

## Maximise your Media Coverage

News is something new or timely. Make sure you get your story out the day it happens or the day after an event - too late and it will not be covered as it is no longer new / news.

### What makes a News Story?

Controversy, Relevance, Topical, New, Human Interest, (Statistics)

### What Helps to Achieve Your Aim

- Telephone the publication and get a contact name
- Email to a specific person – not the 'Editor' (he'll never read it)
- Short and concise press releases (keep to 2/3 single side A4)
- A relevant photo – people sell people – especially 'smiling' people
- Don't send press releases close to deadline
- Follow up release with phone call to make sure it's been received
- Write in the third person – cuts down on sub-editor work for the publication (do their job for them)

### What Hinders

- Long winded, rambling, badly written, non specific press releases
- Posted press releases – might not be read and costs publication money to retype what you've written.
- Me, me, me! It's not about who you are, it's about what you do.

### How to Approach a Journalist

- Know your story, what makes it interesting – dib, dib, dib, be prepared!
- Be prepared to 'sell' your story to a journalist in just thirty seconds!
- Research the journal/station/channel before you call
- Know which journalist or news desk you want to talk to
- Ensure your interviewees are briefed and available if required

### Things to Remember when Dealing with the Press

- Don't call up when journalists are going to press or about to go on air
- Key times are 9.30am to 11am & 2.15pm to 3.15pm
- Avoid Friday afternoons
- Follow up any call to a journalist by email
- Respond quickly to any initial press interest and check deadlines
- If a journalist needs an interview/more information make sure you get back to them before their deadline
- Contact the newspapers directly - they're best placed to tell you who to approach with your ideas
- All publications have a core readership that is age, sex and attitude specific. Target the right title for your audience ([www.nsdatabase.co.uk](http://www.nsdatabase.co.uk))
- Remember for a magazine, the pictures are as important as the words. If you have good pictures, pitch them as well as the idea
- If you have a case study who is willing to be identified you are in a strong position - use that!
- If you want your story in a magazine be aware that they have print deadlines anything from a few days before publication to over a month
- Increasingly, magazines are developing sister websites. If you're interested in being featured in a particular magazine, think of ways to broaden the message onto their website too

- If you have newsworthy stats/ facts from commissioned research that are relevant to a publication's readership, they may probably be interested as long as it's understandable!
- Look at the type of headlines a particular publication uses. Come up with a good headline to sell your idea.

### **Photojournalism - a picture paints a thousand words**

Did you every pick up a newspaper or a magazine where a single image is used to tell a story? That's photojournalism.

#### **Top tips for photography and photojournalism**

- Build a collection of images from your organisation. Many of these won't be immediately news worthy but may be useful at a later date.
- Take pictures of all your organisations' events or gatherings and clearly mark who is in the photographs for future reference.
- Success stories – every picture tells a story so make sure your organisation documents its successes.
- Try and create a small library of stories and images that bring the work you do to life.
- Don't forget to get signed permission from people who appear in the pictures and carefully file all permissions slips and release forms.
- The world of digital photography has made taking, viewing and storing images much easier and being able to e-mail images instantly is a great advantage when the need to get your images to the media quickly is so important
- We live in a world where today's news is forgotten tomorrow and , so keep suitable set of images on hand at all times.

### **TV News**

#### **Think who you want to reach**

- 24 Hour News - think carefully about your message, pitch it to the right news programme for your target audience or planning desk and pick your timing very carefully
- Broadcast journalists needs are different from print journalists - they require:
- Pictures, pictures and more pictures - photographs to illustrate potential filming locations and people
- Access to exciting visual case studies - be aware of privacy issues i.e. anonymity
- A nominated contact available at very short notice - due to tight deadlines
- Good live to camera spokespeople - make sure your representative is media trained

#### **What you should provide:**

- Pictures, pictures and more pictures - photographs to illustrate potential video content
- Last minute and out-of-hours availability and preparation for short notice requests
- Concise subject and organisational knowledge and a jargon-free background briefing

#### **.....and finally!**

With the exception of the BBC, every media organisation is a commercial business and therefore your 'story' has to in some way help retain or increase circulation, listening or viewing figures.

#### **Be prepared, be ready and stay calm!**

You control interviews

You ARE the expert in your field

**Need help? Call me, Paul Henderson on 01769 572502 (working hours), 07933 413521  
or via email:  
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