BIG news… and what it means for us!

Unless you’ve been residing under a rock over recent weeks you will know that there has been much speculation about whether Prince Harry was planning to propose to Meghan Markle - an American actress, model, and humanitarian.

Headlines of late have referred to her quitting her role as Rachel Zane in the legal drama Suits, bidding farewell to family and friends, and even packing up her beloved dogs to get them transported across to the UK. Rumours were rife!

Until this week that is when, finally, Clarence House confirmed the news that Harry has, indeed, popped the question; citing an ‘aligning of stars’ as the driving force behind their relationship.

Now, for most of us residing in the British Isles such an announcement brings with it a modicum of interest I’m sure - with the upcoming nuptials likely to help bolster the economy as tourists flock from overseas to witness the spectacle - but for those of us operating in the PR arena there is far more to consider.

Column inches, for example!

The impact of ‘BIG news’ was possibly my first memorable lesson when entering the profession all those years ago, and it’s a learning I still pass on regularly to those still finding their feet on the career ladder.

In short, if the Royal’s make an announcement you should probably (definitely!!!) put your release on ice for a day or so.

Unless you have news of discovery of life on Mars, or the capture of the Loch Ness Monster, chances are you won’t win in the battle for the front page, the back page, or the pages in-between!

You may also find that even the friendliest of journalists (the ones who always take your selling-in call to let you know they’ve got your story and plan to use it, or not) are assigned to some aspect of the story, and therefore don’t have time to talk.

And of course we’re not just talking print media here, for the record. The same goes for digital and broadcast outlets, as well as self-managed social media tools. To put it into context, there are only so many posts on twitter people can look at in any given day, and as Prince Harry began to trend on 28.11.17 even topics as big as #CyberMonday took a hit.

Having said that, the correct course of action is never ‘do nothing’! After all, there is nothing quite as effective as riding a news wave when it comes to achieving spontaneous ‘hits’. In fact, here at MK we regularly achieve excellent coverage by responding and reacting to topical news.

One great example for this is the annual Budget announcement following which we have historically achieved regional and national name checks for a number of clients including estate agents and law firms responding to changes to stamp duty fees.

By considering what the Big news of the day means for our clients, their clients and perhaps even their region, it is possible to inject the brand into the story, and whilst the topic might not be immediately obvious a good PR pro can always find that ‘angle’.

Think dry cleaners referring to a surge in services of black tie attire when Will and Kate tied the knot; a local off-licence predicting an increase in sales of Meghan’s favourite tipple; and a wedding planner who might choose to release the top 5 wedding trends of 2018 to help provide the public with an indication of what the big day might look like!

With the right PR team behind you, there is always a way to maximise every opportunity… no matter how obscure or (seemingly) unrelated. Just bear in mind that it might take a phone call or two and a question or ten to help uncover the ‘hook’!