

# PR Boot Camp

***Get In Shape Now  
for Valentine's Day and Beyond***

Jennifer Sparks, V.P., Marketing  
Society of American Florists

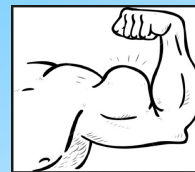




## Today's Goal

Intensive session focusing on key areas:

- Value of PR: Why do it?
- How and when to use it
- Available PR tools/materials
- Hands-on ideas and member examples
- Be a media resource
  - ✓ Contacting the media
  - ✓ Interview do's and don't's
  - ✓ Preparing talking points



**PR BootCamp Powerpoint**  
**available at**  
**[safnow.org/PRBootCamp](http://safnow.org/PRBootCamp)**



## **What is Public Relations?**

**Generating publicity through  
third-party outlets,  
primarily the *news media*,  
and within your *community*.**



*There are many disadvantages to PR. You can't control the content, you can't control the timing, and you can't control the visual appearance of your message. You can't even be sure that any of your messages will be delivered.*

***The Fall of Advertising & The Rise of PR***  
**Al Ries and Laura Ries**



*But the one advantage of PR makes up for all of the disadvantages. PR has credibility, advertising does not. People believe what they read in newspapers or magazines or what they hear on radio and see on television.*

***The Fall of Advertising & The Rise of PR***  
**Al Ries and Laura Ries**



## Power of PR

Using the credibility and influence of third parties to deliver information that will educate and inspire target audiences to change behavior, shift mindset, and take action.



## PR's Value: Why Do It?

- Objective believability, credibility
  - Floral messages achieve third-party credibility through news media
- Increases depth of message delivery
  - News articles allow more content than advertising
- Complements other marketing activities
- Cost effective
- Minimizes damage in times of crisis



## HOW Do We Do PR?

Community  
**News Media**  
Social Media



## PR in Your Community

- **Networking: Get involved!**
  - Chamber of Commerce or other community business groups
  - Social or charitable organizations
  - Church or school communities



# PR in Your Community

- **Speaking engagements:  
Be seen!**

- Garden and country clubs
- Community festivals
- Small business seminars
- In-store workshops



# PR in the Media



*Getting through the gatekeeper*

*“What’s the difference between advertising and PR? Advertising is saying you’re good. PR is getting someone else to say you’re good.”*

Jean-Louis Gasse



## **PR: Earned Media**

- Different from advertising ... you have to **EARN** it
- Builds credibility through third-party endorsement
- Takes time and persistence but the pay-off can be big





**The key to capturing the media's attention is:**

**CONTENT**

***Make it newsworthy  
and make it timely!***



## **PR: Earned Media**

- **Newsworthy and/or timely items**

- National trends/research
- Community or shop events
- Business anniversary

- **HOLIDAYS:**

Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Christmas

- Offer behind-the-scenes look at holiday preparations
- Offer ride-alongs for reporters on holiday deliveries
- Home decorations (Christmas)



## Consumer Research/Trends

### *Ride the SAF Wave!*

**Capitalize on SAF's proven news hooks to establish your shop as the expert and generate valuable local exposure**

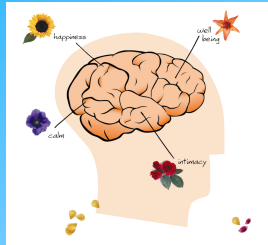


## Effective News Hooks

- **Groundbreaking university studies on the mood-enhancing effects of flowers and plants**



## SAF's Emotional Impact of Flowers Study



***Proof positive:***  
A gift of flowers  
creates instant delight,  
and increases enjoyment  
and life satisfaction.



## Capitalizing on Emotional Impact Research

- **Press release on shop letterhead**
  - Home, Lifestyle or Health print reporters
  - Radio news directors
  - TV assignment editors
- **Get noticed...send flowers with the press release!**
  - Reporters and staff will feel the effects of flowers for themselves



## Capitalizing on Emotional Impact Research

### ■ TV Segment

- Contact the program producer at a local TV station
- “Prove” how flowers make people in your community happy.

