

Public Relations



Speaking to the Press

Publitek Ltd

18 Brock Street, Bath BA1 2LW, UK

Tel: **+44 (0) 1225 470000**



Speaking to the Press

Speaking to the press can be a daunting experience. Horror stories abound of the journalist grilling the interviewee, 'misquoting' answers, and generally trying to create a different story to the one that you wanted to portray. These examples generally originate from interviews with the tabloid and national press, especially when the company is perceived to have behaved inappropriately.

While interviews with journalists and editors from the trade press are generally more pleasant, that doesn't mean that you should be any less prepared than you would be for a meeting with national or broadcast press. Trade journalists are typically busy people and what they want is a good story that they know their readers will want to read. If you can give them that story, there is a good chance that you will be able to generate some good coverage for your company based upon your conversation. If you can't - or if you are perceived to have wasted their time - at best you will get no coverage and at worst you could damage an important editorial relationship.

While you may be nervous about being interviewed, the journalist may be nervous too!

I still remember the first time I interviewed the head of one of the leading players in the industry the magazine I edited covered. I was so nervous and I knew that if I did a good job it might lead to interviews with leading executives from other industry leaders. I was genuinely shocked when he showed interest in my comfort and wellbeing.

That first interview catapulted the relationship to another level and enabled me to get exclusive interviews and generated lots of press for the company in question - a win for all involved.

But how can you ensure that your interviews go just as well?

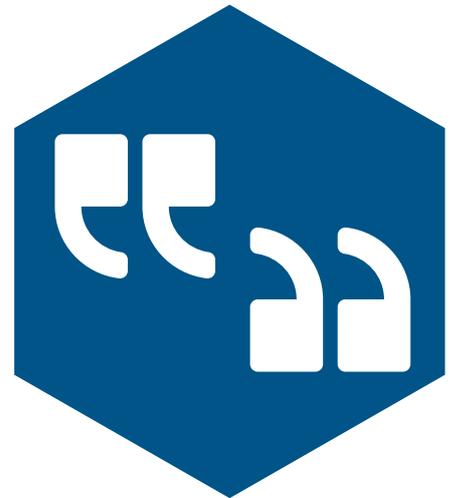
Do

- Do make an effort to understand a publication's audience and what the editor is likely to want from the interview.
- Do respect the editor's time. Ensure you prepare your material so that you can deliver your message in a concise and coherent way.
- Do provide copies of any presentations, press releases, images and other relevant materials on a USB drive or memory stick.
- Do be honest; if you aren't 100 per cent sure of something, or if you don't know the exact answer, don't make something up. Apologise, make a note of the question and promise to get back to him later. But make sure you do get back to them
- Do be extremely careful when discussing your competition. Denigrating the competition doesn't make a story for you - most journalists will go back to the other company and may get a better story from them!
- Do treat the journalist as a human being - if meeting face-to-face ensure they are comfortable and offer refreshments.



Don't

- Don't expect an editor to know everything about your company. If they are not familiar with the company and technology, use the opportunity to educate them; but don't make them sit through the unabridged company presentation!
- Don't say 'No comment'. This response is reserved for high-level politicians, and is often taken negatively (as are high-level politicians!)
- Don't say 'off the record' and then proceed to speak. If you don't want to see something in print, don't say it.
- Don't cite a competitor by name unless you have hard facts at hand to back you up.
- Don't assume the editor will write about you or your organisation. Don't say, 'When you write this story, you may want to emphasise...' Only the editor can decide the outcome of the interview.
- Don't attempt to influence the reporting with a promise of advertising. If the editor asks about advertising, refer him/her to your advertising department.





Need help with Speaking to the Press?

To find out, contact:

Bob Jones
CEO

bob.jones@publitek.com
Europe: **+44 1225 470000**
US: **+1 408 786 5151**

Publitek is the world's leading content marketing and technology PR agency for the B2B electronics industry. By complementing our in-house capabilities with proven partners, we offer a multi-lingual, global capability encompassing both corporate and technical communications.

Publitek Ltd,
18 Brock Street,
Bath, BA1 2LW
Tel: **+44 (0) 1225 470000**

www.publitek.com

