



# Top Ten Tips: Engaging your local media



## Engaging your local media

1. **Have a good story** - the trick to any media relations is having a good story. Ask yourself honestly, “why is this important to local people?”. When you can answer that, you’re off to a good start.
2. **Think about people** - people are interested in people. Finding the people your story impacts positively and who would be happy to talk about it gives it a “human interest” – it makes it real.
3. **Get to know your local papers** - make a point of getting to know your local journalists. They will be interested in your work, and it’s important they have a point of contact.
4. **Be mindful of their deadlines** - most local papers are weekly. Make sure you know their deadlines and meet them.
5. **Be prepared** - make sure you include plenty of information in your story. Think “Who”, “What”, “When” “Where” and “Why” and be prepared to answer any questions.
6. **Be accurate with your content** - lots of people will see your story if it is printed, so ensure it is accurate and fact checked. Be clear in what your message is, and what you want people to take from it.
7. **Think about a good photo** - local newspapers like photographs. Think of the right image with your story and try and arrange for a professional photograph to be taken. Some local newspapers will have a photographer they can send if you give them enough notice.
8. **Be clear in your responses** - if you are responding to a negative story, ensure your response is honest, and clear. If you’ve made a mistake, own up and set out what you intend to do to make it right.
9. **Make it a habit** - get into the habit of sending plenty of stories to your local papers – they often are searching for good local news items.
10. **But not too much of a habit** - ensure you apply the “is this really of interest” filter. Sending news stories that aren’t really news might mean your material gets missed in future.