### ■ Ride-alongs

- Invite reporters to go on flower deliveries and capture recipients’ reactions to the flowers
- **Perfect for Valentine’s Day deliveries!**



## Capitalizing on Emotional Impact Research

### ■ Contest

- Partner with a local radio station
- Listeners call in to tell why their special person deserves a smile; **the most romantic thing you’ve ever done**
- Winner (selected by DJs) receives a flower arrangement
- You provide the flowers in exchange for free mentions of your shop and the research
- ***Make it a regular segment!***



## Member Examples

- **Idaho**

- “Share a Smile” monthly TV segment

- **Colorado**

- Shop owner heard disparaging remarks about Valentine’s Day flowers on a morning radio show
- Sent study findings to general manager and got invited to come on the same show and talk about them



## Member Examples

- **Indiana**

- Advertises on local radio station
- Station asked him to come on air for a 15-minute flower segment every Wednesday

- **Arizona**

- Shared study findings with local newspaper
- Shop owner quoted throughout local story
- Story also published in nine newspapers nationwide



## More University Research

- **Flowers & Seniors Study**

Flowers are *scientifically proven* to ease depression, inspire social networking and refresh memory as we age.

- **Home Ecology of Flowers Study**

People feel more compassionate toward others, have less worry and anxiety, and feel less depressed when flowers are present in the home.

- **Flowers & Plants in Workplace Study**

Problem-solving skills, idea generation and creative performance improve substantially in workplace environments that include flowers and plants

**[AboutFlowers.com/research](http://AboutFlowers.com/research)**



## Valentine's Day News Hooks

- Popular color trends
- Flower & design style options
- Timing of Valentine's Day

*(Order early - Flowers to the office to kick off weekend; flowers to enhance romantic weekend)*

- Rose care tips
- Unique requests, proposals, card messages



## Valentine's Day News Hooks

- Behind the Scenes:
  - ✓ Design stations
  - ✓ Deliveries
- Statistics
  - ✓ 257 million roses produced for VDay 2014

**Ideas and content at  
[AboutFlowers.com](http://AboutFlowers.com)**



**So I've got my news  
hook,**

**WHAT NEXT?**



# Contacting the Media



## Types of Media Targets

- **Print**
  - Daily newspapers
  - Weekly newspapers
  - Community newsletters
- **Broadcast**
  - Television stations
  - Radio stations
- **Online media**





## Contacting the Media

### Create a target media list:

- Visit the news outlet's website; review bios
- Check for a list of section editors:
  - Community news
  - Feature/lifestyle or garden
  - Business
- Read local papers, watch the news and listen to the stations you want to target
- **Media websites: Search "Valentine's Day" for past stories**
- Know which reporters might be interested in story before pitching it



## Contacting the Media

- **Pitch the story**
  - Contact local media (press release, email)
  - Send with flowers
  - Reporters love visual impact
- **Follow up!**
  - Call/email to see if information was received and to answer questions
  - If interested, be helpful and responsive

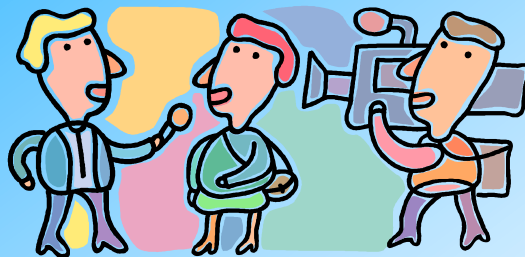


## Contacting the Media

- **Timing is everything**
  - Don't give up; keep trying
  - It may take several tries before the media "bites"
  - Be persistent and learn from each try



## Interviewing with the Media



## Interview DO' s and DON' Ts

### DO' s:

- Be open, honest, accurate
- Keep answers short; soundbites  
(10 seconds or less)
- Prepare three key messages to communicate
- Use questions as opportunity to make your key points (bridge)
- Humanize yourself and the industry as caring and responsive
- **Stay positive!**



## Interview DO' s and DON' T' s

### DON' Ts:

- Don' t dwell on negative allegations or repeat negative words. Decide what' s at the root of the question and address it
- Don' t say 'I think' or 'I believe' ; it weakens your opinion
- Don' t dismiss a question with 'no comment' ; in the public' s mind it translates as guilt
- Don' t make comments 'off the record' ; if you don' t want it on the news, don' t say it



## Interviewing with the Media

- **The media may call you for comment on a story that seems negative**
  - Be accessible
  - Use the opportunity to present your views in a responsible manner
  - Take time to carefully develop your response
  - Because helpful, more likely they will contact you in the future



## “The GLAD Game”



### **Optimism:**

Finding something to be glad about in every situation.

***Use it in your interviews!***





***Rain, Sleet, Snow and Ice  
No Match for Cupid***  
(Florist quotes from Actual Local News Article)

“We’ re doing what we have to do. That’ s our job.”

