

How to Write a Press Release

Press releases can be a great tool for your business promotion but only if they are properly written and presented.

Most people are not aware of the special requirements of press releases. A press release is not a page-long advertisement. A press release is not a novel. A press release is not a tell-all promotional piece that is full of detail.

A press release is one way to get your message out to the media. The media in turn, if interested, will turn your release into a story for hundreds or thousands of people to view or read.

One of the best things about utilizing a press release as a marketing tool is that there is no money involved (unlike costly spending on advertising space). Also, this type of news is viewed as non-biased coverage of your business—the best kind!

The Basics

The first mistake commonly made is writing a press release with your business target audience in mind. Unlike advertising copy, which is written to appeal to your customer, a press release is written to appeal to a journalist. The journalist is not someone who is seeking to buy your product or service. A journalist is looking to fill a news need.

When writing a press release, you must meet that need by fulfilling the reporter's requirements. Rather than answering the question, "What's in it for me," answer the question, "Why would this magazine's readers care?"

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 you.

Your press release should be approximately 400 to 500 words maximum.

The headline also takes on a new focus. Rather than using a headline proclaiming the benefits of your product, use a headline that proclaims its newsworthiness.

Make sure you know what interests the publication's readers have before sending off the release. It is virtually impossible to provide timely, news-oriented information to a site or magazine if you have not done your research.

Distribution

Just like advertisements, press releases must be placed in strategic areas. Search the Web for outlets to run your release.

Email your press release to the appropriate person at individual magazines, newspapers and Web sites. Target those that would be read by your customers.

Be sure to find the correct name and email address for the reporter who handles stories related to your business. Releases that are sent to incorrect contacts are most likely thrown away.

Follow-up

Reporters have a big problem receiving calls from writers asking if the press release was received or read. Journalists are very busy people. They get hundreds of press releases a day.

Resist the urge to call or email. Once you submit your press release, just know that you will be contacted if there is an interest.

Press Release Template:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Your Name
Your Company Name
Company Address
Phone Number: 800-555-1234
[Your](#) Web Site
[Your](#) Email

Headline

Your City and State – Release Date – Content of release.

For information: [Your](#) Web Site
Contact: [Your](#) Email
Phone: Your Number

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Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Kristie Spalding
American Council on Exercise
800-546-7470
kristie.spalding@acefitness.org
www.acefitness.org

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EXERCISE RECOMMENDS 60 MINUTES OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY A DAY
Adults and Children, Regardless of Weight, Can Reduce Risk of Illness

SAN DIEGO, Calif. – Sept. 16, 2002 – The American Council on Exercise (ACE), America's nonprofit fitness advocate, today endorsed the National Academies' Food and Nutrition Board's recommendation that the nation's growing waistline can best be fought with a minimum of 60 minutes of exercise per day.

"According to available research, an hour of physical activity appears to be necessary for optimal health," said Dr. Cedric Bryant, chief exercise physiologist for the American Council on Exercise. "With 60 minutes of exercise a day, you can maintain health and reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer. Consumers need to hear this message as often and as consistently as possible in light of the epidemic of obesity among adults and children."

To maintain cardiovascular health at a maximum level, regardless of weight, adults and children should spend a total of at least one hour each day in moderately intense physical activity, which is double the daily goal set by the 1996 U.S. Surgeon General's report.

According to the Food and Nutrition Board, the new one-hour-a-day total exercise goal stems from studies of how much energy is expended on average each day by individuals who maintain a healthy weight. Energy expenditure is cumulative, including both low-intensity activities of daily life, such as stair climbing and housecleaning, and more vigorous exercise like swimming and cycling. Dr. Bryant adds, "It is important that the public understand that the recommendation doesn't necessarily mean a grueling hour of exercise. It can be achieved through a variety of moderate-

intensity activities. Those 60 minutes do not have to be done all at once; several 10- to 15-minute bouts of physical activity performed throughout the day are adequate to meet the new guidelines.”

There are few limitations on what types of activities individuals can do at a moderate intensity. Brisk walking is the most popular choice since it can easily be incorporated into a busy day, has low injury rates, does not require special skills or equipment, and can be done by virtually anyone at any age. The bottom line is that individuals should choose activities they enjoy and can easily incorporate into their daily routines.

About ACE

The American Council on Exercise (ACE), America’s Authority on Fitness, is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the benefits of physical activity and protecting consumers against unsafe and ineffective fitness products and instruction. As the nation’s “workout watchdog,” ACE sponsors university-based exercise science research and testing that targets fitness products and trends. ACE sets standards for fitness professionals and is the world’s largest nonprofit fitness certifying organization. For more information on ACE and its programs, call (800) 825-3636 or log on to the ACE Web site at **www.acefitness.org**.

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Additional examples of ACE press releases can be found in the ACE Media Center at http://www.acefitness.org/media/media_list_bymonth.cfm.