

## Twilight Tattoo 2013 Public Affairs Strategic Communications Plan

### DESIRED EFFECTS:

The desired effects for Twilight Tattoo 2013 are to:

- Attract, retain, and sustain a quality All-Volunteer Force (Soldiers, Army Civilians, and Family Members): **Use TLT as a vehicle to discuss the wealth of opportunities within the United States Army.**
- Gain and maintain public trust, confidence, and active support for the Army: **Use TLT as an opening to better connect the American people to the American Soldier through the stories told and one-on-one interaction encouraged at the event.**
- Gain and maintain public and Congressional support for resourcing the full cost of an expeditionary Army: **Use TLT as a venue in coordination with OCLL to introduce key congressional representatives and other centers of influence with regard to gaining and maintaining congressional support.**
- Gain and maintain a well-informed community of Soldiers, Army Civilians, and Family Members: **Use TLT as a tool to deliver key messages and provide support to Soldiers, Army Civilians and Families.**

### SITUATION ANALYSIS:

Every summer, the U.S. Army Military District of Washington conducts *Twilight Tattoo*, one of the Army's largest community relations and outreach events. A Tattoo is a time-honored military tradition that dates back to the British Army 300 years ago when bugle calls were designed to notify the troops to return to the barracks from local towns. In modern times, Twilight Tattoo has become an Army tradition that blends the precision and discipline of the 3<sup>rd</sup> U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) with the dynamic musicianship of The U.S. Army Band "Pershing's Own."

Twilight Tattoo is designed as a community outreach program to educate, entertain and enlighten audiences of all ages. The purpose of the program is to help the Army connect with the American public. This show enjoys a long run in the Washington, D.C. area, and in 2001, the program was recognized by the Chief of Public Affairs, United States Army, as the number one community outreach campaign in the Army worldwide and received the Chief's Award of Distinction.

Attendance for the annual Twilight Tattoos was minimal for many years. The audience for this show was primarily internal and little targeted pitching to external groups was executed. The first attempt to expand marketing began in 1998. The average audience for a show in 1998 increased to 1,800 people almost doubling the number of people attending the program in the past. At this time, MDW's leadership began a major campaign to attract significantly larger, more diverse audiences to these performances while effectively "Telling the Army Story" to these entirely new audiences.

This targeted marketing has increased over the years, resulting in a solid base of schools, tour groups and community organizations that bring new audiences to the shows each summer. Additional marketing and outreach efforts have also resulted in more opportunities to connect the local DC-Metro Area to the face of the Army.

The MDW Directorate of Ceremonies and Special Events is the command lead for the Twilight Tattoo campaign. MDW Public Affairs is tasked with overseeing the marketing, advertising, media relations, internal communication, and COMREL execution for the program. The COMREL execution includes group registration, website and phone weather updates, group check-in/processing, seating/audience relations, group announcements and all other customer relations aspects of the program. The Marketing Communications Team is the Directorate of Public Affairs lead for the campaign and will serve as a member of the Command Process Action team, a working team that crafts, designs and markets the program. The marketing team will be responsible for the execution, implementation and evaluation of this strategic communications plan. However, this is one of two major community relations events that involve the entire Public Affairs staff (the second is the Spirit of America program). All public affairs staff members will assist this campaign and receive specific guidance and tasking for their involvement.

The Director of Marketing is the PA lead. All tasks, coordination efforts and issues on the Twilight Tattoo program will flow through the staff lead.

## **AUDIENCES:**

The primary audiences for Twilight Tattoo are as follows:

- Teenagers aged 13-22
- Parents and Educators, influencers
- Organized youth groups (i.e. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H, etc.)
- Active military/Veterans/DoD civilians and their families

Secondary audiences include, but are not limited to:

- Military Organizations (i.e. VFW, AUSA, etc.)
- Community leaders within the National Capital Region
- College student groups
- Youth 12 years and younger with their families

## **OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives of the 2013 Twilight Tattoo campaign are as follows:

- Gain and maintain public trust, confidence and support for the Army through effective community and media relations plans geared towards showcasing MDW units and telling the Army story.
- Raise awareness of the U.S. Army Military District of Washington and the importance of our ceremonial and contingency missions with local, national and media audiences.
- Increase brand awareness of the U.S. Army Military District of Washington as a key source of high quality military ceremonies and special events.
- Provide a forum to showcase the U.S. Army as a viable career alternative for young people from around the country.

