



MEDIA RELATIONS FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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YOUR TEAM TODAY



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NIK LAABS

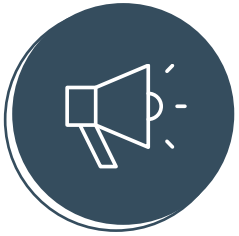
Vice President, co-chair media relations practice

GOALS FOR TODAY

Understand ...



The fundamentals of media relations and how the media operates today



How to develop media relations strategy for public affairs



How to build strong relationships with media

AGENDA

Media relations 101 – Recap of the basics

- Tips on pitching, building media lists, writing op-eds
 - 2023 state of the media
-

Media relations 201 – Public Affairs

Building relationships with reporters





MEDIA RELATIONS 101 RECAP

MEDIA RELATIONS ARE A TWO-WAY STREET

What You Want

- ✓ To move opinions and shape outcomes
- ✓ To effectively convey your messages
- ✓ To foster a working level of trust with reporters that will benefit you in the future

What Reporters Want

- ✓ To meet deadlines
- ✓ To please their editors
- ✓ To be unique
- ✓ To appeal to the outlet's audience
- ✓ To have reliable sources

MEDIA TARGETING: RESEARCH + RELEVANCE = RESULTS

Anatomy of a Great Pitch



- Connect to a trending story:
Why is this important now?
- Compelling subject line
- Strong verbs; avoid fluff
- Leave out nonessential detail (<300 words)
- Hyperlink to additional info
- Always pitch via email first & be smart about follow-up
- Learn/remember reporters' preferences

Media Lists



- Quality over quantity
- Media sweep of topic
- In-depth research of potential targets
- Check social media accounts
- Do not rely solely on Muck Rack or other databases

MEDIA TARGETING: *RESEARCH + RELEVANCE = RESULTS*



Teresa Carey
@teresa_carey



Hey [#PR](#) professionals - here's a tip: I get 40+ podcast pitches each day. I read 1 sentence of less than half of them. I reply to about 3/month. I book even less. Any pitch that leads with a name and long list of credentials bores me in seconds. But lead with...(thread 1/3)



Teresa Carey
@teresa_carey



(thread 2/3)...a really cool *idea* and I'll give it enough attention to read to the next sentence. Keep me engaged and surprised and I'll keep going. This one caught my eye today: "Hi Teresa - Podnosis idea here for you. I wondered if you'd be interested in exploring..."



Alexandra Semenova
@alexandraandnyc



love it when PR people preface their email pitches with "Story idea:" like ok thank you for being my assignment editor

