

6.3 Working the media

PRODUCT
DISTRIBUTION
PROMOTION
PEOPLE
FINANCE
RISK
GROWTH

- > *Who is 'the media'?*
- > *Building relationships*
- > *What are journalists looking for?*
- > *How to write a media release*

Who is 'the media'?

'The media' is a range of communication forms from print through to electronic, including

- > Print—newspapers, magazines and bulletins
- > Radio
- > Television
- > Websites
- > Email news feeds and e-newsletters

The boundaries between these technologies are blurring, and you can now access newspapers and magazines electronically, just as you can access radio via the Internet.

As a food business owner, it is important that you have a good understanding of the media that is most relevant to you, to not only keep up to date with what is happening in the industry, but so that you can target these with interesting information about your business.

Building relationships

As with all business, it is important to build up relationships and networks among the media.

Imagine the different response you would get from a journalist if rather than receiving a media release from someone they have never heard of, they get a phone call backed up by a media release, from someone who has taken the time to meet and discuss their business, given them some samples, taken them for a tour and discussed key issues in the food industry with them. The journalist is far more likely to take notice of the business in the second scenario. You can see why it is important to build two-way relationships over time.

Public relation firms can be very useful. They maintain databases of journalists and their interests, and can point you to those who might be specially interested in your product. They can also help you craft a public relations strategy, including media releases and other media information.

What are journalists looking for?

Journalists are looking for 'news' and items that have an unusual slant to them. They are looking for:

- > events with a difference
- > innovative products (as long as the innovation and difference is clearly spelt out)
- > quirky stories

- > stories with an element of drama.

When you have a story which you think will be of interest,

- > Decide which individual journalist you wish to contact
- > Phone and email
- > Then, provide a media release
- > Follow up with an invitation to a launch or a tour.

How to write a media release

When writing a media release it is important to arrange your information using the following triggers:

- > Who
- > What
- > When
- > Where
- > How
- > Why

It is very helpful to

- > Head the page "Media Release" and date it
- > Write in clear, simple English, use short sentences and do not use jargon
- > Use a creative heading that will catch the attention of those reading it



- > Assume that the journalist won't read more than the first two paragraphs, so try to get a summary of the who, what, when, where, how and why into those paragraphs whilst giving the story an interesting slant.
- > Include an interesting quote from a relevant person and keep the release to one page.
- > Make sure that there are clear contact details of the key contact person and make sure that that person is available and briefed to talk to the media. The media release is to give the journalist the 'taste' of the story, if tempted they will contact you to find out more.

Following is an example of a table to help you manage your media relations. Use it to keep track of who the relevant people are to your business and how much you have done to build the relationship with them.

Websites

www.southaustralia.biz/Events_Calendar/Checklists/MediaReleaseChecklist.pdf

www.womensnetwork.com.au/library/marketing/2002spr_media.htm

Media relationship building

<i>Media type</i>	<i>Name of publication or program</i>	<i>Key contact person</i>	<i>Contact details</i>	<i>Special interests</i>	<i>Contact made</i>	<i>Media release</i>
Print	<i>Sumptuous</i> magazine	Bronwyn Gwyn-Jones		Fusion cuisine Heritage recipes Desserts	1/10 phone call 10/10 coffee meeting 14/10 samples bag 2/11 follow up from media release	1/11—new product release Result—story in Autumn magazine