

# Bucking Tobacco Sponsorship at Rodeos

*Strategies for Media Advocacy*

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## Background

### The Purpose of this Guide

This media advocacy guide is designed to be a starting point with ideas for bringing public attention to the problem of tobacco sponsorship at rodeos and related events. It is a tool for community members, their organizations, and their allies in county or municipal health departments, whose goal is to convince county fair boards, rodeo committees and their communities not to accept tobacco industry sponsorship. After a brief description of this guide's sponsor, the Tobacco-Free Events Project, and the media advocacy approach, the guide presents a condensed history of tobacco sponsorship where we examine the industry's motives for sponsoring rodeos. Then we leap into the heart of the matter: framing. Here we offer reinvigorated arguments for reframing rodeo sponsorship in the tradition of tobacco control. The nuts and bolts of media advocacy follow: developing overall strategy, message strategy, and access strategy. Finally, the Appendix is packed with worksheets and samples to make your job easier.

### The Tobacco-Free Events Project

For decades the tobacco industry has sponsored sporting events, building relationships with the sport's governing body, its athletes, organizers, suppliers, and media contacts—one component of the industry's extensive marketing programs that include many other entertainment and community events. The Tobacco-Free Events Project (TFEP) is a statewide effort in California addressing tobacco promotion to and use by young adults, including chew or spit tobacco and cigarettes, at California rodeos and related events such as rodeo-themed “bar nights.” This includes sponsorship activities at rodeos such as tobacco promotion in “adult-only” sampling booths and outdoor advertising using tobacco company names and brand names; advertising that is linked to a rodeo in the surrounding community before, during or after a rodeo; and industry-sponsored parties that are linked to a rodeo and involve free tobacco samples and other marketing activities at bars and other adult venues in the surrounding community before, during or after a rodeo. The TFEP targets decision-makers who can influence tobacco sponsorship of rodeos and related events, including rodeo organizing committees, business owners in the communities surrounding rodeos, and community members concerned about tobacco, with the goal of *involving them in changing the environment* that encourages and permits the use of cigarettes and chew/spit.

Already there has been some success in countering tobacco promotion at a few small local rodeos in California. However, the public health response to tobacco promotion at California rodeos and related bar night activities is in its early stages, particularly regarding large-scale rodeos.

The TFEP has developed a three-pronged pilot project, including (1) a media advocacy guide; (2) a public engagement campaign; and (3) a community-based policy development campaign, with prototype materials and methods to eliminate tobacco sponsorship from large California rodeos sponsored by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA),

Professional Bull Riders, Inc. (PBR), and National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA), and related events such as rodeo-themed bar nights.

This media advocacy guide is one of the first of the prototype materials to be developed by the project. The media advocacy guide, the public engagement campaign (developed by the Public Media Center) and the successes and lessons learned from the pilot projects that implement them will be shared with tobacco control advocates across the state who would like to pursue similar projects. Although this media advocacy guide is rodeo-specific, the principles and tactics contained here might also apply to efforts to combat other tobacco industry sponsorships (golf, arts, etc.), especially community events.

## **The Task: Reframe from Individual Problem to Social Issue**

Changing policy regarding tobacco company sponsorship of rodeos presents complex communication and community organizing challenges. The purpose of this guide is to provide a strategic framework using media advocacy approaches that can help community organizers and policy advocates meet this challenge.

*Being successful in the policy realm means paying attention to the news.*

Being successful in the policy realm means paying attention to the news. This is because the news largely determines what issues we collectively think about, how we think about them, and what kinds of alternatives are

considered viable. The main strategy advocates have available to influence news coverage about public health issues is media advocacy. Media advocacy is the strategic use of mass media to support community organizing and advance healthy public policy.<sup>1</sup> Media advocacy is the logical communication strategy to support needed policy advocacy in part because it involves the public as proactive citizens who can take action in the political realm to enact healthy public policy.

Media advocacy differs in many ways from traditional public health campaigns because it focuses on changing environments in which people make their health decisions rather than focusing on individual behavior change. It is most marked by an emphasis on:

1. linking public health and social problems to inequities in social arrangements rather than to flaws in the individual;
2. changing public policy rather than personal health behavior;
3. focusing primarily on reaching opinion leaders and policy makers rather than on those who have the problem (the traditional audience of public health communication campaigns);
4. working with groups to increase participation and amplify their voices rather than providing health behavior change messages; and
5. having a primary goal of reducing the power gap rather than just filling the information gap.<sup>2</sup>

## **The Media Advocacy Approach**

Before we delve in, here are just a few thoughts to put media advocacy in context.

### ***Be Mindful of Social Norms***

The media advocacy tactics we describe are not necessarily one-size-fits-all. Since every community is different, not every idea presented in this guide will be appropriate.

Local media advocates will have to choose from among the ideas here, or use them as a starting point for creating their own. Some communities are used to conflict and protest and wouldn't think it unusual to read about a health group taking a controversial stand on a local issue. Other communities—especially smaller communities where individuals are much more likely to know each other personally—may not be used to such controversy. How your arguments are framed and the media advocacy strategies you develop must fit the expectations of the community as well as the need to attract news attention.

### ***When Opportunity Knocks, Answer***

Because media advocacy relies on generating news attention, it is important to think opportunistically. Tobacco control advocates have long been successful at taking advantage of opportunities to draw media attention to their issue. During the bicentennial of the signing of the Bill of Rights, for example, Philip Morris paid for a national tour of an original copy of the document to be shown to school groups and other citizens. What could have been a public relations-coup for the tobacco company turned into a victory for tobacco control when advocates decided to take advantage of the opportunity. Instead of letting Philip Morris dominate the framing of the news story as the tour continued throughout the country, tobacco control advocates staged protests to draw media attention to Philip Morris' strategy. Instead of looking patriotic, the company was framed to look manipulative and exploitive. Behind the slogan, "Bill of Rights—Yes; Philip Morris—No" advocates generated enough negative media attention to convince the company to shorten the tour by several months. While this guide may help you plan your media activities, you will need to be prepared to be opportunistic in taking advantage of unique situations that present themselves in your community.

### ***In a Long-term Battle, Persistence Pays***

In the process of creating a communications strategy, it's easy to get caught up in the idea that this message will be a "knock-out"; that it will be so effective that there will simply be no good response to it. The public will see the light, agree with you, and tobacco will be a problem no more.

Sadly, it doesn't work that way.

## *Messages and media strategies build over time.*

Messages and media strategies build over time. The first time someone said, "Your right to smoke ends where my nose begins," they didn't create immediate demand for clean indoor air policies. In fact, people

talked about this need for about 20 years before there were any places that banned smoking. But, with steady effort and accumulation of messages, policy development, and mobilizing supporters, the idea grew and clean indoor air spaces are increasingly the norm.

Media advocacy is part of a long-term strategy that combines careful policy analysis, message development, framing, community mobilization, and advocacy with other resources to bring community-based pressure to bear on forces undermining our health, in this case, a formidable foe, the tobacco industry.

Media advocacy doesn't get the job done by itself, but it can be a powerful tool to accelerate and amplify your efforts to eliminate tobacco sponsorship from rodeos.

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## A Brief History of Tobacco Sponsorship: Why Do They Do It?<sup>3</sup>

Tobacco industry sponsorship of rodeos is nothing new—the industry has sponsored rodeos since at least the early 1970s. R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company (RJR) was the earliest and heaviest sponsor of rodeo (with its Winston brand) until the mid-1980s, when U.S. Smokeless Tobacco Company (USST, makers of Copenhagen and Skoal spit tobacco, formerly U.S. Tobacco Company) entered an exclusive sponsorship arrangement with the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association and became the major tobacco rodeo sponsor. USST also sponsors Professional Bull Rider and National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association events. Brown & Williamson and Philip Morris have each explored rodeo sponsorship as well.

### Why do Tobacco Companies Want to Sponsor Rodeos?

Previously secret tobacco industry documents illustrate why the companies have sponsored rodeos and exactly whom they have sought to reach with their sponsorship. RJR documents, for example, specify many of the desired outcomes the company sought from its association with rodeos. These outcomes include:

**TARGETABILITY** – The event provides demographic and geographic targeting opportunities. Rodeo was deemed a particularly effective way to reach young males of lower socioeconomic status.

**IMAGE ENHANCEMENT** – Sponsorship of rodeos increases awareness and positive associations with the brand. When fans are very devoted to the sport, they are even more aware and appreciative of sponsorship. The brand acquires “transfer” imagery from the sport.

**EXCLUSIVITY** – The tobacco companies desire a dominant presence at the event (e.g. portable scoreboards). A permanent presence at the venue is even better (such as painting the arena company colors) with exclusive sponsorship and sampling rights. Even other non-tobacco sponsors are viewed as competition.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANSION** – The most attractive events are frequent, well attended, with merchandising potential (fans purchase logo items to show enthusiasm for the sport), and opportunities for “tie in” promotions in the community.

**PRESS COVERAGE.** Ideally, sponsored events have ongoing press coverage with regular writers and publications devoted to the sport.

Industry documents reveal that the tobacco companies carefully studied the impact rodeo sponsorship was having on their marketing efforts. They found rodeo sponsorship increased the awareness of their brands and generated positive feelings toward their brands. U.S. Smokeless Tobacco used rodeo promotions and “sampling” (giving out free samples) to attract new users of Skoal chewing tobacco.

In addition to enhancing their brand imagery, tobacco companies benefited from rodeo sponsorship in other ways. Print stories about rodeo sponsorships portrayed the tobacco company in a positive light. To help enhance this publicity, the companies have spared no expense. For example, the 1982 Winston Rodeo Series included a special media guide that included an instructional booklet on the sport, bios and photos of the cowboys, press conferences, special press tours, prepared news stories and feature stories, cowboy head shots, fact sheets for PRCA announcers, video tapes, and a media calf roping event. They planned to place stories in in-flight magazines, regional magazines, national sport magazines, business papers, and attempted to generate a special news feature in the *New York Times*.

Tobacco companies also used their presence at promotional events to generate “grassroots” support for their legislative agenda during the 1990s. A 1995 “ACCESS”<sup>4</sup> status report documents public relations activities and petition signing at tobacco sponsored events opposing FDA tobacco regulations which would have banned all brand name sponsorship.

The importance of rodeo sponsorship to the industry’s overall marketing strategy was demonstrated in 1995 when Congress was beginning to feel public pressure to take action to regulate the tobacco industry. The companies not only resisted the efforts of tobacco control advocates, but pressured their friends in Congress to introduce the “Rodeo Freedom Act of 1995” which never passed but would have prohibited government regulation of corporate sponsorship in rodeo. The tobacco industry planned a “Sponsorship Recognition Day” in Washington DC which would appear to be spearheaded by sports and entertainment figures in opposition to FDA regulation of corporate sponsorship. Newspaper articles about how loss of corporate sponsorship would hurt rodeo, auto racing, and free speech appeared around this time.

In the almost 20 years since most of these documents were written, the industry’s media and public relations efforts have only become more sophisticated and targeted. Current documents produced by USST for the 2002 PRCA National Conference continue in the same tradition.<sup>5</sup>

Tobacco industry sponsorship of rodeos is consistent with its other promotional efforts. The tobacco industry has pursued sponsorship of lifestyle, entertainment, and sporting events that both reach their marketing targets and build their brand imagery. The industry builds relationships with the sport’s governing body, athletes, organizers, suppliers, media contacts, and fans. Event sponsorship provides the industry more than advertising impressions; it also builds a positive image of the tobacco industry in communities where they sponsor events, provides opportunities for positive press, and potentially a means to support legislative efforts to avoid government regulation (petition signing, access to sports celebrities, etc.). As it has in other areas, the tobacco industry often uses its third party allies (in sports and entertainment in this case) to put forth its legislative agenda.

## **Why do Rodeos Want Tobacco Company Sponsors?**

Although the specific ownership and organizing structure of local rodeos can vary from location to location, no rodeos would be financially solvent without advertisers and other sponsors. So, first and foremost, tobacco companies provide rodeos with some money.

But the companies do more than write checks. By being long-term major sponsors, the companies have developed strong personal relationships with the authorities who oversee the rodeos. These long-term personal relationships make it harder for advocates to frame the companies as anonymous outsiders. To the rodeo organizers, the companies are old friends—very generous old friends. The amounts tobacco companies give local rodeos can vary widely, from as little as \$60 for a small program ad to as much as \$50,000.

At the Livermore Rodeo in 2002, a chute sign was \$450, an event buckle was \$350, and the highest level of sponsorship was \$15,000.

Tobacco companies give national rodeo organizations larger sums for prize funds as well as other items. In 1999, the most recent year available, the Federal Trade Commission reported that more than \$23 million was spent on smokeless tobacco advertising and promotion on sports and sporting events. On its Web site, the Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association (PRCA) explains that USST and other “sponsors provide funds to rodeo committees, bonus money for contestant purses, stock contractor incentives and supplemental pay for judges and other arena personnel, including posters, billboards, bumper stickers and electronic scoreboards. They may provide whatever is needed for press parties and for newspaper and broadcast advertising as well.”

Tobacco companies also give rodeos the security of long-term financial commitments. Instead of having to raise new money and find new sponsors every year, rodeo organizers have found comfort in simply renewing ongoing contracts with the tobacco companies. So, while some advocates have suggested a strategy of finding alternative sponsors to replace tobacco company dollars, such a strategy would be much more difficult—and expensive—than it sounds. The annual cost of sponsoring a single rodeo is only a small part of the broader, long-term financial commitment that tobacco companies have made to rodeos.

So, from the organizers perspective, tobacco company sponsorship allows the rodeo to be exactly what everyone wants it to be—a financially-solvent, regular event celebrated and “owned” by the community in which it takes place.

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## Overall Strategy

Public health advocates sometimes have a difficult time articulating the solution to the problems they address. There is a common perception, even among advocates, that “no one really knows how to solve the problem,” and that “the problem is complex and difficult to address.” Sometimes advocates will go to great lengths to get media attention but then stumble on the basic question, “What can be done?” For a media advocacy initiative it is very important to have a specific, focused solution in mind.

### The Prime Directive

The first rule of media advocacy is that you can’t have a media strategy without an overall strategy.<sup>6</sup> It’s a media advocate’s Prime Directive, the touchstone for all other decisions. It means that you have to be specific and clear about what you want, and

*You can’t have a media strategy  
without an overall strategy.*

acknowledge that solutions are often incremental.

Think of the solution in terms of the specific media advocacy initiative. For example, if your goal is to reduce a tobacco

company’s influence on the county fair, then the solution might be to get the city council to not sign an extension of its contract with the tobacco company. If your goal is to change the environment within which the tobacco sponsorship is tolerated, the solution might be to create negative attention about such sponsorship. In each instance the specific solution you choose will provide an endpoint, an immediate objective, to work toward. That objective will dictate the next steps and the decisions you have to make about your overall strategy. Media advocates use the following six strategic questions to guide their strategy development.

### Six Strategic Questions

#### 1. What is the problem or issue?

Defining the problem is important; the way the problem is defined determines the range of acceptable approaches or solutions. If the problem is “the tobacco scoreboard at the fairground sends a bad message to kids”, then the solution will be limited to keeping kids away from the sign or taking the sign down. While that solution may be a step forward, other related problems—unregulated product sampling, signs directed to adults, more subtle forms of advertising—may persist. Because the problem was defined narrowly, the solution is defined narrowly as well.

Media advocates define the problem at the environmental or community level. That way, they can focus upstream on preventing the problem rather than downstream after the damage has been done.

Although you don’t want to be too narrow, it is useful to be focused. As public health advocates, you may be inclined to think of problems in broad terms: e.g. tobacco kills,

tobacco companies are evil, etc. As media advocates, it is very useful to define the problem in very focused terms: e.g. tobacco companies have access to our community via our rodeo, or spit tobacco sponsorship is corrupting the value of our community event. Focusing the problem leads to focused responses.

