

Valosan

PR Pitching Guidebook

Everything you need to know to properly reach out and pitch to journalists for a successful PR campaign

Valosan

This guide is made by Valosan.

Valosan is the most powerful media relationship management tool for PR teams to build relationship with journalists and get earned media coverage.

In this guidebook, you'll find pages illustrating how certain steps in the pitching process are done in Valosan.



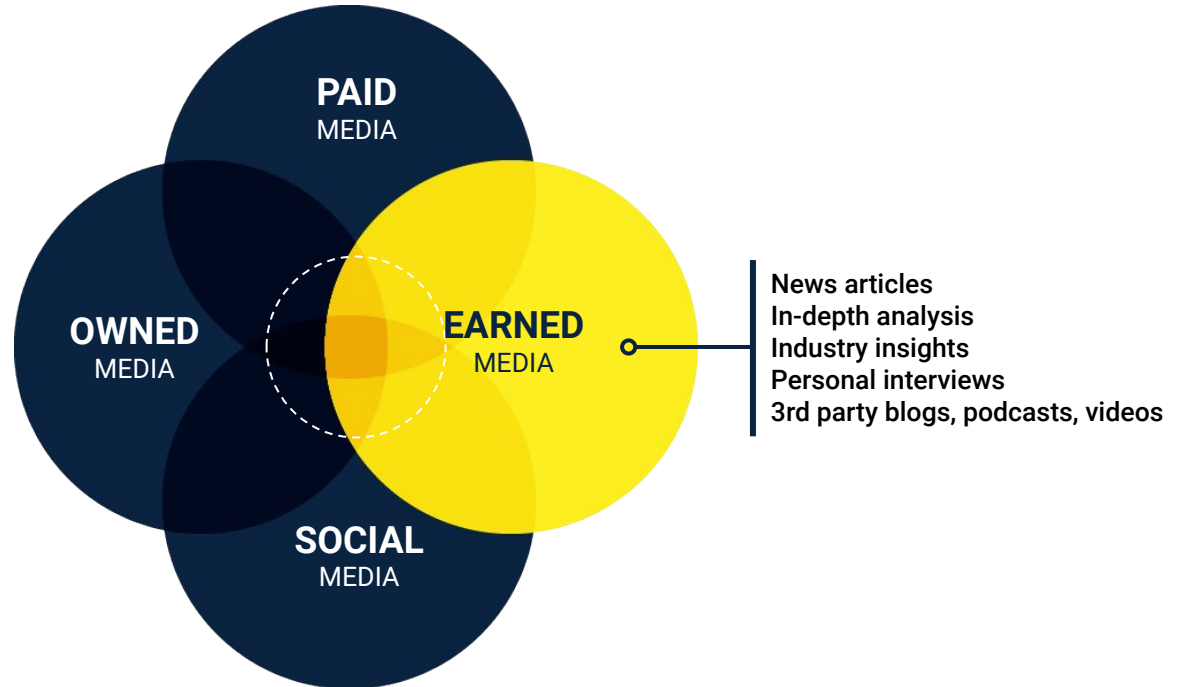


What is PR?

PR is one tool in the communications & marketing toolkit and it means earning the media attention.

It is about an impartial or objective person writing about your company because there is something newsworthy to tell.

PR, at its best, builds your credibility and impacts buyers and public opinion in a positive way.



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CHAPTER 1

Before starting a PR Campaign

Before jumping into executing your PR campaigns, do PR research. This helps tweak the messaging, find new angles for the stories and take competitors media coverage into account.



Company media coverage

Create an overview of your current PR coverage. Does the coverage meet your business and communications objectives?

Story	Overview
<i>E.g. Apple in the Verge</i>	<i>E.g. Relocating to Finland and paying taxes here</i>



Competitor media coverage

Check stories written about your competitors. The stories are a great indicator of the types of coverage that works, and what doesn't. In this case, a competitor isn't just someone who delivers similar services – it's also someone who takes up space in the media you could be occupying.

