



A GUIDE TO PR AND HOW TO MAXIMISE MEDIA COVERAGE

This PR guide has been prepared to help organisations to plan their approach to generating media coverage for a range of events and activities.

It covers the basics of PR and explains how to write a press release and photo call invite – a template press release and photo call invitation are included at the end of the document.

1. What is Public Relations?

- Promoting your organisation by using free editorial space in the media
- Using local, regional, and national newspapers, radio and TV stations to spread key messages about your group or organisation
- It is NOT advertising – editorial is far more credible and powerful
- Good PR is good for your organisation

2. Why do it?

- Promote your organisation in a positive way
- Increase awareness and assist understanding of your organisation and the issues it works on
- Attract new members
- Retain existing members
- Inform your members and non member of activities
- Influence public opinion
- Influence public policy

3. Limitations

- PR coverage is free space so you have less control
- No guarantee your story will appear;
 - when you want it
 - the way you want it
 - in the publication you want it to appear in
- Need to think carefully about what the media might be interested in
- Stories must be tailored to the specific publication

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4. Know your local and national media

- National and regional daily newspapers (e.g. Falkirk Herald, Stirling Observer, P&J, The Herald, The Scotsman)
- Local weekly newspapers (paid for or free sheets e.g. Falkirk Advertiser)
- Radio stations (e.g. Central FM, Scot FM, BBC Scotland)
- Regional TV news and features programmes (e.g. STV, BBC Reporting Scotland)

5. Who are your target audiences?

- Members/potential members
- Colleagues
- Suppliers
- Decision Makers – local or national
- Dignitaries or Celebrities
- Local businesses
- Local community

6. Where to Start: Establish your local contacts

- Familiarise yourself with local media – style, supplements, content (knowing what they like will get you coverage)
- Establish named contacts
- Draw up a good media list (including local photographers)
- Establish deadlines and issue dates

7. What do they want?

- National TV and radio – news stories that will impact on people's lives
- Trade publications – fresh facts directly related to the sector
- Regional media – the local angle

8. Competition for News Space

- There is lots of space to fill
- Newspapers receive up to ten times more stories than they can use
- Follow press release guidelines (see section 10 below)
- News is competitive – know what you want to say and how you're going to say it

9. What is news?

- News is the plural of new
- Immediacy – it is happening now...
- The local angle
 - the first

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- the biggest
- involves a celebrity
- has 'human interest'
- is unusual

10. Writing a press release

- Every press release should contain the five Ws
 - Who?
 - What?
 - Where?
 - When?
 - Why?
- Every story must contain an answer to these
- Use a catchy headline – keep it brief
- In the opening paragraph
 - aim to stick to 20 words in the first paragraph
 - sum up the story using the five Ws
 - use clear language
- Strip out all the extras – adjectives and opinions will be ignored
- Use active verbs (go/going not went/been)
- Personalise your release for the local media
- Remember, they serve a local community and rarely carry news that cannot be related to their readership

11. Lay it out professionally

- Use printed letterhead for the first page and blank paper for any extra pages
- Use the words **PRESS RELEASE AT THE TOP**
- Put the date at the top – clearly visible (undated press releases will be deemed out of date)
- Put an embargo on it if you need to restrict time of issue
- Keep it down to one page whenever you can
- Use 1.5 spacing
- Keep sentences short and to the point
- Use the word 'ENDS' when it is finished
- Always include contact details at the foot of the page
- Always use a quote and make sure they are available for comment
- For radio & TV add a "Note to Producers" – remember they will need someone to interview

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12. Sending out your press release

- Check the email address first for the news desk or reporter you are targeting
- Post – too slow for deadlines
- Faxing – rarely used these days but if you do be prepared to re-fax
- Don't be afraid to follow up with phone call!

13. Photo opportunities

- Daily newspapers will have a picture editor and their own team of photographers, backed up by freelance photographers
- You need to get these photographers to come to your event
- You need to offer a dramatically visual photo opportunity
- Study the types of photos used by various papers – broadsheet v tabloid
- Send out an invitation addressed to the picture desk by email
- Describe the visual aspect of your photo opportunity
- Describe who will be there
- This invitation should be separate from the press release as they are going to different departments
- Weekly newspapers will take professional photography – so you may want to organise your own photographer as well

14. Tips for running photocells

- Send your photo call invitation out three days before the event
- Do a phone round of picture desks the day before the event and check they received the photo call invitation
- Check it is "in the diary"
- If yes, you are in with a good chance
- The rest is up to luck!
- On the day make sure someone greets the press
- Be prepared for disappointment
- They may run late
- Make sure you have a press release to give them more details
- Write down names of photographers and their publications so you can check for coverage

15. Getting on TV

- TV coverage is not easy to attract
- Quirky stories are great and might fit into the 'And Finally...' slot!
- Your idea should be visual and topical

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- You could try contacting 'features' slots on Scottish TV e.g. The Hour or the short slots that follow the STV News

16. In conclusion

- Know what you want to say and how you're going to say it
- Get to know your media contacts
- Familiarise yourself with local papers and what stories they cover
- Don't be afraid to ask journalists what they think
- Keep your cuttings
- Be positive!
- And good luck!

