



JSA+Partners & LA Strong Comms Coalition

Disaster Comms Playbook





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Forward: How The LA Strong Comms Coalition Came to Fruition

By Jennifer Acree, Founder and CEO JSA+Partners

Situational Analysis

In 2025, the Los Angeles fires devastated communities across our region, leaving behind a trail of physical and economic destruction. For me, the disaster was deeply personal: my childhood home was lost in the Palisades Fire. Watching my community grapple with the overwhelming aftermath sparked an immediate desire to act and helped me work through my own personal loss. After the suggestion from Cassie Lawrence, the Vice President on my team and one of my most trusted confidants, we rolled up our sleeves and began offering pro bono public relations support to a handful of local businesses I knew personally to help them navigate the chaos.

What quickly became apparent to my team during those early days was a **massive, systemic communications gap**. When a natural disaster strikes, the national media descends rapidly, broadcasting the crisis to the world. But the news cycle inevitably ends, and the cameras pack up long before the actual recovery begins. Local storefronts and small businesses were left in the dark. They didn't need a single, fleeting mass-media moment while the fires were burning; they needed sustained, strategic PR in the weeks and months and now years that followed to let their communities know they were surviving, pivoting, and fighting to rebuild.

Building the Coalition

After a few weeks of this ad hoc volunteer work, we soon recognized the vital importance of what was happening. At Cassie's suggestion, we formalized this work and decided to build a coalition to maximize impact. That conversation was the genesis of the LA Strong Comms Coalition (LASCC). We began tapping into our respective networks to recruit PR professionals across established agencies and freelance circles. The response was overwhelming; communicators across LA – and the country – were eager to use their specific skill sets to help our city.

However, channeling that goodwill into actionable support meant standing up operations almost overnight. We had to quickly implement tools for intake, streamline our internal coordination, and establish a clear framework so our volunteers could jump in effectively. Finding the businesses in need required a mix of on-the-ground community outreach, word-of-mouth referrals, and digital sourcing. We had to move fast, breaking down the traditional agency onboarding process to reach those who needed it the most.





What We Learned by Doing It

Leading a high-growth PR agency while co-founding a pro bono communications coalition revealed an unexpected truth to us: the fundamentals of effective communication don't change with scale, just how you apply them.

First, we learned that urgency sharpens strategy. When we advise a global brand, there is usually room to test, iterate, and refine. But the small businesses we supported after the fires weren't thinking about long-term brand building—they were thinking about payroll, rent, insurance, and basic survival. Their runway was incredibly short. That reality forced us to prioritize simplicity over elaborate campaigns.

Second, we realized that the core tenets of PR, awareness and credibility, are universal. The tools we use for Fortune 500 companies are the same ones that can help a local business rebuild; the stakes are just much more immediate.

Finally, we saw firsthand that founder visibility and authentic messaging consistently outperformed polished corporate statements. Small business founders are their brands. The updates that resonated most with the community weren't perfectly crafted press releases. They were simple, direct, and human messages from the founders themselves.

We built the LASCC to serve our city, but we documented our process so that communicators in other cities and regions do not have to start from scratch. This playbook is a reflection of everything we learned, built, and adapted—and we hope it serves as a powerful tool for you and your community when you need it most.





Section 1: Strategy and Mission

Define your mission

When a disaster strikes your community, it is easy to assume that if you aren't a first responder, you don't have the right skills to help. But that is certainly not the case. Communications professionals possess valuable expertise that can act as a lifeline for those impacted. To move from the sidelines to taking meaningful action, think about which part of your community would be best served by your specific skill set. To begin, ask yourself these three questions:

What problem are you solving?

Choose one distinct problem that the community is facing. For the LA Strong Comms Coalition, we decided to help small businesses in need because they could quickly benefit from increased awareness of their services in their community, and most didn't have existing PR support.

Who are you serving?

Pick specific verticals to serve that best align with your expertise.

