



Creating a National/Local Partnership - How to Engage Community Partners in Your Issue

By Bill Goodwill

Think for a moment that you are in charge of marketing for a major corporation with a field sales force of people around the country. When trying to introduce a new product or generate more sales, would you overlook your field sales force? Would you ignore or circumvent your partners out there pounding the pavement, day in and day out, like Willy Loman, with a shoeshine and a smile?

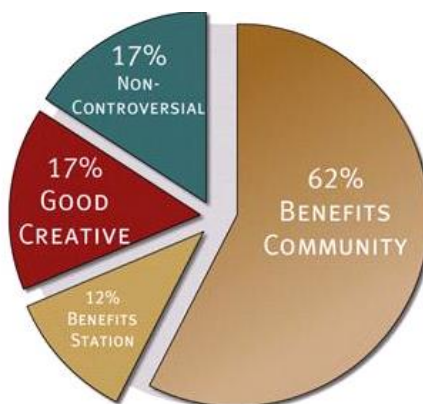
Of course not. That would be marketing suicide. Yet many non-profits overlook - or do not fully utilize - one of their most important assets - the people who can take a national issue and implement it locally.

Why Localism Matters

Why is important to involve your community partners? Two reasons come to mind. First, that is where real change takes place. And secondly, to be successful in implementing any national issue, you must engage local media, preferably on their turf.

As all politicians know so well, social change takes place in the thousands of hamlets, villages, towns and cities that comprise our national fabric. There is a reason why all the most successful non-profits such as Make-A-Wish Foundation, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, American Red Cross and hundreds of others have local chapters. That is where they can efficiently deliver services which cater to the needs of their stakeholders. From the media perspective, that is also where their audience is located, and the sources of their ad revenues, so the concept of localism is very strong, as shown by this graph.

In a survey conducted among 1,000 local broadcast TV stations, nearly two thirds of the respondents indicated that PSAs which benefitted the local community were most important.



It is also important for you to understand the media mindset – particularly for broadcast TV, which will deliver the largest audience and value for your campaign. Shown in this graphic is what we call the “Four R’s of Broadcasting” **THE FOUR R’S OF BROADCASTING**



What really matters to local broadcasters is audience size, shown as **Ratings**, because that is what their advertising **Revenues** are based upon.

In order to build a bigger audience and the revenue that comes with it, the media need to provide **Relevant** programming and generate **Recognition** in their local market. This is where PSAs come into the picture, because they help the media demonstrate support for important local issues and get recognized for that support.



Roles

If you think of a concentric circle, with the national office at the top, and the media in the center, such as the one shown here, it is easy to configure a seamless campaign model to ensure that no one gets left out of the loop.

At the national level, when implementing a public education campaign, there are a variety of functions and activities to plan and execute. These include working with your advertising agency or producer to create compelling messages that will resonate with local media. Then you need to select a distributor which will develop the media plan, handle replication, packaging, local tagging, and campaign evaluation. The key to the success of the entire circle of success are the people on the ground who can make local media contacts, present your materials in a convincing manner, and provide follow-up, depending upon what the local media will use, or what else they may need.

Sharing Information With the Field

One way to share information on your campaign with community partners, is to stage a Webinar. Via this device, you can show your PSAs, discuss all aspects of how you intend to implement the campaign, and tell the people in the field how to access reports.

Fortunately, the Internet is the perfect mechanism for sharing information with people anywhere in the world with access to the Web. You can either post information that will be helpful to your local community partners, or you can ask your distributor to do it. Either way, here are some things that should be on the national website:

- PSAs, videos, radio spots, and creative samples of outdoor posters
- Instructions on how to tag local TV PSAs and get them to either your local community partners, or to the media in the appropriate format
- A distribution list of local media broken out by state, or chapter, showing where PSAs were sent, which is accessible via the Internet
- Facts on your issue, which your partners can use when making their local presentation
- Evaluation reports broken out by the local jurisdiction so your partners can see where they are, and are not, getting exposure.
- A tip sheet on how to make local media contacts. We have written an article entitled: "How to Place PSAs in Your Community," which can be viewed at: <http://www.psaresearch.com/psaprimer.html>

The two most important things to share with your community partners are distribution and evaluation reports. Again, the Internet is the perfect platform for information sharing. In terms of distribution, you should post distribution lists, showing where your PSAs were sent by state, or perhaps by local chapter.

