

How to conduct outreach activities with a limited budget

Part 2

Reaching out

Media can be your friends and bring success to your outreach activities. They help you to reach more people at no cost and achieve your advocacy goals even with a limited budget.

The Elevator Pitch does not cost money and is an excellent outreach tool to create interest in your activities.



Reaching out

How to get media attention?

Getting media attention from newspapers, radio and TV may be challenging, but not impossible, and is rewarding when it happens. In addition, it needs not cost a lot of money.

Archival and records management issues do not attract much media attention and as a consequence, they are not high on the agendas of politicians and stakeholders.

So we need to **act proactively** focusing on the importance of our work, for example in protecting human rights, supporting accountability and transparency, protecting memories, and highlighting our profession's relevance in today's digital society.



Reaching out

How to get media attention?

Establishing a **partnership** with the media will be highly advantageous in assisting efforts to spread our professional message. Media can easily promote or damage our institution, our mandate, our work, the importance of archives or the Universal Declaration on Archives. Of course we are reaching out to get **free promotion**.

The relationship will also be **advantageous** for the media who, although they might not always be aware, are dependent on us doing a good job so they can gather reliable evidence to support their reporting activities.



Reaching out

How to get media attention?

How to start? Where to start?

First step:

- Have a **communication strategy** defining what you can say, can do, when and with whom.

This strategy should include which **tools** to use (Newspapers? Radio? TV?) and should allow you to **respond quickly** if you get a request from a journalist.

Responding quickly to a request for an interview might be difficult if you need permission from upper management and if your institution does not have a communication strategy giving you the authority to offer interviews.



Reaching out

How to get media attention?

The **communication strategy** crafted for individual interviews or publication should answer the following questions:

- Who is the audience? Who are you writing for? What is important to them?
- What is the message? The outreach message can be prepared before the interview.
- Is it a one-off event or message, or is it part of a series of messages that can be developed? Can it be re-purposed for different channels or publications, reaching different audiences with a slightly different focus?



Reaching out

How to get media attention?

The communication strategy should also define who is **the most appropriate contact** for media.

It may be the Head of Archives or the President of the Association but there may be times when other stakeholders or partners can say the same thing and reach a different target audience or offer a different emphasis.

If you work for a government which is not user friendly, it might be important to have your advocacy message coming from an exterior non-governmental stakeholder, such as an archival donor.



Reaching out

How to get media attention?

Second step:

- **Networking** with journalists

You essentially ask media for a favor – to cover your advocacy message for you to get free benefits in return, such as more money, more volunteers, more archival donations, more visibility.

So you establish a relationship ahead of time because we don't ask strangers for favors. Never underestimate the **importance of connections**. Take the time to connect in a personal and/or professional manner.



Reaching out

How to get media attention?

How to network with journalists ahead of time?

Media outreach is all about relationships. Your best chance of coverage will hinge directly upon your relationship with individual journalists.

Since you know them, it will help you to pitch news that they are actually interested in.

Since they know you, they will be more inclined to read your message, offer you an interview or direct you to the right person to cover your advocacy message and outreach activity.



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How to get media attention?

Networking with journalists includes:

- Follow them on **Twitter** – Most journalists can be found on Twitter; engage in conversations of interest to them and to you (no need to connect on archival subjects). Comment on their programs or newspaper articles.
- Connect with them on **LinkedIn** – Some journalists prefer LinkedIn or other social media. Ask them how they prefer to be contacted. Ask them what type of stories they look for and how much notice they prefer to have when covering news or announcements.
- Connect **locally** – If a journalist is local, it is important to connect in person. On a local level, attend events or conferences (even if there is no direct link with archives or records management).
- Make their lives **easier** – Contact them by email or phone, help them with a piece they are working on, even if it is not directly related to archives.



Reaching out

How to get media attention?

Third step:

- The key to get media attention is to find a relevant topic which usually is a **human story**.

