

Top Ten Tips for Successful PR

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GREEN Communications' Top Ten Tips for Successful PR

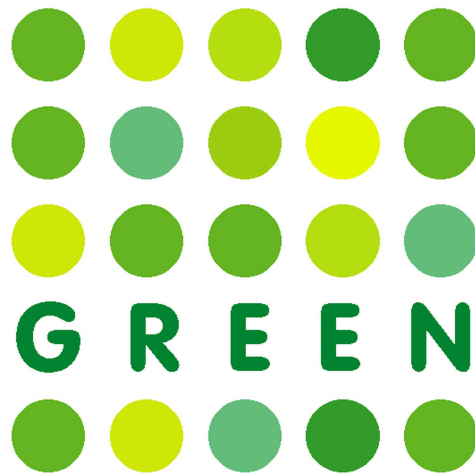
- 1.** Don't hide your company's light under a bushel. If you've got some good news, collaborate with the media and let your customers, suppliers and everyone else know how wonderful you are. Do you have an event planned, a new service to launch or an interesting story with a regional angle to tell? If so, let the local (or even national) media know about it through a press release.
- 2.** Always date the release and include a contact name and number. Phone ahead and find out the name of the editor or the local business reporter, and their preferred method of delivery (email, fax or post). Importantly, find out their deadline, particularly if your story is time sensitive.
- 3.** Newspapers receive hundreds of press releases every week, and only the ones that stand out will ever make it into print. Step into the shoes of the particular publication and its readers and ask the question 'What is interesting and newsworthy about this announcement?'. The answer should form the angle for your press release.
- 4.** The most important elements of a successful press release are its title and opening paragraph. If these fail to grab an editor's attention, the chances of the release being used drop significantly. These should sum up the most important points of your message. If the release is to inform about a forthcoming event or launch, then the date, place and time should be included in the first paragraph.
- 5.** Press releases should not read like a promotional brochure or be overloaded with information. Too much image building is not necessary, and will weigh down the message. Sentences should be short and snappy and the whole thing should be no longer than two sides of A4. Extra information, including company background, can be included in a section called 'Notes for editors'."
- 6.** If you can create a picture opportunity to tempt local photographers from your chosen media, your story will be more attractive. A photocall is a managed event which might be a one-off or a part of a bigger event, such as a presentation or exhibition. An unusual location or the presence of a celebrity can help if it is relevant to the story. Plan ahead and have contingencies in place in case of adverse weather conditions or other eventualities. Issue a photocall notice to relevant media.
- 7.** Build good relationships with journalists you speak to. Having good contacts in the media is key to a successful PR strategy. When you have a story printed, call or email to thank the writer and you'll know who to contact next time you have an event that you want to publicise. They get a good story, your business gets good exposure. Always be polite to journalists as they have the power to decide what

your customers read or hear about you - if anything at all.

8. Prepare a press pack (electronically or on paper) containing a company history, facts and figures, key contacts, pictures and examples of work. You probably already include this in your marketing literature and on your website, but it can be useful to send or give out to journalists to back up photocalls or other events. It's also useful reference material if you are asked to answer questions on the spot.

9. Be prepared for follow-up calls and comments. Designate a spokesperson in your company to have a few paragraphs ready for journalists who call to follow up any kind of PR activity. You could also issue a statement or comment whenever there are any developments in your region or industry. Journalists are always on the lookout for a local perspective.

10. Keep press cuttings. This is not just a vanity exercise, but a good way to track your PR activities. Consider which stories attracted a lot of interest, and which did not, so you can better target your campaign in the future. Cuttings are useful to refer back to if you receive any further enquiries on the story or event. However, if you are planning to use your cuttings as part of a marketing campaign, check your position regarding copyright



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