## **2. What policy approaches will address the problem?**

Journalists may not agree that tobacco sponsorship of rodeos is a problem — they don't need to agree to report on the story. But they will always ask: what can be done about it? Media advocates have to figure out, and be able to say clearly, what

needs to happen to fix the problem.

*Convince the rodeo board  
to adopt a policy prohibiting  
tobacco sponsorship.*

The solution you seek shouldn't be too broad or vague to be workable. For example, an "educated public" may be more receptive to public health messages, but trying to "educate the public" isn't a tangible solution that is easily attained.

Generally, "solutions" to public health problems are not short-term or singular but part of ongoing efforts to address a particular issue. "Changing a newspaper's advertising policy," "convincing a restaurant chain to ban smoking," or "convincing a university to divest itself from tobacco stocks" are all examples of incremental policies that, if applied, would reduce harm from tobacco. In the case of tobacco sponsorship at rodeos, there may be a specific solution at hand — e.g. "convince the rodeo board to adopt a policy prohibiting tobacco sponsorship" — but the solution to the problem of tobacco marketing and advertising in general is not going to be solved by a single initiative. Long-term goals are, well, long-term: they don't happen overnight. Incremental steps (such as removing tobacco advertising from rodeo scoreboards, removing adult-only promotions, adding tobacco-free stands) are necessary and important. Whether for the long-term or immediate next step, it is useful to articulate as clearly as possible the solution you seek for a media advocacy initiative.

## **3. Who has the power to make the necessary change?**

Strategically, you need to identify the person, group or organization that has the power to make the change. Who decides about tobacco sponsorship at your rodeo? This a much different "target" than the general public. Because media have the potential to reach large audiences, media advocates are often tempted to try to concoct strategies and messages that will sway the hearts and minds of large audiences. Ask media advocates who their target audience is and they will frequently say "voters," "the community," or "the general public."

The problem is that it is hard to have a significant impact on large segments of the population. Even political candidates, sellers of commercial products and others with huge budgets and lots of experience often try and fail to reach large audiences in a meaningful way. And, even if large portions of the population could be convinced that still may not do the trick. Support does not always translate to policy change. For years, public polling has consistently shown that about two-thirds of Americans support significant excise tax increases on tobacco products but there have been only two minor increases in the federal tax since 1960 and state excise taxes weren't increased significantly until 2002. Overall, the combined federal and state taxes still lag way beyond tobacco taxes in Canada, most of Europe and many other countries around the world. Similarly, three-out-of-four voters think that Congress should grant the Food and Drug Administration authority to regulate tobacco products, but the only serious attempt to pass such a bill was thwarted in 1998 when a single U.S.

Senator — then-Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott — simply refused to allow the proposal to come to a vote. Many tobacco control policies have stalled despite popular support.

Fortunately, it is rarely necessary to significantly change public opinion with one focused media advocacy initiative. If the solution to your problem is, say, an anti-tobacco sponsorship policy signed by the rodeo committee, then your target audience may be just a few people — in some cases just a single person. The gatekeepers to these promotions — fair boards, bar owners, rodeo committees, rodeo associations — have the potential to significantly change the environment within which tobacco companies promote their products. As long as your media advocacy campaign influences that small audience with the power to make the change you want, it really doesn't matter whether or not it has an impact on others.

This kind of narrow-audience approach to media can seem counterintuitive. Most of us are used to thinking of mass-audiences when we think of media. In fact, most traditional approaches to media (advertising, public relations, etc.) measure their success largely on the simple question of how many people they have reached. But media advocacy recognizes that the power to change policy often rests with a much smaller audience and it is that audience that media advocates try to reach.

#### **4. Who must be mobilized to apply pressure for change?**

People who make decisions that affect our environment need to be pressured into doing the right thing. Pressure comes from community members making their wishes known which is why community mobilization is essential as part of any media advocacy strategy.

While a traditional media approach may covet a celebrity spokesperson, a media advocacy approach sees more value in reaching out to affected members of the community — civic leaders, customers, young people, and others who patronize rodeos or have influence over their policies will be the primary messengers in a successful media advocacy campaign. Members of these groups will bring the message to each other as they organize for change. And, they will bring pressure to bear on the gatekeepers by creating news on the issue so the community at large is part of the conversation. Celebrities, on the other hand, may not always stick to your message or your strategy.

*People who make decisions that affect our environment need to be pressured into doing the right thing.*

#### **5. What message would convince those with the power to act for change?**

The challenge here is to reinvigorate some of the messages from tobacco control's successes and reinterpret them in the context of rodeo sponsorships. Many of the messages used to counter tobacco industry arguments about free choice, for example, have been dormant in the last few years as tobacco control advocates have focused attention on the industry's marketing to youth. But much work has been done crafting messages that use public health arguments to counter tobacco industry rhetoric. In the message development section we discuss how to frame messages specific to rodeos and how messages might differ depending on the messengers and the target.

#### **6. Who will oppose your efforts and what will be the nature of their opposition?**

Media advocacy, of course, does not exist in a vacuum. The messages you send through the media will be only a small part of the overall environment within which the

rodeo and accompanying events take place. Just as you are seeking to change this environment, there will be people who want to keep it unchanged.

Some of your opponents are obvious — the tobacco companies who wish to continue their sponsorship agreements, for example. Others may be less obvious — e.g. rodeo patrons who want to attend the event in peace without the intrusion of “politics” or protests. Or some who feel that any regulation from government is an intrusion. And, of course, the many people who get money from the tobacco company may oppose your efforts — people such as stock contractors, rodeo competitors, bars, publishers of the

programs in which the company buys ads, etc.

In developing a media advocacy strategy, it is important to think of everyone who has any stake in keeping things the way they are and how they are

## *Advocates need to be prepared to articulate their values and make their case in the face of opposition.*

likely to respond to your initiative. Will they fight back? Be unsupportive, but quiet? What will their arguments be and where will they be likely to make them? Most importantly, how will you respond? Public health issues — tobacco sponsorship included — will surface deeply held and conflicting values about what is reasonable to do to safeguard health and prevent disease and injury. Advocates need to be prepared to articulate their values and make their case in the face of opposition.

The Appendix includes a “Policy Menu” that lists different ideas for policy goals related to eliminating tobacco sponsorship at rodeos. Once you’ve made the decision about your first objective, you’ll be ready to develop a message strategy (so you know what you want to say about it) and an access strategy (so you can get journalists’ attention).

### **Strategy Note: What About Alcohol Sponsorship?**

Advocates who address the question of whether or not it is appropriate for tobacco companies to sponsor an athletic and community event such as a rodeo, can’t go far without facing the question: but what about alcohol? If tobacco sponsorship were to disappear tomorrow, it is quite likely that alcohol companies would try to step in to fill at least some of the void. After all, alcohol companies are already one of rodeo’s biggest sponsors.

Like tobacco, alcohol is a product that causes death and disease. Alcohol companies use similar tactics to tobacco companies in attempting to attract new customers, improve their public image, and neutralize opponents to alcohol control policies at the national and local levels. Anheiser Busch, Coors, and Jack Daniel’s are prominent sponsors of rodeos.

Despite the overlap and similarities, some tobacco control advocates believe that it would not be strategically wise to pursue policies that seek to address both alcohol and tobacco simultaneously. They might argue that putting the two issues together makes success less likely for either one. It is better, they say, to get rid of tobacco sponsorship first — as soon as that happens, those concerned with alcohol issues will have an easier time making their case.

However, from a public health point of view, replacing tobacco sponsorship with alcohol sponsorship is hardly progress and it is shortsighted to address one without taking into consideration the likely consequences on the other.

This guide does not take a position on which of these approaches is correct. Individual media advocates will have to address this issue on their own. However, we urge all public health advocates to keep in mind that none of our issues exist in a vacuum and to consider, at least, the likely consequences that our actions have on other issues.

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## Framing: Reclaiming the Territory

After more than 30 years, tobacco company sponsorship seems to be a logical partner at rodeos. The companies are viewed as friends. Tobacco companies have worked long and hard to make their sponsorship appear normal and natural. Consequently, media advocates face a difficult task: unmasking the relationship for the unnatural, harmful, and insidious arrangement that it is. They must reframe tobacco company sponsorship of rodeos.

The goal is to reframe rodeo sponsorship with new language and imagery that reveals the true nature and consequences of sponsorship. To shift the frame, advocates must knock the current picture out of focus and replace it with a new one. Language is

*How advocates frame tobacco sponsorship will influence how news coverage is framed.*

important. Not only is language a way to communicate thoughts and ideas, but certain words and phrases shape the way people think about issues. The words people hear affect what they think. For example using the term “spit tobacco” instead of

“smokeless tobacco” deglamorizes the product and helps undercut industry efforts to encourage its use. The term “spit tobacco” puts a frame around the product that affects the way people think of it, while the term “smokeless” sends a message that chew tobacco is less harmful than cigarettes.

Tobacco control advocates have long been successful at reframing the debate and using language creatively to advance their cause. In the 1970s, “attacks on smokers” became “protecting the rights of nonsmokers.” In the 1980s, advocates stopped talking about “preventing smoking” (which placed the burden, and blame, on the individual smoker) and started talking about the harms caused by “tobacco products” (which placed the burden and blame on tobacco companies and expanded the definition of the problem beyond cigarettes).

How advocates frame tobacco sponsorship will influence how news coverage is framed. By necessity, reporters and editors have to choose what information goes into a story and what gets left out. Even the most detailed story you read in the *New York Times* or the *Wall Street Journal* will contain only a fraction of the information available to the reporter and editors who put it together. How the story is framed tells the reader what is important and what is not important.

### We Can Do This Because We’ve Done it Before

It is possible to generate immediate suspicion about motives by attributing them to the tobacco industry. After years of lying to the public about everything from the dangers of their products to the targets of their advertising, tobacco companies have a bad reputation. That is why most movie stars and other celebrities no longer endorse tobacco products (in this country, at least) the way they endorse almost every other consumer product — and why most politicians who side with the tobacco industry try their best to do so quietly, away from the public eye.

But this suspicion hasn't always been there. Not that long ago, tobacco companies were just another business. They sponsored television shows such as *I Love Lucy* and ran ads showing movie stars touting cigarettes as good Christmas presents. But decades of focus on the behavior of tobacco companies has reframed the way people think of the industry.

Reframing isn't the solution — it's the start of thinking differently. When opponents challenged clean indoor air proposals by arguing that restaurants should 'accommodate' all customers by providing smoking and non-smoking sections, tobacco control advocates pointed out that although smokers and non-smokers may sit in different parts of a

restaurant, the smoke wouldn't know where to stay. A non-smoking section of a restaurant, they argued, was similar to a non-urinating section of a swimming pool.

## *Reframing isn't the solution — it's the start of thinking differently.*

When tobacco companies introduced low-tar and nicotine products as a way of inferring that smokers could minimize their health risks by choosing one of these 'safer' products, tobacco control advocates argued that smoking a low-tar cigarette instead of a regular brand was the equivalent of jumping out of the ninth story of a building instead of the tenth story.

### **Reframing Rodeo in the Tradition of Tobacco Control**

Most discussions of tobacco sponsorship of rodeos will focus on three basic frames: Rodeo as a Community Event; Rodeo as Sport; and Industry Manipulation. These frames accurately communicate different perspectives on the problem.

#### ***Roots of Rodeo: Rodeo as a Community Event***

In many places, especially small towns, the rodeo is celebrated much as a local holiday, with weeks of buildup, parades, spin-off events, and support from throughout the community. Like a holiday, rodeos bring the community together to share civic pride, rural culture, appreciation of the sport, and fun in the sun. Rodeos remind the community of its heritage, its roots, its past. The rodeo is more than an event in the community. It is part of the community's identity.

This frame focuses on the idea that the rodeo is a part of the community and, like a local sports team or annual festival, is "owned" by the community. A community ownership frame argues that tobacco companies are infringing on community property and have no legitimate basis for sponsoring the event in the first place. This frame tries to reverse the reality that, through long-standing personal relationships and ongoing sponsorship, tobacco companies have become insiders at many events, forcing public health advocates into the outsider position. It is from this perspective that advocates can remind community leaders that the rodeo is where the community comes together, expresses itself, and reinforces its values to its children.

For example, the simple question, "What do spit tobacco companies know about our town?" frames the tobacco companies as outsiders (headquartered outside the state) that has primary interests other than the community's welfare or heritage. Outside corporations don't typically become involved with a small town event unless they have a motive — in this case, advertising and selling a deadly product. Raising the question of the company's involvement builds on the rodeo as a community event and frames spit tobacco companies as outsiders versus their desired identity as a civic-minded community supporter.

### ***Roots of Rodeo Framing Examples:***

- ▶ *Our rodeo existed long before the tobacco companies came along. They're trying to steal our culture.*
- ▶ *This spit tobacco company is not from around here; the only thing that brings it to our community is to advertise its deadly product. Our rodeo should be sponsored by family-oriented companies.*
- ▶ *The problem is we are paying a huge cost. We've given them our rodeo, but all we got in return was a scoreboard and a little money.*

### **Sport, Not Spit**

Rodeo is the “toughest eight seconds in sports,” as one television sportscaster put it while commenting on a Professional Bull Riders contest. Controlling powerful 2,000 pound animals with skill and style, cowboys are athletes.

The identity of rodeo as a sport is important. This identity grants the event legitimacy — putting it on a par with football, baseball and other sports, but it raises the issue of whether or not it is appropriate for a tobacco company to be involved as a sponsor.

Athletes have to be in top form; they can't endanger their bodies with tobacco and remain competitive. Clearly, tobacco and rodeos don't mix. A framing strategy focusing on the rodeo as a sporting event calls into question the appropriateness of tobacco company sponsorship. Tobacco in any form is poison for athletes who have to be in top physical condition; it is inappropriate and misleading for tobacco companies to use the athletes to promote their products.

Although the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement specifically allows tobacco companies to have limited affiliations with sporting events, there is a long history of questioning the appropriateness of such partnerships. A voluntary advertising code adopted by the tobacco companies in the mid-1960's (in response to the first Surgeon General's Report), prohibited the companies from making an association between their products and sports. Although this code was routinely violated (e.g. by tobacco billboards in baseball stadiums, the Virginia Slims tennis tour, etc.), the existence of the code demonstrates that even the companies believe — or believed, at least — that tobacco's association with athletics is improper.

### ***Sport, Not Spit Framing Examples:***

- ▶ *Rodeo is a sporting event, not a spitting event.*
- ▶ *To participate in a rodeo, you have to be in excellent shape. So it just doesn't make any sense to be sponsored by a tobacco company.*
- ▶ *As athletes, these cowboys understand their position as role models in our community. Kids who come to the rodeo want to grow up to be just like them. We are sending a very bad double-message when we allow these athletes to perform in front of giant tobacco billboards, on bulls named after tobacco products, wearing tobacco logos on their clothing.*

### **Industry Manipulation, or Goodwill for a Bad Product**

The tobacco industry needs goodwill — it is critical to their success and a necessary part of undercutting other tobacco control strategies. For example, if the industry has created goodwill in a community, it is much easier for them to fight against clean indoor air laws, tax increases, or enforcement of youth access laws. As long as they're seen as good community citizens, their arguments against such efforts will be taken as sincere

and credible. However, if the efforts of the industry to create goodwill are thwarted, then it becomes relatively easy to expose the industry's true motives.

