

Engaging with the media

What is newsworthy?

How to get your message
across

Enhancing your pitch

Interview tips

WHY SHOULD YOU DO IT?



The RIGHT story will:

- Engage the audience (the community)
- Promote the University
- Help recruit students / academics to UWA
- Possibly attract future collaborators
- Promote your personal brand

An anonymous research donation of \$100,000 was the direct result of the donor seeing a news story about UWA's "Microscope in a Needle" project

WHAT IS NEWSWORTHY?



What Media like:

- Stories with mass appeal
- Discussion-provoking stories
- Individual achievement stories
- Stories with a good photos or video
- Stuff already in the news – common topics
- Generally: Stories with IMPACT

What they don't (with exceptions):

- Staff appointments
- Announcements about prizes or awards (unless they are big!)
- Business as usual stories
- “But it’s important for UWA” stories

SUCCESS STORIES



Media success stories:

- Scientists win Eureka prize for leukemia-detecting machine
- Trial to see if cannabis improves sleep
- Sometimes it helps to worry about something
- Glass spearhead found at Rottnest
- Archaeologists find evidence of human occupation of Australia 50,000 years ago
- Scientists observe two stars colliding

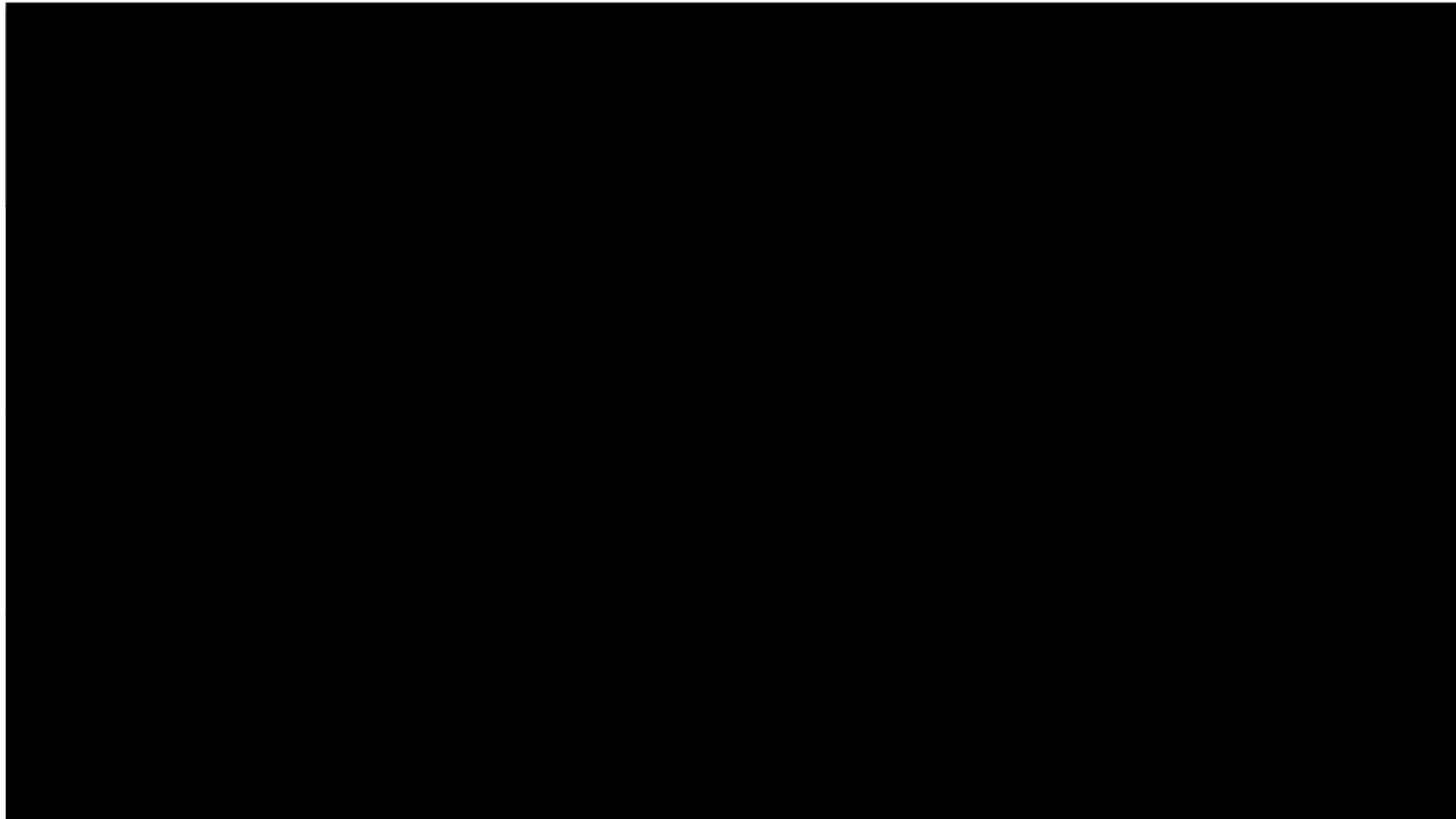
STARS COLLIDE STORY



Media package included:

- Media statement (explaining the science)
- Video of remote Zadko telescope
- Computer graphics of collision
- Actual image of collision
- Well-briefed media talent
- Interesting “side stories” – the production of gold and the Russian hackers

Stars collide – 10 News



THE MEDIA PROCESS

- Think about media at the beginning of your project
- Speak with your Media Office EARLY
- Media interest (or a lack thereof) is not an indicator of importance
- Be realistic about expectations
- Prepare material (video and photos) for the media during your research
- Draft a media release (after establishing if one is needed)
- Nominate a spokesperson (and then be available)
- Seek media training

CRAFT YOUR MESSAGE

What do you want the media to say?

- Find the most appealing part of your story
- Is it the bit you want publicised?
- No?
- Weave or relate YOUR message into the most interesting part

- Produce an elevator pitch – with a headline to match
- Use lay-speak and translate technical stuff

THE MEDIA RELEASE



Catchy and understandable

- Catchy headline, get to the point
- The latest and MOST NEWSWORTHY info in the first paragraph
- Tell them why it's important to their audience
- Not too long – one page
- Understandable – lay speak
- Limit quotes to two people
- Links to more info, contact details
- Photos and video attached

INTERVIEW TIPS



- How can I best prepare for a good interview? – make notes
- What if I don't know an answer? – say what you do know
- What if I stumble on an answer? – pre-recorded? Start again
- Do I have the right to see the story before it's published? No. But you can ask.
- How can I make them get the right 'angle'? – brief them well

BECOME AN EXPERT



Engage with the media

- Media are always looking for reliable experts
- Commentary on current events
- Commentary on common topics in the media
- Comment widely on your subject
- Register with UWA Media Office as a UWA Research Expert
- Media training is available
- Must be responsive and easy to get hold of – available!
- Call the UWA Media Office if you have questions

THANK YOU



To contact the UWA Media Office:

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