

# Public Relations



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## What Editors Want From a Press Pack

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# What Editors Want From a Press Pack



For a journalist or editor attending a tradeshow, press packs are both a boon and a burden. While they do serve as great memory aids, after collecting two or three of them they quickly become a burden on the poor journalist that has scheduled interviews and meetings with company executives all over the exhibition centre.

When I used to work on the other side of the great media divide, I would end up throwing away the pretty packaging that housed the paper press releases and would keep only the press releases and perhaps the backgrounder – in part because of luggage weight restrictions. I know I was not alone in being forced to be so ruthless.

Journalists and editors took a collective sigh of relief when companies started giving them the option of taking away all the press materials on a CD or USB stick.

But how can you improve the chances that your press release will be among those to make it into the editorial pages? And perhaps more importantly, how you make the most of this important opportunity to create a relationship between your brand and the editor?

In my experience, the most important things to do are to ensure the story that you are telling the media is relevant, timely and coherent.

Editor's visiting a show will be expecting news that is relevant to the show, if the news is off-target; it is unlikely to get published. The news also needs to be recent; in today's world of instant messaging and social networks the saying that 'old news is no news' is now more poignant than ever.

The stories also have to be coherent and focused – while your organization might be in the fortunate position to be making several announcements at once, it is crucial that you can find the thread that ties them all together. If you are unable to find that thread the busy editor is likely to walk away slightly confused and unable to see how to position your message to their readers. That can lead to your promotional efforts being diluted and reduce your chances that your stories will get the coverage you desire.

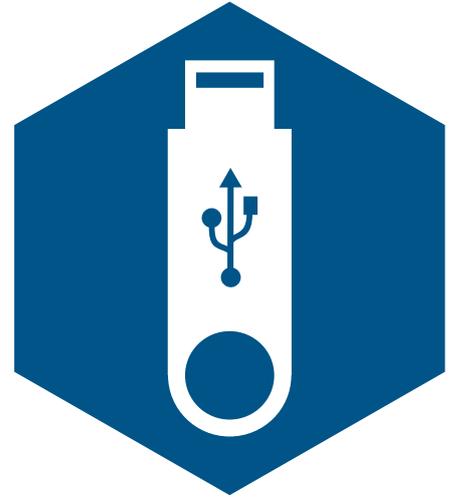
While having a well-told story that resonates with the editors and their audiences does help build a relationship between your brand and the editors, finding novel ways to ensure they keep seeing your brand in a favourable light day after day helps them to remember that message.

To this day, I am still using branded high-capacity USB sticks, laser pointers and travel document holders. Every time I use them, those items still remind me of those organizations and the relationships I built with their PR firms and the internal media relations people – many of whom I still have great relationships with.

The question now becomes, can you afford not to invest in such an important brand building exercise?

## Top Tips

- If you don't have any news, don't waste the time of busy editors by providing a press pack.
- Old news is no news; if the announcement is more than 3 months old, its no longer newsworthy.
- If you have got news, ask your PR agency to arrange press meetings on your stand so you can speak to them directly – or even organise a press conference during the show.
- Don't include more than 3 press releases – it will only dilute your efforts and confuse editors.
- If you do have multiple announcements make sure you find the story that holds them together as this could help an editor develop a larger article that covers more of the news.
- Make press packs available in a variety of formats, on paper, on USB and on the web – let the Editor choose how they want to consume your announcement.
- If providing releases on paper don't hide the news away inside a pretty folder – why make it harder for an editor to find out what is new?
- Provide Editors with unusual and branded USBs, high capacity, small size and fun designs are all likely to keep the press engaging with your brand.
- If providing USBs, try to provide them in a case that tells them what's on the USB drive so they remember to look.
- If hosting the press packs on the web, provide business cards with the url and a QR code.
- Provide other useful giveaways, the best I ever received was a stylish (and subtly branded) leather document wallet for passports and travel money etc. – its been with me every time I've flown ever since and every time I fly, I engage with the brand.





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## Need help with your **Press Pack?**

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