This frame explains what's going on behind the curtain: the tobacco industry is developing goodwill for a bad product. It builds goodwill by pretending to be a friend, by espousing the values based in the community's identity with the rodeo but the commitment isn't real. The tobacco company is not about supporting the community — if it were, it would donate the money and not demand the ad space. The local community rodeo sponsorship fees are simply a small line item in the company's advertising budget, nothing more.

Tobacco companies sponsor community events because they think that doing so will provide them with some safe, positive public relations exposure. While they are willing to pay a price — i.e. money — for this arrangement, they won't continue if the price becomes too high. One way that advocates can increase the price of the sponsorship is by creating negative attention where the companies expect— and pay for — only positive attention.

For example, in the later years of the Virginia Slims Tennis Tour, tournaments were regularly picketed by health advocates and targeted for attention by increasingly skeptical news media. As a result, what had been a perfect vehicle for Philip Morris to promote its Virginia Slims brand slowly became a constant source of negative attention. Rather than continue to fight back, Philip Morris eventually dropped its sponsorship of the tour altogether.

Similarly, a framing strategy aimed at creating negative attention around the tobacco sponsorship of rodeos could increase the price of the sponsorship for the companies. This approach also seeks attention in order to simply “air the issue” and let people in the community who may already feel uncomfortable about attending a tobacco-sponsored event know that they are not alone — others in their community feel just like they do.

### ***Industry Manipulation Framing Examples:***

- ▶ *People in this community are angry about a tobacco company coming in here and taking over our rodeo.*
- ▶ *Every time a tobacco company sends a message to our community — trying to get more people to use its product or feel better about its business — we intend to be right there saying ‘This is our community and we don’t want them here any more.’*
- ▶ *They get more out of this than we do — we get a scoreboard, they get access to our kids.*
- ▶ *The tobacco companies are in the business of selling tobacco. They don’t really care about rodeo — they’re just using rodeo as a means to sell deadly products.*

### **Strategy Note: The Blame Game**

If you are questioning the sponsorship of the rodeo, it can become easy to get drawn off of your message and start talking about the appropriateness of the rodeo board entering into these partnerships or of parents taking their kids to these events. Unfortunately, those messages blame the victims and leave the real enemy — the tobacco companies — out of the picture. An important part of the industry manipulation frame is keeping the blame for the problem where it belongs: on the companies, not on the communities. Ideally, your framing strategy will focus attention on the companies for exploiting the need of the rodeo for money in exchange for valuable advertising and

public relations. Airing the details of any agreements can help. Most people don't give a lot of thought to the exchange between any sponsor and an event's hosts. Publicizing the details of a contract makes the exploitative nature of the tobacco companies much more apparent. The details of a contract make it very clear that they are not in this simply to support the community; if they were, why would they put so much time and energy into specifying — in legal terms — the amount of signage they will be allowed or the size and location of the sampling booth they will set up? The word “sponsor” is a euphemism; this framing strategy argues that what is really taking place is an unequal business relationship where the tobacco company benefits and the community loses.

In fact, the tobacco companies are outsiders who take advantage of any opportunity to market a dangerous product. To bring this into focus, advocates could ask community leaders, reporters, and community members: Why is the tobacco company here?

### **Strategy Note: Not Just Kid Stuff**

When former Food and Drug Commissioner David Kessler labeled tobacco a “pediatric disease” in 1994, he reframed tobacco control as primarily a kids' issue. For the next several years, tobacco control policies such as excise tax increases, product

*An important part of the industry manipulation frame is keeping the blame for the problem where it belongs: on the companies, not on the communities.*

regulation, and clean indoor air policies were defended primarily in terms of the impact they would have on children. This framing was effective in that it eliminated one of the tobacco industry's most useful arguments: that adults should be free to use legal products if they wish to. In essence, Kessler argued that the tobacco industry's behavior toward kids was sufficient by itself to justify federal regulation of tobacco — because almost all smokers start when they are young.

Eventually, some tobacco control advocates argued that the field's emphasis on children and youth was a setback for tobacco control. They said that this framing narrowed the public's attention too much and limited the range of policy approaches. The focus on youth plays right into industry hands, they argued, by reinforcing the idea that tobacco is for adults (which is what kids want to become). This focus also creates an opportunity for tobacco companies to take steps to legitimately reduce their appeal to kids while continuing marketing practices that most public health advocates would agree are harmful. For example, once you draw the line at youth for acceptable industry behavior, it becomes very difficult to argue against tobacco industry marketing tactics aimed at college-age young adults.

Advocates addressing the issue of tobacco industry sponsorship of rodeos need to think through where they stand on this debate. Perhaps one of the more effective arguments for eliminating tobacco sponsorship from rodeos is that many children attend rodeos so rodeos should remain a ‘family-friendly’ venue. But even if this argument is effective, advocates need to consider the consequences of relying on strategies that focus on children. What would happen, for example, if tobacco companies figured out a way to advertise to adult rodeo attendees while legitimately avoiding all contact with children? Would that be acceptable to public health advocates?

In developing this guide, we have tried to be conscious of the pitfalls of over-relying on framing the need for tobacco-free rodeos from a youth perspective. We believe that tobacco sponsorship of rodeos is bad for all ages and that the short-term expedience of a

youth-focused argument is not worth the risk of legitimizing tobacco industry marketing to adults in the long-term. We have tried to reflect this position in the arguments and framing strategies contained in this guide.

### **What Happened to the Health Frame?**

The health frame is another accurate way of communicating about this issue. There is ample evidence that spit tobacco causes tremendous harm.<sup>7</sup> However, we suggest that it not be the first frame that advocates use in this case. We think that when the goal is eliminating tobacco sponsorship from rodeos, focusing on the frames that emphasize the integrity of the community will be more powerful. This is because the health frame is too easily individualized. In fact, the health frame may even distract from the issue of sponsorship. A debate about how bad spit tobacco can be could distract journalists and others from our main goal: eliminating tobacco sponsorship of rodeos. The frame will certainly be raised, and we include it in many of the suggested answers to difficult questions in the Appendix to this guide. We just don't think it should be the starting point.

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## Message Strategy

Message strategies need to be considered in the context of your overall objective. A frame that is effective for one objective may be very ineffective for another. For example, if your goal is to ban sampling of spit tobacco at rodeos in order to prevent youth from getting access to the product, an effective framing strategy might be to focus on society's need to provide special protections for children. However, if your overall goal is to completely eliminate tobacco company sponsorship of the rodeo, a message focused on children could backfire (since it might invite the companies to alter their behavior to avoid marketing directly to children while allowing them to remain as overall event sponsors.)

### Message in Context

Once you have figured out what has to be done, who has to do it, and how to frame the issue, then you have to talk about it, in public and on the record. Each time you talk to journalists you have the opportunity to educate them on the problems with tobacco company sponsorship. You will usually be having one of three different types of conversations with reporters:

**PROACTIVE** conversations are when you call reporters to pitch a story. These are the easiest to prepare for, because you are initiating the contact and suggesting the story. You'll know ahead of time which frame you want to emphasize.

**REACTIVE** conversations are when you respond to a reporter's query. In this case you have to be prepared to reframe a question that may be off-target to the tobacco company sponsorship frame that you want to emphasize. It will take some finesse, but practice helps.

**SELF-DEFENSE** is when you are asked to respond to a crisis or to "bad press." It is not the ideal situation, but nevertheless an opportunity to put forth your message.

Each of these conversations requires focused attention to your overall policy advocacy goals. Your statements, whether proactive, reactive or defensive, should further the message to your target and emphasize what needs to be done.

### Components of a Message

Whichever situation you are in, your message can have three key components that answer the following questions (which by now should sound a little familiar):

- ▶ *What's the problem?*
- ▶ *What should be done about it?*
- ▶ *Why does it matter?*

Use your answers to these questions to compose media bites — succinct answers to a reporter's questions (see the Appendix for examples). Your answers to these questions

can be arranged in any order that makes sense. The important thing is to be sure you've included your solution.

It's relatively easy to anticipate the kind of questions you'll be asked by a reporter. Anticipating questions and thinking through good answers ahead of time is critical; if you rely on your knowledge of the subject and assume you'll have the right answer when the time comes, chances are good that you will be distracted by the reporter's off-target question or lured down a path you don't like and miss some good opportunities.

See the Appendix for brief answers to difficult questions. The questions will help you anticipate what your opposition might say. You can use the answers as a starting point to help you craft responses that link logically to your specific goal (prime directive) and apply in your own community context.

## Different Answers to the Same Question

When most people are asked a question, they have a tendency to simply answer it. All of us answer questions routinely, throughout the day. But when a reporter asks a question, it's a completely different situation. Each question from a reporter represents

a unique opportunity to state your message. And each question presents a range of strategic choices. The important thing to remember when developing media bites is to keep focused on your goal — the specific policy solution you're seeking — all within just a sentence or two.

*keep focused on your goal —  
the specific policy solution  
you're seeking — all within  
just a sentence or two.*

There is no right or wrong answer to a question. A given question could

have numerous answers each of which could be right for different strategies.

Consider a basic question you might be faced with if you get involved in this issue: "Why are you worried about tobacco sponsorship at rodeos?" What's the right answer to that question? Well, it depends. Consider these three different answers based on the three framing strategies we've described:

### **Roots of Rodeo**

Our rodeo is a community event — it's an important part of our community. An out-of-state company promoting a product that causes death and disease doesn't seem like an appropriate sponsor for our community.

### **Sport, Not Spit**

This is an athletic event and the focus should be on the athletes, not on a product that stands as the antithesis of good health and physical fitness. Sports and tobacco just don't go together.

### **Industry Manipulation**

The tobacco company is using our community to improve their bad image and sell more deadly products. They should leave us alone.

Any of the above framing strategies could be used to address a specific policy goal. For example, if your goal is to get the rodeo board to consider not renewing its contract with the company, you could answer the above question these three ways:

### **Roots of Rodeo**

Our rodeo is a community event — it's an important part of our community. An out-of-state company selling a product that promotes death and disease isn't an appropriate sponsor for our community and we hope the rodeo board will seek alternative sponsors when the current contract with the company expires.

### **Sport, Not Spit**

This is an athletic event and the focus should be on the athletes, not on a product that stands as the antithesis of good health and physical fitness. Sports and tobacco just don't go together and the board needs to drop the tobacco contract.

### **Industry Manipulation**

Big Tobacco is using our community to get more publicity and sell more products. We don't have to tolerate this — we should find new sponsors and drop the tobacco contract.

The first set of answers illustrated how the different frames can be used. The second set takes the next essential step of including the policy demand. The second “media bites” are stronger because they include the specific policy goal.

## **Getting Distracted: Answers that Go Off in the Wrong Direction**

Even when you are very focused on a specific strategic goal, it is easy to get drawn off track during an interview with a reporter — even a friendly reporter.

Let's say your goal is to get the rodeo board to publicly acknowledge that tobacco sponsorship of the rodeo is not a good thing and is something they should eliminate. You have decided that to advance that goal, you need to publicize the fact that there are many people in the community who want the board to act. Because of your good press contacts, you get a return call from a reporter who wants to interview you about the controversy. Your interview goes something like this:

**REPORTER:** *Why are you concerned about the rodeo?*

**YOU:** *We are concerned because we think the board doesn't realize how many people in this community are concerned about the influence the tobacco industry has taken over our rodeo.*

**REPORTER:** *Is smokeless tobacco a health hazard in this community?*

**YOU:** *Um, well, yes it is. Certainly, spit tobacco is something that is not good for anyone. That is why we think the tobacco sponsorship deal should be dropped and why we want the board to know how we feel.*

*(so far so good)*

**REPORTER:** *Do a lot of young kids try smokeless tobacco?*

**YOU:** *As a matter of fact they do. Kids as young as 10 or 12 can easily become addicted to spit tobacco.*

**REPORTER:** *Are the schools doing enough to educate kids about this problem?*

**YOU:** *Well, the schools could certainly be doing more. The state has a good curriculum available...*

By now, you're way off track. You've answered each question honestly and succinctly, you've give the reporter important information about the general issue, but in the space of four questions you've gone from talking about your issue (the contract with the tobacco

companies that is the responsibility of the rodeo board) to talking about something not central to your immediate goal — the tobacco education curriculum in the schools. The reporter wasn't trying to trick you, and probably wasn't consciously trying to keep you away from your goal. Part of the problem is that you know more about this issue than the reporter does — if you don't keep control of the interview, it's going to go where she wants it to go — and she isn't thinking strategically the way you are. So your task is to keep on message, no matter what the question is.

*Let's try that interview again:*

**REPORTER:** *Why are you concerned about the rodeo?*

**YOU:** *We are concerned because we think the board doesn't realize how many people in this community are concerned about the influence the tobacco industry has taken over our rodeo.*

**REPORTER:** *Is smokeless tobacco a health hazard in this community?*

**YOU:** *Um, well, yes it is. Certainly, spit tobacco is something that is not good for anyone. That is why we think the tobacco sponsorship deal should be dropped and why we want the board to know how we feel.*

**REPORTER:** *Do a lot of young kids try smokeless tobacco?*

**YOU:** *They sure do and it's no accident. The tobacco companies know that kids are an important part of their future business, so they seek out community events like our rodeo to get their message across. We think the community has better things to do than facilitate the tobacco company's marketing strategy.*

**REPORTER:** *What about the schools — are the schools doing enough to educate kids about this problem?*

**YOU:** *The schools are certainly doing their best — as are the parents. Everyone is concerned about the health and well-being of our kids. But the tobacco companies are spending a lot of money to compete with these health messages and glamorize their products. It's unfair to expect a health class to inoculate our kids against this slick marketing. We would all be better off if we eliminated the problem in the first place — by not letting tobacco companies use our rodeo to market their deadly products.*

That went much better. You stuck to the subject and kept the reporter focused.

## **The Pitfalls of Interviews, or “How did that quote get in there?”**

Almost everyone who has ever talked with a reporter has had the unpleasant experience of being disappointed with the way the story came out. Perhaps you were asked about a subject you weren't familiar with, or got drawn off into an area you didn't want to discuss. Even if you had a clear goal at the beginning of the interview, you still might not like how you are quoted in the final story.

You may feel that you have little control over what quotations appear in the final story since you're not the one asking the questions or making the final editing decisions. While it's true that the reporter is the one asking the questions, you have more control over what goes into the story than you may realize.

When a reporter asks a question, most people do what comes naturally — they answer it. Every time you are asked a question, however, you have many options as to how you respond. There are many different answers for virtually any question that is asked.

How does this work in practice? Let's say you wanted to get rid of tobacco sponsorship of the local rodeo and a reporter wants to talk to you about tobacco billboards. If you were to simply answer the questions directly as they came up, your conversation with a reporter might look like this:

**REPORTER:** *Hello. I'm doing a story on the controversy about tobacco signs at the rodeo and I'm trying to find out if there is any evidence about how harmful the signs are. Do you know, say, what percentage of kids who are exposed to tobacco signs end up trying tobacco?*

**YOU:** *The percentage of kids? Not exactly, but it stands to reason that some of them would.*

**REPORTER:** *Have there been any studies on this?*

**YOU:** *Studies? Not that I'm aware of. But again, it just makes sense, doesn't it?*

**REPORTER:** *I think I've got it. Any other comments?*

**YOU:** *Not about signage, no.*

**REPORTER:** *Thank you.*

Imagine how you would feel when you are quoted in the newspaper as “a local health advocate” who “acknowledged that she didn’t know the percentage of kids who are affected by tobacco signs and was unaware of any studies on the subject.”

