

Implementation of a Media Policy

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Organizational implementation

- Convince top and middle-level management of the need for a new media policy
- Place Press Unit in close contact with top management
- Staff the Press Unit professionally
- Ensure that successes and improved media coverage are made known to the subject matter units

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Impediments to implementation

- General mistrust in the media
- A fear that statistics may be misunderstood
- A fear that comments may be misquoted
- A fear that statistics are trivialized
- A fear of exposure due to mistrust in own figures...
- Loss of control by the subject matter units



Tasks of a Press Unit

- Be accessible – even outside office hours!
- Help journalists find and contact the right employee
- Write and/or edit news releases
- Disseminate releases and publications
- Arrange press conferences and briefings
- Monitor the news media and inform all employees of daily press coverage
- React to misunderstandings and criticism
- Monitor press contacts during the day
- Advise and assist the subject matter units
- Train and educate colleagues



Handling of media inquiries – rules:

- Contact with the news media is a matter of urgency
- If you receive an inquiry, you must:
 - Answer the inquiry completely
 - Or pass it on to the right person
 - Or pass it on to the Press Unit

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Outside office hours

- The Press Officer (or a deputy) should be available at all times
- His/her private and mobile phone numbers should be made known to journalists, printed on your news releases, and easy to find on your website
- The Press Officer judges the urgency of inquiries...
- ...and contacts a specialist or management, if necessary
- A special "press room" on your website could be a help to journalists around the clock

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News releases

- Should be written directly for the news media...
- ...but other user groups read them as well
- You must choose one clear-cut angle...
- ...and present it with a journalistic headline...
- ...in an up-to-date context...
- ...preferably with graphs or maps
- The contact person must be available that day
- Distribute by mail (or e-mail) selectively according to subject matter
- Any journalist may be put on the mailing list

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Publications and additional figures

- Again: All journalists should be treated equally!
- Publications intended for editorial purposes should be free of charge (publicity for you!)
- Unpublished supplementary figures should be free of charge, if they are easily accessible (more publicity!)...
- ... but fees must be charged for genuine customized services according to fixed price list
- Some publications may be forwarded to the news media in advance, but subject to a proviso...
- ...provided the journalists *adhere* to the proviso!

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Monitoring of press coverage

- An overview of daily press coverage should be accessible to all employees early in the day
- If action is necessary, the persons responsible should be alerted
- Press monitoring is a joint responsibility of the Press Section and the subject matter units
- Daily monitoring of the press makes good statistics on press coverage possible



Misunderstandings and criticism

- Misunderstandings may be spotted by the subject matter unit as well as the Press Unit...
- ...but the decision on how to react must be a joint decision
- Newspapers invariably hate retractions...
- ...but love an opportunity to continue the news story the next day (and include the retraction)...
- ...Just phone or mail the journalist
- If this doesn't work – or in the case of severe criticism, write a letter to the editor
- Letters and articles should be approved by the subject matter unit as well as the Press Unit



Reporting of media contact

- All media contact should be reported to the Press Unit, stating:
 - Name of the medium
 - Name of the journalist
 - What did the journalist want?
 - What did the journalist get?
 - What do you think will come out of the contact?

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Monitoring media contact – purposes:

1. Coordination – simultaneous inquiries
2. Keeping tabs – prevent problems, exploit interests
3. Quality – did the journalist reach the right employee ?
4. Follow-up – record TV features, find articles
5. Feed-back – to the employees, praise and criticism
6. Development – subject areas in which coverage can be improved
7. Names – which journalists make use of our service?

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Relationship with journalists

- Know the journalists writing about your subject matter
- Introduce new journalists to the subject matter area
- Regular media seminars for journalists in different subject areas pay off
- Press conferences should be used sparingly
- Employees should look for angles of interest in the published figures...
- ... for the entire news media or individual journalists

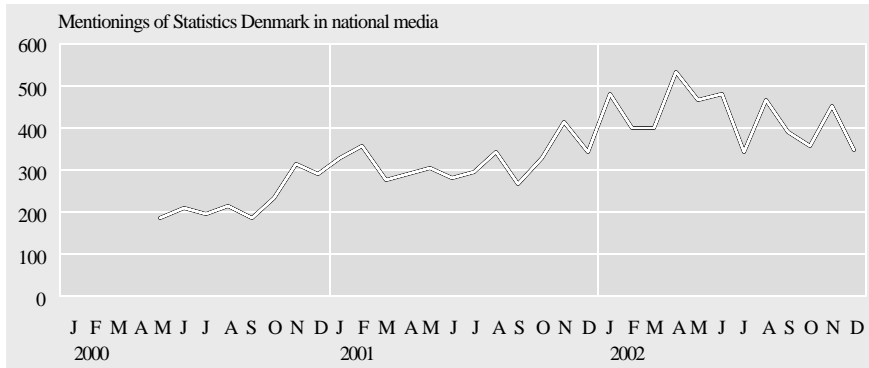


Training and education

- Let the Press Unit take responsibility for the education of staff on media relations
- Train and educate top and middle-level management
- Then, have all employees with media contact take an internal course on media relations
- Introduce newly-appointed employees to the principles of media relations
- A printed guide on media relations is useful



New media policy: More mentionings



The subject matter units: The Press Unit:

- Respond to inquiries from the news media
 - Are accessible
 - Assist as quickly as possible
 - Write/edit news releases
 - Make an effort to see the news angle in their figures
 - Provide customized service
 - Report media contact to the Press Unit
 - React to mistakes or misunderstandings
- Guides the news media
 - Coordinates inquiries
 - Is accessible outside office hours
 - Writes/edits news releases
 - Arranges press conferences
 - Advises and assists the subject matter units
 - Monitors the news media
 - Gives feed-back to employees
 - Reacts to mistakes or misunderstandings