

Getting Your Story Out

Help the Communications & Marketing Office get the story out about exciting developments at SUNY Cobleskill.

Learn how to make the most of C&M's media distribution services.

SUNY Cobleskill

News Values

We consider the same news values taught to every reporter and editor:

- Timeliness
- Impact
- Prominence
- Novelty
- Human Interest

Timeliness

- Something upcoming, that just happened, or is happening now.
- We need to know in advance so we can get the word out to appropriate media outlets and get reporters here if appropriate and possible.
- If something newsworthy is about to happen, please let us know as far in advance as possible.

Impact

- Addresses the question, “Who is this important to?” The more people affected, the more newsworthy.
- For us, it means capitalizing on trends like farm-to-table and STEM, highlighting initiatives or events that have community or regional implications, or addressing state or national issues.
- Note: It is our job to view this from the eyes of reporters and editors. We know there are lots of reasons more people *should* care about lots of things — and sometimes we can make that case. But we need to be realistic with our expectations and pitches.

Examples:

- **Fermentation Science** got national coverage via the Associated Press – brewing is big (yes, it is more than that — but that’s why it got covered).
- Our **water monitoring** work on the Mohawk River gets coverage for its broad implications for many communities in the region.
- **START-UP NY** news always gets coverage because it is a hot-button issue at the state level
- **Institute for Rural Vitality** involves regional partners and has regional implications

Prominence

- If it involves a well-known public figure, it is more likely to get coverage.
- For us, that could be a visit by a government official, but it also includes things like Chef Yono participating in our Culinary Extravaganza.

Novelty

- First. Only. Best. Unusual.
- Our **Therapeutic Horsemanship** is an excellent example of novelty because it is new to most people.
- We were the first in SUNY to implement an **Applied Learning** requirement.

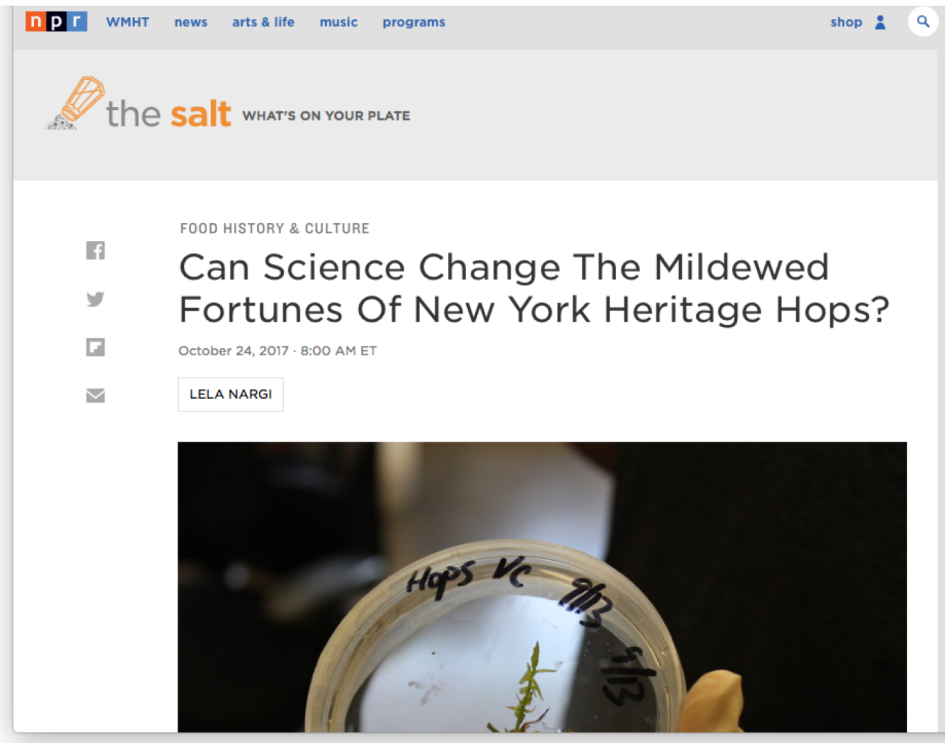
Human Interest

- These are just good, person-focused stories.
- *Examples:*
 - Anthony Yevoli overcomes leukemia to return to the lacrosse field.
 - Alexis Halstead wins national timbersports championship

Fungus-Resistant Hops Research on NPR

- Great example of multiple news values (timeliness, impact, novelty, and human interest)
- "Can Science Change the Mildewed Fortunes of New York Heritage Hops?"
- The story connected: cutting-edge SUNY Cobleskill research, faculty and students to local and global markets, regional history, economic development, and a human interest angle: beer.

