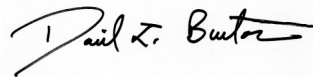


## Media calendar

- Plan the media effort. You should work directly with those in charge of the event.
- Send the first release announcing the event at least eight weeks in advance, or at least with enough to meet deadlines of magazines.
- Write and design a flyer announcing the event.
- Have posters printed for posting at the event and in areas frequented by the target audience.
- Take pictures two to four weeks ahead of the event and then distribute those to local newspapers. Past years' files can help.
- Conduct radio interviews with participants and/or give scripts to radio people for their radio services. Again, figure a two to three week lead time to allow time for editing and distribution.
- Send another more detailed advanced story to newspapers two weeks before the event. If possible, it should be accompanied by a photo.
- Write stories from information presented at the event. Do these in advance so they can be released the day of or the day following the event.
- Contact television stations one to two weeks before the event. Arrange for advance filming and/or coverage of the actual event. Prior to this, determine "highlights" and possible TV "stars" who are willing to be interviewed and filmed.
- Hold a "news conference" (optional) to give editors and broadcasters a "preview" and a chance to interview, take pictures and prepare stories. This usually is done the day before the event.
- Cover the event. Be available to help visiting editors and broadcasters cover it. Take pictures. Make radio tapes. Information gathered at the event can be used to write follow-up features (without a tie to the event) for magazines, to provide timeless interviews for Extension radio service, to document the event and to build picture file.

## Tips for pitching reporters

1. Do your homework.
2. Find the reporter who covers you area.
3. Read their last few articles.
4. Refer to those articles when you pitch.
5. Be quick on your feet. Think of alternative ideas if they shoot down your first idea.
6. Offer three reasons why their readers would be interested in your story idea.
7. Don't be offended by a reporter with a brusque manner.
8. Don't be offended if they ask "so what?" They could be testing you to see if you have a deep story.
9. Reporters have to "sell" story ideas to their editors, just like you have to "sell" ideas to reporters. Give them the ammunition they need and they'll give you what you want.



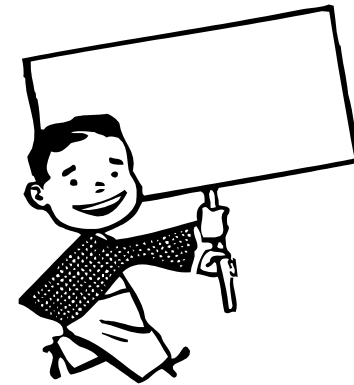
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# Publicizing your event



How to get the  
word out on  
your event

UNIVERSITY OF  
MISSOURI EXTENSION

# Publicizing Your Event

To publicize an event first consider **who** you want to attend. If the potential audience is small, talk to each member personally, call or write a letter. You can't beat the personal approach.

If the potential audience is too big for the personal approach how do you let people know about the event? How do you get them to come?

First of all, the event has to be worthwhile. Nothing will hurt your credibility with your audience and the media more than a highly publicized event that just doesn't amount to much.

Assuming you have a large potential audience, and your event is well organized, you should plan your media campaign at least three months in advance if you want to use magazines as part of your publicity effort. Determine items and people you want featured. It's a good idea to follow through on one theme. For example, the same picture used on your flyer also could be used on posters and with a news release.

## Publicity Checklist

Some media/methods to consider:

- An organizing committee whose members can talk about it personally.
- Advance news releases
- Fliers
- Posters
- Radio tapes
- Radio scripts
- Brochures or programs
- Direct mail or information or invitations
- Pictures
- Loudspeakers
- Caps, name tags and other identification
- Television (public service announcements and news clips)
- Follow-up news releases

# General rules of publicity

**Only publicize events that deserve publicity.**  
Pomp without substance is not appealing to media people. And it won't do your credibility any good, either.

**Put someone in charge.**  
Publicity by committee is a mess. However, you should get help from others to personally spread the work to opinion leaders.

**Make a plan.**  
Decide what you want to publicize and how you plan to do it three months in advance.

**Consider the media options you have and pick the most appropriate (not just one).**  
If you have a small audience, you might just speak or write personally to each person.

**Make a calendar.**  
Plan well in advance a schedule of your publicity activities.

**Be accurate.**  
Clearly establish the 5 Ws and the H. (See news release brochure).

**Be brief.**  
Short, tightly written stories announcing an event have a greater chance of being used.

**Use a local angle.**  
Involve local people in planning your event. They can help make contacts with those you wish to have attend. Localize press releases.

**Focus on the right audience.**  
This may be the most important rule in communicating: know your audience and then write and talk to them. It is also helpful to study how to reach this target group.

**Decide what is news.**  
What makes your event newsworthy?

**Establish media contacts.**  
Be open. Let them know who you are and what you have to publicize. Learn their deadlines and other expectations.

**Be business-like in your dealings with the media.**  
Editors and broadcasters have busy schedules, deadlines and profits to make. They consider themselves experts in their business. They don't like to be told "you have to run my story."

**Don't cajole or beg.**  
"Sell" your story on its own merit (that's why the first rule is so important: make sure you have something to sell in the first place).

**Don't forget to say "thank you" to the media when they help you publicize an event.**  
A letter to the editor, for example, from you or someone who attended the event, is nice.

**Follow up.**  
If an event was worth publicizing, it should be worth a follow-up story on what happened. This could be in the form of information called or delivered to the media before the event ends.

**Start planning for the next event.**  
Keep track of what happened and learn from your mistakes. Have a discussion immediately after the event with those involved to figure out what went right and how you might do better the next time.

