

# Put your best face forward in the media

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The term 'persona' is attributed to Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung, referring to an individual's 'social facade' or 'face presented to the world which reflects the role in life that the individual is playing and makes a definite impression upon others'.



The above definition of 'persona' uncannily sums up the present, although it was coined about a 100 years ago. Personal images to be used as apps and avatars are non-negotiable in current digital, social and virtual worlds.

“ *The business-to-business media is one of the touchpoints where individuals most need to present their best face to the world.* ”

## 10 tips to put your best face forward

If a picture tells a 1000 words, here's some ways a well thought out profile picture can tell more of your story at a glance!

**1. Your profile, on file:** For anyone wishing to be represented in any kind of media, a good quality profile pic is a non-negotiable. To ensure journalists and editors will be predisposed to publish your news, submissions should be accompanied by a good quality profile pic. Marketing teams, publicists and reputation managers can assist by ensuring they have commensurate images on file for media release.

**2. Executive presence:** Creating a business persona differs somewhat from a social persona. Featuring kids, pets and holiday destinations are mostly best on the social media; branded walls, desks and other 'accoutrements' of office, work better in the business pages.

**3. Be the top story:** A passport style photo will be enlarged about 10 times in the media and apart from not being very flattering, is not a satisfying format in a top story space. The objective of a profile image is to do justice to your important press release statements.

**4. Schedule the shoot:** Using a professional photographer is first prize. For a small investment you'll have a portfolio of high-quality shots to use for years to come. If not, find someone with a good eye, a steady hand and an enthusiasm for

their image streams, to take the pics. Take lots, move around, so you can select your best angle.

**5. Dress the part:** Profile pics are your own mini modelling shoot. On the day, a few changes of clothing will allow the selection of the hero shot. For best impact you can't go wrong with a white shirt, well cut jacket or favourite, most flattering garments. Rule of thumb, dress as for an industry event, interview or important meeting.

**6. Your best angle:** Face-on head and shoulders profile pics can make you look like an identikit, but not necessarily one that will be a most wanted in business. Profile pics that show you from the waist up and at relaxed angles, rather than bang on front facing, help avoid your profile looking like your home affairs picture.

**7. Don't pale into insignificance:** Someone once told someone that you should shoot photos against a plain white background, but white backgrounds on white pages do not necessarily make for the best newsworthy impression. A solid colour wall or ambient background will better define the edges of your profile pic.

**8. The no pose pose:** Let's face it, few among us are Sylvesters, Bonangs or Somizis. Striking a relaxed pose can be awkward. Making use of props such as leaning over a banister rail, sitting on a nice staircase, leaning back or forwards in a stylish chair or at a desk next to a vase of flowers, can ensure more ease for even the most awkward of models, add interest to your profile pic and are foolproof ways to a more pro persona that tells more of your story.

**9. Location, location:** Suitable backdrops include offices, boardrooms, foyers or building facades. Hack: If you can find a good graphic designer, they can always photoshop you into a virtual background of your choice. Reflections: in desk tops, glass walls and windows can also add interest to your shots and make you look biz-like and shiny.

**10. Landscape formats:** A lonely, pixelated headshot in the middle of a page misses the opportunity to tell the quality story of your persona. Although phone cameras are vertical, your photo in the press or social media will mostly be required to be landscape – this is a huge problem. Note to self: Remind the photographer to turn the phone on its side to to frame you with horizontal space on either side, to avoid the unnecessary editorial challenge of vertical pics! The same applies if you are taking photos of more than one member of your team.

Following the above suggestions will guarantee quantumly improved impressions and engagement from your press release announcements. Don't forget to provide your new images when you submit your editorial contribution to Bizcommunity at <https://www.bizcommunity.com/SubmitNews.aspx>

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