



PUBLIC RELATIONS HANDBOOK

ON CULTURE DAYS

THE NEW AGE OF PR

PR HAS EVOLVED

Old-school public relations has a lot in common with old-school advertising. While ad agencies relied on the “spray and pay” approach, PR professionals were hired to “smile and dial” to secure coverage that would ultimately sell your product, increase your brand awareness, and quickly propel your company to greatness.

But here’s the problem: The old-school model of media relations was predicated on the way people interacted with radio, television, and newspapers. People used to spend Sunday brunch reading a printed copy of The New York Times, and no one skipped through content or advertising they found annoying. There were no easy vehicles to share recommendations among friends or colleagues other than word-of-mouth, making “earned media” in publications the driver behind awareness and purchase intent.

This book is designed to help you develop and implement a public relations strategy that drives awareness, creates marketplace differentiation, builds lasting relationships with journalists, and delivers results so that you’re front-page news — not yesterday’s news.

THE CHANGED LANDSCAPE

There was a time when glossy print magazines were the be all end all for editorial, but in the past few years, amidst an industry battling sales decline, we've seen some major publications struggle to stay afloat. From women's lifestyle giant Chatelaine dropping down to six print issues a year, to a FASHION magazine and FLARE merger, to the folding of CANADIAN ART, there is no doubt that Canada's media market has shrunk.

The church and state division between advertising and editorial no longer exist, and the vast majority of Canadian outlets are now taking an integrated approach to developing content. As such, the role of a traditional PR has shifted to pitch and secure to 360 programs. Rather than focus exclusively on earned media coverage, we need to look at PR programs from 50,000 feet to determine how we can amplify in earned, paid, social and experiential to make sure we're getting the best value. Here are a few tactics to go beyond earned media.

Partnerships

Events

Digital & Social Campaigns

Online Advertorials

Influencer Campaigns

Event Listings

PUT IT ON THE WIRE

You've heard this time and time again. Let's write a press release and put it on the wire. OK... what does that mean.

A press release is an announcement that sums up campaign or program. This is the meat and potatoes that media can use to write their stories. Often it has quotes from executives, the overview of the announcement and a brief profile of the company as well as contact information.

The "wire" is industry lingo that uses a third-party service like Canadian News Wire to distribute the release. This service can cost anywhere from \$800 - \$3,000 depending on word count and images.

Why would you do this? In the past, there was a journalist in the news room that read and monitored the wire releases. Since the usage of email, journalists rely on custom emails and pitches directly to their inbox vs wide spread releases.

So why use this tactic today? It is still used in PR mostly in financial services and in the corporate world as a way of getting information on the internet and to make it searchable. There is often better ways to use the money though targeted outreach.

PUBLIC RELATIONS IS MORE THAN YOU THINK

It is the management of communication between an organization and its publics. Finding the authenticity of a company/brand and telling this story to its audience. Promoting clients and making them seem as successful, honest, important, exciting or relevant as possible. PR is multifaceted and consists of a variety of aspects including:

- **Counselling:** providing advice to management concerning policies, relationships and communications
- **Research:** determining attitudes and behaviours of publics in order to plan public relations strategies. Such research can be used to (1) generate mutual understanding or (2) influence and persuade publics
- **Media Relations:** Working with journalists, producers and bloggers in seeking publicity or responding to their interests in their organization
- **Influencer Relations:** Working with individual who are influential in their industry in seeking publicity or responding to their interests in their organization
- **Community Relations:** Planned activity with a community to maintain an environment that benefits both the organization and the community
- **Issues management:** Identifying and addressing issues of public concern that affect the organization
- **Special Events:** Stimulating an interest in a person, product, or organization by means of a wellplanned event
- **Social Media:** websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.

**BE YOUR OWN
STORYTELLER**

LEARN THE ROPES

Conventional wisdom around public relations suggests that you draft a press release or media kit, send it to journalists who cover your space, then cross your fingers and hope for the best. However, there are three clear problems with this approach.

1. First, journalists can't be expected to work off of your marketing plan.
2. Second, writers need to focus on what their readers want.
3. Lastly, editors get countless submissions for stories every single day.

Below, we'll dive into each of these issues and what you can do to stand out while respecting journalists' time.

CHALLENGES

1. Journalists Don't Work Off Of Your Marketing Plan

The reporters you contact have their own priorities, deadlines, and editorial calendars to work with. Unfortunately, they are likely not sitting at their desks waiting for your email to arrive to file breaking news that you're opening your doors.

