



Promoting Your Horizon of Hope Event

With a few simple steps, you can easily promote your Horizon of Hope event as a great way for people to support a worthwhile cause. Below is a step-by-step guide to help make your 2008 Horizon of Hope event or fundraising effort a great success!

1. Create your media list.

Create a list of local media contacts – newspapers, television stations and radio stations. Don't forget about specialty papers such as local parenting magazines, military base publications, church bulletins, parent-teacher newsletters or even neighborhood association newsletters. Collect contact names, phone and fax numbers, e-mail addresses and deadlines. Weekly papers often will need information sooner than daily papers. For instance, a paper that publishes once a week on Thursdays may have a deadline each Tuesday by close-of-business.

Track down the name and number of the specific reporter or editor who is responsible for covering events such as yours. Typically, it's a home and garden or lifestyle reporter. Because our focus is breast cancer, it's possible a health reporter would be interested, too. Try both!

Television stations usually employ "general assignment" reporters. Stories are evaluated on their newsworthiness. If your event piques their interest, any available reporter might be assigned to the story. The best contact at a television station is the assignment editor. When speaking with assignment editors, be brief and to the point. Mention any enticing information first (a special speaker, a survivor on-hand to interview or product on display). Assignment editors are flooded with calls from people promoting events – they will appreciate your brevity.

Some radio stations air morning shows that may be an appropriate forum for promoting your Horizon of Hope event. In some cases, the on-air personality handles all the arrangements for the program. At larger stations, a producer typically manages the show. In those cases, the producer is your best contact.

2. Create your press release.

Using the sample pre-event press release available on www.horizonofhope.com, fill in the appropriate information for your event. If you plan to have something special at your event such as a speaker, a survivor who would be willing to be interviewed or a special product display, be sure to mention it in your release.

3. Send your press release.

Two to three days prior to your event (or as early as necessary to meet a specific deadline), and using the contact information obtained in step one, send your press release to each contact. Follow up with a phone call to ensure they received it. Not only will you make sure your press release doesn't fall through the cracks, but you will refresh the reporter's memory that your event is coming up. Make sure to verbally mention any special features of your event.

4. Reminder phone calls.

The day of your event, place a final call to each media contact. By now they will know the details of your event, so keep this call brief.

5. Follow-up press release (optional).

Many smaller papers will report on the success of your event. Use the sample post-event press release available on www.horizonofhope.com to alert your contacts of your successful Horizon of Hope event. Try to send it out as quickly as possible (within 24 to 48 hours) following your event – before it becomes “old news.”

Tips for Making your Horizon of Hope Event Newsworthy

- 🎗️ Create visual appeal. Make your event visually interesting. Consider holding the show at the home of a survivor or at a local arboretum, garden or conservatory.
- 🎗️ Consider special guests. Invite guests that attract media attention. It doesn't have to be a high-profile individual, rather someone who can contribute to the story. As the consultant, you are a natural draw. However, most media will treat your event as a breast cancer awareness event – not a Longaberger event. Have someone on hand who will contribute to that part of the story – a survivor, an area doctor or oncologist, a representative from the American Cancer Society or other special guest.
- 🎗️ Don't compete with similar local events. Before scheduling your Horizon of Hope event, be sure to check the community calendar. If your event falls on the same day as a local parade, 5k run or other community event, you'll find yourself competing for the media's attention.

What to Expect Regarding Media Coverage

- 🎗️ Brief mentions. Many times, the media will only use a paragraph or two about your program. It all depends on how much space they have available. They might also list your event in the local community calendar.
- 🎗️ Feature Stories. Sometimes you will get a bigger feature story. This often will occur with smaller publications in which the competition for space is not as great as it is in larger publications.
- 🎗️ Community Organizations. Many times, community organizations will give your event coverage, particularly if you're a member or live in the neighborhood where it is published. This is a great way to get the word out on a local level.

Grassroots Publicity Opportunities

- 🎗️ Consider tapping into grassroots public relations opportunities by posting your fact sheet (available on www.horizonofhope.com) on bulletin boards at your local library, coffee shop, community center, and other places that allow you to promote your business or fundraising efforts. Be sure to personalize the fact sheet with your contact information before posting.

