

Tips on dealing with the media

1. Don't be nervous of them – local journalists are part of our community – they will know people you know as neighbours and friends – they are not trying to catch us out
2. Remember that their job is to sell newspapers and attract viewers or listeners by writing stories – not to give us free advertising – so they will probably be more interested in the event itself than in publicising it beforehand; but it's always worth a try to get some advance publicity – especially if you can make that into a story in its own right!
3. Make sure that you give them the information. They need: Who, What, Why, When, Where, How – take a look at the "Tips for writing a News Release" page; most importantly, make sure that you give them your contact details so that they can get back to you
4. Make it easy for them – like every other organisation, they are short-staffed and hard-pressed for time; the easier you make it, the more likely they are to pick up your story
5. If the media want to interview someone, say "yes"! Then find someone else who will do it or be willing to do it yourself.
6. When you are interviewed, think about what is the one really important thing you want/need to say to all their readers/listeners, then make sure you say that – perhaps several times! Remember, this is an excellent evangelistic opportunity – what would you like the readers to know about your motivation for doing what you're doing?
7. If you are being interviewed for broadcast media (radio or TV) ask them what their first question is going to be so that you are prepared for it when they start recording

Tips on dealing with Journalists at events

1. You will have been in touch with the paper/radio/tv before the event – and they should have let you know that they were coming; even if they haven't, don't be fazed when they do turn up; and don't be fazed if they come late or don't turn up having said they would – sometimes something else interrupts their plans
2. Make them welcome! Can you save them a parking space? Have someone specifically to spot them and say hello and offer them a cup of tea and introduce them to others...
3. Make sure that they get a chance to speak to key people (eg the senior leader of your MM Team, local church leaders, whoever is in charge of the event, some of the people taking part) for a few minutes
4. Help them with names/titles of people and places (and spellings of these) etc; Journalists have to cover many stories and they are not experts on everything; they will be very quick on the uptake but they may not know as much as you do about your event
5. Be clear (write it down beforehand?) about what you want to say about your event (why it's important, what difference it will make....) and say it to them
6. Make sure that they get a chance to take really good pictures – they will tell you what they want/need – but certainly permission to take pictures/film, and a good place to stand!
7. As they leave, check they have got everything they wanted and give them your contact details so that they can come back to you if they have any further questions