2. Writers Need to Give Their Readers What They Want

The role of a writer is to tell a great story that is relevant and newsworthy for his or her readership, so he or she might choose to write a different angle than the one that is most likely to drive traffic to your event or encourage people to visit your website for more info.

3. Editors Are Drowning in Pitches

Think about how crowded your inbox gets. Now put yourselves in the shoes of a top-tier reporter, many of whom receive up to 500 pitches per day from pr's across Canada. Reporters are bombarded with emails, and phone calls, which makes cutting through the clutter a significant challenge, especially if you don't have the brand recognition enjoyed by Nike, Uber, and other massive brands. You can wait forever for reporters to notice what you're doing or you can think outside the box.

CREATE REMARKABLE CONTENT

When PR's start writing press releases, we automatically default to the traditional "who, what, when, where, why" approach to content, which is often decidedly unremarkable.

Newsflash: Reporters are humans, and 99.9% of humans prefer remarkable, interesting, and dynamic storytelling over bland, boring, and unequivocally promotional writing.

When writing an announcement, a pitch or as a press release, focus on what's different, unique, and narrative-driven versus just going through the motions with a release. Don't be afraid to spice up your releases a little bit for lighter announcements.

STORYTELLING

Storytelling isn't some magical skill only gifted to the poets and JK Rowling and that guy from product with a theatre background who tells the craziest stories at happy hour. It's something we all can tap into and public relations is all about telling an interesting story to entice media and their readers.

There are four elements of great storytelling: relatability, novelty, fluency, and tension.

Relatability

Think of your favourite movie. Chances are, one of the main characters reminds you of yourself. We're instinctively drawn to characters and worlds that we can relate to. This is why we love teen movies when we're in high school. It's why my mom's favourite movie of the last 20 years is *Something's Gotta Give*. If we can see ourselves in a character, we're much more likely to pay attention. Basically, we're a planet of narcissists.

STORYTELLING

Relatability

In PR, we need to know the audience of our target media outlet and tailor our story to them and their audience. For example, if you are pitching CityLine or any mid-morning television show, their primary audience is women from 35-55 who are likely at home and looking for fun and light content. To relate to this audience you need to create a story that this audience will relate to. If you are pitching tech media, use words that relates to their readership. Any time you green light a story for your company's blog or tell a story in a meeting, ask yourself: Can my audience see themselves in this story? Can they relate to it?

Novelty

There is no sense of trying to tell the same story that has already been written, so we need to find a novel hook, something new to say. You need to ask yourself: Am I introducing something new into the world? Is this something editors can find on Google? If so, you need to tweak your angle so that it has a newest about it.

STORYTELLING

Fluency

If we use long, dependent clauses, big words, industry jargon it generally confuses the hell out of everyone. Keep your message simple and concise. The best marketers explain difficult to grasp concepts in a simple, colloquial way. Fluency means capturing and holding someone's attention in just a few seconds using simple words that allow us to get lost in the story.

Tension

Tension is the key to great storytelling, and more than ever, we need stories that transport us to another world. Stories provide relief from the frenetic anxiety of our day-to-day. Stories make us feel hopeful and connected, and when we reach that blissful end, they reinforce that we can overcome tension and conflict, and hope for a happy ending.

MEDIA RELATIONS

BOSS

THE JARGON

Long Lead Media: Media outlets that have material deadlines 3 to 4 months before the newsstand date, think magazines

Short Lead Media: Media outlets that have material deadlines one month or less before newsstand date, think newspapers

Print Media: Publications on printed paper (newspapers/magazines)

Online Media: Digital publications, websites and blogs

Broadcast Media: Television and radio networks



WHAT IS MEDIA RELATIONS?

In PR, media relations is 50% of the job and arguably the most important skill to have.

So, what is it?

Media relations is the broader term for developing strategic relationships with key journalists/editors, producers and bloggers, and working closely with them to tell your client's story plus all other activities in between (i.e. sending out a press release or a media kit, sending out media gifts or samples).

THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO LOOK AT MEDIA

PAID MEDIA

This encompasses everything that comes with a price tag from a clickable banner for Goodlife Fitness on BlogTO, to a full page advertisement for Veuve Clicquot Champagne in the Globe & Mail to a sponsored story (aka. advertorial) about vacationing in the Cayman Islands in enRoute Magazine. Paid media makes it clear that the brand being promoted is the brand that paid the bill on that piece of space.

