

PR Is More than a Press Release

LIBRARY PR 101 + TIPS



Intelli*i***Craft**



@theinfohound

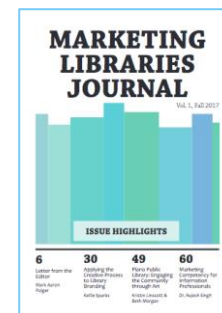
Learning Outcomes



- KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PR AND PROMOTION ACTIVITIES, AS PART OF THE MARKETING CYCLE.
- IDENTIFY ELEMENTS OF THE PR AND MEDIA KIT YOUR LIBRARY SHOULD HAVE
- SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS FOR PR EFFORTS AND IDENTIFY ONE SMART GOAL FOR A LIBRARY PR CAMPAIGN.

Library Marketing Connections

- MS LIS from Drexel University
- IMLS-funded scholarship for PhD study and research in digital libraries, also at Drexel
- Columnist for Marketing Library Services newsletter from InfoToday
- Advisory Board, Communications Director, for Marketing Libraries Journal – open-access, peer-reviewed
- President of Board of Directors for new Library Marketing Conference Group – in charge of popular LMCC



A photograph of a small dog, possibly a Jack Russell Terrier, sitting on a wooden desk. The dog is looking directly at the camera. In the background, there is a laptop, a mouse, and a cat sitting on a shelf or desk.

Why Are You Marketing?

*ASK: Why Should
My Community Care?*

My Marketing Pet Peeve

PR \neq MARKETING
STOP USING THE WORDS
INTERCHANGEABLY!





WHY WOULD THE
MEDIA PAY ATTENTION
TO YOUR LIBRARY?

Marketing



Is this the only time we think of PR?



© marketoonist.com

Marketing vs. PR

Marketing

- ▶ Identifies **human needs and wants**, offers products and services to satisfy those demands, and causes transactions

Public Relations

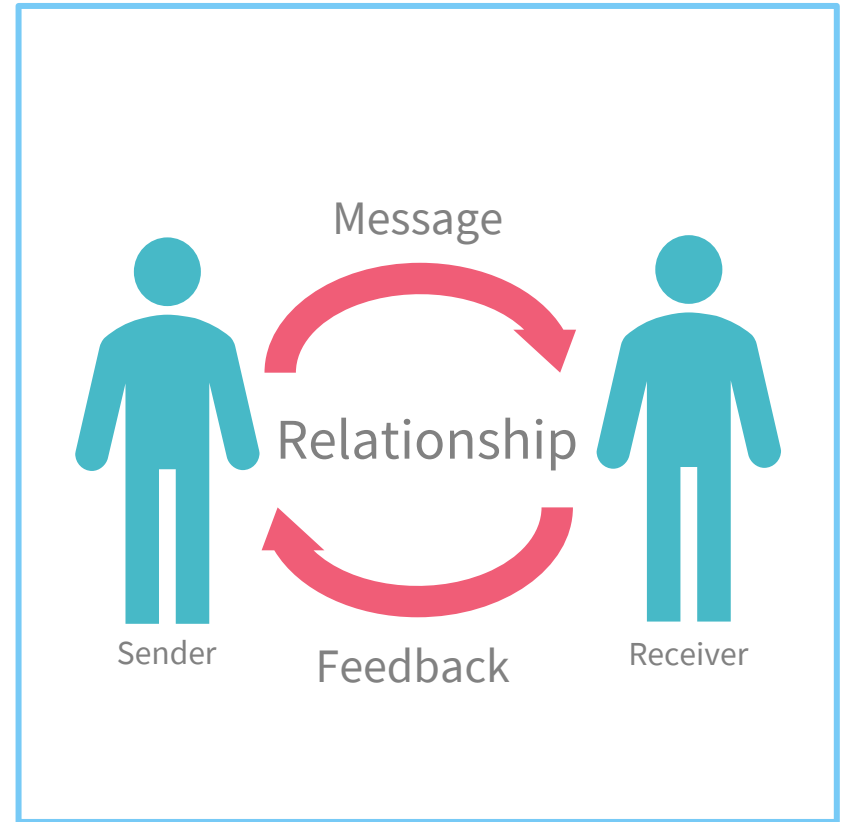
- ▶ Establishes and maintains **mutually beneficial relationships** between organization and publics on whom its success or failure depends

