

How to Write a Press Release

Killer Headline

Always give your press release an opening Headline which conveys the essence of your story. This is your opportunity to make the journalist sit up and pay attention so try and make it as interesting or quirky as possible.

The First Sentence

You should always try to include the following information in your first sentence; **WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHY, WHEN**

For example; Red Farm Cheese is holding an Open Day at their Factory and Farm Shop in Exeter, Devon on 10th June 2014 to launch their new Blue Cheese. A Press Reception will be held from 2pm onwards, with factory tour and a chance to interview the cheese makers.

Contact Details

Include your contact details, (it sounds obvious but it is easy to forget). Make sure your contact name, telephone, mobile, email and other contact details are displayed clearly. Preferably at the top and bottom of your press release.

Content

Don't waffle or make your press release too flowery. Journalists want to get to the substance of your article as quickly as possible, they receive dozens of emails a day, so it must capture their interest straight away.

Your first and last sentences are the most important and should contain all the main facts. Use the middle section of your press release to give fuller details on your story.

Quotes

Where possible try and include a quote or quotes that relates to your story. Avoid using quotes from other journalists or publications, instead use original quotes from people involved in the story.

Try and limit your release to 1 or 2 pages maximum.

Photographs & Multi-Media

An eye-catching photo will always boost your chances of getting your story published, so try and send an image/s where possible.

If you are writing to the press to invite them to an event; check beforehand whether they'll be sending a photographer along to take pictures on the day. If not delegate someone from your team to be responsible for taking photos on the day. Look for different perspectives for your photos and if necessary set up a shot so it creates an interesting backdrop to your subject/s.

Where appropriate you may want to include links in your press release to a website, videos or social media account pages which give more detail about your story or give a bit of background.

Proofing

When you have finished writing your article, proof read it thoroughly for spelling mistakes, bad grammar etc. Also check all the facts are correct, dates, spelling of people's names, place names, telephone numbers, website addresses etc. Sometimes your press release will be printed verbatim including wrong details and typos if they are incorrect at source.

Sending Your Press Release

The quickest, cheapest and most effective way of sending your press release is via email, however snail mail is still acceptable if you don't have access to a computer, or you want to send a press release with a CD or DVD.

Where possible try and send your press release to a named contact with a short covering note that is tailored to them rather than being generic. This is your opportunity to point out the key reasons why they would be interested in your story.

It is a good idea to follow up with a polite phonecall the next day to check that the press release has been received, is with the right contact and whether there is any interest in publishing your story.

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About This Document

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