

# Breaking Through with the Tried and True



*Gregg Castano, Founder, Chief Executive Officer, [News Direct Corp.](#)*

Journalists are deluged with pitches and content from a range of sources – emails, phone calls, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other channels. And that is under normal circumstances. Now, amid the all-encompassing coronavirus pandemic, the volume of content coming at journalists has increased exponentially and shows no signs of abating.

To break through the clutter, communications pros need to rethink their playbook. The COVID-19 pandemic means attention spans will continue to shrink and audience preferences for short forms of multi-sensory content will hasten and intensify. That means watching more videos on Twitter and Instagram and consuming more podcasts / infographics / short articles via Wall Street Journal, New York Times, and BBC news apps.

Keeping that in mind, below are tried and true maxims for [PR](#) pros.

**The shortest distance between two points is a straight line.**

Rather than trying to cook up all manner of creative approaches to catch a journalist's attention, just go straight

to what is most important to them – giving their audience what it wants. Lean into that. Do not rely on lengthy copy. Think of ways to tell stories with compelling infographics; short videos that can be easily shared; pithy gifs; and arresting visuals like the proverbial “flatten the curve” graph indelibly inked in our collective consciousnesses.

**Brevity is best.** This is especially true of video. Get to the point quickly, because not only does the audience have an ever-shrinking attention span, but the sheer volume of content that journalists must sift through places enormous limits on their time. The odds of getting coverage move in inverse proportion to the length of your video.

**Be unique!** Those who report news do not want to cover the same things, in the same way, as their peers. They want content that stands out from the ordinary. So even if your topic is not unique, your perspective, your delivery and your conclusions can be. This will help your content rise to the top.

Every cliché is borne of commonly accepted truth. But the trick for PR pros is to act and think like a journalist to avert the much feared “do not send” list. So why not surprise them by being helpful to their mission rather than hopeful that they will select your story from out of the maelstrom. Achieve success by providing them with engaging, informative, multi-sensory content that tells atypical stories in digestible bites. Like they say, you get more flies with honey than...

---

**About the Author:** [News Direct](#) was founded by Gregg Castano, a veteran of the newswire industry.



*Gregg spent 32 years at Business Wire, capped by nearly 8 years as President, where he was integral in growing the company from under \$20 million in revenue to more than \$160 million. With an insider's understanding of the industry, and expertise in strategic planning and management, Gregg leveraged his unique perspective and insight to create the disruption he believed was long overdue – News Direct.*