

Corporate research:

Tips for effective &
Powerful Target profiling.

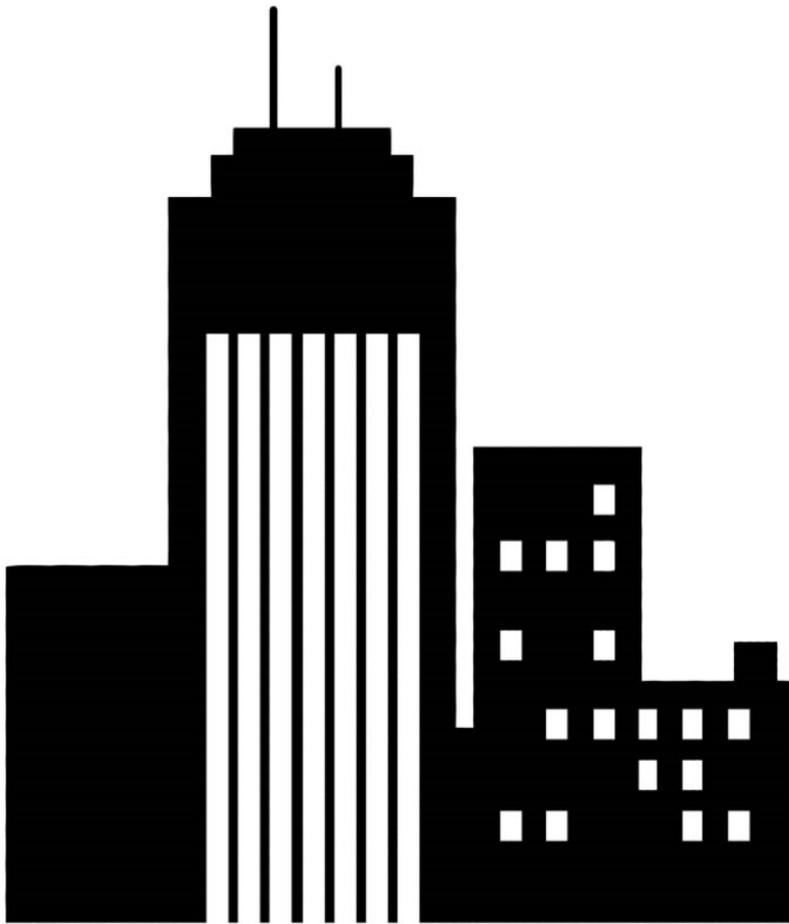


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Principles for a successful corporate campaign

What is a corporate campaign?

A comprehensive effort that exerts pressure to alter corporate behavior by:

- ✓ Research and analysis of a company's key relationships, support network, strengths and weaknesses
- ✓ Engaging as many stakeholders and issues as possible
- ✓ Undermining the target's support network and public image
- ✓ Lining up all the forces to exert maximum pressure to reach the breaking point
- ✓ Crafting an enforceable agreement

Campaign Goals: Campaigns are not “wars” and campaigners must be mindful that their objective is not to “destroy” the target, but to change its behavior or practices and, if possible, those of its peers. That means that campaigners must find creative, imaginative, and feasible solutions that targets can adopt to meet the campaign demands – without undermining their business.

Strategy: Developing a long-term strategic plan is also essential to succeeding in a campaign. Company management –

particularly the CEO – is often focused on long-term strategy, and campaigners, in order to get inside the CEO's head, have to think the same way...the campaign must perform extensive power structure research to better understand the company's supporting infrastructure and vulnerabilities. Corporations do not stand on their own. Each survives in a web of relationships that allow it to thrive. Good working relations with investors, Board of Directors, banker, etc. must be maintained. If not, the smooth operation of these immense organizations starts to falter and weaken.

Campaign Message: Successful campaigns are able to associate their particular demands to broader social justice issues.

