



MEDIA UTILITIES: Media Profile - Stocks and bonds are only half of the equation

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If you thought That Money Show centered just on numbers, think again. Craig McGuire discovers that the editorial team's real interests range from Green Machines to airline ticket prices to healthcare costs

Focusing on a limited number of subjects each week, broadcast news magazines like That Money Show are incredibly hard to pitch. However, your success depends on what, or whom you are pitching.

Produced for PBS by Thirteen/WNET New York, the weekly That Money Show debuted last September, with segments exploring the world and culture of money.

Setting its sights beyond the Street, That Money Show is geared towards affluent 20- to 40-somethings. But note, publicity hounds looking to pitch standard financial fodder to this prime demographic need not apply.

'We won't just put someone on who has something to promote,' says Anne Hartmayer, news coordinator and booker for the show. 'It has to fit. For example, we have something coming up on women investors, so we'll be looking for that type of subject.'

Even if you're savvy enough to get someone to listen to your idea, don't expect instant gratification. 'We work at a fast pace, but there's a lot of planning that goes into each show,' explains Hartmayer. '(PR reps) need to look at this as a long term pitch and not a placement made in the next 10 days.'

'We work mostly with internally produced story ideas, but that doesn't mean we wouldn't run with a story pitched by a PR pro,' she adds. Hartmayer says the best way to pitch her is either by e-mail (hartmayer@thirteen.org) or regular mail.

PR execs should first view and understand the show, says Bob Rumerman, a spokesman for LVM Group, which represents That Money Show along with a number of other WNET programs. 'This show is not just stocks and bonds,' he explains. 'It's about any aspect of life that relates to money, and that involves a broad range of topics.'

Popular subjects with producers have included the US obsession with food as big business, Green Machines (electric automobiles), pharmaceutical

advertising, healthcare trends that relate to out-of-pocket expenses and issues stemming from layoffs, which are becoming increasingly more common.

'They recently ran a piece on the lunacy of airline ticket pricing,' says Rumerman. 'Passengers getting off a flight in Newark were interviewed and every single one of them had paid a different ticket price.'

With such eclectic subject matter, you may not be able to get your client through the front door - but maybe you can slip him in through the back.

'That Money Show is always looking for reputable experts on financial issues as they affect average people,' explains Rumerman. 'There are a couple of financial planners used frequently, and (show producers) are open to expanding the stable.'

Hartmayer says that these experts need to be both comfortable in front of the camera and knowledgeable. 'We'll use a tax expert around tax time, healthcare experts when we run a piece on healthcare costs,' she explains.

Experts will always be in demand, but what really gets producers of That Money Show excited are interesting entrepreneurs. 'And that's not just dot-com types, but interesting types of business,' explains Rumerman.

Recent stories have included a couple that makes accessories for kayaking, and a piece on Dan Juhl. '(Juhl) runs a wind 'farm' in Minnesota - an alternative form of power generation and an alternative form of revenue,' says Rumerman.

As a weekly production, timing is critical and deadlines are taken seriously.

The staff meets every Monday to discuss a large file of mostly internally generated story ideas. Programs are assembled on Friday and distributed to PBS outlets across the country, so as the week progresses, the pace quickens. 'The later in the week, the less likely you'll get an audience,' says Hartmayer.

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