Let’s look at how that interview — with the same questions — could have gone differently:

**REPORTER:** *Hello. I'm doing a story on the controversy about tobacco signs at the rodeo and I'm trying to find out if there is any evidence about how harmful the signs are. Do you know, say, what percentage of kids who are exposed to tobacco signs end up trying tobacco?*

**YOU:** *No advertiser would spend money on signage if they didn't know that potential customers were being affected. But it's not just the signs — tobacco companies buy a lot of good will by being sponsors of the rodeo. In a sense, they are using our rodeo to sell their product.*

**REPORTER:** *Have there been any studies on this?*

**YOU:** *You can bet that the tobacco company has studied this a great deal. They wouldn't be spending the money on it if they weren't getting something in return. Unfortunately, what they're getting is more customers from our community — what we're getting is more death and disease.*

**REPORTER:** *I think I've got it. Any other comments?*

**YOU:** *Sure — there are a lot of people in this community who are disappointed that a big tobacco company has taken over so much of our rodeo. There are a lot of good local companies who would love to lend their good name to our rodeo — let's give them a chance.*

**REPORTER:** *Thank you.*

You can bet that you would be happier with the article resulting from the second interview than you were from the first.

In general, there are four typical pitfalls of interviews to watch out for and avoid:

**YOU SAY TOO MUCH.** Stick to the issue at hand — your prime directive. Otherwise, the reporter will have too much to choose from when it comes time to quote you, and may choose incorrectly. The reporter won’t know that one statement was an aside and another your key point. Repeat yourself if you must, but don’t say too much.

**YOU STRAY FROM YOUR AREA OF EXPERTISE.** If you wander off you risk going on record making a mistake. Not only can this can be a tremendous problem for you or

your agency, but it can sour your relationship with the reporter. Reporters usually measure themselves by high standards of accuracy. If you give unreliable information, the reporter won't return to you as a source.

**YOU RELAX TOO MUCH.** An interview is not a conversation, though it masquerades as one. It is really a series of discrete opportunities to make your point. Stay focused on your objective and make sure every response you give has a logical link to that goal.

**YOU FILL THE GAP.** Don't be afraid of silence. Reporters will stay quiet simply as a means to get you to talk. Endure the silence and wait for the next question, or repeat what you just said.<sup>8</sup>

## **The Importance of the Messenger**

Sometimes, the messenger is almost as important as the message. Different messengers have different credibility that can be used to enhance their message. So, a local doctor might be able to talk firsthand about the health consequences of tobacco use that she has seen in her patients. A cowboy can address how the relationship between tobacco companies and athletes is developed and about the responsibility rodeo stars have as role models in the community. A parent can discuss the conflict they feel in wanting to enjoy the rodeo with their children, but wanting to shield them from unhealthful influences, such as tobacco advertising. Each of these messengers is using his or her own experience and perceptions to create a unique message contributing to the shared goal of eliminating tobacco sponsorship from rodeos. When you are considering writing a letter to the editor or responding to an interview request, consider the various messengers you have available and the strengths each might bring to the task.

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## Access Strategy

The best media messages in the world aren't very effective if no one hears about them. As tobacco control advocate Russell Sciandra notes, "To gain the media's attention, you can't just say something, you have to DO something."<sup>9</sup> Getting your message into print or on the air is, obviously, a critical part of successful media advocacy.

Getting the attention of the news media isn't always easy. Access to the news media is limited to those stories that reporters, editors, or producers consider to be newsworthy. And, although you may think that tobacco sponsorship of rodeos is a critically important issue, the gatekeepers to the media may see it as simply one little health group complaining about one advertiser at a local event — not very newsworthy.

### What's Newsworthy?

Here are some general questions that editors and producers ask themselves about a potential story's newsworthiness:

- ▶ *Is the story timely? Has the story already been reported somewhere else (i.e., are other news outlets paying attention to it)? Does it concern a topic of current interest to the readers or viewers, or would they likely think it was boring?*
- ▶ *Is there a built-in conflict? Are there two sides to the story? Are there people who object to what you are proposing? Like it or not, news media are attracted to conflict — and if you don't give it to them, they may look for it anyway.*
- ▶ *Is the story a breakthrough or milestone? Is it the "first" of something? Or the "biggest?" "Best?" "Worst?"*
- ▶ *Is there a good picture? A good photo opportunity may give newspapers an additional reason to cover your story. And, of course, you need good visuals to attract television coverage.*
- ▶ *Is there a personal angle? Can the story be illustrated by how it affects one person or one family? Is there a human interest side to your story?*

Fortunately, the story about tobacco sponsorship of rodeos contains many good newsworthy elements. It is your job as a media advocate to make sure you highlight those elements that are most newsworthy.

For example, if you tell a reporter that your group is opposed to tobacco sponsorship of the rodeo, you may get some interest. If you say that a major tobacco company is opposing your local efforts, you may get more interest. If you say that a large group of local citizens — in matching t-shirts and hats — is going to be handing out leaflets outlining their concerns at a prominent spot at the rodeo parade, you may get even more interest. If you can provide some evidence that your community could be on the verge of becoming the first in the region to adopt a written policy banning tobacco sponsorship of rodeos, your story will be of great interest.

## **Create News**

*Here are some newsworthy angles you may be able to use with your local efforts:*

### **Publicize Violations of the Master Settlement Agreement and Tobacco Control Laws**

In California, the state Attorney General's office closely monitors the tobacco industry to ensure it complies with the restrictions in the 1998 tobacco Master Settlement Agreement and Smokeless Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement (MSA). The office also enforces state tobacco control laws, such as the ban on free sampling on public grounds (California Health and Safety code section 118950). The tobacco companies often contend that they are a reformed industry since signing the MSA, but post-MSA the Attorney General's office has found tobacco companies to be in violation of the settlement agreements and state law. Keeping track of these violations and including them as part of your story provides newsworthy angles of timeliness (if they haven't already been reported in your community) and conflict. Violations also help counter the industry's desired image of "benevolent corporate citizen" and help frame them as a company interested in selling their product above all else. Hold a news conference to release a report or otherwise inform reporters about the company's egregious actions.

### **Build on Other Policy Success Stories**

When other communities make advances in areas related to your efforts, tie them in to what you are trying to accomplish. If other communities have success in restricting industry marketing behavior in conjunction with the rodeo, ask why your community can't do the same. If other sporting or civic events — such as minor league baseball, beauty pageants or county fairs — ban or restrict tobacco industry involvement, ask why the local rodeo isn't doing the same. Invite reporters to a hearing, print an open letter to the rodeo committee, or find another way to make your questions public and pressure the decision makers to answer in public.

There are many examples of communities building on the successes of others. The clean indoor air movement, which started with a few small communities in California a couple of decades ago and is continuing to spread throughout the world is perhaps the best example.

Another example is the movement to ban vending machine sales of cigarettes which started in the early 1990s in White Bear Lake, Minnesota. Advocates in that town, angry that children were able to purchase cigarettes out of the same machines that sold them candy and gum, urged their city council to ban tobacco sales via vending machine. After hearing about this policy advance, advocates in other parts of the country asked, "If White Bear Lake can do it, why can't we?" Within months, several communities around the country — including New York City — had followed suit and passed similar regulations. Within a year of the first ordinance being passed, the federal Department of Health and Human Services recommended banning vending machine sales of tobacco as part of a comprehensive approach to tobacco control.

### **Use Controversial or Otherwise Newsworthy Advertising**

Some advocates have achieved a lot of success in generating significant news attention by buying paid advertising. Public Media Center has designed ads for placement in local newspapers and magazines as well as spots for television and radio. What they are and how to use them is described in detail in their "Public Engagement Plan for Advocates."

### **Place Op-eds from Authentic Voices**

An op-ed piece or letter to the editor from a local health advocate complaining about

the tobacco industry may not seem very newsworthy. The same piece written by someone with a special relationship to the issue may be much more newsworthy. Do you know a former rodeo employee who could speak out on your behalf? A local athlete? A concerned local parent, doctor or student? Any of the above could be framed as a newsworthy local voice. The Appendix includes an example of an op-ed in the voice of a local doctor.

### **Develop Social Math**

Every day, people are bombarded with stories about large numbers and statistics. Advocates need to be skilled in translating numbers so they become interesting to the journalist and meaningful to the audience. Social math is the practice of making large numbers comprehensible and compelling using comparisons. For example:

Estimate how many people will be exposed to tobacco industry advertising during the week of the rodeo. Or,

Count the different ways the industry is trying to get its message out — advertisements in programs, bull-naming, parade banners, arena banners, sampling booths, stickers on gates (for the TV audience), logos on competitors' clothing, scoreboard, acknowledgement over the public address system, etc. "The tobacco company will use 17 different strategies today to force their name in front of people who just want to see a rodeo."

A surprising comparison can be enough to get a reporter's attention. Then, have the longer conversation that reveals the deeper story about what it will take to eliminate tobacco sponsorship at your local rodeo.

### **Strategy Note: Bar Nights**

When tobacco companies sponsor rodeos, they frequently sponsor promotions in local bars as part of their overall promotional effort. These promotions typically include such marketing devices as free giveaways, special games and sampling of tobacco products.

Many public health advocates object to special promotions in bars in general because they encourage excessive drinking and, with it, increases in social problems including traffic crashes, sexual assaults and domestic violence.

Tobacco-sponsored bar promotions send a doubly bad health message, but not everyone agrees about whether or not these promotions should be a focus of efforts to curtail tobacco-sponsorship of rodeos. Some would argue that because these promotions are an integral part of tobacco sponsorship activities, they can't be ignored. If you work to address bar nights, you may hear from other advocates and community members that the problem of promotions in bars is quite different than the problems of tobacco sponsorship of rodeos and that rodeo efforts should stay focused on the rodeos themselves.

### **Arguments for focusing on bar promotions:**

- ▶ *Tobacco companies say they want "adult consumers" to make "informed choices" about their products. Unfortunately, bars are about the last place people go to make informed choices about anything.*
- ▶ *Bar promotions are inconsistent with the core values of rodeos: family, athleticism, community.*
- ▶ *Bar promotions are effective marketing tools for tobacco companies — otherwise, they wouldn't sponsor them. Tobacco control advocates, then, should do what they can to increase the social cost of these promotions to the companies.*
- ▶ *Unlike virtually any other product, there is no safe level of tobacco use. Sampling or promotion of tobacco should not be tolerated anywhere.*

**Arguments you may encounter against focusing on bar promotions:**

- ▶ *People realize that no one goes to bars for their health. Arguing against tobacco promotions in bars because of public health doesn't meet the common sense-test.*
- ▶ *In college towns, bars are primarily frequented by young adults or minors. But in non-college towns, bars attract older customers. It is hard to argue that older adults shouldn't be exposed to sampling of tobacco products.*
- ▶ *Arguments against tobacco-sponsorship of rodeos are strongest when they focus on the threat to the family-friendly environment of rodeos. This argument doesn't work in bars.*

Some groups might want to highlight egregious promotions to bring attention to them and the related issues they are most concerned about. They might use bar nights as one more example of why tobacco sponsorship of the rodeo is inappropriate. Or they might want to address bar nights because they relate to other goals or policies they are pursuing. As always, the important thing is to know your prime directive and how — or whether — addressing bar nights fits in.

**What Can Media Advocates Do About Bar Nights?**

Some advocates have tried to proactively reach out to bar owners to ask them to sign voluntary agreements saying they will not host tobacco promotions in their bars. If a bar owner agrees, advocates can offer an award or some kind of public recognition which may serve as a small incentive to sign the agreement. Advocates can create news around the signing of an agreement or an awards ceremony for bar owners that have said no to tobacco company sponsorship. Obviously, this approach is probably most effective with bar owners who have not yet hosted a tobacco promotion or otherwise entered into a financial agreement with a tobacco company. Any agreement to say no to tobacco sponsorship and bar nights would not be binding, of course, but reaching out proactively may help bar owners think twice before signing up for a tobacco promotion.

Reaching out to bar owners who already have a relationship with tobacco companies may work too because it would give the bar owner some reason to eschew the relationship with the tobacco company — if they know there is community support for bucking the tobacco sponsorship, or conversely, that they will get bad publicity if they don't.

Other advocates have tried to combat bar promotions by merely publicizing them, on the theory that most people, who don't go to bars often and don't see these promotions firsthand, will be surprised and even shocked by what they see.

Advocates have sent volunteers into these bars to take pictures, pick up sample giveaway promotions, and document what is going on. Often, bar promotions are wilder and more risqué than most people would think, especially compared to the more public promotions tobacco companies use in conjunction with family-friendly rodeos. Publicity about these promotions, therefore, can cause some outrage among members of the community who may feel protective of the rodeo's image and object to any untoward associations with it.

Publicity can be gained by news releases, letters to the editor, release of a study of bar promotions or other news events. The sample op-ed in the Appendix to this Guide focuses on bar nights, putting them in the context of eliminating tobacco sponsorship at rodeos.

(To see samples of pictures taken by advocates during bar promotions, check the Roswell Park Tobacco Documents Web site at [http://roswell.tobaccodocuments.org/bar\\_promotions\\_home.htm](http://roswell.tobaccodocuments.org/bar_promotions_home.htm).)

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## Conclusion

When you participate in the tobacco control movement you are building on a tradition of vision, tenacity, commitment, and creativity more than half a century old. Fifty years ago, nobody could have imagined where we would be today. And even just 20 years from now, who knows what the tobacco landscape will look like. There has been great progress and we have learned a great deal. We've learned that every piece is connected to every other piece, and that anyone's success makes everyone's success more likely.

*As you use this guide, keep in mind the following points:*

### **Community Organizing is Key**

Media advocacy will never do the job alone, but it can be a powerful tool in the hands of savvy community organizers and policy advocates. It can amplify the community's voice and energize supporters. News coverage will add legitimacy and credibility to your efforts to eliminate tobacco sponsorship of rodeo and make it easier to attract supporters to the cause. Design your media advocacy so that it involves community members in the action. This is a good idea because the community members who object to tobacco sponsorship are the authentic voices who can speak with the highest moral authority on the issue. It is also a good idea because as more people gain the skills to make their case, the stronger your base will be. Share the power among spokespeople so everyone enhances their skills and knowledge and ability to work together, because change takes time. Bring community members together and arrange for trainings and practice sessions so supporters can practice talking aloud about tobacco sponsorship and what it means to them. Provide the space so community members can have a say about tobacco sponsorship at rodeos, and help them say it publicly.

### **Change Takes Time**

It would be terrific to eliminate tobacco sponsorship overnight, but we know it won't happen that way. Don't lose heart. Instead, take strength from the changes our society has experienced in tobacco over the last 50 years and know that progress can be made if advocates persist. The policy changes you institute will be lasting, shaping the rodeo in your community for many years to come. And, you'll be making a contribution to tobacco control efforts across the state and the nation. Every rodeo that eliminates tobacco sponsorship makes it easier for the next community to do it. Publicize and celebrate your victories, even the small ones.

### **Keep it Local**

Cowboys, ponies, and bulls may travel around, but the rodeo stays put. It builds its own traditions, and families build their traditions around it. Make sure that the media advocacy you plan respects those boundaries — but don't shy away from demanding change when it comes to tobacco sponsorship. Take your responsibility to your community's future seriously and call for what's right; just do it in a way that is respectful of people and place.

### **Assess Your Work**

Finally, pay attention to the effect your work is having on your target. Examine the news coverage you get — how is it framed? Does it reflect your position, and the specific solution you're seeking? What questions are you getting from reporters, and from your targets (those who have the power to make the change you desire)? Are you satisfied with your answers? What could be better? Evaluations do not have to be expensive or formal to be helpful. Discuss your work with your colleagues regularly so you can learn from failures and build on success. And remember to celebrate the victories!

The Appendix contains some of the hands-on materials we hope will make the job easier. Consider the examples there to be a starting point for your own strategy documents and media kits. Adapt them as you see fit.

Share your stories with us, and with the Tobacco-free Rodeos Project. All our contact information is in the Appendix.

