

Top Tips for approaching Journalists

Journalists are particularly busy people. They just don't have time to wade through piles of writing in order to find the 'story' that hides in your writing. Unless you make it pretty obvious, something that could be a big scoop could easily end up in the bin.

Using my extensive media experience as a broadcast and newspaper journalist, here are some top tips to give you the best chance of getting your story into the media:

- 1. Journalists are story-tellers.** They tell us about what's going on. Every part of a newspaper tells a story about something that has happened, is happening or will happen in the future. Make sure you reflect this.
- 2. People love reading about people, not products.** Therefore make sure everything you write refers to how your product or service benefits the audience. It's not about you – it's about them!
- 3. Contextualise your story with what's happening in the world.** This helps to increase its relevance with the current news agenda and shows you care about the story and not just plugging your product.
- 4. Think of the audience.** So many people make the mistake of sending a release to the masses. Be specific and try to help the publication.
- 5. Do your research.** Only send your story to media titles that are relevant. You won't get a story about a catering company's new cream cakes into a dieting magazine!
- 6. Write Well.** Make your writing clear. Use the correct punctuation and spelling to make the story easy for the journalist to understand.
- 7. A Picture Paints a Thousand Words.** Attaching a high-quality image means the journalists don't have to. Any less effort on their part will increase the likelihood of your story going in.
- 8. Add in contact details.** Without this, any journalist with a query won't know how to get in touch to ask, and could just end up binning your story. Also, contact details might get printed, meaning potential customers can get in touch with you too!
- 9. If you really don't know where to start, remember the 5 W rule.** Who, Where, Why, What, When...and How tells the journalist all they need to know.
- 10. Finally, never give up.** Persistency is the key here. Journalists are very busy and will often forget to call or email you back. Keep up the pace!

If you find you need any help, feel free to give me a call and I'll be more than happy to help you get your organisation into the media.

