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10 Tips for Creating Winning Press Releases

Get the PR Visibility that will Drive Website Traffic, Leads and Sales

By: Erin Jones

If you want to get your company noticed, in a hurry, press releases are one of the most effective ways to achieve rapid results – but only when they are well crafted and executed flawlessly. Follow these 10 tips and you'll be amazed at the website traffic, leads and sales that can result from this public relations mainstay.

1. **Make it newsworthy.** Your press release should contain information that is both timely and relevant to your readers – information that reporters want to pass on. Newsworthy topics include new product announcements, major company milestones, new customer wins, even upcoming presentations or events on key industry-related trends.
2. **Start it strong.** Use your headline to grab attention and tell readers why they should see what you have to say. But headlines should also be short (between 90 and 120 characters) to encourage social sharing. If you need to put more in, use your subhead to underscore the key message and continue to capture reader interest.
3. **Write like a journalist.** Press releases should always be in third-person and in the classic “reverse pyramid” news format with the most crucial news creating the lead. Your first paragraph should summarize the main announcement points. Use the rest of the release to provide details, background and data on why the news is important.
4. **Stick to the facts.** Tell the truth and avoid fluff, embellishments, hype and exaggerations. Try to stay away from buzzwords and marketing-speak that may make your press release read more like an advertisement.
5. **Avoid industry jargon.** If you need to use industry acronyms, do not assume all your readers know what they mean. Spell out acronyms on first reference and do not use industry terms that are not commonly known without first defining them for your readers.
6. **Embed your keywords.** Press releases are a great way to drive search engine optimization, so do remember to embed your top keywords in each release – but do so strategically. Too many embedded keywords and links will work to your disadvantage.



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Keyword “stuffing” can impact press release pickup. For optimal results, use just two or three keywords per press release.

7. **Keep it short.** Your press release does not need to be long to say it all. Average press releases should be between 400 and 600 words. If you need to room for more, consider linking to additional materials.
8. **Quote the experts.** A press release is a great opportunity to leverage “third party” resources to help you tell your story. Consider quoting industry analysts, customers and thought leaders to validate your message.
9. **Proofread, and proofread again.** After your press release is written, have at least one more person review it to eliminate confusing sentence structure, typos or punctuation errors. Refer to the AP Stylebook for the proper journalistic style that should be used in all press releases.
10. **Use the right distribution channels.** Sending your press release to the right targets is just as important as its content. Distributing it over a wire service is a great way to ensure broad visibility and enhance your website search engine optimization. However, directly targeting and submitting to the editors and publications you care about most can be the best way to assure the reporters you really want to see your news, will have that opportunity. Sending a press release to a media distribution list that has been customized for your announcement will dramatically increase the amount of coverage you receive.

Fuel the success of your press release programs by following these simple tips and you’ll achieve fast results that always keep you ahead of the competition.

About the Author

Erin Jones is a senior account manager and media relations strategist for Edge Legal Marketing. With more than 23 years of public relations experience, Jones spearheads inventive media relations programs to drive brand recognition and thought leadership for Edge clients. In addition to her passion for the media, Jones is also an avid NASCAR race fan whose favorite NASCAR driver is her own son, Devin Jones.



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