Scouts Victoria

Generating Media Coverage

Generating media coverage is a great way to promote Scouting, whether it's to parents or other parts of the community. Scouting is about adventure for everyone and at every level. This message runs through all our media work and is what we call our 'brand'.

Underpinning the idea of adventure is that Scouting is about fun, friendship, trust, being confident and inclusive.

What are the facts?

All good media work begins with a media release.

When starting out writing your press release make sure you answer the following questions.

- Who
- What
- When
- Where
- Why

Who was there? What happened? When it happened, Where it happened, and Why the event occurred.

Make sure you summarise the whole story in the first paragraph of the release. A journalist should be able to grasp the basic details of what went on by reading this paragraph. The remainder of the release is a detailed expansion of the facts.

Key Messages

Key messages are essential tools in all communications work. To be effective as a communicator you need to identify the key messages that you want to deliver and use them as a way of structuring your writing.

Every piece of communication should have a key message. Is it obvious? Do you know what it is? If a story your writing doesn't have a key message and demonstrate Scouting as a modern, growing, adventure based organisation why are you writing it?

All of your stories should provide an opportunity to deliver Scouting's key messages. These messages can be demonstrated in every part of your story from the who, what, when, where, why to the images and quotes. All of the information that you include should support your messages.

What quote should I use?

Make sure you get a quote from a young person. The quote should reflect their excitement at being a part of the event and a positive experience they have gained. This could be about trying new activities for the first time, building friendships or simply enjoying an adventure. Quotes are also useful from Leaders and Parents.

What picture should I use?

When taking the picture to go with your press release, try to be as creative as possible. Do not go for the obvious photo of the kids in a group stood still while looking at the camera. Try and get action and interaction.

Take photos throughout the activity or event and try to make sure that the Scout brand is in the shot (scarf, logo, signage etc) Unless competent it is best to keep away from night photos as these rarely look good in a newspaper.

The photo has got to capture the elements of:

- Fun (smile, laughter etc)
- Challenge (kids participating in an activity - climbing, archery etc)
- Adventure (Kids doing an activity which has an element of controlled risk in it flying fox, canoeing etc)

Scouts Victoria

Generating Media Coverage

Submitting your Media Release

- Identify the appropriate local media outlets: Identify media that is most relevant to your story. Look for media outlets that cover topics related to Scouting, youth achievements, and outdoor adventures.
- Find the appropriate contact: Identify the appropriate contact person at the media outlet, such as the editor or journalist who covers the relevant beat. You can usually find contact information on the media outlet's website or through a quick phone call.
- Write a brief email: Write a brief email introducing yourself and the media release, and attach the media release as a PDF. Make sure to include the subject line and a short summary of the story in the email.
- Follow up: Follow up with the contact person a few days after sending the email to check if they have any questions or are interested in covering the story.
- Respect their time: Remember that journalists and editors receive many pitches and press releases every day, so be respectful of their time and only send relevant and newsworthy information.
- Keep a record: Keep a record of the media outlets and contacts you have reached out to, and any responses you receive. This can help you in future outreach efforts.

Tips

- Start with a strong headline: Your headline should grab the reader's attention and give them a reason to keep reading. It should be clear, concise, and include the most important information.
- Keep it short and simple: Your media release should be no more than one page long. Use simple language and avoid jargon or technical terms that may confuse your audience.
- Focus on the news: Your media release should focus on something newsworthy, such as an upcoming event, a new program or initiative, or an achievement. Make sure you highlight the most important information upfront.
- Include quotes: Including quotes from Leaders or youth can help add credibility and interest to your media release and make it more interesting to read.
- Provide contact information: Make sure you include contact information for someone who can answer questions or provide additional information about your event or program.
- Use multimedia: Including photos or videos can help make your press release more engaging and shareable.
- Follow up: After you've sent out your press release, follow up with reporters to see if they are interested in covering your event or program.

By following these tips, you can write effective media releases that will help promote your Scout Group.