

What's Your Business Story?

Spot it! Package it! Pitch it!

WHAT IS NEWS?

News is new information that impacts peoples' lives.

- * Inform
- * Educate
- * Inspire

- Our daily news diet is like our food diet. We need to balance the meat, veg and pudding.

* Meat — these are the grunty hard news, stories about crime. Sometimes hard to digest.

* Veggies—the broccoli of news (often politics). They might seem boring and bland but contain important information.

* Pudding— often called “click bait”. This could be anything from stories about what the Kardashians are up to, to stories known as the “feel good fuzzies”. These are good news stories in the community.

TYPES OF MEDIA

EARNED MEDIA

Free endorsement because of your newsworthiness.

PAID MEDIA

Advertising. Costs.

OWNED MEDIA

Your own platforms – website/social media. Limited reach.
Cluttered space/noise.

BENEFITS OF A MEDIA CAMPAIGN

- Grow your client base.
- Raise awareness about your cause or business.
- Increase your business credibility by communicating your key messages.
- Help people to know, like and trust you.
- Stimulate public debate about your industry or product/service.
- Get the attention of politicians, investors or stakeholders.
- Highlight an injustice — rigid industry legislation perhaps?
- Offer solidarity to similar organisations.
- Gain volunteers, find staff or investors.
- Remove stigmas attached to your industry, product or service.
- Promote social change or a consumer shift in attitude.
- Shed untruths/negative misunderstandings about your campaign/cause/organisation/product/service.
- Celebrate a win with your team.
- Gain support for a challenge.
- Increase awareness for fundraising campaigns.

MEDIA CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES

Why do I want media exposure? What am I hoping to achieve?

What would a good outcome from a campaign look like? Why am I spending time on this?

Knowing your objectives allows you to:

- a) Keep focused throughout your campaign. If an action doesn't help you meet an objective, don't do it.
- b) Focus your key messages. For example, if you want to sell out a show or event, your message/comments must focus on the event.
- c) Allow you to measure your success. Did your campaign help you meet your objectives?

YOUR AUDIENCE

Talking to...

- Ideal clients
- Competitors
- Staff/potential staff
- Community
- Key individuals within your industry.

What media are they reading/watching/listening to? Where are they?

6 WINDOWS OF NEWS

There are 6 main windows of news in your business.

- Who? You, your staff, clients or guest speakers you invite.
- What? The product or service you provide.
- Where? The location of your business, or events.
- When? When you started your business or a seasonal element of news.
- Why? A big one in profiles. That industry need or tension/catalyst for starting your business.
- How? How you achieve your outcomes.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Humans are motivated and fascinated by their need explore and meet certain needs, such as self-actualisation (morality, creativity) esteem (prestige, confidence, accomplishment), belonging and love (sex, friendships, family), safety (security, employment) and physical needs (food, safety, rest).

The most common business stories include:

- Company events which are open to the public, whether free or otherwise. Those with well-known guest speakers, awards or quirky themes tend to do well with media coverage boosting ticket sales.
- Trend tracking - give insights into industry or track economic performance indicators. You are an ear to the ground for journalists.
- Recognition/awards - a great way to celebrate a win with your team.
- Tension - identifies a problem in an industry or in society, which perhaps you provide a solution to.
- Innovation - what's new? Have you, or your company, created or invented something new and exciting?
- Other popular themes include:
- Quirky - unusual stories. These usually become "click bait".
- Humour - make sure it is appropriate humour that doesn't harm your clients, staff or suppliers.
- Information or events that impact peoples' lives.
- Celebrity - sometimes this is simply a respected industry leader visiting your business.
- Injustice - again, perhaps tension in your industry that you need support for.
- Warm fuzzies/inspiration. Some stories just make people feel good about your company. Anything with children, older people, animals and relationships.
- Seasonal - Christmas, tax season, tourism or insects (if you're in pest control).

- Social issue - for example, mental health, poverty.
- Life imitating art - stories where real life mirrors art.
- Paradox
- History/anniversary - perhaps you've found some old photos in the attic or a long-term customer or client is celebrating a milestone age.
- Nostalgia - Industry nostalgia is always great in stories. Is there something in society which causes adoring nostalgia, which you could connect your company or an event to? Food, cars, clothes, music?

If you look at the following popular and reoccurring news themes, you can see this to be true.

- Tsunamis, shark attacks, extreme weather and Mother Nature's dark side.
- The relationship between regions and urban centres.
- Locals being successful.
- The economy's performance/Job seekers and employment figures.
- Property market.
- Cheating websites and marriage statistics.
- Crime statistics.
- Health stories.
- Animals/pets.

Pros and cons of a press release

WHAT IS A PRESS RELEASE?

A press release is an emailed statement or story that you send to a media outlet.

The press release is often written as a news story and contains information which you want to have featured in a story. It has a news hook which identifies why you are newsworthy.

ADVANTAGES OF A PRESS RELEASE

They help you to...

- Control the narrative.
- Shape your key messages.
- Tailor to readers of a specific publication.
- Makes life easier for the journalist.
- Better for urgent messages.
- Introduction or invitation to be interviewed.
- Tells the full story.

DISADVANTAGES OF A PRESS RELEASE

- 5 seconds to get attention of a journalist with your email.
- Pay and spray approach is bad
- Can fail to entice a journalist if not written well.
- Email can be missed in an inbox full of press releases.

9 ingredients of a story package

1: ANGLE

What is your story about?

2: INTRO – wrap your angle in some stardust.

The introduction or hook is the door into your story.

Team popular themes with the 5Ws and H – who is the story about, where is it located, what, when, why, how etc.

3: KEY MESSAGES

Steer your key messages with your objectives. That is, think of the desired outcome of the story, and work from there.

Jot down 3 to 5 key messages for your story and keep them simple.

4: LIVE QUOTES/COMMENTS

5: SOUNDBITES–

- Analogies – shows experience, tell them a yarn from your experience.
- Emotion - shows humanity, the heart of the issue.
- Rhetorical questions - shows foresight, make the readers think and engage.
- Statistics - shows knowledge, but back your message up with data.
- Interesting turns of phrase - memorable speech.
- Humour - if appropriate, can show a warm, human and relatable side.
- Bold statements – shows leadership, not afraid to make a stand.
- Conflict – shows leadership and encourages change, shake things up and grab headlines.

Use soundbites sparingly or you'll end up sounding like an episode of Shortland Street. Avoid too much drama!

6: KEYWORDS

Sprinkle your keywords throughout your story. That is, make sure you use terms and phrases that Google searches can pick up later.

After all, if this story will be going online, you want to leverage off the massive search engine authority of the media outlet.

7: ACE HEADLINE.

Think like a journalist. Don't be subtle!

This headline will also be the subject line of your pitch email.

8: PRESS PHOTOS

Press shots should tell the story - that is, frame you in your workplace.

Do not send selfies.

- in colour
- high resolution (2-4MB)
- Landscape (for web)

Provide a caption too which includes the photographer's photo credit.

• 9: VIDEO

Does your story come with a 1-2 minute video clip? Send on request.

The 4-step pitch

Step 1: Choose your media

Step 2: Time it well (deadlines, news cycles)

Step 3: Be prepared

Step 4: Email or call?

ASSIGNMENT:

On this page, using the news formula, write down the newsworthy stories from within your organisation.

Remember 5Ws and H and keep it simple!

1: Start by exploring the themes and topics. Note which ones relate to your business. Write them down.

2: Now focus in on the 5Ws and H - who, what, where, when, why and how.

Write down the newsworthy elements of your business which fall under those headings.

Use this as the base for your own marketing/media story!