

### How is disability media defined?

Disability media is print, radio, television or online media that is either targeted to the disability community or focuses on disability issues. There are a large number of disability media outlets in Australia and internationally, in particular, print and online media.

Disability media can be delivered as:

- Disability focused but not aligned to any particular organisation - the best example of this in Australia is Link magazine (national disability rights and interests publication).
- Disability media aligned to a particular organisation or disability group - for example newsletters and publications generated by disability advocacy organisations.
- Disability information and resource based media -examples of this are [www.accessibility.com.au](http://www.accessibility.com.au) or Radio for the Print Handicapped.
- Disability media aligned to particular disability community groups - this is media generally focusing on activities or events of interest to a particular group.

Disability organisations and community groups are generally formed around either a specific disability as a way to network, provide information, or as a general disability rights and advocacy service. Organisations or groups may be formed around some or all of the following aims:

- Advice and/or provision of services
- Policy development
- Support and information networks
- Social and leisure opportunities
- Learning opportunities and/or training services
- Advocacy

Each disability organisation or community group will have different ways of communicating with their members and constituency (for example, newsletters, radio programs, online information). These methods of communicating are all part of disability media. You will communicate most successfully with disability organisations and groups if you are able to identify their aims and constituencies and target your information accordingly.

### Why communicate with the disability media?

People with disabilities make up nearly 20% of the Australian population. Many people with disabilities have direct involvement in the disability community, an interest in disability advocacy issues and may belong to one or more groups or organisations formed by and for people with disabilities.

Communicating with the disability media ensures that you will be directly reaching large sections of the disability community through a medium in which people are interested and have a demonstrated loyalty. Word of mouth in the disability sector is also important, so your message will spread beyond the initial readership/exposure group.



### Developing a disability media contact list

Each organisation should develop a disability media list that reflects their own programs to ensure direct communication with the disability community in their area as well as the community generally.

In developing an effective disability media list you will need to identify disability organisations and community groups in your area. You should also identify disability media that has a State or national focus and any international disability media that may be appropriate for your publicity or promotion.

To identify disability groups in your local area, a good starting point is the Aged and Disability worker in your local Council (or the person responsible for disability and access issues). To develop a list of State, national or international media it is recommended that you contact the DADAA network (Disability in the Arts, Disadvantage in the Arts, Australia). Contact details for DADAA organisations can be found at [www.dadaanat.net.au](http://www.dadaanat.net.au).

### Some guidelines for the submission of material

General media and publicity guidelines apply. In addition:

- Ensure that information is presented in a format suitable for the person/people to whom you are sending it. For example, people working in the blind community may need media information sent to them in large print or in an audio format. (Refer to 'Print and Publication Guidelines' for further information).
- Include information on disability access to venues or events.
- Include information on any services that you are providing for people with disabilities (for example, Auslan sign interpreted tours or audio described performances).
- Provide more than one way for the disability media to contact you (not everyone is able to communicate via telephone).
- Ensure that any images you provide are captioned.
- Don't assume that the disability media will only be interested in stories or features directly related to disability; like any other group, people with disabilities have a wide variety of interests.
- If you are submitting information about disability or about a person with a disability, ensure that you are not replicating out of date portrayals of the experiences of disability (e.g. that all people with disabilities are 'suffering' or that any one with a disability who has achieved anything is a "Super Crip").
- Treat disability media representatives with the same concern that you would show any other media group.
- Use language that is appropriate and non-offensive.