

Will it Fly?® Educational Brief

Module: PR Pitch

Section: Overall Formatting

Developing a media pitch is a basic element of public relations, but there are right and wrong ways to go about it. Place yourself in a reporter's shoes when writing a pitch and understand that on an average day, reporters receive upwards of 200 pitches via email. As such, you will need to make sure that yours stands out.

In regard to an e-mailed pitch, do not include attachments or embed graphics or HTML in the pitch. A plain text format is best. It should be fairly short and to-the-point (2-3 paragraphs at most), and designed to pique the media contact/reporter's interest so that he or she will want to contact you for additional information.

You should have background information ready to send (when a reporter contacts you), but you do not need to include ALL the information on the product or announcement in the media pitch. Shorter is better.

Address a reporter with whom you do not have a relationship and when circumstances require more formality, by using a title, such as "Dear Mr./Ms. XX." For a less formal context, even if you have not had prior contact with the reporter, it is acceptable to address the reporter with "Hi [First Name]." Make sure to include your full name, as well as your contact information (best two methods) in the pitch.

If you will be traveling when you send the pitch, make sure to include a cell phone number, or some way that the reporter can get in touch with you. Nothing is more frustrating than to miss a story opportunity because the reporter was on deadline, and you couldn't be reached because you were out of the office. It is perfectly OK for you to send the pitch, but do include both your and another contact's information so that the reporter can reach at least one of you if he/she is on deadline.

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Spell-check and proof your pitch. It is best to draft the pitch, look it over, then walk away from it for a while. Come back to it later and proof it again before sending it out. Also, remember that a second pair of eyes is useful in reviewing your media pitch.
