

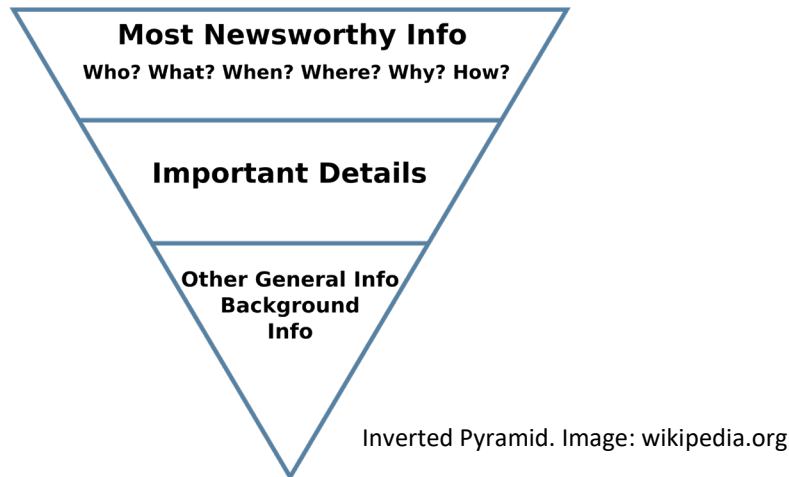
Use this worksheet to map out the key stories you can tell the press and influencers.

What's my story?

1. List any product or service launches you are having this year.
2. Write down any business anniversaries.
3. Start gathering testimonials from happy customers. If you haven't already.
4. Start thinking about case studies of happy customers, any unusual stories or people or businesses you have helped.

Get to the point

Follow the journalism model of the 'inverted pyramid.' Start with the most important information first. Tell the user what the main information is, why it will be useful to them and why they should care. Like newspaper articles, you can hook the reader in with the main details and they can choose to read on if they want to.



Use simple language

Keep language simple and concise, and stick to plain English. Remove any unnecessary words. Avoid jargon, technical terms and buzzwords. Be careful with humour, make sure it will be understood by your target audience.

What are your top three points about your story?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What are the supporting facts and statistics for this story?

National and local statistics are good.

Do you have any case studies that could be used?

Do you have any quotes that can be used?

Do you have any images, audio, video or an infographic that can accompany the story?

When can you release the story?

Can it be an exclusive or embargoed?

Here's a reminder of how to write a Press Release

Remember to be your own storyteller. You have a very short time to catch a journalist's attention, so make sure the headline is informative and interesting.

Tips for writing a press release:

1. It's all about the story

Think about the journalist and the publication you are pitching to, and use the right tone of voice. Write a couple of paragraphs with a compelling story and bullet points with key information. Think who, what, where, when.

2. Grab attention with a great headline

The journalist or sub-editor will probably change it. But it will grab their attention and give them food for thought.

3. Keep it short

Journalists get hundreds of Press Releases a day. You can put extra information in the notes below the Press Release or in web links in your email.

4 Use quotes

Make sure use interesting quotes in the release either from a spokesperson in your business or an expert.

5. Facts

Make sure you have some data to back up your story, journalists need them to make the story credible.

6. Use visuals

Make sure you have a link to hi-res images for the journalist to use. Not all media companies have a picture desk on hand, and high quality, high-resolution images will make it much more likely for you to be featured.

7. Check it and check it again!

There is nothing more distracting than a terrible typo. A second pair of eyes is always useful, send it to a friend or colleague to double check.

You will find a press release template on the next page.

[Logo here]

Press Release

For Immediate Release: [Date]

HEADLINE [ONE LINE ONLY]

Subhead: More Detail As Needed, One Line Only

Your announcement starts here and should lead with a strong first paragraph that is clear about what you are announcing, where, and its relevance to your industry. Don't bury the main story; get right to it in the first paragraph. This makes it easier for time-poor journalists with tight deadlines!

The second paragraph is the best spot for quotes but choose your quotes carefully. No reporter likes reading from a sea of people saying the same boring thing. Leverage quotes to build the importance of your story but also to shape your core messages. Whenever and wherever possible, include quotes from customers or partners who will benefit from the news, and avoid extreme exaggeration.

In the third paragraph, it's often tempting to add information that is not needed. If in doubt leave it out! Your aim is to provide a concise, clear story. Additional info can be given via links in your pitch email, your company blog, and in the notes section of the Press Release. Some extra pointers below:

- Use bullet points to break up the text
- Use language people can understand. Don't make it complicated
 - Review the release, have you focussed on what is newsworthy? If not edit it, keep the news angle in mind at all times.

Put a link to Dropbox or similar with high-resolution images here.

Put the info about your company here. Make sure you include a link to your homepage. Double check to ensure the first sentence accurately and clearly describes your business in a way that could be translated by a journalist.

Ends

Put the PR or your contact details here email address and mobile number.

Notes to editors: General info about the company and its history can be included here but do not make it long!

Traditionally you should leave spacing between each line of the Press Release, and I would also recommend copying the Press Release into the body of the email you are sending. Journalists are more likely to read it. Make it easy – a link to hi-res professional images to download made me much more likely to use a Press Release. Do not attach hi-res logos or images to the email as they won't get through or worse annoy the people you are trying to get to help you!

Good luck with contacting the press, be helpful, polite and persistent. If you have a good story to tell, it will get picked up by the press.

Remember you need:

1. A hook – a catchy headline and a reason to read the press release
2. A good initial summary
3. Quotes
4. Facts
5. Good visual image

Don't forget to have any headshots, product shots and lifestyle shots in a DropBox, OneDrive or Google Drive.

