

Medical Reserve Corps
National Brand Communications Plan

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Agenda

- Situation Analysis
- Goals
- Target Audiences
- Programs and Initiatives
 - "At a glance"
 - The details: Brand maintenance
 - The details: Brand awareness
 - The details: Lead generation
 - The details: Relationship management
- Timing
- Q&A

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Situation Analysis

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Setting the general context...

- With over 600 units, and more than 100,000 volunteers across the United States, it's clear that the Medical Reserve Corps has gained significant traction at the local level
- However, in order to continue to build the program within communities and across the nation, it is crucial to develop and maintain a strong national program brand:
 - That supports local MRC unit goals, and
 - Allows for localization within each community, while
 - Providing local units the messaging and tools they need to tell a consistent story for the MRC as a whole

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Setting the general context...

- Why does this matter?
- The significant danger in these situations is that the brand becomes fragmented (think about it...over 600 flavors of MRC!)
 - Resulting in decreased brand impact nationally and locally
 - Creating major inefficiencies in terms of marketing and communications
 - Ultimately increasing the degree of difficulty when it comes to achieving national strategic goals for MRC

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Goals

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<h2>MRC's national strategic goals</h2>	
<p>1.0 Provide effective national leadership and coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Develop and sustain partnerships that promote the MRC mission 1.2 Promote the integration of MRC units with local and State agencies 1.3 Encourage chains of communication between local, state, regional and national MRC leaders 1.4 Facilitate national level MRC-focused meetings 1.5 Maintain and review MRC unit registrations 1.6 Establish guidelines, criteria and competencies for MRC units and members 1.7 Institute policies and procedures for efficient MRC program operations 1.8 Leverage relationships, interagency agreements, cooperative agreements and contracts to ensure program success 1.9 Participate in development and implementation of federal activation processes for volunteers 	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p>michele levy</p>

<h2>MRC's national strategic goals</h2>	
<p>2.0 Promote awareness and understanding of the critical role that MRC units play in communities across the nation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Identify and assess ways that MRC units contribute to community health and safety, as well as HHS/OSG goals 2.2 Develop MRC marketing and "brand recognition" strategies and materials 2.3 Develop and distribute appropriate information and promotional materials 2.4 Communicate about MRC activities to a variety of audiences (policy makers, Federal, state and local agency officials, public health and medical professionals, community and MRC unit leaders, association and professional groups, and members of the general public) 2.5 Maintain MRC Website as a clearinghouse for updated MRC and preparedness-related information 2.6 Participate on a variety of public health, medical and emergency management message boards and listservs 2.7 Draft articles for inclusion in newsletters, journals and other print publications 	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p>michele levy</p>

<h2>MRC's national strategic goals</h2>	
<p>3.0 Enhance the capacity of MRC units to achieve their local missions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Assess MRC units' level of development and target technical assistance as appropriate 3.2 Develop and provide technical assistance guidance documents based on contemporary best practices and MRC units' lessons learned 3.3 Provide online venues for information sharing between MRC units 3.4 Convene meetings for information sharing between MRC units 3.5 Provide resources for MRC unit training 3.6 Leverage resources for MRC unit administration and management 	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p>michele levy</p>

National brand communications goals

- Build stronger brand recognition for the MRC program at the national level
 - To facilitate achievement of national strategic goals
 - To ensure financial and other support
 - To support ongoing recruitment efforts on the local level



National brand communications goals

The specifics ...

- Increase volume on (appropriate) referrals to MRC
 - Volunteers wanting to join their local MRC
 - Communities looking for assistance from their local MRC
- Increase hits to MRC web site
- Increase number of national press mentions (track via clipping service)
- Increase number of inquiries from, and joint events with, other national organizations



Important to note...

- Effective tracking of results requires reliable, ongoing input of data from local level.
- Results tracking will facilitate ongoing improvement of messaging and tactics.



<h2>National target audiences</h2>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p style="font-size: 8px;">michele levy</p>

<h2>National target audiences</h2>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The general public2. National media outlets3. Professional/trade associations4. Emergency management officials5. Philanthropic organizations	<p style="font-size: 8px;">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p style="font-size: 8px;">michele levy</p>

<h2>Additional potential local audiences</h2>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corporations and business leaders in your community• Your local elected officials (e.g. local letter writing campaigns)• Local media outlets	<p style="font-size: 8px;">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p style="font-size: 8px;">michele levy</p>

Programs and Initiatives
Brand Maintenance

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Key brand maintenance tactics

- Maintain an effective system for ongoing internal communications
 - Begin with a standard orientation binder for use by new leaders and with new volunteers
 - Update the logo guidelines (made available upon registration)
 - Maximize value and usage of message board
 - Consider pushing information that drives to the message board (launching 2-way listserv)
 - Utilize the listserv to update on brand communications
 - Perhaps occasionally feature those who are particularly adept brand champions/use the tools well

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Key brand maintenance tactics

