

Lizzie Slee

Journalist turned PR  
specialist, fighting  
the corner for small  
businesses

# BOOTSTRAPPING PR

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Liz Slee  
@lizziepin  
@e\_nation

# THREE KEY MESSAGES

If there are three things you should remember, it's these:

- Make your business NEWSWORTHY
- PR is not about sales – it's about REPUTATION
- CONTENT – you must have something to say on a regular basis




Lizzie Slee

# NEWSWORTHY!

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# WHAT DO I MEAN?

- Doing the same BUT different...
  - Baby food – but in the frozen aisles
  - Baby's first year notebooks – for two mummies/daddies
  - Accountancy firm – for female clients
  - Dating service – with a social purpose
  - Something that is solving a problem
  - On trend
- 

## Yorkshire firm launches world's first spider-proof garden shed



The spider-proof shed



by

**Ben Green, Acting Head of Digital**

[ben.green@press.co.uk](mailto:ben.green@press.co.uk)

It's a  
company  
making  
sheds!

It's a  
company  
making  
unsexy  
pants!

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#Shine dont be shy  
**DiorAddict**  
THE NEW LIPSTICK

HYDRA-GEL CORE - MIRROR SHINE

[DISCOVER](#)



## Stretchy fabric, no underwiring or padding, and real women as models: The 'Feminist' lingerie that's NOT meant to be sexy

- Hayat Rachi, 25, founded 'unapologetic feminist' lingerie brand Neon Moon
- First collection 'Mon Dieu' offers comfortable styles without padding
- For women of all sizes and body types as well as those who like body hair
- The New Girl actress Zooey Deschanel endorsed the designs

By [FELICIA PENNANT FOR MAILONLINE](#)

PUBLISHED: 07:29, 24 March 2015 | UPDATED: 16:19, 24 March 2015

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## Love at first site? Good Deed Dating sends users to meet at charity projects

Hannah Whitehead, a former charity worker from Holloway, came up with the idea after struggling to find new volunteers at her last organisation

LIZZIE EDMONDS | Tuesday 21 June 2016 | 2 comments



It's an online  
dating app

## Maker of Kiddyum healthy frozen meals for toddlers prepares to hit Sainsbury's shelves

By VICKI OWEN, FINANCIAL MAIL ON SUNDAY

PUBLISHED: 21:02, 1 August 2015 | UPDATED: 09:50, 3 August 2015



[View comments](#)

Former chartered surveyor Jayne Hynes is launching the first five of her frozen Kiddyum meals at 323 Sainsbury's stores this month as a result of a Government investment scheme.

Hynes raised £150,000 through the Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme, enlisted an army of tasters in Manchester, and set about perfecting her own brand of healthy baby, toddler and children's ready meals.

Now the mother of two young girls is up against some big names, including best-selling children's nutrition author Annabel Karmel, whose chilled ready meals are also sold at Sainsbury's, but she believes there are no other frozen ready meals for children. Sales of frozen meals have risen by 1.5 per cent over the past year.



It's baby food but not as  
we know it

Managing Others + Add to myFT

## Propercorn: founders' hunch about a healthy munch

Cassandra Stavrou and Ryan Kohn spotted a market niche for gourmet popcorn



*Cassandra Stavrou and Ryan Kohn initially used their social networks to get up and running*



MARCH 24, 2015 by: **Kadhim Shubber**

Cassandra Stavrou's first meeting with Selfridges to discuss popcorn snacks looked destined to end in farce, or even tragedy.

## FINANCIAL TIMES

**Angle:** spotting a niche for gourmet, GM-free, healthy popcorn AND using a CEMENT MIXER

## AND SOMETIMES THE STORY IS ABOUT YOU...

- Banker gives up city job to start a dog food company
- Lawyer gives up the rat race to design gym wear

Be prepared to talk about yourself. News is all about people if you think about it. It makes it much more likely to be covered if there's a personal angle.





