

INSIDE INFORMATION

PSA efforts with social media help reach precise groups

WHILE PSA INITIATIVES usually focus on TV and radio ads, a social media component can also help reach their viewership goals. Although a Web site's audience might be smaller than TV's, the viewership is typically more precise.

"You can target your message to blogs that have content in line with your message," says Chris Cavello, VP of Internet and specialized media at WestGlen Communications. "You're reaching influencers [and] putting [the PSA] into a platform... people are using on a daily basis."

Blogs are a great platform for PSAs because they are "trusted online news sources" for visitors, who often return there because of the niche coverage, Cavello adds.

Also, PSAs with social media tools, like embedded links or interactive

KEY POINTS:

- Targeting new media with a PSA effort can help content and messaging reach a passionate, niche audience
- Links to audio, video, and text spread more information that can be gleaned from a 30-second PSA spot
- Social media capabilities allow audiences to respond to a PSA quickly and share that information

news releases, present more information than a TV spot, says Larry Thomas, COO of Medialink.

"A PSA is a 30-second spot to highlight an issue," he says. "But these organizations need to disseminate a lot of information and, in many cases, drive fundraising."

Web sites and social media outlets also capture an engaged audience while it looks for information about a specific issue. Therefore, visitors can act quickly on a call to action, says Maya Burghardt, SVP and Los Angeles GM for On the Scene Productions.

"This takes all of the lag time out of the equation," she says. "The PSA is in front of you. It puts you right there in this immediacy."

The viral nature of social media can also be a compelling tool to reach activist audiences that care deeply about issues, Thomas adds.

"Social media is driven by word of mouth, and people are extremely passionate about the topics covered by a PSA," he says. "Passion leads to more conversations." ■

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