Promotion and engagement defined

Promotion: megaphone



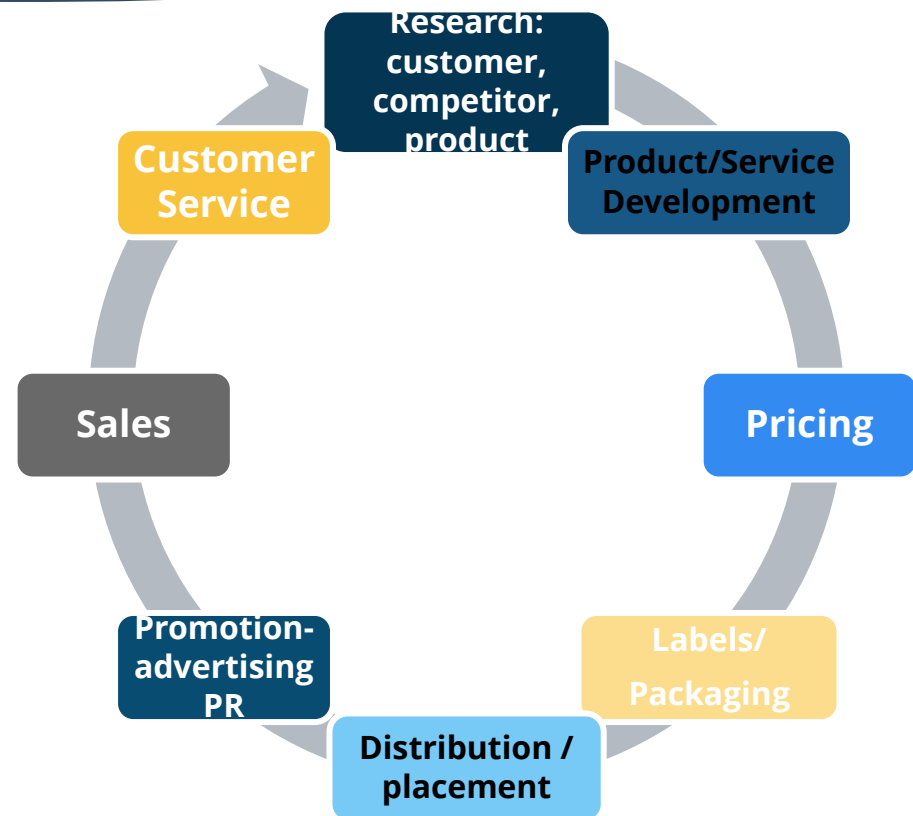
Engagement: relationship



*Cordelia Anderson, formerly Marketing + Communications Leader,
Charlotte Mecklenburg Library*

PR ≠ Marketing!

- ▶ **Marketing** = the entire umbrella that covers design, packaging, branding, advertising, promotion, public relations and publicity
- ▶ **Advertising** = intentional, paid placements of marketing messages.
- ▶ **Public Relations** = a long-term, ongoing effort to influence the perception of your organization, its strengths, and its position within your community; building goodwill
 - ▶ **Media relations** – building relationships, don't send releases blind; spokesperson
 - ▶ **Community relations** – working with local influencers
 - ▶ **Publicity** = what creates attention for org in media; press kit, releases



<https://www.intellicraftresearch.com/dont-confuse-pr-and-marketing/>

Why do we need PR AND Marketing?

