

Don't keep your new product, showcase projects and new people a secret!

The sign and print game is overflowing with news, quality showcase jobs and amazing finished projects! Yet, its like trying to get blood out of a stone to help you guys celebrate the good news! Reading trade magazine you will find the case studies, insights of products and news, however have you ever wondered just how to put it together?

Every week we receive content and information on great, newsworthy information and sensational images alas many of the items don't have that elusive magic! So, here are a few tips...

How to Write a Press Release

A Press Release is a written or recorded communication directed at members of the news media for the purpose of announcing something ostensibly newsworthy. It is merely a statement announcing a range of news items, articles and achievements,

new products or possibly to generate a feature story.

The key to writing a good Press Release is to keep it simple, short, sharp, newsworthy, interesting and persistent. It should include information that is and will be interesting enough to your specific audience, consider whether you are targeting people who will be searching for your business, product or service or maybe your target audience is for the search engines to find your relevant data and content and carry it forward to potential customers.

A Press Release can be broken up into the following areas for ease of writing:-

1) Write an attention grabbing headline – start strong

- As with any article a strong eye catching headline is critical
- It needs to be engaging and accurate
- Contain keywords that people will search by and you include these words in your body text
- Make it bold, even consider using a slightly larger font

- Provide information – not an advertisement
- (a good tip is to write your headline and summary last, as this will ensure emphasis is put on your keywords and information supplied in the release, and also gives you better visibility in search engines)

2) Get to the point with a Summary – don't digress

- Most people are busy and will only read the first sentence so make sure you address important points in the beginning
- It should follow the headline
- Only needs to be one to four sentences and should sum up the press release
- (a good tip is to identify yourself and include your company's name within the first few sentences to immediately link the information to your company)

3) Lead in with Who, What, When, Where, Why and How?

- Follow your "Summary" with as many answers to the below as you can e.g.



- Who is it about?
- What is the actual news?
- When does the event happen?
- Where does it take place?
- Why is it news?
- How is it happening?
- Grab your reader's attention by simply stating the news you have to announce
- Deal with actual facts
- A good tip is to make sure this "Lead In" stands out on its own – don't assume your headline has been read

4) Body Copy

- Here is your chance to tell your story and provide the reader with relevant information
- Detail your story and support your claim
- Include quotes (these give credit to your claim adding a human element to it as well as being a source of information, remember to check that the person being quoted is happy about it)
- Ideally 300 – 800 words (you could even supply sets of differing qualities of wording culled down from the 800 words into bite size chunks)
- Provide some extra information links that support your press release

5) Include a Boiler Statement and your Contact Information

- A "Boiler Statement" is a paragraph or phrase that can be used over and over again without change. Simply put it is your "About the Company" sentence
- Don't forget to include your contact details, address, phone number and email address

The following is a list of do's and don'ts to help you get the best from your "Press Release"

Best to Do:

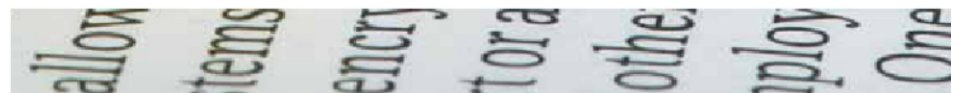
- Send your press release in the morning
- As you only have a matter of seconds to grab your reader's attention make sure you have a strong opening and clarify your news
- Include your headline as the subject line in the email. The better the headline the more it will stand out in your receiver's mailbox
- Make sure your release is accurate, relevant and recent news, you don't want

to send it if the news is out dated or too far in the future. Make sure you stick to the facts

- Check spelling and grammar
- Use format sparingly, keep even spacing and avoid special characters. Leave one line between each paragraph
- Keep to one page (maximum of two) shorter is usually better. This will force you to condense your information and just highlight the prominent points. This can be lengthened however by providing relevant links to your company. However, don't make readers search for more information, guide them quickly and efficiently to your site and keep their interest
- Keep your Press Release within the standard length, between 300 – 800 words is acceptable. Overly short or long releases may have trouble being indexed in the search engines
- Try to keep sentences and paragraphs short, try to stick to three or four lines per paragraph
- Use plain ordinary language
- Try to tie your release to a current event, social issue or recent event as this will bring importance to your message
- Include your company name in the headline, subheading, lead in or first paragraph for better visibility via search engines
- Send Press Releases out as an email, not as an attachment

Best Not to Do:

- Press Releases should not look like advertising, direct marketing or open letters
- Don't use larger type fonts or multiple colours, as they can be distracting
- Do not send out as an attachment
- Do not use non-standard characters, tables or forced line breaks unless you convert your charts, graphs and tables to images or pdf's
- Try not to use direct address such as "you, I, we etc." unless of course it is used within a quotation
- Do not use capital letters to EMPHASISE, exclamation points, slang, hype or describe products as amazing, use phrases like "customers save money" or even "great customer service" as these all challenge your credibility
- Do not use an abundance of technical or work specific jargon
- Do not include an email address in the "body" of the release as this could be picked up by a "spambot". This is a program that searches through the web for email address formats, creating mailing lists for spam
- Do not include excessive links, no more than one link per 100 words of your release
- Don't provide all information and give away all of your secrets, by all means provide links and advise readers where



- If an attachment is the only option then make sure it is in Plain Text or Rich Text Format
- If you want readers to buy your products or visit your website then make sure you include a "Call to Action". Let them know where it is available and include all links to websites
- You can use anchor text and features such as attaching logos, head shots, audio and video files, pdf documents or any other supplemental materials that will build up your release
- Do promote your company if you have reached a milestone, celebrated an anniversary, experienced significant growth or perhaps received an award. Consider announcing a release offering your customers "tips" in your field

they can learn specifics about your news, but if you give your readers no reason to click through to your site then they're not necessarily going to go there

Write your press release in a Word or text document first, enabling you to print it, proofread it, make alterations and proofread again. The more time you take to do it right and state all the facts the better your company will be presented to the all-important reader.

 **Need help in writing an eye catching, show stopping Press Release we're here to help. Call ControlZone on 1300 646 726, email John@controlzone.com.au or go to our web page: <http://www.controlzone.com.au>**