Implementation: Successful implementation of a campaign involves effectively applying numerous tactics simultaneously and/or in proper sequence. One of the most important tools in any corporate campaign is media and public relations. Another essential part of campaign implementation is the injection of campaign issues into the regulatory and public process. The campaign should call on government officials to hold open hearings and investigations.

Research Resources for Company Information:

Company Research Guide

FIRST pull together a profile of the company. This information can be gathered from websites such as Hoovers (www.hoovers.com), Yahoo Finance (<http://finance.yahoo.com>), Morningstar (<http://morningstar.com/>), and from other sources listed on this toolkit. Data that you should gather includes:

- ◆ Addresses and phone numbers for the headquarters
- ◆ Executives and board of directors
- ◆ Subsidiaries and branch operations
- ◆ Synopsis of what the company does
- ◆ Financial data
- ◆ Business plans (what they intend to do in the coming year, areas of growth/downsizing, how they see themselves in the industry, etc.)

This information will help you understand whom you are dealing with and lays the foundation of future research (it will help you know where to look).

SECOND, you should look for major issues affecting the company. This can include “dirt,” but don’t limit yourselves to that. Sometimes “positive” or “neutral” information can be used in your favor. You should always be looking for other groups to ally yourself with (labor, environmental, shareholder, etc.)

Some things to look for:

- ◆ Campaign contributions
- ◆ Lobbying expenditures and influence peddling
- ◆ Government subsidies
- ◆ Labor relations (OSHA, strikes, union-busting, prolonged contract fights, layoffs, etc.)
- ◆ Lawsuits
- ◆ Environmental issues (fines, violations, toxic waste, high emissions, not in compliance with regulations, settlements, ranking in industry, local and federal, etc.)
- ◆ Executive compensations
- ◆ Discrimination
- ◆ Product liability
- ◆ Past performance (bad deals, poor community relations, bankruptcy of companies affiliated with execs or board members, etc.)
- ◆ Private lives of executives (what issues do they care about, who are their peers, etc.)
- ◆ What is the company record regarding your issue in other areas of the country?
- ◆ How is the company promoting itself on social issues? Does it contrast with their record?
- ◆ Shareholder actions
- ◆ Boycotts
- ◆ Military contracts
- ◆ Monopolization in the industry
- ◆ Business tactics
- ◆ How have they responded to community pressure in the past, and what kind?

Corporate Profile Research Tips

Global Economic Environment Context

1. Level of competition from international competitors
2. Major countries where they operate or export
3. Economic conditions/trends in their international markets
4. International legislation that affects their business (like Basel Convention, etc.)
5. Value of currency in US relative to their international trading partners

National/Regional Economic Environment Context

1. Is there regional focus of operations? If so, where?
2. National and regional economic conditions/trends
3. State of economy relevant to their particular growth strategy
4. National and state legislation that affect their operations
5. General public attitudes/awareness of the issues

Industrial Context

1. What are the critical trends in the industry? In consolidation? Startups? Transitions?
2. How competitive is their industry? What is the target's market share?
3. Who are the industry leaders in terms of innovation/profitability/etc.?
4. What companies control what regions in terms of the market?
5. What norms exist in the industry relative to our issue?
6. Who leads the industry (i.e., McDonald's)? Who competes (i.e., Burger King)? Who piggybacks or imitates (i.e., Wendy's)?

Company Context

1. Is it expanding? Contracting? Preparing to be bought?
 - a. What are the worker indicators? (Number of employees, occupational categories, union base, wage levels, etc.)
2. Does it see itself as the industry leader? Who is the major competitor?
 - a. What do the firm's leaders articulate as goals for the firm's development? What are their business plans for the coming year? What are areas of growth/downsizing? How do they see themselves in the industry?
3. How profitable is it? What is its strategy for growth?
 - a. What are the financial indicators for the firm? (Profit, debt, sales, growth, etc.)
4. How is it structured? Centralized? Franchises? Owned retail outlets?
 - a. What is the parent/subsidiary structure of the firm? (Subsidiaries, branches, facilities, etc.)
 - b. Is it a public or private company?
 - c. Where does the company have facilities? Where is it headquartered (address and phone number)?
 - d. Is the company involved in business outside the industry you are investigating?
 - e. What is the production or service delivery process?
5. How is its stock value perceived? What do the brokers say about them?
 - a. Who are the major stockholders?
 - b. Who is the stock analyst?