Media need something that will be of interest to their readers/ viewers/or listeners. You give them the right angle by finding a story which holds unique facts, has a human impact, and is connected to recent news.

The more concrete and personal you share the text, the better. People are more likely to become engaged in an issue if it appeals directly to them, and is easily relatable.



Reaching out

How to get media attention?

Appealing to the audience's **emotions** could be an effective way to obtain insight and understanding when it comes to archives and records management issues. However, it is important not to overestimate people's knowledge of archives and records management, at the same time as not to underestimate their intellect.

The challenge: Saying just the right amount, in the right kind of language.

Watch for events that might be relevant to your objectives or strategies. Linking to such events helps publicize your cause and activity at a later date. It will strengthen your position in the community.



Reaching out

How to get media attention?

Example of a **story with human interest** to advertise at no cost your outreach activities:

- You could link your outreach activities, such as an Open House, to the search for family history. When coming to the archives, visitors might be able to find when their ancestors came to the country or might discover their grandparents' wedding photo in a newly acquired photographic fonds.

Media will want to promote for free the Open House if these human connections may take place during the event.

Ask yourself when you have a story in mind:

- Why is this so special?
- How can this be of benefit to me, my institution, my profession, the media and the public at large? Will it cause us any problems when we share it with media?
- Which problems will the story solve?



Reaching out

Communication tools to get media attention: The Press Release

Effective communication makes you a good advocate and is not expensive.

Writing a good **press release** or a text story-telling is essential to promote for free your outreach activities.

This means writing the text in a journalistic style, starting off with attention grabbing and continuing on with the conclusion instead of using the traditional way of saving the answer until the end. Keep it short: 250-300 words. Never more than one page.

Remember that you are trying to sell an activity, and will be competing with lots of other content that might seem more saleable at first glance.



Reaching out

Communication tools to get media attention: The Press Release

You need to keep it **simple** focusing on just one thing you want to say. Do not use shoptalk or jargon. As archivists and record managers we are by nature concerned with details and getting things right, but in dealing with the media it is important to focus on the **main subject** and build your text around that, even if all the facts can't be included.

Do not be afraid of being bold. Distance yourselves from the myth of the quiet and reluctant archivist and records manager and stand out as someone with passion.

Curiosity may be stimulated with a clever play on words or a contradiction but does not have to be complicated. Examples of headlines:

- Archives come alive - Archives, home to our history

Omit needless words and put some action into your headline. Example:

“Archives, key to our past” is better than “Our past may be found at the archives”.



Reaching out

Communication tools to get media attention: The Press Release

Be **professional!** Use plain language, but don't take shortcuts with the facts. You don't fudge a date or a statistic. This means you may have to do research before writing the facts.

- For ex.: We don't say an outreach activity is offered for the first time unless it is really the first time.

- Facts are usually easy to verify with Internet and you don't want the media to find something which is not true in your text.

Write an outline of what you want to say. It can be a simple framework with sections in order and a few sentences for each section.



Reaching out

Communication tools to get media attention: The Press Release

Follow a **good format**. Usually a text has a **headline, a subhead and the body**.

You will answer these basic questions at the beginning of your text (30-40 words) and keep the reader's attention: When? Who? How? Why? What? Where?

Headlines are extremely important.

The leading sentence, at the top, attracts attention and communicates your key selling point.

It motivates the audience to read (or to move on without reading). It should stimulate curiosity. It can set a tone or establish an emotion. It can identify an institution.



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Communication tools to get media attention: The Press Release

According to Columbia University's guide to **headlines**, you must ask yourself:

1. Anything offensive in any way? Can anything be taken a wrong way?
2. Does it attract the reader's attention? How can it be improved without sacrificing accuracy?
3. Does it communicate clearly, quickly? Any confusion? Any odd words, double meanings?
4. Is it accurate, true? Proper words used?
5. A single "NO" above is a veto, rethink the headline from the beginning

A slogan is a short sentence used to establish an image or identity for an organization. It can be a headline or a subhead. Examples:

Archives are forever

In touch with tomorrow

Donors wanted!



