



9. PR/Media toolkit

PR 101: A failure to plan is a plan for failure... cliché perhaps, but true.

Green Halloween® is grateful for your support and we want to do all we can to help you make your event as successful as possible. To assist in getting the word out and marketing your Green Halloween event, we've created a sample PR plan to help organize your efforts and take the guess work out of PR.

Follow the steps below to develop a personalized PR plan for your event. As a back up, feel free to contact Lynn lynn@greenhalloween.org or Joy joy@greenhalloween.org with your PR questions.

First time developing PR and marketing plans/materials?

Don't worry, it's easier than you think. To create a simple PR plan for your great Green Halloween event, follow the outline below, fill in the blanks and choose 1 or 2 key items that suit your interests and event. These steps will help you get your PR feet wet and organize your efforts.

Still not sure if PR is for you?

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Contact: Info@GreenHalloween.org

If you're not comfortable planning PR/marketing or need additional help, we recommend asking your fellow local volunteers if anyone has PR/marketing experience and would like to lead or assist you in developing a plan. Connecting with other coordinators via the community page's coordinator's board is another good idea (Contact Ghazal Ghazal@GreenHalloween.org for access). Also, feel free to contact Green Halloween's PR Coordinator, Joy Lehman, if you need additional help with press releases or ideas for getting the word out in your area. (joy@greenhalloween.org)

Are you an experienced PR pro?

Go for the gold...or green rather, and do what you like and works best for you. The outline below details a range of ideas that can help market your local event. And remember, you don't have to reinvent the wheel; *there are many pre-written articles and blurbs at your disposal*. Just contact Joy or Corey (Corey@GreenHalloween.org).


PR dates to note:

To assist the Green Halloween local coordinators, the team is planning a conference call in early August to review materials, generate ideas and learn about what's worked well in other areas. We'll also have a wrap up call in early November to discuss the event outcomes and celebrate a successful Halloween season. You will receive and email invitation to both of these conference calls.

Getting started

So you have planned a Green Halloween event for your local community...now it's time to get the word out.

One of the most important aspects of planning and organizing a local Green Halloween event is to market it to your *target audience*. The information below outlines the steps for planning PR and marketing campaigns around your event to help ensure a fab turnout out.

Check off the star after you've completed each step. 

Step 1: Define the objective of your Green Halloween event publicity/media campaign



Keep clear objectives in mind when developing your PR plans. *What are your PR plans designed to achieve?*

Example objectives for marketing your Green Halloween event

- Inform local community members about scheduled Green Halloween events?
- Build a network of local community volunteers interested in Green Halloween events?

Fill in your PR objectives below:

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Step 2: Define the goals in achieving your objectives



It is important that your Green Halloween event goals be specific, measurable, results-oriented and time-bound. They should be in-line with your overall Green Halloween event or group objectives.

Example goals:

- 100 attendees at local Green Halloween event on October 31st
- Recruit 10 volunteers to help with Green Halloween event by August

Fill in your PR goals below:

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| |

Step 3: Determine your target audience



Who are you trying to attract/interest in your Green Halloween event? Where do you find these

individuals/groups?

Target audience musts:

- Defining your target audience will help focus your campaign efforts and messages. Most likely this will be **moms, family friendly groups**, healthy/green sponsors, schools, etc
- **Develop your action plan and communications aimed at this target audience, not the general public**

Fill in the target audience for your Green Halloween event:

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|--|
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| |

Step 4: Develop your plan of green media attack

What local media outlets are available to get your message to your audience? Which communication formats does your target audience prefer and use most often? What do you want to say to these groups? How does your audience communicate (*define a specific list*)?

Below are a few examples of media activities you can use to market your Green Halloween event. Select a few from the list that apply to the preferred communication formats of your target audience and beginning researching and developing your approach. Keeping in mind your audience and goals when writing the content.

And no need to reinvent the wheel, prewritten articles and blurbs about Green Halloween are available.

