

Representing your Agency

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Yakima Fire Department



and.....Beyond

Course outline

- Who is your department's spokesperson
- Basic steps to understand the media
- Turn a cold call from the media into a home run!
- Setting expectations – on scene
- Media timelines
- The people behind the camera
- Shooting your own photos and video
- Social Media engagement
- Learn to be a good speaker
- Q&A

Introductions

- Your Name
- Organization
- Position
- Experience as a PIO
- Experience with Media?

Why is the Media so important to you?

- Their media coverage of your event / incident / interview can span the entire Northwest during the initial broadcast and is global within 2-3 hours after that.
- If you get their interest to run your story, you are getting free coverage and typically they ask, “is there anything else you would like to add?”. That is your moment to talk about (Fire Safety, Smoke Alarms, Water hazards, etc.)
- An example for a 30 second TV spot in Portland is roughly \$9,000.00
- A single add in the Yakima-Herald quoted from an email,

Jeff,

Hello. I wanted to let you know that we are running our Home & Garden section on April 29th in the Yakima Herald Republic and May 5th in the El Sol de Yakima. The deadline to be included is April 20th. This year it is running in tabloid format instead of full pages in the Yakima Herald Republic, easier to pull out and keep for longer shelf life.

Sizes & Prices:

Half page (8.833”x5.18” or 4.354”x10.5”) - \$765

Qtr page (4.354”x5.18”) - \$395

If you would like to be included in this edition – just let me know.

How much is that front page story worth to your organization?

Engage the Media

- Set up a time for either a Media event at your organization or go to them.
- You have expectations, right? The Media has expectations, right? So why not figure it out BEFORE an event or incident?
- One thing to remember, each of us have a job to do, show them your best and they will come to you for questions and answers, even for information outside of your organization.
- If the media asks about an incident that you were not involved in, help them out by getting them to a contact that can help them.

Media day with TRT



Understanding the person behind the camera

Realize reporters are people just like you and I. families, kids, attend sporting events, etc.

Ask questions about their job, offer to buy a coffee and get to know more about who are interacting or working with.

Show a concern for their safety at incidents, explain what and why you do things, remember these guys have not spent years “overhauling” a fire.



Typical deadlines for a day of stories (Television)

- 07:00 – 13:00 Seeking out a story for the day.
- 14:00 – 16:30 build the story to go for that evening's story board.
- Breaking News – all bets are off, your story can be lost due to a big disaster.
- EXAMPLE: Radio – If you respond to an incident overnight or early morning, call the radio station for a live feed. Otherwise if you wait, by 10 am, that is old news and off the roll for the day.
- ACTUAL INCIDENT: Sept. 3 2015, a WA State DOC officer gets shot while working with the PNW violent crimes task force attempting to locate a suspect wanted in a drive- by shooting. [Yakima standoff ends peacefully](#) [Washington Times Article](#)



NBC Right Now
KNBC 25

B91

Cold Calling for a story

- Ask questions
- Purpose of the story?
- Their idea may not be what they are actually looking for?
- Set up a time for the interview – why?
- Handouts
- Statistics





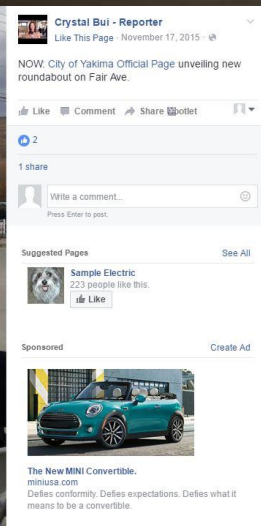
Capt. Jeff Pfaff

Yakima Fire Dept.



Just out in front of the Fire Engine, the grand opening of a new roundabout is being announced by the Mayor.

During the announcement, she was able to video a perspective from inside the Engine which drove in the loop a few times that was part of the grand opening celebration.



[response times video](#)



Early morning fire burns two and claims pet



<http://www.nbcrightnow.com/clip/12715479/early-morning-mobile-home-fire-leaves-a-couple-with-serious-burns>

What can Social Media do for you?

This Facebook post was done on May 4th 2016 at 8:27 am. By 9:15 am, our local ABC affiliate reporter calls me at 09:15 am.

Eugene says, “ I saw your Facebook post and would like to do a story on the IFF Day if you have time this morning.”

09:45 am, I make contact with our Training Captain and have Eugene meet us at 10:30.

Eugene gets two stories in one, a seasoned Fire Officer and a Recruit class all in the same place.

Captain Langbell and the Recruits spend 10 minutes with interviews and 30 minutes filming basic tasks of our recruits and our Training Captain.

Eugene asks to come back in the afternoon to get some B-roll footage and is there from 1:30 until 2:30.

City of Yakima Fire Department

Page Notifications Insights Publishing Tools

5★ Excellent customer service! The Yakima FD PIO was knowledgeable, personable and professional. As a "tourist," I could no... See More
June 1, 2015 · 🌐

👍 Like 💬 Comment 📄

Tell people what you think
★★★★★

PEOPLE ALSO LIKE

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Fire Station
- Chillum-Adelphi Volunteer Fire Dep...
Fire Station
- Hazle Twp. Fire/Rescue Station 10
Fire Station

Fire Stations in Yakima, Washington

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- KAPP-KVEW Local News
- KNDO-TV

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City of Yakima Fire Department shared International Firefighters' Day's photo.
May 4 at 8:27am · 🌐

May 4th is International Firefighter Day. Keep the men and women in your thoughts today that are on duty protecting our citizens and those that have sacrificed their life to protect the communities they serve.
THANK YOU Yakima for supporting your Fire Department!

International Firefighters' Day
May 3 at 3:43pm · 🌐

International Firefighters' Day (IFFD) - May 4.

