

Christmas in July

While most people are enjoying the warm weather by picnicing and laying on beaches, my thoughts are growing cold.

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas - and so should you, if you have a product or service that can be featured in a holiday gift guide. Those are the gift sections that start popping up in magazines, newspapers and on TV every November.

Due to the long lead times for these special sections, many media outlets - especially magazines - start looking for gift ideas in the summer. And as the saying goes, the early bird gets the worm. So you need to start pitching your gift ideas now in order to make the cut.

Here's the scoop on some of the major media types and their usual deadlines and some other suggestions:

- * Magazines - July
- * Wires and Syndicates - September
- * Newspapers - October
- * TV - November

And here are some tips to get your gift idea noticed:

- 1) Don't just put your gift suggestions in one category. Be creative.
- 2) Keep your pitch short: no more than three paragraphs. Highlight the product, offer samples (if available) and photos, and don't forget your contact details.
- 3) Always check to find out who is responsible for the gift guide and what type of information they would like to receive. Some may want a press kit & product samples; others may just want a pitch. (Look at my recommended resource to find out how!)

Just remember to keep it simple: send out a one-page press release about your product or service, a pitch letter explaining why it's such a great gift idea, and links to where a reporter can download 300 dpi product photos, if applicable.

As you craft the materials, think about where your product or service fits. It may work with a variety of typical holiday gift stories such as: stocking stuffers, gifts for teens, gifts for girls on the go, gifts for the parent-to-be; tech gadget gifts, gifts for the man who has everything, etc.

Suggest a good category for your product or service, rather than simply stating, "Here's a product that would make a nice holiday gift," you're making yourself stand out -- and maybe even giving the journalist an idea for a story angle that he or she wouldn't have thought about otherwise.

And don't forget to think beyond gift guides, especially if you only have a service to offer the media. Sometimes you can use the holidays as a great launch for a story. If you're selling spa & massage services, for example, offer up tips to relax during the holiday season. If you provide interior design services, a story idea on simple & inexpensive decorating for the holidays would be gladly appreciated.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

About the Author

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