“It’ s our worst nightmare.”

The challenge, (florist) said, would be met.

“We’ re like the mailman. We’ re getting them out.”



**Are you playing the “Glad Game” or not?**



(Florist quotes from Actual Local News Articles)

“Who calls a flower shop on Valentine’ s Day,” said xxxxx. “Most shops don’ t even answer the phone on Valentine’ s Day. Maybe she shoulda called on Feb. 13, or God forbid, a couple days earlier.”

\*\*\*\*

“It all just adds to the fun,” Ms. xxxx said of the annual mad rush of orders and deliveries.

“The colors are beautiful. Red roses are the most popular, but we have royal blue – they’ re out of this world – orange ones, purple roses. We’ ll make up hundreds of arrangements.

Valentine’ s Day is a lot of fun for many people.

They’ re excited, and it’ s a lot of fun for us.”



## Interviewing with the Media

- **Practice “headline testing”**
  - Imagine a good headline and a bad headline that could result from a decision or something you say
  - Rule of thumb: Don’ t say it if you wouldn’ t want to see it as front page news

***Negative comment = negative headline***



## Prepare Talking Points

- **Decide on three key messages to get across in an interview**
  - **Message:** Flowers are the perfect Valentine’ s Day gift
  - **Point:** *Women want to receive flowers – nothing says ‘I love you’ like a gift of flowers.*



## Prepare Talking Points

- **Message:** Valentine's Day is not just for romance
- **Point:** *We receive many requests for flowers for mothers, daughters, sisters, friends. Valentine's Day has become a time to express sweet sentiments to many people in our lives.*
- **Message:** Surprise your valentine at work
- **Point:** *Valentine's Day falls on a Saturday. Why not surprise your sweetheart at the office early to kick off the weekend? (WOW effect)*

[safnow.org/vday](http://safnow.org/vday)



## Be prepared for tough questions:

- Why are rose prices so high for Valentine's Day?
- Why are your roses more expensive than the supermarket?
- Why should consumers buy flowers when they just die?
- Is bad weather affecting rose supply?

[safnow.org/vday](http://safnow.org/vday)

*(Popular Questions  
Reporters Ask)*



## **Interviewing with the Media: What to Wear**

- For face-to-face or on-camera interviews, dress neatly and professionally (but *real*), as you would when meeting with a client.
- Wear a *smile!* (Even for phone interviews)



## **The POWER of Public Relations**

***Putting flowers and your  
business in the context of people's  
everyday exposure to the news  
(and/or browsing of the Internet)***





## PR: The Media

- **Be a resource**
  - Be available and responsive *ESPECIALLY* during busy times (*If you don't, your competitor will*)
  - Be prepared for potentially negative stories
- **Establish yourself as a credible source and they'll come back to you**



# Learn from Peers



## Learn from Peers

### Plaza Flowers, Philadelphia

- Provides flowers for set of local TV station
- Gets regular opportunity for interviews



## Learn from Peers



6-minute segment!

- Segment on C&H of summer roses
- Included research about flowers
- Live audience got roses



## Learn from Peers

- 9 degrees below 0 in Chicago
- The media came calling and Red Kennicott of Kennicott Brothers Flowers made himself available



“We’ve got a lot of spring flowers right now. Daffodils, tulips, hyacinths. Flowers like that make people think of spring.”

### Chicago area coping with deep freeze

Thursday, February 10, 2011

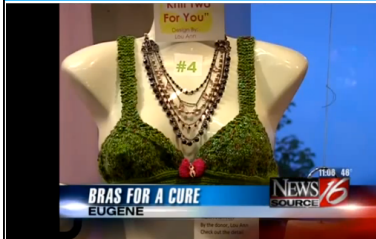


Red Kennicott  
Chicago



## Learn from Peers

- Bras for A Cure: Fundraiser to support local cancer treatment organization



Dandelions Flowers & Gifts,  
Eugene, OR



## Learn from Peers

**BRAS FOR A CURE**  
BENEFITS WILLAMETTE VALLEY CANCER INS

- Dandelions Flowers & Gifts  
1710 Chambers St.
- Each vote costs \$1
- [www.brasforacure.com](http://www.brasforacure.com)

A display of various bras made of flowers and dandelions, with signs and a '16' logo.

