

Press Releases - Promotion through Traditional Media

When dealing with traditional media channels - print, radio, and television - a press release is an easy way to organize and disseminate information. A single press release may be submitted to several outlets for publication, thus assuring that each one gets the same information. Even if you are submitting information to your organization's webmaster for inclusion on a website or social media outlet, a news release assures that all the facts are included.

Start with Research

Contact media - Call or email your local media outlets to learn about deadlines, reporters, photographers, types of news desired, whether the medium will cover the event by sending a reporter and/or photographer, what types of news and photos are accepted, and so forth.

Check requirements - Before you write your press release, it's a good idea to contact your local media to ascertain any specific requirements for news submission. Local newspapers usually include a listing of editors for various news and feature departments or a call to the publication can reveal that information. The publication or station's website may provide contact information for various departments.

Ask about format - Generally, editors prefer files that can be edited. Each publication will edit to match its style. An editable document format is preferred.

Ask about photos - Will the publication accept photos or videos? Ask about format and resolution. The higher the resolution the better for print.

Consider lead time - If your local newspaper is published weekly, it will be necessary to submit your information considerably earlier than to a daily paper.

Timing of news - Sometimes, a series of press releases may be submitted for the same event. Consider submitting serial press releases.

Check for accuracy - Proofread the release. Then proof it again. Be certain that all information is accurate, all names are spelled correctly, all dates and times are right, and contact information is correct. The editor can correct spelling and grammar but has no way to correct the facts presented in your news release.

Writing Your Press Release

Format - When in doubt, send a Word document. *Do not type in ALL CAPS.*

Contact information: Always provide contact information for an individual [or two] who can immediately answer any questions regarding the information you have submitted for publication.



Release Date: Indicate a release time for the press release if it is not for immediate publication. Advance releases can be submitted for an event that will occur in the future.

Headline: The headline encapsulates the point of the article in a short phrase with an action verb.

Five Ws: Be sure to provide enough information to answer all of these questions. Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? Details? Include plenty of detail to allow for editing for space if necessary.

The Lead: The “Lead” is the first sentence. It should contain the main point of the article. Each successive sentence and paragraph expands on the lead and provides details.

-30- :At the end of the press release, insert — 30 —, —### —, or — END — so that the editor will know that no further information is located elsewhere.

Photos: Send original high resolution photo files, uncropped and unedited. Preferred file formats: JPG, PNG, PDF. We will crop to fit the space. Reference any photo(s) included with the release. If more than one photo, reference the photo file name before each caption. Type out captions identifying persons or objects in the pictures. Proofread your name spellings. If no photo is available, we will provide a stock photo to accompany your article.