



Guide to pitching to local media

Top tips on how to pitch to local media and how to prepare for interviews.



Guide to pitching to local media

- Research your local radio station shows and newspapers.
- Research the producers, journalists and presenters and identify the best person to pitch too.
- Call and ask at the organisation's reception desk if it is not clear who the correct person to pitch to is.

Key persons in local media:

- Editor
- Deputy Editor
- Online editors
- Journalists
- Producers
- Presenters

What makes a story newsworthy?

- Impact
- Timeliness of the story
- Proximity
- Human interest
- Prominence
- Conflict

Pitching to local media:

1. Do your research. Target the right media/radio show/journalist.
2. Pitch your story. Remember it has to be newsworthy.
3. Get straight to the point and personalise your pitch with a local angle.
 - a. E.g. why is this story important and why should you discuss this? You are a local legal expert and this issue will impact consumers, your clients and members of the local community.
4. Have your email and press release ready to send when you are on the call or straight after you are finished the pitch.
5. Be available for interviews and follow up requests. Provide your contact details (email and mobile number) and follow up with the journalist or producer.

When is best to contact a journalist or producer?

- The best time to call a radio producer is just after their show ends and before planning for the next show commences.
- Avoid calling during radio news bulletins.
- The worst time to contact a local newspaper is the day before publication.

Interview preparation:

- Know your key messages.
- Prepare the 'who, what, when, where, why and how' of the story.
- Prepare for questions – review your Q&A document.
- Know why you are the one talking about this story. E.g. you are the President of the local Bar Association and are a legal expert in this field.
- Tell the story. E.g. the deposit charges have a human interest and proximity angle – this will impact consumers and members of the local community trying to purchase a house or could impact probate or commercial transactions.
- Give examples to make the story more relatable.

Answering difficult questions:

- If you do not know the answer or cannot answer the question, answer what you do know. Link back to what you want to say. E.g. 'I'm not certain on that point, but I do know X'.
- Never repeat accusations. E.g. they could say 'some solicitors have a bad reputation'. Do not repeat this accusation, instead say, 'Solicitors work hard and have their clients' best interests in mind.'
- Always try to frame your answers in a positive light.
- Remember your key messages!

Interview format (radio):

- Confirm if the interview will be one-on-one with the presenter. If there are other guests, who are they?
- Ask how long will the interview take?
- Is the interview live or will it be prerecorded?