

Finding *Your* Media Niche



Saying Your Piece on Talk Radio

Radio talk shows engage their audience through words rather than photographs. Most radio stations are turning to local angles for interviews. So it's important to figure out if your message has a local tie-in or is important to your community.

Because radio doesn't require visual props or photos, it's a great fit for just about any message, so long as you can discuss your topic for a good 30 minutes. Because what you're really doing is having a conversation with the listeners, you need to be well-versed in your topic and able to handle plenty of questions. Your message should be topical too; something people want to talk about at the office water cooler or over coffee.

Radio talk shows, which are found mostly on the AM dial, also vary from morning to night. Morning shows have shorter interviews during this "drive time" to work. Talk show hosts don't have time for a 30 minute interview because morning shows are jam-packed with news, weather and traffic updates.

Midday shows were once known to target women, but that's changed because so many people listen to the radio at work. Now, you'll find many business shows air during typical daytime work hours. After work, you'll find the second "drive time" of the day. Unlike in the morning, listeners are more relaxed. They're on the way home from a long day at work and there's more time to air a 30 minute interview.

During the evening, it's a mixed audience of people listening from home. And don't discount the reach of overnight interviews—while you may think no one is listening, think again! Overnight talk shows (from midnight to 5 a.m.) are very important due to overnight jobs that bring in listeners - 2nd and 3rd shift factory workers, public service employees and many other industries that operate all night long.

Getting Yourself in Print

Print publicity includes magazines and newspapers. While they are two different vehicles, their requirements are similar to television. Your pitch needs to be newsworthy, entertaining, informative, and in some cases, even visual. Newspapers work on tight deadlines, so make sure you don't wait a week after a hot story is released to offer your expertise or an interview on the topic. Magazines, on the other hand, often have a 30 to 60 day lead time. Research the publication you want to contact and make sure they have a reporter who covers your topic or message. It's also helpful to offer quality visuals. For example, restaurants offering a recipe, a gym offering tips to a tighter tummy, even the latest trends in jewelry, can all be accompanied by photographs to support the story.

I've Narrowed the Search, Now What?

Once you know the types of media you want to target, how do you know which TV stations, radio stations, or print publications are in your area? You can always subscribe to some sort of media list, but why would you do this when the internet is full of free media information? Some websites you may find helpful are www.radiocator.com, www.usnpl.com, www.newspapers24.com, www.mondotimes.com and www.newslink.org. You can also use a basic search engine and search for your city + media, for example type in "Tampa Media." You'll find a whole list of media outlets at your fingertips.

Now that you've found a list of media contacts, you're well on your way to creating a Power Publicity campaign to drive business to your company. Now that you understand why it's so important to find your media niche, next up in our series, we'll focus on creating a powerful message. To be successful at publicity, you must create your message specifically for your target audience and then find the best media vehicle to drive your message home. That's why pushing those standard press releases didn't work for you in the first place.

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