## Messages

- MDW's mission is to serve as the "Guardians of the Nation's Capital," and to conduct ceremonies and special events. We stand ready to deploy in defense of our nation and the National Capital Region at a moment's notice.
- The units in Twilight Tattoo are the Army's premier, elite ceremonial units. They demonstrate the Army's rich heritage and time-honored traditions.
- The Twilight Tattoo is a community relations tool designed to educate audiences about the history, role and traditions of the United States Army.
  - Twilight Tattoo is a free, interactive, high-energy performance that will rekindle the patriotic spirit of all Americans and visitors to this country.
  - Twilight Tattoo is a community outreach event designed to reconnect mainstream America to the United States Army.
  - The Tattoo is a time-honored tradition that blends the precision and discipline of The Old Guard with the musicianship of The U.S. Army Band.
  - Twilight Tattoo offers a free, convenient opportunity to educate your family on the history of the United States, as seen through the eyes of the millions of young Soldiers whose hard work and sacrifice built this nation for 238 years.
  - Twilight Tattoo shows the strength of this nation when individuals with unique skills, attributes and abilities unite under common values with a goal to succeed.

## Branding

-The Twilight Tattoo logo is used on flyers, rack cards, websites, advertisements, etc. to brand the event and allow for easy recognition.

-Promotional materials feature images of Soldiers from TLT in order to increase brand awareness.

-Military District of Washington temporary tattoos & dog tags are handed out to community and media representatives to promote the MDW brand and mission through MDW website and patch branding.

## Strategies

A. Market and promote Twilight Tattoo to increase exposure, awareness and attendance that incorporates the current Army themes through an integrated communications campaign that effectively blends media relations, advertising, community relations and marketing efforts.

B. Design and produce compelling promotional products to effectively promote and brand *Twilight Tattoo*, resulting in increased attendance.

C. Create media opportunities to tell the Army story throughout the course of the TLT campaign.

D. Use a wide-range of internal communication sources to reach Department of Defense, Army and military-friendly audiences.

## Tactics

**A.** Market and promote Twilight Tattoo to increase exposure, awareness and attendance that incorporates the current Army themes through an integrated communications campaign that effectively blends media relations, advertising, community relations and marketing efforts.

- Market the Twilight Tattoo website as a source of information for tour groups, schools, patrons etc.
- Use travel and city guide websites (CultureFinder.com, DigitalCity.com, WGMS.com, CitySearch.com, DCChamber.com, Washington.org, etc.) to post information about Twilight Tattoo on the “events in DC” pages.
- Send invitation letters to schools, tour groups, military organizations, Arlington National Cemetery wreath-laying groups and local youth groups.
- Establish a program with hotel concierges in DC Metro Area. Meet with concierges early in season and detail Twilight Tattoo programs. Ask concierges to promote Tattoos throughout the season to hotel patrons. Leave rack cards and posters on display in hotel lobbies. Replenish these products throughout the season.
- Maintain a database of organizations and private entities, including tour operators that have attended past events. Past experience has shown that these groups provide an excellent source of participants for MDW events. To facilitate awareness, direct mail will be sent to those in the database to invite them to the Twilight Tattoo.
- Other resources include invitations to groups planning to lay a wreath at Arlington National Cemetery to also attend the Twilight Tattoo.
- Send releases/letters to the following:
  - All military branches
  - All wreath laying/ non-wreath laying groups
  - Local libraries
  - Local hotels and bus companies
  - Capitol Hill
  - D.C. Convention and Visitor Association Publications
  - Neighboring city convention and visitor services calendar of events (i.e. Alexandria and Arlington
  - Youth Groups (Girl and Boy Scouts, Big Brothers/Sisters, national 4-H Center, Presidential Classroom
  - American Student Travel and tour group companies)
  - Virginia, Maryland and D.C. Tourism Agencies
  - School programs to include ROTC and JROTC
  - All area Public Broadcasting Service stations
  - Special target groups identified by each honored guest
  - Pentagon Visitor’s Center
  - Friends of the Army – VFW, DAR, Lions, Elks, AUSA, TROA, NCOA
- Maximize marketing activities by partnering with youth and tourism organizations, including:
  - Youth - YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, Presidential Classroom, Boy Scouts USA, Girl Scouts USA, various sport organizations; School Districts, movie theaters, malls, movie rental stores
  - Tourists – Tourism Board, Hospitality organizations (Concierges close to the ellipse), White House Visitor’s Center, The Smithsonian, The Washington Monument, Mount Vernon, the Pentagon visitor’s office
  - Washington DC Tour Guild Association