EARNED MEDIA

Otherwise known as editorial, a story earned as a result of media pitching and having a third party expert such as a fashion editor, telling your client's story on your behalf. There is power in editorial, as the general public is more likely to "buy into" a story that's been vetted by a trusted source, such as a journalist, versus what they could perceive as a biased source; information delivered by you or your client

i.e. Would you believe me if I told you 6 inch platform sneakers from the Spice Girls circa 1998 is back in style, or would you be more inclined to believe this if your favourite fashion magazine says "platform sneakers are the must have of the moment"?

PAID VS EARNED: THE ROI

PR operates solely in the earned media space for this, PR clients will pay X-number of dollars to execute a media relations strategy where public relations experts spend time pitching stories to multiple media outlets in the attempt to garner coverage.

i.e. \$20,000 might be able to buy you one advertisement in a magazine, while your investment could be better spent on a PR who is paid for their time to execute some media outreach which could potentially garner multiple stories across 10 different media outlets of similar or equal reach.

Ultimately paid advertising is 100% guaranteed, where PR is earned so it takes a qualified individual to tell different angles of your story to get multiple media coverage.

The biggest difference in paid vs earned media is consumer trust. Consumers are very savvy and know when they are being “sold”, that’s advertising. PR is a softer approach and it allows the consumer to think about your business or product as positive and trustworthy.

PRINT VS ONLINE COVERAGE

Back in the day, print coverage was the golden nugget in PR. Clients loved seeing their brand, face, or story in a glossy magazine. With the decrease of print publications and the increase of online search, online coverage is now preferred.

The benefit for online coverage is that it allows the client or person to share the coverage on their website, social channels, and newsletters thus expanding the possible reach of consumers touched. Online coverage is also beneficial for Google Search and SEO. When interested consumers or possible clients google your brand's name, the online story will often appear on the first page of Google. This also increases credibility and trust for your clients. Unlike paid advertising, PR coverage will last on the site for many years, giving you additional awareness long after your PR campaign is finished. It is important to screen grab the coverage and convert it to a JPEG press clip to save in your files just in case the outlet closes or does a redesign.

MEDIA RELATIONS: THE MUST-HAVES

The following are just some of the assets you will come across in your day-to-day media relations, whether it's information that will help you pitch a story or media-facing assets developed to be shared and distributed to your media sources:

- **Background information:** These are typically internal facing documents for your reference only that includes all the background details that you need to know when reaching out to media as to come across well-informed and in the know; this can also include brand voice documents or “BVI” (Brand Visual Identity) booklets that teach you how to communicate the brand's message using their voice, key terms and visual identities (i.e. logos, official fonts, specific Pantone colours).
- **Media materials or press kits** i.e. fact sheet, spokesperson biographies, backgrounders, campaign details, press release.

MEDIA RELATIONS: THE MUST-HAVES

- **High-resolution imagery:** whether it's off-figure (flat-lay) product photos, spokesperson headshots or architectural renderings, these are photos that your client approves for public consumption in print or online. What is considered high resolution? An image with a resolution of at least 300 dpi which is considered a print quality photo.
- **Key messages:** bullet points that outline the key points you need to get across in all communications
- **Media lists:** the holy grail of all your media outreach. Your success garnering media coverage is dependent on how strong your media list is.

MEDIA LISTS: HOW TO BUILD ONE

While there are tools out there like Cision that can help you generate a media list, use caution. It's good for top line contacts and details, but often you will need to dig deeper to identify the right contact. The NUMBER ONE TIP IS.....

RESEARCH, RESEARCH, RESEARCH:

Know who you're pitching! Look up the outlet and research old issues to see what kinds of topics they write about. Understand the outlet and their needs (i.e. if you're pitching a woman's lip balm, you're not going to add an editor from a men's publication) and then figure out the right person to reach out to. Has he or she written stories similar to this one before? What is their general point of view on your topic?

i.e. if this health reporter only ever writes about major health topics like stem cell research and advances in Alzheimer's research, he or she may not be the best person to reach out to about a new charity walk raising funds for breast cancer research

MEDIA HIERARCHY AND THEIR ROLES

Editor-in-chief: Leads the overall voice and direction for the publication, and usually has the final veto on a story. This is not someone you'd pitch or add to an email blast list. Save an EIC for a very important exclusive story or a VIP event event only worthy of their presence.

