Video Three: Media
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MEDIA AND GETTING YOUR MESSAGE OUT

Get to know the media that covers your district and/or statehouse. Watch television, listen to the radio and read every newspaper (daily and weekly), magazine, internet websites and newsletters that you can find. Gather the names of all of the reporters who are covering the kind of stories that you might be included in. Determine who at each newspaper, radio and television station will be covering your race, if you aren't sure who the appropriate reporter is, just call the media outlet and ask. If possible, get weekend and after-hours phone numbers for key reporters, the news editors and/or assignment desks.

You can start with basic sources like the telephone book and the internet to get the names, address and telephone numbers of the media outlets in your area. Many political websites have links to other media outlets and information. Check out the web to see which bloggers are writing political and community issues in your area. Often the local or state political parties will have a media list of political reporters that you can use as a starting point for your own personal media list. It is very important that you start your own list, however, so that you can add reporters and update information as necessary.

Some helpful websites for media information and distribution of information about your campaign for the 2011 election cycle are:

Early and Often http://www.earlyandoften.org/
Progress Illinois http://www.progressillinois.com/
Community Media Guide and Workshop http://communitymediaworkshop.org/

BEGIN VIDEO
Section One: Your Message (0:00)

Know why you are running and be able to say it in two sentences – this should be your elevator speech. You may want to write this down on a 3 x 5 card and practice saying it in the mirror until you are completely comfortable with your delivery. If a reporter, donor or voter asks you why you are running, be prepared. If you cant tell them three quick reasons in under thirty seconds, reconsider your bid.

When crafting your message, consider the following: How will you make a difference for voters and how will your candidacy change their lives? Be able also to answer the questions of how can you win or why you will win.

There are four things that are talked about in a campaign:

1. What you say about yourself (your own message);
2. What you say about your opponent(s);
3. What they say about themselves; and
4. What they say about you.

How will you compare/contrast yourself to your opponent(s)? What are your particular issues that you/your area are most concerned with?

Section Two: Developing a Press List (6:09)

Gather the names, addresses, email addresses, phone numbers and fax numbers of all the daily and weekly newspapers, as well as all of the radio and television stations that have news departments. Be sure to collect the names of the political reporters, assignment and/or city desk people. These entries will be coded as your "A" list on the database and email blast list. Also collect this information about specialty publications and/or reporters that cover specialty beats like the environment, health care, business, etc. These should be coded in to your data base on each particular issue. You may also want to code media outlets geographically within your district – west side, east side, city, suburban, etc.

On your press list be sure to include the following kinds of media outlets:

Daily newspapers	Business publications	Organizational newsletters
Weekly newspapers	Other (trade)	Radio Stations
Ethnic Press	TV Stations	Special Interest
Blogs	Websites	Magazines

When you are gathering the information, remember to find out the special information for each type of media outlet. For example:

Print and Online Media - find out the following:

- When are the deadlines?
- What reporter(s) will be working on stories about the race?
- Who schedules editorial board meetings and when?
- How often are the published - for weeklies, what day?
- Do they accept photos? Do they need a head shot?

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Radio - find out the following:

- Do they have a news department?
- Can you call in with news comments?
- Do they have talk shows/live interviews? .
- Will they do phone interviews re: big issues or press conferences?
- After hours contact - email or cell phone?

Television - find out the following:

- Who makes the news assignments? Is there a separate planning department?
- What are the direct lines to the assignment desk and weekend numbers?
- Do they have public affairs programs?
- Is there a specific reporter who covers your issues?

Using the information - creating a flexible database

Create a database for your press list. This will help you sort out which places need to receive each release. Here are some suggestions for fields that you will need in your database; there may be other fields you need as well.

Section Three: Social Media and Websites (11:30)

Websites

Websites are, for many campaigns today, the first point of contact for voters, volunteers and donors. Make sure that the information is easy to navigate and that contact information is complete and easy to find. Contact information should include the street address of your office, PO Box or other mailing address for donations if different from the office, phone number, email, and links to Facebook and other social media. Names, emails and direct phone lines for staff and volunteer coordinators will help visitors connect with the appropriate person. A separate media section, or at least a name and contact information of a campaign spokesperson who can always be reached for comment about breaking events, is a necessity.

