



Compiling a media list

An accurate, current media list is essential to anyone who has a media relations role. There are various ways of compiling one that can be done at different levels of cost. This guide is not exhaustive - rather, it is intended as a starting point.

A DIY media list

This is the cheapest option, the only cost being your time in doing research online and on the telephone. It can be a bit of a slog but it's well worth it, especially since most people don't need the depth of contacts and level of detail provided by subscription services such as Mediadisk.

Compiling a media list doesn't mean you need to have the details of every journalist, editor or producer in the country - most people will only need a brief list, especially if you are working at a regional level. Pick those publications and television and radio stations that reach your audiences and meet the communications objectives of your campaign.

Useful websites include:

Newspapers

www.newspapersoc.org.uk/website/index.htm

Details of most newspaper titles in Britain.

Radio stations

www.bbc.co.uk

Links to all BBC radio stations throughout Britain.

www.radio-now.co.uk

Links to websites of all radio stations throughout Britain.

Television stations

www.itc.org.uk

Details of all television stations throughout the UK.

All media

www.mediauk.com

Directory of television, radio stations, and newspapers throughout the UK.

Once you have the general contact details:

- Phone the newsdesk at each organisation to get the names, job titles, phone, fax and email of the people you want to contact. These could be people in positions such as news editor or features editor, which most outlets will have.
- Find out which journalists might specialise in your area, e.g. a women's editor or environment correspondent.
- Introduce yourself to these key contacts with a brief phone call. Find out the best time to send each person information, the best time to call, and whether they want information by post, fax or email.

- Store the information you gather on each contact along with details of when you spoke to them last. Make it easy to update when people move on and new contacts replace them.

Books

Guardian Media Guide, available from bookshops, priced £15.00.
Details of all media in the UK.

Other resources

You can buy various software packages that enable you to search for and build lists of media contacts on very specific criteria for the entire UK media. They provide in-depth information, including telephone, fax, email, and areas of interest for each contact.

PIMS (pims.co.uk) produces the following packages:
PR Organiser, £2500, daily online updates.
P180, £800, quarterly updates.

Waymaker (waymaker.co.uk) produces Mediadisk, £2500, daily online updates.