

Media Relations Tool Kit



What we can do for you:

- Provide digital images
- Provide Raleigh, N.C. Press Kit
- Press release proofing
- Public relations brainstorming

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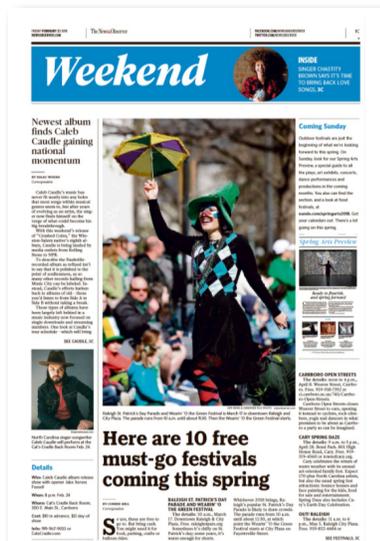
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Congratulations! You've made a great choice in choosing North Carolina's Capital City as the host city for your upcoming meeting. This Media Tool Kit was created as a guide to assist you in promoting your meeting to local media in advance of and during your time here.

If you have a question or need additional assistance, please don't hesitate to contact GRCVB's Public Relations Department.

(Right) The News & Observer, the area's largest daily newspaper, serves an audience of 89,000+ daily.



Media Relations 101

Become a PR Pro in No Time

Ever wonder how media chooses which story to cover or why one organization gets print placement and air time and others don't? Read below to find a few valuable tips to help you gain exposure for your meetings and events.

What is Newsworthy?

You know your organization inside and out, but think outside-of-the-box and pitch stories that aren't just a recap of what a journalist can find on your Web site. What is new and different? Are you unveiling a new program or discovery that has relevance to the general public? Is your organization working with a local charity while in the area? Do you have a speaker or presenter at your meeting that has mass appeal? Creative ideas get noticed!

Do your Homework

The Greater Raleigh CVB has developed a comprehensive media list that includes contact information and editorial/station profiles for Wake County print, television and online outlets. Do your research and find which media outlets and contacts best fit your needs. Journalists hate when they are blindly pitched, so don't send a sports story to a publication that only covers women's beauty issues—unless you can find an angle that ties in with that publication.

Trends are Attractive

Think about where your organization can fit in with a popular trend. Tie your news to current events or social issues if possible. Make sure that your story has a good news hook.

Cause Marketing

Is your meeting holding a 'Party with a Purpose' or are you volunteering with a local organization while in town? These types of events make great human interest stories. If you need a charity angle for your organization, the Greater Raleigh CVB works in partnership with The V Foundation for Cancer Research and can provide a variety of cause marketing tools to implement into your meeting.

Press Relations

If you foresee having media at your event or are planning to accommodate press for the duration of your meeting, consider having a dedicated press room. This room should serve as a quiet place for journalists to file stories, conduct interviews and gather the most recent information such as: press releases, media kits and images.



Interview tips

- Keep and hold eye contact with the person asking questions; **DO NOT** look into the camera.
- Dress appropriately for the message you are sending.
- A television sound-bite is typically less than 10 seconds; practice beforehand on making the most out of your time.
- Try not to use filler words such as: "like," "um," "you know."
- Brainstorm likely questions and develop key messages—they may be asked, they may not, but you'll be prepared.
- Good posture, no gum and no fidgeting.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Once the story airs, follow-up to see if you can use the link on your organization's website or if you can buy the rights to the video.

Get Organized

Make sure you have comprehensive media kits available before your meeting. These kits should include: organization fact sheet, meeting agenda, speakers’ bios, media contacts and press releases. Make sure that key members of the organization are aware and prepared for the possibility of on-air interviews. See interview tips on page 2.

Outreach is Key

Once you have researched and developed your targeted media list, plan on sending a press release PRIOR to your event. Don’t just think local; consider sending your release to industry and trade publications—note that national publications plan stories months in advance, so the sooner you can get information to them, the better. If you are inviting local media to cover your event, send a media alert the week prior and again a day or two before the event. MAKE SURE that all contact information for media contact is included!

Embrace Social Media

Social media is an incredible way to build the buzz for your meeting and keep it going while you are here. Utilize Twitter and begin following local media contacts...many of them get their information and story ideas from Twitter. Develop a hash tag that can be used by attendees of your meeting that tweet and ask people to tweet during meetings.

Be Prepared for the Negative

While you want to paint a picture of your organization or meeting in a positive light, the media may bring up a controversial issue, member or event having to do with your organization or someone involved in it. Be prepared with a statement so that all key spokespeople are on the same page. Have facts and/or figures to back up your rebuttal; don’t just speak on emotion.

