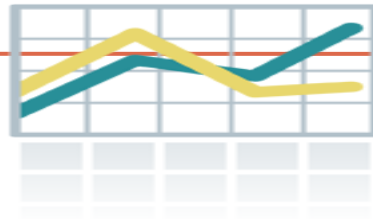


PR BOOT CAMP

MAY 14, 2013



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PRNews

Overview – Media Pitching

- Preparation is the key, you will need:
 - Documents/facts available to support the story
 - Need a valid news hook
 - Visual element (if it is to be a broadcast interview)
 - Talking points/key messages before making contact
 - Prepare internally (e.g. spokesperson, logistics, access to facilities etc) beforehand
 - Awareness of reporter/publication (advance research)
 - “Plan B” - options and considerations (what if story shifts away from focus of your pitch?)

Media Pitching - Key Questions

- Is it newsworthy? (or just important to you?)
- What type of news is it? (breaking news, feature, “evergreen” piece)
- Key variables to help distinguish types
 - Type of product or service (critical vs. non)
 - Is there a controversy/debate?
 - Does it relate to current, significant news/trends?
 - Is there a “sell by” date (freshness of story)?

Suggestion from Bad Pitch Blog*

- Print out the first page of Google search results and/or Google News results for your pitch's topic. Do the results prove out your pitch?
- Editors/reporters need reasons to believe throughout the pitch process, not just in the pitch itself.
- A sound pitch strategy accounts for the hard-earned proof, that will help get an editor's attention and keep it

**Badpitchblog.blogspot.com*

Media Pitching

- The news hook is critical
 - What is the core message?
 - What is the main point to be conveyed?
 - What is new or newsworthy?
 - Why should the reporter (and/or the audience) care ?
 - What makes it unique or different?

Media Pitching

- Email pitches:
 - Subject line is key – as specific as possible!
 - Examples:
 - Good – “New research on gun violence; exclusive interview opportunities”
 - Not so good – “New study on gun violence released”
 - Bad – “Interview opportunity”
 - Worst – multi-party email with some or all of the above and big attachment (news release or entire study)

Sample pitches – Good

- “What to do with 20,000 shovels?” – subject line from Habitat for Humanity in North Carolina. (photo included)
 - Received a “donation of 20,00 shovels and a similar number of rakes” – decided to stage a neighborhood clean up.. Pitch succeeded!
- *“Measuring Brand Advocacy in Social Media”*
 - *subject line; Email copy done as a list:*
- *1. MotiveQuest has developed a tool to measure brand advocacy in social media*
- *2. This measure has been proven as a leading indicator of sales.*
- *3. We have just announced it at “The Online Promoter Score™” . For more info and demo...*
- *Pitch succeeded*

Not so Good - Pitches – examples*

- ***“I’m pleased to present you with the chance to write about our exclusive new product. Consider this a gift to you and your readers. If you’re one of the first five reporters to email me back, I’ll give you access to the information you need.”***
- ***“I’m following up to see why you haven’t written about my new eco-friendly line of car air fresheners. I sent the press release to you a month ago, and I haven’t seen anything on your site yet. Can you give me an idea of when a post will appear? If I don’t see a post soon, I may have to remove you from our contact list.”***
- ***“Along with any coverage you might be planning around the Anthony Weiner photos, I thought you might have interest in featuring this item....[Company name redacted] is a private photo sharing website that allows users to have control over their digital photos...Had Weiner used a site like [company name], it could have prevented the widespread viewing of his photos...Let me know if you have interest in more information. Thanks!”***
- *Bad Pitch Breakdown – Brighton Agency Blog

Media Pitching

- Email pitches – Other tips
 - Single address a must – no group emails
 - No attachments – provide links or paste in copy (only if critical to pitch!)
 - Get to the point quickly
 - Call to action – what do they do if they are interested?
 - Minimize follow-up calls; give them time to read/respond
 - Don't make promises (spokespersons, access) you can't keep!

Media Pitching

Social media vehicles

- Twitter is preferred vs. other (e.g. Facebook others)
- Steps: (note: PR “best practices” apply here as well!)
 - Pitch the reporter, not the publication
 - Follow him/her on Twitter, read posts/blogs
 - Engage before you ask for something
 - Comment on recent stories – provide input, not criticism
 - Retweet their pieces – add your comments
 - Tweet your pitch – with links and other info
 - Follow up – phone, email

What happens if they say yes?

- Your role is to support/enhance interview, manage the process and follow up:
 - Pay close attention to discussion, minimize factual errors or omissions, clarify where needed
 - Identify points or responses you may need to “follow up” on
 - Follow up with all parties
 - Assess session (post mortem) ASAP

Summary - Pitching

- Be specific
- Be direct and to the point
- Avoid mass mailings (at least obviously)
- Minimize attachments (use links)
- Research first and then target appropriate reporter/
blogger
- Go easy on the follow up
- Consider social media pitching (vs. email only)
- Represent your client/company AND the media
- Be ready if they say yes to the pitch
- No whining!

Contact Information

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Panel

- Jonathan Salant – Bloomberg News D.C.Bureau
- Matt Gaffney – AM Producer Fox 5 – Washington DC
- Joanne Bamberger – “The Broad Side” blog; and author -*“Mothers of Intention: How Women and Social Media are Revolutionizing Politics in America”*