

Presented: February 2025

Mastering Media Relations: Presenting Indigenous Tourism Stories & Conducting Interviews

Presented by

INDIGENOUS
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Session Overview

Pitching 101

- Understanding the Media
- How to Make Your Pitch Stand Out
- Timing Matters
- Pitch Exercise

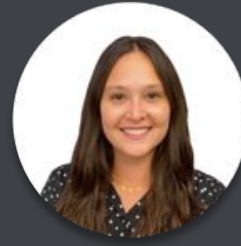
Interviews 101

- Preparing for a Media Interview
- During the Interview
- Effective Follow-ups & Appreciation
- Interview Exercise

Your Speakers



Ryan Rogers
ITAC
Communications
Manager



Bojana Duric
tartanbond
Associate
Director



Jovily Martone
tartanbond
Senior Account
Executive



Debbie Olsen
Calgary Herald
Columnist
& Freelance Writer



Diane Selkirk
Freelance
Journalist



Jonny Bierman
Travel Journalist
& Photographer



Hannah Towey
Condé Nast Traveler
Associate Editor

Pitching 101

Understanding the Media

Understanding the media landscape is key to crafting a successful pitch. Different types of media—print, online, radio, and TV—each have unique formats, audiences, and deadlines, and knowing the roles of reporters, editors, and journalists helps you target the right contacts. A well-crafted media pitch is your opportunity to grab their attention with a compelling, newsworthy story that aligns with their interests and engages their audience.

About the Media

- **Types of media:**
 - Print: Newspapers, magazines, industry journals.
 - Online: News websites, blogs, digital magazines.
 - Radio: Live or pre-recorded segments on AM/FM or podcasts.
 - TV: Live broadcasts vs. pre-recorded segments for news, talk shows, or documentaries.
- **Key roles of media:**
 - Editor: Assigns stories, reviews, edits, and ensures accuracy before publication.
 - Reporter: Gathers information and writes initial news story.
 - Journalist: A broader scope covering a variety of topics and issues

What is a Pitch?

A media pitch is a short communication, typically an email or direct message, suggesting a news story to a journalist or editor at a publication, radio station or broadcast network.

The goal of a pitch is to generate coverage and determine if your media contact is interested in creating a story around the content. This also helps build relationships with the media, in turn creating long-lasting connections.

Examples of Media Coverage

Online

TRAVEL + LEISURE

TRIP IDEAS DESTINATIONS WORLD'S BEST TIPS + PLANNING CRUISES SHOPPING NEWS ABOUT US SUBSCRIBE

CULTURE + DESIGN

This Destination Was Named an Up-and-coming Retirement Spot for Affordability—and It 'Feels Like Paradise'

Pristine beaches, adorable fishing towns, and a low cost of living are some of the perks that await retirees in this under-the-radar area of Panama.

By **Stacey Leasca** Published on February 24, 2025

El Rompio beach on the Azuero Peninsula in Panama. PHOTO: MARCPOGETTY IMAGES

Your golden years deserve nothing but the best, which is why you should consider moving to a [top-rated destination for retirees](#).

In late 2024, International Living shared its list of the six best up-and-coming retirement destinations around the world, chosen for their more under-the-radar vibes. Because we all know [Portugal](#) makes for a great retirement spot by now, as does [Mexico](#), and all of [Florida](#).

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THE GLOBE AND MAIL

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Far right surges in Germany as conservatives face struggle to build coalition

CEIR MOULSON/BERLIN

Germany's conservative opposition leader Friedrich Merz won a lacklustre victory in a national election Sunday, while Alternatives for Germany doubled its support in the strongest showing for a far-right party since the Second World War, projections showed.

Chancellor Olaf Scholz conceded defeat for his centre-left Social Democrats after what he called "a bitter election result." Projections for AfD and ZDF public television showed his party finishing in third place with its worst postwar result in a national parliamentary election.

Mr. Merz said he hopes to put a coalition government together by Easter. But that's likely to be challenging.

The election took place seven months earlier than originally planned after Mr. Scholz's unpopular coalition collapsed in November, three years into a term that was increasingly marred by infighting. There was widespread discontent and not much enthusiasm for any of the candidates.

The campaign was dominated by worries about the years-long stagnation of Europe's biggest economy and pressure to curb migration, something that caused friction after Mr. Merz pushed hard in recent weeks for a tougher approach. It took place against a background of growing uncertainty over the future of Ukraine and Europe's alliance with the United States.