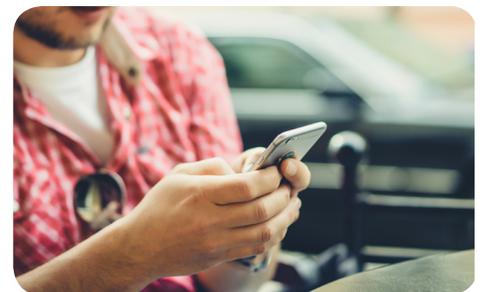


Writing a Press Release

The Power of the Pen

Writing and distributing a press release is one of the easiest and most effective ways to get your information to the media. Press releases are sent to journalists to pitch a story in hopes that they will cover the event. Be aware of who you are writing to (the journalists) and use language that is specific to them. A press release should provide all the information to the story in a timely, truthful, clear and precise manner.

- Make sure the release is on company letterhead.
- Journalists see multiple press releases a day—keep your headline short, catchy and descriptive.
- Consider creating a Twitter-friendly, 140-character headline.
- Include contact information—especially a number or email where you can be reached while on site for your meeting.
- Try to keep it to ONE-TWO PAGES. Clear, precise and to the point. Use only enough words to tell your story. Avoid flowery language.
- The first paragraph should be the most important information. Answer the questions who, what, when and where.
- Use active, not passive voice. Verbs in the active voice bring your press release to life.
- Include a quote from a company spokesman.
- End the release with three pound signs centered at the bottom of the release.
- Spell check and proofread before sending out.
- When sending electronically cut and paste the body of your release into the email and also attach the document. Many journalists will not open attachments or they become caught in spam filters.



Keep in mind

The official names of these Raleigh venues and attractions

- Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau (Visit Raleigh)
- Raleigh Convention Center
- Memorial Auditorium at Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts
- North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences
- North Carolina Museum of Art
- North Carolina Museum of History

Sample Press Release



For Immediate Release
Dec. 12, 2017

Contact:
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Contact info

Resident Input Sought for First-Ever Wake County Destination Strategic Plan *JLL and Visit Raleigh asking residents for input, give update on the planning process*

Twitter-friendly headline

Raleigh, N.C. (Dec. 14, 2017) – In August 2017, the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau (GRCVB), also known as Visit Raleigh, began the year-long process to define Wake County’s future as a premier tourism destination to drive additional overnight visitors and create a [Destination Strategic Plan](#) for the county to accomplish that goal. Since that time, under the directional guidance of Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL), the GRCVB team has plotted out various steps to understand the true opportunities and needs facing Wake County as a tourism destination. The process thus far has involved surveying 380 different stakeholders and interviews with nearly 60 different community groups. Now the GRCVB needs the input of the Wake County residents via an [online survey](#), which will remain live through January 31, 2018.

More Information on the Resident Survey:

By completing the five-minute survey, county residents will provide valuable input on the future of the area as it grows into a more vibrant visitor destination. As a thank you, residents who complete the survey can also be registered to win two great staycations, one in downtown Raleigh and the other in historic downtown Cary. The survey can be found at WakeCountyDSP.com/local.

JLL’s Global Tourism Director Dan Fenton acknowledged the importance of resident input by saying “No destination can achieve transformative results without engaging its numerous constituencies. The role and support of the local community is vital to the future of Wake County as a visitor destination.”

More Background, Update on the Wake County Destination Strategic Plan:

GRCVB President and CEO Dennis Edwards stated at the organization’s annual meeting back in August “Wake County will be one of the premier tourist destinations in the Southeast, attracting major national and international conventions and sporting events, bringing leisure visitors from all over the country and world.”

Quote from key organizational spokesperson

This vision setting quote from the leader of Raleigh’s destination marketing organization provided Wake County with a challenge. The vision was clear, but the path on how to achieve this vision was murky at best. In order to gather the necessary input, JLL needed to facilitate input from a broad audience of Wake County residents and from the multitude of visitors traveling to Raleigh and Wake County.

The individuals, businesses and organizations that depend on tourism were first contacted for input. These “stakeholders” were asked to provide their thoughts on the key attributes of the area that could attract visitors and aspects of the destination that needed improvement. In total, 380 different stakeholders representing every community in Wake County completed the survey that will help guide the strategic plan.

Additionally, the JLL team began directly engaging numerous organizations to gather input, testimonials and personal accounts of the possible directions for the county’s rapidly growing tourism industry. Input on air service, convention business, development options and visitor engagement were collected through interviews with nearly 60 different groups throughout the county.

About the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau (GRCVB)

The Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau (GRCVB), as the official destination marketing organization of Raleigh and Wake County, accelerates sustainable economic growth and development by increasing visitor and convention business. Raleigh, N.C./Wake County welcomes more than 15 million visitors annually whose spending tops \$2.4 billion. The visitor economy supports more than 25,535 local jobs in Wake County and generates more than \$242 million in state and local tax revenues, saving each Wake County household \$663 in taxes annually. VisitRaleigh.com.

About organization boilerplate copy

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Writing a Media Alert

Just the Facts



A media alert, also called an advisory, is used to publicize events to TV and radio. It is different from a press release because it includes only basic information—pushing the reporter to attend the event. It is shorter than a press release and is more dry and precise. It gives who, what, when and where in a more direct format and is almost like an invitation.

