



- Additional contact information at the end for more information or an interview
- One page is preferred and a press release should not go longer than three pages

2. What's in your release?

- A Compelling and Engaging Headline: one that in as few words as possible, informs, excites and will grab the reporter's attention. It should be brief, clear and to the point. It's important to NOT sell or be promotional in a press release. Instead find a hook that will satisfy the news a reporter is looking to cover. You don't have further to go than any newspaper to read headlines that get covered to get a sense for what works. The headline is the most critical part of your release.
- A subhead that further develops your angle drawing in the reporter without taking away from the rest of the copy in the release.
- Regarding the rest of the release Start with the date and city in which the press release is originated. The city may be omitted if it will be confusing, for example if the release is written in New York about events in the company's Chicago division.
- The press release lead or first paragraph: including the who, what, when, where and how of the story. The lead, or first sentence, should grab the reader and say concisely what is happening. The next 1-2 sentences then expand upon the lead. If the reporter were only to read the lead of a good press release, he or she would have everything needed to get started.
- The rest of the press release should further develop and back up claims made in the lead and headline. Careful attention should be given to using quotes and other material to make your case. WikiHow.com, in describing the body copy of the release suggests "The press release **body copy** should be compact. Avoid using very long sentences and paragraphs. Avoid repetition and over use of fancy language and jargon. A first paragraph (two to three sentences) must actually sum up the press release and the further content must elaborate it. In a fast-paced world, neither journalists nor other readers would read the entire press release if the start of the article didn't generate interest. Deal with actual facts - events, products, services, people, targets, goals, plans, projects. Try to provide maximum use of concrete facts. A simple method for writing an effective press release is to make a list of following things:
 - o Communicate the 5 Ws and the H. Who, what, when, where, why, and how. Then consider the points below if pertinent. What is the actual news? Why this is news. The people, products, items, dates and other things related with the news. The purpose behind the news. Your company - the source of this news.
 - o The more newsworthy you make the press release copy, the better the chances of it being selected by a journalist for reporting. Find out what "newsworthy" means to a given market and use it to hook the editor or reporter.
- Your Boilerplate: or information about your company, as a journalist will most likely want to include information about your company if he/she picks up the story. The title for this section should be - About XYZ_COMPANY After the title, use a paragraph or two to describe your company and business. Be sure to include your website url.



3. How to distribute your release? Press releases are often sent alone, by e-mail, fax or postal mail. They can also be part of a full press kit, or may be accompanied by a pitch letter. You can choose to do this yourself or leverage available press release distribution services. To do it yourself get a list of media outlets that you plan to send the press document to. Make sure all of the contact information is correct and current. Check with the media outlets, if possible, to find out their preferred means for transmitting your document (i.e. fax, email, fax and email, etc.). Carefully plan your timing and know when the journalists typically seek their news stories. Transmit your release and generate sufficient confirmation of successful transmission.

There are many different PR distribution services available. For a fee they will help you efficiently get your release to the proper media outlets. Some of the more common ones are PR Newswire and PRWeb.com.

Then What?

After you've crafted and transmitted an effective press release, be ready for questions. It's likely reporters will want more information. Think like a reporter as they will want to drill further down into the who, what, when, where, why, and how. Remember to stay away from promotional and industry speak, staying focused on the exciting and engaging story that the reporter just can't keep his readers waiting another minute from telling.

Develop a relationship with media outlets and journalists in your space. The more you're considered as an "industry expert" and asked to comment on relative news within your industry the more unsolicited exposure you and your business will get.

About the Author

Angelo Biasi is General Manager of SMART Marketing Solutions, LLC, a leading full-service integrated marketing company in Naples, FL since 2001. He has helped create and execute marketing plans and integrated marketing solutions for companies such as Playtex, Bic, Rogaine, Tauck, and over 35 colleges and universities, to name a few. Angelo has an MBA in Marketing from the University of Connecticut and has taught Marketing at New York University for over five years. For more information or to learn more, email him at @smartmarketingllc, visit smartmarketingllc or call 239.963.9396.