

## Press Event Do's and Don'ts

PICA (Publications in Construction and Agriculture) recently conducted a really great survey for AEM (Association of Equipment Manufacturers) in which they asked editors to share their most significant "press event peeves." I found the results to be very helpful and think you will too. Here's a summary...

### Lack of Newsworthy Information

For editors, the most important quality of a press event is its content, and the widest-held pet peeve is the press event that lacks significance.

This is rare for stand-alone press conferences, but it sometimes happens at larger trade shows when a company decides to have a press function simply because a competitor is (and not because of changes in their own product line or operations) or because they have some other message for the trade press.

### Lack of Warning

Many editors also list "a lack of warning" as a pet peeve. Short notice creates intense pressure on editorial staffs to free up an editor for the event and, in the case of a stand-alone press function, it can cause the magazine to absorb an expensive airfare. Inconvenient timing, by contrast, is only a problem for about one-third of the editors surveyed.

### Lack of Structure

While half of the editors surveyed listed boring presentations as a pet peeve, this is not a call for companies to use professional presenters and multi-media "flash" presentations.



We are a marketing communications company geared toward helping equipment manufacturers grow.

We create new ideas for small and large companies eager to build their business with increased sales of their products and services.

We've been doing this for over 50 years because we believe in the entrepreneurial spirit.

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Harold Wallace

Call me anytime: 405.834.5836 (cell).



For the most part, boring presentations are those that either have no point or take a long time getting to it. If you are introducing a new product and your presenters directly address the essential related facts, the editors you most want to impress will be an attentive and appreciative audience. The same is true if your focus is the performance of your company over the past year since the introduction of a new service.

The fact that just 30% of the editors listed "too little information" as a pet peeve is proof that marketers have become increasingly sophisticated in their press functions.

### **Press embargoes**

Press embargoes---the release of information to the press on the condition it not be published until a later, specified date---are somewhat rare in our industry, so relatively few editors find them a pet peeve. In practice, if you need to embargo information, we encourage you to communicate this emphatically, not only in your oral presentations but also on the physical press release itself.

It is very easy in magazine operations for a staff member who was not at the press function to end up handling your materials---and violating the embargo by accident.

*For a list of PICA member publishers and publications, view the online PICA Membership Directory at [www.aem.org/Links/PICA/](http://www.aem.org/Links/PICA/).*

**If you have any questions or need advice, feel free to send us your questions.  
Comments are also welcome!**

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