ELEMENTS OF A STRONG OP-ED



Unique POV



Concrete examples
and solutions



Timely



Imagery



Relevant to
audience



Facts & statistics



2023 STATE OF THE MEDIA SURVEY OF 2,000+ REPORTERS



X (Twitter) is the most valued social network, followed by Facebook and LinkedIn



Nearly all journalists use X (Twitter) – 90%



69% believe a subject connected to a trending story makes it more shareable

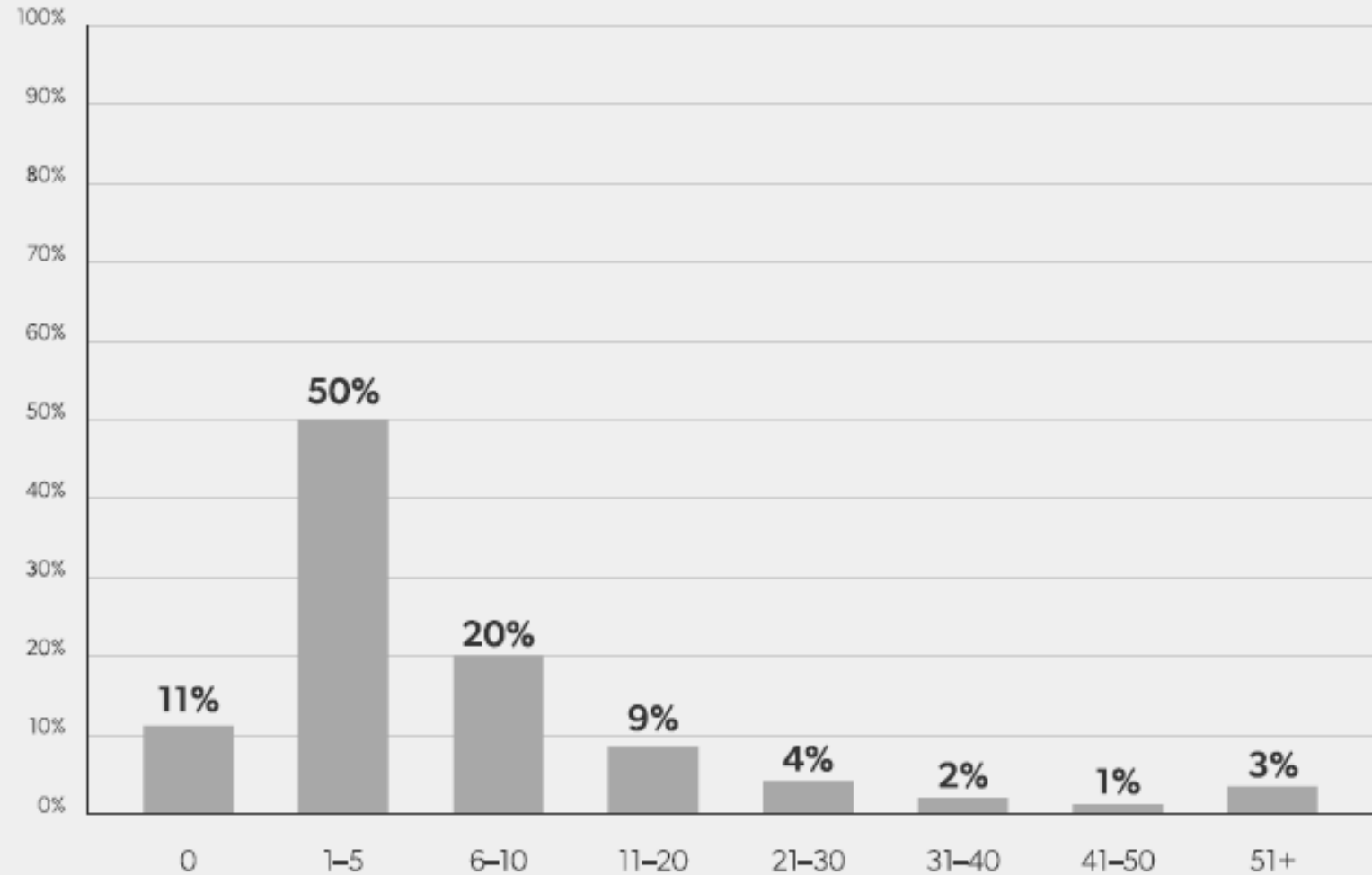


Academic SMEs and CEOs most credible sources for reporting

MOST JOURNALISTS GET UP TO 5 PITCHES PER DAY

And about **60** people said their email is clogged with at least **255** pitches every week!

How many pitches do you receive on an average business day?



Total sample size: 1800 answers

**SIMILAR TO LAST
YEAR, THE AVERAGE
JOURNALIST COVERS
4 BEATS**

What industries do you cover? (select all that apply)



Total sample size: 2226 answers



MEDIA RELATIONS FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

IMPORTANT TOUCHSTONES TO RETURN TO

What is my goal?

How will media relations help achieve
my public affairs goal?

Media relations is an art, not a science.

POWER OF BELTWAY/LOCAL MEDIA

Media targets

Think beyond national, top-tier media

What are your key audiences reading every day?

Morning newsletters are esp. important

Considerations

Paywalls

Importance of key message pull-through over brand awareness

Local angles for local outlets



E&E
NEWS



CQ
Roll
Call



PUNCHBOWL
NEWS[®] AM.



POLITICO

THE PITCH: INTEL + IDEAS = CURRENCY

How to make the PA pitch newsworthy:

Demonstrate the credibility and expertise of your spokesperson/SME

Offer insider info (what is going on behind the scenes), predictions, POV on a policy/report/event, personal/grassroots perspective to tell the “human story”

Ideal timing is before major development; can also offer to provide a POV immediately following an announcement



MAKE NEWS VIA OWNED & SOCIAL MEDIA



Post statements, news alerts, press releases on owned channels and promote on social, particularly X (Twitter)



Steady drumbeat of content



Stay relevant



HOW TO MEASURE SUCCESS

- Message pull-through in coverage
- Call to action in coverage
- Influential reporter/publication engagement
- Quote from leader of coalition/organization
- Coalition/organization mention

MAKING NEWS IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PROACTIVE: Cultivating intrigue

- Editorial calendar: observance months, events where reporters gather; long-lead opportunities
- Pitching SME sources, deskside briefings and media tours
- Embargoes, exclusives and first breaks
- On-background conversations

REACTIVE: Align with News

- Responding to media inquiries
- Pitching statements on timely policy developments
- Holding statements

OPPORTUNISTIC: Bylines & Newsjacking

- Op-eds, LTEs (*though sometimes reactive*)
- Newsjacking
- Creating internal processes to facilitate



BUILDING REPORTER RELATIONSHIPS

HOW TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN RELATIONSHIPS



Consistently pitching relevant story ideas and subject matter experts



Making sure reporters have a positive experience with each interview/briefing you secure



Coffees/meet-and-greets, particularly after a reporter switches beats or publications



Social media (especially X)



Professional networks (EWA, NABJ)



Reading their coverage & reaching out to share thoughts on stories you liked



Relationships beget relationships



Events and conferences where media is present



FAQS

- The proactive pitch: what do you want to say vs. what are reporters interested in?
- Embargo vs. exclusive/first break?
- On the record vs. off the record vs. on background?
- Pitching a statement or an op-ed?