

How to Pitch and Engage the Media on Social Media

When you want to let your community know about your unit, district or area events and accomplishments, your local media outlets—newspapers, radio stations and TV stations—can help you get the word out. Social media is one of the best tools for communicating directly with media outlets and reporters. Here are a few tips to get you started:

Get to know local media. Follow your local newspaper, radio or TV station on Twitter or Facebook and get to know their content, personalities and posting habits. Also follow individual news anchors, radio hosts, reporters or editors on Twitter and get to know what topics they cover.

For example, with a newspaper like the Penticton Herald, below, you want to follow both the newspaper (left) and one or two of its reporters, like Joe Fries (right).



Start developing a relationship: retweet their content or reply if they ask a question.

Target your pitch. When you pitch, try to target a reporter who has covered similar stories in the past. If you want someone to write about your tree planting event, for instance, you will want to pitch a reporter who writes about environmental issues or community events. Smaller media outlets may have only a handful of reporters who cover a wide range of topics. At larger

publications, reporters may specialize in subject areas such as city hall, the environment, community events, lifestyle, sports, or business.

Pitch on Twitter. Have an event coming up and you'd like to invite a particular reporter or media outlet? Try pitching them on Twitter. Send your pitch five to seven days before the event to give the reporter a chance to slot it into his or her schedule. Give them a reason to be interested. What is noteworthy, unique or different about your event? Here's an example:

@janereporter Our Brownie unit will plant 100 trees with Mayor Smith in Memorial Park Sat. June 11 at 10 a.m. Love to see you there.

If they agree, send a tweet a day or two before the event as a reminder. For example:

@janereporter Looking forward to seeing you at our tree planting event with Mayor Smith tomorrow!

Follow up. Alternatively, if you have the reporter's email address (check their Twitter profile), you can email them a personalized pitch and attach your media advisory (see How to Write a Media Pitch and How to Write a Media Advisory in this toolkit), then follow up once on Twitter a day or two later to see if they are interested.

In this real-life example, West Coast area commissioner Diamond Isinger follows up with the editor of the Delta Optimist:

