

Do-It-Yourself Press Releases

Write and distribute your own releases in minutes!

By Susan Payton, Egg Marketing & Public Relations
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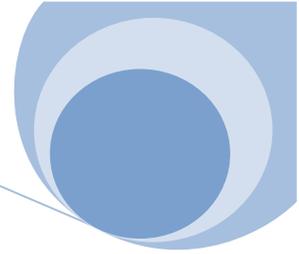
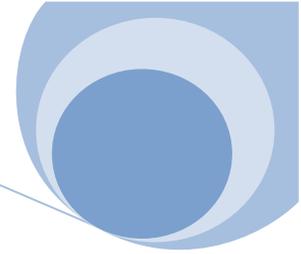


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About the Author

Susan Payton is the Managing Partner of [Egg Marketing & Public Relations](#). She helps small businesses shine the light on their products and services by developing marketing strategies, writing web and marketing copy, and writing press releases.

Susan has several years' experience writing professional press releases for a variety of industries, including manufacturing, finance, music, and online retail.

She has an MBA from the University of Central Arkansas, as well as Bachelor's degrees in English and French. She speaks French and Spanish fluently, and is an avid traveler.

Dear Reader:

If your business needs marketing assistance, let Egg Marketing & Public Relations hatch some good ideas for you! We can assist with:

- Marketing Strategy and Plans
- Marketing and Web Copy
- Press Releases
- E-newsletter and Email Campaigns

Please visit us online at www.eggmarketingpr.com. Or visit our [blog](#), which offers free advice on internet marketing.

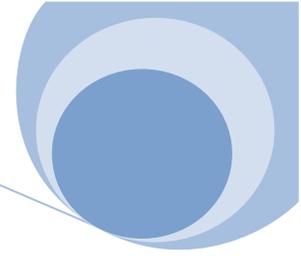
Enjoy this eBook

This guide is designed to take the pain out of writing and distributing press releases. It includes templates for common topics, some sample releases and a list of sites where you can send your press releases for free.

If you have any questions, please [contact me](#). I'd love to hear from you.

Susan Payton
Owner
Egg Marketing & Public Relations

egg
Marketing &
Public Relations



Press Release 101

Press releases aren't as complicated as people think. With just a little guidance and practice, you will be able to turn out press releases easily! But what exactly is a press release?

A press release is a news blurb, usually 400 words or less, relaying news on a single, specific event. It is either distributed using an online press release distribution service or emailed directly to editors and journalists.

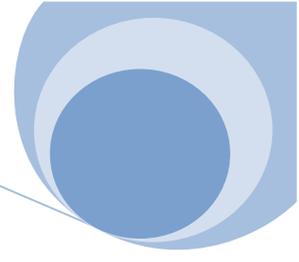
In the “olden days,” people would *mail* press releases to media contacts! Imagine the delay on news! The great thing today is that virtually as your news occurs, you can get it “on the wire” (meaning a service that sends your release to hundreds of sites) instantaneously.

Note that I said a press release is *news*. That means it is not advertising or a sales piece. While your objective may be to increase sales or awareness of your brand through the press release, it is not a blatant advertising piece. It is factual and accurate. Not fluff.

Let's look at some press releases online to get a sense of what they're like. Visit these sites to see today's headlines.

- [PRWeb](#)
- [Marketwire](#)
- [PRLeap](#)

You probably noticed that most of the releases followed the same format. We'll learn that later in this ebook. If you read many releases, you'll start to see certain elements that can be used over and over again in your releases. Reading press releases on similar topics to what you want to cover is a good way to polish your own release. Just don't plagiarize!



Increase Awareness Through Press Releases

Press releases have long been a successful method for getting the media's attention and gaining additional exposure in newspapers, magazines and on television. But with today's [Marketing 2.0](#) world, internet-based media has changed the game. Journalists are now bombarded with press releases, and the chance yours will end up as Time Magazine's cover story is slim to nil. So what's the point of press releases in today's technology driven world?

Online exposure.

What's so great about getting your press releases out online is that they're instantly available. They create what's called Search Engine Optimization.