6. What is their pro-social value orientation? What do they give to?
7. What is their political orientation? Conservative? Liberal? Apolitical? (How does this show? Their policies, actions, programming, charity, PR presentation, involvement in politics, etc.)
8. What is their culture? Values that drive the organization? Image? (How does this show? Their policies, actions, programming, charity, PR presentation, involvement in politics, etc.)
9. What major products do they produce?

Departmental Context

1. Who is the Senior VP? Who is the Sub-dept. VP? And up?
2. How are they structured? What are the sub-departments?
3. What is the relative power of this department in the company?
4. Are they the “offense” (e.g., operations) or the “defense” (e.g., public relations, image production, etc.)?

Management Context

1. What is the dominant style? Laissez-faire, authoritarian, participative?
2. What are the dominant personality traits? Competitive, innovative, decisive, high social presence, psychological-minded, high self-esteem, intelligent, loyal, good impress, ambitious, status-seeking, controlling, etc.?
3. What are each of the management staff like, and what are their backgrounds, affiliations, wealth, compensations, interest areas, social affiliations, families, etc.? Who are the executives and board of directors? How much do they get paid (including other compensation, i.e., bonuses)? How much stock do they own? What affiliations do they have (see “People research”)?



Where can you dig for information?

The Company's own web-site

Some contain a surprising amount of critical information useful for activists. You can find company web pages by doing a title search in various search engines using the company's name or CBS MarketWatch and Hoover's often provide links to company websites.

American City Business Journal <http://www.bizjournals.com/>

"American City Business Journals Inc. is the nation's largest publisher of metropolitan business newspapers, serving 40 of the country's most vibrant markets." Use the "search" feature on the homepage to perform a search – the results page will turn up search options by 'market' (i.e. by local city business journal), industry, company and date. This site is useful for information on private companies and industry trends.

AnnualReports.com <http://www.annualreports.com/>

AnnualReports.com currently lists over [2,200 Annual Reports](#) and covers the majority of the fortune 500 companies. To access the annual reports, just search right from the homepage. The library can be searched by exchange type (e.g., NASDAQ, NYSE, etc.), industry, sector, or company name. You can also access annual reports in either PDF or HTML format.

CEO Express <http://www.ceoexpress.com>

Enter the company's name in the company search box (you can search by ticker symbol too) and it provides stock reports, stock graphs, company information, and more. It also provides comparison data for competitors. Good for getting a snapshot of the overall financial health of the company. You can also search the web for company information using the site's Internet search function in the homepage (by the Google logo) – where you can limit search in Google, Ask.com, Amazon, or Wikipedia. The paid subscription provides access to much more detailed portfolio of companies.

CEO Information from Proxy Statements <http://people.edgar-online.com/people>

EDGAR Online People searches SEC Filings by a person's name or displays all people associated with a specific company name. Lists other stock a board member owns and executive compensation. Useful site! There is a registration fee to access the whole site.

Corporate Information <http://www.corporateinformation.com>

This is a good site for information on public foreign companies and transnational corporations not found in many other search sites – in fact, you can search companies from over 55 countries. Corporate analyses reports are available by paid subscription, but the free corporate snapshots are often good to get when starting corporate research from scratch. To obtain a Snapshot report enter the Company Name or Ticker Symbol in the "Search Company Reports" box.

Executive Pay Watch <http://www.aflcio.org/corporatewatch/paywatch/>

The CEO Pay Database compares workers' wages with their CEOs of Fortune 500 companies. Additionally, the site offers sections such as "2006 Trends in CEO Pay," "New SEC Executive Compensation Disclosure Rules," and more, with explanation of terms, analysis, and other information pertinent to corporate monitoring with particular focus to executive compensation and worker rights.

