

HOTELS & RESORTS

Public  
Relations  
Manual

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# 1

## Introduction

Public Relations (PR) is essential for any brand. It enables a company such as ours to tell everyone who we are, what we are doing and what the brand and hotels represent. It informs the press, the industry and our customers about our initiatives to improve the quality of our service, encourages customer loyalty and positions the hotel as the contemporary luxury hotel brand of choice for discerning travellers.

PR operates on several levels and is executed in a variety of different ways, but the ultimate goal is always the same. Any PR activity you undertake will aim to make the brand and your property as appealing as possible to the media. They, in turn, will build on the stories you give them to enhance your reputation for first-class service and a luxury hotel experience.

This guide should help to stimulate PR activities at your hotel or resort, irrespective of its size or location. It gives you simple advice and practical tools to help you promote your hotel or resort and the brand persuasively, powerfully and consistently.



# 3

What is  
PR?

The purpose of PR is to generate positive and controlled media coverage of your property or the brand - a crucial part of managing the reputation we have worked hard to achieve. Effective PR relies on meaningful and purposeful two-way communication between your hotel or resort and your target audiences. These include consumers (existing and potential customers), consumer and trade media, and your team members.

PR is very different from advertising as it is earned and not purchased. PR is concerned with relationship-building ... the coverage received gives third-party credibility to your hotel or resort and the brand.

Put simply, PR makes up our reputation. In other words, it influences what people think about Hotels and resorts. What people think about us determines whether they speak favourably or unfavourably about our properties, our staff and our service.

A favourable reputation is one of our most valuable assets. It determines whether we achieve good occupancy rates, whether guests actively choose a property over one of our competitors and then stay with us again. Reputation is created by successfully communicating our brand vision and core values.

The plan, the projects and the processes are the key components of a PR programme which can positively influence your public image. Everything we do, say, promote or experience can affect our public image.

### **What can PR do for my hotel?**

PR can attract more customers to your hotel throughout the year. It supports your guest volume by:

- Building and maintaining awareness of the property.
- Positioning and differentiating your hotel.
- Introducing new programmes and products.
- Supporting advertising and sales.
- Generating first-time visits.
- Stimulating guest loyalty.
- Persuading travel influencers to 'sell' our Hotels & Resorts.
- Imbuing team members with a sense of pride.

### **A painless approach to PR Planning**

How do you put together a PR plan that will produce the results you need? First, you need to evaluate your hotel's current position. Start by asking yourself the following questions, and keep your answers to these questions in mind as you review this toolkit:

- Has my hotel received media coverage in the past?
- What kind of press has my hotel received in the past?
- Is the hotel press information current and ready to use?
- Do I have relationships with all the reporters I think I should?
- What makes my hotel different from my competition in the area?
- What new programmes, rates or improvements does my hotel have?
- What events are upcoming at my hotel this year?
- Are the above programmes and events newsworthy?

### The role of a PR representative

A PR representative operates both inside the property and in the community. This person is in communication with the rest of the hotel staff, with the regional offices, with the local brand PR agency, and also with the local and regional media and community.

Among other things, a public relations representative within the hotel:

- DIRECTS the PR activities of the property to enhance the image of the hotel in local and regional markets.
- SERVES locally as the PR spokesperson of the hotel when the GM is unavailable.
- DEVELOPS an annual PR plan consisting of monthly PR actions in support of the PR goals of the hotel.
- ESTABLISHES CONTACTS with local, regional and national editors and other representatives of the media to maximise positive exposure and minimise negative exposure.
- DEVELOPS STORIES consistent with the goals for the property.
- DESIGNS, DRAFTS AND ISSUES press releases for dissemination to local and national media.
- WORKS WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY organisations and charities to maintain the property's image as a good neighbour and a friend to the community.
- ENSURES that all communications tools are consistent in design and appearance.
- WRITES AND UPGRADES the hotel's press kit and the biographies of key hotel personnel.
- MAINTAINS a current file of hotel photographs and key personnel.
- DEVELOPS AND COORDINATES press trips to the property.
- GREET VISITING JOURNALISTS upon their arrival at the hotel, hosts them when necessary, provides them with story ideas about the hotel.
- IS RESPONSIBLE for making all arrangements for photographers on assignment at the hotel.
- CREATES PROMOTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS, short and long-term, that leverage the core attributes of the hotel, with special emphasis on (but not limited to) F&B promotions.
- IS PRESENT at any event at the hotel where the hotel will be highly visible, either to the press or to the community at large.

### Internal contacts

A property's PR programme depends on effective relationships with marketing, sales, food and beverage, human resources and the General Manager to function efficiently.

As a PR representative, you will work closely with all of these internal groups to:

- Identify stories and promotional ideas.
- Secure their support and help to set up PR activities as needed.
- Source information.
- Obtain approval for all media information before issue.

# 4

## Press materials

### Developing a Press Kit

The most basic PR tool for your hotel is a high-quality press kit, which should contain:

1. A fact sheet with the following information (see sample):
  - The property's name.
  - Address and telephone number.
  - General Manager's name.
  - Number of rooms and number of suites.
  - Number of restaurants and the names of restaurant specialities.
  - Number of bars and lounges.
  - Special features: pool, sauna, games room, health or exercise club, beach, etc.
  - Catering accommodations: name and size of ballrooms, capacities.
  - Name and size of meeting rooms, capacities.
  - Parking information.
  - Resident Manager's name.
  - Chef's name.
  - Interesting places to visit near the hotel.
2. A brief description of the hotel's location - is it historic, in the business district, near the airport?
3. A description of any art used in the decoration of the property.
4. A thorough description of the restaurants and bars including the specialities of each.
5. Photographs of the property with both interior and exterior views, with any special features for which the hotel is known or recognised.
6. A brief biographical sketch of the General Manager.
7. A brief biographical sketch of the Executive Chef.

### Finding stories

The media is interested in hotels as they tend to contain plenty of headline-making people. So the story is usually ready and waiting; often the difficult part is identifying the story in a timely manner.

For someone not experienced in newsgathering, this can be a bewildering experience. However, listed on the next page are some types of stories that make news.

**Remember: stories that could make the front page of a small local newspaper may be of little or no interest to a national daily, so give this some thought when you come up with an idea.**

**STORY IDEAS - PRINT**

- **Interesting guests** - celebrities, governmental officers, foreign visitors, speechmakers, entertainers.
- **Interesting staff** - Chef's specialties, what some staff members do in their leisure time - champions in sports, racing car drivers, etc.
- **Anniversaries and significant numbers** - the 50,000th guest, the 100,000th honeymoon couple, how many dishes washed in a year, the number of people fed in a year, anniversaries of the hotel's opening, the number of bags carried by a Bellboy, the number of eggs used in the kitchen each year, the most expensive suite.
- **Changes and promotion** - of personnel within the hotel, retirements.
- **Community/charity projects** - allowing disadvantaged children the use of the hotel's recreational facilities, providing special services to the disabled, offering the hotel for disaster victims, art shows, contests, participation in events outside the hotel.
- **Environment** - all environment-related stories e.g. Green Globe Certification, contribution to green initiatives and events.

**STORY IDEAS - BROADCAST**

- **Interviews** with prominent guests.
- 'How-to...' programmes with hotel staff (how to cook, clean, save energy, decorate interiors).
- **Interesting team members** with whom you should be familiar (the Doorman has been there 20 years, the concierge from France, the Chef).
- **Samples** of entertainment available in the hotel.
- **Special events** held at the hotel.
- **Holiday/festive** decorations at the hotel.

**Please note:** If you wish to publicise the use of any individual e.g. chef, celebrity, etc, you must obtain their written permission beforehand. This is a legal requirement.

**Press Releases - Finding a story**

The PR representative should be present at the General Manager's weekly meeting as well as at the Sales Department meeting. These two meetings provide information on everything that will take place in the hotel in the near future. Ideas for stories and releases should be clear.

Should you come across a story at one of the meetings, or elsewhere, we recommend the following:

- The first thing to do is gather together all the facts: who, what, where, when, why and how.
- Be very precise about names, dates, initials, ages, titles, brand names and organisation names. When a newspaper publishes your release, the editor takes full responsibility for the facts. Spelling mistakes reflect badly on him or her, and you may lose his or her respect.
- Ensure you have written permission for use of any individual's name.
- When you know you have all the facts, write the story. Tell it as simply, precisely and clearly as you can. Avoid long words and elaborate phrases; the editor will probably rewrite your story anyway. Make your release as short as you can; editors rarely read past the first page of a release.

### Things to remember about writing press releases

- Use the press release template for your property (see toolkit).
- Always type the release using Verdana, font size 10.
- Follow the margins shown on the layout.
- Do not try to fit everything on one page if it seems impossible. Use another page.
- Make sure you date the release and give a contact name and phone number for further information (usually your own).
- Write numbers up to nine in words, and numbers over nine (10, 11, 12, etc) in figures.
- Do not add your own opinions - only the facts of the story. If necessary, include quotes from people concerned in the story as long as the opinion is attributed to someone.
- Do not use artificial superlatives.
- Always tell the TRUTH!
- Remember that a release should be kept to the point. For short stories, remember that a one-page distribution is more cost-effective than a two-page distribution.
- Don't be afraid to use images to illustrate your press release.
- When promoting packages make sure you include extensive details (e.g. dates, location, cost of package). Please upload all your key packages to the ConradHotels.com website.
- Provide as much advance notice as possible of your package.

### Before releasing your story to the media

- Make sure your release is in the correct format.
- Check facts and get permission for any quotes and use of names, especially from outside companies.
- Look carefully for errors and misspelled words. Have someone proofread the release several times to ensure it is correct.
- Send a copy of your press release to your regional representative, brand PR, and legal team for review and approval as necessary. Send the final version to all for their records.

### Why some press releases do not work

Remember that the media is interested in NEWS. They are not interested in stories that are disguised advertisements, stories that have limited local interest or stories in which the public at large has no interest. Your press releases should tell a story that the public is interested in hearing. A release has to be informative and appealing if the media is going to use it. Furthermore if the public is able to participate in the event/package etc your release has more chance of working.

### Helpful hints

**Grammar** - Even the best writers occasionally miss errors and typos. Make sure you proofread, edit and reproof your release.

**Lack of content** - Make sure you answer all the 'W' questions - Who, What, Where, When, Why and How - to help the journalist by having basic essential information already included.

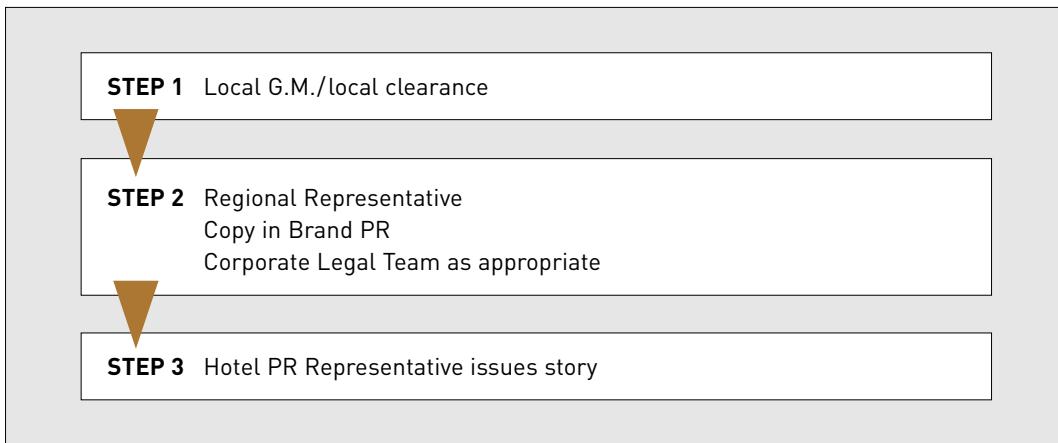
**Buy me!** - Do not write a release like an advertisement. Journalists are **not** our marketing partners. Their job is to report balanced information that has wide public interest. Avoid exclamation points and superlatives - they are a turn-off to the media.

Please ensure you post your hotel releases on the Press Room & Media link on your own hotel website and keep this updated.

**Internal approval procedure**

It is important we present **our** Hotels & Resorts consistently to our audiences by making sure our messages fit both local and corporate needs. We also need a means of ensuring a common set of brand values and messages are communicated regularly, wherever there is a hotel or resort.

We therefore have a three-step approval procedure for all hotel-related press material that we plan to distribute to journalists:



**Please note:** Only the Brand Management Team should create corporate/brand related material.

## Photography

Using photographs and captions will increase the chances of the media using your press release. Images are extremely important and help to illustrate your story. Please make sure all images included on a press release are lo-resolution (72 dpi). This will ensure the size of the file you are emailing will not be too large. Here are some guidelines:

### Photos

Ensure your photographs are professionally taken and represent what we sell - luxury. Only use photos that are:

- **Impressive.** They must capture attention and prompt a second look. A group of people posing for the camera is unlikely to be dramatic enough for most publications.
- **The correct format** for the publication. Publications will usually require hi-resolution (300 dpi) digital images (jpeg). Email jpeg for immediate use.
- **Sharp/well composed.** The pictures must be sharp and well composed - showing facilities, people, location etc to best effect.
- **On brand.** Consider using a prop (e.g. a hotel sign) that will quickly identify your property. Avoid being too 'commercial' with excessive signage or logos that could dominate the main subject.

## Captions

Typed photo captions must be included with any photos you send out to the media. First, they increase the likelihood that your photo will be used, and second, they decrease the chance that your photo will be unidentifiable.

The caption must explain the picture clearly and accurately. Captions must:

- Contain the full property name.
- Describe the image in a few words.
- Be specific and easy to read.
- Be written in the present tense.
- Describe the action in the photograph and identify all the participants and their titles, as well as where and when the photograph was taken.

Before sending out any photos or slides with captions, check to make sure all the names are spelled correctly and are applied to the right person.

## Logos

The media may be able to use your properties logo in their feature - be sure to provide either a hi-resolution (300dpi) jpeg or eps of your logo.

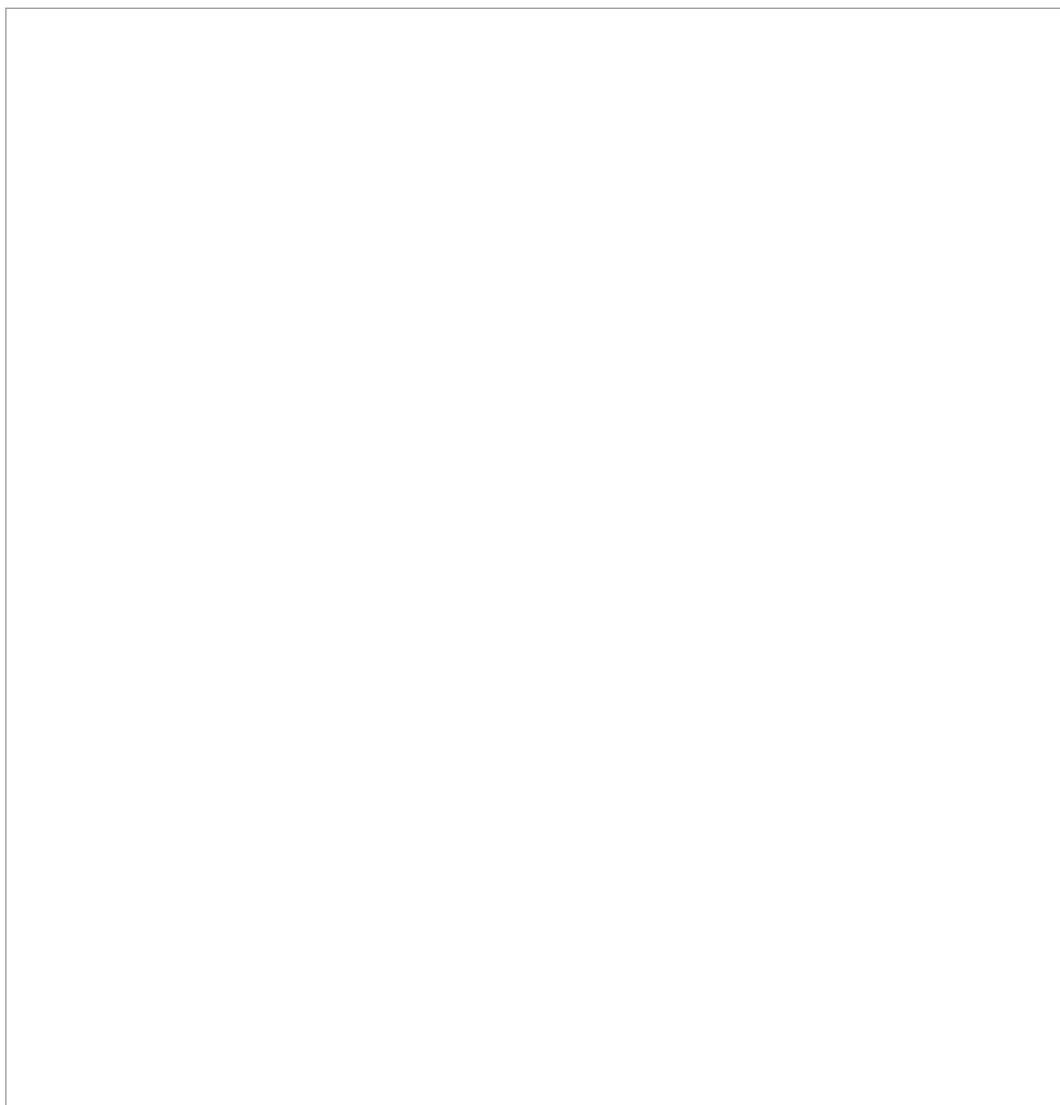
## Newsletters

Hotels & Resorts distributes two external Brand Newsletters on a regular bi-monthly basis: **Pure Hotel**, a consumer newsletter and **Your News**, a media newsletter. Both of these are designed to reflect the contemporary luxury of the brand.

**Your News**, the media newsletter, is designed to communicate the latest news and creative stories to a global media audience. This newsletter relies on creativity from each hotel to ensure it remains relevant. A creative story or package will always be selected for this newsletter. This should be one that is unlikely to be purchased, but is designed to engage with the media. Therefore the emphasis should be on the most expensive/best/first ever... or the most quirky. Local experiences are also key. For example:

### **Tokyo presents a gastronomic getaway**

Experience the very best of Japanese cuisine at the Hotel Tokyo. Learn to make sushi from the city's leading celebrity chef who will take you round the famed fish market to select your ingredients. Then enjoy the fruits of your labours overlooking the bay before a leisurely afternoon visiting the city's numerous attractions. Another gourmet experience awaits you in the evening at Gordon Ramsay's famed restaurant....



**Pure Hotel** is the consumer newsletter and the core objective is to drive sales. Pure Hotel includes two brand or region wide packages such as Romance, Bounce Back, Amex, etc and one or two destination driven packages from the hotels. All packages submitted for Pure Hotel should be simple and offer obvious added value, thereby encouraging sales.

For example:

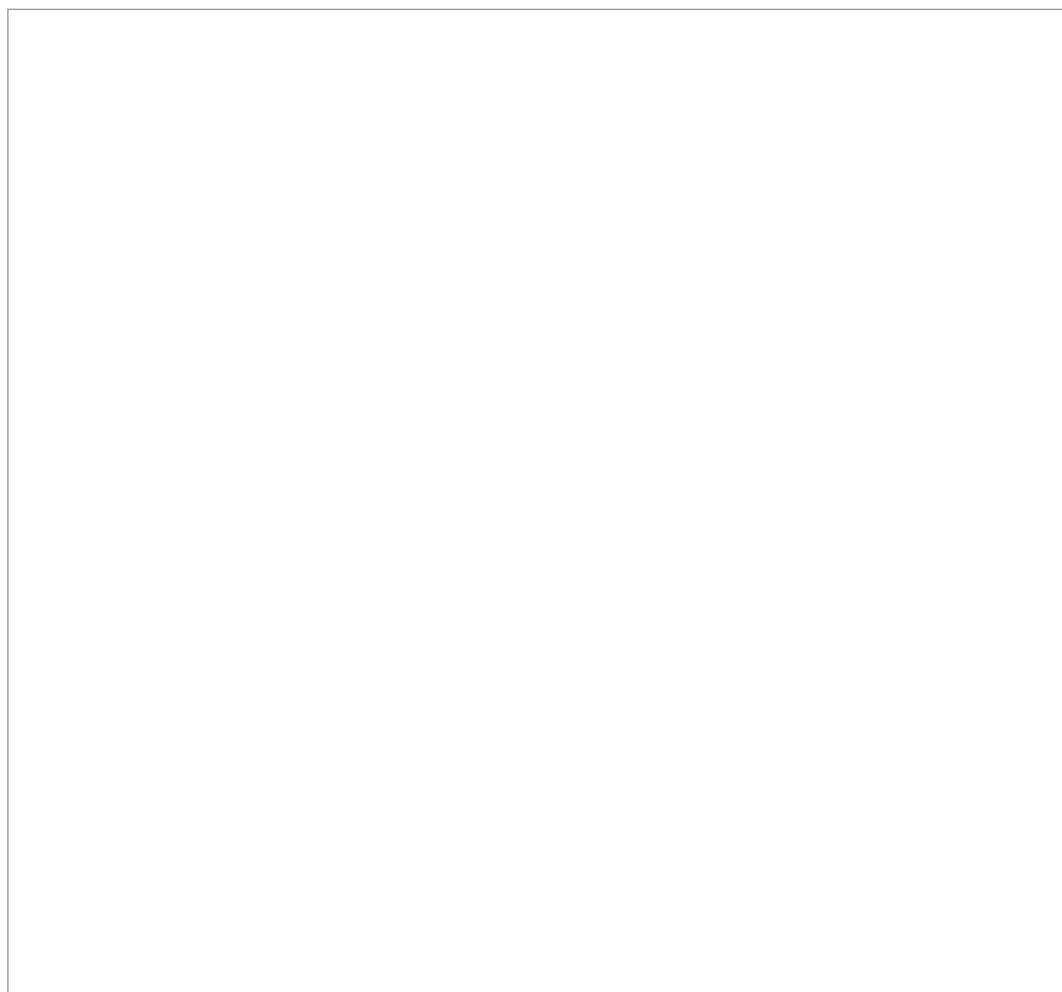
**Spa Retreat**

A weekend overnight stay including breakfast, dinner with one bottle of house wine, two spa treatments from a pre-agreed list and late check out on Sunday.

Or

**Business Benefits**

A business focused package that is aimed at the solo traveller and includes early check in, overnight stay, room service breakfast, and late check out.



**Please note: All packages MUST BE BOOKABLE ONLINE.**

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## Working with the media

### General media enquiries

If you receive a media enquiry about your hotel (e.g. for images, further information, press visits etc) please ensure you respond as soon as possible, preferably within a day. You should get back to the journalist even if it is just to say you have seen their email and will respond shortly. This will ensure that the journalist is aware of our position. It will also allow us to capitalise on all available opportunities. If the request is from a journalist who you consider not to be suitable for a luxury brand please politely decline. If you are at all unsure please contact your regional representative, a member of the PR Network or the Brand Team.

**Please note:** If you would like to contact key media such as broadcast TV or Radio, national print and the news wires then prior consultation and permission is required from the regional representatives and the brand.

### Media interviews

While the PR representative provides information to the media, the General Manager should be the source of all quotes about the hotel and he or she should also be the person interviewed by the media for stories on the property. The PR Manager should serve as the last resort for interviews.

Should the media wish to ask questions about Hotels & Resorts, or to request information of a legal or a financial nature, these enquiries should be directed to your Hotels & Resorts regional PR office or brand management team.

