

Working with the National Media Lessons from the Street

Day-to-Day Tactics for Successfully
Working with Reporters, Editors and Bloggers

PIERPONT



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#prbootcamp

Reporters are Stressed Out

- **Time:** They don't have any.
- **Demands:** The writing they're doing today used to be done by three people.
- **Deadlines:** print, blogs and the website.
- **Money:** It sucks.
- **Us:** As in, "We have met the enemy and it is..."

PR People Usually Don't Alleviate Reporters' Misery

25 PR Habits that Drive Reporters Nuts

<http://digiday.com/publishers/25-pr-habits-reporters-nuts/>

- The pitch that's the exact story I just wrote, only with your source.
- Using personal information from social media in pitches.
- Asking to review quotes for the "story angle."
- The presumptuous meeting.

We Can't Be That Bad, Can We?



Yes We Can!!

San Jose — Nov 7th, 2012 — XXXXXX Inc. announces the release of OutSmart™, the company's second generation suite of managed network services. *We're the first pure-play, zero-footprint Managed Service Provider (MSP) built from the ground up to be symbiotic with collocation owners, top-tier IP carriers, content delivery firms, storage network providers and e-businesses.* The company's suite of services combine best-of-breed infrastructure components with seasoned best practices in site management and internet integration to keep business-critical sites running securely and responsively. *These services enable B2B exchanges, online ISVs, ASPs, i-Builders, and click-and-mortar companies to quickly establish a highly robust online Web presence* without incurring the high cost of purchasing equipment and hiring scarce, expensive IT resources.

You Can't Make This Stuff Up

"I want to slap them silly. 'Are you joking? How can you possibly be pitching me this way?' ... I actually save them because someday I think they'll be historically hysterical." -- NPR, Bureau Chief

"Quite often after a two minute phone call or after reading the few emails I get that are worth reading, I'm either bored or angry. Sometimes I include a thought about a really awful pitch in my review of the product." – *Wall Street Journal*, Tech Columnist

"I'm a big fan of 'group delete.' I get up to 500 unsolicited emails every day, some of them on target for my beat, but also pitching me on everything from the new Oral-B toothbrush to national crime statistics." -- *USA Today*, Consumer Tech Writer

Front Line Tips

Straight from the Source

“What do want me to do, get up and dance a jig?”
— Former *Business Week* Personal Finance Editor

Ask the hard questions – of your own pitch, and your over-zealous C-Suite:

1. WHAT?
2. SO WHAT?
3. NOW WHAT?

If you can't find compelling answers, go back to the drawing board.

Front Line Tips

The Gettysburg Address, a speech that saved a country and redefined the principles of human equality, was ten sentences and 271 words.

Why, then, is your pitch 700 words?

There's genius in simplicity: headlines at 65 characters (MAX) and email subject lines at five words (MAX).

Front Line Tips

"It's not all about you. It's about advancing *our* agenda."

— Former NBC Today producer

Can you introduce your key media to industry insiders and new sources they don't already know but should?

What solution stories illustrate your organization's mission?

How can you put a human face on the work your organization is laboring to achieve?

Front Line Tips

“You’re only as good as your last pitch.”

— NPR Bureau Chief

The hard truth: You are an intruder.

If your name and/or organization becomes synonymous with non-news pitches and self-serving interests, your value is diminished...and that delete key is an easy solution.

Front Line Tips

“Be selfless and help me.”

— *US News & World Report* First Year Reporter

Who do you know that they should know?

Have an inside tip?

Come across something they might be able use?

Stay in a reporter’s conversation even when they’re not writing about *you*.

Front Line Tips

“If your client wants to be in the paper tomorrow, tell them to buy an ad; I’m not working on that angle...yet.”

– *USA Today* Workplace Reporter

A reporter’s biggest challenge isn’t finding a story, it’s finding people to talk about the story that’s due to their editor TODAY.

Unless you have a source that can discuss the story they’re working on right now, you’re not relevant. Stay in front of your reporters in ways that are informative rather than intrusive.

It’s not about a hard sell, it’s about building relationships.

Front Line Tips

“Talk less and read more, especially about me.”

– *Wall Street Journal* energy reporter

Follow your media inner circle on Twitter: they’re crowd-sourcing to find new experts.

Who in your organization has insight, opinions and clarity pertaining to their immediate needs? Over time, that equals relevancy, and relevancy equals a reliable source.

Front Line Tips

“Think *for* your client without thinking *like* your client.”– the late Daniel J. Edelman

Think like the reporter you’re trying to pitch:

- Who cares?
- What’s the medium?
- Can you put a face on it?
- What’s new — stats, updates, angles?

Front Line Tips

“PR does not stand only for public relations. PR stands for personal relationships.”

Don't hide behind Twitter, Facebook, blogs and IM.

Go beyond your phone. Get to know your media inner circle: deadline days, production meetings, editor/producer demands.

Soft-sell your clients as industry sources to build *your* personal “brand.”

Thank you!!

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