

The

**HOW-TO
GUIDE**

to making yourself a

IPR

MAGNET

**ZILKER
MEDIA**

THE SOLUTION

The most effective way to get PR today is to have a “push and pull” approach, where you pitch ideas directly to the media while also pulling them to you via smart content marketing. Let’s break this out some more.

PUSH

This is the “traditional” process that you likely think about when it comes to garnering publicity. This process begins with creating a strategy, crafting a press kit & pitching story ideas to media outlets in the hopes of grabbing their attention. **While this process still works today, it’s less reliable and more dependent on having a publicist who already has great media relationships in place.**

Here are two ways to set yourself up for success before you begin pitching media:

1. Understand what kinds of media will actually help you achieve the results you want.

For most of us there are three media groups that make the most sense to target as part of a publicity campaign:



A. NAME-BRAND TRADITIONAL MEDIA

This category includes traditional media that have been on wish lists for entrepreneurs and leaders for decades and decades, from the *New York Times* to *CNBC* to *Forbes* and beyond. If you want to be viewed as a credible expert, one of the quickest ways to facilitate that is to associate yourself with brands that have more built-in authority with your audience.

EXTRA TIP FOR GARNERING NAME-BRAND MEDIA: ADD A PRESS ROOM TO YOUR WEBSITE.

YOUR PRESS ROOM SHOULD INCLUDE THREE SECTIONS:

Contact information for your publicist: make it as easy as possible for a journalist to get in touch with you.

Links to recent media coverage: when a journalist lands on your press room and sees you have done a lot of other media interviews it tells them that someone else has already vetted you and often accelerates their willingness to reach out.

Downloadable links: have your headshot, press kit and a high-res book cover available for download.



The main value with this category of media is the ability to re-market it for years to come on your website and beyond. What you need to know:

Media at this level is looking for reasons NOT to book you.

You can bet these editors and journalists are conducting their own due diligence to dig up any sort of red flags—bad reviews, an amateurish website, confusing branding/messaging, etc. This is why it’s so important to:

- A) own your first impression online *and*
- B) ensure you’re positioned as a credible expert.

B. MICROMEDIA

While name-brand media provides significantly more credibility than micromedia, the reality is well-targeted micromedia will almost always produce significantly more lead flow. As a reminder, micromedia includes podcasts, blogs, newsletters, webinars and beyond that are run by smaller, hyper-targeted individuals and organizations.

We recently had a *New York Times* bestselling author come back to us for her most recent book and express that the only thing she wanted us to pursue was this category of media. Despite her previous campaign including a national morning show and several top print hits, her data showed that the vast

EXTRA TIP FOR GARNERING MICROMEDIA COVERAGE:

One of the best ways to build relationships with top podcasters is to avoid beginning the relationship by asking for something – instead, start by inviting them on your podcast or to do a Q&A with you on your blog. The micromedia space runs largely on the law of reciprocation and you’ll be amazed how many of the people you feature will turn around and invite you on their platform as well.

EXTRA TIP FOR LOCAL MEDIA:

Follow local on-air and print personalities on Twitter and find ways to engage with them that don’t involve asking for anything. Over time you’ll build relationships that lead to in-bound opportunities.

majority of the actual purchases, from her book to her e-learning program to speaking engagements came from podcasts, blogs and newsletters.

This plays into broader trends in the media landscape that we are seeing – trust in “legacy” media is eroding while trust in micromedia is through the roof. Thus, when a podcaster, blogger or other individual outlet recommends you and your book, their audience often jumps to action in a much different way than the audience of large, generic media.

C. LOCAL MEDIA



The last media category that we want you to include in your target list is local media. Even though you may not sell primarily in your local market, local coverage is not only rewarding for most, it's good for your personal network to 'see' you in action within media they follow routinely.

Depending on the size of your local market, sometimes the fact that you are releasing a book will be enough to generate media coverage. If you live in a larger city, you may need to create a local event, like a speech or book signing, that is open to the public as a hook to get their attention. Often times they need a reason to cover you right now and an event can help push that over the edge.

2. Understand what kinds of media will actually help you achieve the results you want.

If you are pitching the media ideas, you must play by their rules to grab their limited attention. We recently spent time speaking with some of our top media contacts to learn more about their wish list when it comes to those pitching them. Here are the top eight things they said:

1. GET TO THE POINT

The first great tip is the simplest – the best pitches are very straightforward. The pitches that miss are ones that pitch something they don't cover. Before you pitch,

think about who the journalist's audience is and put yourself in the reporter's shoes. Their job isn't to promote your business but if you can help them entertain and inform their audience they will bring you and your business along for the ride.

Examples:

- Having a newborn baby is tough. In the midst of the exhaustion, this mompreneur took a common baby problem and turned it into a multi-million dollar business.
- I'm working with leading productivity expert with 20+ years experience studying the field who I thought you may be interested in interviewing.
- These days, ear, nose and throat physician, head and neck surgeon Dr. John Doe is enjoying his thriving practice, service to the community and good work-life balance, but there was a time when life wasn't so rosy. Dr. Doe shares his story of burnout and recovery in his book, "Burnout" (Publisher, Pub date) which explores how bringing art and science together can promote healing and how anyone can not only recover from burnout but thrive by reconnecting with their humanity and spirit.

