

# 10 Things Every Corporate Campaigner Should Know

Hanna Thomas, SumOfUs



Who Am  
I?



You  
Ready?

# **1. Create an Organizing Vehicle**

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Whether it is a petition, or a #hashtag, create something that folks interested in your campaign can rally around. This is critical to starting a movement and organizing potential allies.

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## **2. Use the Media As Your Ally**

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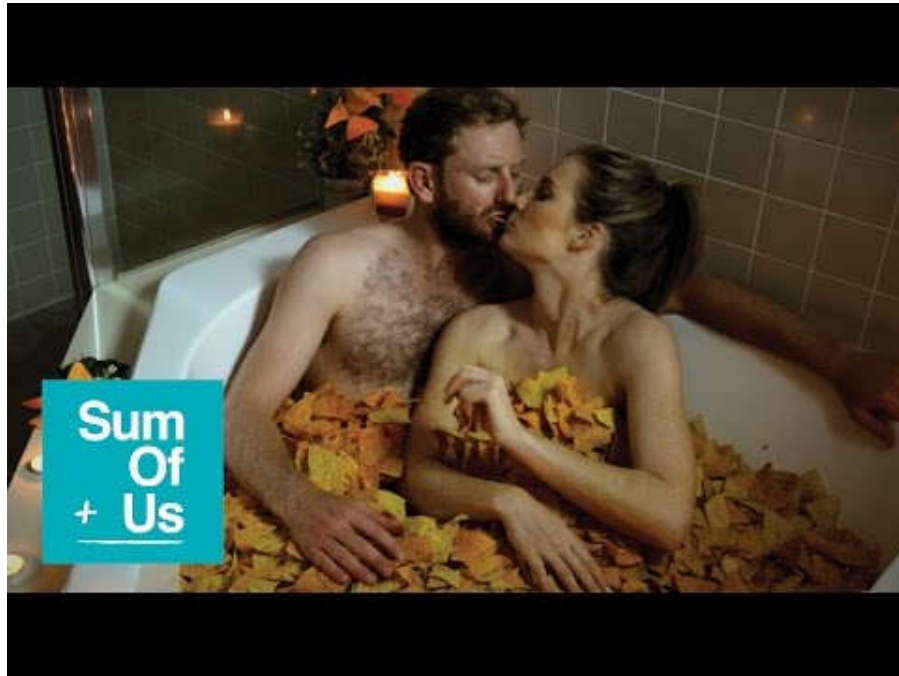
Corporations do a lot of bad things. But they often get away with it because the mainstream media doesn't always report on it. Your job as a corporate campaigner is to find a way to force the media to cover it. You can do that by hijacking an existing news story, or by creating a campaign moment that solicits media coverage.

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# **3. Use Corporate Branding as a Weapon**

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Corporations are more than just the products they sell these days, they are brands that are designed to promote positive associations with the company and its products across the board. Just as large brands make corporations stronger, they also make them more vulnerable to brand damage. Link your corporate target with its larger brand and watch them squirm.

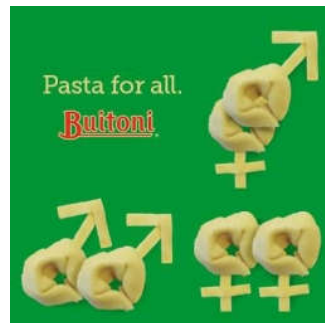
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## **4. One Bad Day Can Cost a Billion Dollars**

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One bad day in the press can cost a corporation billions. You need to be ready to leverage those moments and hit as hard as possible to force change.



"We don't care who you do it with  
The important thing is that you do it Al Dente!"

# **5. Legitimacy is Key**

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# A Viral Petition Says Trader Joe's Parent Company Murders Whales: Don't Believe It

The story of a dead whale, a popular grocer, and an exceedingly dubious connection.

SVATI KIRSTEN NARULA | JAN 3, 2014 | BUSINESS

A popular [SumOfUs.org](#) petition is calling on concerned citizens to "Tell Trader Joe's parent company to stop killing whales with plastic waste!"

I love Trader Joe's, and I love whales. So when a link to the petition popped up in my newsfeed, of course I clicked. But after reading just its first sentence—

A sperm whale that washed up in Spain died after swallowing almost 60 different pieces of plastic dumped by the greenhouses that supply Trader Joe's parent company, Aldi.

—it was apparent that the connection between this dead whale and the grocery store was rather tenuous. Neither Trader Joe's nor its parent company appeared to have been directly involved in any ocean pollution. And after speaking with the activists at SumOfUs, I think it's safe to say that the hundreds of thousands of people who have purportedly signed this petition may be misplacing their outrage.

Always get your facts right, and be responsive to your corporate targets. If your facts are wrong, it can not just undermine your campaign, but the legitimacy of other corporation campaigners. Never put out inaccurate information, and always be responsive to your target when they reach out. That doesn't mean you need to back down, but always be constructive.

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# **6. Find the Right Pressure Point**

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Business

## Breitbart lost 90 percent of its advertisers in two months: Who's still there?

By Abha Bhattarai June 8



### Breitbart loses nearly 2,600 advertisers: report

BY ROBIN EBERHARDT - 08/25/17 09:43 AM EDT

8,690 SHARES

f SHARE t TWEET G+ PLUS ONE

Just in...

### Thousands of advertisers have black-listed Breitbart. Can Sinclair really partner with the site?

Reportedly, more than 2,500 advertisers have already bailed on the right wing site



PAM VOGEL, MEDIA MATTERS  
08.28.2017 • 4:00 AM

Different bad actors are moved by different leverage points. For some corporations, its shareholders, for others its advertisers, for other's it's public pressure, for other's it's spokespeople. Always identify the right leverage point and go to work.

# **7. Use the Right Tactic for the Right Moment**

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Find the tactic that matches the pressure point. If a corporation is likely to be responsive to shareholder pressure - organize the shareholders. Your job is to find the right tactics to move your target.

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# **8. Build Diverse and Relevant Coalitions**

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There is power in numbers. Build broad, diverse coalitions to support your work and amplify your voice in different communities. Some corporations has target demographics - being able to organize those people will help you win change.

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# **9. Celebrate Corporations for Getting it Right**

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Victories in corporate campaigns are few and far between. When a corporation does the right thing - give them credit. They are making a change specifically in response to public pressure, looking to turn a bad PR moment into a good one. Being responsive and applauding them for doing the right thing reinforces their willingness to be responsive to future campaigns - and you're helping support the people within the company that pushed for your cause.

# **10. Live Your Values**

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Sum  
Of  
+ Us

As you ask corporate targets to live up to best business practices, and higher ethical values - you need to make sure that you are doing the same. That means paying your employees well, giving them paid time off, and creating a workplace culture free from harassment, discrimination and sexual abuse.

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The End.