- Develop a "national brand kit" to increase consistency and efficiency of external communications.
 - National "speakers kit" to ensure that everyone who presents (at conferences, seminars, etc.) uses the same "about the MRC" slides in their PowerPoint, and same boilerplate paragraphs in their publications
 - National talking points and frequently asked questions
 - Graphic representation of "how it all fits together"
 - National message matrix with messaging for each of the national target audience segments (see slides #15-16)
 - Guidance on the MRC "uniform" and related promotional items (MRC company store!)
 - General brand guidelines (logo and tagline use, typeface, colors, etc)

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<p><i>Programs and Initiatives</i> Brand Awareness</p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p style="font-size: 8px;">michele levy</p>

<p>Key brand awareness tools</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ongoing national media relations campaign – Merchandise national press as appropriate – Also consider: Visibility/tie-ins to existing events and promotions (e.g. Emergency Preparedness Week) 	<p style="font-size: 8px;">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p style="font-size: 8px;">michele levy</p>

<p>Possible media relations topics</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human interest stories/spotlight on volunteers/build national pride in volunteering • "How-to's" for individuals and communities • Need to brainstorm other story angles 	<p style="font-size: 8px;">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p style="font-size: 8px;">michele levy</p>

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Key brand awareness tools</h2>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Speaking engagements at key national meetings attended by target audiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose events based on efficiency at reaching target audiences (process in place) • Presentations should be as issue-specific and "real world" as possible • Consider tying topics to MRC yearly priorities – Identify additional promotional opportunities at key conferences (local sponsorships, etc)...perhaps jointly with relevant partners – Create/promote MRC speakers bureau (of volunteers) – Continue to maintain a national networking calendar 	<p style="font-size: 8px; margin: 0;">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p style="font-size: 8px; margin: 0;">michele levy</p>

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Event evaluation criteria</h2>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the event present an opportunity to get in front of a significant group of target audience members? • Does the appearance support our strategic and brand goals? • Can we have a significant enough presence (i.e. are there visible promotional and/or networking opportunities?) • Is the topic consistent with the MRC key topic areas? • Is it "national" enough? • Will our appearance generate any publicity? 	<p style="font-size: 8px; margin: 0;">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p style="font-size: 8px; margin: 0;">michele levy</p>

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Key brand awareness tactics</h2>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online/interactive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – National tools that can be customized and used locally <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HTML template for emails and updates • National content for use in local newsletters • (or more broadly) National e-newsletter that can be localized – Search engine optimization (done) – Reciprocal links/embedded content (done) – Two-way listserv – Also consider as a local tool: blogs and/or podcasts 	<p style="font-size: 8px; margin: 0;">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p style="font-size: 8px; margin: 0;">michele levy</p>

Key brand awareness tactics

- Sponsorships/partnerships
 - Investigate opportunities to partner with national organizations for special volunteer populations (ham radio, students, etc.)
 - Partner with national disease and health organizations for events, conferences, etc.
 - Provide guidance to local units on securing local sponsorships

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**Programs and Initiatives
Lead generation**

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Key lead generation tactics

- Work with national associations to direct members to local opportunities for free CEUs
- National volunteer recruitment day/week? Clinic blitzes?
 - To be considered: Partner with relevant "matching" organizations (volunteermatch, idealist, etc)
- Negotiate joint email/direct mail campaigns with relevant national partners (National associations with chapters at the local level, i.e., ADA, AHA, etc.)

NOTE: most lead gen happens at the local level, but there are some national activities that can feed into local

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<p><i>Programs and Initiatives</i> Relationship management</p>	<p style="font-size: small;">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p style="font-size: x-small;">michele levy</p>

<p>Key relationship management tactics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For volunteers ... a yearly national "thank you" email/letter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome letter from Office of Surgeon General already goes in the packet when a unit is recognized - Include a letter in last newsletter of year, encourage local units to thank volunteers as well. • National distribution of an integrated results report • Consider whether there are other relationship management tactics that can happen at the national level 	<p style="font-size: small;">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p style="font-size: x-small;">michele levy</p>

<p>Building the national brand: Some general guiding principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider how national efforts can translate to the local level and vice versa • No reinventing the wheel • Partner for increased impact and visibility • Get the most bang... • Above all...stay focused 	<p style="font-size: small;">brand strategy consulting</p>  <p style="font-size: x-small;">michele levy</p>

Calendars (to come)

NOTE: for increased impact, consider "theme of the month/quarter" whereby communications consistently support a key theme each month/quarter (as appropriate)

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A phased approach over 3 - 5 years...

- Choose a limited number of high potential tactics (against most important audiences)...pilot programs
- Measure progress at 6 month intervals
 - Refine and expand the brand marketing effort as appropriate

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What challenges do we face?

- The usual suspects...time and money
- The potential for brand and role confusion
- Promoting a national program to a hugely diverse set of local units and audiences
- Effectively communicating that MRC is not just about disasters
- Some restrictions on national marketing activities

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