- **Small Businesses:** Small, locally owned and run shops are often hit hardest by a devastating event. They have no corporate infrastructure or additional locations to absorb profit or structural losses. These could be businesses that focus on consumer-facing goods, restaurants, local gyms, retail shops, and more.
- **Individual Professionals:** Professionals are another realistic option. Hairdressers who have lost their in-home studio, interior designers who lost their existing resources, or bartenders who lost their equipment and consumer base are in need of raising awareness of their services. This group is often overlooked because they don't have a storefront but we found they were hit the hardest because if they lost their home they lost their base of business, and most often it is not covered by insurance.
- **Non-profits:** Organizations that support the community during a time of crisis also need help getting their message to those who need it most. Consider this vertical in the immediate aftermath to help mobilize action for the community in need of their services.

What are you offering?

Reflect on your existing expertise and relationships, and offer what you do best. If you specialize in food and beverage, find local restaurants that you could support. If you have strong local broadcast relationships, focus on media outreach for impacted businesses. The goal is to make a tangible impact by playing to your strengths, not your ambitions. Keep the scope manageable so you don't overpromise and underdeliver.

Once you have answered these three questions, you are ready to define your mission. It can be as simple as “using communications to help those impacted by disaster get back on their feet.” From there, weave in the specifics: who you are serving, what problem you are solving, and what





you are uniquely equipped to offer. For LASCC, that became “uniting as comms professionals to support small businesses adversely affected by the Los Angeles fires.” With that north star in place, you are ready to build your coalition.

Setting Your Coalition Goals

Now that you have a specific mission and vision in place, creating goals will keep you focused on what matters most to your mission. For the LA Strong Comms Coalition, we chose:

- **Raise awareness for affected businesses through media relations and thought leadership**
- **Develop sustainable campaigns built for long-term impact, because recovery is a long road**
- **Leverage our communications expertise to help businesses rebuild or pivot**

Underlying all of it is a commitment to staying open. Recovery is unpredictable, and the needs of your clients will shift over time. The goals you set on day one may not be the same ones that matter most six months in. Build in a mindset of continually listening and learning so your coalition can identify new opportunities to help as they surface.

Guiding Principles

Every initiative needs guiding principles to ensure you don't lose sight of what can make the most impact in your community. In a time of crisis, it can feel overwhelming to take on clients in need, but with targeted guiding principles, your team can stay focused and effective.

Don't start from scratch.

Most businesses won't need you to build their story from scratch. Start with what they already have: a clear call-to-action, an existing community, and a story worth telling.

A family restaurant that has fed the neighborhood for three generations doesn't need a new narrative; it needs someone to remind the community why losing their business would matter. Dig into who they are, how long they have been there, and what role they play in the fabric of the community. That history is your foundation.

Simplicity wins over scale.

Focus on high-return wins rather than elaborate campaigns. A few hours pitching local media on the one aspect of your client's business that matters most right now will move the needle more than a sprawling six-month plan that tries to address everything at once.

Go where the customers already are

Identifying where the local community consumes information is the most effective way to build awareness for your client. That could be local broadcast, community newspapers, or a





neighborhood Facebook group. When you find where the community connects, that becomes more effective and manageable than chasing a tier-1 placement.

Governance Basics

Leadership and the Final Decision

Before forming a team, decide how decisions will be made and who has final say. If an overwhelming number of businesses request support, who determines which clients you accept? If the coalition's workload exceeds what the team can reasonably manage, what is the protocol? Establish one or a few decision-making voices at the start and make that structure clear to everyone who joins. Setting these expectations early eliminates confusion and conflict down the road.

Roles to Fill

To ensure the coalition runs smoothly, identify leadership positions early to maintain governance and avoid ambiguity under pressure. We suggest filling the following roles:

- **Coalition lead:** Responsible for decision-making, publicizing the coalition, recruiting members, and maintaining its overall health and direction.
- **Client intake leads:** Vet potential clients that best align with your mission and manage the onboarding process for new clients.
- **Account leads:** Responsible for specific client accounts based on experience and scope. They maintain consistent communication with each client, provide regular updates, and serve as the primary point of contact.