Example target audience communications list:

Target audience for Green Halloween event at local zoo on Oct 31st

- Audience: Local Moms and Dads
 - Preferred information sources: Local parenting magazines, Facebook, local news and radio and newspaper
 - Corresponding PR plan:
 - Write press release and send to local magazines and news sources
 - Create a Facebook page for your event and suggest your friends and volunteers ‘like’ this page
 - Update status 2 times per week

Pick 1 or 2 media projects to start with:

Target audience:



Information sources:

PR plan to reach target audience through their preferred communications format:

- 1.
- 2.



Target audience:

Information sources:

PR plan to reach target audience through their preferred communications format:

- 1.
- 2.

Examples media engagement tactics include:

- **Tips for contacting local media:**
 - Check out the website of local media outlets and look for contact listings, ‘Contact Us’, ‘Contribute’ or ‘About Us’ are always good places to start
 - Be specific as possible, target your phone call or email to the most appropriate person, i.e., the reporter or producer of the show or column you want your event to appear. Examples: TV producers of local morning shows, TV news room, magazine editorial page (look for reporters that write about relevant topics)
 - Make your pitch short and to the point – just focus on the Who, What, Where, When and How. Consider writing down what you want to say in a sentence or two before calling.
 - Include visuals when appropriate. Feel free to use the pictures on Green Halloween’s media page. Note, all pictures must be linked back to Green Halloween’s website,

assuming the story is web-based. Be sure to include © 2007-2008 Holli Dunn and Green Halloween. High resolution photos are also available for print pieces; just send your request to Corey.

- **Press releases** (directed to local newspapers, magazines and websites)
 - Write a dynamic press release about your eco-fabulous Green Halloween event. The press release will be a great marketing tool for establishing media contacts and connecting with your target audience. Distribute the press release to local newspapers, magazines, and websites or on a local newswire service – focus your efforts on outlets that your target audience reads. **See Press Release Tips below.**

- **Articles in local publications** (newspapers, parenting magazines, circulars)
 - Research and contact local magazines with your press release or pitch. A pitch is a brief query letter to a media contact that outlines the main ideas (who, what, where, when and how) of your Green Halloween event or story idea. Your pitch can be either via email or phone, remember to keep it short and to the point. If you use email, be sure to include the pitch within the body of the email, not as an attachment as these will rarely be opened
 - Make sure the publications are aimed at green living, community projects, parenting, health/fitness, etc relevant to your Green Halloween audience
 - If you have a local parenting magazine in mind, please contact Joy prior to inquiring as some magazines will have already been contacted
 - Keep in mind magazines typically plan their articles months in advance. Visit the magazine's website to view the editorial calendar, which will generally tell you the topics they plan to cover in upcoming issues. This will help you be even more strategic in pitching your story. Example editorial calendar:
<http://mothering.com/sites/resources/editorial-calendar.pdf>

- **Radio or television** – A TV or radio feature is a great way to get the word out.
 - If you're comfortable giving an interview about your Green Halloween event, contact your local media programs and pitch them a story about the event
 - Always send the local media your press releases
 - Pitch local media your event or story idea, this means calling the show producer and giving them a two sentence idea
 - Follow up with the producer the morning of your event or the day before even if you haven't heard back from your original press release or pitch inquiry. If it's a slow news day your event might make the news.
 - If this is the first year for Green Halloween in your area the event will probably be of interest. Subsequent years may require a bit more creativity to get the media interested. Brainstorm additional ideas or contact Joy for ideas
 - If you need additional help on how to approach local media, please contact joy@greenhalloween.org