Though we've come to the end of the Media Advocacy Guide, we are at the beginning of one of the new frontiers in tobacco control. Eliminating tobacco sponsorship of rodeos is challenging work — the issue is complicated, long-term, and very local. It won't be easy, but the history of tobacco control tells us that it won't be impossible either. If advocates stay resolutely focused on their goals and organize the local community, they will learn as they go and eventually eliminate tobacco company's presence in their community events.

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## Appendix

### Answers to Difficult Questions

#### *Difficult Questions that Minimize Harm from Spit Tobacco*

In these rodeos, these cowboys are risking their lives. What's the threat from a little chew?

*Tobacco is a lot more dangerous than any bull. Cowboys stay on the bull no longer than eight seconds — tobacco damage lasts a lifetime.*

*Cowboys make a choice to participate. Unfortunately, we don't have a choice about whether or not we are bombarded by tobacco ads just by going to the rodeo.*

*Cowboys know the risks of rodeo, but the tobacco companies hide the risks of tobacco.*

Nobody ever started chewing tobacco because there was a sign on a scoreboard. Isn't this a ridiculous concern?

*The company wouldn't be spending its marketing budget on our rodeo if they didn't think it would buy them some customers. Is our community's health for sale?*

Why do you say our sponsor is like any other tobacco company? They do a lot of good, their product doesn't have the secondhand smoke effect...

*All tobacco addicts and kills. This company has as much disregard for the health of their customers as any other tobacco company. No amount of marketing dollars can change that.*

#### *Difficult Questions that Minimize Harm from Tobacco Sponsorship*

What evidence do you have that event sponsorship causes anyone to use tobacco?

*Tobacco companies aren't stupid — they're advertising for the same reason any other company advertises: to sell more of their product.*

If tobacco sponsorship is limited to adult-only facilities, what's the problem?

*There's no safe age for tobacco use.*

*This isn't about where the ads are — it's about what is appropriate at our family event. Tobacco doesn't belong.*

*The tobacco company's name can be seen on the outside of the facility, where children can see it.*

Why should we give up spit tobacco sponsorship?

*Tobacco is a product that addicts and kills — it isn't appropriate for a tobacco company to be sponsoring an event that celebrates good health and physical fitness, and community pride.*

### **Difficult Questions that Evoke Freedom of Choice**

We are all free independent people who are old enough to make our own choices. Why are you trying to limit our options?

*A lot of us would like to attend the rodeo without being bombarded by tobacco messages — right now, we don't have that option.*

*Our rodeo is not financially dependent on tobacco — we need to get rid of tobacco sponsorship.*

You know, life is full of risks and people are intelligent and can make their own choices... Aren't you being kind of a nanny?

*People in this community are intelligent. That's why we don't want this company tainting our rodeo.*

*There is no free choice with an addictive product.*

### **Difficult Questions that Frame the Tobacco Industry as a Friend**

This company really put us on the map in this town. Don't you think we owe them some loyalty?

*We do not owe the tobacco industry anything — they've bought more than enough already.*

*They didn't put anyone on the map. Our rodeo is popular because of the athletes who participate in it. Big Tobacco is just trying to use the limelight of our rodeo to sell deadly products.*

If, as you say, alternative sponsors are there, why haven't they stepped forward?

*A lot of companies might not want to be associated with tobacco companies. Let's give them a chance to sponsor a rodeo that hasn't been tainted by tobacco.*

You are asking us to dishonor a contract we have. We don't go back on our word. And it's a legal product, why should we?

*The contract is the problem — we need to make sure we don't obligate ourselves to tobacco companies ever again. There are plenty of good companies out there who would love to be part of our rodeo — let's give them a chance.*

How can you ask us to reject sponsorship when what they're providing is scholarships that help send kids to college?

*The tobacco company isn't buying scholarships out of the goodness of its heart. If it was, it would be spending as much on them as they are on the paid ads they've been buying to attract new customers. Based on the way they spend their money, they're a lot more interested in sending our young people to the hospital than in sending them to college.*

Why should our community reject a sponsor who has given us so many resources?

*This shouldn't be about how much marketing money the companies have. If cocaine or heroin dealers offered to sponsor the rodeo, no one would accept it. We shouldn't accept it from tobacco companies either.*

*Tobacco hasn't just 'given' — they've taken, too. They've taken our health, and compromised our freedom to choose. They've gotten a bargain.*

### **Difficult Questions that Frame the Remedy as a Slippery Slope**

If we give in to you guys on getting rid of this kind of sponsorship, where will you draw the line?

*Tobacco is unique. It addicts and kills when used as intended.*

How can we justify eliminating spit tobacco sponsorship when we know the alcohol companies are going to be next in line?

*Some might agree with you that alcohol companies would be a bad alternative sponsor, but today we're just talking about the current sponsor — a tobacco company — and we're here to say that this community doesn't think that this sponsor is an appropriate one for our rodeo.*

*If alcohol is causing the same problems in the community, then we shouldn't have alcohol sponsors either.*

*There are lots of good companies out there; let's give some of them a chance.*

### **Helpful Pivot Phrases**

A pivot phrase helps you transition from a reporter's off-target question to the answer you want to give. Don't feel trapped by the questions a reporter is asking you. You have right — and responsibility — to keep the interview on track. When the questions start to wander, try these pivot phrases to help get back to the topic you want to talk about.

*That's an interesting question, let me remind you, though...*

*Before I forget, I think the audience / your readers would want to know that...*

*Let me put that in perspective...*

*What's important to remember, however...*

*What I really want to talk about is...*

*What's most important is...*

*Before we get off that subject / topic, let me add...*

*That's not my area of expertise, but what I can tell you is...*

*That's a good point, but I think your audience / readers would be interested in knowing that...*

*Let me just add...*

*And that reminds me...*

*Let me answer you by saying that...*

*Let me give you some background information...*

*Let's take a closer look at...*

*That's an important point because...*

*What that means is...*

*Another thing to remember is...*

*Now that you've covered \_\_\_\_\_, let's move on to \_\_\_\_\_.*

*You may be asking why \_\_\_\_\_ is true...*

*While \_\_\_\_\_ is certainly important, don't forget that...*

*Certainly parents have a responsibility to educate their kids about the dangers of tobacco. But parents need help...*

*Of course parents have some responsibility to let their kids know tobacco is dangerous. But parents aren't responsible for the ads kids see at the rodeo. That's why we need to...*

*As I said...*

## **Strategy Ideas for Eliminating Tobacco Sponsorship at Rodeos**

In our discussion of overall strategy, we raised six questions that need to be answered in the process of creating a media advocacy strategy. Looking at these questions creatively can help develop an effective strategy. For example,

### **What Policy Approaches will Address the Problem of Tobacco Sponsorship of Rodeos?**

Although some policy approaches are straightforward and obvious, others are less orthodox. Consider the following possibilities:

**ASK RODEO ORGANIZERS TO END TOBACCO SPONSORSHIPS.** Adopting a formal policy to eliminate tobacco sponsorship is the most direct approach to the problem – no one is forcing the organizers to work with tobacco companies and the more public pressure that is put on them to end their relationships with tobacco, the more uncomfortable these relationships will become. Although organizers do receive money from tobacco companies, they will be less likely to embrace the relationship if the 'cost' of accepting this money is increased by publicly shaming them for putting tobacco money ahead of the health of the community.

**MONITOR TOBACCO INDUSTRY BEHAVIOR TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE COMPLYING WITH THE VOLUNTARY AGREEMENTS MADE UNDER THE SETTLEMENT OF THE LAWSUIT WITH THE STATE.** The Attorney General's office in most states is responsible for enforcing the Master Settlement Agreement and so is already monitoring industry behavior, but they can use additional information from citizens who can knowledgeably serve a watchdog role. Contact the Attorney General's office for details on the settlement and how to report noncompliance. A subset of this strategy is to publicize the details of the limitations imposed on tobacco companies by the voluntary agreement. This publicity can help other citizens monitor industry behavior and also reinforce the idea that tobacco companies are not selling normal, everyday products but are selling very dangerous products that require detailed oversight from state law enforcement officials.

Another subset of this strategy is to monitor the actions of the Attorney General's office closely and generate local media coverage whenever they cite a tobacco company for violating voluntary agreements in other locations. The news 'hook' can be asking if

similar violations have taken place locally and what organizers are doing to ensure tobacco industry compliance at local events.

**PUBLICLY CALL ON TOBACCO COMPANIES TO SIGN VOLUNTARY AGREEMENTS TO NOT SPONSOR ANY SPORTING EVENTS.** Existing settlement agreements allow for some sponsorship of sporting events but limits such sponsorship significantly. By urging a stronger agreement, you can force the question, if tobacco sponsorship is harmful enough to limit in the first place, why should it be allowed at all? That is, why do rodeo fans deserve less protection than fans of other sports, where tobacco sponsorship doesn't exist? This might be a first step in a long-term plan to get a formal policy in place to eliminate tobacco sponsorship.

**REPLACE THE FUNDING.** At first glance, simply replacing tobacco industry sponsorship funds with money from elsewhere seems like an obvious strategy. However, even though the amount of money involved may not be huge in some cases, replacing it may not be as easy as it sounds. Tobacco companies, after all, not only provide funding for the current year, but also offer rodeo organizers long-term commitments and stability, benefits that health groups may be hard-pressed to provide. In addition, it may be more cost-effective to use funds to organize in the community and develop long-term advocacy capacity than to use it for a one-time sponsorship of an event.

However, if you can successfully locate funds from an alternate source or combination of sources, it may still be worthwhile to make the offer to rodeo organizers. Doing so can highlight the monetary relationship between tobacco companies and the rodeo and effectively eliminate the “we need the money” argument that organizers frequently make. Several years ago, a wealthy advocate in New York City offered to replace the \$250,000 that the New York Mets received each year from Philip Morris for a huge Marlboro billboard in the outfield of Shea Stadium. Although the Mets never accepted the offer, the advocate was able to draw a huge amount of media attention to the billboard, which was later removed.

**ASK FOR THE ELIMINATION OF FREE SAMPLES, EVEN AT ADULT-ONLY FACILITIES.** Although voluntary agreements allow tobacco companies to provide free samples to adults (under certain conditions), rodeo organizers can ask that sampling not be included as part of any sponsorship agreement they sign with a tobacco company. It can be argued that the product is just as harmful for adults as it is for children and that the addictive nature of the product makes free sampling a particularly bad idea. Because tobacco products are addictive, a consumer may be physically affected by a free sample of tobacco in ways that are far different — and potentially much more harmful — than they would be with samples of, say, food or beverages.

**ASK LOCAL PUBLICATIONS TO BAN TOBACCO ADS.** Although tobacco companies have a limited right to advertising, no publication is required to accept such advertising. Many newspapers across the country have already established policies banning tobacco advertising. Local newspapers can be asked not to accept any advertising that includes any tobacco company name brand, even if it is in conjunction with the sponsorship of a local event. An alternative to this strategy is to demand equal time — ask for free health ads for every ad that is run with a tobacco message. Some advocates have created hard-hitting, controversial counter-ads and offered to pay for the space or airtime to run them. When their offer is turned down (by publishers who don't want to offend other advertisers), the advocates then gain free media by exploiting the controversy. (This strategy works best in a media market with multiple media outlets — a newspaper isn't likely to provide much news coverage to protests over a decision it made itself.)

**ASK FOR ADDITIONAL HEALTH WARNINGS.** If advertising and sampling are allowed at a rodeo, ask organizers to provide additional health warnings to consumers. Although some

health warnings are required by law, there is nothing preventing a venue from providing any additional health information it wants. Offer to provide the warnings and background information. If your offer is turned down, create free media by publicizing the health information that ‘organizers didn’t want you to see.’

### **Who has the Power to Make the Necessary Change?**

Who has the power to make the changes for the policy options you pursue? Think creatively; often there is significant power from nontraditional sources. Consider the power any of the following have to affect rodeo sponsorship decisions in your area:

- ▶ *Rodeo organizers*
- ▶ *Rodeo committees*
- ▶ *All relevant permit boards*
- ▶ *City and county governments (e.g. for monitoring use of public land)*
- ▶ *Health departments (who can call for more stringent warnings, for example)*
- ▶ *Newspaper publishers (who can turn down tobacco ads)*
- ▶ *Bar owners (who can refuse to participate in tobacco-related promotions)*
- ▶ *Local groups that can refuse to participate in the rodeo until the tobacco connections are severed*

### **Who Must be Mobilized to Apply Pressure for Change?**

Who is in a unique position to apply pressure to anyone on the above list? Again, think creatively:

- ▶ *All rodeo fans and supporters*
- ▶ *Doctors, dentists, other health professionals*
- ▶ *Victims or relatives of victims of tobacco-related disease*
- ▶ *Students (4H, Future Farmers, etc.)*
- ▶ *Current or former rodeo competitors*
- ▶ *Co-sponsors (who may not want to be associated with tobacco companies — or be attacked for being associated with tobacco companies)*
- ▶ *Local business and civic leaders who want a healthy rodeo*
- ▶ *Non-tobacco advertisers on local media*
- ▶ *All rodeo parade participants (who can be asked to speak against the double messages being sent by tobacco sponsorship)*
- ▶ *Faith groups*

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## Worksheets

### Worksheet for Developing Strategy

Answering these questions should help you focus your policy goal so you can be as specific as possible. Do this before figuring out what your media advocacy plan will be — the answers to these questions will help you determine whether you even need a media advocacy plan.

- 1. What is the specific policy needing change?*
- 2. What problem will the policy solve?*
- 3. Who has the power to make the change? (The answer to this question is your target.)*
- 4. What's the target's current position on your policy goal?*
- 5. Who opposes the change (if not the target)? What are their arguments?*
- 6. Can you achieve your policy goal by working with the target directly, and/or do you need to engage the media to influence the target?*
- 7. Is there a timeline / deadline for your policy goal?*
- 8. What needs to be done next, and who will do it? Then what?*

## **Monitoring the Media and Sample Contact Form**

It is important to keep track of the reporters, editors, and producers you have contacted about your news events so you know who is interested in tobacco company sponsorship of rodeos. A media list can be a simple card file or an electronic data base, whatever works for your group. Some organizations may already have lists of reporters interested in health or sports or other rodeo sponsorship issues; share lists when you can. The most important thing is to be sure they are current. Reporters move around a lot, especially in small communities. A list can go out of date at the bat of an eye: addresses change, reporters and editors come and go, publications and stations alter their formats and sometimes go out of business. Find out with a phone call if you're sending your news release to the right person.

A basic list should include names, affiliations, addresses, and phone and fax numbers for all local (and some regional or national) journalists covering your issue. Compiling and updating a media list requires attention, but you can't operate without it. Here's a sample form — adapt it to your needs.

## Media Contact Form

This form completed by:	
Date & Time:	
Contact Initiated by:	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff / <input type="checkbox"/> Media
Reporter's Name:	
Title:	
Media Outlet:	
<input type="checkbox"/> TV / <input type="checkbox"/> Print / <input type="checkbox"/> Radio	
Address:	
Phone #:	
Fax #:	
Email:	
This contact was about:	
Request/Comments/Notes:	
Follow-Up Needed:	
Follow-Up Needed by (Date):	
Follow-Up Completed by (Who):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Add to Media List / Added to Media List (Date):	

## News Conference Checklist

\_\_\_\_\_ ***Is your room large enough to hold the invited number of journalists, plus a few more?*** Always leave yourself plenty of room for last-minute attendees

\_\_\_\_\_ ***Is there parking nearby for attendees?*** If necessary, have signs directing attendees from the parking lot to the conference site.

\_\_\_\_\_ ***Can the conference site accommodate TV cameras?***

\_\_\_\_\_ ***Are there enough (and powerful enough) electrical outlets and extension cords for cameras and microphones?***

Make sure your office is staffed before, during and after the conference so the reporters can reach someone to get directions or additional information if necessary.

