Florida District
Pilot International

HOW TO GET YOUR ARTICLE PUBLISHED

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HOW TO GET YOUR ARTICLE PUBLISHED

- Make a Phone Call
- Know Whom to Call
- News Releases
- Self-Submit
- Sponsorships
- Advertising
- Another Point
- Most Newspapers have certain sections
  - *Features*
  - *Calendars*
  - *News*
  - *Opinions*

GETTING TO KNOW THE MEDIA

- Knowing whom to call and talking with that person increases the likelihood of your event being published. Newspapers try to cover everything, but they get HUNDREDS of news releases each week, so it pays to make a phone call to the right person.
- It doesn't take long for email to accumulate in an editors mailbox. To ensure your news item doesn't fall through the cracks, it's always a good idea to follow up with a phone call, even if it's just a voice message. It may help trigger an editor's memory.
- When you call you should say something like: "Hi, this is Betsy Smith from the Junior League of Tallahassee. I just sent you a news release about our upcoming Whale of a Sale, which is a huge annual community fundraiser that many of your readers will want to know about. I just wanted to make sure you received it, and I wanted to see if there was any more information I could provide."
- Don't pressure the person, but politely remind them of your event and offer to answer any questions the editor might have. Leave a cell phone number so he or she can contact you if they have questions.

KNOW WHOM TO CALL

- Before you submit a news release, you need to know something about the organization to which you are submitting.
- Which section of the newspaper would be the best place to publish your information? Contact the editor of that section.
- Think about your audience – the people you're trying to reach with your message. Which section of the newspaper or which part of the website are they most likely to read?
- Is it a general audience, or is it a targeted audience, or is it both?

NEWS RELEASES

- Keep them short, concise and to the point. Make sure you answer the basic questions: who, what, where, when, why and how.
- Don't write the news release in a way that would make someone have to wade through many paragraphs to get your main message.
- Always put a contact name and contact information in a prominent spot on the news release.
- Make sure this person can be contacted easily at any time (cell phone is the best number).

SELF SUBMIT

- Some newspapers have what is called “reader-submitted” sections. In Tallahassee, it is in the section called The Chronicle – a small newspaper insert about community events and news.
- Everything published in The Chronicle is written by a non-staffer. All content is produced by the community.
- The newspaper staff edits and compiles it into The Chronicle.
- A newspaper will never be able to staff every newsworthy event in its community, so this is a great alternative.
- If a news editor says, “I’m sorry. We can’t make it to your event today.” Ask if you can take your own photos and write a story to submit
- The Chronicle is free, you can’t beat it for getting the word out about your event or organization.
- Check with your newspaper editor about self submit articles. Find out where you send them and how they want them submitted.

SPONSORSHIPS

- A local paper may sponsor dozens of events each year – everything from the annual NAACP banquet to nonprofit golf tournaments
- Most other news organizations do this as well
- Find out who the community relations coordinator is at the media organization and talk to them to find out how they do sponsorships

ADVERTISING

- The local Tallahassee newspaper, The Democrat, gives discounts to nonprofits
- Check with other news organization to see if they do, too
- An ad representative can present a variety of print and online options that are affordable

ANOTHER POINT

- If you are not on social media, you're missing a big opportunity, especially if you want a younger audience
- However, today all ages of people use Facebook, Twitter, and other social media as a means of giving and receiving information

NEWSPAPER SECTIONS

- ***Features*** – includes things like families, cooking, health, dining, the arts and music. Most newspapers have a special section, to highlight things to do in your town and entertainment
- ***Calendars*** – most news organizations have calendars of events. This is normally an online form where you can manually submit items to the calendar
- ***News*** – newspaper people coordinate all news in print (mainly the A section and Local section of a newspaper). Includes government, schools, crime and courts, higher education, nonprofits, etc.
- ***Opinion*** – if you're trying to draw attention to a community issue, submitting a letter to the editor or guest column are options. Other good ideas would be to send a letter to the editor or a guest column thanking the community for its support when you have successful fundraisers or events

Information provided by Rebeccah Cantley, Managing Editor, Tallahassee Democrat