

A press release has landed in your inbox with the instructions to ‘get this out ASAP!’ This guide will help you collect the required information before contacting your press release provider and to shorten the time from your inbox to distribution to the world.

Getting Started

The first step is to read the press release. Being knowledgeable on the content that you’ve been asked to distribute will allow you to more easily answer questions from your distribution provider and make intelligent choices when it comes to your options.



What are the communication goals?

Is your PR or Marketing team interested in brand awareness, media coverage, website traffic, or a different objective?



Who is the intended audience?

Is your press release intended for the media? Consumers? Analysts? Investors? Most wire services have target distribution lists that can help you reach the audience that is most important to your news or brand.



How much can you spend?

You’ll need to establish what amount of money has been budgeted for distribution, including options such as adding photos and videos.

Press Release Components

The next step is to make sure that the press release includes all of the necessary elements to attract media and end-user attention. Completing the checklist below prior to contacting your distribution provider will help you save time and avoid a lot of back-and-forth while trying to piece these items together.

Headline	The headline should grab readers' attention and draw them in for more. It should also be short enough to be tweeted, about 100 characters, leaving your audience some space to add hashtags, comment, etc.	
Subhead	This is where you can add more detail with a descriptive sub-head, which informs search engines and further engages readers	
Dateline	Includes the city of origin and the date of release	
Media contact information	Be sure to include a contact name, phone number, and email address for journalists and bloggers to use if they are considering picking up your story and require more information	
Boilerplate	This is the space to tell your readers about your organization. Keep it brief, avoid jargon and include your website URL	

Best practices

There are also items beyond your headline, subhead and media contact point, that are necessary components of a successful press release. These components can be the key to increasing visibility and engagement, as your audience will be more engaged and likely to utilize your release in some way (in an article, shared via social media, etc.) if there is more there to support your story.



Multimedia

Including multimedia drives an increase in views up to 552%¹, so consider adding images and/or videos to set your press release apart.

- Was multimedia content created that is relevant to the news, campaign or event mentioned in the press release? This would be an ideal time to get extra mileage out of that content by sharing it with a new audience
- Does your PR or Marketing team have standard, pre-approved images that you can select from?

Tip

Your press release provider will ask for caption text to accompany any images or videos. This is something you can get approved in advance to help speed up the distribution process.



Social Sharing

Updating your press release to include easily shareable elements, such as a tweetable headlines and quotes, boosts your potential for earned media and online engagement.

- If you are promoting an event that has a hashtag, be sure to include this information in your press release
- Try using a relevant and popular hashtag in a tweet-ready headline—keep it to about 100 characters and make it interesting
- The obligatory quote? Craft it for Twitter by dropping the hyperbole and editing it down into a 100 character statement that makes a key point
- Encourage social interaction by including the handle of anyone you quote in the press release



Translation

If your organization or the content of the press release appeals to a multicultural audience, this is an excellent opportunity to distinguish yourself from your competitors.

When appropriate, consider translating your message to connect with your audience through additional languages, even within the US or Canada. The time required to translate your press release will be dependent on the length of your press release.

1 2013 PR Newswire web analytics

Behind the Scenes

Now that you have brought together and tweaked all of the information required for your press release, it's time to reach out to your service provider. Here's a list of all the things taking place behind the scenes at PR Newswire to get press releases ready for distribution:



Proofreading

- Spelling mistakes, grammatical errors...we've seen it all. Your press release may have gone through several levels of review but an extra set of eyes, with editorial experience, never hurts.
- Consistency is key. We review things like acronyms and the names of people and places to ensure that they are spelled accurately throughout your press release.
- Our team also reviews the full press release to verify that the content makes sense overall.



Consultation

- Our team leverages their experience to share what works, what doesn't, and how a press release can be optimized to help an organization meet their goals.
- A best-in-class distribution provider will offer insider tips and suggestions on how your press release can cut through the noise and make an impact.



Formatting

- Press releases are inputted into our editorial system in order to be distributed online and to the media.
- If your press release contains any elements such as links, tables, or multimedia, some additional time will be required to format these components so your news looks perfect.

Tip

If your press release distributor offers a customer portal, you can save time by submitting your press release using the portal, such as PR Newswire's Online Member Center. Using the tools provided will eliminate some of the manual work that happens behind the scenes, helping you to meet your deadlines more easily.

Now that you are armed with the answers you need to distribute your press release, it's time to get started! If you have questions about which options make sense for your next release, a PR Newswire team member would be happy to offer consultation.

ABOUT PR NEWSWIRE

For more than 60 years, PR Newswire has helped PR, corporate and marketing communications, and investor relations professionals achieve their communications goals – from building awareness with new audiences and gaining media pickup, to managing reputation and inspiring investor confidence – by sharing, targeting, tracking and enhancing their messages to make the most of their communications campaigns and content investments.

