

**Public Relations Tips for Small Businesses**

Small businesses and nonprofit or arts organizations often need to make the most of their marketing budgets. Public relations is a way to effectively reach audiences with targeted messaging to influence awareness and behaviors. The only cost for typical public relations work is time and effort.

Below is a selection of recommended PR tactics organizations can use to spread their messaging:

**Event Calendars**

News publications often have event calendars online and in print, which promote local events. Be sure to submit your event(s) to these calendars. First, research online for popular event calendar in the area, such as HistoricCoastCulture.com, VisitStAugustine.com, and JaxEvents.com. Then, research how local newspapers prefer to have events submitted. Some may prefer submission via an online form, while others may ask for events to be submitted in an email.

Include:

* Event name
* Date, time, location
* Phone number or website for more information
* Short paragraph (50 – 100 words) about the event that will entice the reader

**Press Releases**

The most popular PR tactic today is still the old-fashioned press release. Use a template, found on [www.historiccoastculture.com/toolkit](http://www.historiccoastculture.com/toolkit) to help you craft the release in an easy-to-use format.

**Tell the story visually.** Journalists are more likely to write or broadcast a story that is visually appealing. When crafting your message, let the journalist know what audiences might see and experience at the event.

* Images - Journalists are not likely to publish a story if an image is not available. Images from an iPhone 5, 6 or 7 are suitable if a camera is not available. Images pulled from Facebook are typically not high-resolution.

**Make the story relevant.** Why is the information you are telling relevant to the publication’s audience?

* Timeliness - Does the event relate to a popular season or holiday being written about?
* Impact - For community newspapers, the answer can often be found by answering two questions: 1) How will this event/initiative impact the community at large and make a difference in people’s lives? 2) Why are the people involved in this event/initiative passionate about it?

**Know the deadlines.** Newspapers often publish daily, but other publications only publish weekly or monthly. Be sure to submit your information before the publication’s deadline. For example, monthly publications typically begin creating content 1-2 months in advance.