Editors: Generally leads the editorial strategy for the overall section that they work for (i.e. Style Editor, Health Editor). Editors sometimes write stories, but more often will assign stories.

From here, the editor structure breaks down from the EIC to the Managing Editor (no specific beat, just manages workflow and story assignments across the board), Senior Editor, Associate Editor, Assistant Editor and then finally, writers and interns.

Writers: Will do the majority of the writing for a publication and is typically assigned the stories they will write. On occasion, depending on their role within the publication, they may be able to pitch a story idea to their editor who can give them the green light to move forward or not. Other times, writers have the freedom to write what they want, particularly if they run their own column.

FREELANCERS AND THEIR ROLE

As more and more media outlets slash staff, freelance journalists are increasingly becoming more important. Freelancer writers are often former editors or journalists that decided to write for multiple publications instead of just one. They often have specific media beats that they specialize in. You need to keep that in mind as you pitch them because just like staff writers they only focus on what they need.

There are several steps in pitching freelance writers and some considerations you need to be aware of.

- Freelance writers get PAID by the publishing outlet and it is often based on word count
- Freelancers pitch their gate keeping editor on several angles for different stories
- Their lead times can be longer than regular writers as they have several steps to get the story through
- They are willing to work with you to discuss the best angle to get your story published as they have skin in the game

BROADCAST MEDIA

Television and radio stations have their own gate keepers for public relations. The role that you need to outreach to is called a producer. Broadcast producers are responsible of placing all of the guests on the TV or radio shows.

Never pitch the hosts of the television show as they are not the people that can get you on the show. However, television hosts are open to attending events.

WHAT IS A PITCH?

There are different ways to pitch media, but these days, it's primarily over email in addition to phone calls and/or in-person meetings depending on the subject matter and your level of relationship. Overall, the pitch components fall into the following "template".

Pitch Components:

1. Subject Line (see across)
2. Personalized greeting (see across)
3. Your hook (see across)
4. The details (see across)
5. What are you looking for (see across)
6. The close (see across)

Subject: Ontario Culture Days announce four free family-fun weekends

Hi Shaun,

Ontario Culture Days is announcing the line-up of free, family fun activities for a month long celebration including some must-see performances great for all ages.

From September 24 to October 24, Ontario Culture Days will have over 1,000 events in 70 municipalities across the province. From visual arts, dance, theatre, music, history and heritage, architecture and design, culinary arts, craft, and storytelling, we have something for everyone.

We have selected the following events that we think you would be most interested in attending and covering, please see below:

- September 24, 7pm Live Dance performance with XX dance team
- September 31, 3pm Elder storytelling with XX
- October 4, 11am Architecture tour of XX with XX

All performers are available for interviews as well as Ruth Burns, Executive Director at Ontario Culture Days. Ruth's 2021 mandate was to ensure free inclusive community programming for all ages, which meant going into some brand new rural Ontario sites.

I've attached the press release and full itinerary below and included some images for you to use. Looking forward to chatting.

Best,

MEDIA RELATIONS TRICKS + TIPS

Not all media pitches should be the same. There are many factors to consider i.e. the type of outlet, the kinds of topics the outlet covers etc. Here are a few tips for media pitching:

1. Research, Research, Research

This goes hand in hand with building a media list. Know your audience and who you're pitching. Being targeted in your outreach is going to yield more results per pitch, than sending out one blanket pitch to 50 outlets at once. Think from the perspective of: is this outlet going to be in favour of a story like this? You might need to change your pitch depending on who you're talking to.

2. Work Backwards

This is so important the key to successful media relations is knowing aside from being targeted in your outreach, is thinking about your pitch from the perspective of the result. Ask yourself "what is the story I want?" and then craft the pitch that will get you there.

3. Know Your Tone

Your relationship is key here. Err on the side of formal in your media pitch if you're reaching out to someone new or someone you don't work with on a regular basis.

MEDIA RELATIONS TRICKS + TIPS

4. Be Helpful

Editors will tend to work with PR people who they have the easiest relationships with. Develop an excellent track record for great pitches and neat story ideas, and they will be more inclined to work with you again. Sometimes, they may even come to you with an idea.

5. Get To The Point

The best media pitches are written clearly and concisely. Be clear about your ask so that when the editor reads your pitch, he or she knows exactly what you're looking for.