- ▶ Why should the media pay attention to your library?
- ▶ 'Earned' media vs. 'paid' media
- ▶ *"Everyone SHOULD love libraries – we are an essential part of the community."*
- ▶ PR considered low cost compared to other marketing tactics
- ▶ PR is long-term, ongoing, relationship-building, reputation management activities
- ▶ Marketing is organization-wide, ongoing, encompasses research, outreach, PR, promotion, displays, branding, signage, etc

PR Done Better

- ▶ PR needs **research, audience** and **SMART** goals like rest of marketing plan
 - ▶ Define your **audience** – it's not 'everyone'
 - ▶ Overarching PR goals and campaign or program-specific
 - ▶ Think yearly and in campaigns – not short-term for PR
 - ▶ Goals vs strategy vs tactics
- ▶ PR **SWOT** – Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats
 - ▶ Do you need crisis comms planning and to role play ahead of time?
 - ▶ Planning for IF not When in terms of crisis communications
 - ▶ Know who your allies and defenders are; know your detractors
 - ▶ Involve all your staff

PR Needs Plans Too

- ▶ **Relationships** are key – plan them
 - ▶ Building and nurturing relationships – before you need them in crisis
 - ▶ Build a team/network of outside support for yourself as a PR person
 - ▶ Who are your go-to's, your **spokespeople**?

In short: Plan your PR and reduce reactivity



WHAT'S A SMART PR
GOAL FOR YOUR
LIBRARY – NEXT 90
DAYS?

Create Your PR Toolkit

▶ Press Materials -

▶ *Ready at your fingertips*

- ▶ Fact sheets – stats, history, ‘Did You Know?’, myths vs facts (consider infographic)
- ▶ Leadership/spokesperson bios
- ▶ Your internal approval process/timing and your overall marketing plan + calendar

▶ *As needed*

- ▶ Social media posts to support PR goals
- ▶ Media alerts/pitch emails (list of subject lines)- tailor your pitch to each reporter/influencer, know their interests and coverage area
- ▶ Press releases – templates (but use releases sparingly!)

More Media Kit



Photos



Logos w/ use guidelines



Team member or spokespeople bios + photos



Quotes, testimonials



Events or 'where to find us next' - current community events



Links to key product/service overviews



Previous press releases



Anything else that helps publicity

Create Your PR Toolkit

- ▶ **Media Relations – Relationships are everything!**
 - ▶ Who is **on the beat** in your community? (print, TV/Radio, online blogs, key local bloggers, social media influencers)
 - ▶ **Influencers** are everywhere! Government, community leaders, other civic org leaders, donors, friends group, teachers, students, parents; other deans, provosts, faculty, other org leaders at your college
 - ▶ **Industry trades** (both for library world and among who you serve)
 - ▶ Friendly **neighbors** – your most vocal supporters and super users

When to Send a Press Release

- ▶ If it's timely, relevant, and newsworthy – ask WIIFM
- ▶ Breaking news announcements
- ▶ Product/service launches
- ▶ Major events
- ▶ Partnerships
- ▶ Sharing research
- ▶ Awards
- ▶ Hired new staff, new leadership
- ▶ Crisis management

Tips on Developing Media Relationships



Media Relations Tips – from Emily B

▶ **Do Your Research**

- ▶ Keep an eye on the types of stories local reporters cover
- ▶ What are the common points of the stories that get covered?
- ▶ Pitch better when you understand what they cover and how they approach stories
- ▶ Follow your local media people on social media

▶ **Share Your Victories**

- ▶ Share the coverage you get via all your library channels And tag the media – give the love back!
- ▶ Media is interested in knowing their stories hit and get clicks too

Media Relations Tips – from Emily B

- ▶ **Response Time Matters**

- ▶ Respond quickly + thoroughly, every time – be ready to respond.

- ▶ **Network, Network, Network!**

- ▶ Take any chance you get to meet + chat with local media members
- ▶ Makes you memorable, lets you learn, and builds ongoing relationship



In-Studio Interview: Fox 4 KC



In-Studio: 103 Hot Jamz



On-Location: KC
Fox4 – Museum
Passes, during
NLW



In-Studio: KKFI Radio



On-Location: KSHB

Media Relations Tips – From Nicole F

It's Never Too Late – or Too Early

- ▶ Start now
- ▶ Schedule a meeting
 - ▶ At your location
 - ▶ Invite your team (if you have one) and 1-2 members of administration
 - ▶ At a networking meeting
 - ▶ Give the editor/publisher/producer a chance to meet many communicators at once
- ▶ Informal – coffee or lunch
 - ▶ Keep it casual
 - ▶ Everyone gets to know everyone a little more