Competitor story	Overview
<i>E.g. Apple in the Verge</i>	<i>E.g. Relocating to Finland and paying taxes here</i>



Topic newsworthiness ranking

To guide your planning, we have ranked the most common campaign topics below, including their suitability for mainstream and vertical media, how likely a campaign is to generate multiple hits, estimated workload, and how quickly stories get published.

Story	Industry media	Business media	Media hits	Workload	Publishing time	Score
Significant investment (high 6 figures)	High	High	Many	Heavy	Fast	★★★★★★
Exits, acquisitions (minimum 7 figures)	High	Medium	Many	Heavy	Fast	★★★★★★
Editorial content (thought-leadership)	Medium	High	Few	Heavy	Slow	★★★★★
New international partner/customer	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	★★★★
<i>International event announcements</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Few</i>	<i>Light</i>	<i>Fast</i>	★★★★
<i>Founder interviews (inspiring story)</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Few</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Medium</i>	★★★★
<i>International market entry</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Fast</i>	★★★★
<i>New product or service launch</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Fast</i>	★★★
<i>Crowdfunding</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Few</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	★★★



Build your credibility

This list summarises the most important credibility points that media need when writing about you. These should help guide your future PR campaign planning.

Credibility points

Investment and revenue figures

Recognition and quotes from high-quality partners, customers, and influencers

International presence

Data insights from inside the company

Influential team and board members in thought leadership positions

Previous media hits

Industry awards



Objectives and key PR results

Record your PR key results before you begin operations to create a benchmark for ongoing work. Ensure you have the relevant tracking tools and software in place with reporting before your campaign begins.

EXAMPLE Objective 1 - Build international credibility in the right media

	Target
Tier 1 international media hits	6
International industry media hits	6

EXAMPLE Objective 2 - Position ourselves as thought-leaders worth listening to

	Target
Speaking opportunities at the right events	3
Active conversations with new journalists	10



CHAPTER 2

Building and Running a PR Campaign

The following is a step by step guide to setting up a PR campaign and running it.





Getting started

Make sure you have all of your PR assets defined and ready.

- Clarify the tasks and schedule of the campaign
- Define campaign responsibilities
- Create a media list
- Gather key PR assets
 - Company's media kit
 - Company boilerplate
 - Company logo
 - Team member bios



PR campaign tasks and schedule

4–6 week approximate

1. Planning	2. Content	3. Pitching (2 weeks)	4. Launch	5. Post launch
Select PR topic	Press release draft	Media list refresh	Embargo lifted – press release send out	Media follow ups
Quote collection	Boilerplate review	Pitching points	Posting to groups	Coverage report
Media targeting	Credibility points check	Pitch email content	Social media updates	Campaign debrief
Embargo scheduling	Media kit review	VIP pitching	Press release hosted on web	Planning next steps



Campaign responsibilities

A successful PR process outlines who is responsible for handling each task before, during and after a campaign is executed. This way everyone knows who should be doing what – at what time – for the best results.

Activity	Person responsible	Email address/URL/document
Pre-pitching	<i>E.g. Name</i>	<i>Add email address used for pitching</i>
Distribution	<i>E.g. CEO</i>	<i>Add press release distribution email</i>
Press release hosting	<i>E.g. Agency</i>	<i>State where the press release will be hosted</i>
Social media support	<i>E.g. CMO</i>	<i>Add link to content calendar</i>
Engagement and visibility tracking	<i>E.g. Agency</i>	<i>Add link to tool</i>
Company media contact	<i>E.g. CMO</i>	<i>Add email address</i>
Company spokesperson	<i>E.g. CEO</i>	<i>Add email address</i>





Media List

Just splashing out your press release to a random big media list feels tempting, right? Do not do it. Best practices show that focusing on pitching your story to a handful of carefully selected journalists before lifting the embargo, eg. press release mass send out, brings best results. And even with the mass send out, please pay careful attention to only target media the news is relevant to.

Quality beats quantity.



VIP (pitching) Media List

Choose 10-40 journalists that you would contact directly to **pitch your story under embargo**. Take the time to understand each journalist's beat and interests so that each of your pitches can be customized. Journalists like it when you have done your homework.