Communication Norms

Before onboarding anyone to the coalition, set clear expectations around response times, escalation paths, and shared communication channels like Slack or Teams. People are volunteering their time and expertise, so being upfront, but reasonable, about what reliable participation looks like makes it easier to build a team that will show up consistently and contribute meaningfully to the work.

For LASCC, we used a shared Slack workspace as our central hub. Members use it to share relevant media opportunities, exchange ideas across client accounts, and keep the full team aware of active projects. We also flag wins, circulate coverage, and loop in other team members when a story has crossover potential for multiple clients.





Section 2: Communications Talent Intake

Recruiting PR and Comms Pros

Who to Target

When building your team, the key is assembling a mix of perspectives and experience levels. Having several seasoned professionals lead accounts spreads the workload across the team, so no one person is responsible for managing and overseeing every client relationship.

It's important to think about the diversity of industry backgrounds and connections on your team. An in-house entertainment communications professional will have an entirely different network from that of a tech-focused agency veteran. A lifestyle PR specialist will know editors that a B2B communicator never would. The broader your team's collective reach, the more doors you can open for clients. As long as someone's experience can contribute meaningfully, varied perspectives will only make the Coalition stronger.

Another key factor to consider is building a team with a range of experience. Account coordinators and junior staff can handle drafting and logistics, freeing up senior members to focus on strategy and relationships, but this work also gives them the opportunity to step up. Since this is pro bono work, junior team members can take on responsibilities they might not yet have access to in their day jobs, whether that is leading a client call or shaping a campaign strategy. Managers and directors bring judgment to shape strategy and the ability to troubleshoot when things go sideways. C-suite leaders add credibility, open doors with media, and can advocate for clients in ways that more junior team members cannot. Each level brings value, and utilizing each role adds to a well-staffed coalition.

Students and interns are a great way to get young professionals involved in the mix, too. They bring fresh energy, and for many, a coalition offers hands-on client experience they wouldn't get otherwise. However, you have to ensure that these more junior team members have the guidance and staffing to succeed, as you don't want to leave clients with half-baked work.

Creating The Talent Intake Form

When it's time to recruit members, a simple interest form is the most efficient way to vet incoming talent and match people to the right roles within the coalition. At a minimum, your form should capture:

- Name and contact information
- Area of specialty (media relations, social, food and beverage, tech, nonprofit, etc.)
- Years of experience
- Preferred role: client lead or member





- Any businesses they would like to nominate as potential clients
- An open field for anything else they want to share

For the LASCC, we organized talent into specialty committees so that clients could be matched with communicators who already understood their industry. Consider building your committees around the verticals you identified in your mission, whether that is food and beverage, travel and lifestyle, nonprofit relations, community outreach, or others relevant to your disaster context.

What to Communicate Upfront

One thing worth being upfront about is that this is a pro bono commitment. Asking people to confirm this before they join sets the right expectations and filters for those who are committed to the mission. Beyond that, be clear about:

- **The mission:** On the top of the form, list out the specific mission of the coalition so people are clear on what the point of the organization is.
- **The why:** People show up more consistently when they feel connected to the mission. Consider making this a personal call to action: the clients they represent could be the restaurant they have been going to for years, the gym where they know the owner, and the small shop on their street that is now struggling to rebuild.
- **Time commitment:** How many hours per week are expected, and for how long
- **What participation looks like:** Be specific about how often members can expect to join client calls, the importance of being responsive on Slack, and how often the coalition has check-ins.

Outreach Channels

LinkedIn should serve as your primary channel for recruiting new members, as it's the most direct way to reach the professional communications community. A simple post announcing that you are building a coalition and looking for talent can travel further than you might expect, especially when coalition members share it within their own networks. Keep the post clear: who you are, what you are doing, and what you are looking for. Then ask your contacts to share the post with their own network.

