

Creating news releases: easy and free publicity for your business

By Angela Booth

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Angela Booth
angela@zip.com.au

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Summary: If you're not sending out news releases every month, you're missing out on free publicity for your business.

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What's news? You are! If you're not creating monthly news releases for your business, you're missing out on giving your business an instant boost.

As a tech journalist, I received dozens of news releases every day. Most of them went into the recycling bin, or were used as scrap paper.

However, the releases I did use received a fantastic boost of free publicity and instant credibility for the businesses which

sent them.

Years ago, when I managed a dog training and boarding business, we spent huge dollars every week buying display advertising in a Sunday paper. It bit a massive chunk out of our cash flow, and I knew there had to be a better way. At the time, I wrote romance novels, and didn't think of myself as a copywriter. However, I figured that if I could get some free publicity for us, maybe we could save on advertising.

I sent dozens of news releases to newspapers, radio stations, and TV shows, and we got a wonderful response.

Lots of interviews and television appearances. Great coverage. I managed to position our business as experts in dog behavioral problems, so whenever anything dog-related made news, journalists would call us as the experts on dog behavior. One of our trainers would then give newspaper and TV interviews, dispensing advice while promoting our business. Once the publicity ball got rolling, the only paid advertising we needed to do was in the Yellow Pages.

That taught me that if you're willing to put thought, creativity, and time into promoting your business, not only can you save on advertising, but you can also build an image for your business.

= The major element of your release

Here's a list of the elements of a news story. The story you're presenting must contain at least one of these elements: TIMELINESS, PUBLIC INTEREST, CONFLICT, TRAGEDY, HUMOR, SEX, MONEY, HUMAN INTEREST, THE FUTURE, or ANIMALS.

= Rules for news releases

IDENTIFICATION: Display the words "News Release" prominently.
DATE THE RELEASE. LETTERHEAD: Use your own business letterhead.
(Create it in your word processor.) TIMING OF THE RELEASE:
Underneath the letterhead, type in caps, underlined: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE. USE DOUBLE SPACING. LEAVE WIDE MARGINS, for journalists and producers to make notes. FINISH OFF THE COPY: type ****ENDS**** or **###** at the end of the copy. CONTACT INFORMATION: vital. You can end the release with it, or begin the release with it, your preference. You need to include the name of the contact person: you, or your client, or both of you, and the phone numbers you can reliably be reached at.

= The structure of a news release: the inverted pyramid

After you've done a lot of news releases, you'll get in the habit

of writing in inverted-pyramid style automatically. "Inverted pyramid" writing is used in newspapers.

You can remember what IV style is if you imagine it. Imagine a pyramid. Stand it on its apex. You now have the broad base uppermost. This signifies that the base of the story, or the root of the story, comes first.

Therefore, news releases have this structure: a headline, and the first paragraph giving the most important information. The first graph tells the entire story.

Then each succeeding paragraph gives more information in order of descending importance. You can chop off any of the later paragraphs and still have the story make sense.

I like using a headline in a news release, but it's optional. Unlike the headline in an ad, your headline shouldn't be cute or gimmicky, it should summarize the story in five or six words. For example: 'Nursery Gives Away Free Trees'; 'New Store Opens'; 'Delaney Sponsors Local Swimmers'.

The first paragraph is your story in a nutshell: who, what, how, when, where and why. It's easy to write. Just state your case. Tell who you are, what you're doing, how you're doing it, where you're doing it, and why.

For news release examples, visit <http://www.prweb.com> . (PRWeb.com lets you send out free news releases.)

When you get into the swing of whizzing out monthly news releases, they take less than an hour write. After all, they're just a page of straightforward information. However, that hour can have a powerful impact on your business.

Make some news today!

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