

# Working with the media

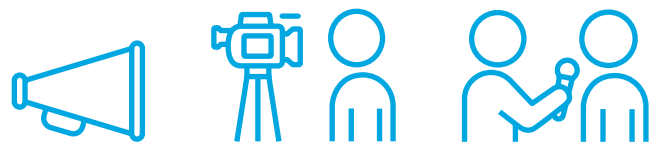
## Top tips for small businesses

Communities rely on the local media for relevant, interesting and up-to-date news and current affairs. The local media can play a positive role in promoting your business and your offerings to the community. Importantly, the local community is full of potential customers. This fact sheet provides some tips on how you can engage with the media to potentially get a story promoting your business.

### Understand what makes news

There are common themes that local media will think is newsworthy for small business promotion. The way you pitch your story can increase your chance of publication. These include:

- ▶ Something new which can generate excitement – a new service or offering
- ▶ How does this positively affect the community – an event, charity or support
- ▶ How much money does this save the community
- ▶ Does this link to relevant community need or events
- ▶ Emphasising why this can be a 'big deal' worthy of media coverage.



#### 'Human interest'

Local media are interested in leveraging stories that will generate interest from their readers or listeners. They tend to report on positive events or news for the community and are more likely to cover topics that impact their readers. You may also want to consider a well-known local celebrity endorsing a campaign.

#### 'Good photo opportunity'

Look at all types of media avenues to promote your success.

- ▶ Create your own website presence and link in with other stakeholders, such as the local Council, business chambers, business network or local social media community groups.
- ▶ Set up a Facebook, Instagram and Twitter account and regularly update your pages.
- ▶ Position your story to reflect how this is a positive for the community. Increase your chance of publication by offering a good photo opportunity.
- ▶ Consider running or participating in a local event.
- ▶ Contact your local radio to promote the success of your product, service or initiative.

## Build a relationship

Local media use their contacts to help produce stories, often with a tight deadlines. By building a relationship with your local media you are more likely to be the one they ask when they need a local good-news story.

## Plan your media story

Planning will put you in a good position for any media contact, it can be informal and does not need to be complex.

- ▶ Set the goals and objectives for what you want to achieve and what you want to promote.

- ▶ Prepare a brief overview of your business. What do you provide or offer and if you do any good social work in the community.
- ▶ Highlight the benefits of what your business is offering or achieved for the community.
- ▶ Create a 'call to action' - how do you want the reader/listener to respond.
- ▶ Prepare for an interview – if your story is picked up know your key messages.



## Draft media plan template

Use this information to make your pitch and write a press release.



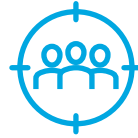
<b>Set goals and objectives</b>	<i>Examples</i>
<b>What is the goal you want to achieve?</b>	Increased sales or visitors; improve reputation, strengthen business relationship.
<b>What are your objectives?</b>	Improve community knowledge of your products or service.
<b>What is your 'call to action'?</b>	Think about what it is you want people to do as a response.
<b>Background – about your business</b>	<i>Examples</i>
<b>Who you are and your business?</b>	Business name, year business started, family business. Don't forget to include key information about your business: contact details, address, website, is there parking available.
<b>What you offer?</b>	Products or services.
<b>Your role in the community</b>	Sponsorships, corporate social responsibility, local club member.
<b>Key message</b>	<i>Examples</i>
<b>What sets you apart from the rest?</b>	Benchmarked service, new product.
<b>Is it time dependant?</b>	Deadline, sale, event or significant holiday.



## Time for your pitch

**Local newspapers** are often short-staffed and time poor, so **presenting them with a well-written press release**, with all the relevant information can help your chances. You can find examples of press releases online or you can consider outsourcing this to a freelance writer or local university students seeking experience.

**Sending an email with a concise heading** that includes the phrase 'story idea' and a few paragraphs **outlining your idea** in an email is often enough. **Attaching the press release to this email** is more likely to get a journalist's attention. Follow up the email to pitch the idea over the phone as well. Be sure to avoid obviously busy times such as the local news bulletin time of your local radio station or deadline day of the local newspaper.

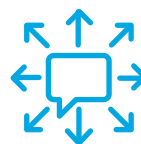


## Success and resilience

Measuring the success of your story will be easy, remember you already identified your goals and objectives in the planning stage. Depending on what you are trying to achieve will mean success can have different outcomes. Success could be:

- ▶ Improved community knowledge or perception of your business offerings
- ▶ Increased sales or customer visitation
- ▶ Social media interactions – likes, shares and comments
- ▶ Trade increases on Thursday evening or weekends.

Having your story picked up and published is also success in itself. Local papers have limited space for content. If your pitch didn't make the news this edition don't give up. There are many different reasons stories are included or not. Local coverage of local small businesses does happen and carries real benefits for your business. Follow the top tips, keep trying, and you will get there!



### For more information:



1300 795 534



[smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au](http://smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au)



[sbf.councils@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sbf.councils@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au) or



[we.assist@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au](mailto:we.assist@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au)



Small  
Business  
Commissioner