Beyond LinkedIn, lean on PR trade networks such as PRWeek, PRSA, O'Dwyer's, PR Daily, and Ragan, as well as personal referrals. Word of mouth is often the fastest way to find reliable people. If you know a strong communicator, ask them directly and have them pass it along. Great people tend to know other great people and find those that want to lean into the cause.





Section 3: Account Management

Shared Tools and Workflows

Agreeing on foundational infrastructure before work begins is what keeps a coalition running smoothly, especially when your team is spread across multiple agencies and freelancers. Getting aligned on tools and workflows early prevents inconsistency down the road.

For the LASCC, we kept it simple: Slack for day-to-day communication and a shared Google Drive for assets, documents, and client materials. Whatever tools you choose, the goal is to create a single source of truth where anyone on the coalition can find the current status of a client, who the assigned contact is, and what deliverables are in progress.

Beyond the day-to-day, we recommend building in a quarterly coalition check-in. This is an opportunity for the team to discuss roadblocks, share wins, reflect on what is working, surface opportunities and ideas for clients, and ultimately keep the team engaged.

Messaging Consistency

When multiple people are contributing to the same client, consistency becomes the work. Assign one person as the primary contact so the client always has a clear point of accountability. For accounts with multiple contributors, a dedicated Slack channel keeps everyone aligned and creates a running record of decisions that anyone can reference.

Within the coalition, make it a habit to flag media opportunities that could open doors for more than one client. This might look like a LinkedIn post from a local reporter looking for sources, a HARO query seeking local business owners, or an interesting article angle that applies to a client outside your direct accounts.

Dividing the Work

Match clients to coalition members based on capacity, specialty, and interest. Experience is a natural starting point, but enthusiasm can also go a long way. A junior team member with a genuine interest in a business or industry might bring more energy and commitment to the account than their experience level might suggest. Interest drives commitment, and that shows up in the work.

When multiple contributors are working on the same account, establish clear lanes before work begins. Creating a brief communications plan that outlines who owns pitching, who is the primary client contact, and who handles social amplification can make a real difference in keeping the work organized and moving forward.





Section 4: Client Intake

Identifying Eligible Businesses

When a disaster hits, the number of businesses that need help can feel endless. The hard truth is that your coalition will have limited capacity, and trying to serve everyone at once risks serving no one well. Setting intake criteria is a helpful way to categorize businesses and ensure your coalition is making the deepest possible impact where it matters most.

Some criteria to consider:

- **Direct impact:** Prioritizing businesses that were directly affected by the disaster, whether that is physical damage, loss of inventory, displacement, or a significant loss of their customer base.
- **Small and locally owned:** Independent, local businesses tend to have the least infrastructure to fall back on. Unlike larger chains or franchises, they have no corporate support system absorbing the blow.
- **Clear CTA:** There's an easy way community members can support the business, whether it's through financial support or raising awareness for its services and offerings.
- **No existing PR support:** Focus on businesses that don't already have communications representation. Your skills are most impactful where there is no one else in their corner.

The Intake Process

A form is the best way to organize intake and keep things manageable as interest grows.

To start, leading with empathy sets the right tone before asking anything of the applicant. For the LASCC, we opened the form by acknowledging what people had been through before jumping into the questions. It was a simple reminder for applicants that there were real people on the other side who genuinely care about their situation. From there, clearly explain what your coalition does and who you are there to serve. That way, applicants can self-identify before they start filling the form out, and those who do submit feel confident they are in the right place.

Keep the form simple and open-ended. Ask applicants to share their story in their own words, identify the audiences they are trying to reach, and leave space for anything else they want to add. This should be enough to get started and have a meaningful introductory call.

From there, work through your submissions by priority, sending a follow-up email for an introductory call. Start with those who best meet the criteria you initially set, and move down the list as your capacity allows. This follow-up is another touchpoint to learn more about the client, understand their needs, and gauge where your coalition can be most useful.





