



The Voice of Your Customer

1119 E. McMillan Ave, Suite B - Cincinnati, OH 45206 (513) 281-3228
info@thevoiceofyourcustomer.com – www.thevoiceofyourcustomer.com

Tips to Maximize Your Media Campaign

By Crystal L. Kendrick

As a freelance writer for a number of local publications and the President of *The Voice of Your Customer*, I have the responsibility of reviewing hundreds of press releases, notices and media communications each month.

In addition to selecting material to be included in my articles, other media persons often contact me for story ideas and content to fill specific sections when sufficient information is not available. Needless to say, time is always of the essence. Following these tips will surely increase the likelihood that your subject will be covered in my column and other media outlets as well.

While it is not possible to include every submission, there are a number of tips to maximize the possibility of your submission being selected for calendar entries, news briefs, editorial comments and feature stories.

1) Submit your information prior to required deadline.

Media releases can be daily, weekly, monthly and even quarterly. Submitting information after published deadlines drastically decreases the likelihood of effective coverage. Submitting information well in advance will ensure that your documentation is reviewed and considered for publication.

2) Use effective subject lines when submitting electronic entries.

Due to the volume of messages received each day, most editors/producers create electronic folders to store submissions or forward submissions to the appropriate member of the team for processing. If subject lines do not effectively describe the content of the email, your submission may be incorrectly filed, forwarded to the incorrect team/department or even deleted for appearing as spam or junk mail in electronic mailboxes.

3) Blind copy your distribution list.

Unfortunately, persons with very public email addresses also receive a great deal of spam and junk mail messages. Sending messages to large distribution lists without using the blind copy function can make your message appear as spam. As a result, your message may never reach the desired recipients.

4) Create a type written press release.

Email blast, flyers, hot cards and electronic brochures are definitely aesthetically pleasing; however, they are very difficult to quickly copy or to transfer to print, radio or television. Use black font on white paper. Properly use upper case and lower case letters. Ensure that the file can be copied so that editors do not have to retype

information. The more editing required to include your submission, the less likely your submission will be selected when time is of the essence.

5) Include pertinent information.

Unfortunately, many submissions do not include all of the pertinent information such as date, time, location, contact information, cost, etc. When submissions must be returned for additional information/clarification, you may miss upcoming deadlines and/or opportunities for additional coverage.

6) Submit a summary and detailed description of your subject.

Press releases are used to populate calendar entries, news briefs, editorial comments, feature stories and email blasts. When creating a press release, be sure to include a summary that can be used for shorter entries and a very detailed description that can be used for feature stories.

7) Manage the size of your electronic submissions.

While it is important to include as much information as possible when submitting press releases, it is also very important to manage the size of the file. Pictures and other attachments can drastically increase the size of your electronic file. Large files are often rejected due to space constraints or junk mail parameters. You may want to consider zipping files or attaching links to websites where additional information can be downloaded.

8) Use a professional photographer.

Pictures can add a great deal of interest to your story. Professional photographers know how to take and prepare pictures for the media. They understand lighting, editing, shadows, colors, dimensions and art. Many times, the press will include a great picture with a caption when there is not an opportunity for a feature story.

9) Identify a spokesperson.

If your submission is selected for additional publicity, it is important to have a spokesperson who is knowledgeable, available, responsive and willing to discuss the subject matter for print, radio and television upon request. Editor and producers often work on tight timelines. Identifying a spokesperson will eliminate the concern of who will manage media requests and the possibility of missing the promotional opportunity.

10) Use a professional marketing or public relations firm.

Costs for experienced firms vary; however, their support can be invaluable. Experienced firms typically maintain complete and accurate distribution lists and meaningful relationships with editors and producers that often result in increased visibility. Experienced firms also create press releases that are written in AP format and attract the attention of a variety of decision makers which will often result in a multitude of feature stories.

The Voice of Your Customer is a marketing firm that specializes in penetrating hard to reach, niche and underserved populations. For more information, visit

www.thevoiceofyourcustomer.com.

