

Media Relations



The news media (trade, business and mainstream) has no obligation to publish or broadcast your press release, or use it exactly as you have submitted. In fact, editors receive literally thousands more press releases daily than they have room to print. However, you can increase the odds your organization's news will make it into print by understanding the guidelines followed by COCO+CO. below.

- 1) Start with a strong “news hook.” Ask yourself, what is important about the information and why would someone be interested in reading about it? Constructing news stories with this information at the top and least important at the bottom is called “inverted pyramid” style. In other cases, you may simply want to take advantage of standard columns such as “People,” “Companies,” “Calendar,” etc.
- 2) Avoid overtly promotional text. Placing one or two paragraphs of company information at the bottom of a press release, however, gives editors the flexibility of removing the text or keeping it to fill a “hole.”
- 3) Adhere to journalism conventions. Journalists follow certain “style” guidelines and conventions governing capitalization, order, titles, etc. Some examples: the first letter of all proper names must be upper case regardless of its marketing usage; the first letter of titles appearing before a person's name appear in upper case, but presented as lower case when appearing alone or after a name; and events are listed in order of time, date and place.
- 4) Illustrate your news with appropriate photographs. If you have promoted an employee, for example, send a “head” shot along with your announcement. To help break up overly “gray” pages, editors often give priority to press releases with photographs. Don't e-mail news and photographs without knowing the media outlet's policy on such submissions. For print use, your digital photographs should have a resolution of about 300 dots per inch (DPI).
- 5) Don't hound editors. Although one hears of “publicists” pushing the media to include certain press releases, this tactic may actually reduce the likelihood the news will appear.
- 6) Provide contact information. Since journalists often work very late at night or early in the morning, and face tight deadlines, it is important they have a contact that can be reached at almost any hour in case of questions. Failure to promptly answer or return a reporter's call risks usage of the news story.

©2008 COCO+CO. All rights reserved.