



Leadership Donelson-Hermitage Public Relations Plan

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Last Reviewed:	October 2015

L'Evate is a community-based organization that provides participants with insights into how our community functions. Our leadership programs are intended to enhance leadership abilities, foster opportunities, and improve the quality of life in our community.

L'Evate was founded in 1998 with the support of the Donelson Hermitage Chamber of Commerce and several community businesses. . The original class of 1999 was hand-selected by the original L'Evate board of directors, and the class was charged with the responsibility of getting the leadership program up and running. L'Evate is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, not-for-profit organization led by an Executive Director. Today, applicants for L'Evate go through a rigorous application process, including a written application and in-person interviews with a selection committee.

As L'Evate has increased in size and visibility over the years, each program has improved and provided greater value to the community. Each year brings an increase in media exposure, program quality, and community impact. Consistent efforts to market this program and enhance positive exposure remain a top priority.

PR Plan Objective

The main objective of L'Evate's PR plan is to identify and capitalize on opportunities to increase the organization's visibility and reputation within the community. This plan considers the full year ahead but requires flexibility as changes occur throughout the year and should be reviewed annually. The messaging opportunities contained within this PR plan should always be based on L'Evate's annual Strategic Plan and need to succinctly align with the organization's strategic objectives, as they are the backbone of the year's communication activities.

Strategies

L'Evate has adopted four key strategies to address public relations. Each of these strategies will focus on specific audiences and use appropriate mechanisms for communications.

1. **Media Communications:** L'Evate will use multiple media outlets to increase exposure for the organization's events and activities.
2. **Relationship Building:** L'Evate will continue to create and maintain positive relationships with the Chamber of Commerce and public and organization officials in the Donelson-Hermitage area so they may fully understand and appreciate the many contributions of L'Evate to the community.
3. **General Communications:** L'Evate will regularly communicate its activities and accomplishments to its alumni, sponsors, potential members and key audiences.
4. **Crisis Communications:** L'Evate will provide vital, accurate information in a timely fashion to all key audiences in the event of a crisis involving the organization, and will take

appropriate and timely actions during a crisis situation to bring an end to the crisis as soon as possible.

Strategy Tools & Tactics

1. Media Communications

- The Marketing Committee will develop an annual calendar of potential media opportunities (L'Evate special events, special projects, class graduations, and other significant events determined by the Executive Director, Board Chair, and Marketing Chair). This calendar will also include general communication opportunities and due dates for items listed below, such as alumni testimonials, annual column submission, media outreach, etc.
- The Marketing Committee will create news releases or media advisories for the events on this calendar and handle the distribution of these communications in a timely manner.
- The Marketing Committee will carefully research and build a database of local key reporters (or update the database annually if one already exists). This database should contain publication details and journalist contact information as well as the value of the publication to help L'Evate reach key audiences.
- Each year, L'Evate will develop testimonials regarding L'Evate from its prominent alumni. The testimonials may be featured on the website, in newsletters, in media releases, on letters inviting applications to L'Evate, etc. L'Evate will feed stories regarding prominent alumni to area media outlets as appropriate.
- The Marketing committee will draft at least one column each year for submission to the Tennessean.
- The Marketing committee will conclude each L'Evate class year with an annual Press Release; this release will recap L'Evate history and highlight the respective class' project goals and significant community accomplishments.

2. Relationship Building

- The Marketing Committee will forward favorable news items about L'Evate to public officials.
- Annually, the Marketing Committee will report significant accomplishments of L'Evate to public officials and to Community leaders. Such reports might contain the new class members, the projects of the previous class, etc.
- L'Evate will have a presence at Chamber functions.

3. General Communication

- All media releases will be shared with LDH alumni.
- L'Evate will disseminate copies of favorable media coverage to L'Evate alumni.
- Encourage Alumni to include L'Evate on their bio/resume.
- All official communications of L'Evate will include the L'Evatgr website, mission statement and tagline.

4. Crisis Communication

- Refer to separate "Crisis Communication Plan" document for details

Evaluation

In September of each year, the Marketing Chair and Executive Director will evaluate the effectiveness and implementation of the previous PR plan. As part of that evaluation, L'Evate will consider the impact this plan had on key audiences and outcomes achieved (or not). The amount of effort necessary to implement this plan, media outreach, return on investment, amount of coverage and key audience exposure should also be considered.

An overview of the year will be provided to the incoming Marketing Committee, including hits and misses. The new Marketing Committee will create/update the annual communication calendar in September of each year and use that calendar as a roadmap for the upcoming term.