6. Pitch them!

Always provide the story angle you're looking for, don't leave it up to the editor to decide what the story could be.

7. What's in it for them?

When drafting your pitch, always consider what the benefit there would be for the readers, listeners or viewers. The main purpose of media is to inform their audience, so what will people get out of your story? What to do this weekend? New artist?

MEDIA RELATIONS TRICKS + TIPS

8. Make It Easy

There's nothing an editor hates more than unnecessary back-and-forth. If you're pitching a festival, minimize the amount of back and forth by anticipating their needs, and making sure you have provided all the assets ready at their disposal in your correspondence.

i.e. If you're pitching out main performers for an theatre show, make sure your pitch includes a link or attachment for the actors short bio, head shot, attendance information so that if the media person wanted to, they could reference your email last minute for everything they could need for a What To See This Weekend story without having to come back to you and ask for all the above details.

9. Be Timely

If you're in the midst of media pitching and you get a response, media appreciate a quick and timely email back. Media are often working on tight deadlines, so the quickest PR (and most thorough) will win the story.

MEDIA RELATIONS TRICKS + TIPS

10. Know Your Stuff

Study your materials. It is up to you to be able to communicate the message as clearly and as knowledgably as the performers or artists. Word of warning: some journalists love to phone! Be prepared for an unexpected phone call and make sure you know your stuff, because when they start asking you questions, it will become clear very quickly that you're faking your way through the conversation. If you truly don't have the answer, and need to ask the client for details, simply tell them: "let me find out for you!"

11. Be assertive but not aggressive in your follow-up

You won't always get an immediate response from media, so make sure you follow up a day or two later. Sometimes, the squeaky wheel wins the grease, so persistent followup might be required for you to land that story. That said, don't try to bully the media into covering your story either it doesn't work that way.

EDITORIAL CALENDAR

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

You may have the best story with the best pitch but if you miss the editorial deadline there is not much you can do. So to prepare your outreach calendar you need to know the editorial lead times required for different outlets.

Tip: The earlier you pitch the outlet, the greater likelihood your story will be covered.

LEAD TIMES

Magazines: Print magazines have the longest lead times in media. Depending on how many issues the magazine publishes you need to pitch 3-6+ months in advance of the issue to be considered. So if you want to be in the holiday issue, the time to outreach is in June/July. Often if you get a confirmed story published in the print issue, the outlet will also publish the piece online as well.

Newspapers: Depending on the section, hard news can be 24-48 hours from pitch to paper. If the story is part of the lifestyle section, it is often two weeks from pitch to paper. Often journalists will file their story a few days before for their art director to design the story.

Online Media: Most online publications require 2-6 weeks from pitch to coverage landing

Television: Producers require 3-4 weeks for optimum booking. If the pitch is timely, like a CEO response to a political change, producers are open to 24-48 bookings.

Radio: Radio producers are required 1-2 weeks for optimum bookings

CULTURAL TOURISM

WHAT IS CULTURAL TOURISM?

Cultural Tourism in simple terms mean people that travel to a destination to experience an outcome. Travellers plan in advance with the expectation that they will experience a certain festival, hotel, event, museum, region etc. Travellers tend to be more educated and affluent than general travellers and do research about their trip prior to arrival.

In order to pitch media your region as a go-to destination, we need to create a brand identity. For example: When you think of Paris, people tend to think of good food, high-end fashion, sophisticated style, good wine and the Eiffel Tower.

TAKE TIME AND BRAINSTORM

What does your region bring to the table, how can you be different for other areas and what makes you special?

WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT?

THOUGHT STARTERS

- Unique food and restaurants?
- People that moved to your area during the pandemic?
- Art galleries? Festivals?
- Vineyards/ wine tours?
- Unique public activities?
- Site installations?
- Free events?
- Sporting events?
- Interesting people?

GATHERING ASSETS

Now that you have a solid proposition to market your region, you need to gather assets to prove your point.

WHAT IS INTERESTING IN YOUR AREA?

- Pull together a list of businesses (hotels and food and beverage), attractions, permanent art installation, etc
- Reach out to your asset builders and ask for attractive images, information on their business as well as any future plans
- Find out if you have any interesting residents or people that can be leveraged for secondary proof points that you have an exciting area. For example, if you have notable musicians living in your region that would be a proof point that you have a musical community that tourists might be interested in visiting. Lots of chefs? Your area could be attractive to a food and beverage enthusiast that might be interested in checking out local restaurants
- Think in numbers: media love stats and hard facts so if you know you have 15 arts activities throughout the summer, you can make a point that your community thrives in the summer

GET CLEAR ON YOUR OFFERING

Once you gather up your assets, get really clear on your region's offering. This means developing an elevator pitch of what makes you different or interesting.