## Banking Boomers who are making a new start

WHEN they lost their jobs in the recession, these three former City workers saw it as a chance to begin their own businesses

By ADRIAN LEE

PUBLISHED: 02:01, Mon, Jul 1, 2013

SHARE  TWEET     11 



Nikki Cooper and son with some of her products

NIKKI COOPER, 32, from Guildford, Surrey, took voluntary redundancy from an investment bank after being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and starting a family.

When I left the City I was earning a six - figure salary and it was hard waving goodbye to my BMW but my fashion project has left me broke because I've ploughed all my savings into the business.

Libby Hart



Adam and his partner Lexi for Stratford upon Avon have set up a pt food delivery service

ADAM TAYLOR, 29, from Stratford upon-Avon, who lost his highly paid bank job, runs PetShopBowl, an online company delivering pet food and accessories

# Ex-lawyer's gym kit proves a hit

A former lawyer has designed and launched her own range of gym wear that's proving popular with gymnasts. Zoe Chamberlain talks to Lara Young about switching from courtrooms to crocheting.



BY ZOE CHAMBERLAIN  
12:36, 20 JUN 2014    **UPDATED** 12:36, 20 JUN 2014



Birmingham  
**MAIL**

## Banker Turned Entrepreneur Cooks Up Success At Café BODA

Mumbai Restaurants    by Neomi Paul - April 10, 2015



**They say your choice of qualification is directly proportional to the career you pursue. We say all is fair in just not love and war, but it is equally fair when it comes to one's passion and desire. All said and done, Raja Debnath, the owner of Café BODA, rightly fits the bill.**



Interior, Cafe Boda, Mumbai

person all his life; he yearned to be an entrepreneur. He couldn't satisfy all his after 13 long years of his life in the banking and consulting sector at the top-shot financial institutes like Ernst and Young, GE Money, Citibank and Kotak Mahindra.

He finally hit the blind spot and quit the cushy jobs to turn an entrepreneur. Café BODA, an authentic Bengali food restaurant in the

Debnath didn't always come with chef's knife handles. In fact, he is an engineer from MIT, with an MBA in Marketing and Finance from Jamnalal Bajaj and Oxford University respectively. This might be the dream of a lifetime for someone who aims for the highest gratification in a corporate culture and in a system that is not the result of his own brain. Raja Debnath was just an exception.

For Debnath, he just didn't want to be a salaried



# QUICK GUIDE TO PR


Lizzie Slee

PR is NOT ALL ABOUT SALES GUYS

- It is about developing a **reputation**
- It's about creating a story and a dialogue with journos and influencers
- You need a good reputation because it makes doing business and eventually making sales quicker and easier
- It can help attract investors
- It can bring in sponsorship
- It can open doors
- PR takes six to nine months to work

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# THE DIFFERENT BITS OF YOUR PR KIT

- Standard press release with an angle (new business/new product/new direction, investment, blah)
  - Product PR – submitting photographs and product descriptions for consumer outlets
  - Trade PR – speaking to journalists within your own industry – ie Drapers for fashion/The Grocer for food production/The Drum for creatives/ Marketing etc
  - YOUR WEBSITE
  - Make the language you use throughout the website easy to read and factual
- 

# PR BASICS TO MASTER

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- Writing a press release
- Pitching a story, developing relationships
- Website 'About us' – write it like a story
- Adding an expert opinion – what do you want to stand up for?
- Speaker opportunities – can you talk?
- Awards – become 'award-winning'

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# WHAT'S THE (BUSINESS) STORY?

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- WHAT SORT OF STORIES DO JOURNALISTS WRITE ABOUT BUSINESSES?
- A new company that does something different, solves a problem
- Overcoming adversity to do something amazing
- New trend/on trend – journalists want to be on trend – (popcorn is the new marshmallows is the new cupcakes/fintech/unicorns)
- Financials – raising investment, but you MUST disclose the £figure
- Expansion/job creation/job losses/
- Law suits/massive cock-ups/failure/personal tragedy
- Something that fits into a regular slot – How I made it, Working Life etc
- Current journo trend: tech firms that raise millions and then crash

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# WHAT IS NOT A (BUSINESS) STORY?

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- This company is really great
- We sell the same stuff you can buy in Tesco
- We are doing all the things we've always done and we're still great
- Our products are still selling well
- We are crowdfunding – sorry about that.

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# CREATING A STORY

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- Timeliness – is it part of a trend?
- Different – what sets you apart? Do you know? You need to. (healthy, frozen, ethical, tech, massive investment)
- What will its impact be on the industry/community? Will your product or service ‘help’ anyone? Is it disruptive?
- Relevant – will it mean something to the journo AND their audience

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# WRITING A PRESS RELEASE. IT'S EASY!

Lizzie Slee

- Key messages – max 3
- Write a headline you can imagine reading in a newspaper or online
- Write it like a story you would read
- First paragraph explains the story in one sentence
- Second paragraph explains what it means a little more
- Third paragraph - quote
- One size does not fit all. Your story will likely have two or three different audiences - consumer/trade/business – these are all different versions
- You are writing this for the journalist NOT directly to consumers, so it is ALWAYS third person NEVER we, or our or you, unless it is in a quote
- Always add your contact details – telephone and email

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# PRODUCT RELEASE

## BRITISH DESIGNER CREATES EXCLUSIVE CHRISTMAS RANGE FOR SELFRIDGES

Award-winning British children's wear designer Rachel Riley has created an exclusive collection of classic Christmas dresses for Selfridges.

The five satin and damask dresses, inspired by twinkling stars in a winter's night sky, were specifically designed to be part of Selfridges Christmas Constellation theme 2015 and are available in the flagship Oxford Street store, as well as those in Birmingham, Manchester Trafford Centre and online at [www.selfridges.com](http://www.selfridges.com)

Rachel Riley, founder and designer of the Rachel Riley label said: "Creating a collection with this imaginative theme was a lovely challenge. I've chosen sumptuous fabrics like satin and damask woven with silver sparkle thread. While they are perfect for the festive period, they will also work beyond for the whole winter party season as they are timeless.

"The five pieces are all designed to mix and match with our AW15 and Heritage collections that are also in the Selfridges store and online."

The following exclusive collection for Selfridges can be viewed [here](#).

The sleeveless polka dot silver damask dress with a front bow and box-pleats at waist costs £99. Age 6 months to 2 years and 4 to 10 years.



The black satin star print dress, with puffed sleeves, frill on peter pan collar and front bodice, costs £79 and is available from 6 months to 2 years and 4 to 10 years.



# WHY IS A GOOD HEADLINE IMPORTANT?

## British blokes are a tight bunch when it comes to Valentine's flowers

IS YOUR boyfriend likely to buy you flowers this weekend?

By **FELICITY THISTLETHWAITE**

PUBLISHED: 16:57, Tue, Feb 9, 2016 | UPDATED: 17:06, Tue, Feb 9, 2016

SHARE  TWEET     179  6



British men won't spend over £20 on a bloom this Valentine's Day

This weekend is the most romantic time of the year, and those with partners will no doubt be expecting a big bloom to show they're loved.

But those expectations are set to leave a lot of people disappointed.

# HELP! THAT SOUNDS TRICKY!

Don't panic! It's very hard to step back and look at your own business from the outside. So try this:

- Ask a copywriter friend/journo friend, to write a one-pager on your business or INVEST in some professional copy writing.
- Ask them to come up with a word or phrase that captures the essence of your business – like 'small business support group' or 'workplace pension provider'
- Use this as the basis for your website – especially the About Us bit
- Use it as a basis for press releases
- OR – use a press release template
- OR – Base it on a newspaper story that is similar to what you are trying to seed

# GETTING THE NEWS OUT

Lizzie Slee

- Email - always include a short pitch highlighting most likely angle
- Use a pithy subject line: Feature idea, Exclusive, Comment etc
- Never send release as attachment – always copy and paste
- Is it an exclusive? Decide on your hit list and go one-by-one
- Tweak for trade/news/features
- Embargo – make this point VERY clear
- Leave it half an hour/or an hour or two and then call

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# SUBJECT LINE

Vicki Owen

- ▶ INVITATION: Meet the Journalist - Bristol May 16  
Hi Vicki I wondered if you'd be interested in speaking

11/04/2017

[Older](#)

☐ Vicki Owen



- ▶ Small business comment Emma Jones: Brexit  
Hi Vicki Emma Jones, founder small business support gro

28/03/2017

Vicki Owen

- ▶ Hammered: Budget comment Emma Jones  
Hi Vicki This from Emma Jones, founder small business s

08/03/2017

Vicki Owen



- ▶ FFE launches on International Women's Day  
Hi Vicki We're launching the Festival of Female Entrepr

07/03/2017

Hi Vicki

Emma Jones, founder small business support group, Enterprise Nation, said:

"Britain's small businesses are keener than ever to trade with Europe. This week we've been in Paris with a group of home grown food and drink entrepreneurs that have identified Europe as a massively important trade route and are developing sophisticated products to suit that taste.

"They need to understand now what's likely to happen with trade deals into the future so they can capitalise on this important market that is still very much open to British products."

Best

Liz

# WHAT DO I SAY IN THE EMAIL THOUGH?



Liz Slee

Tue 09/05, 15:54

Graham Hiscott <graham.hiscott@mirror.co.uk> ↵



Reply all | ▾

Hi Graham

I wondered if you'd be interested in covering/coming along to this? Enterprise Nation is holding a Question Time-style event with SME spokespeople for the main political parties on Thursday next week. There may be some interesting debate around NI tax increases in front of an audience of small business owners, start-ups and the self employed.

Let me know.

Best

Liz

## **Entrepreneurs line up to hear political debate on small business policy**

Britain's entrepreneurial community is lining up to hear top politicians outline their small business policies in a one-off Question Time-style event ahead of the snap election.

Minister of State for Digital and Culture Matthew Hancock, MP, entrepreneur Ibrahim Dogus, Chairman of SME4Labour, Lord Munroe Palmer, the Liberal Democrat's SME spokesman in the House of Lords, UKIP's small business spokesperson, Ernie Warrander and Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, will outline their small business policies and views in front of an audience of business founders, start-ups and self-employed individuals, organised by small business support group Enterprise Nation in partnership with the Institute of Chartered Accountants England and Wales (ICAEW).

# WHAT DID HE SAY?



Liz Slee

Tue 09/05, 16:38

Graham Hiscott <graham.hiscott@trinitymirror.com> ▾



Reply all ▾

Not at all - I will make sure there's a space for you.

Best

Liz

...



Graham Hiscott <graham.hiscott@trinitymirror.com>

Tue 09/05, 16:37



Thanks. I'll see if I can. Do I need to reserve a media place?

Sent from my iPhone

...

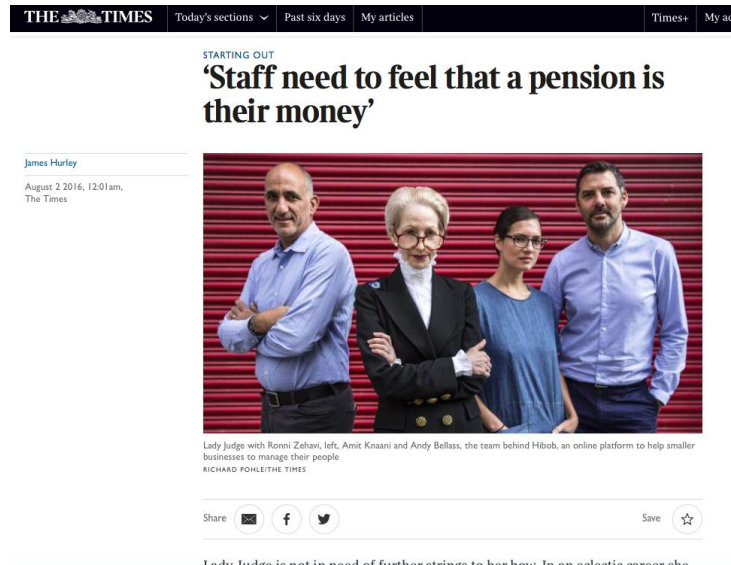


# BINGO



# PHOTOGRAPHY

- Photography – you’ll need imagery - and that might be YOU, so think about your image.