Once you have a clear picture, match the client to the coalition member or team whose experience and industry background fits best. Once a client is matched, send an introduction email or set up a call to get the relationship started.

Especially in the early days, make sure that you handle the intake call with care. We found that most of the business owners were still reeling from the immense loss and were deep in issues like filing insurance claims, finding alternative places to live and schools for their children. PR wasn't always top of mind so recognizing each situation and giving them a space to share was key – and much appreciated.

Setting Expectations

Before work begins, take the time to align with clients on what the engagement looks like. Being clear about what you can deliver and what falls outside your scope sets everyone up for success. Establish a single point of contact so clients always know who to reach, and agree on a communication cadence upfront, whether that is weekly check-ins, email updates, or a group text.





Section 5: Successful Angles and Media Strategy

Where to Begin

Local reporters are the best place to start. They are the journalists most embedded in the community and most likely to follow a story through the long road to recovery. Look beyond those who covered the initial disaster and identify reporters who consistently write about community gatherings, personal stories, and business reopenings. Those are the relationships worth building.

For national coverage, look for a broader hook that connects the local story to a wider moment or trend. A compelling local story on its own may not land at the national level, but if you can tie it to a topic people are already talking about, it becomes more relevant for reporters to cover. For one of our LASCC clients, a cocktail brand founded by two moms, we used Mother's Day as the hook to secure national coverage. The story was local, but the timing made it resonate with the audience of a national outlet. In another example, we tied Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month to highlight a few female founders of Korean beauty businesses.

Broadcast relies on visuals, bringing a story to life in a very different way than digital or print, whether that is capturing the rebuilding process, a ribbon-cutting, or hearing directly from the founder. When you pitch broadcast producers or reporters, make sure that you lead with the visuals. This works best when your client has an upcoming event or a charismatic spokesperson who can carry a segment on camera. Paint a clear picture of what a camera crew can capture on location, or include a suggested script built around strong visual moments. If an in-person crew is not possible, send footage and supporting assets. Giving a producer everything they need to tell the story increases your chances of getting it on air.

Timely Moments and Anniversaries

Disaster anniversaries are a natural re-entry point for coverage. The one-month, six-month, and one-year marks all present an opportunity for a meaningful update on where your client is in the recovery process and remind the community that the story is not over.

Tying a client's story to a broader news moment can also bring them back into the cycle in a relevant way. One of our LASCC clients was a small business navigating the rebuilding process while also facing the rise of tariffs. This combination made for a compelling story for local media, leading to broadcast features and eventually positioning the founder as a recurring spokesperson for a local TV station. When a client's experience intersects with a topic people are already paying attention to, lean into it.





Seasonal moments are another reliable hook. Holidays, back-to-school season, and local community events can all give a story a fresh angle. For small business owners, a pitch like "local shops to support for your Fourth of July celebration" or "where to shop small this holiday season" gives reporters a timely, community-focused story that can be an easy yes. Cross-client pitching works especially well here. Offering a reporter multiple clients to choose from broadens your chances of securing coverage and builds familiarity over time. The more a reporter knows your clients, the more likely they are to come back to you when they need a source.

Evergreen Opportunities

Some stories don't need a news hook to land. The founder's origin story is worth pitching, especially if the owner made an unexpected career change or overcame significant obstacles to build their business. That history predates the disaster and can shed a different light on their coverage, showing that what they are rebuilding is just one chapter in a much longer journey.

The before-and-after rebuild narrative is another strong angle. Documenting where a business started, what the disaster took from them, and how they are piecing it back together gives reporters a story with a clear arc. Progress updates along the way, such as a new location, a reopening, or a returned employee, can all serve as fresh entry points into the news cycle.

Community impact is one of the most reliable angles for local media. Reporters covering a neighborhood want to know why a business matters to the people who live there. One of our LASCC retail clients historically employed teenagers in the Palisades community, which became the heart of their story: this was not just a store; it was a place that invested in the next generation and served as a community hub. Other angles to consider include the longtime neighbors they have served, the local organizations they have partnered with, and the other meaningful ways they have shown up for their community.

