

Media Relations

Developing Media Relationships

- Identify and select key media outlets that will appeal to chosen audience.
- Identify key reporter who has an area of responsibility for automotive, science, or environment (use Web site of media or review editorial information found in newspaper to identify this person).
- Make personal contact (phone call is best). Briefly introduce yourself and explain the purpose of Odyssey. Have points ready that show how the event relates to reporter's "beat," or area of interest; share pertinent issues.
- Invite the reporter to your event; explain that you will be sending follow-up material or information and make sure your event gets on their calendar.
- Contact the reporter early (Special features or sections often schedule articles a month in advance).
- Make sure you follow up and deliver whatever information or action was promised.

Tips for Working with Reporters

- Always be honest.
- Be willing to show that you recognize the important role they play in your community.
- Be accountable; make sure your information is accurate and have permanent facts ready.
- Be reliable; deliver what you promise.

First Meeting

- First meeting should establish who you are and what you represent.
- Provide or follow up with contact information and some resources.
- Save pitch for later but be prepared to respond should reporter ask for story ideas.

Pitching a Story

- Be ready to share why you believe your Odyssey event is news, i.e., driving more of these vehicles will positively impact energy security, energy efficiency, and the environment. The event is positioned to let people discover the benefits of ownership, dispel myths, try out the vehicles and ask questions!
- Explain why audience will care (i.e., your city is in a non-attainment area and needs to reduce air pollution; offer statistics; explain that driving alternative fuel vehicles is one solution to improving air quality).

Covering the Event

- Invite media to cover event.
- Have press packet available at event.
- Send media alert to inform reporter of possible key speakers, etc.