## Make sure PR is a part of your marketing mix!

- Advertising
- **PUBLIC RELATIONS**
  - Social Media
- Direct Mail
- Promotions
- Internet



## Utilize **SOCIAL MEDIA** to reach out to customers



[facebook.com/AboutFlowers.com](https://facebook.com/AboutFlowers.com)



[twitter.com/FlowerFactor](https://twitter.com/FlowerFactor)



[pinterest.com/AboutFlowers](https://pinterest.com/AboutFlowers)

*Member examples on [safnow.org/prbootcamp](https://safnow.org/prbootcamp)*



# BUILD CONTENT: www.AboutFlowers.com



# www.AboutFlowers.com

- A wealth of content ideas:
  - Hip Givers' Guide
  - Floral trends and research
  - Guide to flowers and plants
  - Design styles
  - Creative gift ideas
  - Decorating and entertaining
  - Holiday information
  - Ordering advice
  - Care tips



# BUILD CONTENT: www.AboutFlowersBlog.com



## flower factor

A LIFESTYLE BLOG FROM ABOUTFLOWERS.COM

- Decorating
- Love
- Entertaining
- Prom
- Gifting
- Weddings
- Relationships/  
Friendship
- Holidays
- Floral Trends
- Gardening
- Flower & Plant  
Care

AboutFlowersBlog.com

# flower factor

A LIFESTYLE BLOG FROM ABOUTFLOWERS.COM



## Blogs for Valentine's Day (Feb. 1-15):

- Order Valentine's Day Flowers Early
- Plants to Say 'I Love You'
- Plans for a Romantic 3-Day Weekend
- Unique Rose Designs
- Best Bets for Last-Minute Shopping
- Caring For Your Valentine's Day Blooms

AboutFlowersBlog.com



## Links to all social media platforms



FOLLOW US



florist directory

aboutflowers

AboutFlowersBlog.com





## Build Content: Sharable Facebook Graphics

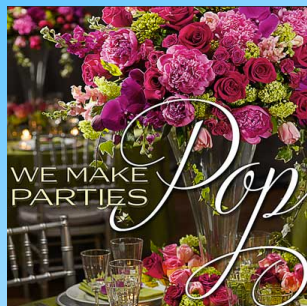
Create holiday reminders



[safnow.org/facebook-graphics](http://safnow.org/facebook-graphics)



## Build Content: Sharable Facebook Graphics



[safnow.org/facebook-graphics](http://safnow.org/facebook-graphics)



## **SAF' s Guide to Social Media**

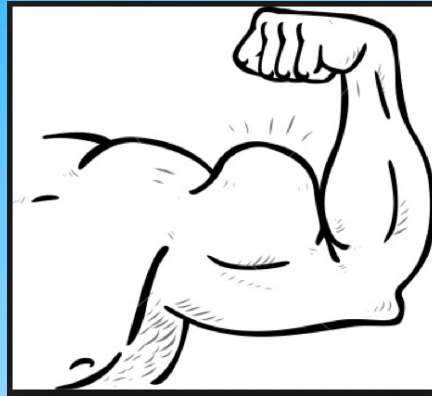
**[safnow.org/SocialMediaGuide](http://safnow.org/SocialMediaGuide)**



**PR BootCamp Powerpoint  
(expanded)  
available for  
SAF members at  
[safnow.org/PRBootCamp](http://safnow.org/PRBootCamp)**



## **SAF's PR Boot Camp:**



**Flex Your PR Muscle**



## **QUESTIONS?**

**Please enter any questions  
in the  
Questions Control Panel**



**Thank you for participating!**

**More questions?**

**Email: [jsparks@safnow.org](mailto:jsparks@safnow.org)**

**\*\*\*\*\***

**[safnow.org/PRBootCamp](http://safnow.org/PRBootCamp)**

**[safnow.org/VDay](http://safnow.org/VDay)**

**[safnow.org/facebook-graphics](http://safnow.org/facebook-graphics)**

**[safnow.org/SocialMediaGuide](http://safnow.org/SocialMediaGuide)**

**[AboutFlowers.com](http://AboutFlowers.com)**

**[AboutFlowersBlog.com](http://AboutFlowersBlog.com)**



**NEXT UP!**

**One Day Profit Blast**

**January 25 (Seattle)**

**Congressional Action Days**

**March 9-10 (Washington, DC)**

**Retail Growth Solutions**

**June 7-8 (Hartford, CT)**

**SAF Convention**

**Sept. 9-12 (Amelia Island, FL)**

**[safnow.org/events](http://safnow.org/events)**

