



Tips for PR Success

Anyone can do it! Anyone can reach out to a media outlet with a good story. But PR is a team effort: make sure you've coordinated with your fellow unit leaders and council professionals. Be sure to only share events you're responsible for- i.e. if you're a unit, don't invite the media to a district or council event without coordinating with them.

When contacting a reporter, or the public, keep in mind:

WHO	Who are you representing... be clear! "Pack 123 of Anytown, USA." If needed, explain the communities or area you serve.
WHAT	Explain what is your event... don't assume anything! Avoid BSA jargon and use every day terms. Ask yourself: what would make the media or public interested in this?
WHEN	When is your event taking place? Give them the hours you'll have the most engaging activities, not the entire day
WHERE	Where does your activity take place? Be very specific with details- especially if you're inviting them to a Scout Camp.
WHY	Why should the media come? Paint a picture for them- give them details on what they'll see, anything impressive like the event size, detail the activities taking place, etc.
HOW	Why should the media come? Paint a picture for them- give them details on what they'll see, if it's a large event include registration numbers, illustrate what's happening.

How to share news:

- Often people hear about press releases those are still important tools, but for most of Scouting's news, a pitch is the best method.

A press release announces the news exactly as it happened; the media may or may not run your story as written or at all.

A pitch is an email inviting the media to cover your story; they'll contact you before covering your story. 94%* of journalists prefer an email pitch.

- Email is the name of the game! No matter which method you choose, email is the best way to engage media today.
- Be concise- 91%* of journalists say they prefer pitches under 200 words.
- Visuals tell the story- include high-quality or well-captured photos in your email. Make sure to have permission from people in the photo and the Guide to Safe Scouting is followed!
- If your organization has active social media pages, include links to them.

When to share your story:

- Print: understand when they publish and contact them the news cycle before, this may be two weeks or a month before your event.
- Digital: a week or two before your event is best.
- Broadcast: three to five days before your event, but they'll ask you to call the morning of to see if it's still on their calendar. Securing broadcast is the most dependent on breaking news in the moment.

How to follow up:

- There's a fine balance on following up with the media: you want to keep them aware of any updates, but don't want to annoy them so much they throw your pitch out.
- For print and digital, it's about a week after you send your pitch. For broadcast, it's the morning of your event.

Bonus: Be sure to share your event on social media and your websites if you have them. Telling your story on your channels can engage your community and could lead to media coverage as well.

*According to MuckRack's State of Journalism Survey 2021. <https://muckrack.com/blog/2021/03/15/state-of-journalism-2021>