



#2a 1445 McGill Rd
Kamloops, BC, V2C 6K7

#2065 – 555 W. Hastings.
PO Box 12138
Vancouver, BC, V6B 4N6

Ph. (250) 374-0906
Fax (250) 374-0915
Toll Free: 1-888-374-0906

Ph. (604) 738-0906
Fax. (604) 738-3334
Toll Free: 1-866-738-0906

How to write a press release

Everything in Site. Content. eCommerce. Customers

By: Tara Copeland

For: SiteCM Users

Date: Jan. 8, 2007

There are two reasons why people write press releases:

1. To generate interest for a cause or event
2. To deliver information in a concise manner

There are several different parts that make up a press release:

Headline: This should give the reader a little bit of information about your press release and inspire the reader to give your press release a second look. Look to newspapers for examples of different headlines.

City and date: This is included so that a journalist can tell quickly if your press release could fit within their local news and how current it is.

The body: Write your press release like a news story. Press releases, like news stories should be written in inverted pyramid style – the most important information should be included near the beginning of the press release.

Avoid using adjectives and adverbs in your copy. Adjectives and adverbs are flowery, wordy and are not used in journalism. Ernest Hemingway didn't need them, nor should you.

Try not to exceed a page with your press release. Aim for 400 words or less.

It's always a nice touch to include quotes in your press release. Try to have at least three colorful quotes. For quote styling, please refer to the CP style notes below.

Lede: The lede is the opening paragraph for your press release. You want your lede to be punchy and answer as much of the who, what, why and where as possible. Aim for 30 words or less.

The end of the body: The body of a press release always ends with a centered – 30 –. This comes from the early days of war reporting when reporters had to file their stories over the wire. When the reporters were finished sending their story, they always included an “xxx” over the wire to indicate that the story was finished. Now, we use a - 30 -.

Contact information: This doesn't have to be the name of the person who wrote the press release. The contact should be someone who is prepared to have calls from the media.

CP style:

CP style is a style guide that was created by the wire service Canadian Press. It was created in order to establish some consistency in Canadian journalism – if a newspaper in Canada decides to put one of their big stories on the wire, another newspaper can pick it up without having to make many edits.

If you are writing a press release, you want to write something that will look credible to a journalist.

It is considered bad journalism to directly print press release in the newspaper. But it has been known to happen and the more similarly your press release reads like an actual news story, the better chance you have of making this a possibility.

CP issues a style guide book and a caps and spelling guide, both can be purchased at many book stores or online. If you are going to be writing many press releases, they're purchases worth considering.

In the mean time, here are some notes on basic CP style rules:

Numbers one to nine are written alphabetically and numbers after nine are written numerically. Example: 23.

When given the choice between American spelling or British spelling, opt for British.

Example: Colour, not color.

Don't use a comma before an and in a sentence.

Example: I'm going to bring apples, mangos and pears.

There's only one exception to the rule of no commas before ands – a list with more than one and.

Example: I'm going to bring plates, salad, and bread and butter.

For quotes, put your punctuation inside the quotations and make sure you attribute the quote. The first quote should have the speaker's full name and if relevant, their title. For every proceeding quote, just attribute it using their last name.

Example: "This is an example of a quote," said Joe Blow, expert on press releases.

"Here's a quote to follow that first quote," said Blow.

For people and their titles, if the title comes before the name it is capitalized, if the title comes after the name, it is written in lowercase letters.

Example: President George W. Bush or George W. Bush, the president of the United States.

Sample press release

Sample press release (note: press releases should be sent on letterhead):

This is the headline – something that attracts attention

City, Date—This is where we are going to write our lede. This is the paragraph that gives you the meat of the press release and it's written in a concise, interesting way.

“This is a quote from our important source. This makes our press release seem more credible,” said Joe Blow, president of Our Company.

“Here’s another quote. Strive to make your quotes interesting,” said Blow.

More information added to the body of the press release to sum things up.

— 30 —

Contact information:

Name

Title

Phone number and/or email address

The following proposal is based on our conversation and current understanding of your requirements. While every effort has been made to ensure its accuracy, it is based on limited discussions and as such, might contain inaccurate assumptions which could affect the final cost of the estimate.

This proposal contains confidential information that is proprietary to ideaLEVER Solutions. It is being provided for evaluation purposes only and must not be divulged to any other party. By accepting this proposal the recipient agrees that ideaLEVER Solutions information will be held in confidence and will not be shared with any other party not authorized to receive it.