

Media release checklist

Most great stories in the media are created from a well written and newsworthy media release. This is a handy checklist to help you write a media release to attract the attention of your chosen media outlet (newspaper, television, radio).

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Getting media attention

If the story is newsworthy, it's going to meet at least one of the news values below (the more news values it meets, the more likely your media release will be picked up).

News values are:

- Timely (is it current, does it tie in with a wider message or campaign or another story in the media)
- > Unique
- Significant (wide audience)
- Prominent (is there a celebrity or credible speaker attending the event or endorsing the product or program?)
- Human interest (is it about people, is it emotional, funny or sad?)



Notes

Target audience

If your event/announcement is local then consider sending a media release to your local newspaper/s. These media outlets are more likely to support you as the information is relevant to local community members and their readers.

If you want to attract local seniors in the area to an event, then look for membership clubs such as Probus and Rotary, and/or promote your event at the local retirement villages.

Rules for writing your media release

- Have you located a good example of a media template to help guide you?
- Have you ensured that your writing is clear, factual and concise without jargon?
- Have you answered all the questions: who, what, where, when and how?
- Have you included quotes and applied the third person approach, using "he/she said, rather than "I"?
- Have you double spaced the lines and spelt out any abbreviations?
- Does it have a punchy or interesting headline that isn't too long?
- Did you keep it to a maximum of two pages? (preferably only one page).

Always get someone else to read your media release and get their honest opinion about it.

Remember: A journalist is looking for a well written media release that requires little or no work. Read your local paper to get an idea of how they write their stories, and what type of stories they are interested in.

Notes

Distributing your media release

Which media outlet is going to be most interested in your story? Narrow down the most appropriate media outlets and write down their contact details.

It is recommended you phone the media outlet and request a name to personalise your email to. Sometimes these details can be found in the paper itself or on the newspaper's website.

Make a list of all the outlets you have sent your release to. These outlets are your messengers or potential channels to get your story out there.

Just before the event, phone the journalist and see if they need any more information and if they are attending the event. Ask if they want a follow up media release (key facts, speech notes) and/or a photo from the event.

On the day, have some media kits ready (including your media release, fact sheets or backgrounder to hand out to busy journalists).

Media alert

On the week before your event, send out a media alert to your media contact list. This could attract a few photographers on the day. A media alert is a short snappy paragraph (much like an invitation) with the where, when, why, who and what covered.

Channels for distribution of your media release.

Major media channels

- > Television
- Radio

Print media

- Newspapers (national paper or local newspapers)
- Newsletters (for example, church or seniors groups)

Other media channels

- SMS/MMS
- Internet/blog websites (that cover subjects relating to your event or program)
- Social media websites (Facebook, Twitter)

Don't forget to put your media releases on your website if you have one.