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Media Pitching 101

SMART START

A Crash Course On All
Things Media Pitching

The basics of media pitching

When applying for a job, as soon as your application hits a company's system, you're essentially thrown into a pool of candidates. Many have the same qualifications, certifications, and formal education as you. So, how do you stand out?

Sometimes it's a uniquely designed resume, or a handwritten thank-you note post-interview. Whichever way you decide to take, it's crucial to differentiate yourself from other applicants.



This idea of standing out from the pack applies to media pitching too and that's because according to research from Fractl, **46.5% of journalists receive at least 11 pitches per day while the other 28.64% receive over 26 pitches a day.**

With an influx of pitches received every day, it's imperative you cover all the bases to ensure your media pitch stands out, and for good reason.

Below is a quick checklist of questions and considerations to review before pitching to the media.



Media pitch checklist:

- **Is this story newsworthy? Would the publication's audience truly care about this information?** Hesitation and/or pondering should signal the story you're trying to pitch missed the mark. A quick and confident yes is the byproduct of an attention-grabbing, newsworthy press release.
- **Is this the right contact?** This sounds like something Captain Obvious would ask, but it shouldn't be overlooked. Journalists are, in some respect, like digital nomads moving from publication to publication and switching areas of focus. Before sending a pitch, do your due diligence to ensure the journalist is the right person to reach out to.
- **Is it personalized?** Avoid mass emails. Make sure each media pitch is unique to the recipient. In your pitch, have you made reference to past, relevant pieces they've written? Have you highlighted how your product/service would be of interest to their audience and why? Take time to personalize. It'll go a long way in relationship building with key media contacts.





Media pitch format

While there's a basic format that can be used to craft a media pitch, the actual content of the pitch should change with each recipient.

As mentioned before, brevity is key. When it comes to media pitch length, it's like a Goldilocks situation. You don't want your pitch to be too short, but you also don't want it to be too long. You want it to be somewhere in the middle.

To achieve the just right length, start with the why/what, give the recipient reasons to care, and end with an open line of communication.

Here's a media pitch format to consider:

Hi _____,

I think your readers will be interested in (your product/service) as I know they're fans of (similar topic/product). **WHY/WHAT**

(Your product/service) does/provides benefit 1, benefit 2, and benefit 3. **REASONS TO CARE**

If you're interested, I can (send a free sample, set up an interview, share data, etc.).

You have my email, but if a call/text is easier for you, my phone number is (123)4567890. **OPEN LINE OF COMMUNICATION**

I look forward to hearing from you,

(Name)

Media pitching mistakes and tips to avoid them

Lackluster subject line

We've all received a random email with a subject line you know took zero thought...

Hello (insert your name)

Odds are, when an email like that hits your inbox, it gets a one-way ticket to the trash folder.

Crafting a subject line for a media pitch takes creativity and skill to get your message across in as few words as possible.

Remember, the subject line of your pitch is the first thing a journalist will read. Make it memorable. Make them want to open and read. Here are some tips:

- **Clear, concise, entice** - Keep your subject line between 60 - 80 characters and 8 - 10 words (max). This will force you to keep your message simple and get to the point. Don't be vague. Share exactly what they can expect to learn from your email.
- **Make it obvious** - Tell the journalist the exact reason for your email. Is it a pitch? Exclusive? Story Idea? Segment? Whatever it is, make sure to share in the subject line.
- **Highlight an offer** - Are you sharing important information in the form of raw data, graphs, multimedia, etc., in your pitch? If you are, make it known in the subject line. Doing so will signal to the journalist you're reaching out to them for a specific reason that deserves their attention.



Bad timing

Timing is everything, especially when it comes to media pitching. Before sending a pitch, think about a journalist's day. Emails typically flood their inbox first thing in the morning and then throughout the day they're in editorial meetings and in the throes of writing. With all these moving pieces in mind, do some testing on your own.

Consider sending a pitch mid-morning, after the early morning influx of emails or around lunchtime before the afternoon deadlines hit.

Tip: Avoid sending media pitches late Friday afternoon and on the weekends. Journalists are people too, who respect their time spent outside of the office.

Sales pitch

Of course, the end goal of a media pitch is about you, but you don't want to come off that way through your pitch.

When drafting pitch content, keep the focus on your recipient. What value can you provide them? How does your story relate to other pieces they've written in the past? How does your story align with the interests of their readers?

Keep the focus on the journalists and their audience and you'll likely be rewarded with an earned media opportunity.





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