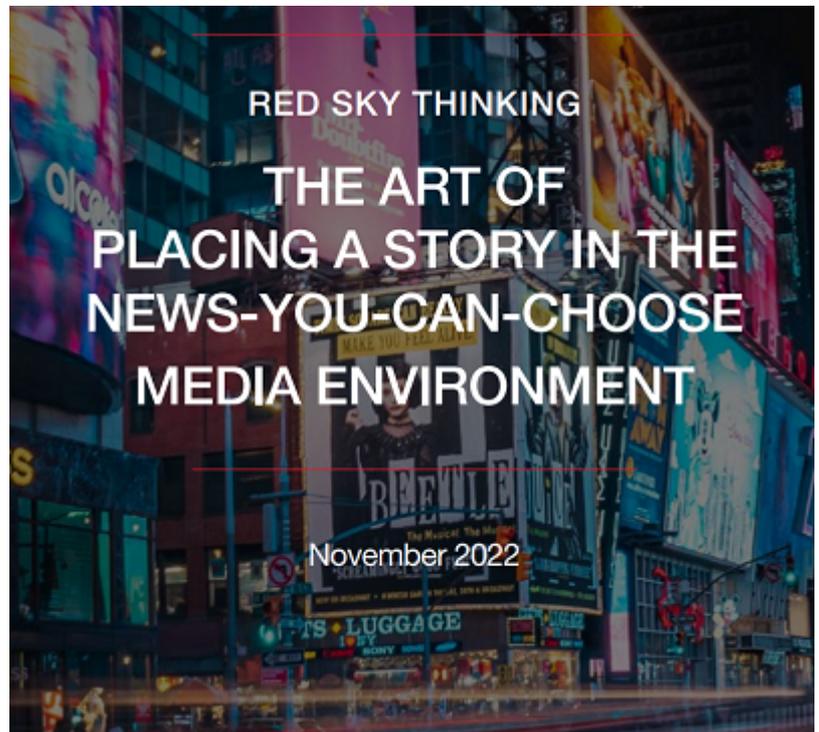


How Brands Can Place a Story in The News-You-Can-Choose Media Environment

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What does it take for a brand to place a story that breaks through to media and intended audiences in the crowded post-pandemic media landscape? Red Havas answers this question with our latest white paper, citing interviews with our own earned media experts as well as external consultants and journalists from around the world.

Our research uncovered three major trends shaping the new channels, choices and definitions of journalism:

- **The avalanche of content that people must filter through:** Each new day brings us 7.5 million additional blogs and articles and 500 million tweets. Over on Instagram, 500 million accounts use Stories daily. The sheer volume of content means we have to make choices about what to view, read, listen to or click on – or

else we'll get buried.

- **Consumers' deepening distrust and apathy toward the news media:** Havas Group's proprietary Meaningful Brands study from 2021 finds that less than half (47%) of brands are seen as trustworthy. At the same time, news consumers are also more distrustful and apathetic toward the media. Some are opting out of news altogether. Thomson Reuters' "Digital News Report" shows interest in news has fallen sharply across countries, from 63% in 2017 to 51% in 2022.
- **The changing business of news:** Since 2008, newsroom employment in the U.S. has dropped by 26%. Having had to become generalists to cover multiple beats in their shrinking or nonexistent newsrooms, today's remaining journalists are stretched thin, burned out from covering COVID-19 and under extreme time constraints. Per Pew, 72% of journalists in 2022 use a negative word like "struggling" or "chaos" to describe the news industry, even though most of them describe still being passionate about their work.

This is now a news-you-can-choose environment

We don't have, nor do we want, a one-size-fits-all news source anymore. Instead, the mix of news people choose to consume is as unique as they are. When it comes to placing meaningful news stories today, brands face sizeable but not insurmountable obstacles.

Some editors and journalists receive thousands of emails a day. Under tremendous deadline pressure in this 24/7/365 news cycle, they're short on time and prefer to digest information in a specific way. To earn a reply from an editor or reporter working within this paradigm, a brand's story needs to be deftly told, personally and culturally relevant, and deliver a

value add to readers.

Three tactics in particular have helped us be successful in getting our clients' stories

to break through:

- **Lead with your brand's impact, not your marketing information**

Your brand's impact on people should be at the heart of every story you tell. Not the product you're trying to sell, company you want to raise awareness of, or message you want to land. It's about the human beings your company has impacted. Who are they, and what's been the benefit to them?

Red Havas has made a case for person-to-person (P2P) communications, as opposed to the more traditional stay-in-your-lane practices of business-to-business (B2B) or business-to-consumer (B2C) communications.

- **Personalize and contextualize every pitch and interaction with media**

There has to be a good reason why a journalist would talk to your company spokesperson over any others. Can you supply facts that show that you're the best, first, latest or most unique? Are you finding out something that counters a common trend? Even better.

To succeed, your brand needs to showcase it has real credentials. Working with a PR firm that knows how to spark a connection with the right journalist and what they're pitching on your behalf – ensuring it is both personally relevant to that media contact and culturally relevant to what's going on in the news cycle – can put your brand in position to stand out.

- **Get to the point with pithy pitches and press releases.**

We must contend with shorter attention spans. This shows up both in how consumers take in content and how the media interacts with our pitches. Successful pitches consider what each journalist likes to cover, how they like to receive information and how they like to be spoken to.

For insights about how communications professionals and brand marketers can make journalists' jobs easier for them and much more, download the News-You-Can-Choose white paper.

About the Authors:



Linda Descano: Linda is an executive vice president of Red Havas in New York, specializing in corporate communications and executive visibility across brands and organizations at growth stages and industry verticals. Prior to joining Red Havas in 2015, Linda was managing director and global head of content marketing and social media at Citi; other roles during her tenure at Citi included president and CEO of Women & Co., the award-winning financial lifestyle community for women, and director and portfolio manager of the Citi Social Awareness Investment program. Named PR Professional of the Year by Bulldog (2022) and PR News (2018), Linda brings a unique blend of storytelling experience, scientific background, and investment acumen, complemented by work in B2B, B2C and B2B2C, giving her an uncanny ability to help clients create authentic conversations and campaigns.



Ellen Mallernee Barnes: For the past decade, Ellen has served as the voice behind the majority of Red Havas' agency communications. Without a doubt, she is the Redster most likely to be asked to make something "sound sexy" or to offer grammatical peace of mind to a colleague or client.