- Washington DC Tourism and Convention Bureau
- Faith patrons in the database

**B. Design and produce compelling promotional products to effectively promote and brand *Twilight Tattoo*, resulting in increased attendance.**

- Work with the Old Guard PAO graphics and the U.S. Army Band PAO graphics to develop new designs, which incorporate the Twilight Tattoo brand.
- Order rack cards, flyers, posters, programs and all other materials deemed necessary to promote Twilight Tattoo. Approximately 10,000 rack cards and posters will be developed and printed for distribution in the local area to increase attendance at the Twilight Tattoo performances. These materials will be distributed as follows:
  - 7,500 rack cards to be distributed to hotels, visitor's centers, Washington Tour Guild Association.
  - Design and order promotional give-aways to be used within the season.
- Distribute flyers, posters, and other products on MDW installations and within the local community.
- Paid advertising will be purchased once at the kick-off of the Twilight Tattoo season, with the possibility of a second purchase near the end of the season when attendance numbers historically drop. Paid advertising will be targeted to youth-oriented radio stations (hip-hop and pop), and through the Connection Newspaper Group (covering Arlington County, Fairfax County, Alexandria County and Montgomery County).
- Radio advertising is scattered to increase awareness at various times throughout the season. Run times and duration are as follows:
  - Select stations for: 15 spots, first part of early May; 15 spots, late May (to promote June/Tattoos)

**C. Create media opportunities to tell the Army story throughout the course of the TLT campaign.**

- All Twilight Tattoo participants from U.S. Army Band and The Old Guard will be media trained prior to any interviews.
- Write and distribute media releases for each event and proactively pitch specific dates for coverage.
- Directly target travel publications and pitch Twilight Tattoo articles, photos and stories.
- Design and produce press packets for the season.

**D. Use a wide-range of internal communication sources to reach Department of Defense, Army and military-friendly audiences.**

- Ensure all MDW installation websites feature stories and general information about Twilight Tattoo from May – June.
- Team with the Old Guard PAO to write a series of news articles throughout the season that will be published on a regular basis in all MDW installation newspapers.
- Seek additional print coverage from other installation newspapers across the country.
- Regularly issue blast emails to ALL FMMC and Pentagon employees with Twilight Tattoo information.

**Budget**

(See Advertising/Marketing Attachment)

**Management/Evaluation**

Management of the campaign will be conducted by the MDW Public Affairs Marketing/Community Relations office. Evaluation of effectiveness is made by comparing the total number of attendees and total number of media hits to records from previous years. Will also combine attendees and media hits to compare total overall audience reach each year.

**Summary:** This Strategic Communication Plan is a working document and is event driven. It is representative of MDW Public Affairs' efforts to achieve the maximum impact for MDW and the Army to reach the community through public and media events.

