Contacting the local press to cover your fundraising activities can be a highly effective way to raise awareness and support for your organisation.

It might seem difficult to get press coverage, but local news outlets are always on the lookout for relevant community-interest stories to write about, so in reality your latest initiative could be just what they're searching for!

1. Find relevant local news outlets in your area to approach

This could be newspapers, radio or even TV. To find your targets, use a search engine to look for "your area news" or "your area radio" and make a note of the sites that come up.

2. Locate the right contact details

Search for the contact details for the "news editor", "news planner" or "forward planning" department. Some websites may include a "send us your story" form or email address, which you can use to send your press release to.

3. Prepare your press release

Sending a properly prepared press release is the best way to engage with a journalist. Remember, the less work a journalist has to do to turn your release into a story, the more likely they are to cover it!

Make their life as easy as possible by including all the key facts in an easy to read format and include links to your organisation's Localgiving page and any other relevant information.

Send your release in Word Doc format so that the journalist can easily copy and paste information. If you have them, send over any relevant graphics or photographs as separate files - these are a great way to illustrate a story and are always gratefully received!

4. Approaches your contacts

Now that you have your list of outlets and contacts, it's time to start "selling in" your story. If this is your first time approaching the outlet, you may be best off starting by emailing the journalist your press release and then following up with a phone call to ensure that they received it.

Here's an example you could use:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject: Press release – [press release title]</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dear [insert journalist name],</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am writing to you on behalf of [group name], a [your area]-based [charity/group] that [what your charity does] in the local area. On [event date] we will be taking part in a [fundraising initiative where] [details of initiative] and I thought that this may be of interest to your [readers/listeners].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More information can be found in the attached press release. If you need any further information or would like to arrange an interview with any of the relevant parties, please do not hesitate to get in touch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yours sincerely,</td>
</tr>
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5. Follow up

If you don't hear back from the journalist or news outlet, feel free to follow up — either by phone or email. When calling, always remain polite and professional. The best approach is often to simply enquire if the journalist has received your release and if they found it of interest.

Don't risk damaging your future relationship with the outlet by pestering them, two follow-ups is plenty. If they don't choose to cover your story, don't worry - you've still put your organisation on their radar so there's a better chance they will write about you next time!

6. Maximise your press impact

If you do gain coverage, make the most of it by sharing the online link via social media! If you're on Twitter, tweet to the journalist who covered your story thanking them for the article. This will help to develop the relationship for future opportunities.