ELEVATOR PITCH

- A few concise sentences
- Be clear on seasonality - what season is best for you? Keep in mind competitors. Do you want to “own” summer? Or does Winter make you shine?
- Curate your list. Do not list everything because it waters down your offering. Pick one or two lanes and double down on your proof points. You can't be everything to everyone. Find your angle and run with it.

PRESS RELEASE ROUND UP

Once you developed your brand position and the “what makes you different” you can now start communicating this externally.

ROUND UP

- Write a press release to be used to pitch to media
- In the first paragraph, declare your brand position
- In the supporting paragraphs fill out your proof points from your asset gathering
- Call out any important dates for future events
- Ensure you have a quote from your spokesperson/CEO/CMO within the release backing up the point from your brand position
- Ensure you include a press contact, boiler plate, and social media accounts/hashtags

WINNING WITH LOCAL MEDIA

Start by winning in your own back yard. Pitching local media that know you/your area and getting coverage will entice larger media outlets to cover you in the future. The more coverage you can gather from friendlies, the more you can expand. Win with locals, grow with outsiders.

LOCAL MEDIA WINS

- Pitch media with the regional tag line/offering. If you want to be known as the ultimate ski destination in Ontario, make sure that you are pitching that angle so they can cover you as the place to be
- Try to get supporting facts and figures to back your angle
- Include an attractive image package for media to easily use

GOING BIG.

Getting regional tourism media coverage in a larger publication is all about identifying your offering to attract tourists.

PRESS RELEASE ROUND UP

- Use your press release round up and images as a secondary asset in the email pitch
- In the email body, identify why your region can be considered a tourist destination
- Identify the time of year that makes the most sense for tourists
- Research editors and freelance writers that have previously written about Ontario as a destination and reach out to them
- Offer the editor/writer a free experience to the area. This could mean creating a specialized travel package for them

MEDIA TRIP.

Often large media outlets will need to experience the region for themselves vs take your word on it. You will need to create a custom media trip for them to ensure everything you tell them is, in-fact, accurate

MEDIA FAM TRIP

- Identify a small group of media targets that write about destinations
- In an email, offer them a free media trip with a proposed itinerary
- Give them the details of where they would stay, where they would dine and what are they doing
- Media often expect door-to-door experiences. If they are from the US, it would mean booking their flight, transportation, etc.
- Give them the people they would be able to interview for their story

FESTIVAL SPECIFICS

FESTIVALS: WHAT TO DO?

Ok so you are working on the festival event theme, artists, and line up. What are the steps on your public relations journey.

MEDIA LIST:

The creation of a media list can be done months in advance. This is probably one of the most important steps in success. You need to actually look through the media outlet to determine the best person for the story and get their first/last name, title, and email and start an excel list. Media are often changing positions so it's important that you do not solely rely on an older list as the be all, end all. You need to make sure that the editor is not on maternity leave or retired.

The editors and beats for a community festival could include:

- Local community editors
- Arts/cultural reporters
- TV producers from local TV stations
- Tourism editors
- Lifestyle editors

FESTIVALS: WHAT TO DO?

Once you created your media list, it's now time to put together your media strategy. How many times can you reach out to an editor with relevant news? This will determine your outreach calendar. Remember it's about crafting a story angle for each outlet so you will have to play around with your pitches to get the most success.

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:

This is the big reveal to drum up excitement for the festival and it should be done about 3 months in advance. Too soon = not enough for media to cover it again. Too far = readers will not care.

The announcement should include top acts and performers, the title of the festival, any themes specific for this year, any important changes, etc. Media love to tell their readers about FREE things to do because it means that all people can attend. If your event is free, ensure you highlight it!

FESTIVALS: WHAT TO DO?

Once you've identified editors, say 10-20 editors from your list, now you go ahead and send them the pitch email. If they don't respond, give them a few days and follow up again. After about 5 follow ups and no response, consider this a dead end and either change up your offering -ie, pitch them an interview with the festival director instead of the line up, or let it die.

ARTISTS:

Your artists are the biggest asset you can use! Talk to your artists and find out their story. Did they start making art from their grandmother? Did they move from another country and have a story to tell? Did they quit their job only to be successful in their craft? Find out more about them and then develop a pitch around it.