Set up a media table near the entrance where you can greet arriving journalists. Make sure you have extra media kits and other background materials, even if you've already sent them out.

Have a complete list of invited reporters and check them off as they arrive, or create a sign-in sheet for names, addresses and affiliations of all attendees. Keep track of every media representative there, and use the information to update your files later.

Give each attendee a media kit, including an agenda for the conference. Have spare pens and paper available. Identify speakers via table tents or nametags. Make your speakers and guests available for post-conference interviews, in person and by phone.

\_\_\_\_\_ ***Are presentation materials prepared?*** Make sure the slides are right side up; pre-test the overhead projector or slide projection and have a spare bulb available. Have two copies of any video or audiotapes you are going to play in case one of them breaks.

\_\_\_\_\_ ***Do your microphones work?***

\_\_\_\_\_ ***Are there refreshments available?*** You may want to provide regular and decaffeinated coffee, etc. Be sure speakers have water available.

\_\_\_\_\_ ***Are rest rooms available?***

Ask yourself every question that could possibly be important, and prepare yourself for every possible problem. Rehearse your news conference until you are comfortable with it.

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## Rodeo Resources Page

### The Tobacco-free Events Project

The Tobacco-free Events Project is a treasure trove of information on eliminating tobacco sponsorship from rodeos. Check out the Web site <http://www.bucktobacco.org> for information and resources on rodeos, bar nights, policy, and sponsorship in general.

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<http://www.bucktobacco.org>

### The Rodeo Toolkit

The Rodeo Toolkit, developed by the Tobacco Control Section of the California Department of Health Services, contains valuable information regarding tobacco sponsorship at rodeos, including an overview of rodeo events; information on spit tobacco risks; sample tobacco-free policies for public events and venues; and contact information for many PRCA-approved California rodeos. It comes with the Tack and Tools booklet, a leave-behind educational piece for rodeo organizers. Copies may be obtained for \$7.50 plus shipping by contacting:

Tobacco Education Clearinghouse of California (TECC)  
4 Carbonero Way  
Scotts Valley, CA 95066  
Phone: (800) 258-9090  
Fax: (831) 438-1442

### The Tobacco Industry Monitoring Evaluation (TIME) Project

Funded by the California Department of Health Services, Tobacco Control Section, The TIME Project monitors tobacco industry activities and tracks tobacco marketing and promotional strategies in California and several comparison states. This information is designed to help tobacco control groups in California plan their local and statewide efforts.

The TIME Project provides technical assistance to tobacco control groups interested in tracking tobacco marketing activities. Its special areas of expertise include ways to track and understand tobacco marketing through:

*National Magazines*  
*Weekly Entertainment Newspapers*  
*General Audience and Ethnic Audience Newspapers*  
*Tobacco-Sponsored Sporting and Community Events such as Rodeos and Racing*  
*Tobacco-Sponsored Bar and Club Promotions*  
*Retail Store Advertising*  
*Direct Mail Promotions*  
*Televised Tobacco-Sponsored Rodeo and Racing Events*  
*Tobacco Corporate Donations*  
*Tobacco Corporate Websites*  
*Tobacco Industry-Sponsored Youth Tobacco Prevention Campaigns*  
*Tobacco Industry-Sponsored Programs to Educate Retailers About Underage Sales*  
*And other areas...*

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 626.457.4012 (fax)  
 tesscruz@usc.edu

**California Attorney General's Office**

To learn about recent tobacco control enforcement activities or to report possible Master Settlement Agreement violations you can contact the California Attorney General's Tobacco Litigation and Enforcement Section:

Web site (which includes news releases about enforcement activity):  
<http://caag.state.ca.us./tobacco/index.htm>

Mailing address:  
 Tobacco Litigation and Enforcement Section  
 Office of the Attorney General  
 P.O. Box 944255  
 Sacramento, CA 94244-2550

Phone number for leaving a message for the Tobacco Section: 916.565.6486  
 Email: Go to the "Contact Us" section from the Web site.

**URLs for Rodeo Organizations**

California rodeo section of the About.com website  
<http://rodeo.about.com/cs/california>

Association of Rodeo Committees  
<http://www.rodeocommittees.org>

Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA)  
<http://www.prorodeo.com>

California PRCA circuit  
<http://www.californiaprorodeo.com>

Professional Bull Riders, Inc. (PBR)  
<http://www.pbrnow.com>

National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA)  
<http://www.collegerodeo.com>

Women's Professional Rodeo Association (WPRA)  
<http://www.wpra.com>

## URLs for Rodeo Sponsorship

Local rodeos often print their “rate sheets” for different levels of sponsorship so potential sponsors can make a selection. For examples and a peek at some former sponsors and their level of sponsorship, see:

The Auburn Rodeo  
<http://www.auburnrodeo.com/sponsors.htm> (*USST is listed as a corporate sponsor*)

California Salinas Rodeo  
<http://www.carodeo.com/sponsorpkgs.html>  
<http://www.carodeo.com/2002sponsors.html>

The Folsom Rodeo  
<http://www.folsomchamber.com/rodeo.html>  
 (scroll to the bottom to see the information on sponsorship)

The Grand National Rodeo, Horse, and Stock Show  
<http://www.grandnationalrodeo.com/involve.html>

Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA)  
<http://prorodeo.com/Sport/Member/3.5.rodeomostvaluableteam.html>  
 (Scroll down to “PRCA rodeos attract top cowboys, specialty acts and national sponsors”)

## URLs for Spit Tobacco Companies

<http://www.us smokeless.com/> (*general site*)  
<http://www.ustinc.com/> (*geared toward investors*)

*Here is where U.S. Smokeless Tobacco boasts about how its primary brands, Copenhagen and Skoal, each account for more than \$1 billion in sales. The company also produces Red Seal, Rooster, and Bandit brands. Explore this site to investigate the company's vision, its statements about corporate responsibility, and corporate giving strategy.*

<http://www.swedishmatch.com/eng/brands/smokeless/index-chewing.asp>

*Swedish Match makes Red Man, Golden Blend, and Southern Pride chewing tobacco. This company's violation of California law led to a settlement that provided the funds to develop this Guide.*

<http://www.susk.net/dip/>

*This site is for The Snuff Alliance®, an international snuff users group.*

## **Tobacco Document Web Sites**

There are several web sites that allow you to search through tobacco industry documents that were made public as part of the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement. Among the biggest sites are:

The Tobacco Control Archives, housed at the library of the University of California, San Francisco  
<http://galen.library.ucsf.edu/tobacco/>

Legacy Tobacco Documents Library, also housed out of the University of California, San Francisco  
<http://legacy.library.ucsf.edu/index.html>

Tobacco Documents On-Line  
<http://tobaccodocuments.org/>

The Roswell Park Cancer Institute has an extensive collection of tobacco industry advertising available online, with a section focused on tobacco industry bar promotions that may be of special interest to those working on rodeo issues:

<http://roswell.tobaccodocuments.org/index.htm>  
[http://roswell.tobaccodocuments.org/bar\\_promotions\\_home.htm](http://roswell.tobaccodocuments.org/bar_promotions_home.htm)

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## Media Kit Samples

This section includes examples of the materials you might provide for reporters in a media kit (or press kit — we say media kit because we don't want broadcast journalists to feel left out). Typically, a media kit includes everything a reporter would need to tell the story, or at least get a very good start on one: a news release that tells the story, written in newspaper style; background material about the sponsorship issue like a fact sheet about your local rodeo or a "Question & Answer" sheet that explains what's wrong with tobacco sponsorship of your rodeo; statements from presenters at your news conference (if you have one); copies of news articles or op-eds that have already been published on the issue (for background); other materials to give the reporter good sources and direction on the story such as names and phone numbers of people to call on the issue (include home phone numbers whenever you can — it lets the reporter know you are serious about being accessible); copies of the policy language you are proposing or samples of other policies that you'd like the rodeo committee to adapt and adopt; and anything else that you think will help the reporter tell the story.

Be sure to differentiate between the materials you produce for a media kit and those that you create as tools for yourself and your allies. There are other important materials you will want to produce but not necessarily include in a media kit. For example, the answers to hard questions included in this Appendix could be adapted for your locale and the specifics of your rodeo or other tobacco sponsored event, and you would want to share that with other advocates so you have a starting point from which to craft the answers that make the most sense to you to those questions that you anticipate getting from reporters — but you would not include that document in a media kit. Instead, in the media kit you would include a simple one-page "Question & Answer" sheet that explains what's wrong with tobacco sponsorship of the rodeo from your perspective — slightly different than the strategy documents you produce for your allies. Similarly, you would not include a sample op-ed or sample letter to the editor in a media kit, but you would include op-eds, letters, or news articles that already had been published.

### News Releases

A news release is used to announce a press event, a new study or report, a public demonstration, or anything else of interest to the media. Although you can be creative with the contents of a news release, there is a general format that most people use. Here are some guidelines:

**KEEP IT SHORT.** *A news release should almost never be more than two pages long and, ideally, will be only one page.*

**GET TO THE POINT.** *Reporters, editors and producers may not get to your second paragraph if the first one doesn't interest them. Include the basic facts — who, what, where, when and why — and make sure the most important point is mentioned up front.*

**USE A GOOD QUOTE.** *Most news releases contain a quote from someone in the organization sending out the press release and /or another expert on the issue. This is a chance to creatively state the main purpose of the news release in your own words. Write the quote you'd like to see the next day in the newspaper.*

**MENTION ALL RELEVANT DETAILS.** *List all available contacts or speakers, good photo opportunities, etc.*

**KNOW WHO YOU'RE SENDING IT TO AND WHAT THEY WANT.** *Different news organizations may have different needs and expectations. Some small town newspapers, for example, will sometimes run a news release virtually intact as an article. Other outlets prefer to do more of their own reporting and want good contacts.*

## Sample News Release

### NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 28, 2003



Contact: :  
Jane Smith 555-1234  
or John Jones 555-4321

### Study Documents Amount of Tobacco Advertising at Rodeo

A local health group estimated that the average person who attended last month's rodeo was exposed to at least 65 separate tobacco ads.

The Jackson County Health Alliance counted ads in programs, at a sampling booth set up on the rodeo grounds and in flyers distributed to rodeo attendees to reach their startling figure. The official rodeo program featured a tobacco ad on the back cover, dramatically increasing the number of times each person at the rodeo was exposed to it.

Dr. Alice Lewis, Chair of the Health Alliance and a local physician, said, "The study shows that the role of the rodeo in our town is changing. What used to be a family-friendly sports event is increasingly becoming just a venue for tobacco companies to sell their products."

The Health Alliance is asking the organizers of the rodeo to not renew the contract they currently have with a Connecticut-based tobacco company. "As a community, we need to demand that our rodeo be kept free of tobacco advertisers," said Lewis.

The study also estimated that over three-fourths of rodeo attendees were offered free samples of tobacco products. "This isn't just a problem of commercialization," said Jorge Lopez, a volunteer with a health group that is part of the Alliance. "You have to remember that this is a lethal product. There is no safe level of tobacco use. A community event like the rodeo shouldn't help promote this product in any way, shape, or form."

The Health Alliance said that they would continue to monitor ad exposure at future rodeos and other community events to see if the problem is getting worse.

# # #

Note to editors: A summary of the study, a chart comparing exposure of tobacco ads to other ads, and a photo-ready logo of the Jackson County Health Alliance are available on request

*Here's a second sample, for the following year's event.*

**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
July 28, 2004



**Contact: :**  
Jane Smith 555-1234  
or John Jones 555-4321

**Study Documents Amount of Tobacco Advertising at Rodeo**

A local health group estimated that the average person who attended last month's rodeo was exposed to at least 52 separate tobacco ads.

The Jackson County Health Alliance presented its second study of tobacco promotions in programs, at a sampling booth set up on the rodeo grounds and in flyers distributed to rodeo attendees to the rodeo committee's public meeting. The official rodeo program featured a tobacco ad on the back cover, dramatically increasing the number of times each person at the rodeo was exposed to it.

A similar study last year found that rodeo patrons were exposed to 65 ads. Although the amount declined this year, Dr. Alice Lewis, Chair of the Health Alliance and a local physician, said that it isn't necessarily the sign of a good trend. "Being exposed to over 50 tobacco ads is too high a price to pay for simply wanting to attend a rodeo," Dr. Lewis said. "Although the amount of the ads declined slightly from last year, the amount is still shocking. It's clear we can't wait for tobacco companies to simply decide to stop advertising; we need to make a decision to stop accepting these ads."

The Health Alliance is asking the organizers of the rodeo to not renew the contract they currently have with a Connecticut-based tobacco company. "As a community, we need to demand that our rodeo be kept free of tobacco advertisers," said Lewis.

The group is also concerned about the free samples of tobacco products that are offered to rodeo patrons. Bill Smith, a student at Jackson County High School and a volunteer for the Health Alliance noted that safeguards that were supposed to limit free samples to adults, weren't effective. "I was able to walk right in the tent and get a sample, a free hat and a water bottle. In fact, I walked in the tent three times and was not asked for an i.d. once," said Smith.

The Health Alliance said that they would continue to monitor ad exposure at future rodeos and other community events.

# # #

Note to editors: A summary of the study, a chart comparing exposure of tobacco ads to other ads, and a photo-ready logo of the Jackson County Health Alliance are available on request.

## Sample Media Advisory

### **MEDIA ADVISORY**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
July 28, 2003



**Contact:**  
Joe Camille  
Media Coordinator  
Jackson County  
Health Alliance  
555-6543

**WHO:** Jackson County Health Alliance, a group of health care organizations and voluntary associations working to reduce tobacco use in Jackson County.

**WHAT:** To mark the beginning of this year's rodeo, the Health Alliance will be releasing a study of tobacco advertising and marketing related to the rodeo. The study documents the number of tobacco ads that rodeo attendees are subject to via the rodeo program, related flyers, a tobacco sampling booth set up on rodeo grounds, and other venues.

In addition to the results from the study, information about the health consequences of tobacco use and the impact of tobacco advertising will be presented. Speakers will include local health experts, a marketing professional and a high school student volunteer who helped compile information used in the study.

**WHEN:** 10:00 am, July 28, 2003

**WHERE:** The study will be released at a press conference outside of the rodeo grounds, within site of a large tent where free tobacco samples are distributed to rodeo fans.

**WHY:** The Jackson County Health Alliance is concerned about the negative health consequences caused by tobacco use and about the negative impact tobacco sponsorship has on the local rodeo. Its goal is to try to convince rodeo organizers to commit to finding more appropriate sponsors for future events.

# # #

## Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor can be a good way to respond to news coverage of a local event or to raise a new issue. The letters section is generally one of the best read sections of the newspaper and it is accessible to anyone. For guidelines on writing to a publication, check the publication itself. Often these guidelines are printed on the letters page. In general, try to:

**KEEP IT SHORT.** *Most letters are no more than 200 to 300 words long. Resist the temptation to say everything; pick a message and stick with it.*

**BE SPECIFIC.** *If you are writing in response to a previous letter or article, refer to the article by headline and date. Keep in mind that readers of your letter may not remember the specific details of the article you are responding to. Your letter should stand alone.*

**USE CREDENTIALS** — *but only if they will help you make your point. In some instances, your status as a public health expert or medical specialist may be helpful. In other instances, your status as a parent, teacher, or civic club member may be more powerful.*

**BE TIMELY.** *If you are commenting on a community event, do so close to the event itself. If you are responding to an article or editorial in the paper, do so as quickly as possible.*

**BE PART OF A CROWD.** *When several letters are written on a similar subject, the likelihood of one or more of them getting published increases significantly.*

## Sample Letter to the Editor

To the editor:

As happy as I am to see the rodeo back in town (“Cowboys Gear Up for Rodeo,” June 11, 2003), there is part of it that I’m not happy about — the primary sponsor, a tobacco company.