Firefighters dedicate their lives to the protection of life and property. Sometimes that dedication is in the form of countless hours volunteered over many years, in others it is many selfless years working in the industry. In all cases, it risks the ultimate sacrifice of a firefighter's life.

THANK YOU for your dedication,
THANK YOU for your commitment,
THANK YOU for your sacrifice.

THANK YOU for protecting our lives,
THANK YOU for protecting our communities.

THANK YOU for being there for us every hour of the day,
THANK YOU for being there for us every day of the year,
THANK YOU for risking your lives.



[International Firefighter Day](#)



City of Yakima Social Media Policy

Purpose

City of Yakima departments, divisions, offices, etc. may utilize existing and emerging social media tools to provide information to and interact with the public. Social media is broadly defined as internet-based communications technology that provides immediacy, interactivity, and the sharing of information across multiple platforms.

The City encourages the use of social media, where appropriate, to further the goals of the City and the missions of its departments, divisions, offices, etc.

The City of Yakima has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is “spoken” on behalf of the City through social media. This policy establishes guidelines for the use of social media by City departments, divisions, offices, etc.

Policy

1. Use of any and all social media by City of Yakima departments, divisions, offices, etc. must receive prior approval from the City’s Communications & Public Affairs Director and will be subject to review by the City Manager.
2. The City of Yakima’s website (yakimawa.gov) will remain the City’s primary and predominant internet presence.
3. The best, most appropriate City of Yakima uses of social media tools fall generally into two categories:
 - A. As channels for disseminating time-sensitive information as quickly as possible (example: emergency information).
 - B. As communications/outreach tools which increase the City’s ability to provide messages to the widest possible audience.
4. Unless otherwise approved by the Communications & Public Affairs Director, content posted to official City of Yakima social media sites will first be posted on the City’s official website(s).
5. Whenever possible, content posted to official City of Yakima social media sites should contain links directing users back to the City’s official website(s) for in-depth information, forms, documents, or online services necessary to conduct business with the City of Yakima.
6. Designated department, division, office, etc. staff will be responsible for the content and upkeep of any official social media sites their department, division, office, etc. may create. All postings and comments made to official City social media sites will be approved by the Communications & Public Affairs Director or other assigned managerial staff.



On Scene PIO - Considerations

Do you have a go kit?

- **Gather information quickly!**
- **IC**
- **Check with Investigator**
- **First in**
- **Identify areas to do interviews that will not affect the investigation**
- **Stay clear of the hot zone**

For the Media

- Create a location to be accessible and visible
- Out of the hazard area
- Good location with the least amount of noise.



The PIO – Media Partnership

What the PIO wants:

- A conduit to the public
- Respect for incident perimeter (no interference with operations)
- Accurate and fair reporting

What the Media Wants:

- Access
- Prompt answers to queries
- Fair treatment
- Respect for deadlines
- Timely updates and corrections to information (especially during evolving incidents)



Media Needs at the Scene

Access to:

- You
- The Scene
- Newsmakers

Basics:

- Explanation of the big picture
- Respect for deadlines
- Updates as quickly as possible

Logistics:

- Where can they set up
- Location of nearest food, lodging, fuel (for long term incidents)



[Yakima Herald Coverage](#)

PIO Needs at the Scene

- Access to workers, leadership, legal staff, Incident Command
- Involvement in all management briefings
- Trust of coworkers and management

- Where is a PIO in the ICS system?

Basics of a Press Conference

- What do you need?

- Podium?
- Background?
- Flag(s)?
- Lighting?
- Heat / Shade?
- Who is in the conference?
- Who does the speaking?
- What are your talking points?
- How do you keep the conference on track?

Watch this conference and we will discuss

[Tuscon News Now- Burrow Fire AM Update](#)

[iPhone](#)

[Alamo Fire](#)

Interviews

If you don't take the time to talk to the media.....

They will find an eye witness or resident expert!

[Casa Linda Apartment Fire](#)

[Dodson Interview](#)

Media Advisory / News Release

- Do you send media information “Press Release” after every significant fire? MCI? Incident response?
- Do you send media information “Advisory” when you do something? Because you know we are the best at our profession, right?
- Media releases can be used to inform of the big fire last night, to get your recruit graduation, pancake feed, training event, etc. “scheduled” in advance.
- These advisories can be set up to notify your (Board, Council, Commission, Chief’s) along with the media. This gives them a heads up if the reporter calls lets say..... the Mayor.

[YFD Media Advisory](#)

Writing a news release

- The first thing most reporters will see when they get a news release is who it's from. The standard news release will usually have a logo or large, printed text at the very top indicating the department's name, the name of the city or governmental agency, a street address and general phone numbers. (Representing your Agency)
- Always have your name and pertinent contact information or the person that will be following up the release listed in your release. If a reporter has another question or needs clarification, you should be easy to find. The date of your release should also be prominently displayed.

The Body

- Reporters generally want answers to six basic questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and maybe How? You may or may not know the answers to the last two questions, or they may not be relevant, but the first four are pretty standard for any news release. Inverted Pyramid
- You will usually get your facts from people in your own department, and occasionally from other departments. Regardless of your sources, double-check those facts. Sending out news releases that are factually inaccurate will damage your credibility, and the credibility of your entire department.

Release Con't.

Ending Your News Release

There isn't much to this, but many PIOs will signify the end of the release with symbols traditionally used by reporters, such as ### – End –. Some PIOs, myself included end their releases with their name and contact information.

Sending Out Your News Release

- The electronic revolution has certainly had its impact on PIOs.
- Sent via email
- Many outlets
- Proof read! Proof read! Proof read!! Before hitting send

- Send a release or have it posted on your site? Thoughts?

Questions? Thoughts? Ideas?

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