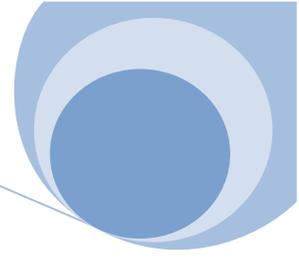
Search Engine Optimization, or SEO, refers to the natural process of boosting your ranking in search engines like Google and Yahoo!. Rather than pay for the top spot in the search results, you're getting there the "fair" way, which tells searchers that your site is popular or you have a lot going on to garner such a good position.

Think of it this way: the more places your company is mentioned online, the better the exposure. So if your press release shows up in 50 different places, the more eyes see it and the higher it ranks in search results. Click [here](#) to read more ways to market your business on the internet and improve SEO.

Egg Marketing & Public Relations owes some of its SEO to press releases. Do a search for "[Egg Marketing & Public Relations.](#)" You'll see some of the results are press releases.

Keywords

Another important component of the press release and SEO is the keywords you use. You want to use phrases people are likely to search if they're looking for your product. If you own a massage facility in San Francisco, try to include these keywords or phrases in your press release: "San Francisco massage" or "SF massage." This will put you closer to the top of the results for those keywords. Ultimately, you want the top position so if someone is looking for a massage, you're the first website they see!



Step-by-Step Guide to Writing Great Press Releases

Writing a press release is easy! There's really a formula to it, and once you get it, you'll find it easy to write multiple releases.

1. Start With Your Subject. What is your release about?

Keep in mind: it MUST be newsworthy! No one likes reading "fluff" releases like:

"Meowy Cat Food Best in Planet"
"Why You Need a Pedicure From Us"

Some newsworthy topics include:

- Launch of new business/grand opening
- Launch of new website
- Addition of major client or contract
- Announcement of contest
- Announcement of donation to charity or participation in nonprofit event
- Award received
- Coverage in major media source

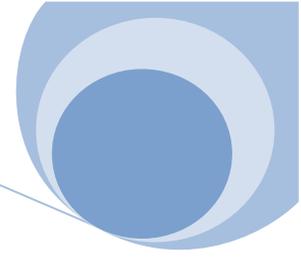
This list isn't comprehensive by any means, but just ask yourself: could this be a headline on the front page of the news? Or anywhere else in the newspaper? Or is it more of an article or sales piece? If it's the latter, save it for something else.

2. Who, What, When, Where, Why, How.

Now write out all the details about your subject. Who does it involve? What is the event/announcement? When and where does/did it occur? How is it happening? From this you'll have the meat of your release, and your first paragraph (remember, most people won't read past the first paragraph, so you want all the pertinent information to be there).

3. Find Your Keywords.

Make a list of keywords or phrases that relate to your business. An easy way to do this is to ask yourself how you would describe the business. If it's a local business, include the city (Orlando pizza) in the keyword. Test out the keywords by searching for them in Google to see what results come up. If the results show listings you want to be among, they're good keywords. Use the keywords throughout the release.



4. Fill in the Blanks.

Using one of the templates on page 9 and 10, create your release. Insert your city and state, today's date (or the date you'll send out the release) and the info from step 2 in the first paragraph. Most releases are around 400 words or less. There's no need for your release to be longer than it needs to be, so say what you need to say and be done. You'll have 1-2 additional paragraphs, then it's customary to have an "About X Company" section that overviews what your company does. Following this is the contact information. Be sure and put a contact that is the most relevant to the topic. That might not be you, so if you don't want a lot of phone calls with questions you can't answer, put the appropriate person.

Quotes are good. Try to include a quote from someone involved in the news (the higher on the totem pole, the better). The quote should be interesting and show excitement in the topic.

5. Decide on Distribution

For distributing your release, you have three primary options:

1. Use a distribution service like prweb.com. You pay anywhere from \$80 to \$500+ for this service, but your release is guaranteed to go to specific websites like Google News, Yahoo, MSN, and sites specific to your industry. The releases generally go out immediately or within a few hours. If you're looking for a guarantee of where it's going and are short on time, this is your best option. You have to have an account with whichever service you choose (see page 14 for a list of the most well-known press release distribution services that charge).

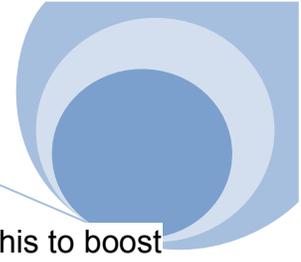
2. Send to a list of media contacts. If you have media contacts at websites, newspapers, magazines, radio or television stations, you can send them the press release directly. If not, you can research (free) or buy lists that give you the contact info for these PR contacts. With this option, you may get local coverage of your news if they deem it newsworthy enough. If you choose this option, make the subject line like this:

Press Release: Funn Toys Opens 75th Store in Little Rock, Arkansas

Copy and paste the press release into the body of the email, as most people won't open attachments from people they don't know.

Now, if you want to make sure the media contacts received the press release and to check to see if they're going to print it (or encourage them to do so), follow up with a phone call. Reporters get a lot of press releases, so improve your chances by following up. If you want local coverage and don't mind a little footwork, this is a good option.

3. Your third option is to send the release to the numerous free distribution sites available. There are many, and some are better known than others. The disadvantage of these sites is that it may take 2 days to get your release published (it's usually first come, first served). If you plan in advance, it can



work. The more places your release is found, the better. If you're on a tight budget, try this to boost your SEO with your release. See page 16 for a list of free distribution sites.

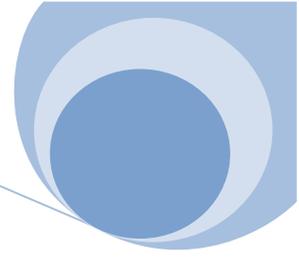
Additionally, you should send your release via email to your database of customers and contacts.

6. After the Release

To see what sites published your release, search for your business name or your keywords on Google. You can also set up a [Google Alert](#) that will tell you where your keywords or business name are appearing online each day. Compare your search engine ranking with what it was prior to your release going out. It should move up. Then check your website traffic and orders to see if they went up as well. If they did, the release successfully helped boost your company exposure!



If you elected for paid distribution, you will receive a report that tells you where your release was published. This is a useful metric, so keep it for comparison purposes for future releases.



Templates

Use these templates as a springboard for writing your own releases, making sure to change all the important details to reflect your news. Add to them as needed.

X Company Announces Grand Opening in Yourtown *(variations on title)*

X Company: Coming to a City Near You

Grand Opening of X Company: Food, Fun, and Discounts

Yourtown, State - August 21, 2010 - X Company announces the opening of its latest retail store in Yourtown, State. The grand opening, which will be held on October 1 in the Shopalot Plaza, will feature free barbecue, a bounce house for the kids, and 35% off all purchases to the first 100 customers.

The Yourtown store will be the 75th store opened in the X Company chain. The clothing retail stores are found throughout the Southeast, and appeal to young teens. Cera Mae, CEO of X Company, says the company is expanding at a rapid speed: "We have already surpassed our estimate of store openings for the year, and the tremendous popularity of the store is the cause. We're thrilled to be opening our 75th store, and look forward to many hundreds more."

About X Company

X Company, founded in 1983, creates casual clothing for teen boys and girls. With the recent acquisition of Kewl Shoes, the Southeastern clothing store offers a full line of apparel, footwear and accessories at reasonable prices. For more information, visit www.xcompany.com.

Contact

Joy Beree
PR and Communications
888-888-8888
joyb@xcompany.com

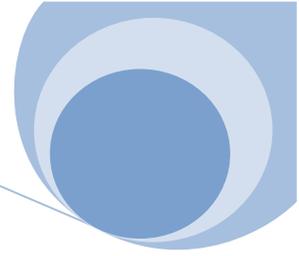
Who: X Company

What: Grand opening in Yourtown

When: October 1

Where: Shopalot Plaza

Why: new store



**YourCompany Inc Presents Newest Generation Cell Phone
(variations on title:)
Lightest Phone in History Released Today by YourCompany Inc.
Hot Off the Press: Light-as-a-Feather Phones by YourCompany Inc.**

Anytown, State – March 28, 2010 – YourCompany Inc. proudly introduces its newest generation of cell phone, the SuperSlim 01. This phone is the lightest cell phone in history, at .001 ounces. The phone was released yesterday, and is available in most YourCompany retail stores and online at www.yourcompany.com.

The SuperSlim 01 features mind-activated dialing, speechless conversations, and a 500 color screen. It is fully equipped with WiFi, email and games, and retails at \$1,000.99.

