

press release essentials



Press Release Checklist

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Press release checklist to make the most out of your publicity campaign.

If you are using a fill-in release from your Press Release Success package:

Part 1 -Getting the release ready.

- 👤 Download the fill-in-the-blank press release.
- 👤 Fill in the release with your information anywhere you see highlighted areas. Be sure to remove all the highlighted areas after you are finished!

Or

If you are going to compose your own release (using the Press Release Success software or on your own):

Part 1 -Getting the release ready.

- 👤 Write the press release according to the guidelines provided in your package.
- 👤 Be sure to follow the formatting suggestions as indicated.

Part 2 - Who to send it to (local).

- 👤 Focus on local, first.
- 👤 Ways to find the right reporter and right publication.
 - You can also find great contacts by using the newspapers, magazines, etc., you may already have. Simply look for reporters who are covering your press release topic and take down their contact details.
 - You can also use online directories to search for other outlets. A great one is http://dir.yahoo.com/News_and_Media/
 - Let your fingers do the walking by using the phonebook to find other media outlets
- 👤 Call to confirm all contacts. Ask how they want to get your release: email, fax, snail-mail.
- 👤 Send out release to each reporter as they prefer.

Part 3 - Who to send it to (national).

- 👤 Research media outlets online which appeal to your target market. Use the same system outlined above to find out the right contacts.
- 👤 Use release posting websites. These are great for search engine optimization, and driving others to your website. But please remember, they often don't lead to any media coverage. (See you guide for suggested sites.)

Part 4 - Following up with reporters.

- 👤 Choose which media outlets are important to you - the places you really want the release to appear in.
- 👤 Call and ask for the reporter.
- 👤 First, introduce yourself and ask if they have time to talk.
 - If yes, then go to next step
 - If no, then find out when would be a good time to call back. (Then do so!)
- 👤 Do **NOT** tell the reporter you are following up on a press release. Instead say:
I have some additional information that I left out of the release I sent you about being named one of the only Work at Home Mom MVPs.

At this point the reporter will say to continue or that they don't recall the release.

If it's to continue, say the following:

Did you know that this national recognition allows me to continue my efforts to help moms live the dream of working at home, while raising their children. Do you think this would make an interesting local story?

Or say:

Since winning the award, many people, especial moms, are asking me how I balance work and life. I think it's something that your readers would be interested in. Do you agree?

If the reporter says he or she did not getting the release:

Offer to resend it. Confirm the reporter's method of receipt. And ask when you can call back to make sure they got it. (Then follow up by using the method above.)

If the reporter says, “No Thanks. I don’t think I’m interested.”

Ask the reporter why.

* It may often be the case that you targeted the wrong reporter! In this case, ask them for the correct contact and report the whole process by sending the correct contact the release.

*If he or she truly isn’t interested, ask what he or she is interested in covering. If you can fill one of the reporter’s topics, tell him or her so immediately.

- Thank the reporter for his or her time and ask they would be interested in other stories from you in the future. (Make a note for future reference!)

👤 If the reporter says, “Yes.”

- Find out if the reporter will be running the release as is or wants to set up an interview.
- Thank the reporter for his or her time.

Part 5 - The interview

👤 When a reporter wants to interview you:

- DON’T just answer off the cuff. Ask for a time to call them back if they are doing a phone interview.
- Confirm the topic and focus of what the interview is going to be about.
- Set up a time for the interview.

👤 Use the interview prep worksheet to prepare your talking points. (bonus download)

👤 If your interview is face-to-face with camera use:

- Don’t wear all black. You’ll look as though you’re disappearing into a hole. This often throws women into a panic, as we love the slimming properties of black, particularly when TV will probably make you look slightly heavier than you are in real life.
- Don’t wear all white. It makes the lights that may be used bounce back and you’ll look as though you just descended from the heavens on a cloud.
- Don’t wear anything with a very small pattern such as pin-stripes, tweed or polka dots. Again, it has a strange effect on lights known as strobing.
- No visible logos of companies or brands (watch out for this particularly on sportswear) as this may be regarded as advertising. You may be asked to change if a logo is too obvious.
- Avoid buying a new outfit the day before and acting as if you’re going to a job interview. If you feel too stiff and formal in your clothes this will affect how you express yourself.
- You should wear your make-up much heavier than you normally would. Otherwise you will look washed out.

- 👤 Some things to remember, during the interview:
 - Focus on your three main points from your worksheet.
 - If a reporter is quiet, that doesn't mean fill in the space with you talking. It's a tactic for you to reveal too much.
 - Nothing is EVER 'off the record.'
 - If you don't know, say so. And offer to find out the information.
 - If, for any reason, you can't reveal something, explain that as honestly as you can.

Part 6 - Leveraging your publicity.

- 👤 Post any coverage you receive onto your website. Check to make sure you can use the footage or story, as copyright may apply. If you cannot post the whole thing, perhaps you create a link to their website.
- 👤 Post "As Seen On" on main page of site with a list of the media outlets you've been featured on/in.
- 👤 Send an announcement to your customers/clients
- 👤 Send announcement to possible clients/customers
- 👤 Use Google News Alerts to help track coverage as well.

Part 7 - Getting more publicity.

- 👤 Send reporters a hand written thank you note no more than three days after your story appeared.
 - Express gratitude for taking the time out of their schedule.
 - Tell them what the coverage meant to others (It was informative, well written, etc.)
 - Do NOT thank them for the coverage or tell them how the coverage benefited you.
 - Tell them you will check back with other ideas every month or so that may be of interest to them. (Then do so when you have other news or story ideas!)