When you are approached by a member of the press, whether television, radio or print, here are a few things to remember:

- FIND OUT as much as you can about your interviewer and the audience:
  - What kind of questions are you going to be asked?
  - What is the topic of the interview?
  - Is the interviewer likely to have any bias about the issues to be discussed?
- HAVE AN AGENDA. Think about three or four points you want to make in the interview before it begins. Think about how you would like these points to sound on television or appear in the newspaper. Practice saying these points out loud. Know your points very well and try to make them early in the interview.
- THINK ABOUT ANY QUESTIONS you would prefer not to be asked, and plan how to respond to them positively.
- HOLD PRACTICE INTERVIEW SESSIONS with your assistant, your spouse or your co-workers.
- BELIEVE in your message. Know more than the reporter about your topic.
- BE ON TIME for the interview.
- DON'T RESPOND to hypothetical questions, the ("what if...?") as your predictions are unlikely to prove accurate. It is best to say that you would be happy to give a response should the hypothetical situation arise, but not before that.
- DON'T REPEAT NEGATIVE WORDS back to the reporter. Your audience will only remember that you said these negative words.
- DON'T LOSE YOUR TEMPER or become defensive. Doing either will make you look guilty or say things you will regret later. Stay calm.
- NEVER LIE. You're almost certain to be discovered.
- DON'T BE AFRAID of silence - don't feel like you must talk when there is a pause. Take your time in answering questions or ask the reporter to repeat the question if you need more time.
- ILLUSTRATE YOUR POINTS with examples, personal experiences and anecdotes. This will keep your audience interested in what you are saying.
- BE PROUD of the Hotels & Resorts name and don't be shy about saying it.

**Please note:** You should be sensitive to cultural dynamics.

### 'On the record'?

During your contact with the media, they will assume that what you are saying is 'on the record' and therefore it may be published or broadcast without your permission. Generally, it is wise never to speak 'off the record' as these remarks are often repeated. As the PR representative, you should make everyone aware of the perils of speaking 'off the record'.

### The news business

Any good PR representative needs to know how the various types of media work. Here are some tips about the most important media:

#### Newspapers

- Editors and reporters at newspapers are constantly fighting a deadline and need as much advance notice of important guests and events as possible.
- They must allocate their time carefully if they are to make their deadlines, so you need to know when they work in order to get them your information before the deadline.
- If your city or regional papers come out at different times, make sure that one paper is not always getting the story before another.

#### Columnists

- Columnists have long been the best friends of the PR practitioner. They can, though, also be enemies if they are not treated properly.
- If there is more than one columnist in your city, share your stories, giving a story to one columnist one day and to another the next day.
- Individually invite the columnists to lunch at the hotel, for coffee or a drink after work. Let them see any improvements that have been made. Tell them what upcoming events will be held at the hotel and who will be participating.
- If a journalist writes an entertainment column, invite him or her to the entertainment you have in the hotel and share your plans for the coming season.
- It is a good idea to call columnists whenever you find a good story for them. They will begin to know you as a friend, not just someone who is trying to get publicity for the property.

#### Television

- At the television station, deal with either the assignment editor or someone on the planning desk. Talk to them first, and arrange to give the assignment to a reporter - then work with the reporter and/or cameraperson assigned to cover the story.
- Electricity is crucial for television equipment and you must consider its availability whenever and wherever you plan events - especially outdoors. It is wise to check the power needs of television crews and if possible, arrange to meet them before they arrive to cover a story. If the event is large, create an area in the back for TV crews that is on a raised platform.

#### When being interviewed for television

- DRESS CONSERVATIVELY, be well groomed. Wear nothing that might distract your audience from your message.
- WHEN SITTING, sit up straight, smooth down your jacket and straighten your tie.
- BE CLEAR and concise, and avoid using slang or abbreviations that people might not understand.
- BE CONVERSATIONAL, have an open, honest, cooperative attitude towards the press person. Smile if appropriate - it will help people warm to you.
- MAINTAIN EYE CONTACT with your interviewer - forget about the camera.

### Press trips

Individual and group press trips are an important way of gaining favourable media exposure for our hotels and resorts. Individual press trips usually offer a one-night or a weekend stay and include hotel tours, activities and meals at the hotel restaurants, as well as a tour of the local area.

A group press trip usually offers up to five nights, depending on the destination and whether it is a long or short haul trip. For example, US press groups visiting Brussels would stay at least three nights.

### Why do we host press trips?

Press trips, sometimes called 'familiarisation trips', provide the opportunity for media to familiarise themselves with all aspects of your hotel, and are of particular interest to new properties. They are also important to properties in a very competitive market or those in less popular destination destinations.

Press trips are the best time to showcase your hotel or resort and gain positive exposure in the media and with your guests. As such ALL journalists should ALWAYS be treated as VIPs and receive the highest services and where possible, best facilities.

Press should always be coordinated with the hotel's Director of Sales and Marketing, and with the approval of your General Manager.

### Group press trips

Having an airline partner is vital to the success of press trips. In most cases, the hotel is expected to provide transportation for the press group visit. If you don't have an airline partner, you should work to build relationships with one urgently.

#### When inviting press guests, you will be expected to provide the following on a complimentary basis:

- Round-trip transportation.
- Accommodation.
- Airport transfers.
- Hotel meals.
- Access to all hotel facilities.
- Sightseeing trips.
- Welcome reception.
- Tax and gratuities.

All incidental charges, such as telephone and fax charges, in-room movies, laundry and use of the mini-bar, are the responsibility of the visiting journalists, and you should obtain an imprint of their credit cards at check-in to cover these costs.

#### Always provide reporters with the following:

- Hotel press kit.
- Access to management for interviews - General Manager, Executive Chef.
- Tour of the hotel.
- A welcome letter, agenda and gift (e.g. fruit basket).

**Please note:** If you are unsure whether the media is of the right quality please either contact your regional representative, PR Agency or the Brand Team.

### Group press visits

- Agree all press trips with your regional representative and Brand PR.
- Develop a theme. For example, you could plan a trip around the property's business travel package.
- Submit your press trip proposal to the General Manager and/or the Director of Sales and Marketing for approval.
- With assistance from your sales and marketing team, secure airfares from the airline partner.
- Find out when the hotel has lower capacity and rooms available.
- Offer press trips in writing. Include a story idea related to the trip's theme and tailored to the particular publication. Be clear about what is complimentary and what will be chargeable.
- Contact your local tourism office for help with sightseeing tours.
- Draft an agenda, listing activities by day. Make sure it allows the journalists enough free time to pursue their own story angles.
- Plan either a welcome or a departure reception so the journalists can mingle with each other and meet important members of the hotel staff.
- Place a welcome letter and gift in the reporters' room. Make it clear which of services the reporter may use (e.g. gym, pool) and which services they will be billed for (movies, laundry). This will prevent any misunderstandings at the end of the visit. Include your direct line and offer any assistance they might need.
- After the press visit, send follow-up emails thanking the journalists for visiting your property, offering any additional assistance they might need to write their story.

### Individual press visits

If you are approached directly by a journalist requesting a visit, **ask if the reporter is on assignment** (if so, coverage of the hotel can be expected) or if it is a personal trip. Only provide complimentary accommodation if the journalist is on assignment, or if the hotel has several rooms available and it is important to build a long-term relationship.

- If the reporter plans to file a story, you should offer all the amenities and benefits you would to a group press trip, except the welcome reception.
- If you feel the journalist does not intend to file a story and only needs accommodation, the PR representative may decide to offer the reporter a special discounted press rate, at his/her discretion.
- Use a Media Enquiry form to help you assess incoming requests from journalists. Make a copy of the example in the toolkit and use one whenever you speak to members of the media to help you keep track of their requests and report results.

**Keeping records**

We recommend you use a form like this as a prompt for what you need to know and also as a means of building a profile of your media relations. Complete and save this form after each journalist contact:

N

## MEDIA ENQUIRY REQUEST

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

JOURNALIST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PUBLICATION TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF PUBLICATION \_\_\_\_\_ CIRCULATION OF PUBLICATION \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

DEADLINE \_\_\_\_\_ STORY DATE \_\_\_\_\_

REQUEST \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

ACTION TAKEN \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

RESULTS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DATE COMPLETED \_\_\_\_\_ CC: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Personnel announcements**

Personnel announcements are a good way to gain media coverage of your property. Most trade journals, such as magazines like **TTG-Europa**, which focus on travel industry news or hotel news, devote a page each issue to appointments. Editors particularly, welcome short announcements of appointments, promotions or retirements.

You should also plan on sending personnel announcements to your newspaper contacts. You will need to use your judgement here. A national paper may not print an announcement that your hotel restaurant has a new Sous-Chef, but a local paper may find this very interesting and may want to interview the new arrival.

### **Writing biographies**

In most cases, biographies of leading executives or spokespeople need only be a few paragraphs long. Here are some additional guidelines:

- The title of the biography should be 'Biography: Name and Title' all in capital letters and single spaced, centred and in bold.
- In the first paragraph, summarise the individual's overall expertise and their title, then describe his or her current responsibilities.
- Start with the most recent information about the person and work backwards, chronologically to his or her education. At the end, include any relevant civic or professional organisations and activities.
- For degrees, you can use initials (e.g. BA, MA) or you can spell out the names of the degrees (bachelors degree or masters degree). Make sure not to mix your styles.
- With the titles of people and organisations, capitalise only the proper names. Most titles are not capitalised.

### Media lists

It is your responsibility to make regular contact with the most important media to the Hotels & Resorts mission. A key to success is having friends in the media. If you know the person you're talking to, and he or she knows you, information is much more easily transmitted. This media liaison work doesn't have to take a lot of time. An occasional lunch or drink is all it takes to build and maintain this contact. You should be familiar with:

#### Newspapers

- News editor.
- Features editor.
- Food and wine editors.
- Travel editor.
- Finance editor.
- Women's page editor.
- Food, wine and travel columnists.

#### Television and radio stations

- Planning desk editors or news planning editors.
- Assignment editors.

#### Magazines

- Editor.
- Food, wine and travel editors.
- Food, wine and travel columnists.

#### Also develop contacts with

- Wire services.
- Regional newspapers.
- General news magazines.
- Financial and business press.
- Trade press.
- Travel trade press.

A key part of your PR toolkit is your media list. This list will contain the names, titles, addresses (email and postal) and phone and fax numbers of the media that are important to you in securing regular coverage for your hotel or resort.

#### Take notes

Keep notes on your media contacts so that you build up a picture of their needs and interests, and can tailor story ideas to them. Usually this helps to cement good relationships and show that you care about giving them opportunities that work for them, as well as for Hotels & Resorts. Keep a record of such items as:

- Topics the reporter writes about (i.e. travel, hotels, food, etc.).
- What (if anything) he or she has written about properties.
- Specific likes and dislikes.
- Personal information (information about family, children, pets, etc.).
- When you last spoke to the journalist and should call next.

### Media Evaluation

Measurement and evaluation is an essential part of any public relations campaign. It is an ongoing process and we need to ensure that we take the time to establish what works, and what doesn't, so that we know how to progress.

The media coverage we attain ensures we are able to illustrate how well our hotels and resorts are doing from a media perspective. It also allows us to showcase the good results to our stakeholders.

It is always extremely useful to compile and evaluate coverage on a monthly basis so that we can compare and contrast our results.

Measuring the Equivalent Advertising Value (EAV) is the most common method of determining the worth of the campaign.

EAV = Advertising Value x 3. The calculation process for the EAV is as follows:

- Assess the size of the piece e.g. a quarter page.
- Take the value of advertising for a quarter page and multiply by a figure of 3.
- The total value is the PR Value or EAV.

### Media Coverage Compilation

The general process for compiling all the clippings is as follows:

- When a media clipping comes through, scan the image and paste onto a word document.
- At the top of the document the following details should be listed:

Publication: X

Date: X

Circulation: X

EAV: X

Article summary: ...

- Subsequent to evaluation, each clipping should be listed in chronological order in a comprehensive Excel chart. This should be placed at the front of each months coverage booklet for reference.

Publication	Date	Article summary	Circulation	EAV (£/US\$)
Attitude	May 2008	Hotel Tokyo in destination feature	70,000	6,000
HotelBusiness	29 June 2008	Hotel to debut in the Algarve	8,064	900

- The total circulation and total EAV should also be calculated and highlighted at the end of the chart.

**Please note:** It is a good practice to avoid thanking reporters for their coverage of your hotel as it can take away from the fact that the coverage was earned and was newsworthy; rather, compliment the thoroughness of the article or report, the angle of the story or the reporter's attention to detail.

### Example of media evaluation

Publication: HOTELS Food & Beverage Bite

Date: January 2008

Circulation: 60,000

EAV: £2,343 / \$4,690

Article summary: Hotel Miami raises the Stakes



### Hotel Miami Raises The Stakes With Level 25

Level 25, the F&B / entertainment concept encompassing the entire 25th floor of the recently renovated Hotel Miami, is a multifaceted space that encourages guests to move seamlessly from lounge to restaurant and even on to private events.

With ultramodern interior design by Johnson Interiors and Architects, the space reflects the sophisticated but fun aura of the various venues, which include the 80-seat, all-day dining Atrio restaurant, The Bar at Level 25, and The Room at Level 25 (which accommodates up to 800 guests for private dinners or events).

Level 25 centers on The Bar, which is surrounded by chic, cabana-style banquette seating. A palette of dark charcoals, slates and brown blends with the glass surroundings to convey an urban modernity.

The Bar then segues seamlessly into the slightly more formal dining room, where deep reds and rich materials convey a sense of the lushness and indulgence reflected in Atrio's global menu (think entrees that blend the flavors of the East and West). Executive Chef Michael Gilligan also offers a tasting menu in Atrio's new private wine room, complete with optional wine pairings.

"When the opportunity arose to update our public spaces on the 25th floor, we decided to create a true destination" says Hotel Miami General Manager "We want to provide a one-of-a-kind experience that will appeal to international travelers who have enjoyed the world's best restaurants and hippest lounges, and desire that ambiance as part of their hotel stay".

The menus for Level 25 were designed to satisfy any desire - from caviar service or a seafood raw bar to afternoon tea, and from "pintxos" (small plates) to specialty evening cocktails. A selection of more than 40 wines by the glass is also offered.

Samples of items from the pintxos menu:

#### Cold

Sea scallop tiradito  
Cod fish esqueixada  
Saffron sautéed Spanish artichokes

#### Hot

Duck confit cazuelita  
Spicy stuffed piquillo peppers  
Foie gras and goat cheese empanadas



# 7

## Crisis communications

### How to define a crisis

By definition, a crisis is usually an event or series of events that is unexpected and, potentially, damaging to our reputation. Crises often present situations for which you are unprepared. They tend to progress very rapidly, and if you do not take control, they can take control of you.

You will often have no choice but to react, as best you can, as a crisis evolves. There are, however, ways to prepare and manage the growth of a crisis situation, so that Hotels & Resorts is perceived as competent, responsible and in control.

Today's most timely concerns are:

- Damage to a property caused by fire, flood, nature or terrorist activities.
- Guests accidents or death on property.
- A 'celebrity' misdemeanour whilst staying at a Hotel property.
- Security incident.
- Criminal or police activity.
- Public demonstrations.
- Major natural disaster.
- Food poisoning.

Should such events unfold and become public, Hotels & Resorts is prepared to give an appropriate, timely and caring response. If you become aware of a crisis, here is a simple action plan.

#### A. Forming a Crisis Management Team

Crisis management begins with the formation of a team of appropriate executives, who are responsible for setting policies on crisis responses, designating a spokesperson and communicating actively between group members. The following are included in this team and **all of them should be notified in the event of a crisis:**

- Hotel General Manager.
- Hotel PR representative.
- Regional PR representative.
- Corporate PR (Linda Bain).
- SVP Brand (Richard Blamey).
- Brand Communications team.
- Human Resources Representative.
- Security Representative.
- Legal Representative.

#### B. Crisis assessment

A crisis is a relative thing, so one of the first steps in effective damage limitation is deciding how bad things are, and how bad they may become. Once a crisis begins to take shape, the crisis management team should determine best, and worse-case scenarios, and a plan for dealing with any developments.

A best-case scenario may only require issuing a press statement and responding to a handful of calls before the crisis is dealt with. A worst-case scenario may mean you have to deal with journalists from national and international media, undergo daily coverage from your local press, and have to hold a news conference to explain the specific issues.

Crises can be divided into several categories, but the most important distinction is between those involving human actions, or those that are acts of nature. A major health and safety failure is an example of the first category; a flood is an example of the latter. The legal exposure of Hotels & Resorts, and its public image, will be in much greater jeopardy from a crisis that involves negligence or wrongdoing. Conversely, a disaster-oriented crisis like a storm or fire is generally not a severe PR problem unless guests and team members are injured, killed or not properly taken care of in an emergency.

### C. Action checklist

**Contact everyone** who should be involved in the crisis communications effort:

- Hotel General Manager.
- Hotel PR representative.
- Regional PR representative.
- Corporate PR.
- SVP Brand.
- Brand Communications team.
- Human Resources Representative.
- Security Representative.
- Legal Representative.

