

## A Press Release Protocol for SMBs and NGOs



In the age of digital public relations, a press release protocol is a strategic necessity for small-medium businesses and non-profits.

True, the press release is not the cornerstone of public relations and communications it once was. But information is no longer produced and distributed the way it once was. Newsprint, cable, and radio news desks are no longer the exclusive arbiters of what is, or what is not, news.

Nonetheless, a press release should remain part of your digital public relations and communications strategy. Because, when publishing and distribution are well planned, a press release benefits your brand, organization, or campaign in multiple ways.

## How a press release helps you

1. *A press release is a factor in your online discoverability (i.e., SEO).*
2. *A press release is a source for secondary and repurposed content (i.e., social media).*
3. *A press release captures and demonstrates institutional credibility and performance.*
4. *A press release is a critical step for developing media relations and winning media coverage.*
5. *A press release is a vehicle for building customer trust and engagement.*

The press release is still important.

And, in the age of digital public relations and paywall journalism, it remains one of the only sources of information that everyone can still [freely access](#) and one of the [most trusted](#). That's important, too.

With all that said, don't count on a newswire service to do the heavy lifting for you. Simply submitting a press release to one of the many pay-for services won't guarantee distribution to your target audience. You may just end up paying exorbitant sums for mere vanity metrics and no publicity.

Instead, first ask, how *should* I publish and distribute my press release?

## **A step-by-step guide for your press release**

This is a modern press release protocol for SMBs and NGOs.

Use it and you'll not only own your news, but you'll see if it blazes, burns, or fizzles. Then, if your analytics suggest that your community digs it, distribute it via paid newswire to traditional media for more consideration, and to reach more of your target audience.

### An 11-Step Modern Press Release Protocol

- 1. Define keywords or phrases that will attract attention from your target audience. Include them in the headline.*
- 2. Create a meta description that accurately summarizes the content and reinforces its key value to the reader. Use that meta description as a subtitle under the headline.*
- 3. Optimize the content for online search. Include keywords throughout the piece but maintain readability. Use subheadings to improve readability and break up text into logical segments.*
- 4. Include calls-to-action for direct access to related information. Include links to relevant pages on your website. Include a quote or two. A quote can increase the likelihood of it being published should the editor/writer decide to run it as a brief. Include a contact for additional reporting inquiries.*

5. *Now own the press release. Embed it in your website. Create a dedicated URL and more feature content and social media sharing widgets. Link to it from other pages on your site and, if possible, partner sites.*
  
6. *Provide a sharable and printable PDF version. Include high-resolution photos and videos as part of a hosted digital media kit.*
  
7. *Push the release to customers and prospects via email, chat, community groups, etc. Share it directly with social media influencers interested in your niche.*
  
8. *Share on social media using hashtags identical to the press release keywords and phrases. Follow social engagement strategies to promote it.*
  
9. *Stop and listen. Analyze audience feedback, site traffic, and any social chatter. Is your audience talking about it? What is the general sentiment?*
  
10. *If you are sensing traction, pitch your release to your favorite journalist as an exclusive or to your media list.*
  
11. *Ready to go further and you have the budget? Pay up. Pick a newswire service and push your press release to editors and journalists. There are many options: PR Newswire, Business Wire, Marketwired, GlobeNewswire, PRWeb, eReleases, Newswire Today, Press Release Jet, Newsmaker, PR Underground, Nova Release, and more. Want to scale down? Consider regional or niche-specific options.*

## **Press release protocol performance review**

This is a press release protocol for SMBs and NGOs. It can be improved and tailored to your needs.

You followed the steps above. Now take some time to look at what worked and what didn't. Here are some sample questions to kick off your review.

### Performance Review Sample Questions

- *Did we adhere to an effective schedule?*
- *Did we have the right target audience for our news?*
- *What does engagement data from owned media indicate?*
- *What does engagement data from paid media indicate?*
- *Did we get earned media coverage? Who are their readers?*
- *Does the demographic data for engagement align with our audience personas? Maybe there is a new market to target.*

For SMBs and NGOs, a press release protocol is a strategic necessity for effective digital public relations and communications. Plan your distribution well and your brand, organization, or campaign will benefit. Make it a component of your digital public relations and communications toolkit.

If you have questions, [we can help](#).