Germany is the most populous country in the 27-nation European Union and a leading member of NATO. It has been Ukraine's second-biggest weapons supplier, after the U.S. It will be central to shaping the continent's response to the challenges of the coming year, including the Trump administration's confrontational foreign and trade policy. ■ GERMANY, A4

Flu-vaccination rates down from last season, risking added strain on health system

KELLY GRANT HEALTH REPORTER

Hundreds of thousands fewer Canadians received flu shots this season than they did last season, and the drop could be contributing to the heavy toll influenza is taking on the health system.

Flu vaccination coverage rates are down between one and four percentage points in the eight provinces and one territory that provided data to The Globe and Mail.

British Columbia is typical of the trend. As of Feb. 9, 25 per cent of the province's population was immunized against the flu, down from 28.5 per cent at the same time last year. The reduction reflects nearly 50,000 fewer shots in arms, the B.C. Ministry of Health said.

"That lower vaccine coverage rate translates into more emergency department visits and more pressure on our health care system in terms of hospital beds and even ICU beds," said Jesse Paolovich, a pediatric infectious disease specialist at the Montreal Children's Hospital, a facility slammed with flu cases in recent weeks. "The more we vaccinate, the more we're able to protect our health care system."

Theories abound as to why fewer Canadians got the flu shot this fall and winter. Some experts say vaccine fatigue has taken hold since the pandemic, a hypothesis reinforced by the fact that coverage rates for COVID-19 vaccination are also down, according to provincial data. The Globe collected.

Fewer people seek out flu shots after a relatively mild influenza season.

Still, others say the main problem is access, particularly when an estimated 6.5 million Canadians don't have a family doctor nudging them to get inoculated. ■ INFLUENZA, A15

A NATION FIGHTS ON

Three years after Russia's invasion, photojournalist Olga Ivashchenko reflects on poignant images from a war she never wanted to cover ■ A5

Trudeau presses Trump to ensure any peace deal offers security guarantees for Ukraine ■ A5

Ukrainians on Sunday visit the graves of relatives killed during Russia's invasion. A large-scale installation called Lights of Memory was set up at Lviv's Lyckakiv cemetery to mark the third anniversary of the war. ROMAN BALUKH/REUTERS

TV

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How to Make Your Pitch Stand Out

The Power of Storytelling

- What is your story angle?
- What makes it unique and what will captivate media interest?
- Research and proof points – Are people writing about this topic recently? What data points demonstrate that it is top-of-mind?
- Who is your spokesperson?

Crafting Your Pitch

- Keep it short.
- Include who, what, when, where, why and how, in the first paragraph.
- Grab their attention with an enticing subject line ensuring key points are included.
- Personalize the pitch to whom you're reaching out to.

Who Are You Pitching?

- Who are your target media outlets? Make sure to pitch the appropriate journalist.
- Follow up after 2-3 days – journalists are busy, and persistence increases your chances of success.
- Keep follow-ups brief – just 1-2 sentences to reference your initial pitch.

Timing Matters

- ✓ **Know the News Cycle** – Understand the media's editorial calendar and deadlines.
- ✓ **Pitch in Advance** – Aim to pitch your story 3-4 weeks before a key event, launch or announcement. The earlier the better. Lead time for print is 2 months.
- ✓ **Be Ready for Last-Minute Opportunities** – Be flexible for breaking news or last-minute story openings.
- ✓ **Respect Media Deadlines** – Aim to send materials for date/time agreed upon. If you need more time, ensure you communicate this to the journalist.
- ✓ **Avoid Pitching During Slow Periods** – Know the right times – i.e. Holidays, OOO.

Example of a Reactive Pitch

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Friday, November 8, 2024 at 9:05 AM
To: [REDACTED]@tartanbond.com>
Subject: Hi Samantha, it's [REDACTED] from the Globe and Mail

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

[REDACTED] I'm writing the big round up of Places to Go in 2025 – the theme for the package, however, is community tourism. How Canadians can give back through their tourism dollars. We want to highlight one or two destinations in Canada, with one (or it could be both) that are indigenous. I'm hoping you can help. [REDACTED] suggested I contact you so you could help me narrow it down. I look forward to hearing from you, Best,
[REDACTED]

A dense, top-down view of various tropical plants, including large monstera leaves and palm fronds, creating a lush, textured background. The colors are muted, with a mix of dark greens, purples, and blues.