“This phone is so light you’ll forget it’s there,” stated Chief Phone Designer Wang Chu. “It is the ultimate in portability, and we use telepathy as the communication channel, which is a first in the industry.”

About YourCompany Inc.

YourCompany Inc., a publicly held corporation based in State, is the leader in innovative cell phone technology. Its cell carrier partners include WeMobile, AP and P, and Single. Look for the YourCompany booth at the Cell Technology Summit in Georgia this summer. For more information, visit www.yourcompany.com.

Contact Us:

Robert Barber
Public Relations, Cell Phone Division
777-777-7777
rbarber@yourcompany.com

Who: YourCompany

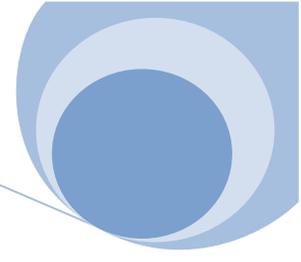
What: product launch of SuperSlim 01

When: yesterday

Where: YourCompany retail stores

Why: new product

How: n/a



Sample Releases

(from [Egg Marketing & Public Relations](#))

Bloggers to Use Social Media to Share Black Friday Deals

November 25, 2009 – Bentonville, AR – [Collective Bias](#), an interactive marketing firm that connects brands with shoppers at the store shelf by facilitating conversation and building relationships, has partnered with [Whrrl](#), a location based mobile application that lets people capture and share the stories of their lives one moment at a time, to create a unique platform that helps shoppers find the best deals on Black Friday.

Twenty bloggers, led by well-known mom bloggers [Melissa Garcia](#), the “money-saving” Consumer Queen, and Courtney Velasquez of [Gifffully Simple](#), will hit stores on Black Friday and upload photos and tips through Whrrl to [My Black Friday Deals](#).

Visitors are encouraged to check the website throughout the days leading up to Black Friday and then all day, Friday November 27th, 2009 to find the best deals at nationwide chains and local stores, and to find the best prices on the biggest shopping day of the year. Visitors can vote for the deals they like the best, and the participating blogger with the most votes on a deal will receive Google Analytics training or tech/design assistance for his or her blog.

“We wanted to integrate a strong social media campaign to show the power that the average person or blogger has to reach so many others,” said John Andrews, Managing Partner of Collective Bias. “By working with bloggers, Whrrl and social media sites, we can effectively spread this idea like wildfire.”

My Black Friday Deals will also be promoted through channels like [Flickr](#), [YouTube](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) to reach a wider audience.

About Collective Bias

The first company of its kind, [Collective Bias](#) offers an alternative to the traditional agency model. Formed at the nexus of and Social Media and Shopper Marketing, we address the need for a comprehensive approach to facilitate ongoing conversations amongst brands, retailers and consumers. Our philosophy is to build true relationships **between brands and consumers** that make **those consumers** “part of something” and engender a sense of ownership that manifests itself in advocacy.

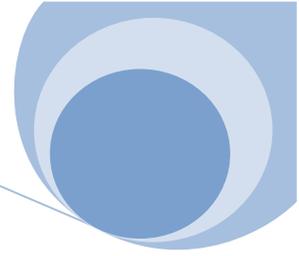
Contact

Susan Payton, media contact

susan@eggmarketingpr.com

501.318.8925

My Black Friday Site: <http://mybfdelals.com/>



Facebook Marketing E-Course Designed for Busy Entrepreneurs

December 22, 2009 – Hot Springs, AR – With more and more companies turning to Facebook to market their products and services, entrepreneurs are looking for resources to teach them how to use Facebook as a marketing tool. The Marketing EggSchool has released two courses teaching entrepreneurs how to [set up a Facebook Page](#) and [market it](#).

“I meet people who want to learn how to use Facebook for their business every day, so I designed [two levels](#) of courses to help them,” explained Susan Payton, owner of The Marketing EggSchool, “The courses are self guided so students can go at their own pace.”

The Marketing EggSchool offers a variety of internet marketing and public relations courses, including e-courses on [writing press releases](#), using [email to market](#) and [connecting to customers through social media](#). Courses start at \$29.99. For more information visit the site [here](#).

