For tips on how to more effectively pitch influencers, read 5 Media Relations Hacks to Get More Coverage.
Courtney Linder is a business technology reporter for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. She likes to cover autonomous vehicles, robotics, equity and access of technology for underrepresented groups, crypto and blockchain, R&D and patenting, and software with interesting use cases. "I do not cover life sciences or biotech much, though I would love to write about human augmentation in the future."

She advises PR professionals to personalize their pitches to her, and says, "I like to receive personal emails (that I can tell aren't sent en masse to all tech reporters across the country) along with an accompanying release with more information. Phone calls are nice as an intro if we haven't worked together before. I do believe in the power of connecting outside of our omnipresent screens."

She also reiterates the importance of pitching local stories to a local newspaper, "Please, whatever you do, avoid pitching stories to local publications that have no local angle. I know that it seems to make sense to cast the widest net possible, hoping for a bite, but journalists get loads of press releases, and we really can tell when you've sent the same message to dozens of people. That said, show that you know our work and that you're sure your client or idea is the right fit for us as individual reporters. That will get you a response, even if it's a no. That will help you build a relationship that might not land a story today, but will tomorrow. If we think you're making this transactional and impersonal, we'll be able to tell. And you can expect to get ghosted."

She gets irritated when she can tell a PR professional has put together a template and removed certain pieces of information and just added her name or organization. "Also, make sure to spell our names right, as we would our sources. I have been called Cindy four times in the last two years. That's not a good way to get off to a productive start. It comes back to professionalism and relationship-building."

She uses social media for story leads all the time, however, feels pitching via social is a bit unprofessional. "Most journalists have their email in their Twitter bio for a reason."

» CONTACT HER VIA EMAIL AND PHONE.

WHAT ARE THREE GADGETS YOU CAN’T LIVE WITHOUT?

My Galaxy Note 8, my rose gold Fossil smartwatch (which has a little animated robot face whose eyes tell the time) and my Chromebook, because it’s lightweight to run around with on assignment.
Alex Yong is a columnist at Small Business Trends covering social media trends in small business. He is also a contributing writer at Observer and a blogger at TechMania411 where he covers technology, consumer electronics, mobile communications, smartphones, social media and fashion.

He prefers to receive inline images with pitches and stresses that he wants to know the name of the city where the company or pitcher is based, along with their Twitter handle. Board memberships and proof of partnerships with well-known brands are what catches his attention.

His advice to PR professionals: "I generally don't click on links — exceptions are trusted domains like YouTube. I also like it when PR pros say client X is going to be in New York City on X dates. Saying so proves the PR pro knows I'm in New York City."

He adds again, "I like inline images because they grab my attention, but so few PR professionals take this extra step."

» HE DOES NOT ACCEPT PITCHES VIA SOCIAL MEDIA. CONTACT HIM VIA EMAIL.
Max Buondonno is the founder and executive editor of MBEDDED Maximum and also working on Matridox as per the revert from MaxBuondonno. He blogs for the site, covering computers, technology, Windows, Apple, and mobile apps. He likes to cover the newest in phones, "I always love a crazy new smartphone. If you’re coming to me so I can cover your new smartphone launch, there’s a really good chance I’ll take your story and run with it. I also like covering crazy new technologies like over-the-air wireless charging and new smart home devices."

He advises PR professionals to include the news peg right off the bat, and says, "Not to tell them how to do their job, but the best way to convince me to open their press materials is to start their email with the story or article they’re pitching. Oftentimes, I notice they include a header or other information at the very beginning which doesn’t allow my email app to display a good preview of what your actual message contains. And if I don’t like the preview, I’m most likely not gonna open your message. So at least for me, when you’re sending pitch emails, include your reason for contacting me and what story you wanna pitch at the very beginning. Otherwise, I might delete it immediately."

He also wants PR professionals to reply to his emails, and explains, "I don’t necessarily appreciate no return email. So if I contact someone who sent me an interesting story I’d like to cover, I always appreciate hearing back from them. I understand they must get thousands of emails in their inbox, and so do I. That’s why I really appreciate it when they take time to respond to my message. Otherwise, I’ll likely scrap their story in favor of some other project I have in my pipeline which, mind you, is always pretty full."