Building Relationships with Reporters

Building relationships with reporters starts with authentic engagement, not just outreach when you need a win for a client. Follow reporters on social media, like LinkedIn or X, to stay current on what they are covering. This visibility will inform your pitching angles and help you identify the topics they are most likely to respond to. Even when you are not pitching, leaving a thoughtful comment or sending a note about their work can show that you are paying attention to their coverage, not just looking for a placement.

Personalizing pitches to reporters can also help build an ongoing relationship. Reference their recent work where it is relevant, showing that you understand how your client fits into their beat. Again, offering multiple clients as potential sources is also an effective way to position yourself as a long-term resource. Reporters covering a community beat need reliable contacts. If you can be that person, they will come back to you.





The strongest relationships are built on consistency. Follow up after coverage, share relevant data or updates that could feed a future story, and keep reporters informed as your clients hit new milestones in their recovery. The goal is to be the first person they think of when they need a local business story, and that only happens if you show up for them more than once.





Section 6: Client Campaign Examples

The following examples show what sustained PR support looks like in practice. Each client's results went beyond press coverage and translated directly into business impact: increased revenue, new distribution partnerships, and community traction.

This Girl Walks Into a Bar

Situation: Sisters Jordan and Jocelyn built This Girl Walks into a Bar, a boutique bartending and mixer company that offered white-glove service to residents and businesses, based in Pacific Palisades. The team collaborated with over 140 local bartenders who relied on This Girl to connect them with opportunities to serve drinks at events and parties. The fires destroyed their equipment, uniforms, and supplies overnight, forcing the bartending side of the business to close. Their non-alcoholic mixer line survived only because a large shipment had been moved to an off-site facility weeks before.

Approach: The LASCC focused on the founders' stories: two sisters who lost the core of their business overnight and made the decision to pivot to their mixer line. We leaned into the mom-founded, women-owned angle and looked for immediate, timely hooks that would resonate in local and national media. Mother's Day became the entry point for national outreach, connecting their story to a moment people were paying attention to, and one the founders could speak to personally as moms themselves.

Outcome: We secured a TODAY Show segment highlighting mom-owned businesses to shop for Mother's Day. Within 20 minutes of the segment airing, sales covered two months of the company's warehouse rent. Additional coverage in local media, like Westside Current and KCAL, also followed. From this coverage, we were able to secure placement in the Oscars Gifting Lounge, inserting the brand into a major cultural moment. As a result of our ongoing media efforts, This Girl was also able to sign a distribution deal with Total Wine & More, and the founders earned a Fast Pass to Walmart's Road to Open Call, ultimately securing a path to national distribution.

PlayLab Beauty

Situation: Vanessa and her co-founder Jeanha built PlayLab Beauty, a Pasadena-based destination for K-beauty and J-beauty products made for the skincare-obsessed and makeup lovers, carrying hard-to-find products that really work. When the Eaton Fire hit Vanessa's home in Altadena, it wiped out their entire inventory, marketing materials, and business supplies overnight.





Approach: LASCC built a strategy around the founders' resilience in the aftermath of the Eaton Fire and their mission to make K-beauty and J-beauty accessible to everyone. We targeted local broadcasts, pitching KCAL an on-air segment on trending K-beauty and J-beauty products, opening with how the fire impacted the business before moving into the founders' expertise. AAPI Heritage Month became a second major hook, timed to coincide with the one-year anniversary of the store opening and framed around the importance of supporting AAPI-owned businesses. We also identified the tariff conversation as a relevant hook, given that rising tariffs on South Korean imports directly threatened the founders' ability to deliver on their core mission of making K-beauty accessible to all.

