

TIP SHEET:

Building a Media List



A **Media List** is a list of target media contacts—including editors, reporters, photographers, anchors, etc.—organized according to geographic coverage areas and subject areas (beats), and including all relevant contact information (phone number, email address, etc.) A media list is an extremely important tool for promoting your program, message or event. Follow this quick and simple guide for building an effective media list that saves you time and increases your media success

EXAMPLE: Washington, DC Media List

OUTLET	CONTACT NAME	TITLE	PHONE	EMAIL
Washington Post	Christina Barron	Kids Post Editor	202.123.4567	email@address.com
The Gazette	Krista Brick	Arts Reporter	202.123.4567	email@address.com
Washington Times	Daniel Wattenberg	Features Reporter	202.123.4567	email@address.com
Washington City Paper	Alison Black	Health Reporter	202.123.4567	email@address.com

Step #1: Research Demographics

In order to gain a reporter's interest in your story, you need to make sure that you're pitching within the geographic area they cover. Using the web or social media, make a list of local:

- Publications—print & online newspapers/magazines
- Radio stations
- Television news programs

Step #2: Read, Watch and Listen

Study your targets to figure out what topic they work on and if your story idea would match or complement the stories that they typically cover.

- Take note of which newspaper sections cover youth news, community events, and/or human-interest stories.
- Find out what segments on your local TV or radio stations cover youth news, community events, and/or human-interest stories.

Step #3: Pick Your Targets

Check bylines or reporter names of articles that appear in the coverage areas of interest to you (e.g., Youth News, Community News, Nonprofit News, Lifestyle/Human Interest News, etc.) If possible, check the media outlet's website for names of editors and producers. Make a list of your targets including names, phone numbers and email addresses.

Step #4: Reach out and pitch your story!

Pick up the phone or send an email to introduce yourself and tell the reporter about your planned event. Invite them to attend your event, send a photographer and directly ask them to write a story.

The Right Contacts: For Print

Who to Contact

- **Section / Beat Editors:** They assign reporters and stories for certain beats or sections of the paper.
- **Section / Beat Reporters:** They report / write on certain beats or sections of the paper
- **Editorial Editors / Writers:** They offer or edit opinionated coverage and commentary in the editorial section of the paper.
- **Editorial Assistants:** These entry-level assistants help review story opportunities, and write and edit stories
- **Web Editors:** They translate newspaper coverage to the Website.
- **Calendar Editors:** They review and provide details about events / happenings in the coverage area.
- **Columnists:** They offer analysis or opinionated commentary on current events, trends or news of relevance to their readers.
- **Photo Editors / Photojournalists:** Same as TV.

Who NOT to Contact (without a relationship)

- **Managing Editors***
- **Editors-In-Chief or Editors-At-Large***
- **Executive Editor***
- **Publishers***
- **Copy Editors**
- **Advertising / Circulation Managers**

**NOTE: These contacts may be relevant for smaller publications*

The Right Contacts: For TV

Who to Contact

- **Assignment Editors:** They assign reporters and photojournalists to cover local news events
- **Producers:** They help determine the topics for specific newscasts / programs
- **Beat / General Reporters:** They look for good stories ideas and pitch them to producers and news directors
- **Videographers:** If you have a great visual opportunity or action shot, they may come out to shoot video footage.
- **Guest Bookers:** These contacts screen pitches and book interviews for TV talk show or in-studio interview programs

Who NOT to Contact (without a relationship)

- **Meteorologists**
- **PSA Directors**
- **Promotions Managers**
- **Website Editors**
- **Station Managers**
- **News Directors***
- **Anchors***

**NOTE: News Directors and Anchors may be relevant contacts for TV stations in small cities*

The Right Contacts: For Radio

Who to Contact

- **News Directors:** Radio stations that have more comprehensive news programs often have news directors who are responsible for reporting during news breaks.
- **Reporters:** Some radio stations, particularly news/talk radio stations, have actual reporters or correspondents.
- **Show Producers:** These contacts are responsible for planning and assigning topics for radio talk show programs.
- **Show Hosts:** In some instances (although not often), hosts are involved in booking interviews or planning shows.
- **Guest Bookers:** These contacts screen pitches and assess opportunities to book interviews for radio talk show or interview programs.

Who NOT to Contact (without a relationship)

- **Disk Jockeys**
- **Programming Managers**
- **Sales Representatives**
- **Account Executives**
- **Promotions Managers**
- **Traffic Reporters**
- **General Managers**
- **Production Managers**