



PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

# Convention PR & Marketing Plan



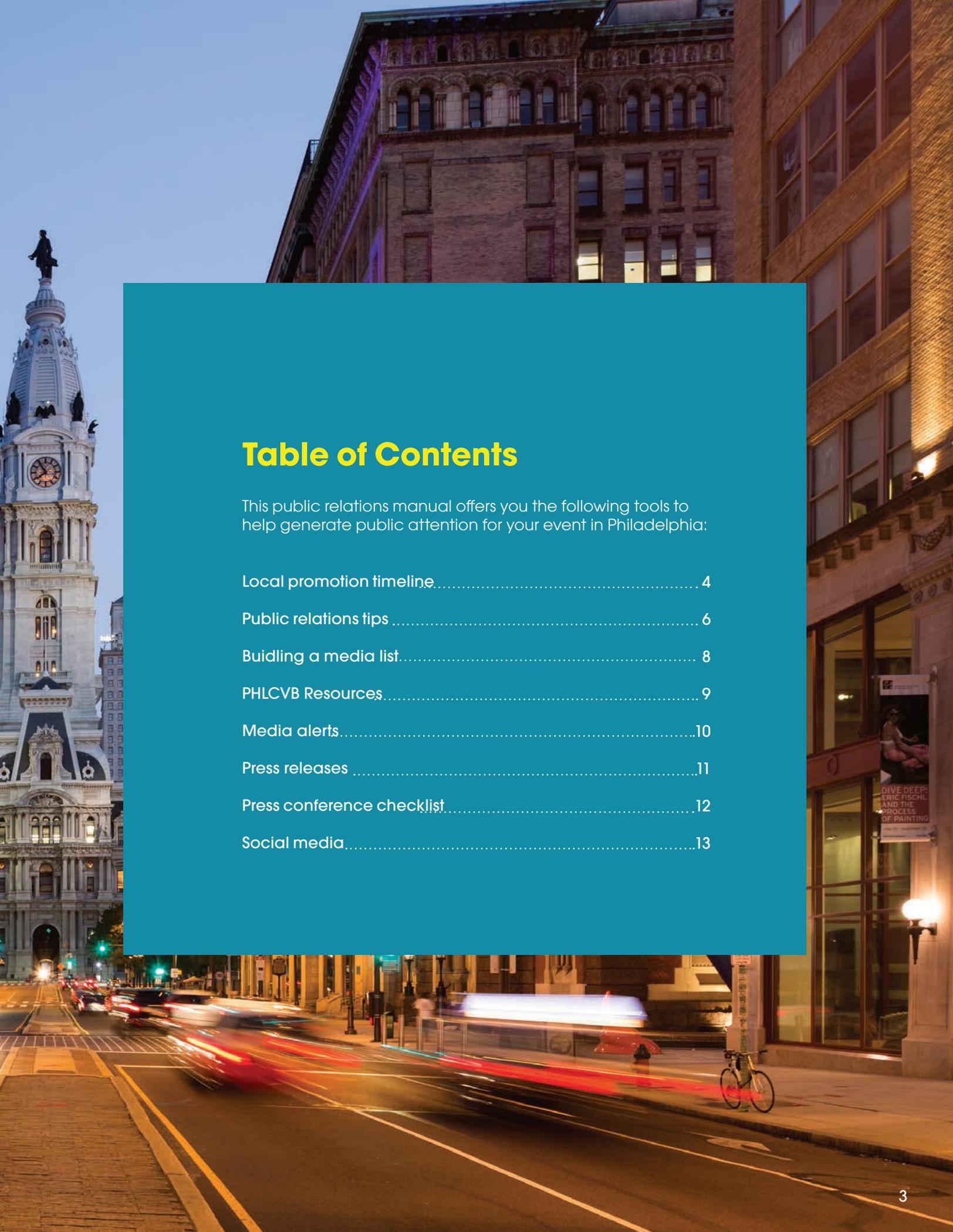
## Welcome!

We are delighted that you will be holding your convention, meeting or tradeshow in Philadelphia. This PR & Marketing Plan is a resource created especially for your group by the Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau (PHLCVB) to assist you in promoting your meetings in Philadelphia.

The more work you can accomplish in advance, the greater chances of meeting your promotional goals. Please add us to your media mailing list and send a copy of your program when it is complete.

If you have any questions or need any assistance, please contact the Communications Department at **215-636-3412**. If you are interested in hiring a local full-service public relations agency, please let us know and we are happy to provide recommendations.

