

Marketing/ Public Relations Conference Call Notes  
November 12, 2009

1. Introductions of participants
2. Public relations support from the Texas Exes– Erin Huddleston, Director of Public Relations & Diane Powell, Chair, Texas Exes PR Committee
  - a. Media contacts
    - i. Can provide list of media contacts within the state of Texas
    - ii. Can help identify media contacts outside of Texas
  - b. Press releases
    - i. Can help draft press releases before and after events
    - ii. Sample press releases sent to chapters/networks when an alum from that area has been honored by the Texas Exes
      1. Can personalize and send out to local media
  - c. PR Committee
    - i. Texas Exes has a PR committee that meets regularly
    - ii. Committee members are here to help chapters as they try to gain press for their events
    - iii. Can also help chapters find a PR chair for their chapter board
  - d. PR Toolkit
    - i. Includes sample press releases, tips for getting press for your chapter, etc
    - ii. <http://www.texasexes.org/userdocs/chapterprtoolkit2009.pdf>
3. Tips for getting events covered locally
  - a. Set calendar of events early to take advantage of local community calendars
    - i. Deadlines may be several months in advance
  - b. Take photos at events and send them to the local paper/magazine with a caption
    - i. Great for post event coverage
    - ii. Creates awareness about the chapter
    - iii. Do not need to hire a photographer, a volunteer can serve as a photographer
    - iv. Try to take diverse shots
  - c. Take advantage of free publicity offered by media
    - i. Before an event
      1. Look for a hook or unique angle to get your event covered
        - a. Why your event should be covered over other events in the area
      2. Plan ahead – send the release a couple of weeks before the events
      3. Media alert – what to send to the media if you are trying to get them to attend and cover the event
        - a. Needs to cover the who, what, where, why and when

4. Press release – letting the press know what is happening/what has happened
    - a. Use photos with press release
    - b. We have a general Texas Exes scholarship press release that we can share
    - c. Keep press releases brief
    - d. If you need demographic data about your area, we can provide that
  5. Communicate with media electronically or via fax
  6. Follow up with a phone call
  7. Find reporters in your community who have a UT connection
    - a. Use them as an entry point
      - i. More likely to help get coverage of an event or put you in touch with right people
    - ii. After the event
      1. Send a post event release talking about the success of the event or a photo with caption
    - iii. Radio – Talk/News radio stations are in great need of filling time
      1. Contact your local stations to see if your chapter president could do an interview on a morning show about an event or if they might want to do a live remote from the actual event.
      2. Radio stations and TV stations may consider being a media sponsor of an event.
4. Tips for marketing events – Erin Naman, Director of Chapters
- a. Utilize all methods of communication
    - i. Email
      1. Good communication tool for all events
      2. Texas Exes emails to go both members and non-members
      3. Email policies
        - a. Give 2 business day notice
        - b. Chapter/network emails are sent out on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays
    - ii. Paper mailings
      1. Chartered chapters get 2 per year so use wisely and plan ahead
        - a. 1 mailing to members only and 1 to both members and non-members
      2. Mailing can promote more than one event – can be a calendar of upcoming events
    - iii. Websites
      1. Great place to include more detailed information about an event, can direct alumni to the website on emails and paper mailings
      2. Important to keep websites up to date

3. Great place to post photos and post event reports
  - a. Show them what they missed
4. Contact Erin or Courtney if interested in starting Texas Exes hosted site
  - a. Chapter/network responsible for content and keeping it current
- iv. Take advantage of online calendars in the community
  1. local newspapers, magazines, etc
  - v. Promote events through multiple avenues – increases the chances of alumni seeing the message
- b. Important to have a clear, consistent message
  - i. Each message should have an intended result:
    1. Inform
    2. Interest
    3. Involve
    4. Invite
    5. Inspire
  - c. Make sure to always include:
    - i. Date
    - ii. Time
    - iii. Location
    - iv. Contact/RSVP
      1. Always include a point of contact, even if there is not a RSVP
    - v. Cost
  - d. Timing – make sure you leave enough time to promote the event
    - i. If there is an RSVP deadline make sure the invites arrive with enough time for them to RSVP
    - ii. Paper mailings should go out 4 to 6 weeks in advance
      1. Can follow up with an email reminder
5. Social networking –
  - a. Many chapters have their own Facebook groups/pages
    - i. Great place to upload event photos
    - ii. Designate several administrators from the chapter board to maintain the group
    - iii. Can post events and take rsvp's for events
  - b. Groups vs Pages (for more on this go to <http://mashable.com/2009/05/27/facebook-page-vs-group/>)
    - i. Similarities:
      1. Both provide the same basic tools – place to post events, notes, photos, etc
      2. Can message members with both but is done in different ways
        - a. Groups - messages send out via their Facebook in-box
        - b. Pages – messages can be sent out 2 ways

- i. Posted as a status update which appears on their front page like any status update
    - ii. Sent out as a Page update which appears as a link in the top-right corner of each fan's front page
  - ii. Differences
    - 1. Membership
      - a. In general, anyone can become a fan of a Page; membership of Groups can be more tightly restricted
    - 2. Admin status
      - a. Groups – you will be identified in your postings and communications by your real name
      - b. Page – your personal identity will be anonymous
- c. Advertising tab in Facebook will tell you the number of UT alumni by city that are registered with Facebook
  - i. Tab is on lower right hand side of the page
  - ii. Will have to put in info like you are buying an ad to get to the information but you can cancel the ad
  - iii. Buying ad space on Facebook may be a good way to reach your audience
- d. Texas Exes Facebook Application
  - i. The Texas Exes have their own application
    - 1. A calendar of events listing all chapter events and an events search feature by zip code
      - a. Ex: Alum in San Francisco could visit the application to see all of the events going on in San Francisco
      - b. Chapter events entered into our database will show up on the calendar, as long as your chapter website is hosted by the Texas Exes
    - 2. A news function with Texas Exes, UT, and Athletics news
    - 3. A class notes section
    - 4. A discussion forum
    - 5. A classifieds posting
- e. Twitter, Flickr, LinkedIn and all others
  - i. Twitter allows chapters to micro-blog about upcoming events and anything else chapter related. Messages are pushed to followers of your Twitter account in real time.
  - ii. Flickr is a photo sharing site that can be used to share photos of your chapter events.
  - iii. YouTube is a video sharing site. The Texas Exes have a channel that we use to upload videos from events and educational videos about programs, like the scholarship program and the student chapter. The site is relatively easy to use and your chapter can

purchase a Flip video camera for less than \$200 and shoot some decent photos.

- iv. LinkedIn is good for professional networking and there is a group for chapter leaders that the Texas Exes has created.
- v. Other options – do some exploring and see what social media tools are most useful to your chapter!