



Rural Health Care

Marketing & Education Consultancy

www.Trizzie.com

Winning Health Care Techniques and Avoiding Pitfalls in Free Press

Inside Tips, Dos and Don'ts to Reach Patients through the Media

Know newspapers, business publications, regional, ethnic, special interest publications, television, radio, and even online media in and around your practice. Also know what's important to them. Consider all creative ideas for a media hook that will be of interest to the readers and will set you apart from competing ideas.

Free publicity is not the same as easy publicity. Here are key ideas of what to do and what not to do in capturing the media's attention. Be sure to match your story to the right reporter, the right media, and in the right way.

Refine your idea. Be sure you have a compelling, interesting and newsworthy story that will be of value (and interest) to the reporter. Gather and/or create appropriate support materials to help grab the targeted readers attention, highlight the core idea then sell the idea and assist if they run with the idea.

Pitch by phone. To save time and resources it makes sense to pitch your story idea by phone first. However, be prepared to follow-up promptly with materials if they express an interest. After time you will build a relationship and will have them calling on you.

News release format. Be concise, accurate, simple and clear. Use the standard Who, What, Where, When, Why and How format. Include contact name, phone, etc. at the top. Be brief, but interesting, with the most important information right up front and don't forget to tie in your article with your (URL) address at the end of your article.

Capture attention in the heading and first sentence. Just as in your phone pitch it should be in your first sentence in the news release, put the big idea first. Keep it within the heading and the first two sentences.

Flexibility is your friend. At times the idea you pitch comes back from the media with variation or a slightly different angle that you did not intend to have. Look at this as an opportunity to know the reporter's specific needs or interest; you may be able to tie into their idea. Finding this common ground will benefit both you and the media.

Follow-up. Stay in touch by following up. If they're interested, they'll call you. However, in health care many different Medias see your time and experience as valuable and will usually work with you to add credibility to themselves.

Controversy = credibility. The media likes the shove contentious issues to gain attention. Use caution if your idea is controversial or could be controversial as the media may inspire a debate. Some reporters or media outlets have a reputation for finding a negative spin. That said, controversy can often be the crucial element that gets the media to pay attention to you. **Your ideas may lead to great debates within your area of experience.** Remember, to use caution as you do not want to bring negativity to your facility. It is best to hire a consultant before diving into these types of waters. Trizzie can assist you in developing a systematic approach.

Accept rejection. Be prepared for "no." Sometimes even good ideas don't make it. The media doesn't take everything that crosses their desk and it is unpredictable.

Do it right the first time. When it's done right and well, the personal and professional gains are satisfying and the value of a recognized authority will gain the respect of the community, patients and staff and is an effective marketing plan that is rewarding.

Trizzie understands that successful characteristics are developed over time and are an important part of any business. Let Trizzie assist you in evaluating and implementing the right strategies for your current and future success. www.trizzie.com