

# HOW TO NEWSJACK A CURRENT STORY OR TREND



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# HOW TO NEWSJACK THE NEWS

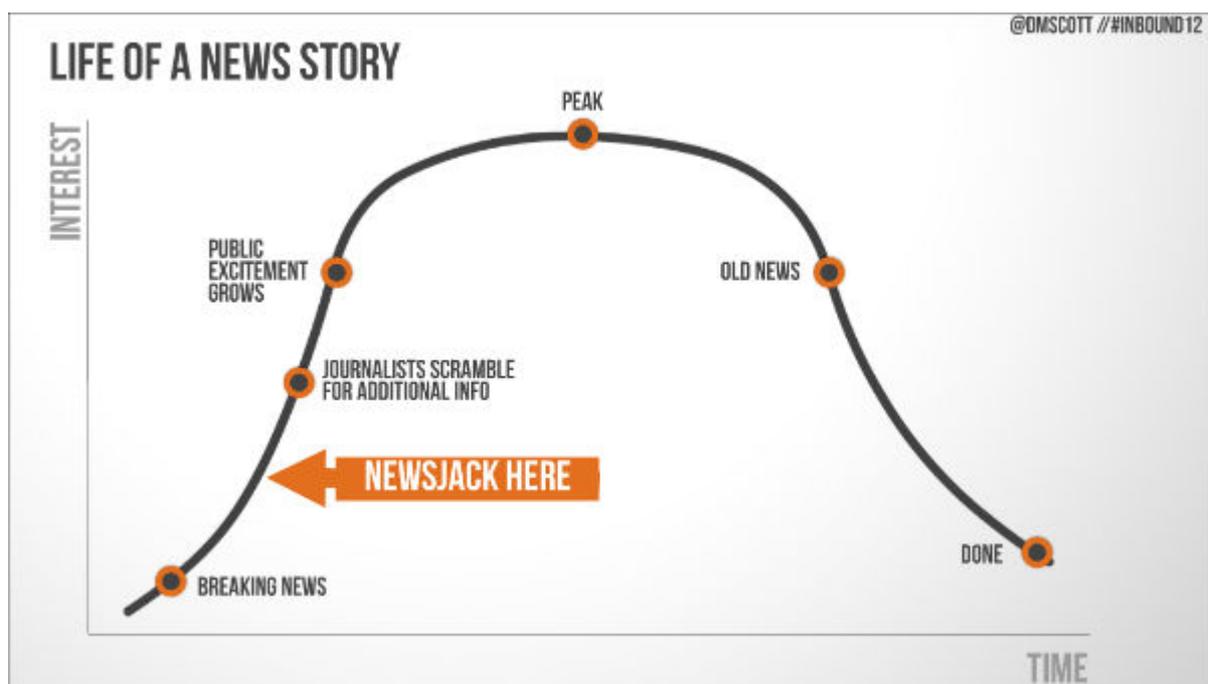
## Newsjacking...wha?

PR gun David Meerman Scott first used the term and as a result is recognised as the creator of the expression. He even wrote a book called [Newsjacking](#) that explains it more fully. As he puts it, 'Newsjacking is the art and science of injecting your ideas into a breaking news story so you and your ideas get noticed.'

To newsjack a story, you're really just adding more 'flesh to a story', ie. providing more in-depth insight to a story through another angle, and the best way to approach the tactic is to consider potential follow-on questions a journalist might ask someone with your expertise. And then answer them. Quickly! (Timing is critical when it comes to newsjacking.)

## When to newsjack

But to fully understand how to do it, you need to understand how the news cycle works, which is illustrated beautifully in Meerman Scott's diagram showing the news life cycle.



Source: "Newsjacking", David Meerman Scott

Meerman Scott highlights how important it is to act quickly just after a story breaks, as this is the time the media scurries around looking for what he refers to as the second paragraph, which explores the story more fully. In other words, the answers to the questions that flow out of the primary news story.

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## How to newsjack

When it comes to piggybacking on a breaking news story, your job is to pre-empt what the media will be looking for and provide answers to their (soon-to-be-asked) questions.

Sure, this sounds straight forward enough, but despite this, seasoned professionals have stumbled (some badly - search: Woolworth's #freshinourmemories AT&T's #neverforget and Croc's #DavidBowie moment) attempting to newsjack a breaking news story or trend.

That's because there are a few rules when it comes to newsjacking and you ignore them at your peril.

## Rules to newsjacking

To ensure you don't suffer the same fate, make sure you:

### 1. Don't try to SELL!

People can sniff out any attempt to lever your product or service into the story and they won't hold back in letting you (and everyone else) know about it.

### 2. Never try to newsjack a story about a death or a disaster.

Even if you're tempted and don't believe it could be misconstrued, it can be and will be.

### 3. Make the connection REAL, not contrived.

Sure, while the social media team at Crocs might have LOVED David Bowie and all that he stood for, there's no obvious connection between the shoe and the master music maker. Accordingly, it looked self-serving and angered many, many fans before being taken down. (When the reputational damage is already done.)

## In practice

Take this simple story. Gwyneth Paltrow posts this to Instagram.



Photo: Instagram

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Apple (her daughter) doesn't like it and comments:

"Mom we have discussed this. You may not post anything without my consent."

Paltrow replies: "You can't even see your face!"

Now while this is a simple story, it's picked up by major news outlets all over the world, in large part because...  
CELEBRITY.

But if I was providing PR advice to a privacy or parenting expert, or even an employment expert, this is the sort of breaking news story just ripe for jacking.

## Can you see how?

Ok, Apple didn't want her mum to share her pic on Insta. Simple, right? Wrong.

There are plenty of follow-up questions that flow from a story like this. And this is where the magic happens.

For example:

### **1. HR professionals and experts in employment might want to pitch answers to the following questions:**

- Can a parent who posts images of their children adversely impact their child's future job prospects?
- Do employers take a harsh view on the children of parents who posted images of, or stories about their children?
- How common is it for young people to create new identities due to damaging content being posted online (by themselves or others)?

### **2. Experts in online privacy might want to pitch answers to the following questions:**

- When can a child object to a parent posting their image or stories about them on social media?
- What rights do children have over their images etc being posted online by their parents?
- Is it possible to completely 'delete' your social media history?

### **3. Parenting experts might want to pitch answers to the following questions:**

- If they object to you sharing their images and/or stories, should parents respect their children's wishes?
- Do parents risk their child being bullied as the result of posting their images and/or stories online?
- Do parents risk exposing their children to online predators by sharing their images/handles etc online?

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So there you have it. Newsjacking... in practice.

Make sure you keep an eye out on our SourceBottle [Facebook page](#) as well as our SourceBottle [Expert Profiles Support Group](#) page (if you're an Expert Profile holder) for timely newsjacking ideas that you can action yourself by applying this basic technique.

Wishing you fame and good fortune!

Cheers,

*Bec*

**PS:** Are you receiving FREE media and publicity opportunities, straight into your inbox?

No?!!

(Wha?)

[Let's fix that... right here!](#)