



## **Getting your press release noticed**

Journalists receive hundreds of press releases every day from companies all clamouring to be heard. So how do you make sure your release stands out and sparks their interest? And how can you make the most of social media and online PR tactics to get your press release noticed? We share our top tips for extending the reach of your releases.

### **1. Make it compelling**

Before you distribute your release, check that it's as compelling as possible. Put yourself in the journalist's shoes. Will this story interest his or her readers? Is it relevant to the publication? And have you communicated the story in a concise, informative way with a catchy headline, insightful quotes and accurate facts and figures? And most importantly, what's your call to action? Will this release help to change your audience's perceptions?

### **2. Use great images and videos**

Use dynamic images that help to communicate the story. If you have an interesting video that will add interest and reinforce the value of the story, why not add it? Make sure you're sending the journalist an interesting, engaging and well presented package of information. If the story has a strong visual element, research which TV programmes may be interested and brainstorm a compelling visual take on the story. If, on the other hand, the story lends itself more to debate, why not consider a radio campaign?

### **3. Create a targeted media list**

Once your press release is ready to go, you'll need a targeted media list with all the most up-to-date journalist contacts at your key publications. Taking the time to hone in on the most relevant publications will really maximise your reach, particularly if you spend an extra bit of time looking at the publications themselves and spotting any regular features or slots that may be suitable for your story.

If you don't have access to an approved media database, CJAM can help. It is possible to pay for press release distribution but we recommend distributing it yourself or asking your marketing agency to manage the process. Look around within your own industry to see whether certain websites allow you to post your stories for free.

### **4. Start a social conversation**

Ensure that all press releases are posted on your website and disseminated as widely as possible via social media and e-newsletters. Contact relevant publications and stakeholders with an interest in the subject via Twitter and ask their opinion, using appropriate hashtags. Get a conversation going and respond to comments (positive and negative) as quickly as possible.

Where possible, repurpose the content to extend the reach of the release – this could mean editing it into a blog a column, or even a case study – select the format that works best for the websites you have in mind and pitch the idea to them. You may be surprised by how much coverage you can achieve by packaging the story slightly differently.

### **5. Follow up confidently**

Follow up with journalists in a polite and confident way. Try to avoid asking 'Have you received our press release?' or 'I wondered if you were planning to use our press release?'. Retain their attention by offering something new or different that wasn't included in the original release, an interview with a senior figure, for instance. By showing that you have a full understanding of journalists' needs, they'll be more likely to listen when you send your next story.

The same applies to seeking support for the release from your suppliers, customers or other stakeholders. Negotiate confidently and show willing to support their

releases too, where appropriate. Build a community of advocates who support your stories and gradually you'll reach more and more people within your target audiences.