He is open to pitches via social media, "I don’t get a lot of story pitches via social media, but I’m totally open to anyone who would like to reach out with an interesting idea for an article so long as they directly message me. I also constantly am checking social media (especially Twitter) for new stories to cover for Matridox."

» CONTACT HIM BY EMAIL
Ben Lovejoy is EU editor at 9to5Mac and covers Mac, iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, HomePod and Apple company news. He wants to receive information on:

- 4K USB-C monitors larger than 27-inch
- Smart home/home automation technology (which must be HomeKit-compatible)
- Photography kit, provided there's an Apple angle (but no iPhone lenses)
- High-end Bluetooth headphones from respected audio companies
- High-end speakers (especially AirPlay 2 ones) from respected audio companies
- 4K monitors with styling appropriate to Macs
- High-end accessories (think anodized aluminum, wood, leather)
- Cycling gadgets (provided they have an iPhone app to make it relevant to us.)
- Action cams with unique features (no straightforward GoPro clones or iPhone app.)
- Premium cases for 10.5-inch iPad Pro/MacBook Air/2016 15-inch MacBook Pro
- Premium charging docks for Apple Watch (need to really stand out from the masses here)
- Cool augmented reality apps (but no games or measuring apps)
- Feel-good stories with a specific Apple product angle (Apple Watch helping people with disabilities, etc.)

“This isn’t an exhaustive list – in general, think Apple-specific, premium, hi-tech.”

He is NOT interested in pitches regarding the following: bluetooth speakers, games, stickers, children's toys, low-end products, products with no relevance to an Apple site, company news (financials, acquisitions, etc.) unless it's an acquisition by Apple or Google.

When it comes to working with PR professionals, he says, "Summarize the pitch in the subject line and opening line. I get around 150 emails a day, so anything that doesn't get straight to the point is less likely to be read."

His biggest pet peeve is "circling back" emails, and when PR doesn't read his replies. He does not use social media to source story leads and does not accept pitches via social channels.

» CONTACT HIM BY EMAIL ONLY.
Jonathan Handel is a contributing editor at the Hollywood Reporter and covers the intersection of technology and entertainment, entertainment business, as well as law and labor issues. He also wants to receive information about gadget reviews, including mobile.

He offers these pitching preferences: "Before pitching, Google me to see what I cover! Include your release in the body of the email and as a Word doc attachment. Follow AP style please — in particular, one space after the end of a sentence, not two. And proofread your copy!"

He also advises PR professionals who have breaking news, to send him an embargoed release ahead of time as a courtesy. "That makes it possible for coverage to be more thoughtful and complete as well."

His pet peeves are: "Pitches that are so far out of my focus that it shows the publicist has no idea what I write. Also, don't follow up with further emails, and especially not with phone calls, unless you are very sure that the pitch is relevant to me."

He does not use social media for story ideas and does not accept pitches via social.

» CONTACT HIM BY EMAIL.

New streaming services from Disney and ultimately Comcast. Foldable cellphones. Hopefully, other game-changers in mobile.
Theresa Cramer is an editor for the EContent Magazine and Speech Technology covering news, news features, editorial page and commentary. She also oversees the online content for EContent Magazine Online and Speech Technology Online.

She advises PR professionals always to check their media lists, and says, "I get so many weird pitches that have absolutely nothing to do with my coverage area." She wants to hear about people behind the tech and explains, "Machines are only so interesting. The people creating them, thinking about them, finding new ways to use them are what interests me."

Her biggest pet peeve is when PR professionals email her to ask if they can email her more information. "We all have inboxes that are bursting at the seams. Do your part to keep them manageable. (Ditto for phone calls asking if I received your email...)

She says she gets ideas from social media but prefers not to be pitched via the social channels. "I prefer to receive pitches in my email. I like to keep everything in one, easily searchable/archivable place."

» CONTACT HER BY EMAIL.