Find out where the artist was born or where they live now and send a pitch out to their local community paper to show their artist being successful.

You can create at least 1-2 months of media outreach with artist stories that all build up to your event. Be cautious that you are not pitching all of these stories to the same person or it just becomes annoying. You have to switch up your editors!

FESTIVALS: WHAT TO DO?

FESTIVAL 4 WEEKS OUT:

Things should be in a pretty good place as far as festival line up, headliners, timing, locations, pricing, etc. and now it is time to announce your festival to the world! It's time for the big reveal and press release. Start by penning a release that has the key information for media to know.

Now you've got that sexy release approved, it's time to outreach. With this release you will want to go **WIDE**, meaning try to outreach to as many media outlets that make sense.

Highlight the news - such as headliners, changes in festival etc. Offer up interviews with your CEO or Director.

Keep following up and outreaching!

FESTIVALS: WHAT TO DO?

FESTIVAL 2 DAYS BEFORE LAUNCH:

Two days to go but you have work to do. Today is the day you need to outreach to local TV cameras and radio to send them a **MEDIA ADVISORY**. This is an announcement that has the 5W's in it and is a request for TV cameras to come down to take video, interview artists, festival goers and event directors. So what does it look like?

MEDIA ADVISORY

Tomorrow, Ontario Culture Days kicks off their free month long cultural festival with a VIP performance by artist XX. The festival presents a unique opportunity for independent organizers to come together to showcase local talent, foster community collaboration, and bring the public into the creative process. In the past, our organizers have hosted programming from multiple disciplines, including but not limited to: visual arts, dance, theatre, music, history and heritage, architecture and design, culinary arts, craft, and storytelling.

WHAT: Ontario Culture Days Opening Celebration featuring XX performer to approx. 100 people

DATE: September 24

WHERE: Ontario Place, Trillium Pavillion

TIME: Performance starts at 7PM, optimum media time is 6:30 - 7:30PM

INTERVIEW OPPS: Ruth Burns, Executive Director of OCD, XX performer, XX performer

PHOTO OPPS: Performer singing to families, Art works by XX, Family friendly fun

Media contact: Your Name, Phone Number

FESTIVALS: WHAT TO DO?

FESTIVAL 2 DAYS BEFORE LAUNCH:

Great, I created my advisory but who do I send it to? Send it to your local TV producers under the tips or breaking news emails. Every TV and newspaper has a tip line on their website, this is where you send the advisory email to. You simply add the subject line as: **MEDIA ADVISORY: Opportunity for camera and interviews for Opening Day Festival** and then copy and paste your advisory in the body of the email and include a word attachment.

FESTIVALS: WHAT TO DO?

FESTIVAL DAY 1:

Bright and early, like 7AM, do another blast with your advisory to the break news teams. If they have already responded to you, this is not necessary but if they news desk is silent, do one more push!!!

Make sure you are onsite when media arrive, often the news desks assigns a breaking news reporter that has very little information on what's going on. They need you to bring them up to speed quick and show them the best places to capture video etc.

FESTIVALS: WHAT TO DO?

FESTIVAL ONGOING:

With every cool or newsworthy event during the festival, send out another advisory to the news desk. They will continue to cover if the content is new and exciting. Follow the template and go. Just be mindful there is a fine line between sharing information and being annoying.

FESTIVALS: WHAT TO DO?

FESTIVAL ONGOING:

Let's say you are not getting any luck from TV reporters. What now? Get your photographer to take engaging photos from the festival and put together a pitch about how much the community is enjoying this free, family fun! Send an email with details and most importantly photos to a community reporter in your local newspaper on a Monday or Tuesday and let them know about the events happening that week or weekend. Chances are they will run the photos and give the festival some more love.

FESTIVALS: WHAT TO DO?

FESTIVAL DONE:

Congratulations, you made it!!!! But there's no rest for the wicked!!! Now is the time to do another release with your top highlights, festival interactions, how many people came, that type of thing. Media LOVE LOVE numbers and stats so if you can say XX people attended, a XX% increase of last year. They love it!

You will want to gather about 5 images from your top performances and do a What Happened At This Year's Festival pitch. Share any personal anecdotes from festival goers or artists that paint the picture of fun!

Pitch it out to community reporters and pour yourself a glass of wine!