Reaching out

Communication tools to get media attention: The Press Release

Headline and **subhead** communicate key selling points quickly. They contain the **main** points of the message.

Subhead consists of a few words and stimulates a more complete reading of the text.

Body is the textual component and tells a more complete story; it should reinforce the headline and subhead; it must be interesting to the reader.

Guidelines for the body: Involve the reader, avoid superlatives, use short words and sentences, present tense and active verbs (not passive form).

Include **contact details** of the spokesperson because a radio or TV journalist can't copy and paste your quote like a print journalist.



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Communication tools to get media attention: The Press Release

The **message strategy** depends on the objective (what do we want to accomplish?)

- If the objective is to **convince the reader**, for example that archives deserve a visit, we use testimonials.

Testimonials: when an advocacy position is taken by another person outside the profession

Example: Take a genealogist or the average donor or user as a spokesperson for the target market to relate to that person

- If the objective is to **change behavior**, you need a plausible threat to motivate and to induce a certain degree of anxiety. Example:

“What if you were to wake up one morning and could not prove who you were because you had lost your identification papers? What would you do? You would go to an archives. Visit us today at the archives to see our collections”

If you use a threat: You need the right balance to remain ethical.



Reaching out

Communication tools to get media attention: The Press Release

- If the objective is to **transform an image perception** (example: go from “archives are dusty and boring” to “archives are essential and deserve a visit”)

The challenges will be:

- To explain to someone else why something unknown is so special
- To transform the experience in the user’s head
- Expectations can be deceiving and damaging

In conclusion:

Once you have finished writing your text, try it out on someone who is not in the archives/records management field. This person will be able to tell you whether you have managed to “de-professionalize” the text making it easy to read. Then send it out into the media world.

... And don’t forget to put the press release in the body of your email!

In conclusion: The Press Release

The Inverted Pyramid

• The Most Important Information First

- What's happening?
- When is it happening?
- Why is it happening?
- Who is in charge?
- Where is it happening?

Secondary Details

- Quotes
- Other details in descending order of importance.

Additional Info

- Boilerplate copy.
- List any times and dates for an event (if applicable)
- Who should they contact with more questions?

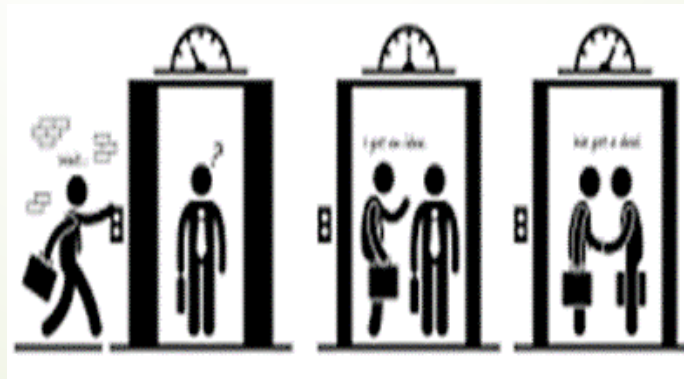
Reaching out

The Elevator Pitch

An Elevator Pitch explains in about 30 seconds what makes you – or your organization, activity, or idea – unique.

An Elevator Pitch is “a concise presentation designed to influence and persuade, to gain support or understanding.”

The idea is that you may find yourself in the elevator with a stakeholder who can support you; you should be prepared to make your case in the seconds you have before one of you leaves.





Reaching out

The Elevator Pitch

In the pitch you **go straight** to the point with the aim of providing **the most information** in the **minimum amount of time**.

The pitch is not only about facts but is also about emotions. It should focus on a unique selling point and must be adapted to suit your audience.

The term Elevator Pitch was first used in the United States in 1995 and applied originally to the world of business.