The October 2017 NPR story was picked up in 200+ markets across the United States



What are the other values?

- **Proximity.** Readers care about news that is geographically close to them. The bigger the news, the farther it can reach.
- **Conflict.** This covers things like crime, politics, war, natural disasters, etc.
- **Currency.** This refers to trends in news and culture. They can be long-term trends (like the farm-to-table trend) or cyclical things like back-to-school season, summer fashion, etc.

Press Release or Story?

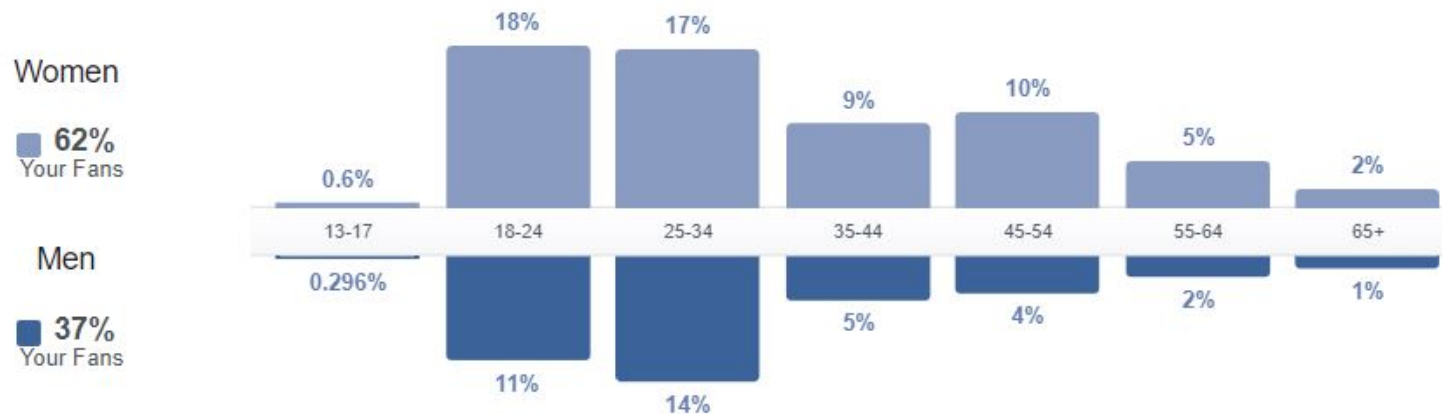
- If a story fits one or more of those criteria really well, a press release may be appropriate.
 - We have a variety of curated distribution lists for different topics to get the news to the most receptive audience.
- If the event/news item has already happened or is mostly of interest within the SUNY Cobleskill community, we will write it up as a blog post and push it out via social media.

What We Need to Know

- Advance notice of an event or activity
- Basic details: who, what, where, when, why
- A quote or two from organizers or prominent participants
 - These should add some personality to the release and give some “insider” context for why it’s important. They should be 2-3 sentences at most. C&M can help craft quotes if needed.
- Photos
 - Should be as high resolution as possible
 - Should be horizontal/landscape orientation
 - Should have basic caption information: WHO is doing WHAT

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest

- For social media, it is always best if it is interesting to a wider audience
- Most of our Facebook fans are female. The largest female age group is made up of followers between 18 – 34.
- Social media posts are most successful when they include a compelling image or video, and a short, positive message.



How to Tell Us

- Use the *Communications & Marketing Request Form* on our office webpages to make a formal request and initiate the discussion.

The screenshot displays the website's navigation menu on the left, with 'Communications & Marketing Request Form' circled in red. The main content area features the 'Office of Communications and Marketing' header, a mission statement, and a list of services. A red arrow points from the circled menu item to the 'Communications & Marketing Request Form' page on the right. This page includes a title, a note about the CobyNow Request Form, a request description, and input fields for Name, E-mail, and Phone. Below these are radio buttons for 'This request is for:' (A Campus Office, An Academic Department, Other) and a text area for 'Briefly describe the project, including completion/distribution dates.' A 'Categories' section is partially visible at the bottom.

- For upcoming news stories and events, email or call Jim Feldman, Director of Communications & Marketing