For me, the rodeo has always been a place I can take my family and enjoy a day of watching well-trained cowboys perform their skills.

How does tobacco fit in with that? Rodeos are about sports — not spit. Sponsorship from an out-of-state tobacco company goes against everything the rodeo is about — community, sports and family. Surely there must be some local businesses who would be glad to sponsor this event.

I urge everyone attending the rodeo to let the organizers know that you are happy to be at the rodeo — but unhappy to be the latest target of the tobacco industry’s marketing strategy.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Your town and phone number(s) (so the paper can call and verify that you indeed sent the letter).

## Sample Letter to the Editor

To the editor:

As a doctor I must say I was horrified to see the logo of a tobacco company prominently displayed on page one in the background of a photograph accompanying an article about last week's rodeo ("Record Crowds Attend Rodeo," June 26, 2003.)

Unfortunately, this free advertisement merely echoed the tobacco ads that assaulted everyone attending the rodeo — from the ads in the program to the scoreboard in the arena to the free samples at the "adults-only" booth on the grounds. For those attending the rodeo, it was sometimes hard to remember that you were at an athletic event and not at a tobacco marketing exposition.

No one should need reminding that tobacco is a product that is lethal when used as the manufacturer intends. The city should do a better job of regulating who is allowed to sponsor community events and your paper should do a better job of not handing out free advertising to a product that kills its customers.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Your town and phone number(s)

## Sample Op-ed

Op-ed pieces — columns that usually appear opposite the editorial page — are an alternative to letters. Become familiar with your local newspaper’s policy for printing opinion pieces. Out of a sense of fairness and community service, some newspapers will accept op-ed pieces that take a different approach from their own editorial pages. The newspaper sees it as its duty to provide a forum for community voices, and that’s what the op-ed page is for, so don’t hesitate to offer them something to print.

Op-ed pieces are usually more in-depth than letters to the editor — generally three double-spaced pages or about 750 words (check your local paper for typical lengths). Although op-ed pieces are longer than letters, it is still important to keep to one theme and only two to four major points. Asking a local politician or other prominent citizen to author the op-ed may give it more attention and increase the likelihood that it will be published.

Again, the best source for guidance on a newspaper’s op-ed policy is the paper itself. Ask specific questions of the editorial staff and read the op-ed page to get a good feel for what works and what doesn’t.

After you write an op-ed, “pitch it” to the op-ed editor, often in a brief email describing the topic, why it is important and why it is timely. You can also call and ask the opinion page editor if they’d be interested in seeing your op-ed. Or you can simply mail it in, and follow-up with a phone call or an email. After the paper publishes it, make copies to include in future media kits and to share with your allies and targets.

Here’s an example of what an op-ed on eliminating tobacco sponsorship from rodeos might look like (feel free to use it as a starting point and create your own). This one is 528 words.

## *Using Sport to Sell Spit*

*By Anne Anderson, M.D.*

Have you heard? Tobacco is back in the bars.

Although California bars have been blissfully smoke-free for more than a year now, tobacco companies haven’t given up on using bars to reach out for more potential customers.

How do they do it? By using bars to stage elaborate promotions designed to glorify their products — products that, incidentally, have no safe level of usage and cause death when used as intended.

Tobacco industry-sponsored bar nights have been an increasing phenomenon throughout the state. These marketing demonstrations — often disguised as “parties” — involve discounts, giveaways, cheap drinks and free samples. How can you give away free samples of tobacco in a smoke-free bar you ask? Well, one way is to give away free samples of smokeless, or ‘spit’ tobacco.

Companies that sell spit tobacco don’t mind the smoke-free bar scene. To them, any bar patron is a potential customer.

One of the many sad things about these promotions is that they are frequently held in conjunction with rodeo week. That’s right, the week that celebrates family fun, community tradition and wholesome athletic competition, is being used by tobacco companies as just another opportunity to sell their weed.

How does tobacco fit in with the parades, concerts and rodeo events that otherwise dominate rodeo week? Well, it doesn’t. Or shouldn’t, at least.

Unfortunately, using the age-old strategy of writing checks, tobacco companies (most of them headquartered in eastern states where most people's association with rodeo and California is Rodeo Drive) have entrenched themselves as part of rodeo week. As rodeo "sponsors" (read: advertisers), tobacco companies get the right to plaster their name all over town for a week — in the rodeo program, on signs, the scoreboard, flyers, etc.

And what do we get in return? As a community, we get the risk of more tobacco users, and more death and disease as a result. As parents, we get to explain to our children why real cowboys who care about their health wouldn't let themselves be manipulated by tobacco company marketers.

All of this is bad enough, but drawing bars into it really crosses the line. Unfortunately, bars tend to attract a lot of people who have health and social problems related to alcohol use. To prey on that crowd to try to get them to use another addictive unhealthy product is marketing at its worst.

And when tobacco companies use the good name of our rodeo as an excuse to engage in these marketing activities, it hurts the image of our rodeo — and our community.

So what can we do about it?

The Madison County Health Alliance is encouraging our rodeo organizers to adopt a new policy prohibiting tobacco sponsorship of the rodeo. That is a worthy goal we should all support.

In the meantime, we should let the organizers know we don't appreciate them selling out our community to a tobacco company. And we should let bar owners know we don't support tobacco-sponsored promotions there, either. The best way to communicate that message is to simply stay away. Instead, patronize the many bars and restaurants in town who aren't engaged in helping tobacco companies find new customers.

— Dr. Anderson is a family practice physician and member of the Tobacco Free Rodeo Coalition.

## Sample Fact Sheet for Rodeo Media Kits

Here is an example of a “Spit Tobacco Fact Sheet” you could use in a media kit for reporters. Add local data for your region if you have it — reporters always prefer local data.

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# Spit Tobacco Fact Sheet

### ***What health problems are associated with spit tobacco?***

The Surgeon General has determined that the use of oral snuff can lead to oral cancer, gum disease, and nicotine addiction,<sup>10</sup> and increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, including heart attack.<sup>11</sup>

Constant exposure to tobacco juice causes cancer of the esophagus, pharynx, larynx, stomach and pancreas. Spit tobacco users are up to 50 times more likely to get oral cancer than non-users. These cancers can form within five years of regular use.<sup>12</sup>

Spit tobacco causes leukoplakia, a disease of the mouth characterized by white patches and oral lesions on the cheeks, gums, and/or tongue. Leukoplakia, which can lead to oral cancer, occurs in more than half of all users in the first three years of use. Studies have found that 60 to 78 percent of spit tobacco users have oral lesions.<sup>13</sup>

Gum disease (gingivitis) is also caused by spit tobacco.<sup>14</sup>

Spit tobacco users are four times more likely than nonusers to have decayed dental root surfaces.<sup>15</sup>

### ***How does advertising effect consumption, especially among youth?***

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the development and marketing of “starter products” with such features as pouches and cherry flavoring have switched spit tobacco from a product used primarily by older men to one for which young men comprise the largest portion of the market.<sup>16</sup>

A national survey conducted in 2002 showed that kids were more than twice as likely as adults to recall tobacco advertising. While only 27 percent of all adults recalled seeing a tobacco ad in the two weeks prior to the survey, 64 percent of kids aged 12 to 17 reported seeing tobacco ads.<sup>17</sup>

A study in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute found that teens are more likely to be influenced to smoke by advertising than they are by peer pressure.<sup>18</sup>

A study in the Journal of Marketing found that teenagers are three times as sensitive as adults to cigarette advertising.<sup>19</sup>

Eighty-eight percent of youth (12 — 17) smokers prefer Marlboro, Camel and Newport — the three most heavily advertised brands. Marlboro, the most heavily advertised brand, constitutes almost 55 percent of the youth market but only about 36 percent of smokers over age 25.<sup>20</sup>

### ***Since the tobacco companies settled the lawsuit with the states, hasn't advertising decreased?***

After signing a multistate settlement agreement in late 1998 in response to lawsuits from state Attorneys General and intended, in part, to severely restrict tobacco advertising in general and tobacco advertising aimed at kids in particular, United States Smokeless Tobacco Company (USST) actually increased its “selling, advertising and administrative” expenditures by more than 14%. The most recent FTC report on all the major spit tobacco companies show that their total marketing expenditures increased by 17% just from 1998 to 1999, from \$145.5 million to an all-time high of \$170.2 million.<sup>21</sup>

## Sample Q & A for Rodeo Media Kits

Here is an example of a “Question and Answer” sheet you could adapt to include in a media kit for reporters. It is designed to answer the basic questions for a reporter doing a story on eliminating tobacco sponsorship.

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## Our Answers to Your Questions about Tobacco Sponsorship of Rodeo

### **Why are you protesting the sponsorship of the rodeo?**

Like everyone else in the community, we take a lot of pride in the rodeo and value what it means to our community. We feel strongly that tobacco is not an appropriate association for an athletic, family-oriented community event. We want to work with rodeo organizers to help find alternate, more appropriate sponsors.

### **Don't tobacco companies have a right to advertise? Are you advocating infringing on their free speech rights?**

Actually, tobacco companies are quite restricted in their “right” to advertise. For example, they haven’t been allowed to advertise on television or radio for over thirty years. And voluntary agreements that they have signed restrict their right to market directly to children.

But the important thing to remember is that the rodeo has the right to choose what kind of advertisers it wants as sponsors. Some products and services are clearly inappropriate sponsors for a family-oriented, athletic event — none more so than tobacco products. After all, tobacco is addictive and causes death when used as intended.

### **Who is harmed by tobacco company sponsorship?**

All advertising is used to gain new customers; if it didn’t, companies wouldn’t be dumb enough to spend their money on it. So when a tobacco company sponsors a rodeo and gets its name associated with it, you can assume that, in some way, it is increasing the number of people who will use its product. And a large percentage of people who use tobacco products are harmed by them.

Perhaps there is more immediate harm, however, to the rodeo itself. The rodeo is an important part of this community and a well-respected, family-oriented event. By associating itself with a tobacco sponsor, the rodeo is hurting its own image.

When we allow sponsorship we allow the tobacco company name to be a normal part of the rodeo — the association with rodeo lets the company distance itself from the true association, death and disease. The sponsorship makes the product seem normal, but it is not normal. Most people don’t use it, and those that do die sooner.

### **When the tobacco companies settled the lawsuits with the states, didn't they cut back on their advertising?**

No. Since the signing of the 1998 settlement, spending on advertising for all tobacco products, including spit tobacco, has gone up.

### **If tobacco companies don't sponsor the rodeo, who will?**

Tobacco companies aren’t the only sponsors around for rodeos. After all, rodeos existed before they had tobacco sponsorship and they’ll continue to exist without it. Any number of companies could benefit from associating with the rodeo — the only thing they

don't have is the long, personal relationship with the rodeo organizers. We need to put pressure on other companies to take over for tobacco companies and the organizers need to seek and embrace new, more appropriate sponsors.

Besides, it may be easier for other corporate sponsors to highlight their products as part of the rodeo. Everyone's seen race car drivers drink milk in the winner's circle; what's a champion cowboy supposed to do - spit in front of everyone?

***If someone doesn't like tobacco advertising, can't they just not pay attention to it? Isn't that a better solution than more rules and regulations?***

It's hard to ignore the message from a sponsor when that message becomes part of rodeo promotions, prize funds, publications, spin-off events and, often, the events themselves. When the tobacco company name is on tents as you enter the rodeo grounds, on signs near the events, and in the programs for the rodeo, it's very difficult to simply ignore them. This is especially true for younger rodeo fans who may not yet have developed critical thinking skills necessary to evaluate the motives behind the ads or the real-life consequences of the products. When we allow that, we are giving our tacit approval of the product — but we don't approve. It's dangerous and inappropriate for tobacco to be associated with the rodeo.

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## Media Advocacy Resources Page

For more information and examples of media advocacy try these sources:

*News for a Change: An Advocate's Guide to Working with the Media*, by Lawrence Wallack, Katie Woodruff, Lori Dorfman, and Iris Diaz, Sage Publications, 2001, available from <http://www.sagepub.com>.

Download PDF versions of this guide from  
<http://www.bmsg.org> or <http://www.bucktobacco.org>.

For information on media advocacy training or to arrange a training for your group, contact the Berkeley Media Studies Group at [bmsg@bmsg.org](mailto:bmsg@bmsg.org) or 510.204.9700.

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## Footnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Wallack, L. and Dorfman, L. Media advocacy: A strategy for advancing policy and promoting health. *Health Education Quarterly* August 1996, 23(3):293-317.
- <sup>2</sup> Wallack L, and Dorfman L. Putting Policy into Health Communication: The Role of Media Advocacy. Pp. 389-401 in Rice & Atkin (Eds.), *Public Communication Campaigns*, 3rd Edition, Sage Publications, 2001.
- <sup>3</sup> This section is based on an analysis of tobacco industry documents by Pamela Ling, MD, MPH, University of California, San Francisco, prepared for the Berkeley Media Studies Group, September, 2002.
- <sup>4</sup> American Coalition for Entertainment and Sports Sponsorship, an "independent" nonprofit group that was largely established, directed, and funded by the tobacco industry.
- <sup>5</sup> See, for example, U.S. Smokeless Tobacco's website at <http://www.us smokelesstobacco.com> and the Tobacco-Free Events Project website at <http://www.bucktobacco.org>.
- <sup>6</sup> See Wallack L, Woodruff K, Dorfman L, and Diaz, I. *News for a Change: An advocates' guide to working with the media*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999.
- <sup>7</sup> For an excellent overview of the health data on spit tobacco, see Alexander, Susan. Spit tobacco sponsorship of rodeos: A literature review. Public Media Center, November 1, 2002. Available at <http://www.bucktobacco.org/resources/LitRev.pdf>.
- <sup>8</sup> These tips (and others) can be found in *News for a Change*.
- <sup>9</sup> *News for a Change*, page 39
- <sup>10</sup> USDHHS, "The health consequences of involuntary smoking: A report of the Surgeon General, USDHHS, Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control, Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health (1986).
- <sup>11</sup> Bolinder, G., et al "Smokeless tobacco use and increased cardiovascular mortality among Swedish construction workers," *American Journal of Public Health* Vol 84, No. 3 (1998).
- <sup>12</sup> Bolinder, G., et al "Smokeless tobacco use and increased cardiovascular mortality among Swedish construction workers," *American Journal of Public Health* Vol 84, No. 3 (1998).
- <sup>13</sup> "The Smokeless Tobacco Outreach and Prevention Guide," Applied Behavioral Science Press (1997).
- <sup>14</sup> "The Smokeless Tobacco Outreach and Prevention Guide," Applied Behavioral Science Press (1997).
- <sup>15</sup> Tomar, S.L., "Chewing Tobacco Use and Dental Caries Among U.S. Men," *Journal of the American Dental Association* Vol.130, p. 160 (1999).
- <sup>16</sup> CDC, "Surveillance for Selected Tobacco-Use Behaviors — United States, 1900-1994." *MMWR* 43 (SS-3) (November 18, 1994).
- <sup>17</sup> National telephone survey of 50 kids aged 12 to 17 and 1,005 adults conducted for the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids through the International Communications Research Teen Excel Study, March 6-10, 2002. <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/Script/DisplayPressRelease.php3?Display=472>.
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- <sup>19</sup> Pollay et al., "The Last Straw? Cigarette Advertising and Realized Market Shares Among Youth and Adults," *Journal of Marketing* 60(2):1-16 (April 1996)
- <sup>20</sup> SAMHSA, Summary findings from the 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, 2001.
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## Notes

# Bucking Tobacco Sponsorship at Rodeos

*A Public Engagement Plan for Advocates*

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Public Media Center

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## Introduction

The public engagement campaign is a social marketing effort intended to help create an environment receptive to the “Buck Tobacco Sponsorship” message. Public Media Center has created materials to support local advocates’ efforts to advance the objectives of the policy development campaign. These materials should be used in conjunction with the grassroots organizing and media advocacy elements of the campaign to change the environment that encourages and permits spit tobacco sponsorship of rodeos and related events.