MEDIA LISTS

MEDIA LISTS

BE SPECIFIC :

Find the area of where the event is happening and use area specific media lists to help gain PR attention during OCDF as well as any time of the year. Remember to stick to your area, most media will only cover local news.

Pitch assignment desks for TV and Radio interview coverage two days before the event as well as morning of. Most local broadcast TV enjoy feel-good community stories and events that are free to the public.

MEDIA LISTS

TORONTO ASSIGNMENT DESKS.

newsroom@640toronto.com,
news680@rogers.com,
breakingnews@cp24.com,
ontariodesk@cp.org,
tonews@cbc.ca,
newsatsixtoronto@cbc.ca,
mediareleases.to@citynews.ca,
torontodesk@ctv.ca,
newstor@fairchildtv.com,
newstips@globaltv.com,
newsroom@globeandmail.com,
nym@insidetoronto.com,
torontonewsdesk@metronews.ca,
newsdesk@mingpaotor.com,
news@nowtoronto.com,

omninews@rci.rogers.com,
iciontario-grp@radio-canada.ca,
tor@singtao.ca,
city@thestar.ca,
torsun.citydesk@sunmedia.ca,
editor@29secrets.com,
editor@canadaland.com,
newsroom@trnto.com,
toronto@dailyhive.com,
editorial@postcitymagazines.com
hello@westendphoenix.com

MEDIA LISTS

OTTAWA ASSIGNMENT DESKS.

contenteds@ottawacitizen.com,
cbcnewsottawa@cbc.ca,
Jennifer.beard@cbc.ca,
ontariotoday@cbc.ca,
intownandout@cbc.ca,
ottawanews@ctv.ca,
tips@ottawa.citynews.ca,
mike@ottawa.citynews.ca,
dani-elle@ottawa.citynews.ca,
GlobalOttawa@globalnews.ca,
news@cfra.com,

MEDIA LISTS

SUDBURY + NORTHERN ON ASSIGNMENT DESKS.

newswatch@chextv.com,
news@sudbury.com,
newsforthenorth@bellmedia.ca,
Tamara.Ischenko@bellmedia.ca,
NorthernOntarioDigitalNews@bellmedia.ca,
CTVCommunityCalendar@bellmedia.ca,
morningnorth@cbc.ca,
upnorth@cbc.ca,
news@peterboroughdaily.com,
lisa.MacDonald-Lowe@globalnews.ca
ndixon@dougallmedia.com,
bthird@dougallmedia.com,
circulation@chroniclejournal.com,
thunderbay@cbc.ca,
newsroom@netnewsledger.com,
news@999thebay.ca,

MEDIA LISTS

LONDON ASSIGNMENT DESKS.

londonnews@ctv.ca,
news@980cfpl.ca,
londonnewstips@cbc.ca,
afternoondrive@cbc.ca,
londonmorning@cbc.ca,
lfp.newsdesk@sunmedia.ca,

MEDIA LISTS

WINDSOR ASSIGNMENT DESKS.

thewindsorstar5@gmail.com,
newsnow@bellmedia.ca,
john.lewis@bellmedia.ca,
windsor@cbc.ca,
contact@am800cklw.com,
news@windsorstar.com,

MEDIA LISTS

KITCHENER/WATERLOO ASSIGNMENT DESKS.

yournewskw@cbc.ca,
news570@rogers.com,
news@kitchener.ctv.ca,
ctvkitchenerwebteam@bellmedia.ca,
communitycalendar@kitchener.ctv.ca,

MEDIA LISTS

BARRIE ASSIGNMENT DESKS.

GlobalBarrie@globalnews.ca,
barrienews@ctv.ca,
news@barrietoday.com,

MEDIA LISTS

BARRIE ASSIGNMENT DESKS.

news@guelphtoday.com,
newsroom@kx96.fm,
newsroom@durhamregion.com

MEDIA LISTS

HAMILTON ASSIGNMENT DESKS.

mpearson@hamiltonnews.com,
news@thespec.com,
hamilton@cbc.ca

CONCLUSION

WRAPPING UP

PR is common sense.

Now that you've finished reading this guide, don't stop here! You've established the basics of PR, and learned what it takes to truly be newsworthy. If you have any questions in your journey, feel free to reach out for any questions to Deanne Moser, **DMPUBLIC**

deanne@dmpublic.com



PUBLIC RELATIONS HANDBOOK

ON CULTURE DAYS