

# Types of Media

## Public Relations

All of us engage in PR each time we tell people what we do, who we are ... even the way we dress is public relations!

We are living in an information age. Targeting the news media has become one of the most effective methods for transmitting information to the public.

Today there are many more types of media than there was 10 years ago. Most people still get their news from traditional forms such as television, newspapers, magazines and radio. However, a growing number of people are getting the vast majority of their news content from the internet, mostly Twitter and Facebook. Understanding each type of media and its target audience is a crucial first step to putting your PR plan in motion. You should also have an idea of which media your target audiences are most likely to use.

### *Types of Media*

- TV
- Radio
- Newspaper
- Internet
- Newsletters
- Specialty Magazines
- Social Media

## Television

Television is considered the medium with the farthest reach, but with a growing number of cable stations, it is important to choose a television outlet or program based on its audience and then tailor your message to fit its scope of coverage.

National networks and stations (i.e., ABC, CBS, NBC) and cable news (FOX News, CNN, MSNBC) often focus on national stories only. Local affiliates, on the other hand, devote a large part of their newscasts to local issues. You can contact them about a local event or an initiative.

Successful TV pitches REQUIRE a visual element. Without video, the TV story is nothing. Hosting an event, witnessing a volunteer activity or even hanging a banner is better than nothing and a good way to provide visuals for television cameras.

### *When to pitch your story:*

Call assignment desk between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm. Call after the morning planning meeting at 9:30 and 10:00 am. News Directors, Reporters and Editors are usually gone by

the afternoon.

Your *most important* job is to describe the stories' VISUAL elements

## Radio

Like other media outlets, there are more radio stations than ever before. Most tailor their programming to a specific audience. Before you call a radio station to pitch your story, identify the station's format and audience.

*When to pitch your story:*

The best time to pitch a story on the radio is early in the morning between 7:30 am and 8:30 am. After that the staff goes into planning meetings. You can make another call at about 10:00 am. News Directors, Reporters and Editors are usually gone by the afternoon.

**MOST IMPORTANT:** Personality is key! Since you can't "hide behind" visuals, you need to be more expressive. Your voice needs to show your personality, passion, and compassion if managing a crisis.

*Submitting your farmers market schedule to free public radio event calendars is a great way to get reach the NPR audiences. Highlight key events such as opening day, when beloved crops arrive (blueberries, tomatoes, peaches, corn, etc.), holiday shopping (i.e., flowers for Mother's Day), as well as any events you have planned.*

**Northwest Public Radio:** <http://nwpr.org/community-calendar>

**KUOW:** <http://kuow.org/community-calendar>

**KNKX (former KPLU)** <http://knkx.org/community-calendar>

## Newspapers

Newspapers provide ongoing, up-to-date coverage of national and local stories. This medium reaches decision makers in your community, business leaders, elected officials and experts. Reporters are looking for you to provide them the "who", "what", "where", "when", "why" and "how" of a story. Specifically:

- **WHO** is the story about and whom does it affect?
- **WHAT** is happening and why is it newsworthy?
- **WHEN** is the story occurring? Did it happen already or will it happen in the future?
- **WHERE** is the story taking place? Is it national or local?
- **WHY** does this story matter? Why should readers care?
- **HOW** does this story affect the community? How does it affect the nation?

Daily newspapers often target larger metropolitan areas and focus on a wide variety of news. These papers have much larger staffs than weekly publications and often seek

information from a variety of sources. You should make a point to know as much as you can about the reporters you are pitching what their "beat" is and how they might cover your story.

Weekly papers are more commonly located in smaller communities and concentrate more local news. Weeklies have much smaller staffs than their daily counterpart and, as a result, are often more open to publishing materials as submitted (word-for-word press release)

*Best time to pitch your story:*

Best time to call the newsroom is between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm when reporters are likely to be available and not on deadline.

**MOST IMPORTANT:** Return phone call or schedule interview ASAP, the more you work with the reporters schedule, the less likely they are to turn to other sources. Understanding a reporters schedule also makes it more likely they will call you back when they need another source.

### Magazines

Magazines, like newspapers, focus on stories with detailed and fact-driven information and often report on a particular angle of a story that will be most interesting to the audience. When you pitch to a magazine you must tailor your message to each magazines target audience. Special interested or community magazines in your area will be receptive to your message. Unlike newspapers, magazines require a much longer lead time. Often, a story will hit the newsstands several months after it is pitched. This requires you to plan far in advance for the types of stories that are well-suited for magazines, such as personal profiles of volunteers or significant results from a new initiative.

What you may not know is that each type of media might not be right when it comes to telling your story. That is why it is necessary to have a strategic approach to your public relations future:

- Who is your audience and what are their opinions, attitudes, and perceptions.
- Which type of media can be best reached by your audience
- What is the best way to shape your message for each media type

### Internet

In today's fast paced world, the internet- specifically news-oriented websites- are becoming a heavily relied upon source for easily accessed, reliable and up-to-date information. News websites typically target a specific audience.

Reporters often use an organizations website to find out information and identify potential story ideas. For this reason, you should maintain an up-to-date website with information both reporters and the general community will find useful.

Websites are constantly updated and have different rules on access to archived stories. It is best to copy the articles into a document to save them and insure that you have accurate documentation of all media coverage.

Web reporters usually have revolving deadlines, but as a general rule, you should follow the same rules that apply to print reporters. Call between 10:00 a. and 2:00 pm.

### **Social Media**

From Baby Boomers to dogs and cats everyone seems to have a presence in social media nowadays! However, for most companies, a mere presence in the social media ecosystem is not enough. A well thought out social media strategy has become a critical component to the digital marketing strategy of any business. Brands and products strive continually to find new and innovative ways to engage consumers. Upon seeking out such methods it is important for companies to remember to remain vigilant in observing the unwritten rules of social media etiquette. How companies manage their pages and posts can potentially determine whether customers become advocates or enemies. When leveraged properly, Facebook and other social media channels have the ability to increase brand awareness and customers' engagement.

It is no longer a question of IF companies should execute a social media strategy. The question for most companies is HOW to best execute a meaningful and engaging approach that generates results. With so many social media marketing options available, marketers must also decide best practices and what tactics to avoid.

We all make mistakes as marketers and it's important that we not only learn from those mistakes but share with others so that they can avoid them.