Outcome: We landed broadcast segments on KCAL and Spectrum News. The live AAPI Heritage Month broadcast was especially effective as it drove a direct spike in online orders. Co-founder Vanessa was also featured on Reid Hoffman's podcast, Masters of Scale, putting her story in front of a much wider audience and positioning her alongside some of the most recognized entrepreneurs in the country.

Flour Pizza

Situation: Robert Flutie opened Flour Pizzeria in the Palisades in 2024, and it quickly became a neighborhood hub. Robert lost both his home and his storefront in the 2025 fires. Rather than wait to rebuild, Robert fast-tracked the opening of a planned Brentwood location to Valentine's Day, his way of living out his motto that "pizza is love." On opening day, he gave away free pizzas to fire victims and first responders who helped in the fires.

Approach: The LASCC led pitches for Flour's Brentwood reopening around Robert's act of generosity. A 21-year Palisades resident who lost both his home and his storefront, Robert chose to respond by giving back, and the free pizza offer for fire victims and first responders became the news hook. For digital media, we positioned Robert as a voice of resilience in the community. For broadcast, we kept it simple and visual: a local owner who lost so much in the fires, a new location opening, free pizza for residents and first responders of the Palisades – a visual story with a clear arc.

Outcome: Coverage landed in ABC, FOX, Time Out LA, Westside Current, and SFGate. As a result, the community flooded Flour with support, with lines out the door at the reopening. Additionally, Dave Portnoy organically featured Flour on his One Bite Pizza Reviews, one of the most followed food personalities online, driving a surge in foot traffic and earning the pizzeria the top pizza score in LA.





Section 7: Social Media Amplification

Channels

For LASCC, we primarily use LinkedIn and Instagram as our public-facing platforms to highlight coverage wins, promote client announcements, and show ongoing support for affected communities. When we post, we tag both the client or founder and the journalist or outlet they were featured in. Every post includes a clear call to action, whether that is reading an article, watching a news segment, or visiting a client's website.

A visual asset in every post can help grab the attention of the audience. A screenshot of coverage, a news segment clip, or a simple graphic helps stop the scroll and can increase engagement.

Timely moments that work for pitching also work for social. For example, in March 2026, the LASCC ran a series highlighting all of the women founders we represent for Women's History Month. Cross-client pitches can often be retooled into social content, extending the reach of work you are already doing without much additional effort.

Finally, consider featuring coalition members as part of your content mix. Highlighting the professionals behind the work, who they are, where they work, and why they showed up to volunteer their time, adds a human layer to the coalition's presence.

Content Principles

When the coalition creates content to amplify your client coverage or announcements, lead with their story. The disaster can provide context, but the rebuilding process should remain at the center. What resonates is the person behind the business: who they are, what they built, and how they are choosing to move forward despite significant setbacks.

Specific, direct calls to action are the most effective. Tell the audience exactly what you need them to do, whether that is visiting the store, placing an order, sharing a post, donating, or tuning in to a segment. The clearer the ask, the more likely people are to act on it.

Wherever possible, amplify the founder's voice. Reposting a video clip, sharing a quote, or directing people to something the founder said themselves in an article will be the most authentic way to amplify their journey.





Conclusion

Moving Forward

Thank you for taking the time to read this case study and learn more about the work we've done with the LA Strong Comms Coalition. When a disaster strikes, the path to recovery is a long road, but having a clear framework in place can make navigating it much less daunting. We hope the strategies, lessons, and resources outlined here are helpful to you and your community should the need ever arise.

It is easy to assume that if you aren't a first responder, you don't have the right skills to help. But that simply isn't the case. As a communications professional, you possess valuable expertise that can act as a lifeline for those impacted. Never underestimate your ability to move from the sidelines to taking meaningful action—you already have the unique skills, talent, and experience required to make a tangible, lasting impact when your community needs it most.

We invite you to stay connected with us as we continue our work supporting small businesses. You can follow our ongoing efforts and find more resources by visiting our website at <https://jsapartners.co/lascc> or by keeping up with us on Instagram at [@lastrongcomms](https://www.instagram.com/lastrongcomms).