Contribution information should be upfront and accessible and include fill-in forms that capture all information required by law (name, address, occupation, employer) as well as optional fields for information that would be useful to the campaign (phone number, email address). Be sure all pages soliciting donations include the legal disclaimer: *Contributions are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. A copy* of *our report is (or will be) available from the State Board* of *Elections, Springfield.*

A good campaign website should be a one stop shop for information:

1. Why you are running
2. Candidate bio
3. District information and map
4. Issues information
1. Campaign events
2. Contribution information
3. Videos of the candidate and events
1. How to volunteer
2. Press Releases and media coverage of the event

The site should be easy to navigate and quick to load. You should use photos and video to tell your story, but not so much material that the site gets slow.

The most important thing to remember is that the contact information and donation information is easy to find and easy to use.

The site should work with your fundraising database and voter file so that you can easily manage all of your contacts.

Social Media

Social media is a great way to get the word out about your campaign, recruit volunteers, connect with voters. Many elected officials have begun to use Facebook and other social media sites to increase transparency concerning their legislative work and keep the informed about important votes.

Much like the common political expression "Yard signs don't vote," Facebook fans don't necessarily equate to voters - especially if you aren't taking the time to identify supporters. While social media is a great compliment to a well run campaign, it is not a substitute for knocking on doors and meeting with voters face to face.

However, the best use of social media for a campaign may be its ability to aid your campaign in identifying plus (and minus) voters. While not everyone you friend may be a

supporter (or even know you!), positive comments from friends or supporters should lead your campaign to look that person up in your voter database and identify them as a yes vote.

Best campaign uses for social media:

- Identify friends and supporters. Facebook and Twitter each have a "find friends" function that will allow you to "friend" people based on their e-mail addresses. Use your e-mail account or Outlook contacts to identify potential friends and supporters.
- Post campaign news. Updated links on press hits and press photos may increase the amount of activity you receive on your page from friends, as well as way add to your friends. Links receive a significant amount of attention from both fans and friends. This may be done with the "News" application. Photo posts can similarly show voters your connection to the community.
- Post calls to action. Use your Facebook feed or twitter to post specific calls to action such as pass/sign petitions, put up a yard sign, or volunteer.
- Publicize events. Use event features, such as "events" on Facebook or Evite to increase attendance at fundraising and volunteer events.

Avoid these uses for social media:

- Avoid private commentary that might distract from the message of you campaign. Anything you put on the internet should be considered public, even if you have made the posts "private" or "locked."
- Don't let social media take up too much of your time. Too frequent updates or commentary can distract from knocking on doors or face to face contacts.

Facebook Basics for Campaigns
Available at www.thefacebook.com.

Facebook Profile Pages

- Candidate's "personal" page, a profile page can be used to share a bio, photos, issues, and calls to action.
- A profile page is the only page on which you can "find friends" on Facebook using your e-mail account or Facebook. Groups or profiles require you to select friends or e-mail addresses to invite.
- Profile pages can be linked to your blackberry or smart phone, allowing updates at any time.

Facebook Fan Pages:

- Fan pages are public, allowing people who are not registered on Facebook to view the page
- Fan pages, like Personal pages, allow one to post photo albums but does not allow anyone else to tag you in photos.
- Facebook pages can have more than one administrator
- Fan Pages can send updates to all people who connect with them, but cannot send individual messages. Any messages a Page sends you will appear in the separate "Updates" tab of your Inbox.

Facebook Groups:

- Groups are useful for discussions and quick information.
- People can be added to groups without accepting a group request.
- They allow Administrators to send mass messages, but are mostly used for the short term such as Events, Sharing of Ideas, and Updates on Specific Topics.

Mass E-mails for Campaigns:
Mass e-mails are a great way to communicate with your supporters. Many campaigns use paid e-mail list services to organize large e-mail lists. These services can be used to create smaller groups (volunteers, specific neighborhood, specific language, specific issue interest). Paid services include sites such as www.constantcontact.com, www.mailchip.com, www.myemma.com, etc. These sites can personalize e-mails (Dear Michael, etc) and easily enable sharing with social media sites.