Beware of professional jargon and acronyms. Don't include too much information; don't talk too fast, nor too slow and make eye contact. It is recommended to have several pitches ready to respond to different circumstances. **Practice is essential.**



Reaching out

The Elevator Pitch

When pitching for support for an outreach activity, the guidance recommends that the advocate **targets the right person with the right pitch** by:

- Speaking clearly
- Avoiding shop talk and terminology unique to our field (“jargon”)
- Identifying the issues that will appeal most to the person we are addressing, making archives and records relevant to them, communicating our idea in their own words

In preparing an elevator pitch it can be useful to use a checklist of **six questions**:

1. Who are you?
2. What do you do?
3. What services do you offer?
4. Whom do you do it for?
5. Why you make a difference?
6. What is in it for them?



Reaching out

The Elevator Pitch

Examples of “one-liners” which may be included in an Elevator Pitch:

You know how you use research material in your work? Well, I’m the one who filed it, tagged it and organized it, so that you could find it...

I manage the memory banks of my organization...

I help my company leverage its information assets and heritage...

I preserve the past for the future...

I will make sure you and your work won’t be forgotten...

From the ICA toolkit <https://www.ica.org/en/elevator-pitch>

Reaching out

The Elevator Pitch

Here again story-telling is essential. We need a narrative to bring archives and records to life for many potential and existing stakeholders.

It is vital that recordkeepers are able to communicate effectively the essence of their work (when conducting outreach activities), the services they provide and the value they bring to the communities they serve. We also need to remember to explain why we do what we do, not just what we do. Example:





Reaching out

The Elevator Pitch

Good advice:

- You need to prepare and rehearse your pitch before you deliver it. In practicing you need to free yourself from the script, otherwise the pitch may come across as flat and too rehearsed.
- Adjust your pitch to your audience. The same pitch should not be used everywhere and for everyone. Think about roles and level of management, skills and the knowledge of your audience.
- Don't focus on too many details. Example: A doctor asked to explain his or her work will not give a long description about writing medical case summaries, analyzing test results and studying X-rays. The response will be: "I save lives!".
- Find and use good one-liners. Example: "What does an archivist do?" "I preserve lives!" or if you prefer: "I protect human rights!"



Reaching out

The Elevator Pitch

Good advice:

- Use humor and keep it real.
- Don't babble and overwhelm people with information losing your main message.
- Don't make it too short and fact-like, your message won't come across.
- Relate your pitch to the other person's field of interest or expertise. Example: Pitching to a physicist, an archivist/ records manager could say: "You know all those research reports you use in your work and those you produce yourself, I record them in our electronic system and add descriptive data so that they are easily found when needed again".
- Appeal to people's vanity. Example: "I'm an archivist, and I can ensure your immortality".



Reaching out

Free ICA Outreach Resources

ICA makes available on its website the following **free outreach resources** which are of high interest:

- The **Universal Declaration on Archives (UDA)**, endorsed by ICA and UNESCO, is an excellent tool to advocate the importance of archives and records management. The ICA AEG (Advocacy Expert Group) developed UDA training kits, entitled *A tool to improve understanding and awareness*. These kits include PowerPoint slides and speaking notes. They provide guidelines on adapting the UDA for different audiences and on its implementation.

The kits offer also suggestions for increasing awareness of the importance of records and archives through the use of the UDA. ICA's goal in developing and providing this material is to enable individuals working in archival institutions and members of professional associations, who are inspired by the UDA, to hold their own workshops in places and at outreach events beyond the reach of ICA. The UDA training kits are available here:

<https://www.ica.org/en/universal-declaration-archives-tool-improve-understanding-and-awareness>



Reaching out

Free ICA Outreach Resources

Every time when an outreach activity is offered to the public, it is worthwhile encouraging those present to register their **support for the UDA by signing online**. If possible, have a computer available at the event so that they can do it immediately. This is the link for signing:

<https://www.ica.org/en/register-your-support-universal-declaration-archives>

Including the UDA into your outreach activity will make an international connection between your event, ICA and UNESCO in the public eyes. It will increase the importance of your event at no cost.

