

## Working with the media

Print media coverage offers a fantastic promotion of your business. Printed articles (editorial) is seen by readers as more objective and credible than advertising and it can communicate much more information than many other forms of advertising or promotion.

The downsides are that you have little control over what is written, and it can be difficult to get editorial coverage. For these reasons it is important to have a well developed media strategy and know how to deal with media.

As your business develops, consider what media angles you have. An angle might be a quirky story, a new feature, or an interesting personality involved about a good story can easily be written.

Start by compiling a list of media channels. If you are targeting the local and domestic market, find out about the media people in your target regions. Venture Taranaki can assist you in this area. There are also media guides at public libraries, and the internet can provide useful information.

Many of New Zealand's daily and weekend newspapers and magazines carry travel pages that are ideal to promote your product and services in. It can also be worthwhile to work with a collection of likeminded businesses to reduce cost or do something on a grander scale such as packaging a collection of stories that would make a media visit more worthwhile.

If you have an international focus for your product or service then it is recommended that you work with Venture Taranaki, who in turn work with international media directly and through the Tourism New Zealand International Media Programme (IMP).

### Press releases

The first step in keeping media aware of your business is the press release. Releases must be interesting,

accurate, and concise, as editors receive hundreds of releases a day, all competing for the same space.

The general rule for a media release is to have an eye-catching headline and your most important information in the first paragraph. If the headline and first paragraph don't grab the journalist, they are unlikely to read on.

Subsequent paragraphs should include full information and quotes. At the end of your press release ensure you list your key contact details - name, position, cell-phone, and email address.

Generally your press release should be no longer than one side of an A4 page and the font size at least 12 point.

Once sent you should follow up by phone to check it has been received. It also is an opportunity to gauge their interest.

Tips for working with the media:

- Have a media kit ready, which includes an A4 sheet on facts and figures, your press release, other story angles, and a CD of relevant print-resolution images and your business card.
- When being interviewed, prepare yourself with background information: the facts, the key points you want to make, and the media's audience. In a few cases the media will supply you with a list of questions they would like you to answer, but you still need to be fully aware of the situation and the facts.
- Identify others who can add value to the story.
- Keep it simple and avoid jargon and acronyms.
- Always convey your passion and enthusiasm for your business. Smile.