

## Earn Your Earned Media

Earn the right to be heard through respect, education, responsiveness.



## Understand the Media

The media business is not glamorous. It is 99% hard-work, deadlines, pressure and low pay. The media is also highly competitive and made up of extremely talented professionals that deserve respect. The media is also a business that is trying to stay in business which ultimately means that they will work with you if you help them with stories that will grow their business.

## Establish Relationships

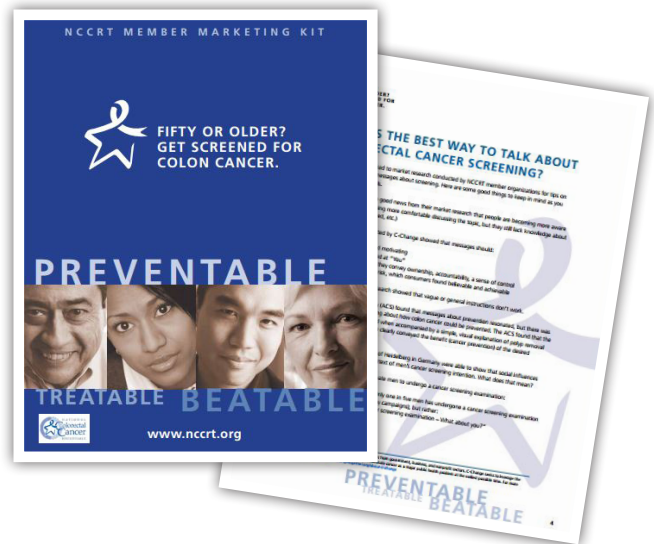
In general, people do business with people they like and respect. Establish good working relationships with your media connections and maintain those relationships regularly. Also, remember journalists have a job to do and your stories may not be published or if they are published, they may be changed. In other words, at the end of the day – they want to get the story correct, but they also want to “sell papers.”

A media committee can help coordinate messages and outreach efforts so the organization is speaking with one voice. They can keep everyone up to date on key messages, select and train spokespeople, and keep leaders up to date. The committee serves as a gatekeeper; monitoring contact with the media and supporting media events. They also make it easier to prevent erroneous or conflicting information from confusing the press and ultimately the public.



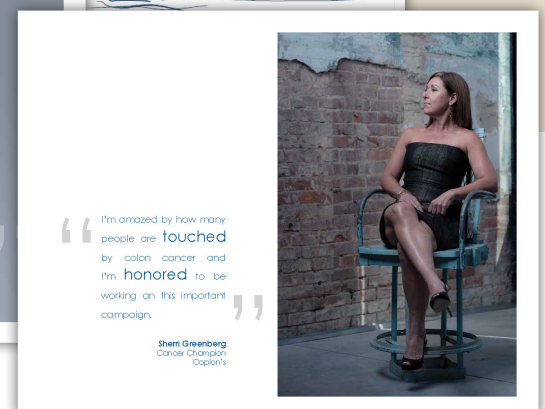
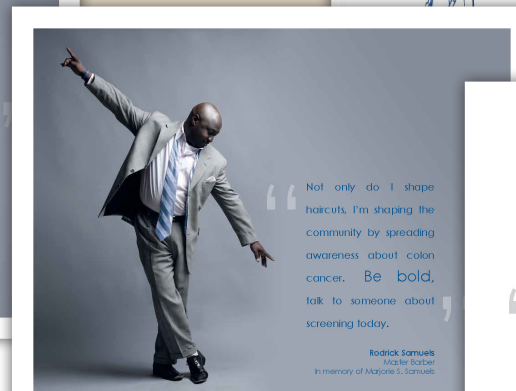
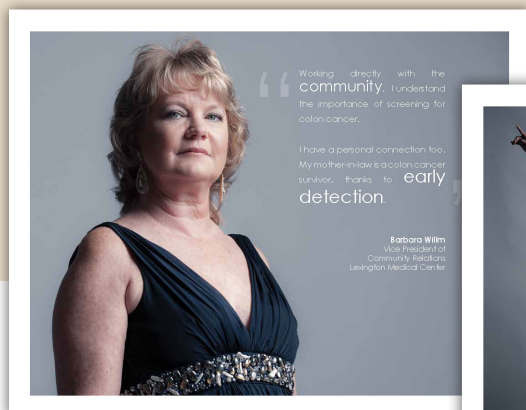
## Build Your Identity and Brand

An identity and brand can help an organization gain name recognition and member loyalty. Creating an identity is different from creating a brand. According to the *American Marketing Association*, brand is an identifying “name, term, design, symbol or any other feature” that distinguishes an organization’s products or services. An identity is much deeper. It helps the community recognize what the organization stands for, what it does, and how members can participate. An identity speaks to emotion – passion, compassion, empathy and purpose.