Guidestar <http://www.guidestar.org>

A clearinghouse of information on nonprofit organizations currently includes the activities and finances of more than 650,00 nonprofit organizations. See full description under Government Information section.

Hoover's Corporate Information

<http://www.hoovers.com>

Database containing news articles, financial information and company overview. The free information can be found through the "capsule", "financial", and "news" links. Users must pay for expanded information (i.e., the "profile" and "people" links). This site is best for brief overviews of companies. You can also get names of "key people" as well as specific financial reports, in the company, and read about larger industry-wide trends and analysis.



PR Newswire <http://www.prnewswire.com>

This is a newswire focused on business and industry news from around the world. So expect to search tons of national and international business news articles and public-relations news stories by/on companies. Good for private companies and international big companies news search.

Securities & Exchange Commission <http://www.sec.gov>

The Securities and Exchange Commission provides on-line copies of government filings made by publicly traded companies. Beginning in 1997, the SEC has required all public companies to file electronically. Selective filings are available back to 1994. In the homepage, under the Section heading "Filings and Forms (EDGAR)," click on Search for Company Filings." We recommend you try the tutorial on how to best use EDGAR, the site's search feature for corporate filings. EDGAR is most useful when searching for specific companies. You can search by company, industry (SIC code), or location.

<http://www.sec.gov/info/edgar/forms/edqform.pdf>

This page (PDF format) on the SEC site defines the documents that companies are required to submit. Below are definitions of some forms we find useful. You can limit your results to specific types of reports (we recommend first scanning through recent 10-K (annual) reports that tend to contain detailed updates about the company, including business strategy, competition, financial status, any legal 'issues,' etc. Since you can't download the reports but can view them online, you can use "find" feature of your browser to scan for terms like "litigation" or "labor dispute" or other keywords related to things you want to dig for.

Proxy Statements (or 14A's) : Issued when official notification is given by a company to designated classes of shareholders of matters to be brought to a vote at a shareholders meeting. Proxy votes may be solicited for changing the company's officers. Contains executive compensation data.

Form 8-K: This is the "current report" that is used to report the occurrence of any material events or corporate changes which are of importance to investors or security holders and previously have not been reported by the registrant. It provides more current information on certain specified events than would Forms 10-Q or 10-K.

10Q Statements: Provides quarterly financial statements, management discussion, legal proceedings, changes in securities, defaults upon senior securities, submission of matters to a vote of security holders, exhibits and reports on Form 8-K (major events).

□ **10K Statements:** Provides fiscal year financial statements, most of what appears in 10Q, but, for year end. Contains description of business, properties, directors and executive officers, security ownership of certain beneficial owners of management.

Yahoo Market Guide <http://finance.yahoo.com/>

A current favorite for researching specific public companies, this site provides information on institutional stockholders and recent buying and selling activity in addition to financial information that paints a picture of the financial standing of a company. It also has information on executives and general business information. Just enter the ticker symbol of the company you're researching (you can get it through the Lookup feature first if necessary) on the left side of the homepage. The next page lists selections down the left side. Enjoy!

Please note that the listed sites and their contents are subject to change – and they do change quite often. If you find the tips are outdated for any of the resources, please let us know – or contact us so you can receive the latest revision of our Web Resources!

Other Web Resources Topics include:

Education & Schools

Environment

Labor

Money & Politics

Prison & Criminal Justice

Welfare & Economic Rights

....and more!



Corporate Profiling: you can do it!

First, put together an in-depth description of your target:

Company Name: _____

When were they founded, and by whom?

Company History: _____

What Do They Do? _____

Basic Information

Main Office/Headquarters

Location: _____

General contact information

Important insiders to contact

Ticker symbol: _____

Legal status: _____

State of Incorporation: _____

Size/Number of Employees: _____

Regulatory History

Political Affiliations and Strategies

Legal Proceedings (past and present)

For more information about our programs, please visit our website at www.datacenter.org or e-mail Jay Donahue, Program Manager, jay@datacenter.org