In order to be consistent in the delivery of the campaign messages, it would be very useful if you could let us know what activities you're planning/running in relation to self management. Please contact Shelley Gray at Shelley.Gray@lucas.org.uk, or on 0141 404 0231 with this information.

Where appropriate, please make reference to the My Conditions, My Terms, My Life campaign in your activity.

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TEMPLATE PHOTO INVITATION

This is a template photo invitation which you can adapt to suit your organisation's event.

***** PHOTO-OPPORTUNITY *** PHOTO-OPPORTUNITY *****

(INSERT ISSUE DATE)

**(INSERT NAME OF PERSON OR ORGANISATION) TO LAUNCH
(INSERT DETAILS E.G. NEW CENTRE, FUND RAISING EVENT,
CAMPAIGN) FOR (NAME OF CONDITION OR CAUSE)**

Photo Opportunity:

**DESCRIBE YOUR PHOTO OPPORTUNITY THAT YOU ARE OFFERING TO
THE MEDIA, FOR EXAMPLE:**

One of the UK's leading contemporary artists Jack Jones will unveil an original painting he has agreed to donate to **(INSERT NAME OF ORGANISATION)**, to help raise funds for **(INSERT NAME OF CONDITION OR CHARITY)**.

Note to Editors: Jack Jones, the artist, and **(INSERT NAME OF ORGANISATION)** will be available for photos/interview.

Date: (INSERT DATE OF PHOTO OPPORTUNITY)

Time: (INSERT TIME OF PHOTO OPPORTUNITY)

Location: (INSERT THE ADDRESS AND LOCATION OF THE PHOTO OPPORTUNITY)

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Background:

(INSERT NAME OF ORGANISATION) is charity which has been set up to help **(DESCRIBE BRIEFLY WHAT YOUR ORGANISATION DOES AND WHAT THE FUNDRAISING OR EVENT AIMS TO DO. ADD THE WEBSITE DETAILS HERE)** For example: Jack Jones the contemporary artist has donated an original painting "A walk on the beach" to the Pink Ladies, a charity set up to support women with long term conditions. The painting will be auctioned off at a fundraising dinner to be held on **(INSERT DATE)** at the **(INSERT VENUE)**. Tickets are available **(INSERT TELEPHONE NUMBER)**

Further information from (INSERT NAME OF CONTACT), on (INSERT TELEPHONE NUMBER) or (INSERT EMAIL)

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TEMPLATE NEWS RELEASE

This is a template news release which you can adapt to suit your organisation's event or fundraiser.

(INSERT DATE HERE)

***** NEWS RELEASE *** NEWS RELEASE *** NEWS RELEASE *****

ARTIST DONATES PAINTING FOR CHARITY AUCTION

(NAME OF PERSON), the contemporary artist, has donated an original painting "A walk on the beach" to the **(INSERT NAME OF CHARITY)**, a charity set up to support women with long term conditions.

The painting will be auctioned off at a fundraising dinner to be held on **(INSERT DATE)** at the **(INSERT VENUE)**. Funds raised will go towards setting up a meeting place for **(INSERT DETAILS OF WHAT FUNDS RAISED WILL GO TO SUPPORT)**.

(INSERT NAME OF CHARITY REPRESENTATIVE) of the **(INSERT NAME OF CHARITY)** said: "We are absolutely delighted to receive this wonderful and generous donation by **(NAME OF ARTIST)**. His paintings are very popular and we are hoping to raise £1m on the evening of the auction."

(INSERT NAME) said "I am delighted to support the **(INSERT NAME OF CHARITY)**. The group has helped one of my close family members. I wanted to give something back to

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support such a worthwhile cause. The painting is valued at £1m and I am hoping we can meet that bid on the evening.”

Tickets are available from **(INSERT WEBSITE AND TELEPHONE NUMBER HERE)**

Ends

Further information is available from (INSERT NAME OF CONTACT, CHARITY, AND TELEPHONE/EMAIL ADDRESS)

Notes to editors:

- **(INSERT FURTHER DETAILS THAT MAY BE USEFUL TO JOURNALISTS e.g. key facts about the charity or condition(s) it represents)**

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