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“The Press Release that Gets Noticed”

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Press Release Tips

Fashion your release to “sing to the editor”

It shouldn't read like brochure text or blatant advertisement. Editors have one question, “What's the story?” All your sentences need to help answer that question. Review publications to discover what kind of stories are being published in each venue.

Include a short facts and statistics sheet

Quick bullet-point facts and research summaries become supporting material for the story. Editors and writers love these resources; it saves them a little researching legwork. Use solid sources, and include attribution for research and statistics.

Remember to include your name and contact info on all supporting material.

Educate your team

Everyone involved in editing the release will need to know the rules of good press-release writing. Especially focus on the need to craft text that captures an editor's attention (news)—as opposed to writing to capture a customer's attention (advertorial) or a board member's attention (internal reporting).

Follow-up is key

Use your first few press releases as tools to build your editor database. Even if you don't get coverage, you're generating phone dialogue, learning seasonal deadlines, and finding out who might be open to covering one of your topics in the future. Take detailed notes on your follow-up calls.

If a publication comes to you...

It's the best situation possible! Ask if they want a full press release or if a simple product description will suffice - don't create extra work for yourself. Get a copy of the publication and review their format for product/service descriptions. Provide text that resonates with any stylistic nuances you notice in their articles (specific headings repeated for all reviews, sidebar bullets, etc.)

For small businesses: focus on cultivating a Priority List of 5-10 media contacts.

Decide on your local and national coverage goals, and pick your contacts accordingly. Phone follow-up takes time; it's better to do it really thoroughly with a few venues than to slack on completing the calls for a list that's too long for your available staff hours.

Two days after the initial email blast, make your follow-up call to ask if they received the release and confirm whether it's a topic of interest to the venue. Make sure you do this with your select priority contacts. Many emails are lost as SPAM and must be re-sent. Re-send as needed. Follow-up call once more, offering to answer any questions, and asking what other topics are of most interest to this venue.

Include freelance writers in your press release distribution

Develop your pool of writer contacts while at trade shows (they often come to you) and while reading industry magazines (look for "contributing writers" covering topics that resonate with your business). Independent writers often gravitate to certain topics and often have an "in" with editors at their favorite publishing venues.