



www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/advocacy.html • LOCAL LIBRARY AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

PITCH TO YOUR LOCAL MEDIA

The media can play an important role in expanding awareness of your campaign. Build on the relationships you already have or use your campaign to make a connection with the appropriate media professionals in your community.

Introduce local media to your campaign as soon as possible.

Use the public relations materials provided on the Advocacy in Action site or create your own. We recommend sending hard copy plus an e-mail, and making a follow-up call. Things to think about:

- If you don't have relationships with your local media, take some time to evaluate the appropriate person(s) to approach. For example, search news archives to see who commonly covers the library.
- Make covering the campaign as simple as possible by providing what they need—and more. Take notes during your follow-up call and include any additional information via e-mail.
- Remember to explain the 'community' aspect of your local awareness campaign. This isn't only about the library, it's about the community—library funding impacts all aspects of the community, such as small businesses, individuals, the economy, and property prices. Ask for the reporter or editor's support in promoting the campaign.
- Provide context around your local campaign, such as length, partnerships and planned activities. (If they don't cover the story from the get-go, you are planting a seed for the future.)
- Tell the reporter or editor if you have purchased ads with their organization.
- Invite media to attend events and activities.

Keep local media updated throughout your campaign.

Make it a habit to inform the media about events and activities, and provide updates about other changes, such as new partnerships.

Pitch an article series.

Work with your media contact to develop a series of articles about the campaign or a related library topic, or a series that uses the 'geek' or 'passion' theme. One idea is a 'geek on the street' concept that includes a photo and asks someone what they geek.

Gain coverage through the editorial section.

Find ways to talk about the campaign through letters to the editor and contributions in the editorial section. These articles don't have to be all about the campaign itself. Try to find topics that are broader—and have more general appeal—but tie in the value of your library. You know what sets your library apart (e.g., interesting resources or programs) and you know the local inspirational library stories (e.g., someone who found a job by using the library or someone who found family members by researching genealogy records); use this to create a bigger story. Things to think about:

- Include statistics about your community and your library where appropriate.
- You or someone on your staff can submit these articles, but also consider supporters from your community who are willing to work in partnership with you to write the article. (Always give them the opportunity and ask that they submit themselves vs. you sending on their behalf.)