

# Ten top tips for better press coverage ...

... or how to avoid the journalist just hitting the delete key

1

## Get to know your local journalists

Speak to your local media. Find out who your local contacts are and which areas they specialise in. Make an effort to meet them and actually get to know them. Invite them round for a coffee and show them round your venue, so they are aware of your product first hand. Of course you can do this with national journalists too, but it may well take a specifically targeted media event to entice them along.

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## Know your product

Don't just e-mail a press release with scant details about your event, as the journalist won't ring you to ask for any more information. Be concise, accurate, but clear with your words, and try to avoid 'arts speak'. If the journalist doesn't understand what you've sent them, why would a reader?

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## Give them what they want and how they want it

Ask your journalists in which format they would most like to receive information from you. If they don't like to receive e-mails – don't send them! But don't forget to give them your own contact details.

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## Offer them something original

The media are always looking for a new take on an event. Your event may be nearly (or possibly exactly) the same as one that has already been reported on for someone else. So try to be inventive with your words, don't just copy and paste information from a marketing pack. Remember at this point the target for your press information is the journalist, not the public.

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## Quotable quips

When you send your press information, make sure there is at least one sentence that could be a lead-in, a teaser, or a quote that could be pulled out. Use previous press quotes, but remember a journalist in the local area won't want to just reproduce another journalist's quote from a different paper.

6

## Keep it simple

If a paragraph is longer than eight lines, a journalist is likely to turn off. If a sentence is more than 25 words, we don't retain any information after the 25 words. So, keep it plain and simple, short and to the point, and don't use colloquialisms or incomplete sentences.

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## Make yourself into a reliable source

If you offer to, or are asked to organise an interview, or provide images – do it. Papers won't hold the press until your image arrives, and the radio won't broadcast silence. So come up with the goods when they are needed, and you'll gain a reliable reputation.

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## Provide good quality images

Make sure any images you send (if you send them) are of good quality and a high enough resolution to be reasonable size when they are printed. There is no point in sending an image if it only reproduces as a 1 cm square.

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## Think outside the box

Think creatively about attracting media attention about your event using other resources. Remember though not to lose sight of the event you are trying to get coverage for.

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## Remember: nearly all publicity is good

Don't forget you can get just as much media coverage after an event has passed, as you can before it. It might not sell you more tickets, or get you more visitors, but it is all good for profile-raising, and keeping your name in front of the public.



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