Prepare Your Media Packet

- ▶ Things such as ...
 - ▶ Annual report
 - ▶ Fast facts (1-sheet)
 - ▶ Latest newsletter
 - ▶ Swag
 - ▶ A library card!
 - ▶ Your business card

Prepare Talking Points

▶ Ask About Them

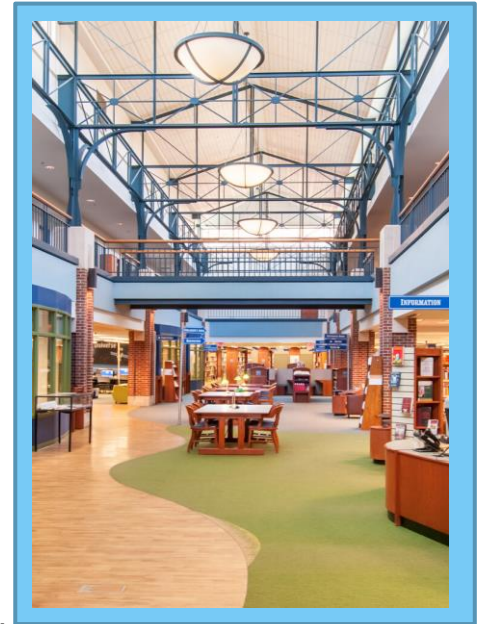
- ▶ How did they get where they are? What are they passionate about?
- ▶ What are their goals for their news organization?
- ▶ How can you help them meet those goals?
- ▶ What do they need from you to be successful?
- ▶ What are their **deadlines**?

▶ Talk About You

- ▶ Answer the 5 W's of your library.
- ▶ Show off something new/fun/popular.
- ▶ Do you need to control a message on something? Bring it up.

▶ Give a Tour

- ▶ If you're at your location and there's time - Show, don't just tell.



Listen + Pitch Ideas

- ▶ Weekly Column
 - ▶ They need regular content? Discuss a weekly library column.
- ▶ Warm Fuzzies
 - ▶ They need art/photographs? Prepare a weekly pitch of upcoming photo opportunities.
- ▶ Jump
 - ▶ Use this as a jumping platform to fill both your needs.
- ▶ Follow Up
 - ▶ Create a calendar reminder (weekly, monthly, quarterly) to touch base and check in again.

Crisis Comms – PR Tips

- ▶ Control the messages (*as much as you can*) from the start
- ▶ Be honest and upfront
- ▶ Know your stakeholders and include them
- ▶ Apply what you've learned



Local turns national
-Crisis communications at DCDL

What's Next?

- ▶ **Be realistic about what you want to achieve, what PR can do** – your story is 1 of 100s
- ▶ **Don't go to traditional media without real news + clear story** – what's your angle? Can you answer 'what's in it for my audience'?
- ▶ **Measure what matters** – track your results
- ▶ **Stay positive but curious** – be willing to adapt based on what your community, audience, and media reacts to and wants
- ▶ **Think outside the box** – look beyond traditional media

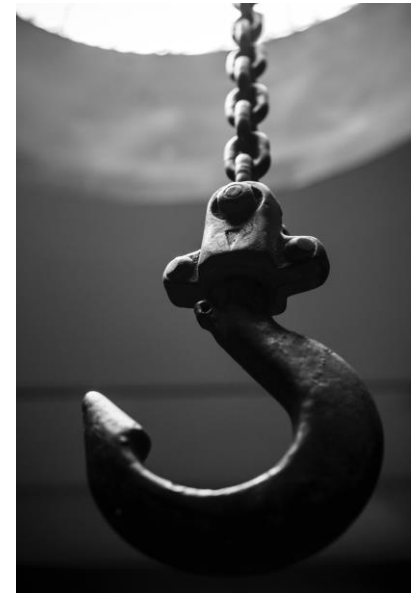


Remember to Tell a Story!

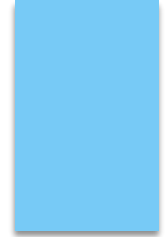
Psst --
“Programming” isn’t a story.

What's In It For the Media? For their Audience?

