

The SPIN Project is proud to bring you *Whose Media? Our Media!*, a toolkit designed to help media activists develop and successfully execute their own communications campaigns from the ground up.

USING THE MEDIA TO REFORM THE MEDIA

MEDIA ACTIVISM is broadening and strengthening a mosaic of voices in many ways—from campaigns to limit media consolidation to efforts to preserve net neutrality, from struggles to promote community radio to advances in wireless access and other means of ensuring that independent voices are heard. Common to the many facets of media reform is an understanding of the unparalleled power of media to influence public opinion through the stories it tells about our communities.

At the SPIN Project, we believe that one key to reforming the media is shaping these stories. By employing the tools of public relations—strategic communications planning, framing, messaging and creative campaign tactics—we can use the media to reform the media, spreading the word about the need for a better media system and the means to get there.

The Message About the Media

In these pages, you'll find best practices and inspiring case studies of media activists who have used strategic communications to impact coverage, win new supporters and forge alliances with activists in other movements. You'll find tips for:

- framing media reform issues to appeal to deeply held public values.
- creating messages that make your target audience sit up and notice.
- harnessing new media to change the way we collaborate and activate.

Media justice and media reform issues, while profoundly resonant for activists, can still be hard for the average media consumer to understand. That's why this toolkit is intended to give advocates, grassroots organizers, policy specialists, community leaders and their allies the tools they need to help shape public opinion in favor of a democratic media system.

It's an exciting time for media activism. Millions of Americans are making their voices heard against media consolidation and in favor of net neutrality and expanded low power FM radio. Yet the struggle continues to wrest the media from monolithic megacompanies that suppress divergent and diverse voices. *Whose Media? Our Media!* is the SPIN Project's contribution to this vibrant and growing movement.

Navigating this Toolkit

The toolkit is organized into five parts.

- Section One introduces strategic communications planning and provides a detailed sample communications plan.
- Section Two focuses on framing, messaging and storytelling for media reform and media justice, including framing how-to's, tailoring messages for your audience and tips for creating a compelling campaign narrative.
- Section Three offers a host of creative ways to broadcast your message, providing the basics and more on press releases, pitching, working with reporters and crafting a persuasive argument in an opinion editorial (Op Ed).
- Section Four explores the ever-changing world of Web 2.0, offering insights into tools that can help organizers work smarter, activate their base and reach whole new communities of potential supporters.
- Section Five delves into the possibilities and realities of collaborations between researchers and activists, and the growing importance of ethnic media. The section ends with an exploration of funding issues within media reform/media justice.

About the SPIN Project

The SPIN Project, a program of the Communications Leadership Institute, engages nonprofit communications specialists who work with grassroots groups and progressive organizations across the nation to build their communications capacity. SPIN helps organizations increase their effectiveness in influencing debate, shaping public opinion and garnering positive media attention. The SPIN Project honors the multiracial, multicultural, diverse constituencies of the groups we train.

The SPIN Project works with a broad range of organizing, advocacy and policy organizations, all of which work to strengthen democracy and public participation. Our clients typically focus on issues concerning civil rights, human rights, social justice and the environment. We work towards a stronger democracy in which people enhance and actively participate in the public discourse.

To best meet the needs of our clients, we offer:

- Communications Audits
- Communications Strategy Development
- Skills Building and Leadership Development
- Communications Coaching
- Organizational Communications Infrastructure
- Campaign Support
- Peer Networking
- Customized Communications Conferences
- Publications

We invite you to visit our Web site at www.spinproject.org and contact us if you would like to discuss our services.