- **Social networking** (Facebook and Twitter) – *Contact Ghazal for help with social networking ideas ghazal@greenhalloween.org*
 - General social networking advice – keep posts fun, simple, green and creative. Try to post new status updates or tweets 2-3 times a week at a minimum
 - Create a Facebook page and event invitation for your Green Halloween Event
 - When creating a Facebook or Twitter account for your local event, please use the following format: @GHCity
 - Sign up for Google Alerts for @GHCity - <http://www.google.com/alerts> Google Alerts are email updates of the latest relevant Google results (web, news, etc.) based on your choice of query or topic.
 - Sign up for Social Oomph <http://www.socialoomph.com/> This site helps you maximize your Twitter tweets and retweets
 - Suggest your Facebook friends become fans of Green Halloween, Celebrate Green and your local Green Halloween group
 - Post status updates advertising your Green Halloween event well in advance and follow-up with weekly reminders leading up to the event, including name of venue, other businesses involved, city, etc
 - Create a Twitter account for your local Green Halloween group and send fun, creative tweets to members informing them of upcoming Green Halloween events and ideas
 - Add relevant hashtags to your tweets (#green, #GreenHalloween, #ecofriendly, #halloween, #candy, etc)
 - Follow other local green parenting groups on Twitter and Facebook and look for opportunities for partnership
 - National Green Halloween support for your local event is available by contacting Joy or Ghazal, send them 5-10 ‘Tweets’ or ‘Status updates’ about your event

- **Green Halloween alert e-blasts**
 - Add your event to the local section of the Green Halloween e-blast, send the details, photos and any additional information to Corey and Ghazal
 - Make sure you’ve subscribed to the e-blast and recommend subscribing to your local volunteers, friends and family

- **Blogs**
 - Start a Blog Tour (reaching out to local bloggers about your Green Halloween event and green holiday ideas). Search for popular local green and family friendly blogs that have a strong following. Get in touch with the blog owner and ask for an opportunity to write a guest post about your Green Halloween event
 - Create your own event blog on Green Halloween’s website. Contact Corey for details and Green Halloween blog guidelines. Here is an example:
<http://www.greenhalloween.org/daytona>

Step 5: Create a media calendar and contact list



When planning your Green Halloween event, try to plan PR activities at least six months in advance to make sure you don't miss key media/publication deadlines. Most TV, news and publication outlets have deadlines several months ahead of their release dates. Pay careful attention to the closing dates, or you may risk losing out on the opportunity. Example editorial calendar: <http://mothering.com/sites/resources/editorial-calendar.pdf>

We suggest emailing chosen media centers your press release or pitch and then call the day of the event as a reminder – especially important for TV.

Calendar

Create a calendar that lists scheduled community events you want to partner with or plan news releases around. Examples include:

- Magazine, publication and news release deadlines – note TV and news have shorter lead times
- Local green and family events
- You can also use the calendar to track your PR activity timelines. Create a list of duties and volunteers involved in completing each PR task and include these key dates/responsibilities on your calendar

You may need to revise the calendar as you move through the year, but it'll give you some initial dates to look out for and help focus your efforts on the most beneficial media outlets and timing.

Fill in key publication and event planning dates:

May 2010

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|---------------------------|--|-----|---|---------------------------------|-----|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | 3 Twitter tweet | 4 Update media contact | 5 | 6 Draft GH event press | 7 FB status update | 8 |

| list | | | release | | | |
|------|---|----|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 9 | 10 Send press release and article ideas to MAG | 11 | 12 | 13 FB status update | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 FB status update | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 GH event volunteer orientation |
| 23 | 24 MAG DEADLINE | 25 | 26 FB status update | 27 | 28 Twitter tweet | 29 |
| 30 | 31 | | | | | |

Media list

Researching and creating a list of media contacts (reporters and journalists) at media outlets most relevant to your target audience is a good idea when trying to place articles and news stories about your Green Halloween event.

Once you've created a list, schedule time on your calendar for media outreach. Contact each reporter and publication individually to introduce yourself and your Green Halloween event press release. Be sure to include the press release in the body of your email as well as an attachment – this will increase the chances it is read.



Fill in your media contacts below:

Publication:

Name:

Title:

Phone:

Email:

Key pub deadline date:

Publication:

Name:

Title:

Phone:

Email:

Key pub deadline date:

Publication:

Name:

Title:

Phone:

Email:

Key pub deadline date:

Step 6: Track and measure the results of your PR Campaign



After each PR/marketing tactic is complete, sit down and review the results. Did you achieve the defined objectives and goals for your Green Halloween event or project? Should you consider modifying your original plan? If so, how and why?

PLEASE SEND COPIES OF ANY PRINT PIECES, TV OR RADIO THAT YOU PRODUCE TO JOY SO THESE CAN BE USED TO PROMOTE GREEN HALLOWEEN.



