

Introduction:

Your aim is to achieve positive media coverage.

It is important that local clubs and coaches build relationships with local media in order to generate their own media publicity.

This media guide is geared to help you understand what media is, how it works and how you can better promote your club, service, program or event through a variety of media channels.

Media coverage is never guaranteed but Tennis Australia hopes this guide will assist you in gaining increased exposure in your local area.

Tennis Australia's Communications Department generates significant amounts of publicity for tennis and tennis programs in Australia; however, it is impossible for the department to highlight every event, club, coach or program happening daily across the country.

The templates included in this guide will help provide you with a starting point and the Tennis Australia Communications Department are also available to assist you in proofing and editing potential media releases.

Sparking Media's Interest – LOCAL, LOCAL, LOCAL

The media is interested in what interests their audience. The more localised the information the better but most importantly make the story interesting.

Sports pages are interested in:

- Local tournament or local player results
- Local up and coming talent
- Local players/coaches/clubs that have won awards or achieved good results
- upcoming local events or programs.

News pages are interested in:

- Human interest stories (eg: local stringer going to work at the Australian Open, club volunteer reaches 50 years of service, families involved in the local club).

Preparing a media release

A media release conveys the more important details of your news/story to the media and is designed to entice them to cover the news/story.

Before you start writing a release you need to consider the following:

1. Remember: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How
2. What is the main point of your story?
3. Is your story interesting and if so, why?
4. Is your story LOCAL
5. Does your story have an interesting angle – the more interesting the more likely it is they will run it
6. Who is the best person to act as a spokesperson for your news/story. This person should be readily available after the release is sent out for comment and vision opportunities
7. Which media organisations are you targeting? Do you need to change your message to suit different media outlets?

Writing and Presenting a Media Release

- Communicate your message as clearly and succinctly as possible.
- The headline and the first two leading paragraphs are the most critical parts of your media release.
- Headlines should be no more than one line.
- The first two paragraphs need to contain all the hard facts and should not exceed more than 25 words per paragraph if possible.
- The opening paragraphs need to cover: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How.
- Keep your media release short – one page is ideal
- Keep it simple, if the journalist wants more information they will ring you
- Proof read – this is best done by someone else
- Include the contact details for the spokesperson and make sure they are available to take calls once the release has been sent out
- Use a clear font (Arial, Times New Roman)
- Use 12 point typeface for the main text

Why Publicity:

You are a source of stories and valuable information to local media who have a need and a want for new stories, new angles and most importantly local recognition.

Each member of a tennis community (volunteers, coaches and players) has a story that is potentially interesting and engaging for the local community.

Publicity gained through media campaigns is commonly described as “free” because, compared to advertising, there is little cost involved. Unlike advertising there are no guarantees of placement or message.

What is the Media?

The media is made up of a variety of different mediums – television, radio, internet, newspapers and magazines. Each form of media presents information in different ways and requires different things from you in order to get your story out there.

Television relies heavily on good visuals to tell a story, without the visual angle most television programs will not be interested.

Radio disseminates information through quick 15 seconds segments and longer segments that can last as long as five to ten minutes. In order to effectively communicate on radio people need to be brief and articulate.

Newspapers rely on both words and pictures to tell a story. They provide numerous possibilities for media coverage, from letters to the editor and coming events columns to sports or news stories and features.

Magazines rely more heavily than newspapers on good quality pictures and can often devote several pages to one story.

The Internet is an ever growing avenue for use as a media tool. From your own website and websites of news outlets to social media pages such as Twitter and Facebook.

Know your Local Media

It is important to familiarise yourself with your local media outlets, the stories they cover on a regular basis and the people responsible for the articles or programs that are relevant to you.

Just as important is determining the audience – who their readers and listeners are – and tailor your message to suit.

Be aware of deadlines. Some sections in local newspapers are completed up to a week before the paper goes to print and likewise some radio programs are pre-recorded days in advance.

Remember no media coverage is guaranteed; do not be upset if they don't run your story.

Plan Ahead

Make journalists aware of potential newsworthy stories in advance.

- Draw up a list of relevant media organisations and their relevant contact people that you want to target
- Be aware of deadlines
- Provide journalists with dates for competitions or programs (Hot Shots, Ballkids trials)
- Give them information when local players head interstate or overseas to compete, or when they are selected for a team
- When that player competes or returns from competing provide their results/photos

Distribution

Make contact with your local media outlets and find out who they would like you to send your media releases to. Also find out the email address of the editor and send it to them as well.

Once you have built a relationship with the journalist you can contact them by phone in the following days to confirm they have received it and find out if they need any further information.

The Communications department of Tennis Australia can also help provide you with contact details for local journalists as a starting base.

Always put the addresses of the people you are sending the release to in the Bcc field of an email. Do not include them in the To or Cc sections.

Images

Images often have a greater impact than words when it comes to selling a story.

Keep shots cropped tight so faces are visible



Make sure you include a caption with the image



Caption: Australian tennis player Sam Groth with local children from the Albert Park Primary School

If you use children make sure you have the parents or guardians permission before sending.

A good way to do this is to get parents to sign a disclaimer at the start of the year/term/program.

If you have a sponsor you need to promote get someone in the image to wear their brand or have the sponsor logo in the background of the shot.