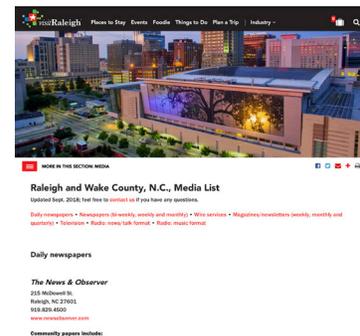
- Make sure the release is on company letterhead.
- If there is a photo opportunity or a specific event (like ribbon cutting) state that at the beginning of the Media Alert.
- Include contact information—especially a number or email where you can be reached while on site for your meeting.
- Include basic who, what, when, where, why followed by basic company boilerplate (organization information).
- Include your organization’s boilerplate at the end of the release.

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Looking for local contacts?

Reference the [Raleigh and Wake County, N.C. Media List](#)

<https://www.visitraleigh.com/media/local-media-lists/>



Sample Media Alert



Annual Meeting Media Advisory

Who:

Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau (Visit Raleigh)

What:

Annual Meeting, Strategy Session and Awards Luncheon (where two new initiatives will be unveiled)

Where:

Raleigh Convention Center (500 S. Salisbury St., Raleigh, NC 27601)

When:

Thursday, August 24, 2017

- Strategy Session: RCC Room 305, 10-11:15am
- Awards and Luncheon: RCC Ballroom, noon-1:20pm

Why:

Tourism is at an all-time high here in Wake County with [recent figures released](#) showing record breaking visitation, visitor spending, tax generation and employment across Wake County. As a result, GRCVB will be holding a series of brief presentations that cover tourism topics and trends, and we will be unveiling two new initiatives. One to address an immediate need and another to set the stage for tourism development across the county for years to come.

- Strategy Session topics and speakers
 - 10:05am: A primer on Wake's interlocal tourism tax agreement: what is it and how is it valuable? – Denise Foreman, Assistant to the County Manager, Wake County
 - 10:20am: A Whole New World of Visitors – Heidi Walters, CHME, Director of Partner and Industry Relations at Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (Visit North Carolina)
 - Legislative issues impacting tourism in Wake County – Lynn D. Minges, President and CEO of the North Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association
 - Stellar content marketing tactics for visitors who are always online – Derek Allman, CHIA, GRCVB Senior Marketing Manager and Michael Robson, GRCVB Content Marketing Manager
- New Initiatives
 - We plan to discuss our new comprehensive [Destination Strategic Plan](#), a 13-month project to set the stage for what tourism in Wake County will look like by 2028. This is a first-of-its-kind initiative and is being done with inclusion of Wake County, the City of Raleigh and the other 11 local municipalities that make up Wake County.
 - We will also discuss the [Wake County Restaurant and Hotel Job Fair](#), a new workforce development initiative we're undertaking with the Capital Area Workforce Development Board and North Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association.
- Award recipients

GRCVB will be handing out the following awards:

 - Thad Eure, Jr. Memorial Award
 - John B. Ross, Jr. Leadership Award
 - Horizon Award
 - Isaac Hunter Excellence in Service Award

**Note: Press release announcing award recipients will go out following the luncheon.*
- Timeline of Days Events/Media Availability:
 - 10:05-11:15am: Strategy Sessions
 - 11:15-11:45am: Media availability for interviews (name and topic below)
 - GRCVB President and CEO Dennis Edwards – Destination Strategic Plan and Wake County Restaurant and Hotel Job Fair
 - Jones Lang LaSalle Executive Vice President Daniel Fenton – Destination Strategic Plan
 - North Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association President and CEO Lynn D. Minges – Wake County Restaurant and Hotel Job Fair
 - Noon-1:20pm: Luncheon Program and Awards Presentations

Planning a Press Conference



If you are considering holding a press conference during your meeting or event, ask yourself the following questions. Is my story newsworthy, timely and of interest to news organizations? Do I have a good visual to present? Do I have noteworthy speakers? Am I announcing a new program, initiative or results of a survey or study that has mass appeal? If not, think about what it is you are really trying to accomplish by holding a press conference.

Choosing a Date

- Try to obtain as much information as possible about internal deadlines of the media you are targeting, and schedule your press conference accordingly.
- In general, scheduling a press conference in the morning hours of a working day is preferable. Try to avoid Mondays and Fridays.
- Try to avoid a date parallel to other events that are likely to attract considerable public interest.

Picking a Location

- Make sure the location can be reached easily and with little effort for journalists.
- Locate your press conference at a meeting room of your organization, at a conference venue or in a hotel where you can talk without being disturbed by others.
- Make your organization visible (e.g., with a banner, roll-up, poster).
- The speakers of a press conference should sit around a table or use a lectern with a microphone.

The Press Conference

- Have a media sign-in sheet (good for follow-up after the press conference).
- Have a moderator/facilitator to host the press conference.
- Each speaker should prepare a short presentation or statement.
- Communicate clear messages.
- Align the whole program around one key message, e.g., think of the headline that you would like to see the next day in the newspaper.
- Keep input short and easy to understand.
- Do not assume that journalists necessarily understand technical terminology.
- Invite journalists to ask questions.
- Be prepared to answer critical questions regarding your topic or organization.