**Obtain** as much information about the crisis as possible - as quickly as you can.

**Designate** one spokesperson, and make sure the hotel staff knows that only the spokesperson may talk to the press. This should be the hotel General Manager when at all possible. If the General Manager is not available, the hotel PR representative is the appropriate spokesperson.

**Don't panic.** Take a minute to relax, take a deep breath. Being nervous will not help you make the right decisions, so take time to calm yourself.

**Listen** carefully to the journalists when they call with questions. Get as much information as possible from each reporter. Find out: Who has the reporter spoken to? What evidence is there?

**Do not let** reporters pressure you into talking before you are ready, but do be responsive to them. If you do not have enough information and there is no more time before their deadline, you must tell them that you just cannot talk yet. Make sure they know you are doing your best to help them.

**Do not be afraid** to tell the reporter that you need some time to gather the facts. Ask the reporter when the deadline is, and get back to them prior to the deadline.

**Make sure** your actions reflect your concerns. If company policy and the situation allow it, let the media see how you and your staff are working to remedy the situation and what kind of a command centre you have set up to deal with the crisis.

**Be compassionate.** If your crisis involves loss of human life or injury, express sadness - show your sensitivity.

**Be aware** of your facial expressions and body language. Be relaxed, but not overly relaxed. Keep eye contact with the reporter. If it is appropriate to smile, do so. If not, look pleasant.

**Don't admit guilt** or responsibility. Do not speculate about responsibility. If a press person asks, respond that not all the facts are available yet.

**Don't be defensive** or hostile - this may seem like an admission of guilt.

#### D. Communicating with the media

Generally, your most important concern during a crisis is guest and staff safety, followed by the media. The media, and the coverage you receive, will directly or indirectly determine the extent to which you handled the crisis effectively. There are a few essential pointers to remember during any interview, including:

**Honesty** - Do not appear evasive. Provide as much verified information as you feel you are obliged to disclose. Reveal as much as you can up front, but NEVER SPECULATE. Do not expect that if you request something be 'off the record' that it will not show up in print. While most reporters will honour your request, they may take the gist of what you said and seek confirmation from a different source.

**Fairness** - If you are used to dealing with a favourite journalist, particularly one who may be sympathetic, your inclination may be to treat him or her differently than others. The best approach is to treat every journalist equally, as this will increase your chance of keeping them on side.

**Intelligence** - Few journalists have extensive backgrounds in hospitality, business, food and beverage, or other technical fields of managing properties. Do not take their lack of familiarity with your property as a weakness. Instead, explain the position in a down-to-earth, articulate way. Also avoid overt selling or 'cheerleading' for the company. In a crisis situation, such talk sounds shallow.

**Brevity** - The best responses are often the briefest. Most TV soundbites are only 10 to 15 seconds, so try to provide succinct response in that amount of time.

**Sincerity** - Attempts to force humour will backfire. Your concern must be apparent at all times. Do not speculate about the causes behind a crisis, or affix blame if there is any question about how things happened. Do not discuss hypothetical situations, rumours or 'what if...?' questions.

**Patience** - You may be asked the same question three or four times, rephrased in similar ways. It is better to repeat yourself than to have your response misunderstood. If journalists continue to press for information you cannot provide, politely say you have given them all you have on the subject.

**Readiness** - The quality of your performance will be directly related to your comfort level and the degree to which you are prepared. If you know you will be doing an interview or press conference, take time to prepare. Compile a list of questions, and then prepare a list of responses.

### Interview Do's and Don'ts

<b>Do</b> appear confident, self-assured, and in control.	<b>Don't</b> appear evasive, ill-informed or insincere. And don't say, "I refuse to answer that." Or "No comment." It leads to speculation.
<b>Do</b> practice questions and answers in advance - if time allows.	<b>Don't</b> go into a situation where you are stressed or ill-prepared.
<b>Do</b> define, before the interview, what message you want to convey, and work towards that.	<b>Don't</b> let the journalist dominate the conversation and prevent you getting your point across.
<b>Do</b> ask how long the interview will last and request a list of questions in advance.	<b>Don't</b> let an interview continue after you have disclosed as much as you can.
<b>Do</b> rephrase questions that may be mis-leading, accusatory or negative.	<b>Don't</b> assume that a comment you have requested be 'off the record' is going to stay off the record.
<b>Do</b> reveal as much information as you have decided ahead of time is appropriate.	<b>Don't</b> ask to review the story before it is published.
<b>Do</b> follow up on any requests for information that you received but were unable to provide at the time.	<b>Don't</b> release names or admit fault or liability in a crisis situation.
<b>Do</b> call a journalist after the interview to clarify any statements you made that you feel may have been inaccurate or taken out of context.	<b>Don't</b> apologize rather, in a crisis situation say "We are deeply concerned and are working closely with the proper authorities on the matter," etc.

**Be prepared for a crisis before it occurs: be sure you have reviewed this section of the toolkit carefully and be sure that the duty manager can always contact the General Manager at any hour, under any conditions.**

# 8

## Promotions

Promotions are a good way to create instant local publicity. They should also help you demonstrate how the brand positioning and essence translates to the media.

### Television and radio promotions

If done properly, promotions can be the perfect addition to an already effective PR programme. By working closely with your local radio or television stations, not only will on-air promotions provide numerous mentions of your property, they can also include the key message points or objectives of your overall hotel PR programme.

### Creativity is important

The aim is to get your promotion publicised without having to pay a fee. Your promotional idea will have a better chance of making it into print or on to a radio or television station if it is creative and topical. Radio stations often conduct thousands of promotions a year, and that means your promotion has to be a little bit different, a lot of fun and one that will get the radio stations' listeners involved.

### Creative ideas

Here are some questions you should ask yourself when developing a promotion:

1. Are there any upcoming holidays I can logically tie into?

**Examples:** New Year, Valentine's Day, religious festivals, national days.

2. What local events might offer an interesting tie-in opportunity?

**Examples:** Elections, sporting events, graduation.

3. Is there a trend or current feature story that has attracted a great deal of local media attention?

**Examples:** Recent surveys about your city, re-birth of the 70s fashion trends.

Check your local newspaper.

4. Is there a particular station I listen to or watch that has an existing promotion I could work with?

(You may want to target a station that you do not listen to or watch. So, listen to or watch the station for a few days to get the tone and feel of the show.)

**Examples:** Talk shows offering prizes, A day in the life of (a General Manager?).

5. Is there another company I can cooperate with that might make this promotion stronger?

(Be sure, however, that your own message is not overwhelmed by the other sponsor's message).

**Examples:** An airline or your local school (not a local charity since Hotels & Resorts is not set up to comply with US state or other countries charitable solicitation laws).

6. Is there any opportunity to add a 'sound' element that might make the promotion more fun/ compelling for radio.

### The prize

- Try to provide the best promotional prize you can - the more attractive the prize, the more audience participation. A better prize will also make it easier to get the promotion on air.
- Whether the prize is a three-night hotel stay or lunch for two, try to create a promotion with a luxurious, unique and fun angle.
- Remember, you can also look for promotional partners to make your prize even better. Airlines are a particularly good choice, because you can then offer these trips to stations in other areas, or even in other countries. To the listeners or viewers in those markets, your property can be portrayed as an exotic destination.

**Choosing a radio station**

- If you only have enough budget to do one promotion, approach the radio station that offers the most listeners and is most likely to reach your audience. If you are refused, move to the next station on your list. By approaching the stations one by one, you can offer the package as an 'exclusive'.
- On rare occasions, you may have two stations interested in the same promotion. You MUST offer the promotion to the first station you approached, even if another bigger/better station comes along. If one station discovers that you rejected it for another, you and your hotel will probably not be able to work with that station again.
- With a little extra work, you can promise the competing station another promotion and then pitch them a different idea or offer them first choice of future promotions.

**The pitch email**

Once you have your entire promotional concept laid out, develop a pitch email outlining your idea and send it to the appropriate person at the targeted stations. Although there is no universal standard, some television and radio promotions require programme sponsorship or advertising.

For most promotions, you should get your promotion on the air at the time with the highest audience figures. This can depend on the particular programme or the time of the day. Do a bit of research to find out what the peak hours are.

