



PR Toolkit

Small Business is BIG NEWS

Use PR to grow your small biz--PR Newswire can help!

SPECIAL OFFER!

The Schallert Group has teamed up with the global leader in press release distribution, PR Newswire to bring you a special package of free and discounted services valued at more than \$2,000*. To learn more about this special offer submit your contact information at <http://toolkit.prnewswire.com/schallertgroup> and a PR Newswire representative will contact you within one business day.

PR Newswire can help you:

- ▶ Gain visibility with media, investors and potential customers
- ▶ Increase online sales
- ▶ Announce a new Web site, product or service
- ▶ Drive traffic to your Web site
- ▶ Roll out a new service or product
- ▶ Get media coverage

PR Newswire also harnesses the power of the Web by delivering your press release to more than 5,400 Web sites, databases and online services such as MSN, Yahoo!, AOL and Excite. The enormous amount of traffic on these sites gives your message the potential audience of millions. With every news release you will also receive valuable feedback detailing where your release appeared on the Web.

To learn more about how public relations can help you grow your business visit the PR Toolkit at <http://toolkit.prnewswire.com/schallertgroup>, which includes a host of educational resources such as news release templates, helpful articles, writing tips and answers to common questions.

*Offer available to new PR Newswire members only



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PR Tips

Small Business Advice

Being Newsworthy

For an announcement to be considered newsworthy it must have a broad, general interest to the target audience and a strong news angle (e.g. material information, new development, drama, human interest, local angle, consequence, etc.). In addition, your release needs to be written in a journalistic, rather than marketing style. It should be objectively written as though a reporter were writing the story for you. Most importantly, your release needs to “inform” people, NOT just sell them something.

Headline Formats

In most cases your headline is the first thing an editor sees when reviewing your release. An effective headline can make the difference between an editor covering your story or hitting the delete button. To create an effective headline consider the following points:

- Limit your headline to no more than one line. Many newsrooms have a limit on how many characters they can receive in a headline and their systems are programmed to reject releases that exceed this limit.
- The headline should provide an editor with a tantalizing snapshot of what the news release is about. This is critical as many journalists view releases over their wire system by headline only, then pick and choose when they want to view the full text of the release.
- The headline should include the name of the company issuing the release.
- Do not include the terms “Company”, “Incorporated” or “Limited” or their abbreviations unless they are necessary to clearly identify the organization, i.e. Tandy Corporation vs. Tandy Brands.
- Do not use exclamation points or dollar signs.
- Attribute all potentially critical, controversial, or judgmental statements.

Writing Tips

Writing a professional and effective news release can be difficult. Here are a few guidelines to consider when crafting your release:

- Get to the point quickly and back it up with quotes and evidence.
- Use proper grammar and punctuation. Check for typos, and don't just rely on spell check!
- Address who, what, when, where, why and how in the news release.
- Double check phone numbers and URLs.
- Read your release aloud to see if it makes sense.

- Include quotes to convey opinion or affiliation.
- Don't forget to put your contact name, release date, dateline, web site URL and phone number in your release. Also make sure you are available for phone calls after sending the release out.
- Your release should be written objectively, as if the writer has no affiliation with the company.
- Do not use pronouns such as I, we, us, our, your, etc. except in direct quotes. Write in third person.
- Do not use puffery statements or hype (i.e. we make the best widgets East of the Rockies), but do inform the reader of your status in your industry.
- Always include standard boilerplate information about your company in the last paragraph. The headline for this section should read “About (insert your company's name here).”
- Your release should be concise and to the point. You should be able to convey your message in two pages or less. Releases that are less than 50 words in length tend to be advertisements and cannot be run as a news release.
- Bullet points are accepted, but use sparingly

Writing Tips for Multicultural Releases

If you're trying to target the Hispanic market, make sure to “Hispanicize” -adapt your release for this market. Incorporate appropriate market quotes, and have a spokesperson available that speaks fluent Spanish Remember news is news, so any news story can be related to multicultural markets.

Writing Tips for Feature Releases

If your news release does not contain breaking news, you may want to consider submitting your release as a feature distribution. Feature releases often get play in the “lifestyles” or “living” section of newspapers and are designed for verbatim pickup. When writing a release as a feature, there are some additional tips you should take into consideration.



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For additional PR Tips & Advice, visit The Schallert Group's PR Toolkit at <http://toolkit.prnewswire.com/schallertgroup>