

What Makes a Good Story Idea?

While crucial components to an effective story idea include an interesting hook, a new development or product, a quirky individual or place, and so on, there are other important elements to consider when developing key messages:

The first question you should ask yourself: So what?

Seems harsh, yes, but this is what an editor will ask. They'll want to know what makes this idea special or worthy of consideration. If you have taken the time to thoroughly map this out, and develop your idea and its merits thoughtfully, you should have no trouble answering this first question.

Second question: What makes your offering any different from a similar business down the road?

You're one of many wilderness resorts (for example) in BC? Great, but what differentiates you from your neighbours?

Don't think of this as a competition; you shouldn't allow your messaging to devolve into we-do-this-better missives. Instead, your communication should focus on what you offer that others don't — the quirkiest, the better.

What's new?

This is an easy one. Editors love talking about what's new, and the more information you can provide, the more success you will have in communicating your stories.

That said...Sometimes what's new/exciting to you doesn't always translate to readers.

You've hired a new executive to the team? Awesome. But that doesn't mean that readers will take much notice. You offer an opportunity for adventurers to spend time with an owner/president who is passionately involved in the preservation of their environment (and is also an interesting character)? Now, that's something that just might catch a reader's attention.

What's trending.

There's always going to be an interest in the market for current and emerging trends. Some offerings that continue to enjoy popularity: women-only, kid-specific and multi-generational gatherings; green initiatives; technology; cutting-edge food and beverage trends/menus that you can only find at your locale; specialized programs/learning holidays; opportunities to mingle with the locals or experience local culture; festivals and events, etc.

Don't forget what's tried-and-true.

Should you have an interesting offering that's not exactly new, don't assume it won't be of interest. If your team offers a package, say, that promises a unique spin on the tried-and-true, think of that as one more feather in your cap — and one more reason why you stand out in the crowd.