Status	Country	Outlet	First Name	Last Name	Contact Title	Contact Subjects	Email	Twitter	Outlet Audience Reach	Outlet Unique Visitors Per Month	Phone Number	Mobile phone number	Outlet Website	Language	Notes



Send out Media List

Choose 100–700 journalists and media outlets you would like to **share the release with after the embargo is lifted**. This list should be regularly updated with new contacts your company would like to keep informed on your news. The only information needed for the send out is identified in the white column.

Status	Country	Outlet	First Name	Last Name	Contact Title	Contact Subjects	Email	Twitter	Outlet Audience Reach	Outlet Unique Visitors Per Month	Phone Number	Mobile phone number	Outlet Website	Language	Notes





Key PR assets

Successful PR delivery relies on essential supporting assets that further enhance the stories that media and influencers are able to tell about you. An incisive boilerplate is an essential tool for introducing your company in snapshot to people you communicate with. A great media kit enriches PR campaigns with supporting content like photos and videos.



Company's media kit

A media kit is a resource pool for journalists and influencers to access when talking about you. It provides essential content for enriching the stories they are able to tell.

Media kit elements – all these should be added f.ex. to a folder, which media can access through a shared link

Most important: Visuals (marketing, product and staff images), logos (.png format), brand guidelines (name, colors, visual identity)

Short introduction and company description (boilerplate)

Media mentions – earlier articles about the company (preferably with media logos)

Headlines and links to earlier press releases (latest on top)

Team member bios and company history

Press contact information (spokesperson and/or other press contact) and other important company channels (e.g. social media)

Associations, awards, known brands the company is associated with

Key figures / statistics (about the industry and/or company)



Company's boilerplate

Written in company's tone of voice, your boilerplate is a short (3–5 sentences max) summary of your value proposition, mission, key credibility points and company information. It can be appended to emails, press releases, and any official correspondence.

E.g. Company** is an ambitious, award-winning clothing brand aiming to **bring fun to the business industry**. Established in 2000 in **City**, we've worked on a number of prestigious contracts for clients including **This, That and These**. We specialize in **Products and Service**, including **This product and That service**. Contact us at **Company.com



Team member bios/pitching profiles

Well-written bios swiftly explain your expertise and experience, highlighting why you're a good authority figure to talk about the subject matter. Your credibility as an expert also provides leverage for securing media interviews and talking opportunities. Well prepared bios help the PR team pitch the spokespersons to media & events or introduce them elsewhere.

Team member – Title

E.g. XX is a business and product development executive with over 20 years of international experience in driving new initiatives and making an impact in the healthcare industry. Proven track record with companies such as XX, XX, and XX. Studied the fields of XX and holds a Master's degree in XX. XX has previously been featured as a thought leader in publications such as XX, XX, and XX. Contact details:

Team member – Title

E.g. XX is a business and product development executive with over 20 years of international experience in driving new initiatives and making an impact in the healthcare industry. Proven track record with companies such as XX, XX, and XX. Studied the fields of XX and holds a Master's degree in XX. Contact details:



2

Create your pitch email & press release

A good pitch email is short and sweet. Use your template but then modify based on your brief research of what the journalist has recently written about and shared in social media.



Pitch email

This is a general draft email you can use for pitching.

Dear _____,

After reading some of your most recent work on [subject] I thought I would reach out to ask if you would be interested in (an upcoming announcement) by [Company]

[Statement of the core announcement]

[Statement of why the journalist might be interested]

[Key facts, links, and information]

If you would be interested, I would be happy to share the embargoed release for your review. I can also coordinate an interview with [name, title], who is available for a call or a meeting within the next couple of days.

All the best,

Team member

Contact information

[Company Boilerplate]



Press release template

[Get the full press release template here](#)

**** Under embargo until {{embargoDate}} ****

Title - include keywords and clearly explain newsworthy aspect of story

The subheader adds context and credibility

CITY, Finland (January 1st, 2022) [The company name](#) should be linked and should appear in the first sentence, which should also include the newsworthy announcement or lead. The second and third sentences should be clear, simple, and provide context in terms of what this announcement means for the market, industry and consumers, i.e. its impact. [You can link to high quality, relevant online sources](#), but don't overdo it.