- Why does your community love your library?
- What do users/patrons say is the top reason they come?
- What do they tell their friends about what's going on at the library?
- What makes this event/program truly newsworthy, relevant, timely, unique?



Different Media, Different Audiences Need Different Hooks



Print Media

You need a top quality, compelling image to accompany the text

TV

You need to create a visually vibrant message that can be told in the studio

Radio or podcasts

Your hook needs to raise an issue or report something that arises from a report or statistics

Online media

You need keywords that are relevant to your readers, and images to attract them



“

*“Advertising is what you pay for,
publicity is what you pray for.”*

”

~ HELEN WOODWARD

Hooks + Pulls

- ▶ Not always text or sentence –image, video, thought-provoking question, a stat, or even a stunt
- ▶ Short and concise, around 60-100 characters
- ▶ Specific, factual, objective, and avoid sensationalism

“Pull Questions” = powerful questions hook or engage your audience/reader and ‘pull’ them into your marketing content

- ▶ Could be desire-based or problem-based
- ▶ Keep to one line whenever possible
- ▶ Use power, emotion, feeling words – nothing fancy, no complex concepts

What Could Be Pull Questions?

Examples –

- Do you look at the kale, but buy ice cream instead?
- Are your friends getting married, and you're tired of getting parked at the singles table?
- Do you need your drains cleared before your bathroom floods, but you're afraid of getting ripped off?
- Do you want to hear stories and writing tips from your favorite authors, but you don't want to get out of your PJs today?

Let's Brainstorm Library Examples –

About a library service improving job hunter's lives

Some eye-opening stats about library use in your community

A season library program – but with a twist from the 'usual'

The library has partnered with another community organization to offer new service/new program

Anatomy of a Press Release



Headline



Dateline



Opening Paragraph



Body Copy



About Us



Contact Information

PRESS RELEASE

DATE: DAY/MONTH/YEAR

YOUR HEADLINE GOES HERE, AND IT NEEDS TO BE NEWSWORTHY

THIS is your vital first paragraph, include five key news points and try to keep it to no more than 25 words.

Expand on the first paragraph with a little more detail about your story, remember each sentence should be a standalone paragraph.

In this paragraph continue to elaborate on the main news angle, include here a little more factual information, perhaps how long it took to develop your business and where you are based.

Now your main spokesperson is introduced and explains what they are about to say. Name them in full with their job title, i.e. Fay Armstrong, Age, Founder of Baby Cakes, said:

She said: "Quote here that explains the 'why' behind the story and has passion and life.

"As the quote continues it needs to keep talking about motivation and purpose and also highlight the impact you hope to have with your business.

"Finish your quote looking to the future and giving people an idea of what is happening next with your company and how they can get involved"

Bring in more facts here about your story – figures and details about what makes your business so special. This is information that you need but it is not very newsworthy.

You can introduce another spokesperson or the first spokesperson again. If you use someone else, try and get a third-party organisation with credibility who can endorse your product/service/event.

He said: "Quote here quote here quote here. Quote here quote here quote here. Quote here quote here quote here. Quote here quote here quote here."

Say what it is. This is a **PRESS RELEASE**

Always date the release with the day you are issuing it, unless you are using an embargo. If you issue your release again a week after your first attempt remember to change the date. No journalist likes a story that is **clearly old!**

Should be the one killer fact that makes the journalist go **'wow'**. It can be repeated in your intro paragraph but elaborated upon. Try and stick to one line as this discipline will force you to be concise.

CAP UP the first word as this is good news style and shows the journalist you know what you are doing. The intro paragraph should have your clear news hook. Remember you're looking to include what is new, a first, unusual, disruptive, counter intuitive about your story. This is what makes news.

This short paragraph style forces you to write very logically, avoid repetition and it makes it easy for the journalist to edit his piece to any length depending on how much they want to use – **THIS IS HOW THEY WRITE**.