COL Michelle Roberts  
MDW Public Affairs Director



# Fact Sheet

The U.S. Army Military District of Washington

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## *Guardian of the Nation's Capital*

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### U.S. Army's Twilight Tattoo

Twilight Tattoo” is a time-honored tradition that blends the precision and discipline of the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) with the orchestral sounds of The U.S. Army Band “Pershing’s Own.”

The history of Twilight Tattoo began more than 300 years ago as British troops were summoned from the warmth and hospitality of local pubs by a bugle and drum call to return to the barracks. The familiar tune told tavern owners “doe den tap toe,” or “time to turn off the taps.” The troops knew the call to mean “taps off,” and minutes later they were back in their tents.



The modern-day call is known as “Tattoo” and during basic training the call signals the time to quiet down and hit the bunks. For the U.S. Army Military District of Washington (MDW), the call serves as a tribute dedicated to the vitality of our nation and to the sacrifices of those who forged America into the land of the free and the home of the brave. It is for our forefathers and fellow Americans that MDW proudly presents “Twilight Tattoo.”

The U.S. Army Military District of Washington (MDW) Twilight Tattoo can trace its own history back to the years before World War II. At that time, on the grounds of Fort Myer in Arlington, Va., the 3rd Cavalry Regiment held military shows during the winter months. The Military District of Washington revived the traditional show in 1961 to showcase the talents of its ceremonial units.

As Twilight Tattoo grew in popularity, the Army adapted the show, its location and the time of year it was performed to fit the growing needs of the American people. Settling on performances in the Washington, D.C. Metro area, throughout the summer months, has allowed for thousands of audience members to experience the ceremony and pageantry of the United States Army.



# News Release

*The U.S. Army Military District of Washington*

*Guardians of the Nation's Capital*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 12-11**

**DATE: April 16, 2012**

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## U.S Army's Twilight Tattoo changes venues and extends its season

**WASHINGTON** - The United States Army's most popular outdoor ceremonial pageant has moved from Fort McNair, DC, to Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall in Arlington, Va. This year's Twilight Tattoo will extend the length of its season to run the entire summer. Performances are scheduled for 7 p.m., on Wednesdays at Summerall Field on Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall on the following dates: **April 25; May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; June 6, 20, 27.** Performances will continue after the Fourth of July holiday at Whipple Field on Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall on the following dates: **July 11, 18, 25; Aug. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29.**

*Twilight Tattoo* is an hour-long sunset military pageant that features Soldiers of the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) units – The U.S. Army Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps and the U.S. Army Drill Team; Soldier-musicians from The U.S. Army Band "Pershing's Own," The U.S. Army Blues, vocalists from The United States Army Chorus and The U.S. Army Band Downrange.

"It's our honor to bring the Twilight Tattoo series to historic Joint Base Myer Henderson Hall. Our Army has been the Strength of the Nation for almost 237 years, and we appreciate the opportunity to share our history, and the talents of our Soldiers, with those we serve – the American People," said Maj. Gen. Michael Linnington, commanding general of the U.S. Army Military District of Washington. "The Soldiers of the Military District of Washington represent the Army's finest. The show not only highlights our past, but more importantly, it represents the future and our Army's role in decisive action in the defense of the freedoms we enjoy as Americans," Linnington said

With more than 100 Old Guard Soldiers wearing Army uniforms of the past and present, a portion of our show is dedicated to providing a fast-paced journey through Army history, from Revolutionary times to your Army's involvement in current military operations.

The U.S. Army Military District of Washington is proud to bring this show to the community, said Ron McLendon II, chief of Community Relations for MDW. "Bring your family, your friends, your group, and your enthusiasm for our country to one of our performances," McLendon said. "This program salutes not only the Soldiers who defend our country; it salutes you, the citizens and patriots we defend."

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U.S. Army Military District of Washington  
Twilight Tattoo 2013 Strategic Communications Plan

These performances are free and open to the public. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information and group reservations, contact the U.S. Army Military District of Washington at (202) 685-2888, or visit our web site at [www.twilight.mdw.army.mil](http://www.twilight.mdw.army.mil). Interested media, please call 202-685-4645.