

Title:

How to Write a Great Press Release and Increase Press Release Distribution

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Summary:

While paid advertising - especially Internet advertising - can drive highly targeted traffic to your site, many online businesses overlook a key component of any marketing and advertising plan: press releases and press release distribution.

Keywords:

business, press release, press release distribution, advertising, free advertising, press release services

Article Body:

Every online business should have a marketing and advertising plan. While paid advertising - especially Internet advertising - can drive highly targeted traffic to your site, many online businesses overlook a key component of any marketing and advertising plan: press releases and press release distribution. A great press release can garner the kind of exposure that money can't buy; in essence, it's free advertising. Press release distribution is an extremely cost-effective way to get the word out to thousands, hundreds of thousands, and perhaps millions of potential customers.

Many business owners might respond, "But I've written press releases and haven't received a single response." If that's the case, the lack of response is most likely either due to either a poorly written press release or poor press release distribution.

Although virtually anyone can string words together, writing a press release that will grab and hold the attention of the media is an art. Many press release services also offer press release writing services; in most cases, it's worth the money to leave it to the professionals. If you do want to write your own press release, though, here are some tips:

1. At the top of the release, include a contact person's name, phone number, and email address, as well as the URL of your website. It's imperative that whomever is listed will be available to speak to the media. In other words, don't decide to distribute your press release and then head off on vacation.

2. Make the topic timely. Unless yours is a Fortune 1000 company, simply announcing that your product exists will draw only a yawn from the media. Find a hook. Your hook could be an upcoming holiday, for example. Better yet, find a way to piggyback your product or service onto something that's currently making news. Reporters are always looking for new angles for their follow-up stories.

3. Don't forget the Five Ws. A reporter should be able to read the first paragraph of your release and know who, what, where, when, and why. If they don't find the information there, they won't read any further.

4. Incorporate quotes from an "expert." The expert could be you, the CEO of your company, or someone with whom you collaborate. The bottom line is that he or she should be able to authoritatively speak about the topic of the release, and should be available to the media for interviews.

5. Keep it short. A press release is a teaser to get the media interested in your company. Say what you need to say in 400-500 words. If reporters want more information, they'll contact you.

6. A picture is worth 1,000 words. If you're promoting a product, have high-resolution (300 dpi) images available, and state their availability at the end of your press release. Editors will choose to cover a product with a photo over a product without every single time.

When it comes to press release distribution, use press release services. Ideally, you should use a press release distribution service that can target your release to members of the media that specifically cover your market or industry. Consider a press release distribution service that offers online print distribution, fax distribution, and audio distribution.

Keep in mind that press release distribution can take awhile to bear fruit. In contrast to websites, which continually publish new content, magazines often have months of lead time. Your press release may get some immediate responses, and continue to receive a trickle of responses for months to come.

Lastly, press release writing and press release distribution should be a cornerstone of your marketing and advertising efforts. Issuing a new press release every three to four weeks keeps your company in front of the media, and has a cumulative effect of increasing the effectiveness of your press releases.