Let's practice!

Pitch Exercise

Breakout Session Format

- Split into three-four groups
- Each group is paired with one journalist

Activity Overview

- The journalist will share an article they're currently working on and looking for Indigenous stories and travel experiences

Task

- Craft an engaging subject line
- Write a short, impactful pitch based on what the journalist is looking for

TIP

According to a national survey developed by ITAC and Insignia Research:

- one-third (32 per cent) of Canadian travellers are already planning trips that incorporate Indigenous tourism
- 68 per cent of travellers are positively inclined to participate in Indigenous tourism experiences.

Pitch Exercise

Group 1 – Debbie Olsen

Topic: Four Unforgettable Indigenous Experiences in Canada

Group 2 – Diane Selkirk

Topic: How Tourism is Helping Indigenous Businesses Owners Preserve Traditional Cultural Values

Group 3 – Hannah Towey

Topic: Indigenous Outdoor Experiences in Canada

Group 4 – Jonny Bierman

Topic: Why Indigenous-Owned Lodges Are More Than Just a Place to Sleep

Interviews 101



Preparing For a Media Interview

Key Messages

- Know your story – Be clear on your unique values and what sets you apart.
- Stay on Message – Focus on key points and steer conversation back if needed.
- Keep it Simple – Use clear, concise language.
- End Strong – Reinforce your key message before wrapping up.

Media Brief

- Vet the journalist - understand who they are and review their past work.
- Understand the angle of their story and how your pitch aligns.
- Develop Q&As based on what the angle is and what you've pitched.
- Prepare challenging questions and think about potential concerns or areas you feel less confident about.

Know Your Brand

- Share how your business reflects Indigenous traditions, storytelling and ways of knowing.
- Tell your inspiration story - What motivated you to start your tourism business? What unique experiences do you offer?
- Make your business stand out - Why should visitors choose your business for their next travel experience?

During the Interview

Mastering an interview comes down to a few quick tips: stay on message, keep answers clear and concise, and speak with confidence. If a question catches you off guard, take a moment to pause and bridge back to your key points. A calm and prepared approach ensures you stay in control and make the most of every media opportunity.

Quick Tips

- ✓ Pause and think before you speak (silence is ok!)
- ✓ Facts – correct yourself/clarify immediately
- ✓ Flubs – move on, no need to draw attention to it!
- ✓ Use the ‘3S’ – stats, stories, soundbites (for radio)
- ✓ Repetition is okay
- ✓ Brand mention early on in the interview (especially for radio)
- ✓ Correct misconceptions gently – If a journalist introduces a myth/misconception, correct them right away
- ✓ Speak to what you know – focus on what you do know, not what you don’t

Navigating Difficult Questions

- ✓ Stay calm & composed – Take a breath before answering. A pause is better than rushing into a response.
- ✓ Acknowledge, Then Redirect – Address the question, then pivot back to your key message.
- ✓ Know your boundaries – If a question is inappropriate or outside your expertise, it’s okay to say, “I’m not the right person to answer that, but I can connect you with...”
- ✓ Stay true to your values – If a question challenges Indigenous perspectives, respond with confidence, focusing on the main topic.

Effective Follow-ups & Appreciation

- ✓ **Send a Thank You note** – Ask if they require additional information/materials (high res-imagery, Broll, helpful links for coverage)
- ✓ **Share the Coverage** – Share coverage on your social platforms, ensuring you tag the media outlet and journalist you worked with.
- ✓ **Keep the Conversation Going** – Continue sharing updates, add them to your distribution lists for future story ideas.
- ✓ **Build Long-Term Relationships** – Treat interviews as the beginning of an ongoing connection.

A dense, top-down view of various tropical plants, including large monstera leaves and palm fronds, creating a lush, layered texture. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal and blue color gradient.

Let's Practice!

Example of a Media Brief

PHONE INTERVIEW

Darla Ponace
Reporter/Editor
CBC Indigenous Saskatchewan

KEY DETAILS

- Friday, July 12, 2024
- 2PM PST/5PM EST
- Approx. 30-min interview
- **Darla to call Keith's cell**
- ITAC contact: Keith Henry; keith@indigenoustourism.com; 778-388-5013
- Internal contacts:
 - Jovily Martone; jovily.martone@tartanbond.com; 416-319-8296
 - Jen Le Blanc; jen.leblanc@tartanbond.com; 403-707-7549

ABOUT DARLA

Darla Ponace is a Saulteaux woman from Zagime Anishinabek First Nations. She started as an associate producer in the Indigenous Pathways program at CBC. She is currently working with CBC Indigenous Saskatchewan.

