

Beyond PR 101: 3 Truly Unique Pitching Tips

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If PR professionals understand what it means to re-purpose content, it might be because there's a new "pitching tips" blog post or article at least every week.

Many of these cover the basics, for example: do your research, know the reporter's audience, and pitch a story, not a product. This is all sage advice, but it's the minimum barrier to entry in effective media relations, and yet it gets recycled and re-polished on a continual basis.

There's probably a good reason for that. The volume of bad pitches has long been out of control, and though I contend SEOs account for much of this, there seems to be a genuine need for a continual stream of PR 101 level content.

That aside every now and again there are some tactical tips that are truly unique. While I've curated three articles below and pulled out one salient point from each, I encourage you to read each piece in its entirety.

1) Building Relationships with Content

I really like that Nadya Khoja emphasizes relationships rather than pitching in her [piece](#) *How to Build Relationships With Visual Content Marketing*.

You can absolutely build relationships with content, and content marketing absolutely plays a role in media relations. But Nadya takes this a step further by tackling pitching rejection too:

“You find yourself getting rejected by influencers you reach out to, with little or no improvement.”

“This need for original visual content is the perfect opportunity for you to build relationships with influencers and as a result, boost backlinks. And that will in turn increase your SEO rankings, and eventually lead to an increase in organic traffic. Meaning an increase in revenue, as well.

And the way you can build those connections and backlinks are with infographics. By creating original infographics for influencers, there is massive potential for higher rankings and better relationships.”

I absolutely love this idea; it’s brilliant influencer marketing. It’s mutually beneficial. Brands that truly do their research, that set out to find influencers with values that align, will find lots success in this tactic.

2) It’s Not What You Know...

When PR people talk about “relationships” with journalists, I always get uncomfortable. Save for perhaps a handful, relationship isn’t the right word and yet it winds up in sales presentations and worse, clients buy it.

A good story is a good story, no matter who pitches it – full stop. That’s also what I take from Michelle Garrett in her piece – *Media Relations is Not about the Pitch* – it’s about WHO You Pitch:

“Can you send the same pitch to more than one reporter? Sure, but you need to customize it for each reporter. This is why sending the same canned pitch out to hundreds of reporters

isn't a good idea. They can smell this type of tactic a mile away. The chance of them reading a pitch like this is slim. And really, it could be considered spamming them."

Customization and personalization – those are recurring trends in marketing; in PR these are essential.

3) The Best Pitch is no Pitch

In pitching, I like to aim for the unconventional:

- *When press releases go through a hack job of 10 corporate revisions by committee, this usually means the first draft is a solid pitch.*
- *When everyone else on the team says short pitches work best, try a long one, but make sure it's good.*
- *Don't follow up on a pitch, it didn't work; write a new pitch!*

And that's sort of what I mean when I said the best pitch is no pitch, as Zoe Blogg of ICS Digital captured in her round-up piece titled, *Pitching Tips for PR Professionals*.

"Reporters are people too, so instead of pitching, have a conversation. Conversations build relationships."

Do you have a unique insight about an article you read? An angle that wasn't covered? Send the reporter an email with meaningful insight – and with zero expectations. You'll be surprised what happens when you don't pitch.

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