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How to hit the headlines: finding and developing stories

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Disabled teen among
Hamas hostages



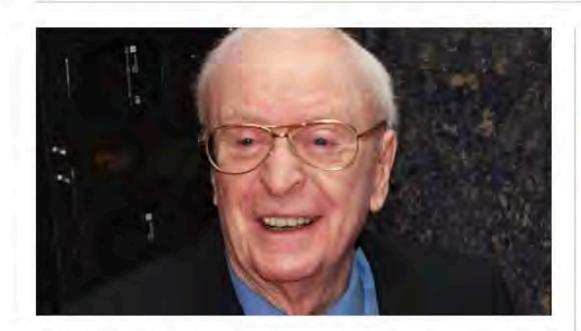
They came at dawn: inside the Kfar Aza kibbutz massacre



Conservatives triumph in New Zealand election, ending Ardern legacy



Australia says No in Aboriginal rights referendum



As Michael Caine confirms retirement: his greatest roles ranked



Carrie Johnson was 'the real person in charge during Covid'



Unmasked: the 'infertile' father of multiple children with different women



Flintoff given £9m for Top Gear crash

News values

"It is news values that give journalists and editors a set of rules

– often intangible, informal, almost unconscious elements –

by which to work, from which to plan and execute
the content of a publication or a broadcast."

Paul Brighton & Dennis Foy News Values

Newhess

"Stories must be contemporaneous if they are to achieve prominence... Newness will vary depending on the individual news cycle of the output."

Impact

"Information has impact if it affects a lot of people, particularly if those people constitute the publication's readership."

Clarity

"If an event or issue is too complicated to unravel, it is more likely to be spiked in favour of one that is easy to understand."

Proximity

"The importance of the audience in judging news stories is why you should make every effort to learn as much as you can about readers."

David Randall The Universal Journalist

Unexpectedness

"Every journalist is searching for the story that can make a reader think 'Wow' or 'Fancy that!'... The news media like nothing more than to surprise."

Agenda

"Sometimes news stories seem to be selected ... because they fit the agenda of the news organisation, whether to promote certain commercial or ideological interests or to engender a sense of audience loyalty and identification."

Tony Harcup Journalism Principles and Practice

Continuity

"More value is given to stories that relate to issues or events in the current spotlight...The follow-up story has to add to or extend yesterday's coverage with a news development."

Power elite

"Stories concerning powerful individuals, organisations, institutions or corporations are newsworthy precisely because this group has power so their actions are likely to impact the rest of us."

Tony Harcup Journalism Principles and Practice

Celebrity

"If you come up with a story featuring somebody who is already famous, you will have a better chance of it being picked up than you would with a similar story populated entirely by 'ordinary' people."

Tony Harcup Journalism Principles and Practice

Conflict

"Conflict is dramatic in all walks of life and it is a key role of journalism to report debate and to invite [readers] to form an opinion for one side or the other."

EXCUSIVITY

"The most prized stories tend to be exclusives... each paper will be in hot pursuit of a new twist to lend their coverage authority over their competitors."

Practicality

"Available space, time and even budget constraints are extrinsic factors that have a direct impact on what makes news."

It's good to talk

Make contacts internally and externally

- Engineers
- Designers
- Product planners
- Fleets
- Retail customers particularly high profile

Use online and offline methods

- Chat face to face
- Make connections on Twitter/X, LinkedIn, Instagram

Find out what's happening in their area that's extraordinary and exciting

What's going on?

... in your organization

- Talk to people in all areas
- Make connections
- Read the fine print

... in the news

- Comment from senior staff on the day's breaking news stories
- Use social media, Google alerts

... in the future

 Plan response to predictable events: budgets, elections, your own brand's anniversaries, Strictly/Bake Off/I'm a Celeb...

Where do you want to be?

Read/watch/listen to the media outlets where you want to gain coverage for your brand and its products

- Consume critically
- What stories worked really well for that reader/viewer/listener?
- Could you do the something similar but featuring your brand, and with a new twist?
- Could you do the opposite?

Keep an ideas file for inspiration

Al: Article Inspiration?

Describe a great article idea on the Ford Mustang Mach-E in Auto Express magazine in no more than 100 words

ChatGPT response:

Title: "Evolving the Icon: Exploring the Ford Mustang Mach-E's Impact on the Future of American Muscle"

This Auto Express magazine article dives into the Ford Mustang Mach-E, analyzing its shift to electric power and how it's reshaping the future of American muscle cars. We'll discuss its design, performance, and the driving experience, while considering its role in the automotive industry's electrification journey.

Further reading

- Paul Brighton and Dennis Foy News Values Sage 2007
- Tony Harcup Journalism Principles and Practice Sage 2021
- Brendan Hennessy Writing Feature Articles Taylor & Francis 2005
- Sarah Niblock 'What is news?' in *Print journalism: A Critical Introduction* edited by Richard Keeble, Taylor & Francis 2005
- Andrew Noakes 'Automotive Journalism' in Specialist Journalism edited by Barry Turner and Richard Orange, Routledge 2013
- David Randall The Universal Journalist Pluto Press 2007