

# Fruitful PR

PR is five times more effective, on a space comparison basis, than advertising.

When you stop to think about it, this isn't really that surprising, is it? After all, do you buy a newspaper or magazine just to look at the adverts? Any form of advertising is clearly produced by a particular organisation. They have paid to get their message across. The reader knows that they are being 'sold to'. They will therefore put the requisite 'filters' in place.

On the other hand, press editorial has presumably been independently researched and written by journalists. Hasn't it?

The answer is that, by and large, it has. This is especially the case in the national press. However, it is quite common to see articles in the trade and professional press which have been written and contributed by companies. And, the new products and people sections are usually 90%+ the results of the efforts of the PR industry. Beyond this, you might be quite surprised just what an influence companies, charities, the government, special interest groups and others have on the 'independent' media.

## News value

Whenever a journalist reads your PR material, they will be wondering whether their readers / listeners / viewers are going to be interested in this story. This is the acid test of PR success. If you send out boring, self-centred copy with zero news value, it will never appear in the media. So whatever you communicate to the media must be relevant and interesting to their audiences.

## Press Releases

Press releases are the staple diet of many PR professionals. Here are the vital elements of a great press release:

Press release headlines should be informative. In other words - they should tell the recipient what this release is all about.

Ensure that the opening sentence and the first paragraph tells the reader what the story is about (i.e. don't leave them gasping until page three - because they won't bother to read that far).

Use short words, sentences and paragraphs.

One or two page press releases are fine

Don't forget to add a standard 'boiler plate' paragraph, right at the end of the press release. This gives a thumbnail sketch of your organisation. Sometimes, this is marked 'For Editors information'. It'll tell them what you do; when you were founded; how big you are (turnover, number of staff); where you operate; recent developments, and anything else of this nature that you feel is relevant. You can then use this paragraph at the end of each of your press releases.

Visit [www.mediauk.com](http://www.mediauk.com) for journalist's contact details and make sure you spell their name correctly – no need for a black mark before you even start.

