

press release essentials



101 Press Release Ideas Report

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101 PRESS RELEASE IDEAS

How to Get a Presence For Free

Every business wants to create a positive presence to attract more clients and customers. One of the best (and cost-effective) ways is to get media attention.

And it's not as difficult as it may seem. All you need to do is write a good press release.

A press release, also known as a news release, is a newsworthy story about your business that you submit to various media outlets ~ newspapers, magazines, website, radio, television, and blogs.

This is a great way to get free promotion for your website and business. Any story that the media picks up will be far more valuable than a paid advertising spot. After all, people are suspicious of advertising, but when the media reports on you - people are more likely to accept the information as provided.

When the media do a story about you it's like a personal endorsement of your website and business. And gets your potential prospects eager to business with you!

Not sure if you have anything newsworthy to share? There are PLENTY of topics you can take on for your next press release campaign and this guide starts you off with 101 of them.

Also included is the basic template of a press release, and a few samples you can use to emulate your own press releases.

101 PRESS RELEASE IDEAS

101 Reasons to Write a Press Release

1. New employee
2. Promotion
3. Certification
4. Community award
5. Business award
6. New or updated website
7. Company anniversary
8. New product or service
9. Speaking Engagement
10. Poll Results (create your own poll)
11. Company support of a non profit
12. Contest
13. Company Going Green
14. Support of a School Program or Initiative
15. Educational Program
16. Holiday Affiliation
17. This day in History Affiliation
18. Employees on a committee
19. Getting a new client
20. Taking on a new large project
21. Affiliation with a strategic partner

101 PRESS RELEASE IDEAS

22. Free offer on website
23. Moving to a new location
24. Redecorated store front or office (especially if its GREEN)
25. Piggy Back news story
26. Participation in a fair or trade show
27. TV show or media affiliation
28. Sports Team affiliation
29. Upcoming Presentation or Workshop
30. Free Tip Sheet on your Website
31. Taking on an intern (announce that you are interviewing)
32. Announcing a new intern
33. Opportunity to volunteer
34. Completion of a degree or training program
35. Open House
36. Legislation that affects your business
37. Industry Trends
38. Announcement of media coverage
39. Important Guest or Celebrity Visiting
40. Celebrity Endorsement
41. Discount or Rewards Program
42. Thank you letter or recognition from celebrity
43. New Blog

101 PRESS RELEASE IDEAS

44. Trends of other industries that affect your business
45. Adding bi-lingual marketing materials
46. Google Ranking
47. New Members
48. Fundraiser
49. Musical Performance (schools/churches, etc)
50. Job Shadow Programs
51. Hosting a Press Conference
52. Hiring New Staff
53. Information on how voting for a candidate will affect your industry or community
54. New or improved employee benefit program
55. New, improved or updated business tools, such as a curriculum for a school, or software for a company
56. New or Extended Hours
57. Significant Increase in Sales or Membership
58. Survey Results
59. Campaign Support or opinion
60. Common misconceptions about your service or industry
61. Research Results
62. Hosting an Online Chat Session or Webinar
63. Being quoted in a book or publication
64. Something named after you (restaurant menu item, star, street)
65. Your own company holiday (create one)

101 PRESS RELEASE IDEAS

66. Donation of business or educational books to a school or public library
67. Completion of an online certification course
68. Partnership with a school or university to offer a class or workshop together
69. Company sponsored scholarship program
70. Bring your child to work day participation (send photos)
71. Community beautification project
72. Attending a national conference or convention
73. Friendly competition with a branch office or school in another state
74. New Website Technology such as audio or video capabilities
75. How to know if you need a _____
76. Employees or students adopting a charity
77. Employee's significant anniversary
78. Allowing flex hours or work sharing
79. Implementing healthy choices to work environment
80. Joining the BBB or your chamber of commerce
81. How To Choose A Reliable _____(your product or service here)
82. Why a _____is a good idea
83. You or your staff are accepting interviews from the media
84. Advance notice of a holiday
85. Advance notice of a trend (mortgage companies think interest rates)
86. Overcoming an Obstacle
87. Important Discovery in your field

101 PRESS RELEASE IDEAS

88. Review a movie or tv show about your field or industry
89. Promote an industry trade show
90. Host a Lunch and Learn Program
91. How your product or service is beneficial during a disaster
92. News on your company pet
93. Being Featured in an online newsletter
94. Being Featured in a blog
95. Being Featured in a webinar
96. FAQ Sheet or Hot Tips
97. Program on Community TV
98. How your product/service can help people find more time
99. Annual Schedule of Events
100. Advance Praise of an upcoming product, service or book
101. Record number of website visitors

101 PRESS RELEASE IDEAS

Press Release Basics

News releases are used to announce new products or services, awards, surveys, events, give-aways - just about anything. But before you just go writing some words, you need to know the basics.

