

## Publicity and the Power of the Press Release

You spend your life building your company, hiring the best employees, creating cutting edge products and services, and finding loyal customers who push you to strive to be better every day. It's critical that you don't forget one of the most important aspects- telling people about it! You can accomplish this through both advertising and publicity. Advertising is a more controlled strategy and it is a way for a company to create brand awareness. Publicity is more free-flowing, interactive and is the key to building credibility. People buy from companies they know and like. **One easy way to create publicity for your company is by sending the media press releases on new and exciting things happening with your company.** Have you recently partnered with another company? Share it! Do you have an amazing new product or service that is going to revolutionize the industry? Tell people about it!

Understanding how to write a press release and how to get it published is a very vital aspect of promoting your business. First, it's important to know some basics on how to write a proper press release.

Here are some tips to help you through the process....

- **Avoid excessive use of capitalization and punctuation.** Capitalize your headline only and not the entire press release. Also, make sure the press release isn't an image. An editor needs a press release that requires no additional work for them to publish. If they would need to re-type a press release, chances are it will never get published. Avoid using excessive punctuation like !!!! or ...
- **Create a compelling short headline with descriptive sub-headlines.** The first 10 words are the most important! Make sure the information is newsworthy and relates to the media's audience.
- **Hook your reader in the first 2-3 sentences.** You should use the 5 "W's" immediately. Who, What, Where, When, and Why.
- **Describe, Don't Sell.** Give the facts and help the reader connect. They should quickly know what's in it for them. Show the reader how something is unique and how it relates to them. Tell the readers what they can expect and describe as many unknowns as possible.
- **Avoid Wordiness.** Use as few adjectives as possible and make it as easy to read. This may seem to conflict with the previous tip but the key is to make it interesting with the least amount of text as possible. Attention spans drift quickly.
- **Add credibility quotes from non-biased sources.** These can be obtained from sponsors, universities, other well known individuals in the community, or industry.
- **Provide your contact information, web URL, and social media links.** Let your audience know how to connect with you, where they can get more information and how to get answers to questions.
- **Use the Editor Symbol.** Press releases should end with "###". This let's editors know the official end of your announcement.

Next, it's time to share how to get your press release noticed and published.

- **Do your homework!** You must be able to relate your press release with the publication/media outlet you are sending it to. Editors receive tons of press releases each day and often can't hit the delete button fast enough if the press release doesn't relate to their audience. Be crystal clear on why your press release is something their audience needs to know about.

- **Make friends and create relationships.** Get to know people in the media who service your industry. If there is limited space and an abundance of press releases on hand, chances are the editor will choose to publish the news from the companies they know.
- **Choose the right media coverage.** Don't send something out nationally that is only important locally. Don't send something to sports if the story is human interest. Know your topic and know the department that will take a story and run with it. When you don't know, ask the editor.
- **Provide collaterals.** Give the media tools to work with. Share photos, logos or access to background video that the media can build a story around. If you have a new product, it may also be helpful to share a sample with the editor. Get them just as excited as you are about the product.
- **Social Media.** Don't forget to stay interactive with your friends and fans on Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, etc. Share your press releases on your social media sites too.

The power of a press release can be extremely valuable in creating publicity and credibility for your company. These simple tips and strategies will help you create well written press releases that will greatly enhance your opportunities to introduce your company to the masses. You create a winning combination for your company by engaging in the broad spectrum of ways to create brand awareness through publicity and advertising.

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