Press release tips

A press release is a great way to get your local Green Halloween event advertised to the community... if it's picked up by the media. Here are a few tips and resources to help you write and distribute your press release most effectively.

- Keep it short (1 page), factual and written from the journalist's perspective
- Keep the theme and tone in-line with Green Halloween events – fun, creative and light hearted
- Target your media contacts to the event– use your media list of local and community publications, media outlets and organizations aimed at your target audience (moms, family friendly, etc)
- Plan ahead – use your calendar of publication deadlines, events and local happenings and to plan your press release submissions accordingly
- Don't reinvent the wheel. Review the great national and local Green Halloween press releases posted on Green Halloween. Use these as examples for your local press release. Visit <http://www.greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=press#releases>

Helpful press release 'how to' guides

<http://www.publicityinsider.com/release.asp>

<http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Press-Release>

<http://pressrelease.lifetips.com/cat/62980/press-release-basics/index.html>

<http://www.samplepressrelease.info/presswriting.htm>

SEE PRE-WRITTEN PRESS RELEASES BELOW

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

Contact: **LOCAL CONTACT**
www.GreenHalloween.org

For immediate release

GREEN IS THE NEW ORANGE! CELEBRATE ‘GREEN’ HALLOWEEN IN STYLE WITH A FUN, EARTH AND TEETH-FRIENDLY HOLIDAY

Create a fun, healthy and eco-fabulous holiday by taking the Green Halloween® challenge to think “outside of the candy box®” this year.

Complete details available at www.GreenHalloween.org

CITY DATE – Celebrating an EEK-O-friendly and healthy Halloween has never been easier, or more fun, thanks in part to www.GreenHalloween.org. Green Halloween serves up dozens of creative, inexpensive, and even no-cost ideas to entertain and engage kids in a healthier and Earth-friendly holiday.

Why green and why Halloween? In response to widespread concern about childhood obesity, discovery of chemicals and lead in store bought costumes, and enormous waste generated at Halloween (list-topper for candy sales and second only to Christmas for décor), Seattle-area mom, Corey Colwell-Lipson, started Green Halloween, a not-for-profit community initiative that has parents and kids alike applauding.

"By applying the 3Rs-reduce, reuse, recycle-to every aspect of Halloween, parents can save money while creating healthier traditions for kids and the Earth," says Colwell-Lipson.

While some parents might be skeptical, kids aren't. The Green Halloween team tested their ‘candy-free theory’ with local Seattle experts - 20,000 kids. They exhibited alternatives to conventional candy and not a single one (ages 4-16) said they would be disappointed if they received one of the treasures or healthier items displayed. Proof positive Halloween and trick-or-treating is more than just candy.

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Contact: Info@GreenHalloween.org

Whether you're interested in saving money or saving the Earth, Green Halloween has ideas. Here are just a few:

- **Want to stick with candy as a treat?** Look for organic sweets, especially those packaged in compostable wrapping. These can be found at natural food stores as well as online and many cost the same or less than conventional confections.
- **Used to giving out handfuls?** Cut back by 25%. Kids won't notice the difference, but you'll save money.
- **Prefer to hand out treasures?** Empty your kids' pockets. What treasures do they store? Shiny rocks, feathers, sea shells. Stock up on these and if you're wary of the response, offer as an alternative to conventional candy. See what happens.
- **Always purchased new costumes?** This year, before heading to the big box store, try an experiment and set kids on a hunt through the house collecting items that might be turned into creative costumes. Then work with them to construct their heart's desire. Or try a costume swap with neighbors or visit sites [online where you can do the same](#).
- **In the habit of buying new Halloween décor every year?** Try swapping old for new-to-you with friends and neighbors. Host a make-it-take-it décor party before the big day. Pull out every black, purple or orange item in your home and decorate with those. Search online for how to make décor out of items you'd normally toss.

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Green Halloween® is a non-profit, grassroots community initiative to create healthier and more Earth-friendly holidays, starting with Halloween. For additional information about Green Halloween, please visit www.greenhalloween.org