

How to Write a Press Release That Works!

How My First Press Release Came About

I wrote my first press release about 8 years ago. I was putting on a free seminar at a local place of business – I had a good friend who gave me her list of personal contacts (I couldn't thank her enough). She had the names of all the editors of the new papers in my city and thankfully was willing to give me her sources.

Because this event was based in a particular region – it needed to be published in the appropriate newspapers and publications close to where I was holding the free workshop. I was hoping I could get it into some of the larger local papers – my hard work paid off one of the biggest publications – The Deseret News – did publish the press release - all because I wrote a good cover letter, addressed the editor by name and wrote a great headline and simple copy – my seminar? A timely seminar that would help out the business community.

“How to utilize the internet for business growth”

Newsworthy, timely, and free...

I had about 60 business owners show up and to this day I am getting phone calls from businesses that were at my seminar and need my services.

Was this press release and seminar a success “You Bet” – but it all started with one idea – and a **well written press release**.

These days we submit a lot of press releases to online websites - when they are well written and newsworthy they can do a lot to bring you business and make you stand out from your competitors.

But Press Releases are so Yesterday!

You may have read “Press Releases” are not the way to market, I have even read the press releases are a waste of time!

Nothing can be farther from the truth – a properly written and executed press release can attract new groups of people to your business, get your company on the radar as well as give you great backlinks (and we all need those for search engine positioning) to your website.

It is important to understand that a press release is not an advertisement or a large promotional piece to hand out to unsuspecting readers.

So what is a press release?

It is something that is news worthy – an award your business won – a unique event or grand opening - A good press release answers all of the "W" questions (who, what, where, when and why), providing the media with useful information about your organization, product, service or event.

If your press release reads like an advertisement, you need to go back to the drawing board.

In this day and age you can send press releases to newspapers, submit them on-line, have them published on social media sites.

The trick is having something of value that a newspaper online or off finds newsworthy enough to publish.

One of the most important things you can do is develop the headline – it is no different than any news story or article you write if the headline attracts journalists they will read your press release and if it is newsworthy they will use it

Press releases are not meant to tell the whole story. They are meant to give the reporter an idea of what's happening in your business that their readers need to know about.

If the journalist would like additional information or would like to arrange for an interview, he/she will call.

Your press release should be approximately 400 words - 500 maximum. Use only enough words to tell your story. Avoid using flowery language, or redundant expressions such as "added bonus" or "first time ever". If you can tell your story with fewer words, do it.

Wordiness distracts from your story. Keep it concise. Make each word count.

When writing your press release us a word processor like word, you will need to write – read – edit – print it and re-edit. Making sure it is formatted to perfection.

I always write my articles, and press releases in word. I save them in word docs simply because I want to submit them to various news agencies and press release web site.

Having a copy to draw upon later is really a big help and saves a lot of time.

Example of a Press Release:

Below is an example, this is an actual press release that one of my client's received after working hard to become one of the top companies in her industry.

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wasatch Front Ski Accommodations Receives 2009 Best of Salt Lake City Award

U.S. Local Business Association's Award Plaque Honors the Achievement

WASHINGTON D.C., March 20, 2009 -- For the second consecutive year, Wasatch Front Ski Accommodations has been selected for the 2009 Best of Salt Lake City Award in the Tourist Homes category by the U.S. Local Business Association (USLBA).

The USLBA "Best of Local Business" Award Program recognizes outstanding local businesses throughout the country. Each year, the USLBA identifies companies that they believe have achieved exceptional marketing success in their local community and business category. These are local companies that enhance the positive image of small business through service to their customers and community.

Nationwide, only 1 in 70 (1.4%) 2008 Award recipients qualified as 2009 Award Winners. Various sources of information were gathered and analyzed to choose the winners in each category. The 2009 USLBA Award Program focused on quality, not quantity. Winners are determined based on the information gathered both internally by the USLBA and data provided by third parties.

About U.S. Local Business Association (USLBA)

U.S. Local Business Association (USLBA) is a Washington D.C. based organization funded by local businesses operating in towns, large and small, across America. The purpose of USLBA is to promote local business through public relations, marketing and advertising.

4/30/2009 <http://artistadesign.com> pamela@artistadesign.com

The USLBA was established to recognize the best of local businesses in their community. Our organization works exclusively with local business owners, trade groups, professional associations, chambers of commerce and other business advertising and marketing groups. Our mission is to be an advocate for small and medium size businesses and business entrepreneurs across America.

SOURCE: U.S. Local Business Association

CONTACT:

U.S. Local Business Association

Email: PublicRelations@USLocalBusinessAssociation.com

URL: <http://www.USLocalBusinessAssociation.com>

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As you can see it is simple, precise and to the point – it give a synopsis of the award given to my client as well as a little background about the company who gave the award – this lends credibility to the award that was given.

Formatting Standards

- ❖ Create a headline that draws attention, put it in bold type just above the first line of the body of the press release. Headlines typically highlight the most important, significant or shocking fact in the release.
- ❖ Create a dateline - the first line of the body of your press release - that includes the city where the release is generated and the date (i.e. SLC, UT. - January 1, 2009).
- ❖ Make certain the first paragraph includes all the vital information: the where, when, why, what and who.
- ❖ Include some tantalizing peripheral details or facts to spark curiosity in following paragraphs. A good press release not only informs but also teases.
- ❖ Wrap up the last paragraph with a "for additional information" line, a place to find more details. An annual report or a Web site can be great sources of information.
- ❖ Center these marks, " # # #" or "-30-", at the bottom of the page to indicate the end of your release.

Remember you only get one chance at a great first impression – so be sure that your press release is a strong one!

