

Communicating with the World

FINDING MEDIA CONTACTS

- To get your information out to the world, you first need to get it into the hands of the right people.
- Find your target media outlets. Not every media outlet will be interested in your information so find the ones that will and focus your attention there.
- Find out who at that magazine/newspaper/radio station will use this information. This can be done via the company website or, if it's a print publication, on the masthead.
- The masthead is the easiest way to find out who does what in a publication.
- Do not presume that sending the information to one person means that person will pass it on to everyone else - it's your job to make sure the right information gets to the right people.
- Apart from the masthead, media will often have other email addresses or fax numbers listed throughout their publication inviting people to send in specific information. Always read through publications on a regular basis and add these kinds of email addresses or fax numbers to your contact list.
- Keep your contacts up to date. Regularly check your contacts' email, phone and addresses. This is especially important if you're sending printed matter, which can be very expensive.

DEADLINES

- Learn them and abide by them. How early you get your press release out depends on what kind of coverage you want.
- A feature story: these are planned and scheduled months in advance. You will need to send your information out early.
- A listing/notice: deadlines vary so find out when you need to get your information in –and then send it in early.

How to write a press release

A press release is a way to communicate your event, project or successes to the world – this helps gain support for what you are doing and inspires others to do something too!

You can send your press release to media contacts, community groups and businesses.

Follow these 10 steps to write a clear press release.

1. Start with the words “Press Release” and include the date of release and event title at the top of the page.
2. Who? What? When? Where? Why? How much? The press release should have all this information up front.
3. What: Keep it short and to the point. Stick to the topic. Background information can be sent separately.
4. When: Date AND time.
5. Where: Full address even if it's at a major known location.
6. Why: Why is this newsworthy? Why are you sending it now? In other words, what makes your news topical, timely, and significant?
7. Provide a 'General Enquiries' contact email/phone/website for the public.
8. After this, draw a line across the page and write 'For further information:' Here include ALL your contact information, especially a phone number.
9. Below this you can list descriptions of any other attachments, documents or photos you have sent.
10. Don't:
 - Go over one page
 - Include quotes unless you have the full name of the person being quoted
 - Don't write a cover letter explaining you need coverage – media outlets consider a Press Release enough of a request for coverage.