# Hundreds to take part in biggest start-up Saturday event

Hundreds of fledgling entrepreneurs are set to take part in the biggest UK-based start-up event during Global Entrepreneurship Week.

0 6

By Business Matters / November 9, 2016



Small business support group Enterprise Nation has teamed up with the British Library to host the day-long Biggest Ever StartUp Saturday event on November 19 which will see hundreds flock to London on what's set to be a mammoth start-up festival.

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Starting up a second time? Brace yourself, it's not going to be easy



Rohan Blacker

Last updated at 12:01AM, April 20 2015

With the successful sale of a first venture under their belt, an entrepreneur running their second business should, in theory, be better connected, more confident and more likely to provide another winner than the average wet-behind-the-ears founder. In theory.

Dan McGuire isn't so sure. The 34-year-old sold his first business, Broadbean, a job advert distribution company, for a substantial sum in 2008. Since then, he has since started up Cube19, an analytics company, yet he feels under more pressure, not less. "I started my first business with a £20,000 loan, so the worst-case scenario was I would end up with a £20,000 debt.

Rohan Blacker has sold two start-ups in lucrative deals and now he is on a third, but even he is keen to guard against any sign of over-confidence  
Paul Rogers/The Times

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Sometimes a really great picture can tip the balance to whether a story gets used. It can also project give an impression of integrity, taste and fun.

# HOW DO I KNOW WHO TO CONTACT?

Lizzie Slee

- Set up google news alerts for competitors – who are they talking to? Set up a Google alert
- Follow them on Twitter and get involved, comment perhaps on something on the day you're sending out your release to prompt them
- Once you've identified them you can get alerts when they have work published via Journalist alerts or [journalisted.co.uk](http://journalisted.co.uk)
- Set up google news alerts for key words – ie 'children's food brand', 'auto enrolment', 'popcorn brand', 'start-ups', to get an industry view
- You can usually work out the email address from a formula. Contact numbers will be on the website or you can call the switchboard and ask for the journalist in person

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## UPDATED: Top small business journalists to follow on Twitter (2017 edition)

11/05/2017 in [Growing your business](#), [Sales and marketing](#), and [Business communication](#)

Want your business in the press? Check out the 2017 edition of our hugely popular annual list of the top UK business reporters, editors and correspondents to follow on Twitter.

### Related posts



**Labour promises help for small firms with business rates, late payment and funding**

By on 16/05/2017



**Seeking advice: What's stopping you?**

By on 16/05/2017



**Success in spandex: Behind the scenes at Morphsuits**

By on 15/05/2017

# WHAT DO I DO WITH COVERAGE?

- Use it for social media AS LINKS
- Get the logo of the media outlet onto your website IMMEDIATELY
- Use it on product information
- Use it in investment pitches



# GOOGLE NEWS ALERTS ON COMPETITORS



Google Alerts

Thu 11/05, 11:06

Liz Slee ▾



Reply all ▾

ibox



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## Google Alerts

### now pensions, morten

Daily update · 11 May 2017

NEWS

#### [Now Pensions hires non-exec to replace Bo Foged](#)

[www.professionalpensions.com](http://www.professionalpensions.com)

**Now Pensions** chief executive **Morten** Nilsson said: "Bo Foged has been a great support through our first phase of growth and his choice to hand over ...



Flag as irrelevant

## QUICK TOP TIPS...

Lizzie Slee

- Write a short introduction outlining what the story is, introducing yourself and your business in two sentences
- Make sure you get the journalist's name right
- Copy and paste the press release into the body of the email underneath the introduction
- Attach a picture of yourself or a relevant picture
- If it's product placement, embed the images into the email, add the link to the website, price, sizes, colours etc
- If you can't imagine reading the story or pitch you've written - don't bother

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# HOMEWORK

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- Apply for awards – only if there is no fee
- Apply madly for competitions – there's usually some coverage that goes with
- Reap good results socially
- Make sure they are relevant and add something

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Lizzie Slee

# Questions?

**[liz@enterprisenation.com](mailto:liz@enterprisenation.com)**

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