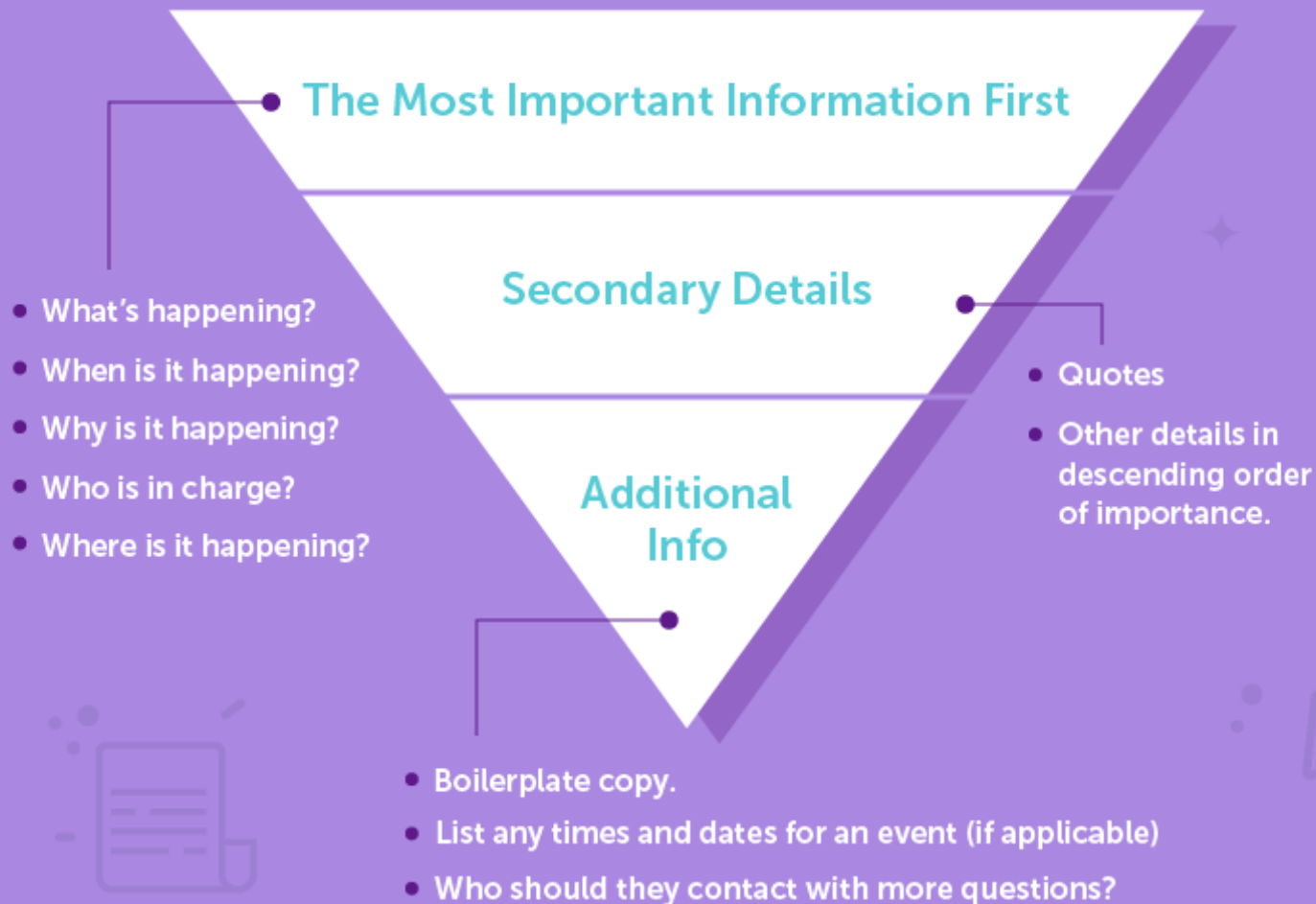
Make sure your quotes sound like a human being speaking and not a robot writing. Try a few quotes out loud to yourself before you hit the keyboard. What do you really want to say? News stories should always be in the perfect tense. Features are in the present tense.

If you are issuing an image with your press release, make sure that the person you are quoting here is in the photograph. And for heaven's sake **don't embed photos in the press release!**

Only close the quotation marks at the end of the final paragraph.

Great method to **build trust** in your brand. It leaves the reporter thinking, "Okay this must be good, other people are saying it is great, not just the person behind the business".

