



How Do We Get Media Attention?

FIRST: develop (or update) contact lists for the media outlets in your area. Be sure to include name, address, phone, and email contacts for Radio and TV stations that serve your community, as well as newspapers and other print publications (community news-sheets, church bulletins, senior center flyers, etc.).

News releases, information sheets, and pitch letters are excellent ways to inform the media about the arrival of the Library Innovation Studio Makerspace and related events. Social Media posts and Public Service Announcements will increase coverage.

News releases are best used when the information must be publicized in a timely fashion—for instance, if you are communicating the date of an open house or other event. News releases are short and precise, covering the basic who, what, when, where, and why of the event. Keep paragraphs short—less than seven lines—and keep the entire release less than two pages long, if possible. You can always add supplemental information below the ###.

Information sheets are used when a reporter—or anyone—needs detailed information about an event or activity. Information sheets are very useful for members of your Community Action Team to assist them in making outreach visits and presentations, and for soliciting support.

A **pitch letter** is used when the subject of your story is not time-sensitive. The purpose of a pitch letter is to create interest so the media will decide to do a story about the topic. Pitch letters are most effective if they are addressed to a specific person in the media (e.g., city editor at the newspaper, a local television reporter or radio announcer, etc.). Pitch letters work best if they include the story of a real community member who is willing to be interviewed about how the availability of the Library Innovation Studio Makerspace had a direct effect on his/her life.

Social Media platforms are powerful tools for libraries to extend the reach of media messages. Use a simple planning process, scheduling system, and conversation builders to help staff and volunteers make the best use of their time spent communicating in digital platforms.

Public Service Announcements (PSAs) are scripts provided to radio and television stations. These scripts must be written in a standard format and should be 15 or 30 seconds long. Read your PSA aloud and time it to estimate the length as accurately as possible. Check with your broadcast media outlets to see if they prefer a written script or a PSA recorded by someone on your team. This is a great opportunity to use the music recording technology that comes with the Makerspace.

Examples of news releases, information sheets, pitch letters, Social Media posts and PSAs are located in the *Nebraska Library Innovation Studios: Transforming Rural Communities Media Kit* for use as templates or guidelines. Open as a Word document to edit/alter the content, adjusting the font and margins, so the page can be printed on your library letterhead.

The media may want to arrange an interview with a library representative or customer. This is a very effective tool for publicizing events and generating public interest. Follow the points presented on the Interview Tips sheet included in the Media Kit to ensure a successful interview.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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