

Tips on Pitching Stories to Media

Interested in getting your story published in your local newspaper but don't know where to begin? Here are some tips to get you started:

Do Your Research. Read the newspaper and stories written on similar topics you want to pitch. Follow the reporters you are interested in on Twitter. Look for ways to develop a relationship by commenting or sharing their tweets. Make sure what you plan to pitch is something their readers will want to hear about. Finding the right reporter for your story is key and worth the extra effort.

Develop a Story. Ask yourself these questions when thinking through a story to pitch: Is it newsworthy? What is the storyline? Would anybody care? Is the timing right?

Write a personal pitch. Keep it short and simple and to the point. Bare essentials – no more than 150 words or so. Don't give too much info, just enough to pique a reporter's interest. Attach a photo, press release, or video if it helps tell your story. Give them a story their readers can relate to.

Start with a sentence or two, then outline a few key points using bullet points. Provide a list of resources/visuals /interviews you can provide to help the reporter write the story.

Make it relevant. Link your pitch to something they just wrote about, or a trending news item or recent story. Make it easy for the reporter by including all of the pertinent details—who, what, where, when, why—and even suggest locations for interviews and why they would work well for the story.

Use quotes or statistics. Having statistics that support your story is key. Quotes can provide opinions, observations, commentary on your story and let the reporter know who they can interview.

Best practices. Email your pitch – with a compelling subject line that grabs their attention. Give it a few hours, then follow up with a phone call. Be ready to recap your pitch swiftly and succinctly, and remember to include why they should cover the story now. Don't be discouraged by a reporter saying no. Even if you have a good story to tell, relationship building takes time, and a “no” could just mean “not right now.”

Wrap it up. Make sure the reporter knows how to contact you –phone, email, Facebook, Twitter, etc.