[LinkedIn](#)

STORY ANGLE

Darla learned about ITAC's funding cuts and is looking for more answers on how these cuts from the Federal Government will impact Saskatchewan Indigenous tourism businesses.

ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS:

- Who will be directly impacted by these **cut backs** and what does it mean for Indigenous tourism in Saskatchewan?
- Do you know of any smaller tourism companies that will be affected?
- Is the government doing enough to support it? If not, how can they better support it?

PHONE INTERVIEW

Genevieve Murchison
Journalist
CBC Manitoba – French News

Interview Details

- **Date:** Wednesday, July 13, 2022
- **Time:** 2:15 pm PST / 5:15 pm EST
- **Reporter:** Genevieve Murchison
- **Outlet:** CBC Manitoba
- **Location:** Seb to call 204-981-4304
- **Interview Type:** Phone
- **Internal Contact:** Jovily Martone; tartanbond; 416-319-8296

Story Angle

Genevieve will focus the interview on whether there's an increase in Canadians looking to explore Indigenous tourism experiences this summer. She wants to highlight the prairies as well and would like to know if there are any examples of initiatives ITAC can speak on.

Journalist profile



With over 20 years of communications experience, Genevieve Murchison has worked in the field of television. She has hosted several current affairs programs, as well as productions with community and cultural content. Currently, she's a host and producer at CBC Radio-Canada.

Outlet Profile

CBC/Radio-Canada is Canada's national public broadcaster and one of its largest cultural institutions. The Corporation is a leader in reaching Canadians on new platforms and delivers a comprehensive range of radio, television, Internet, and satellite-based services. Deeply rooted in the regions, CBC/Radio-Canada is the only domestic broadcaster to offer diverse regional and cultural perspectives in English, French and eight Indigenous languages.

Sample Questions and Key Messages

*Please note that journalists will **not** share their questions ahead of time. These are anticipated questions only.*

Questions

Q: Have you noticed more travellers looking to incorporate Indigenous experiences into their travel plans?

A: Yes, we're seeing more people looking to include immersive Indigenous experiences. It's great to see! We're finding that there's more interest in the Indigenous culture and visitors looking to take part in all the experiences that are offered.

Q: How can travellers find out more about / support Indigenous experiences and communities that are available and open?

A: People can find more details about different experiences through destinationindigenous.ca. There are blogs, different types of experiences to choose from, and a magazine available for anyone looking to take a deeper dive into the culture.

Q: Are there any particular experiences you'd recommend this summer?

A: Yes! I recommend checking out [Onhwa Lumina](#) in [Wendake](#), Quebec. Recently, they opened an immersive experience where visitors can take part in celebrating the life and values of the great Wendat nation. They're transported by the magic of light, sound, and video projections from nightfall, along a 1.2 km route. You can find more details and book tickets at onhwalumina.ca

There's also [Mádhóki Farm](#) that's located in Ottawa where Indigenous people reconnect with the land through both healing and wellness programs and social enterprise opportunities.

For travellers who enjoy being out on the water and fishing, [Unamen Shipu](#) is a great option. They're best known for their fishing trips in the traditional territory of the Innu of [Unamen Shipu](#), which is located north of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. They also offer [lobster fishing trips](#) where visitors can learn traditional lobster fishing methods.

Q: Are there any notable experiences or businesses that you'd like to highlight in the prairies?

A: Travellers can choose to take part in experiences that include arts and crafts, cuisine, culture, reconciliation, wildlife, nature and adventure, events and more! Currently, there are Pow Wows happening in and around these areas and are some of the most memorable experiences visitors can take part in.

Media Interview Exercise

Breakout Session Format

- Same groups as pitching 101 exercise with same journalist

Activity Overview

- In the media brief handout participants will draft some key messages to help them prepare before their media interview
- Ryan, journalists and tartanbond will offer guidance and feedback

Task

- Journalists will interview each group about their business and apply what they've learned.

A dense background of tropical plants, including large monstera leaves and palm fronds, with a color gradient from purple on the left to teal on the right.

Thank you.