- The ICA SPA (Section of Professional Associations) has produced an excellent general brochure entitled *Advocacy* which sets out guidelines for advocacy and outreach activities. It outlines the following “**golden rules of advocacy**” which will ensure the success of outreach activities.

Reaching out

Free ICA Outreach Resources

Golden rules From *Advocacy* at: <https://www.ica.org/en/spa-brochure-advocacy>

Do:	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Be proud and assertive▪ Seize opportunities for promotion▪ Show patience and flexibility with the public▪ Use plain language▪ Have a clear message▪ Use the media▪ Define your audience▪ Think of others as partners▪ Define one goal at a time▪ Remain professional but use humor▪ Recruit assistance from allied professions▪ Tell what you have to offer to users▪ Offer your help to the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Apologize or be hesitant▪ Lose opportunities, such as anniversaries▪ Show impatience and inflexibility▪ Use professional jargon▪ Confuse the public with too much information▪ Recreate what is already available▪ Use the same message for everyone▪ Be too ambitious▪ Take yourself too seriously▪ Separate yourself from possible allies▪ Think only of the preservation and conservation of records



Reaching out


Free ICA Outreach Resources

- The following ICA SPA toolkit will help groups wishing to offer a workshop on the **Elevator Pitch**: <https://www.ica.org/en/elevator-pitch>

This toolkit gives useful advice and provides scenarios to think about as well as some really good “one-liners”. Information and training provided by this toolkit may be used at any outreach events.

- The ICA AEG **Social Media Strategy** is available at: <https://www.ica.org/en/aeg-social-media-strategy> It is very easy to adapt it to your own needs. It demonstrates how to construct a social media strategy. You can either use it exactly as it is, or edit it to meet the special needs of your outreach activities.

- The ICA AEG is also making available on the ICA website an excellent Power Point presentation entitled **How to deal with media**. This toolkit will help you to deal with journalists when you work on your outreach activities, it gives very useful advice on offering interviews on radio and TV. There is also good information on writing a press release.



How to conduct outreach activities with a limited budget

Free Resources

Entwhistle, Brad (2014) The 10 Communication Laws for Schools – part 1.
<http://info.imageseven.com.au/school-marketing-blog/bid/344236/The-10-communication-laws-for-schools-part-1>

Mackay, Hugh (1994) 10 Laws of Human Communication
<http://www.science.unitn.it/~andreatt/LawCommunication.pdf>


Losee, Robert (1999) Communication Defined as Complementary Informative Processes
<https://ils.unc.edu/~losee/comminfo.pdf>

Universal Declaration on Archives. International Council on Archives (2012)
<https://www.ica.org/en/universal-declaration-archives>

<https://www.ica.org/en/universal-declaration-archives-tool-improve-understanding-and-awareness>

<https://www.ica.org/en/aeg-social-media-strategy>

<https://blog.katapult.co.uk/how-to-deliver-a-compelling-elevator-pitch>



How to conduct outreach activities with a limited budget

Free Resources

<https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/elevator-pitch.htm>

<https://articles.bplans.com/the-7-key-components-of-a-perfect-elevator-pitch/>

<http://www.storyboardthat.com/storyboards/aaron-sherman/elevator-pitch>

<https://www.ica.org/en/spa-brochure-advocacy>

<https://www.ica.org/en/elevator-pitch>

<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/advocacy/advocacy-principles/advocacy-plan/main>

<http://www.jrmyprtr.com/make-your-press-release-stand-out/>

<https://coschedule.com/blog/how-to-write-press-releases-examples-templates/#examples>

<http://www.differencebetween.net/business/differences-between-policy-and-strategy/>

All resources were accessed on February 11, 2021.



How to conduct outreach activities with a limited budget

Thank you for your attention and for taking our workshop. We really enjoyed connecting with you.

Do you need further outreach assistance? Do you have comments? We would like to hear from you.

Please contact the **ICA Advocacy Expert Group** at: Roberto@ica.org