A RELATIONS GROUP GUIDE:

Top Tips For National Stations - What Stories Are They Looking For?

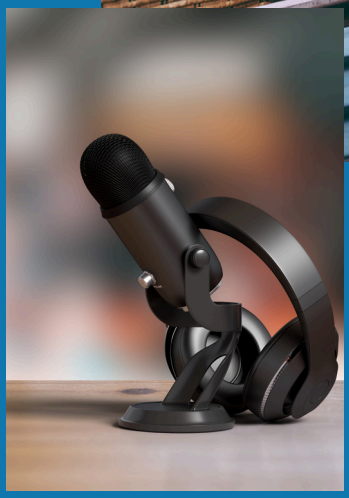


Straight From The Presenter's Mouth



At The Relations Group, we have a podcast called 'A Face For Radio'. The show speaks to presenters, producers and reporters behind your favourite shows.

What the podcast also does is ask these names behind the microphone about the stories and guests that they're looking for. Ensuring we can secure the best coverage for our clients.



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Justin Webb

Justin Webb is a presenter for the 'Today Programme' on BBC Radio 4, one of the biggest radio programmes across the UK. When we spoke to Justin on the podcast, he gave us insight on who the best people to pitch are if you think your story is the perfect fit for his show.

He stated, "The interesting way in which the Today programme is run is, it's run by editors and producers who sort out what goes on. I mean, we can suggest things and occasionally we can really stamp our feet and cause a nuisance and get something on, but generally speaking, we can't. So the interesting thing is that pitching to a presenter is a complete waste of time. That doesn't stop people."





Martin Stanford

Martin Stanford is a recently retired presenter, working for the likes of LBC and Sky News. He's also spoken at many PR-related events in the past. Martin told us what he looks for in a guest.

Stanford said, "In seeking guests, whatever it might be, whether that is for a television news interview, whether it's for a radio news interview, you want them to be informed, you want them to be interesting, and you want them to be human as well. Absolutely, because they don't want to be so obsessive in their own little world that they don't appear to be a human being operating, you're almost listening to a machine reciting bits of words that have been put together by somebody else."





Rosie Wright

Rosie Wright presents the Early Morning Breakfast Show on weekdays for Times Radio. She has a big say in the stories that are on her show, and when talking on our podcast, this is what she had to say on the decision-making process.

She told us, "I'm always looking at what the breakfast show are going to be doing. My show's definitely got to compliment them. So normally we've actually got the same lead story, but we'll maybe just come at it from a slightly different lens. I do really see the show as setting you up for the day and then for the breakfast show. So I probably will give you the facts of what's happening and then more of the analysis happens on breakfast. So, I sort of set the groundwork for the day. And that's why all the features are quite quick to kind of get as much in as possible, but it's always complimentary with the breakfast team."





Carl Hartley

Carl Hartley is a newsreader for BBC Radio 5 Live, as well as a lecturer at the Univeristy of Leeds. When discussing guests with us, Carl really thinks about the listener, and how a guest can connect with them.

Hartley said, "When it comes to getting guests, generally you need someone who can talk and somebody who I think can connect to your audience. If, for example, I'm looking for a good story, it's got to be a story that connects with your audience. So, the biggest thing I always say is, before deciding that story is going to go in your bulletin, ask yourself, what is the story? And why should I be bothered about that story? So, as the listener, why should I care?"





Shivani Sharma

Shivani Sharma is a reporter for the East of England with LBC. She also used to produce for Shelagh Fogarty on the same station. When talking to 'A Face For Radio', Shivani believes that the answer to a story is often staring you right in the face.

Sharma explained, "I think it depends on the story. So, sometimes there might be stories where the person is at the heart of the story, so it might be someone who's made some comments, or it might be someone who's kind of made it to the front page of the papers or something like that. Sometimes the answer's staring at you in the face and you just want to get that particular person on because they are the story. And I think it's always important to remember to not shy away from that. It doesn't always have to be kind of someone reacting to the story. Sometimes it's about bringing that story to life itself. So if this person's written words in a paper, but they haven't spoken on air yet, you can really bring that to life with radio in a way that you haven't necessarily done."





Dan Brennan

Dan Brennan is a producer, newsreader, and broadcast journalist for BBC Radio 5 Live. Dan is a key part of the behind-the-scenes at the station. When discussing guests with us, he highlighted that they need to provide the best possible angle on a story.

He said, “So, for example, the really serious stories, you look for the guests that can give you the absolute best angle you can get on that story. Or if it's dry, for example, you might have focused just on the breaking news at breakfast, but how do you take that story on? What guests can give you, taking that story on later on in the day, when maybe the audience has already heard the actual news itself, that maybe it's a bit more analysis. Maybe it's another angle to the story that hadn't really been talked about yet.”





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