The online lists have complete contact information for local media and can be easily exported to Excel for customization.

Once your campaign is distributed and you begin getting evaluation reports which are also posted to the client's reporting portal, it is important to monitor where you are and are not getting exposure.

One way we do this is via an interactive map, as shown below that depicts exposure by state according to four levels of usage. You can let your cursor linger over the map to bring up campaign usage data for a particular part of the country, i.e. state, chapter, city or any other geographic subset. It makes it very easy to see where more work is needed from both the national and local perspective.



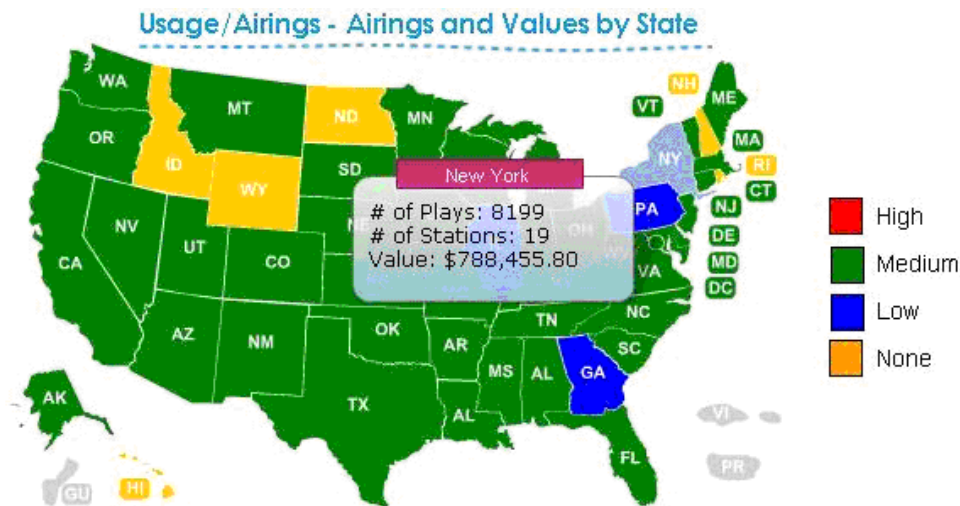
USDA/NRCS Webinar

USDA **NRCS**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Local PSA Outreach
Presented by:
Bill Goodwill
CEO, Goodwill Communications
NRCS PSA Distributor

Click on your state to see Distribution list for your state.





Creating a Feedback Mechanism

The final step is to provide a feedback form that is posted to the Internet, so your local partners can provide information on their media contact experience, or any changes they want to make to distribution lists.

The Take-Away

- Create a comprehensive plan to show how all the parties required for a successful program will work together
- Share everything with your community partners; tell them what you expect them to do; give them the resources to get it done
- Study the areas of the country where your exposure is weak; take corrective action
- Thank the media which have supported your cause;

FEEDBACK SURVEY

In this section, please provide your full name, state or territory, email address and phone number.

Name:

State/territory:

Email:

Phone:

In this section, provide feedback on your media contact experience, or any changes that should be made to distribution lists.

Comments

SUBMIT

About the author: Bill Goodwill is CEO of Goodwill Communications, a firm specializing in PSA distribution and evaluation. He has nearly 40 years of implementing local campaigns for the, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Easter Seals, Volunteers of America, the Peace Corps, the Internal Revenue Service, most of the U.S. military services, and many other non-profits.