About Egg Marketing & Public Relations

Egg Marketing is the Orlando marketing firm that connects brands to bloggers and consumers. Susan Payton and her team assist businesses in promoting their products and services through internet marketing, social media and public relations. Egg offers a range of services, from social media marketing strategy to press release writing and email marketing campaigns.

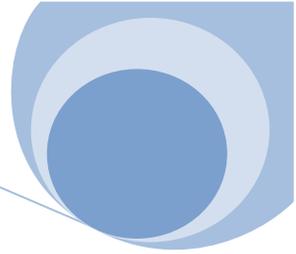
Egg’s blog, The Marketing Eggspert (www.sparkplugging.com/marketing), offers free advice for marketing in a Web 2.0 world.

Contact

<http://www.eggmarketingpr.com>

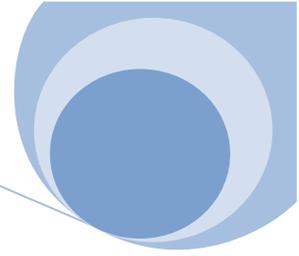
501.318.8925

susan@eggmarketingpr.com



Resources

- Blog on marketing and press releases
<http://www.sparkplugging.com/marketing>
- The Importance of Keywords
<http://www.sparkplugging.com/marketing/the-importance-of-keywords/>
- Why You'll Never Get on Oprah...and Why That's Okay
<http://www.sparkplugging.com/marketing/why-youll-never-get-on-oprah-and-why-thats-okay/>
- Bloggers: The World's Most Overlooked PR Pitch
<http://www.sparkplugging.com/marketing/bloggers-pr-pitch/>
- Tips for writing good releases and getting them in the news
<http://www.stetson.edu/~rhansen/prguide.html>
- Useful newsletter on press release writing
<http://www.press-release-writing.com/resources/writers.htm>
- Resources and books
http://www.24-7pressrelease.com/pr_resources.php
- Articles on press releases
<http://www.evancarmichael.com/Tools/Press-Release-Builder/Resources.htm>



Fee-Based Press Release Distribution

PRWeb.com

- Based on search engine options, not geography
- Prices range from \$80 for basic to \$360 (to "make front page headlines")

MarketWire.com

- Based on geography. Options include:
 - Metro area
 - State
 - Region
 - National
 - International
- Prices range from \$145 for some Regional to \$415 for National

Mass Media Distribution

- Based on geography
- Prices range from \$199 for local to \$399 for worldwide distribution

Webwire.com

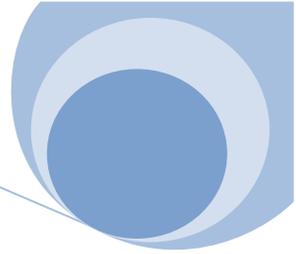
- Price range:
 - WebPost® - \$19 per submission (great value!)
 - WebRelease® - \$49 per submission
 - WebWire® Wire Service Distribution
 - Starting at \$180 per submission.

24-7pressrelease.com/index.php

- Based on search engine options, not geography
- Price is \$49 per "Search Engine Plus" Press Release

epressreleases.org

- Based on Search Engine Optimization (SEO) of your website / product / service.
- \$9 per Press Release



Free Press Release Distribution

www.prleap.com
www.pfree.com
<http://www.pr.com/press-releases>
<http://www.virtualwordpublishing.com/press.htm>
<http://www.1888pressrelease.com>
<http://www.i-newswire.com>
<http://www.prurgent.com>
<http://www.theopenpress.com/>
<http://www.free-press-release.com>
<http://www.sanepr.com>
<http://www.pressabout.com>
<http://ecommwire.com>
<http://express-press-release.com>
<http://www.free-press-release-center.info>
<http://www.freepressreleases.co.uk>
<http://www.newswiretoday.com/index.php>
<http://www.pr9.net>
<http://www.prlog.org/>
<http://www.pressmethod.com>
<http://www.bizeurope.com/pressrelease.htm>
<http://www.afly.com>
<http://www.betanews.com>
<http://www.downloadjunction.com>
<http://www.malebits.com>
<http://www.nanotech-now.com>
<http://www.openpr.com>
<http://www.press411.com/>
<http://www.pressreleasespider.com>