- The people to contact are generally the producer, director of promotions or sometimes the on-air personalities themselves. Or, you might want to call the station and ask who you should write to about a promotional idea.
- Your pitch email must be as compelling and fun as your promotional concept. Many promotions never get approved because the producer or personality was not interested by the pitch email.
- Your email should be clear on when you want the promotion to air and for how long.

**Follow-up calls**

As with press releases, follow-up telephone calls about promotions are crucial. They let you pitch your story verbally and repeat the most attractive elements of the idea. During your follow-up call, remind your contact that your promotion idea is:

- Unique
- Fun
- Exclusive
- A luxury prize

With television stations, be sure to have videotape footage of your hotel available. If footage of your property is not available, photographs and logos can be used as alternatives.

**After the promotion**

Sending a follow-up thank you card or email to the appropriate person or people at the station is a good idea. Tell them how successful the promotion was and how much your friends, family, etc. liked it. This keeps your relationship strong and may lead to future promotions.

### Print promotions

Magazine promotions are a great way to create media coverage and garner solid placements for your property in key publications. The extent of your coverage or placement(s) depends upon the arrangements you make with the magazine.

#### Choosing a magazine (or publishing group)

Here are some things to consider when considering which magazine or magazines to approach for a print promotion:

- Is there a publication that naturally ties in to your product (i.e. hotel services) or promotional concept?
- Is the publication right for a luxury brand?
- What is the publication's circulation? You want to reach as many people as possible.
- Has the publication undertaken promotions before? Have you seen, heard or read about them? What does the magazine seem most interested in when it comes to promotions? Prizes? Surveys?
- Does the publication have any regulations or rules against you approaching other publications to participate in the promotion as well? Do they require that Hotels & Resorts purchase advertising? Do they have extensive restrictions on mentioning brand names as part of the promotional package?

#### Creativity is important

As with radio promotions, you should develop a creative and a workable tie-in for the publication. Make the idea intriguing and be sure to spell out the benefits for the magazine (ad spend, media coverage, exclusivity, etc).

#### Approaching the publication

Once you have identified the publication(s) you want to work with, develop a pitch email outlining your promotional concept, objectives, goals and, specifically, how the magazine will benefit from participating in a promotion with your hotel.

#### Examples of food and beverage ideas

- **Promotion** - Distribute mouth-watering food and beverage releases, highlighting your hotel's most recent food and beverage promotion or dinner package. Increase your chances of media coverage by including a recipe offered in your hotel restaurant and accompanying images.
- **Demonstrations** - Host cooking classes or cooking demonstrations. Focus on the unusual and exotic cuisines or on very difficult techniques - these will be of most interest to the media. Invite the press to attend your sessions. Cookery classes can be themed or done for leisure or business guests.

#### Contracts

Be sure that all agreements between you and the promotional partner are detailed in writing, and that they specifically indicate who is responsible for what. It is too late to argue about what was or was not agreed to once the promotion is running.

### Community activities

Community activities are an excellent way to generate media interest in your property while also creating feelings of goodwill in the community in which your hotel operates.

### How to pick a charity

At a general staff meeting, ask staff members which sector of the community in proximity to your hotel is particularly in need of assistance. Be charitable by becoming a sponsor of that particular charity or charity event. You can do this by hosting the event, providing food and/or drinks, or by providing accommodation for a local charity. You must always check if there are any restraints placed on your hotel relating to certain charities.

**Please note:** The hotel should enter into an agreement with the charity so that each party's obligations are set forth and so that you have the right to use their logo in your advertising. You may also want to add in your agreement that the charity will not allow another competitor hotel to sponsor the event.

### During the event

Make sure that you maximise the exposure of the Hotels & Resorts name during the event:

- Provide hotel logos to the charity for use in promotional materials for the event.
- If the charity organisation does not appear to have a great deal of money to promote the event, offer to print flyers to publicise it, and put the Hotels & Resorts logo on them.
- At the event itself, your property's logo should be highly visible on podiums or on banners around the room. Do try to make sure the logo is visible in areas where there are likely to be photo opportunities or where television cameras are likely to focus. Try to be relatively discreet about your efforts. It would not be sensible to have every item in the room covered with the Hotels & Resorts logo.
- If you are not the title sponsor (the main sponsor) of the event or charity, be careful that your participation is not overshadowed by that of the larger sponsor. Try to ensure that the Hotels & Resorts name and logo appear wherever the larger sponsors do.

### After the event

- Make sure you follow up the event with a press release to the local papers and magazines announcing your contribution or donation.

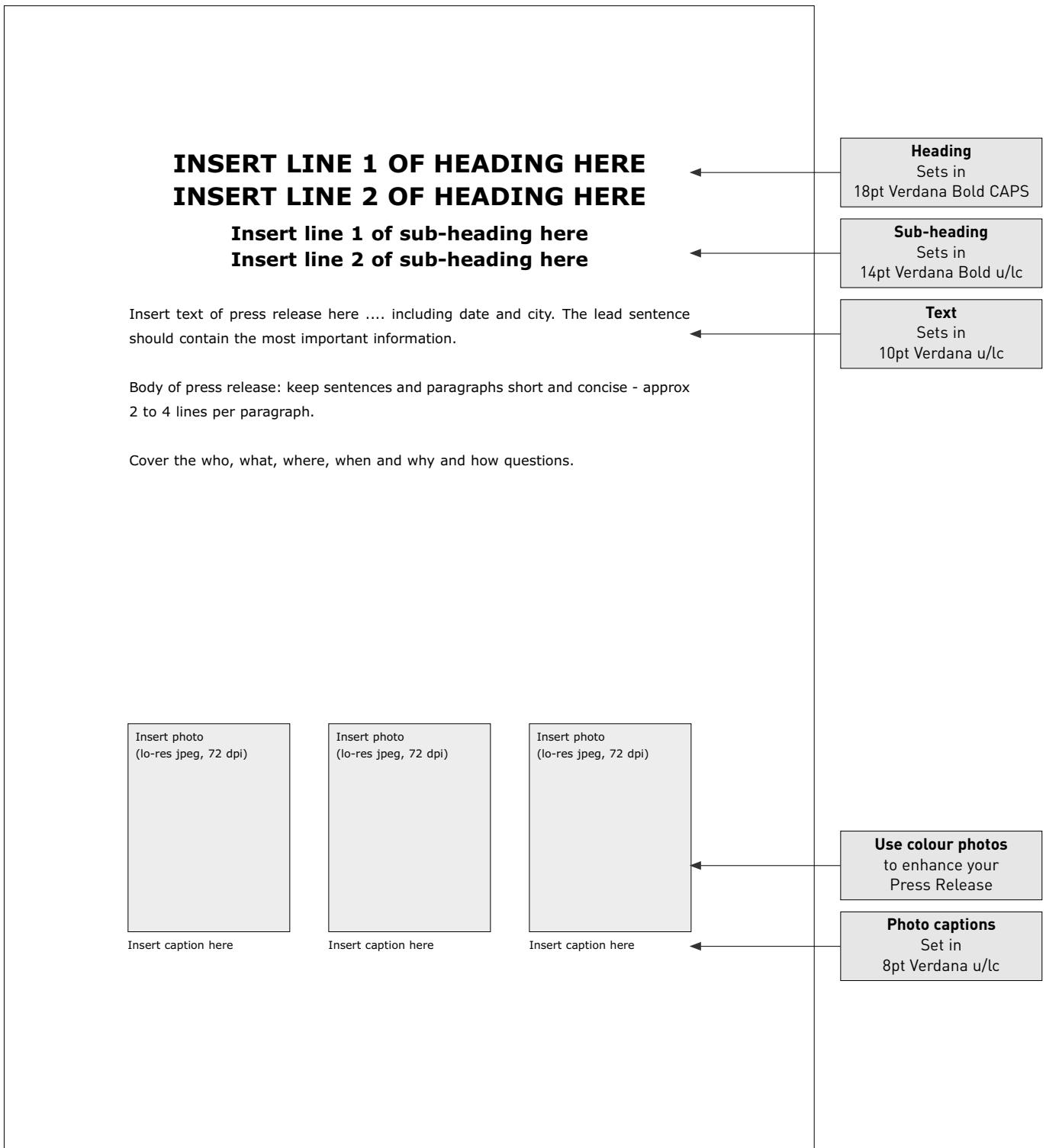
### Relationships with local partners

- You should consider building relationships with prospective local partners whose customer base complements those of the hotel and can therefore be mutually beneficial.