[Press release content]

###

**** Under embargo until {{embargoDate}} ****

Some useful facts can be bulleted here if needed.

- Fact 1
- Fact 2
- Fact 3

[Media kit with pictures]

[Company Boilerplate]



The screenshot displays the Valosan Gmail extension interface. On the left, a draft titled "Example pitch" is shown, addressed to "Test Contact (example10@test.valosan.com)". The draft content includes a greeting, a statement of interest in "MeNaiset", an embargo date of "3 March 2022 at 8:30 am UTC+2", and a bulleted list of details about a funding round. The draft is ready to be sent, with a "Send" button and a dropdown menu currently set to "Pitch sent".

On the right, the contact profile for "Anna Swan" is visible. She is identified as the "MeNaiset Editor" at "is.fi". Her status in the campaign is "Pitch sent". Below this, the "WRITE CONTENT TO MESSAGE" section contains two buttons: "Press release (English)" and "Pitch (English)". These two buttons are circled in red, indicating the next step in the process.

First, create the PR campaign content on Valosan. Then you can access the pitch and press release straight from your inbox with Valosan Gmail extension.



3 Pitching progress

Keep track of who has been pitched to and who is still to be contacted.

If you are not using Valosan and multiple people are pitching the same story, make sure to mark your activities in a common VIP media list. Valosan-users don't have to worry about this.



Pitching best practices

Build your relationships with the media by following the best practices below.

Pitching

Start pitching a minimum of 2 weeks before you plan to announce your news.

Keep pitches short and interesting – include the news in the very first sentence and pay attention to the subject of the email.

Personalize your pitches to the individual journalists and influencers you contact.

Don't attach .pdfs or Word Documents – copy and paste any content in-line.

Launching

Use your own work email address for pitching and the press release send outs. Open rates are higher for personal emails compared to generic company email addresses .

Upload your press release to your web media kit a few hours after launch.

Schedule the announcement according to the appropriate time zones of your audience. Also, Mondays and Fridays tend to be slow news days, but some regions have different news schedules.



Example campaign 1

Start date 17 February 2022 Embargo date 3 March 2022 at 8:30 am UTC+2

Setup Audience Content **Pitching** Activity Distribution Reporting

Pitch & follow-up 5 / 13	Positive response 0 / 13	Press release sent 4 / 13	Published
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Anna Swan ★ MeNaiset Pitch sent (11 days ago)Joe Wombat ★ UK Tech News Follow-up sent (3 months ago)Ruslan Snail ★ Tivi Pitch sent (5 months ago)Sami Fish ★ Sifted.eu Pitch sent (3 months ago)Bob Sloth Jalopnik Pitch sent (2 months ago)	No contacts found	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tim Tiger ★★ Kauppalehti Press release sent (3 months ago)Mari Kangaroo ★ Tekniikka & Talous Press release sent (5 months ago)Juhani Puma tech.eu Press release sent (3 months ago)Nina Moose TechCrunch Press release sent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">John Rhino Talouselämä Published

Keep track of the pitching process with Valosan media relations management tool.



4 Post campaign activities

- Post campaign follow ups
- Measure

Summarize how well your campaign went based on pitches made, responses, and the resulting media hits.

With Valosan you can download an informative media coverage report, which has all relevant data from your PR campaign.

From there, you can celebrate success and better find ways of improving with your consistent path towards valuable earned media through Press Relations.



Post campaign follow ups

Ensure you continue to build your relationships with the media and make the most out of the media hits by completing the below follow up tasks **after a campaign is executed**. These steps are essential to build media relationships and visibility in the long-term.

Journalist follow ups

Follow up with journalists who covered your story on email

Follow journalists who covered your story on Twitter

Follow up with VIP media who didn't initially cover your story

General campaign follow ups

Track and record campaign success metrics and compare to benchmarks

Set up a free mention.com account to track further coverage, unless you already have media monitoring in place

Schedule debrief meeting – what worked, what to improve in the next campaign

Revisit and review PR calendar – plan next campaign

Social media support

Like and share incoming news hits on the company profiles. Set the best hit as a 'feature post'.