Voice is going to continue to heat up as it becomes a bigger part of the devices we use every day. So will privacy issues. ... Data-driven companies are going to have to figure out how to satisfy savvy consumers' privacy concerns without blowing up their business models.
Shane Schick is the editor-in-chief at B2BNN covering technology, marketing and innovation strategy for business to business only. He is also a freelance journalist and is most interested in how technology becomes a part of culture, particularly organizational culture in terms of how people develop and share ideas, collaborate or exchange information or assets through new channels of communication.

When it comes to working with PR he explains, "Like a lot of journalists now, I cover several different "beats" within technology. For example, I edit B2B News Network which has a pretty unique audience of marketing, sales and IT professionals whose customers are other companies. That means I'm not interested in a lot of the more consumer-oriented tech stories that get pitched to other publications."

He advises PR professionals to customize a pitch, or even develop different versions of a release based on general business or trade title. Also, getting visual assets like images or videos in the release saves a ton of time. He also offers several of his pet peeves when working with PR, "Please don't e-mail a pitch and then forward the same e-mail less than four hours later with the words, 'Any interest?' (This actually happens). Please don't pitch an executive to be interviewed by phone and then, when I respond right away, ask if I could just do it via e-mail instead (This happens at least three times a week). Please forgive me if I can't respond and please do not write again by saying, Bumping this to the top of your inbox!, Please do not send me a pitch with bullet points to be discussed and then ask me, after I say I'm interested in doing the interview, to send detailed questions about what I'll be discussing."

When it comes to social media, Schick explains that Twitter is a go-to media tool for him. He is open to getting pitches via Twitter, but cautions, "You can try pitching me that way but it's not a great way to share a lot of detail. Where I've seen PR people use it well is by reaching out when I'm at a conference and they have a client with a good story to tell. If I wasn't aware of them it's a good alert to get and I've arranged interviews that way. Generally speaking, I'd say monitor social media to get ideas and then follow up via e-mail as a rule of thumb."

I'm interested in seeing how the most talked-about technologies of 2018, like AI and blockchain, are used in creative combinations with older technologies like the cloud and the Internet of Things in 2019.
James Oppenheim is the founder and technology editor of James Games Gadgets & Gizmos. He is also a contributor for the TODAY show on NBC and Sirius XM Radio covering topics on family technology, computer and video games, fitness technology and cooking technology. **His favorite tech subjects to cover are family technology, fitness tech and AV.** He is not open to pitches via social media and does not use Twitter or Facebook to gather leads and story ideas.

» **HE PREFERENCES TO RECEIVE PRESS MATERIALS VIA MAIL OR EMAIL.**
Steve Anderson is the executive editor for TAAR Report: The Anderson Agency Report, covering insurance agency technology. He is interested in receiving pitches and content regarding InsurTech. He advises PR professionals to do their research, and says, "Make sure to spend a few minutes to do your research. I focus on a particular niche within the insurance industry (the distribution system — insurance agents and brokers in North America). It’s a waste of my time and irritating when I received pitches for products and services that are obviously outside my focus." His biggest pet peeve is pitches that are not related to his focus.

He is interested in covering emerging technology and how it might affect the insurance industry globally. He explains, "A particular focus is on insurance technology startups (InsurTech companies). The technology can be quite broad ranging from autonomous vehicles to how satellites will improve the imagery available as well as internet access globally."

The only social media platform he accepts pitches via is LinkedIn. "My primary social platform is LinkedIn. I have been designated by LinkedIn as an ‘influencer.’ I don't mind pitches on this platform, but it may take longer for me to respond if I'm interested. Unfortunately, I get many pitches from salespeople who have not done their research and thought I'm a prospect."

» CONTACT HIM VIA EMAIL.
CISON PITCHING KIT METHODOLOGY

The traditional and non-traditional media professionals featured in the Cision Pitching Kits have profiles in the U.S. Cision Media Database, and are vetted by the company’s media research team to verify their positions as media professionals, influencer’s and bloggers. These individuals must meet certain additional criteria to be featured: they must cover the specific topic being highlighted in the kit, have given direct consent to be listed in the Media Database and must have been verified by the research team recently. The professionals must also be willing to be included in marketing materials and provide in-depth advice for PR pros.

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