

5 Ways to Make News

Social media may be making its way into the mainstream, but public relations strategies that target traditional media haven't been blown out of the water quite yet. Here is a handful of ways for you to make news:

1. **Look inward.** Take a closer look at your employees and customers for a human interest angle. Consider quirky business practices and the unexpected.
2. **Be the "next-day" story.** What has people talking? Can you add a fresh angle, localize a national story or apply what's in the news to a vertical market? Convince an editor of a local impact, and you increase your odds of coverage.
3. **Make it visual.** Charts, graphs, illustrations and photos all contribute to building an interesting story - and get you valuable space on the page.
4. **Spot the trends.** Position yourself as the expert who's available to comment on emerging trends, and mark your product or serve the solution.
5. **Have fast facts and stats.** Conduct a poll or compile facts from existing company data to shift the focus of a current event or trend story to your industry.

5 More Tips for a Successful "Pitch"

Go your story? Here's how to "sell" it to the media:

1. **Do your homework.** Visit the Web sites of the publications that would be a good match for your story. Identify the right reporter to "pitch" by reading some of their archived stories.
2. **Keep it simple.** If you pitch via email, keep it short and sweet. Note that you have additional back-up material available and quotable sources ready.
3. **Rehearse.** If you make your pitch by phone, first put together notes or a short script and practice until it sounds natural.
4. **"Why do I care?"** This is the primary question a news editor will ask when evaluating story potential. Your "news" is important to your organization; be ready to answer why it's important to a publication's readership.
5. **Be available.** You or your company "expert" should be prepped before you place a call. Know that reporters and producers are always working under a deadline. Be prompt with return calls to build a reputation as a solid, dependable news source.