

## Get Reporters to Open Your Email

One way to ensure your email *won't* get read is to send a message with a blank subject line. Here are some tips for getting reporters to open your emails:

1. Always place the word or phrase *News* or *Press Info* or *Story Idea* at the beginning of your email subject line, in brackets: e.g., [*Story Idea*].
2. Try to incorporate the reporter's first name at the beginning of the subject line.

If you know the name of the reporter's column, for example, "Community Pulse," try to incorporate it. If the reporter doesn't write a regular column, try to at least include a word that refers to his or her beat (e.g., Jane, re: your future pieces on education). ♦

### NONPROFIT COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

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## Harness the Power of Visual Communications

Studies show that humans retain 10 percent of what they hear, 60 percent of what they see and 70 percent of that which they actively create. Those statistics demonstrate the value nonprofits can derive from including their communities in their visual communications strategies. "When engaging with students, we tell them to do a lot of things, but what are we showing them?" asks Michael Broyles, CEO for The Scholastic Network, a company that builds school culture through visual empowerment.

Most schools already possess screens that can be used to share visual stories. These internal channels provide institutions with a way to spread insightful messages students will see and recall later. Students, staff and other important stakeholders upload their own visual content and stories directly to **The Scholastic Network's** platform, which makes their involvement more memorable.

"We believe that a positive school culture and effective communication are inseparable — and it starts with communication," Broyles continues. "Proactively take your story to your stakeholders in a visually stimulating and impactful way." While The Scholastic Network's platform is used primarily by K-12 schools and has recently expanded into the commercial space through a partnership with Newline Interactive, Broyles believes most nonprofits can harness the power of visual communications by using existing channels to bring their organizations' stories to life. Here he offers tips to make the most of such efforts:

1. **Foster a culture of content creation.** "Your community is already out there creating videos and sharing them on social media and YouTube, where they go unseen by anyone outside of their own circle," Broyles says. "Now there's a way for them to show their peers and teachers everything that they've been working on." Include your volunteers, staff and other stakeholders in your visual communications strategy — they are the people from whom your audience wants to hear.
2. **Focus on simplicity.** Once you've established that culture, provide stakeholders with the tools and resources to create and disseminate their stories. Remember, short-form content equals greater retention. "Make it fun and easy, and you'll have no problem finding people who want to share stories through videos," Broyles says.
3. **Invite community members to tell their stories.** "Students may not follow their principal's Instagram account, but they'll certainly stop and look at the screen when they hear the captain of the football team raving about his culinary arts class," Broyles offers as an example. "Reimagine your audience as advocates and provide them the tools to co-author your story. Develop them as caretakers of your school's culture."
4. **Meet audiences where they already are.** Use existing infrastructure — like on-site screens — to broadcast messages that students would otherwise miss on social media. "This way they actually see and hear the stories you want to share, and remember them too," Broyles adds. ♦

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