PMC has produced a powerful graphic image that will serve as a logo or brand for the campaign. It bears a very strong image of a cowboy on a bucking bull kicking a spit tobacco can above the slogan, “Buck Tobacco Sponsorship.” It should appear with the web address ([www.BuckTobacco.org](http://www.BuckTobacco.org)) on anything the public sees: ads, brochures, posters, promotional items, etc.

Copies of the campaign ads and other materials should be used when meeting with decision makers or potential allies. The breadth of materials in your toolbox conveys seriousness of purpose and momentum which, in itself, will impress your audience.

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## Advertising

### News Coverage of the Campaign

The launch of an advertising campaign is newsworthy. This campaign is particularly newsworthy because it includes a full complement of print, television and radio ads. It should, at a minimum, be accompanied by a news release and calls to local media, and potentially by a full news conference where you present the print ads and the radio and television spots. The release should reflect not just the local placement of the ads, but also that it is appearing in national rodeo trade publications as discussed below. Of course, all communication with the news media regarding the ad campaign, or anything else, should be placed in the context of the local policy work. The ad campaign is just another hook to use to get your primary policy message to the public. (See the media advocacy section of this report for more information about working with the news media.)

With some luck, local television and radio stations will run stories on the campaign and broadcast the spots, providing the campaign with free air time. The news release should include a copy of the print ad and an offer of dubs of the broadcast spots. You may be asked how often the ad or spots will run. Since you may not know and because the schedule may change depending on response, it is fine to say something like, “Our schedule ensures a broad and diverse audience will hear our message.” Do not feel obligated to provide all the details of your plan.

There is a good chance the ad will be rejected by some publications, particularly the trade press and rodeo programs. Should this happen, it will provide fodder for more news

stories. Distribute a news release and call the media to bring attention to the long-censoring reach of the tobacco industry. Use the opportunity to raise questions about whom the publications are protecting—is it the community or the tobacco industry? You could end up getting more news coverage by being rejected than the ad itself would have provided.

## Print

PMC has developed an ad for placement in local newspapers, tabloids and magazines as well as in trade publications and rodeo programs. It is headlined “[The Western Rodeo] Don’t let spit tobacco sponsorship stain an American family tradition.” The ad creates the appearance of speaking to the general public, but its primary targets are the rodeo board members and those who can influence them, e.g. clergy, parents, existing and potential sponsors, opinion leaders, etc.

By placing ads in the trade publications, e.g. *ProRodeo Sports News*, *American Cowboy*, *American Quarter Horse Journal*, and *Women’s Pro Rodeo News*, the campaign will convey the message that it is broad-based, highly professional and well organized—a force to be reckoned with.

PMC also has created an ad designed to reach students. It is intended primarily for placement in college newspapers, but it also could be used in high school papers. This ad should be placed once a core of supportive students has been organized in order to help spread the message and place pressure on the decision makers. In addition to buying ad space, organizers should try to place news stories in the school papers to amplify the ad message.

## Television

PMC has created a 30-second television spot to broadcast on local cable stations. The spots have room at the end for a local phone number to be added. It is designed to allow the local TV stations to insert this information. This is a common practice and should present no challenge to the stations.

The spot can also be used during presentations at organizing events, such as at churches, rotary clubs, schools, colleges or with the rodeo boards themselves. It will serve to educate and raise questions. Moreover, the spot’s very existence evidences a high degree of professionalism and organization that will impress your target audiences.

If you do any television interviews or appear on local talk shows, bring a dub of the spot along for the station to broadcast as part of their introduction to the issue and to you. Always be on the lookout for free broadcast opportunities.

## Radio

Radio can also be an effective way to create the appearance of a major, all-encompassing, highly organized campaign, as it costs very little to run ads on local stations. We have produced two radio spots you can run in rotation. Like the television spots, there is room at the end for the station’s announcer to put in your local contact phone number.

As with television interviews, if you do anything on radio, bring the spots for the station to run as background on the campaign.

## Environmental and Transit

PMC has designed artwork for billboards and other outdoor advertising outlets as available. Since billboard sizes vary considerably, once you determine that you want to

run such an ad, PMC will prepare the final artwork for placement.

This artwork can be used as a banner mounted on pickup trucks or vans and parked near rodeos to raise the visibility of the campaign. This low-tech and inexpensive approach is an effective way to reach the rodeo audience directly. In addition, the banner or sign can be used if you do any tabling, e.g. in front of the supermarket, at local fairs, at colleges and schools, etc.

Finally, since a rodeo audience is a captive one, you may want to consider hiring a plane to drag a tail banner with “Buck Tobacco Sponsorship from Rodeos.” This is certainly a dramatic and memorable way to reach your target audience. Done in the context of the larger educational campaign, it will reinforce your message and serve to raise the stature of the campaign by showing that you are thinking broadly and creatively about how to disseminate your message.

## Collateral Material

PMC has designed folders for organizers to use for media briefing kits and to present materials to other target audiences, e.g. rodeo committee people, other sponsors who can influence the rodeo committee, bar owners, funders, etc. There are slits on the inside pockets where a business card can be inserted. The folders can be filled with background material, print ads, news releases and fact sheets as appropriate to the recipient. The mere existence of the professionally designed folder will raise the stature of the campaign.

PMC has designed a postcard packet for organizing. It consists of an informational card the recipient can keep and a perforated postcard that can be torn off and mailed to a designated decision maker. They have been designed with a blank space where you can apply a sticker with your local contact information.

There are many ways to use the packets, e.g. tables set up at supermarkets where people just fill in their names and addresses and you mail them, through school and college organizing, after talks to church or civic groups, at tables set up at or near rodeos, etc. Extra mailing postcards can be produced in case you want people to send separate cards to various individuals.

Artwork for posters is available to help expand the reach and ubiquity of the campaign. The posters could be put up in schools and colleges, store and bar windows, possibly even churches, and other appropriate locations where families tend to gather.

## Promotional Items

Promotional items help create buzz around your campaign and serve as incentives to involve people. Should you have a table set up somewhere to educate and attract attention to the issue, you might give some trinket, e.g. a key chain or mint box, to anyone who fills out a postcard. As people see others wearing “Buck Tobacco Sponsorship” t-shirts or hats around town, they will wonder about the campaign and start asking questions. As the tobacco industry well knows, young people are particularly susceptible to messages on these items. If you can recruit a few “cool” kids to start wearing your message or attaching your key chain to their backpacks, the message will spread not only among youth but to their parents as well.

The options for producing promotional items are endless and the simple strong brand design provides excellent artwork to apply to hats, t-shirts, key chains, mint cans or anything else you might want to produce. The web address ([www.BuckTobacco.org](http://www.BuckTobacco.org)) should always appear with it.

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## Bar Nights

The bar night strategy is an individualized approach that will require one-to-one communication with bar owners. The ads will help create an atmosphere to soften bar owners to visits by organizers. Research indicates that a considerable part of the appeal to bar owners of bar nights is simply the “stuff” they get, e.g. napkins, coasters, etc. So, it makes sense for the campaign to supply these items to replace what they lose from the tobacco industry. The promotional items will bear the “Buck Tobacco Sponsorship” brand. If it seems appropriate, the headline “We’ve Bucked Tobacco” could be added.

As this part of the campaign proceeds, you can determine whether it makes sense to produce a sign that bars could place in their windows declaring their tobacco freedom to help spread the word on the campaign. It would echo the message on the napkins and coasters.

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## A Primer on Paid Media Purchase

As local organizations, you are in an excellent position to negotiate favorable treatment from the media outlets that serve your communities as well as large local advertisers that use the media. After all, you represent precisely the people whom the media and the advertisers need to reach and impress if they are to survive, much less succeed. You are the heart of the community. You speak for the citizens of the community, not for tobacco industry interests, and as such, have much greater credibility.

If the most important customer of a bank or retail establishment were to ask for a favor from the establishment, there is little doubt that the request would be considered and probably acted upon. Local organizations are the most important customers of the media and of advertisers in their communities and will be treated as such if you make your needs known in an appropriate manner.

### Getting the Best Rates and Media Attention

The first thing to do is designate a small group to represent yourselves and your issue to each media outlet. If possible, make this group as diverse as possible, e.g. include a member of the clergy, a student, a businessperson/parent, a health care worker. At this meeting, present a description of your goal, a list of supporters and an outline of how you intend to achieve your goal. Make clear that, while some funds are available to purchase advertising time/space, you will need the active cooperation and assistance of the media to achieve your very worthy goal.

For radio, television and newspapers, cooperation and assistance can most tangibly be provided in two ways: 1) beneficial rates, and 2) access to the editorial board, news director or other persons/departments who can see to it that your messages are transmitted to the community via paid media as well as through news stories.

When asking for beneficial rates, don’t be shy. As a nonprofit, you are working on

behalf of community health in a most significant fashion. Radio, television and newspapers are able to offer rates lower than published rate card prices — and do so regularly with certain customers. You are not asking for anything extraordinary, merely recognition that you qualify for the beneficial treatment the media outlet has already established for other community-based programs.

When calling on the radio and television outlets, ask for an appointment with the station manager. The public service person is not the right one with whom to start. He or she may come into the picture later, but the person with maximum influence is the station manager. You may already know this person. If he/she is known to be sympathetic to the cause, it certainly wouldn't hurt to invite him/her to join your effort.

With the newspapers, the same approach should be followed — an introductory meeting with the publisher at which the same kind of information is presented and the same kind of requests made — for access to the editorial writers and beneficial rates for paid advertising.

## **Environmental and Transit Advertising**

Outdoor advertising — both posters in various sizes (which are smaller and usually silk-screened as opposed to painted, found, e.g. on the sides of buildings) and painted bulletins (which are very large and generally known as highway billboards) — presents a different challenge. First, determine who owns the signs that comprise the outdoor “plant” in each community. In most cases, the name of the owner is appended to the board itself.

Depending on whether the poster/billboard is owned by a local individual or a large media company like Clear Channel or Lamar Advertising, the approach to the owner can vary, although the essential presentation is the same. Namely, we are the community, we're trying to eliminate a major health hazard and your medium will be critical to our success. Can you provide us with access to the sign(s) and give us a price we can afford?

Identify the specific location of each board you would like to use to carry your message. Something like, “the corner of 4th and Main, southbound on 4th, closest to the road.” It also helps if the name of the advertiser currently using the board is provided. In the case of highway billboards, the same precise identification is needed.

You may have noticed that posters' messages change frequently, normally every 30 days, while highway billboards tend to change much less often. A month is the minimum period of time for which a poster is purchased. But a billboard is normally purchased for a year, during which time one or two new messages may be painted on its surface.

What you need to determine from the “plant” owner or the owner of the billboards is whether the desired locations are available during the time you hope to use them and, if so, at what price. Clearly, the price has to be factored into the decision whether to move forward with this strategy.

In addition to the cost of the board, there will be the additional expense of producing the poster or painting the billboard. The former can be handled for a small quantity by silk screening and it is likely that the “plant” operator can recommend a printer. If the billboard has to be painted, the owner can be asked to provide a beneficial price for that too, as part of the total cost.

In either case, should all of the poster or billboard locations be sold out for the foreseeable future, coalition members should consider directly approaching the advertisers currently using the boards to request that they forego a month of posting for your organization's sake, and perhaps even donate the space to the campaign. Such a donation may be tax-deductible, but it is certain to endear the advertiser to the community once your tobacco-free rodeo message begins to take hold. Of course, offer to put on the sign, “Space donated by...” or whatever they want. Be aware also that the advertiser may be supportive, but not want public recognition, particularly early in the campaign.

## Considerations for Evaluating Media Placement

All media messages are ephemeral, even outdoor or transit ads (e.g., on the exteriors and interiors of buses or on bus shelters) which are purchased in one-month units. Some, however, are more ephemeral than others. Electronic media — television and radio — are purchased in 30-second units, sometimes 60 seconds, and for primetime television sometimes 10 and 15 seconds. Print — newspapers or magazines — are purchased in day-long units in the case of newspapers and one-week or one-month units in the case of magazines.

The media differ as well in terms of how much of a message can be conveyed at each intersection of a pair of eyes or ears and the message itself. Good outdoor and transit ad designs are usually very brief and concise — 6 words is considered an appropriate length, sometimes more, but never longer than 10-12. The reason is that most of the time the eyes seeing the message have only a few seconds to register it. These media rely upon frequent “hits” to deliver comprehension. People tend to drive the same routes every day and are exposed to the message each time they pass the same billboard. An ideal “showing” is one which places the client’s billboards throughout the population area on routes that, over a month, will expose a maximum of those going outdoors to the message. The cost of preparing the message for outdoor is relatively low. A quantity of posters equivalent to the number of boards expected to be purchased or donated need to be lithographed or silk screened. Billboards need to be painted and the cost of this is generally included in the rental of the space.

Radio is similar to television in its reach and frequency, but is usually capable of reaching only a fraction of the number of homes television delivers. There are normally far more radio than television stations serving a market and radio stations tend to deliver much smaller numbers of listeners individually than do television stations.

Advertisers can focus on particular audience characteristics with either radio or television, but not with surgical precision. On television, the audience to children’s shows, daytime dramas, news broadcasts, sports broadcasts will have particular and discrete demographics. In the order above, children, women, adults, and men will dominate. On radio, programming over the course of the entire day is usually focused on a particular audience — teens, mature adults, ethnic groups, etc. Generally, radio audiences are loyal to their favorite station(s).

Both radio and television stations will be happy to describe details of the audience they can expect to deliver for schedules of varying weights and lengths. Ask for competitive presentations from both media to ensure informed media buying decisions.

Newspapers are the medium for people who read. Typically, newspapers deliver a demographic audience that is better educated, better paid and more likely to be in the opinion leader category. Newspaper messages can be perused at length, can be returned to, can be clipped and posted, and can be mailed. Though the life of the paper is a day, a given ad can be much longer lived. Newspapers also permit lengthy exposure of the message. There is no constraint like 6 words or 30 seconds, even in quarter-page ads.

A final point is that the media can and should be used for the combined impact all types of media will have on the target audience. The lengthy exposition of a full-page newspaper ad, for example, can be summarized in an outdoor design which repeats the summary statement to the entire market audience for 30 days following the ad’s appearance. Simultaneously, radio messages can reinforce the message. Using a variety of media maximizes the reach of the campaign and creates the overall appearance of a well-coordinated, highly professional effort that must be taken seriously.

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## Conclusion

PMC has designed a variety of tools for your use to help eject spit tobacco sponsorship from rodeos. As with any tool, it requires proper application to maximize effectiveness. In placing paid advertising, timing will be a key factor to help synergize your organizing and earned media efforts. It will help plant the seed of your message and reinforce it once it begins to take hold in the community.

The Public Engagement plan is intended to work in conjunction with the Media Advocacy Guide prepared by the Berkeley Media Studies Group and with your own considerable experience and knowledge of the specifics of your local community.

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## Public Engagement Resources

To read or download “Spit Tobacco Sponsorship of Rodeos: A Literature Review” prepared by Public Media Center, visit [www.bucktobacco.org](http://www.bucktobacco.org).

For more information about Public Media Center, visit [www.publicmediacenter.org](http://www.publicmediacenter.org).

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## Notes