A few tips for sending campaign e-mails:

1. Pick the style of email that will be most effective for the message of the email.
2. Use attention-grabbing message statements. Don't use "meeting tonight" try to grab the attention of the reader.
3. Keep emails short and sweet. It the email is too long people won't read it and your message won't get out.
4. Use clear, concise, and compelling sentences. Write like the email is a press release.
5. Use action sentences and don't use filler adjectives.
6. Separate large bodies of texts into paragraphs and try not to use many large bodies of text.
7. Keep the email short, sweet, and to the point. Give the *Who, What, When, Where, Why,* and *How,* then stop writing.
8. Only send emails to the list serve that need to go to everyone. If you need to talk to one or two people, email the message only to the people you need to talk to. No one likes an inbox full of junk mail, and people will be less likely to read future emails.
9. Always include the basics when sending an e-mail out to a full list – contact information, date, web address, quick information on how to subscribe to the list serve.

Section Four: Press Releases & What You Should Say (14:10)

Set up your main press list and specialty/subsidiary press lists into email groups so that you can get press releases and other information out quickly and efficiently. Some television newsrooms still like to receive information via fax, so email them and fax them.

- Print, news website and blogger list
- Radio press list
- Television press list
- Issue related list (environment, education, business, etc)
- List by geographic division
- Major donor list (this isn't press but you should keep them informed)

Anticipate the questions - do your homework

- What are the current issues in the news?
- Who are the paper's readers?

- What kind of articles has this reporter written recently?
- What kind of a story is the reporter covering - hard news or a feature piece?
- Has the reporter written anything about your opponent or the issues you are working on?

Its okay to have notes, but its very important to know your information and memorize your answers. Practice and get comfortable with it. There are a couple questions that every candidate will get – be prepared!

- Why are you running?
- How much money have you raised?
- How are you going to win?
- Whats your viability?
- Who is supporting you?

Talking to reporters - on your terms

- If the reporter calls you and you are not ready to talk to him/her, explain that you are busy at that moment and that you need to call him/her back. Make sure to ask when the deadline is and what topic they want to talk about.
- Before you call back, organize your thoughts and decide on a couple of points that you would like to make. Then, once you have composed your thoughts, call back promptly, particularly if they are on deadline.
- Always remember that in the final analysis, reporters are people too. Sometimes they have bad days and are a little cranky, so set a good example and be polite. "Hello, how are you today," and a bit of small talk usually help break the ice.

Message, Message, Message

- Before you go in to an interview, decide what 3 key points that you would like to make. Write them down, think about how you can work them into conversation.
- Stay on message in every sentence. Try to anticipate how they might edit your quotes and embed your point in every sentence.
- Be specific rather than vague. For example, if your point is that a woman is electable, use that in every answer that you give. Don't simply say, "Our poll says we can do this." Say "Our poll says that this district is ready to elect a pro-choice candidate who will stand up for women's rights."

Know when to hold' em - know when to fold 'em

- Look at the newspapers, listen to the radio, watch television and surf the web. Figure out what the hot topics are and map out what you might be asked and figure out some possible answers.
- Don't be afraid to stop talking. Once you have made your point, be quiet. You don't have to fill the silence. There is no "dead air" in a print interview.

Section Five: Audience Questions (21:22)

How do you distinguish yourself from the crowd?

Be yourself. You know why you are running and what issues you are passionate about – talk about those issues. Don't let someone come in and make you something you are not. Talk about your core beliefs and values that make you who you are. Look at how you differ with other candidates and emphasize that.

How do you make sure that what you want the media to cover is actually news?

Don't cry wolf. If you have an event that isn't really that important don't invite the media. If you are announcing a policy initiative, such as how you plan to fix the budget issues. If you are inviting TV news, have a good background. For instance if you are talking about housing, go stand in front of housing.

Consider the type of media you are inviting – some stories are better for TV (ideas that can be clearly stated in 30 seconds with great visuals) and some for radio (longer stories with great audio) and some for print (those that need more time and explanation).

Is there such a thing as bad media attention?

Yes. Do research on yourself and your opponents – know everything there is to know about you in the public domain to anticipate any bad press. Research won't prevent an opponent or media outlet from reporting it, but it can give you the opportunity to either correct it or be prepared when and if the issue is raised.

What do you do when someone else has your same name?

Every candidate gets sort of a last name in the press – you want to make sure that you are constantly describing yourself the way you want the media to describe you. If you want to be known as John Smith, community activist, then make sure you are getting that message out.