

What Journalists Want

Presented by

- Rob Reinalda – Executive Director of Lawrence Ragan Communications
- Lauren Young – Money Editor – Thomson Reuters
- Chitra Nawbatt – anchor/correspondent – Business News Network

NASDAQ OMX Corporate Solutions

1. What should you have in an online newsroom?

- Cut out all the noise, get to the most important issues, what's happening today or this week, get to the heart of the issues.
- Data overload is a real problem for journalists.
- Media releases must be clear, concise and relevant, not use flowery language
- Quotes in the release can add colour to news coverage, can be used by on air reporters
- Media releases should have key facts, no inaccuracies, proper spelling and grammar, use spell check.

2. Brand Journalism

- Media releases should be ready for news outlet to plug right in
- Story must be presented in a consumable way, a way that's palpable
- News moves fast, reporters want quick summary of the key components so they can start there and dig deeper
- They want the who, the what and the why does it matter?

3. Is this a cooperative venture between the journalist and the PR person?

- It's the PR firm that must provide the information, they have to boil it down to the 'so what?'
- PR firm should present information in a crystal clear method, should not use flowery language.

4. How to Pitch a Story

- Chitra receives 500 pitches daily, building a relationship with the media person helps.

- They prefer pitches via e-mail, Twitter messages are too short and easily get lost.
- Keep in mind media people are busy, they need it quick and concise
- It's important for the PR person to answer the phone when a reporter calls in order to move forward on a pitch – the news cycle is too fast to miss these calls!
- One speaker said she is pitched stories that aren't engaging, they should be crafted, make it smart, know what the media person actually covers and pitch to their interests/beat. Use Google to look up what reporters typically like to cover.
- Pitch story ideas not products.
- Anecdotes rule.
- Connect reporter with users of the product or service, show rather than tell.
- Relationship building and pitching stories depends on doing your homework and knowing what has been covered, what's trending, what the media outlet or reporter likes to cover; use Twitter for that.
- Make stories/pitches more than one dimensional.
- Reporters want to know what people are doing, not what people are thinking. Surveys are boring for media coverage.
- There is still value in a press release, provides invaluable information for busy reporters.
- Media releases are really good for the initial story, not great for the follow-up story.

5. How to Ace the Interview

- Keep answers short and punchy with enough meat – don't be vague and long-winded
- Keep energy up, be positive and remember not everyone knows everything about what you're talking about
- Don't be negative
- Train speakers in how to talk in sound bites but don't do too much coaching, personality is good.
- Doing interviews by email is OK if the person is too busy.

6. Forging relationships is important

- Do coffee or a meal with the reporter to get to know them, send a personalized message to pitch a story
- Be persistent and keep trying to reach the reporter when pitching a story, but don't pester.
- Reporters want to speak to the unusual person in the survey
- If pitching a story, the people in it should actually be available for interviews
- People need to illustrate the story

- If you urgently need to reach a reporter, use the subject line of an email to get their attention.