The Inverted Pyramid



Best Practices For Releases That Work

- ▶ Don't just list facts, technical info, or that you have an event
- ▶ Releases need to be targeted – no 'spray and pray'
 - ▶ Do not send every release to every media contact you've collected
- ▶ Start with best local contacts, established relationships
- ▶ Have a plan for personalized approaches and messages to go with release
- ▶ Turn hook into eye-catching email subject line for release

Asking for Publicity

Good headline

Mention timing if appropriate

4 lines mentioning your hook and why you'd be a great inclusion

Links to media kit and media pages

Contact details

Thank them for the opportunity

Sign off

Email to media contact – asking for publicity, to accompany a targeted release

More Examples





On-Location: KC
Fox4 – Museum
Passes, during
NLW



"Tie-brary" On-
Location: KC Fox4



[41 Action News](#) (NBC Affiliate)
During Natl Family History Month,
campaign for Midwest Genealogy
Center



[KMBC: In Focus](#)
(ABC Affiliate)

*“...celebrating
the week
without
competing with
ourselves”
~Cordelia A*



Libraries Transform®

ADVOCACY, MARKETING, PROFESSIONAL ARTICLES

ALA Newsletter: Because One Week Can Make a Big Difference

May 21, 2018
canderson

The American Library Association wrote this nice piece about my quick and effective National Library Week campaign using the Libraries Transform toolkit. Just goes to show that you don't need a big budget or a lot of time to plan an effective campaign!

“ When the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library System in North Carolina staff realized National Library Week (NLW) was fast approaching, they knew they would need to use their limited resources to plan a major event c



Doing It Differently for Success

- ▶ You're here – so you're on the way to success!
You're thinking differently.
- ▶ Be creative
- ▶ Be strategic
- ▶ Be reliable
- ▶ Be helpful
- ▶ Be willing to take some risks
- ▶ Be on message

Looking for Examples - Award Winners

- ▶ JCD (John Cotton Dana) and PRXchange
 - ▶ <http://www.ala.org/awardsgrants/awards/438/apply>
 - ▶ <http://www.ala.org/news/member-news/2019/05/john-cotton-dana-library-public-relations-awards-announced>
 - ▶ http://www.ala.org/llama/awards/prxchange_bestofshow
 - ▶ <http://www.ala.org/llama/sites/ala.org.llama/files/content/2019%20PR%20Xchange%20Awards%20winners.pdf>
- ▶ Library Journal Marketer of Year
 - ▶ <https://www.libraryjournal.com/?page=Marketer-of-the-Year-Guidelines>
- ▶ Other state and regional library associations – may have PR + Marketing awards, swag swaps
- ▶ PRSA – look at general public relations associations and campaigns
 - ▶ <https://www.prsa.org/conferences-and-awards/awards>
- ▶ MLS- Marketing Library Services newsletter – see write-ups of campaigns, submit your own
 - ▶ <http://infotoday.com/mls/>

More Resources

- ▶ HARO ([Help a Reporter Out](#))
- ▶ Source Bottle (<https://www.sourcebottle.com/>)
- ▶ Check #Journorequest on Twitter – comment, retweet, reply to requests
- ▶ E-releases (online press release service) Guide to Writing Press Releases - <https://www.ereleases.com/how-to-write-chapter-1/>
- ▶ Press release distribution services <https://class-pr.com/blog/press-release-distribution/>
- ▶ Media kit templates in Canva <https://www.canva.com/create/media-kits/>
- ▶ CoSchedule guide to How to Write Press Releases - <https://coschedule.com/blog/how-to-write-press-releases-examples-templates/>

Sample press releases

- ▶ Apple- ["Apple Adds Earth Day Donations to Trade-in + Recycling Program"](#)
- ▶ AP + Red Bull : ["AP + Red Bull Collaborate to Provide Premium Sports, Music, Lifestyle Content"](#)
- ▶ Modcloth: ["Modcloth Breaks Up with Black Friday"](#)
- ▶ NYPL: [New York Public Library Announces 2018 Young Lions Fiction Award Finalists"](#)

Contact Me for More!



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