

5

SIMPLE STEPS TO GETTING NEWS COVERAGE



STEP 1

MAKE IT NEWSWORTHY

Newspapers, television and radio stations receive hundreds of press releases weekly. Many of the suggested stories are not covered because they are not *newsworthy*. News editors are looking for:

Audience - If you want to send a press release to a news editor, keep in mind that the editor must choose news that interests the greatest number of people.

Impact - How many people will be affected? How serious is the impact of your information or event?

Timeliness - News must be as up to date as possible. Get information about your event to the media as far in advance as possible, then follow up with a phone call as the event gets closer. When possible, show how your event relates to an issue that is already in the news.

Prominence - If your event will include a celebrity or pub-

lic official, news editors are more likely to be interested.

Unusualness - When possible, let them know that you're doing something that has never been done before.

Conflict - When one group of people opposes the actions of another group, it's often news. Explain why the problem affects many people.

STEP 2

TARGET AN AUDIENCE



Determine which media you want to target and which audiences are appropriate for your message. For example, if you're targeting a television audience, make sure your event has a strong visual component. If you want to target young people, choose a medium that has listeners, readers or viewers who fit your audience profile. Pay attention to radio station formats that make it easier to capture a particular audience.

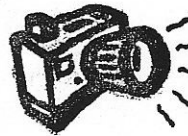
STEP 3

WRITE A GOOD PRESS RELEASE

The elements of a news story are what journalists call "the five Ws and the H." In other words, the WHO, WHAT,

WHEN, WHERE, WHY and HOW of a story. Sometimes it also helps to add HOW

MUCH. Surprisingly, news editors receive press releases every day that leave out one or more



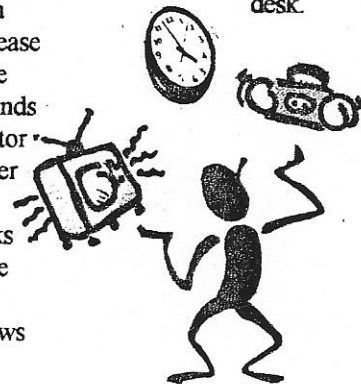
of these key pieces of information. A concise, easy-to-read press release that is newsworthy and includes the five Ws and the H will improve your chances of getting coverage.

STEP 4

BEAT THE DEADLINES

Ideally, a press release should be in the hands of an editor or reporter at least two weeks before the event.

This allows time for planning and gives the reporter time to research the subject and to do some reporting before the event. Also,



keep in mind that some newspaper sections are done days in advance.

STEP 5

GET IT IN THE RIGHT HANDS

Assigning editors oversee reporters and those reporters are more than likely responsible for specific subjects or beats. Before sending a press release, take the time to find out which editor or reporter covers your issue. This can be accomplished with a quick call to the newsroom. It also helps to become familiar with the various sections of newspapers and segments of newscasts. Otherwise, your press release about a celebrity car wash could end up lost on the religion editor's desk.