**Thank you for choosing Philadelphia for your upcoming event!**



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# Local Promotion Timeline

START  
HERE

## 1 YEAR OUT

- Promote your customized Philadelphia microsite to attendees on social media and on your website
- Speak to your Convention Services representative about available e-blast templates for promoting Philadelphia as the destination for your meeting
- Download free, high-resolution Philadelphia photos for inclusion in promotional materials at [www.discoverPHL.com/photos\\*](http://www.discoverPHL.com/photos*)
- Share the Philadelphia videos with your attendees to build excitement about the meeting [www.youtube.com/philadelphiacvb](http://www.youtube.com/philadelphiacvb)
  - Follow [@meetPHL](https://twitter.com/meetPHL) for tips

## 6 MONTHS OUT

- Post about your convention on social media tagging [@discoverPHL](https://twitter.com/discoverPHL) (Twitter) and [facebook.com/discoverPHL](https://facebook.com/discoverPHL), using a hashtag specific to your conference so your attendees can join the conversation
- Request local media lists from PHLCVB Communications Team

## 2 MONTHS BEFORE CONVENTION

Determine story angles and reporters to contact (see page 6 for tips on how to uncover trends and angles to make the most compelling pitches)

## 1 MONTH BEFORE CONVENTION

Prepare your press release/media advisory

See examples on:  
**Page 10**

## 3 MONTHS BEFORE CONVENTION

Create a pitch list with target media.

## 3 WEEKS BEFORE CONVENTION

Pitch story ideas to local media. Keep in mind that some media outlets publish weekly; allow adequate lead time accordingly.

## 2 WEEKS BEFORE CONVENTION

Follow up with reporters pitched. Determine if they would like to attend an event during your conference or interview a member of your leadership team or a guest speaker. Process any media credential requests as needed.

## 1 DAY BEFORE CONVENTION

- Tweet about your meeting to local news media (Request list from PHLCVB Communications)
- If media are invited to attend, send out a media advisory and let them know the best times to attend.



# Public Relations Tips



## Tips for Meetings, Conventions & Tradeshows

Whether you're interested in drawing attention to your industry, generating coverage of a keynote speaker, letting the host city know that your convention is coming or just making your attendees feel welcome, there are many ways to promote a meeting, convention or tradeshow in Philadelphia.

## Here are 5 public relations strategies that can complement your marketing efforts.

### 1. Target your stories

The PHLCVB maintains local media lists for your use. At least six months prior to your event, request lists and add the appropriate contacts to your database. Target stories to specific departments, i.e. health, science, education or business media, for more effective results. Remember to keep it simple – you may know what certain industry terms mean, but that doesn't mean that the media and public do.

Media will be more apt to cover your events if news items have mass appeal and can be understood by people outside the industry. Make the connection between your industry news and public interest.

### 2. Look for trends

Is there a trend in your industry that might make a great story? Often, reporters, especially at major daily newspapers, need to see a trend in order to cover an industry convention. Know what the trends are in your industry and you could become a part of a major feature story.

### 3. Find a local angle

In Philadelphia, many conventions identify with the city's history, such as the fact that Philadelphia was the site of the nation's very first convention (the Continental Congress) or the first convention of people of color, and incorporate this into pitches to the media. Promote your attendance and economic impact projections with the **PHLCVB**, so Philadelphia organizations and businesses will see the importance of your convention and help support your efforts.

Work with a local charity by donating all extra show food and beverages to a food bank, or promote your efforts with a community program.

### 4. Plan for media

If you plan to have media come through your show or your meetings, plan on staffing a press room. This room should include up-to-date press releases, photographs, resources, computers with Internet access, and at least one phone line staffed to answer media inquiries during show hours.

A press room also serves as a meeting place for interviews with speakers and executives, and a checkpoint for escorting media onto the show floor. Get consent from all speakers prior to inviting media, and have specific materials prepared, including the agenda, speakers' bios, and a schedule of events. Be accessible – list a specific room where your event is taking place.

Media who cannot find an event cannot cover an event, and sometimes cannot wait until a public relations representative is found on the show floor. If you release information through a press release, be accessible and list phone numbers where interested media can reach you at all times.

### 5. Timing is everything

The key to promoting a convention or tradeshow is an early start. If you are trying to increase attendance, do not rely on the local media. Your best bet for driving attendance is to focus pre-convention efforts on trade magazines and newsletters in your industry, which are more likely to give upcoming conventions and tradeshow substantial coverage.

Local media almost always focus on a meeting when it arrives. Keep current events in mind when pitching stories. Last-minute pitches regarding current news items often generate great coverage.

## How to Build a Media List That Works For You

A media list includes key contacts who may cover your story, or who would benefit from receiving your press release.

### Finding the right reporters:

- Search your target outlets websites to see if any of them have covered your organization or topic you are pitching previously, or anything similar to it.
- Determine what department is most likely to cover your story – sports, business, health, etc. – and look at what each reporter covers in those sections to find the person most suited to your story.
- Most importantly, be sure to read, watch or listen to the media outlets you plan to pitch before pitching them! Reporters can tell when you've done your homework, so make sure to know what they are interested in before sending them a story idea.

### What to include in your media list:

- When laying out your media list, use whatever format is most helpful to you – an electronic database, collection of business cards or a spreadsheet chart. There are also companies that can create media lists for you, primarily if you plan to send out releases nationwide.
- Next to each medium, note the contact name, phone number(s), e-mail address, social media accounts and website. Most prefer e-mail (no large photo attachments, please).
- Keep a running log of phone calls and conversations with each publication.

# PHLCVB Resources

You can also request the following free communications resources from the PHLCVB :

- Welcome Letters
- Comprehensive Philadelphia-area media lists
- Digital images and stock footage
- Promotional Philadelphia copy
- Public relations consulting
- Quantities of the Philadelphia Official Visitors Guide, and maps for your press room
- Philadelphia destination video



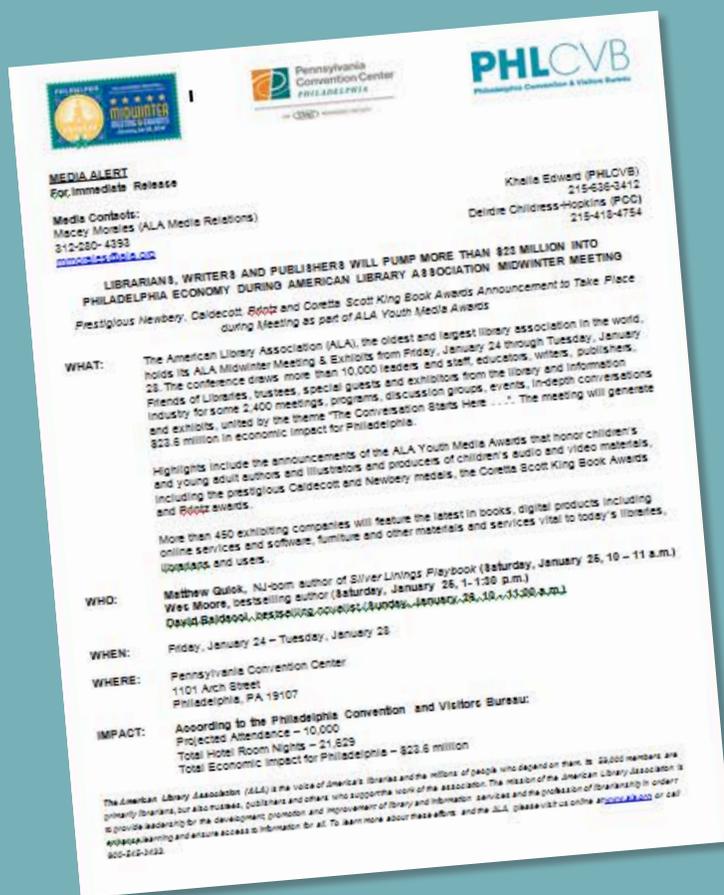
Philadelphia Destination Video

Spring and Summer  
Philadelphia Official Visitors Guides

# Media Alert

If you are interested in having media cover a specific event, you should send out a media alert. The alert should provide key information about the event and entice the media to attend and cover the event. For example, **a media alert should be issued if you plan a press conference.**

See page  
**12**  
for a Press  
Conference  
Checklist!



## Media Alert Elements

1. Issue the media alert on company letterhead. It looks professional and credible.
2. If there will be a photo opportunity, state it at the top of the alert; it is more likely to generate photo and television coverage.
3. Include media contact information for press seeking additional information, including a cell number for the person who will serve as their on-site contact.
4. Use a short, active and descriptive headline to entice the reader.
5. Use a block format for media alerts, so the news desk or reporter can quickly and easily find the specific information they need. Describe what the media will see and hear, where and when it will take place, who will be there and any relevant background details.
6. Include a boilerplate. (Information about your company or organization.)