Ask employees to like+share news hits.

Post news hits to relevant discussion groups and internal stakeholders.

Remember to reshare the news after a couple of days/weeks to keep engagement up.



Measuring the impact of your PR campaign

Following are examples of the metrics that you can track to measure the success and impact of your PR campaign. Aim at choosing just a few key metrics to be shared across the company. You may track more metrics with your communications team .

Activity metrics

Number of journalists contacted

Number of positive/negative replies from journalists

Share of active (=responding) journalists on your VIP media list

Performance metrics

Number of publications

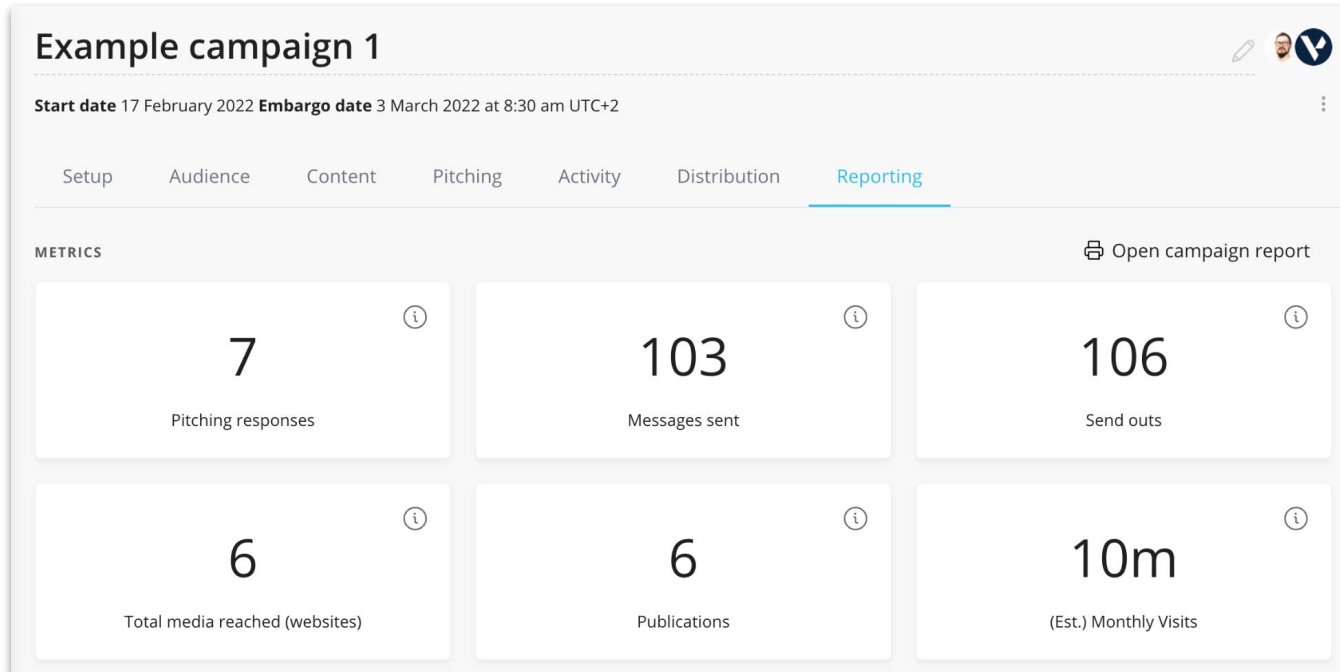
Share of voice in the media compared to competitors

Increase in the number of website visitors at the time of the media hits

Incoming new leads, ask sales to find out the lead source for new leads



Valosan media relations management tool allows you to create reporting dashboards to track the metrics.





Need help?

Our team of PR professionals or the Valosan Media Relationship Management tool can help!

Contact us at

hello@valosan.com
info@sanfrancisco.fi

