

THE DEFINITIVE MEDIA LENS GUIDE

*How to identify your ideal issues to ensure
brand renown and influence*





Introduction

The old saying goes ‘You have two ears and one mouth and should use them in that ratio’.

But, how often do we find ourselves speaking more than we listen?

It’s like entering a drinks reception and walking up to a bunch of people and talking about yourself before listening to what they are saying. Who does that?

A good communicator reads the room first.



The Media Lens stage of the B2B Campaign planning process is where we do just that.

We put your messages into context of what is going on in the outside world.

We look at what your competitors are saying, what the media is interested in and topics that you can talk about that will resonate with your target persona.

This will ensure you are joining the conversation at the right time and adding something new, so that others take note and listen.





Gatekeepers

Not all communication with your target audience is direct.

Media Relations (earned media) relies on you successfully getting through a gatekeeper. Journalists are the gatekeepers.

You need to get through the gate. But, why?

- They give your organisation credibility.
- They validate what you are saying so that your prospects trust you.
- They raise awareness of your organisation amongst your target audience.





How to get through the gate

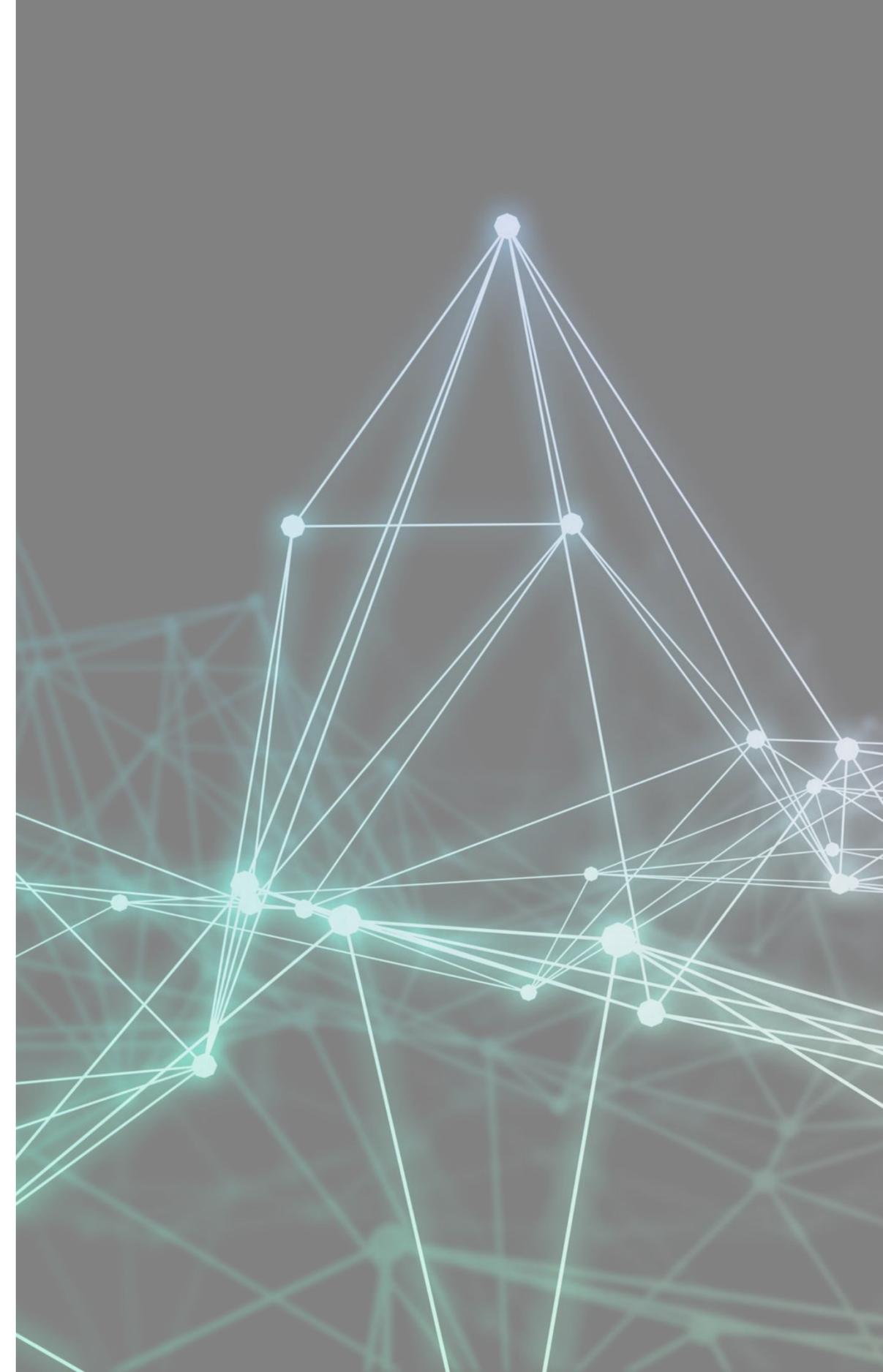
It's no longer about a little black book bulging with media contacts, but that certainly helps! What journalists want is:

- News (opinion, announcements)
- Issues not products
- Evidence (whitepapers, case studies, reports, surveys)

It's important to remember, we are competing for journalists' attention all the time.

They can block and blacklist you if you are not relevant or interesting. You get one opportunity to make the right impression.

Be relevant and not a cold caller.





Preparation

The Media Lens workshop will explore current issues that the media is writing about.

It will successfully identify three issues which are relevant to your customers and that you are credible to talk about. **Before you get started you need to have prepared the following:**

1. Your Comms Plan. It sets the direction of travel, so you know what you want to say and who to. From your plan you will need:
 - a. Your proposition and messaging platform
 - b. Your target industry
 - c. Your agreed target personas so the customer is the heart of what you do and say.



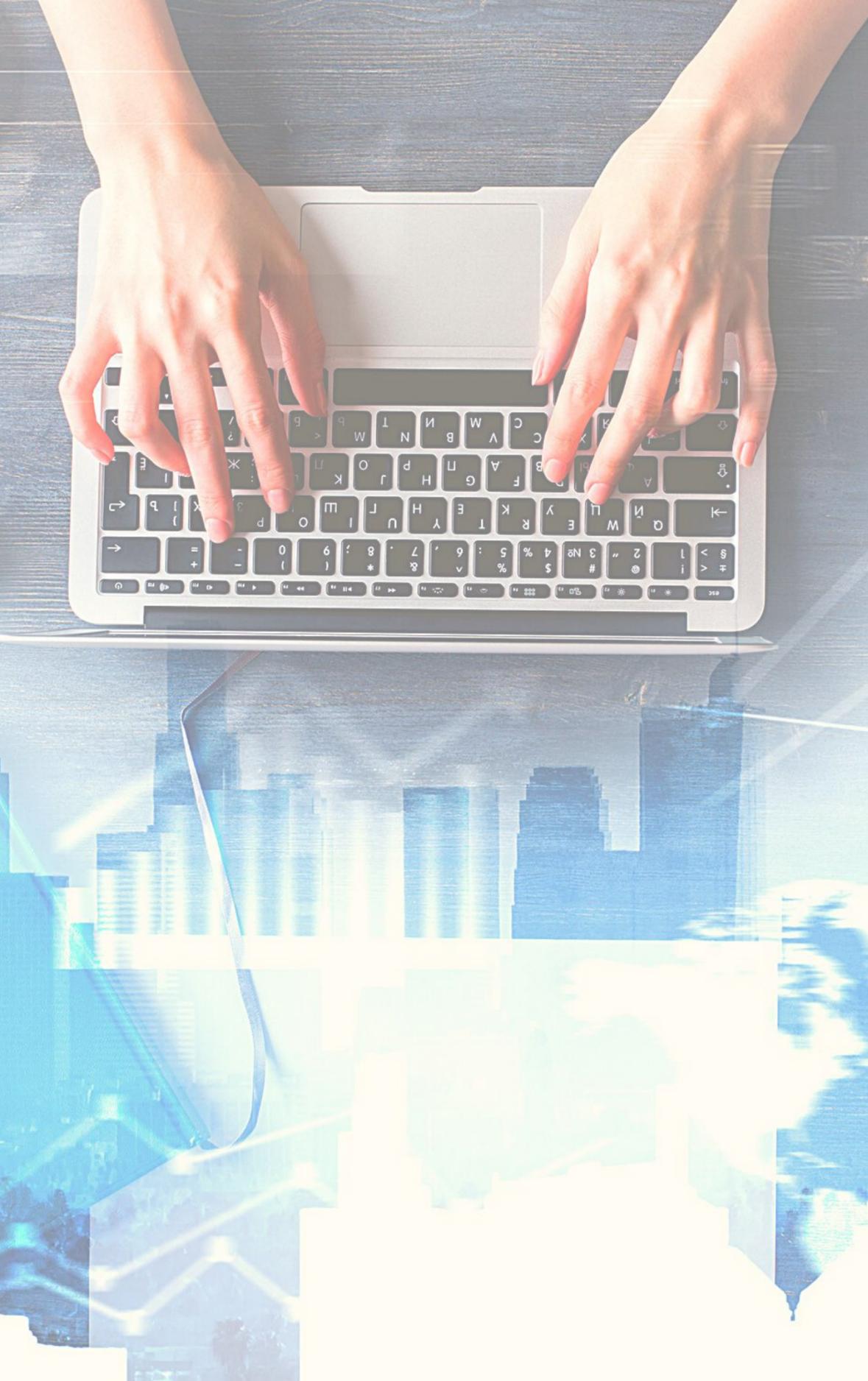
2. Identify who we are competing with for attention by:

- a. Listing your top 5 competitors
- b. Google them: what relevant news articles come up in the first 2 pages on the news tab?
- c. How do they describe themselves?
- d. What campaigns or initiatives are they currently involved in?
- e. What have media said about them?

3. Find your gatekeepers: List the top places your target persona goes to for information. Who are they influenced by? Your PR or Media buying agency will be able to help you with this if you are unsure. Think about:

- a. National media
- b. Trade media
- c. Social platforms
- d. Industry blogs and forums
- e. Podcasts
- f. Analyst and market reports





4. Issues Exploration

You need to make a long list of issues to consider (10-20) and then look back over the last 12 months.

What are the big issues that have dominated the national business media?

Make a list of market drivers or sources. It's important to understand the big picture, especially the tone before you go too granular into your own industry.

Do the same exercise again but this time with your trade media and make your way down the gatekeeper list above in #3.

Check out the table on the following page:



For example:

Issue	Market Driver	Publications	Companies Quoted	Sources of data /KOF	Newscycle stage	Important to your target persona?	Important to you?
Brexit and impact on SMEs	Regulation	Telegraph	Sage	Sage spokesperson/ YouGov Survey	Dying	Yes	No
Impact of 5G on Digital User Experience	5G rollout	Retail Technology	Tesco, BT	Survey from Cisco	Current	Yes	No
Future of Work	Accelerated migration to the cloud due to pandemic	Telegraph, FT, Management Today, Contact Centre Monthly	BT, Salesforce, Kura	Gartner report Salesforce service survey	Current	Yes	Yes

To be completed by you:

Issue	Market Driver	Publications	Companies Quoted	Sources of data /KOF	Newscycle stage	Important to your target persona?	Important to you?

You should aim to have 10-20 issues and they can become more granular in your industry specific press.

We mustn't forget to remind ourselves of who we are targeting.

Re-familiarise yourself with your target persona and ask yourself which of these issues are important to them?

If they are important to them, are they important to you?

Cut your issues down to just 8 to explore in more detail.





The 8 Issue Media Audit

Now, it's time to really drill down into those 8 issues and add more detail to the table above.

The qualitative data you need to log is:

- The source of the information e.g., a report, data, regulation.
- KOF (Key Opinion Former) in this space; MPs, regulators, analysts, company spokespeople.
- Main companies dominating the conversation (especially noting any direct competition).
- What stage of the news-cycle is this issue at? Is it dying / current / emerging?

The quantitative data you need to log is:

1. The total number of articles about each issue.
2. Break each issue down by competitive share of voice.





Issue Evaluation

Now that you have collated the data, involve others in your organisation so you can get a range of views when prioritising which issues to focus on for the year ahead.

All 8 of your issues are important, **but this is about prioritising 3 of them for the next 12 months.**

To help you rank these issues, ask yourself and others the questions on the following page:



Is it a current or emerging issue?	Yes	No
Do you have a solid POV on the topic?	Yes	No
Can you add to the conversation? Is there room for you?	Yes	No
Do you have proof points or evidence to back up what you are saying?	Yes	No
Could you create thought leadership content or a wider campaign?	Yes	No
Is this an issue you want to be known for talking about?	Yes	No



Issue Selection and next steps

Following the above evaluation, you should be able to select 3 issues to work with that will feed into the wider B2B plan and enable you to create a brilliant ideas bank, strong messaging matrix and complete the asset audit.



Contact Us



Call: 0203 740 6080

At EC-PR we are passionate about B2B communication. We believe your work is amazing and we want to help you tell the world how extraordinary it is.



Lorraine Emmett
Managing Director

07710 199327
Lorraine@ec-pr.com



Liz Churchman
PR Director

07966 820 320
Liz@ec-pr.com