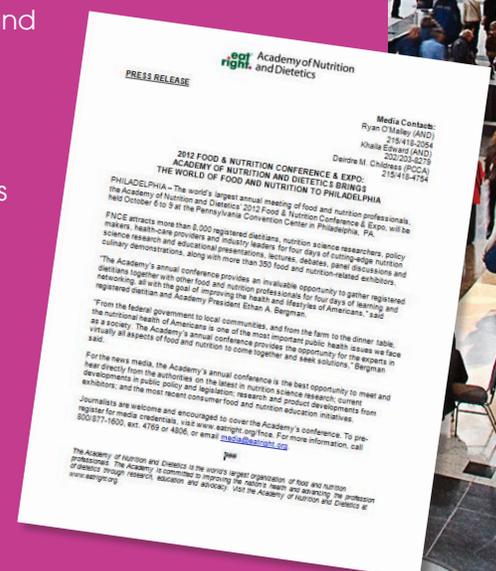
## Press Releases

A press release is written and distributed to get your message in front of a large audience in a short amount of time. A press release should include newsworthy and important information in an organized and concise manner. When sending a press release, include a short “pitch” to media in your email as to why they should read the release and cover your event.

### Press Release Elements

1. Issue the release on company letterhead. It looks professional and credible.
2. Include a contact for members of the media to reach for additional information, or to set up an interview. This person should be familiar with all of the information in the release and be able to answer questions.
3. Include a short descriptive headline to grab the reader’s attention.
4. Include where the press release was written and date released.
5. Put the most important information at the beginning. Provide answers to who, what, where, when, why and how in the first paragraph.
6. The remaining body of the release should include further details, background information, quotes and additional relevant information.
7. Use a quote by a company representative. This adds credibility to your release. If your convention is bringing in well-known experts in your field or recognized speakers, include quotes from them as well.
8. Center three pound signs (###) at the bottom of the page to indicate the end of your release.
9. Include a boilerplate. (Information about your company or organization.)

**\*Be sure to proofread your release before you send it out!**



Sample press release

# Press Conference Checklist

- Select a date
- Reserve a location
- Invite appropriate guests and speakers
- Order audio visual equipment, including a mult-box\*
- Order appropriate food/beverage
- Order appropriate signage (banners, podium sign, etc.)
- Hire a photographer or bring a digital camera
- Research background materials
- Write media alert
  - Email at least one day prior
  - Post on website
  - Distribute on newswire service
- Make pitch calls to media (one day prior and morning of)
- Prepare materials for on-site
  - Press release (email and/or release on newswire service)
  - Media sign-in sheet
  - Speakers' bios
  - Background materials
  - Other relevant background releases as needed
  - B-roll, if available \*\*
- Props for photo ops (backdrop, gifts, etc.)

\*A mult-box is a device connected to the main microphone at a news event that allows journalists and crews to "plug in" and record clean audio feed.

\*\*B-roll is pre-recorded video footage that relates to your product, association or event.

# Social Media

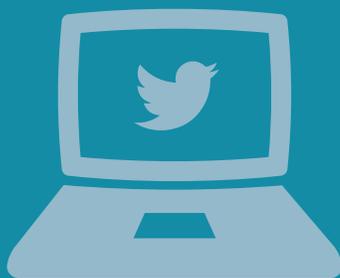
A lot has changed in the media landscape over the last ten years. Increasingly people are turning to social media websites for news. Whether it's Twitter, Facebook or Instagram, social media should be included in any outreach plans to potential attendees as well as media.

**Here's a list of the Twitter accounts for Philadelphia's major media outlets:**

Philadelphia Inquirer - **@PhillyInquirer**  
 Philadelphia Business Journal - **@PHLBizJournal**  
 NBC10 Philadelphia - **@NBCPhiladelphia**  
 CBS Philly - **@CBSPhilly**  
 Fox 29 - **@FOX29philly**  
 PhillyWeekly - **@PhillyWeekly**  
 Philadelphia Daily News - **@PhillyDailyNews**  
 Philadelphia Tribune - **@PhillyTrib**  
 Philadelphia Magazine - **@PhillyMag**  
 Philly.com - **@Phillydotcom**  
 Action News on 6ABC - **@6abc**  
 WHYY - **@WHYY**  
 KWY News Radio - **@KYWNewsRadio**  
 Billy Penn - **@billy\_penn**



## Tips for marketing your event on social media



- Create a timeline for event promotions and announcements.
- Create visual elements to support your event across all channels.
- Find a strong hashtag to help people connect and discover content before, during and after the event. Leverage it everywhere, even in non-social communications (such as e-mail, print or giveaways).
- Encourage live tweets from your event.
- Share photos and video on Facebook and Twitter.
- Monitor your hashtag and engage with those using it.