- 1) Always use your own letterhead.
- 2) Put “FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE” somewhere near the top. That tells the journalist that they can use the news immediately. If you HAVE to pre-date something, which I do not recommend, then instead put “Embargoed Until” whatever date it is.
- 3) Next, put in your headline. Keep it short and make it sound just like something you’d see in the paper.
- 4) For the first paragraph, start with Your City and State capitalized. This tells the journalist where the release is coming from. Then add a dash.
- 5) The opening paragraph, also called a lead, should be brief but include the major details: who, what, when, where and why.
- 6) The next paragraph should be a quote about the thing you’re writing about. This is the only place where you can put someone’s opinion. The rest of the release is just the facts.
- 7) The third paragraph (and sometimes a fourth) gives additional details about the topic you’re writing about.

101 PRESS RELEASE IDEAS

- 8) The last paragraph is also known as the boilerplate. It talks about who you are and what you do. Include your website and contact details here in sentence form.

- 9) Put three number sign symbols centered after the final paragraph. This lets the reporter know they've reached the end.

- 10) Put your contact details at the end.

On the next page is a template so you can use it to create your own release.

101 PRESS RELEASE IDEAS

Your letterhead

for immediate release

Headline (No more than 8 words)

CITY, STATE - DATE - The opening paragraph, or lead, should be brief but it should also contain the main details. But don't talk about your business; talk about what's newsworthy. Standard format is double spaced, but it can be single spaced, too. Make sure the most important facts are included in the paragraph.

"The second paragraph is a good place to put a quote," says Shannon Cherry, APR, MA, president of Be Heard Solutions (www.beheardsolutions.com) and a veteran publicist. "A quote is the only place where you can put subjective information such as writing press releases can be fun. Remember to keep the release fact-based and the quote opinion based."

The third (and, if needed, fourth) paragraph highlights additional details about the topic such as costs, benefits, etc. Keep this fact based. Sentences should be brief.

The last paragraph is called the boilerplate. It's usually no more than a few sentences and includes details about you and your business. For example: Cherry is the owner of Be Heard Solutions (www.beheardsolutions.com), and Cherry Communications (www.cherrycommunications.com). A former TV and newspaper journalist, she helps small business owners and entrepreneurs who are struggling to get more customers by launching successful communications programs. Cherry is accredited in public relations and has worked in the PR, marketing and fundraising field for more than 15 years. She received her bachelor's degree in communications from SUNY Geneseo and a MA in Communications Administration for the University of Memphis. Cherry has published numerous articles, pens a food column, Culinary Bites, and is the author of a weekly ezine, Be Heard! She is also a professional speaker and co-author of two books. She can be reached at contact@beheardsolutions.com or by calling 800.257.0633.

(This marks the end)

contact:

Your Name

Your title, Your Company Name

Email address

Phone number

101 PRESS RELEASE IDEAS

Before you send your release out

Now that you know what needs to go into a press release, I'd like to remind you of a few things.

It's important to stress (again and again) that you should never send news releases to the media which amount to no more than an advertisement.

The editors see right through these, and discard them. It's not their job to advertise your product or website, that's why they have an ad department.

If it's not news, it's of no value to them. You must carefully craft your press release to make it interesting to a potential editor in your target market; otherwise you're wasting your time and theirs.

It's also paramount to ***target the media you send your release to.*** This means you would not send news about a new auto accessory to a fine cuisine publication, or a newspaper editor who only covers pet stories.

Inexperienced PR folks, or low-budget press release services, often make the mistake of "blanketing" every publication under the sun, regardless of market segment, which can alienate editors.

Now I want to give you a real insider's tip. Never, I repeat, never send a press release out on a Monday.

101 PRESS RELEASE IDEAS

Mondays are one of the busiest news days in the business because most places are still covering a full weekend of news for those who missed it.