



CREATING MEDIA RELEASES THAT WORK

A media release is a great marketing tool that allows you to publicise the existence and activities of your business, while also promoting goodwill.

First and foremost, for your media release to be effective it must be newsworthy. It must also be useful, accurate and interesting. Ask yourself, 'How are people going to relate to this and will they be able to connect?'

There are seven basic elements that every media release should entail.

1. **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** If you want the story to be published straight away (e.g., if the issue being discussed is time-relevant), this capitalised message should appear clearly at the top of the release. If this message is not required then simply print 'MEDIA RELEASE' in its place.

2. **The date:** This should usually be situated directly under or next to the above message, and should be the date you are distributing the release.

3. **The headline:** In approximately 10 words or less, you need to grab the attention of the reader. It should summarise the information in the media release, but in a way that is exciting and dynamic. The headline should be centred and appear in bold.

4. **Opening paragraph:** This is a critical part of the media release. The opening paragraph must explain who, what, when, where, why and how. It must summarise the media

release, with the following paragraphs providing the detail. The opening paragraph must also entail a hook: something that compels the audience to continue reading. It is not a hard sell or a devious promotion, but a factual statement of something new, original or useful. The key to a successful media release is that the hook must be relevant to your desired audience.

5. **The body:** An inverted pyramid technique should be used when constructing your release. This means, the most important information and quotes should appear at the beginning, with the less critical information being contained at the end. Editors need to comply with space constraints, and this technique ensures that when information is cut from the latter part of the release, the crucial information is retained. Wherever possible, try to include relevant direct quotes or testimonials, as they are a good way to establish credibility, and demonstrate excitement.

6. **Contact information:** At the end of the release, provide a contact name, title, telephone and e-mail address for your business. If the contact person is not yourself, make sure that they know the full details of the promotion.

7. **The end:** If your media release exceeds one page, the second page should indicate 'Page two' in the upper right hand corner. Three # symbols should be included, centred directly underneath the last line of the release, to indicate the end of your media release.

Remember to edit and spell-check your media release and to place your company logo and details in the release.

Remember these basic journalistic guidelines and adhere to the rules of accuracy and usefulness to ensure an effective Media Release for your business.