



NAIL YOUR PITCH

There are some very big dos, and lots of don'ts, when it comes to pitching the media. Use this checklist to nail your pitch and get a producer's attention.

Pitch Dos

- **DO get my name and station right in an email.** You'd be surprised how often this mistake is made. Not only does it show carelessness but it also shows you're pitching everyone under the sun the same angle. If you send me a pitch that would be perfect for "NBC" and I work at "ABC" I know you're pitching the same segment to everyone. That does not make a producer feel special.
- **DO include a short bio, a pic and a video clip.** If you are pitching TV you MUST include a clip of you talking on camera. Even if you haven't done any television before you should include a YouTube clip or whatever you have to show you can speak intelligently about your expertise.
- **DO make sure the entire email takes about 30 seconds to "skim and get."** That means if I only have time to scan over the email quickly — I can understand what you're getting at in a glance. That may be how much time your email gets - grab the producer's attention quickly.
- **DO include a timely, unique angle.** Know what's going on in the news and what the outlet has already covered. Take a look at their website or watch their show. Know who you're pitching.
- **DO remember that TV, and web, too, are visual.** So your pitch should include what visuals you'll provide. What will be looking at? How will you demonstrate?
- **DO follow up the right way.** It's OK to reach back out to a producer via email after you've sent a pitch. But be sure to include more than "what did you think of my pitch?" That is just giving the producer more work. Instead make sure to summarize what you're pitch was about, who you are and why the producer should care in your follow-up note.

Pitch Don'ts

- **DON'T be too over-the-top and not be able to deliver.** By that we mean don't try to take an angle to the extremes. Make sure there's substance to your pitch and not just a flashy headline.
- **DON'T use subject lines that are "Click bait."** That means, don't say something is revolutionary if it isn't, or a breakthrough if it isn't. And be careful when saying something is a miracle unless it really is. The subject line should not be too vague — like "Can I pitch you?" "Here's an idea for you" or "Expert Available" — those will get lost. Be specific.
- **DON'T use all caps or emojis.** Anything that looks like spam will get deleted.
- **DON'T send attachments.** The big media stations have crazy filters on all their emails to protect employees from viruses. They may never get your pitch if there are lots of attachments. Put all the relevant info in the body of the email. If there are relevant web pages to share, link to those — just make sure that when the producer lands on that page, she knows what she's looking at and why.
- **DON'T pitch the exact same angle that you pitched to someone else.** For example — don't tell me you just did this segment last week with my competitor. It **WON'T** make me book you. It **WILL** make me want to delete your email.
- **DON'T bother with a press release.** The press release is basically dead. It was initially intended to break news. Unless you're a celebrity, you don't need a press release. It's unnecessary. But if you have one, use it as background information. Don't make it the focus of your pitch.