2. DON'T FORCE FAMILIARITY!

Several also mentioned a pet peeve – putting “re” in the subject line to make it seem like you've already had a conversation. Don't play games or force familiarity – this diminishes you in the eyes of the media you're pursuing

3. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE.

A journalist at a local Business Journal mirrored the earlier statement that anyone pitching them needs to know their audience. Business Journals are super niche, mostly covering B2B local businesses. Their reporters are very busy, all the time, so they often appreciate when PR pros keep following up with him (if it's relevant) with more details about the idea. Again, there's a fine line on follow-up – stay on the right side of it.

4. ACTUALLY WATCH/READ THE OUTLET YOU ARE PITCHING (WHAT A CONCEPT!!)

To be successful when pitching you need to understand the producer's needs and know what is important and the best way to do that is to watch/read the local news

and understand who does what. Keep track of who wins the awards in your local market and pitch those folks. Don't just pitch the assignment desk, but grow a relationship with the actual reporter.

5. NAIL THE SUBJECT LINE AND KNOW HOW TO COMMUNICATE.

General tips on pitches from the panel are not to use attachments, and keep them short. Don't forget the who, what, when, where, how.

If you know that an event should really stand out from other news of the day — follow up with a phone call! In general – if something is newsworthy – like, REALLY newsworthy, call! Multiple modes of communication help when you have something urgent. Let reporters know about deadlines – they have to work around breaking news.

Nail the subject line! Don't use a subject line that doesn't give any specifics. Subject lines need to get to the point – think of it like a headline on a newspaper.

A little offbeat creativity here or there can work sometimes, but journalists get so many pitches you need to be clear and get to the point to stand out from the noise.

SUBJECT LINE SECRETS

6. KNOW HOW JOURNALISTS WORK.

Their attention is divided – try to build a personal relationship to be able to cut through the gatekeeping. The best place to do this is Twitter, so if you haven't read our Twitter Playbook on how to build meaningful relationships with Twitter, we'd strongly encourage that.

>>> FREE DOWNLOAD <<<

THE TWITTER PLAYBOOK

7. BE CLEAR ON THE ROLE OF A PRESS RELEASE.

Several journalists said press releases can be helpful for background but can't be the only tool for pursuing coverage. When crafting a release, think about how it may look to someone a couple years down the road. Include data about a company –

especially in the boilerplate. If you're pitching TV, know they will need to break the release down in 25 seconds.

THE 411 ON PRESS RELEASES

8. KEEP IT REAL.

Don't stretch the facts in your pitch because one off-target stat will call into question the entirety of your pitch. Instead, be honest and real the whole way through and you will build a much more long-term relationship.

PULL

When you are pushing pitches at the media, it's always going to be harder to generate coverage because you're trying to talk them into covering a story that you want. On the flipside, when you pull the media to you, you fit yourself into a story they already know they want covered and oftentimes it leads to the biggest media coverage you'll get.

In today's landscape we often say that Google can be a great publicist and that's because when a journalist decides they want to cover a certain story, many of them head to Google or Twitter in search of more information and potential sources.

Many of our clients have successfully generated inbound media requests and while it's certainly not easy to get a call from CNBC or CNN, there are a number of things you can do to increase your likelihood of doing so, beginning with this list:

Sign up for HARO

One of the best innovations in the PR space in the past 10 years was created by an entrepreneur named Peter Shankman. Shankman recognized how inefficient the traditional 'push' process is for journalists and decided to flip it around – instead of PR reps and experts guessing what the media wants, Help a Reporter Out (HARO) is a daily email that goes out with live media queries. In other words, it's full of reporters requesting to speak with specific types of experts for stories they are working on. In other words, it's the one time a journalist will say – "I'm looking for an expert on plastic surgery for burn victims, if this is you – please pitch me." We have seen many Members

self-generate significant PR attention through HARO.

Push out timely content

This is another reason why news-driven content is such a vital tool. It allows you to widen your net around certain topics, as statistics show that journalists are increasingly turning to Google, Twitter, HARO and other online resources when they need an expert to speak on a breaking news topic. When you have created a “newsjacking” post, you widen your net to attract media rather than trying to stand out among a thousand daily pitches. It also facilitates relationship-building with media personalities. Media members are more frequently looking to build these kinds of relationships with authorities.

WHAT IS NEWSJACKING?

“Newsjacking is the art and science of injecting your ideas into **a breaking news story** and generating tons of media coverage and social media engagement.”
- David Meerman Scott

Make it easy on the media

As mentioned earlier in this letter, you must make it easy on the media to reach out to you. If you have a website, make sure you have a press room. If you don't have a press room, understand which pages come up in a search on your name. For many experts, this is a bio page on their company or university website. Make sure there is contact information on that page. If you don't make it easy on media to reach you, they're going to move on to the next expert.

Don't let your social media infrastructure languish

Few things look worse to media members or readers than a social media extension that hasn't been updated in months. Don't set up a Facebook page or Twitter account unless you intend to engage and provide consistent, valuable content. If you have social media accounts that you don't update, cancel the accounts.

Have an opinion

This should be a given right? Surprisingly, no. Many experts stay in the middle of the road which doesn't really drive interest or sharing on either side of a debate. Your odds of getting content in front of a journalist within social media are boosted dramatically if you are writing provocative pieces that your readers want to share with their networks. This doesn't mean to get super controversial, but people don't engage with those who stay in the middle of the road – so be interesting; have a take.