9

Toolkit

## Template for A4 press release - first page



**Template for A4 press release - second page**

Quotes from your spokesperson should contain additional information about the news you have to tell - they should not simply repeat information already covered in the release.

The final paragraph should summarise the news in your release.

- ENDS -

For further information, images or interviews please contact:

**Name, Title**

Tel: insert number

Email: [name.surname@hotels.com](mailto:name.surname@hotels.com)

**Contact details**

Set in  
10pt Verdana u/lc

**About Hotel (insert name of your hotel here)**

Insert text about your hotel here ....

Insert text about your hotel here ....

**About Hotels & Resorts**

**Hotels & Resorts** is a global contemporary luxury brand. Hotel's award-winning hotels and resorts are located in key destinations from the US and Asia Pacific to Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Hotel offers unique and personalised services for the discerning traveller, creating a world that celebrates individuality in every sense. Additional Hotel projects are under development and conversion in the Bahamas, China, Portugal, Thailand and the UAE. All hotels and resorts participate in the acclaimed reward programme..

**Boilerplate**

Sets in  
8pt Verdana u/lc

For further information on **Hotels & Resorts** please visit [Hotels.com](http://Hotels.com)

*Please consider the environment before printing this document.*

## Sample A4 press release - Corporate/Regional - first page

## HOTEL BECOMES HOTELS & RESORTS

### Hotel revises name and Corporate Identity to reflect growing portfolio

**23 April 2007:** The Hotel brand today announces that it is changing its Corporate Brand Identity from **Hotels** to **Hotels & Resorts**.

The move comes at a time of extensive growth and development for the luxury brand and emphasises the fast-evolving portfolio of Hotel's hotels and resorts globally.

The transformation will be most noticeable in the new name, **Hotels & Resorts** as well as being reflected in distinct visual refinements to the brand's identity and hotel logos.

With a number of new resort projects set to join the Hotel portfolio over the next two years, the new corporate identity will highlight the message that **Hotels & Resorts** appeals to both leisure and business travellers, while simultaneously underlining the ever-increasing importance of leisure travel within the luxury market.



Hotel Bali Resort & Spa



Hotel Tokyo



Hotel Chicago

**Sample A4 press release - Corporate/Regional - second page**

Says **Karl Lagerfeld, Senior Vice President Brand Management**,  
**Hotels & Resorts**: "This is an exciting time for the luxury travel market and undoubtedly for Hotel. The decision to revitalise the brand identity is testament to our global growth, with each new opening showcasing the World of Hotel, a world that celebrates individuality in every sense. We welcome the opportunity to further strengthen the influence of Hotels & Resorts around the world."

**Hotels & Resorts'** portfolio currently includes 58 luxury award-winning properties in leading urban and resort destinations globally.

New **Hotels & Resorts** are in conversion in the Maldives and under development in Abu Dhabi, the Bahamas, Dubai, Koh Samui and Shanghai.

- ENDS -

For further information, images or interviews please contact:

**Brand PR/Communications Manager**

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7856 8261

Email: [...@hotels.com](mailto:...@hotels.com)

**About Hotels & Resorts**

**Hotels & Resorts** is a global contemporary luxury brand. Conrad's award-winning hotels and resorts are located in key destinations from the US and Asia Pacific to Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Hotel offers unique and personalised services for the discerning traveller, creating a world that celebrates individuality in every sense. Additional Hotel projects are under development and conversion in the Bahamas, China, Portugal, Thailand and the UAE. All hotels and resorts participate in the acclaimed reward programme..

For further information on **Hotels & Resorts** please visit [Hotels.com](http://Hotels.com)

*Please consider the environment before printing this document.*

# 11

## Glossary

### Glossary of PR and news terms

**Advance:** Provide a journalist with information or a press release prior to the release date. The advance gives the reporter an edge to write a better, more thoughtful - and frequently more comprehensive - story. Advances should be offered carefully as they can alienate competing journalists.

**Audiences:** These are groups of people (i.e. journalists) you want to reach and influence.

**Backgrounding session:** A 'get to know you' meeting between a reporter and a company executive. These meetings may not generate news stories but they do increase understanding and rapport between journalists and sources.

**Backgrounder:** A component in many press kits, this document gives detailed information on Hotels & Resorts and provides perspective on how our company is an important player in the field.

**Boilerplate:** The standard last paragraph of a news release that offers a summary and factual statement on the company, key facts and location.

**Contact:** All communications must prominently display the name and phone number of someone a reporter can call for more information.

**Dateline:** Each release should begin by indicating the date and city from which the news release is being issued.

**Deadline:** For most daily newspapers, hard news sections have a deadline of 17:00 and soft news of noon for the following day. Make sure you know the deadlines of weekly and monthly publications you are dealing with and honour them.

**Embargo:** Sometimes news is given to a journalist on the understanding that it is not ready for publication. The time and date when information can be made public should be clearly and prominently labelled. NEVER give embargoed information to a journalist unless they have agreed to honour our terms. Simply giving them the release with the embargo date on it is not enough.

**Exclusive:** Information given only to one journalist on a topic of real interest, exclusives are designed to garner more coverage than if all outlets received the news at the same time. Exclusives should be used only for important stories and critical publications. While all reporters love a scoop, they all hate to see someone else get one. Exclusives can be a way to endear yourself to one reporter while alienating others. Do not promise exclusive information unless you are sure the agreement is in the best interests of Hotels & Resorts. Conversely, you must honour your promise to the media outlet that no other media will receive the information prior to the media with whom you've agreed to give the exclusive. Your internal and external team and partners must also honour the embargo, not releasing information prematurely.

**Fact sheet:** A short summary on the property, the company, the subsidiary, marketing programme, promotion or event.

**Lead:** The first sentence and paragraph of a news story or press release. It should capture and hold the reader's attention and summarize the most important aspects of the situation. When possible, leads should include all or most of the five Ws: Who, What, When, Where, Why ... and How. The lead should be no more than 40 words - ideally 30. Remember, the lead should always include a reference to Hotels & Resorts or the industry.

**Lead time:** The period during which a publication prepares story plans, sources and writes all content. Lead times vary widely - from a couple of hours in the case of daily newspapers, to up to six months for monthly glossy publications. Check lead times of your key media.

**Media alert:** A one-page document that is generally used to invite media to an event. The document is dated and presented in fact sheet style, responding to 'Who, What, When, Where and Why'.

**Routing for approvals:** Press releases and other media materials require approvals by management as explained in section 4.4.

**Media:** An all-encompassing term that includes all types of print and broadcast organizations dealing with the news. Media is the plural of medium.

**Messages:** The most important points you want stressed in a release. Most releases can have one main message and two/three sub-points - any more and you risk losing your audience.

**News:** Timely information of interest to the public. There are two kinds of news: 'hard' and 'soft'. Hard news generally concerns breaking stories - stories of the moment - while soft news focuses on features and human-interest stories.

**News/press release:** The most commonly used PR tool to transmit information of interest about Hotels & Resorts to the news media. Releases should read like news stories, with facts, full names, short sentences and concise writing. Also, make sure our releases include the key message that Hotel wants to convey.

**News hook:** The specific angle that makes a story of interest to the reporter or editor.

**News wire:** News organizations belong or subscribe to news wires that transmit news stories, many of which drive what is picked up by journalists to cover.

**Objectivity:** One of the most important news principles is to present news in an impartial and factual way, in order to allow readers or viewers to reach their own conclusions. Not surprisingly, reporters want releases written in a similar fashion: provide information backed up by facts or expert opinions.

**Photo caption:** A brief explanation of what is happening in a photograph. All captions should also include the names and titles of the people in the photo, as well as the Hotel property name.

**Pitch:** The process of capturing a report/editor's attention about a possible story idea that should appeal to their readers/viewers. Pitches can be made over the phone or in writing. Phone calls should be kept brief and letters should be one page in length.

**Press:** The term refers to print news media only and does not include broadcast organizations.

**Press release:** See news release.

**Spokesperson:** Someone designated to speak on behalf of Hotels & Resorts. Typical spokes-persons are company executives, GMs, researchers and PR representatives. A spokesperson might also be a celebrity or an expert who is endorsing a product or a concept.