

Promoting Your Unit - Scouting for News Stories

Public Relations (PR) Checklist



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Contact Info: Boy Scouts of America, Hawk Mountain Council, 5027 Pottsville Pike Reading, PA 19605
610-926-3406

Here's a helpful checklist for working with the media:

1. The Need for News	Newspapers (daily and weekly), radio and TV stations, and online media constantly need good stories. Make sure your story is compelling.
2. Add Interest	Position your story; find the most interesting story angle. Think of a creative, but accurate, headline for your intro.
3. Ask...Who Cares	Ask yourself, "What does this story mean beyond my Scouting unit? What's the impact in the community?" Who will care and why?
4. Make it Simple	Understand the customer's (the media's) needs. They want interesting stories that impact and/or interest a majority of their readers. They may also want interviews and often want information quickly to meet deadlines. Help meet their needs as easily as possible and you'll both win.
5. Who Covers What	Use the media contact list available from council. Use the media in your area. If you have additional reporter contacts that you know cover Scouting, get your story idea to them personally.
6. More than <u>Just</u> the Facts	The best way to tell a story is to put a face on it. Don't just outline the issue or give just the fact alone, share a success story of a real person affected by your story where possible.
7. When to Sell the Story	Consider the timing of your ideas. Mondays and Saturdays may be slower news days (but remember that any breaking news could bump your story from that day's news). Holidays are also slower times for reporters and they may be looking for stories.
8. When to Tell the Story	Check the media contact list from council for weekly publication days. Be sure to use the community calendars to publicize your upcoming events (even meetings).
9. Have a Backgrounder	Prepare a fact sheet on your unit listing your key leaders, chartered partner, programs, number of youth, etc. and have them ready if asked. Council has one that can be used as a sample.
10. Not Everything is Newsworthy	Don't bury the media in unimportant press releases. After a while, they may start to tune them out. Keep it relevant.
11. Who's Best to Cover the Story	Consider the best news medium to tell your story. In general, stick with the papers that covers your immediate area. Don't blanket all the press sources with every release. Again, keep it relevant.
12. Who's the Best Contact	Decide who is the best person in your Scout unit to be the contact person with the media for this story, and make sure they're always accessible.

Remember, we want your story ideas.