

At the heart of any great public relations campaign is media relations. The ultimate PR goal for many companies is to garner media coverage that will drive brand recognition and build awareness of their products and services. Producing results through media relations can be challenging, but there are key tactics every PR professional can use to ensure success.

Affect shares 10 strategies to maximize media relations outreach:



- 1 Read the news.** Take time out of your day to read about current trends in the industry. It's difficult to insert your brand – or your client – into the media if you don't know what's happening in the news.
- 2 Become an expert on the brand/products.** You are the first point of contact for reporters. Being able to intelligently convey differentiators and value propositions to the media will help secure journalist interest in writing a story.
- 3 Know your media targets.** Reporters are busy and receive hundreds of pitches a week. By conducting research on your targets – including what they write about and who their audience is – you'll be able to determine which reporters are relevant and develop nuanced pitches that will be of interest to them.
- 4 Cut the wordiness.** A reporter may only read the first few lines of your email pitch or may only have 30 seconds to talk on the phone. Communicate the important information first and don't be afraid to bullet out your key facts.
- 5 Use an appropriate subject line.** Don't opt to use clever word plays, industry jargon, acronyms or unspecific language for an email subject line. Keep it simple and clear, and always include the company name so the reporter can easily find your email again later.
- 6 Don't send attachments.** Sending an email with an attachment can land your pitch straight in a reporter's spam folder. You may have an excellent graphic or compelling video that you want to share, but don't send it without first getting approval from the reporter.
- 7 Promise only what you can deliver.** Proving your credibility and reliability with journalists is key. Don't pull a bait-and-switch by offering something you can't deliver just to get your foot in the door. Following through on all of your promises, and communicating early if for some reason you can't, will help ensure future opportunities with the reporter.
- 8 Follow up.** While your initial pitch may interest a reporter, your email may get buried in his or her inbox. Whether by email, phone or tweet, follow up with the reporter if you don't hear back the first time.
- 9 Put it in writing.** Whenever you have a phone or in-person conversation with a journalist, send a follow-up email that details important items discussed and any action items. This will ensure that both parties have a record of the conversation and are on the same page about expectations, deliverables and timelines.
- 10 Build relationships.** Establishing a good rapport with key reporter contacts will help ensure your emails are read and your phone calls are answered. A little social time over coffee, lunch or drinks can help you maintain a strong relationship and get insider information on how and what they like to be pitched.

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