**Contact medical and health professionals in your community** who are concerned about colorectal cancer and request that they include the Blue Star in their materials or distribute patient fact sheets at their facilities. The Center for Colon Cancer Research at the University of South Carolina was recognized for their Photo Book, which captured their March 2011 Blue is the New Black campaign. The campaign was designed to make colon cancer prevention fashionable. They enlisted cancer champions – cancer survivors, family members, doctors, scientists, government leaders, business owners, and executives – to help start a public dialogue and shed light on the fact that people are embarrassed or afraid to talk about colorectal cancer.

Working with a team of experts, including fashion designer Carmen Marc Valvo and celebrity stylist Laura Schuffman, the champions were adorned from head to toe in the latest blue star trends, photographed, and featured in a Blue Star Trends photo book.



## Create Newsworthy Messages

Key messages help you stay on track and ensure that you communicate the right things to the right people. Once a message has been developed, it is important to tailor it for different audiences. Media outlets like to print stories that other media outlets have already tested as long as there is a new angle that can help them differentiate their story. Identifying a local angle is always a strong strategy.

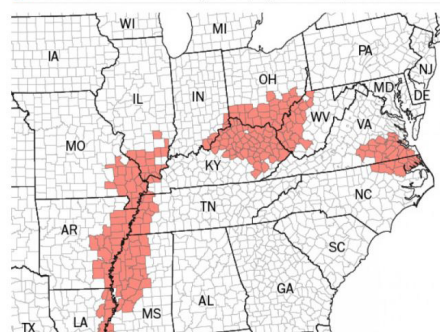
Apart from breaking news exclusives, most stories are repackaged, reframed, and republished because they have already been tested and are believed to be of interest to media consumers. You can reproduce your key messages in ways that can easily be tailored to different audiences. From news editors to radio announcers, tailor your messages so that they will be easy to read and report amidst a flurry of weather, sports and entertainment news by different kinds of journalists and reporters. Remember you have three audiences: your target audience, your journalist and their audience.



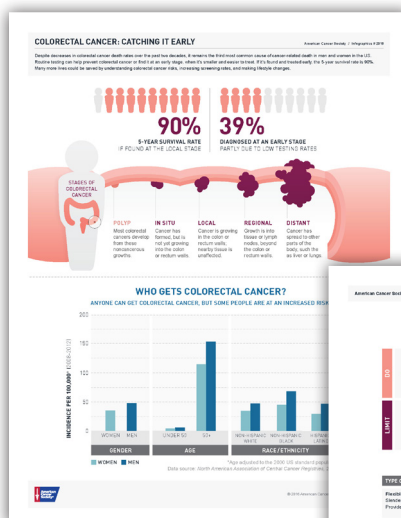
## The 3 hot spots in the U.S. with the highest colon cancer death rates

Hotspots for colorectal cancer

Three clusters of counties with significantly high death rates, 2000-2009



[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2015/07/08/the-3-hot-spots-in-the-u-s-with-the-highest-colon-cancer-death-rates/?utm\\_term=.e6f3b1435b6b](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2015/07/08/the-3-hot-spots-in-the-u-s-with-the-highest-colon-cancer-death-rates/?utm_term=.e6f3b1435b6b)



## Package your Messages

When packaging your KEY messages remember the acronym K.E.Y. "Keep Everything Young." This means creating messages that a 5th grader will understand. Infographics are a great way to package complex ideas in a visual way.

Information should be bite-sized for easy dissemination. Help reporters quickly understand the importance of your message and communicate it to readers, viewers and listeners.

## Disseminate your Messages through Multiple Media Channels

It is important to consider the many communication channels you can use to share your messages. It takes time to customize messages for specific channels but it is completely necessary to do so. Managers of online content want authentic messaging for their specific channel. Blog posts should not simply be repurposed as Facebook posts, etc. A good strategy is to focus your efforts on two overarching media categories: Broadcast (radio and TV and print) and Narrowcast (social media, YouTube, Blogs). Structuring your messaging broadly around these two categories will help guide your team.

- Mobile
- Online
- Reading
- Email
- Blogs
- Television
- Audio
- Closed Circuit
- Podcasts
- Social Media



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2C7UuyoGfnc&feature=youtu.be>



<http://nccrt.org/80-by-2018-blog>

Some information in this document is based on the following guide: *Policy, Systems and Environmental Change - Effectively Engaging Your Coalition When Working with the Media*. A copy of the guide can be downloaded here: <http://www.ccnationalpartners.org/new-resource-policy-systems-and-environmental-change-effectively-engaging-your-coalition-when>

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*Lorrie Graaf, RN | Program Manager, Comprehensive Cancer Control, American Cancer Society.*