

## **Q: Tell us about your news release preferences**

### **Journalists shared useful information about how the media is evolving and how news releases fit into the picture:**

Press releases must evolve to the new needs of media; some agencies are stuck in old models and do not understand what news outlets are looking for. Look.. we are a magazine, web site and community. How do your press releases impact those platforms is a question you must consider. Good luck

### **A variety of respondents praised email, citing the ability to archive, respond quickly, and get accessible content:**

e-mail is the best.

Email is king!

Our needs have changed due to an increasingly small staff and a greater concentration on our digital platform. Time is not a luxury anymore but a commodity, if we can receive items by email will speed up the process of distributing or using it for the web or print.

As editor, I will only use press releases via e-mail. I cut and paste instead of retype

If a release is being e-mailed (preferred), the format should be easy to copy and paste, some write-ups need a lot of editing and time is important, which those take a lot of time.

### **But while email is preferred, there is frustration with PR professionals who send attachments and large files (and docx files). They prefer links and well organized, easily accessible assets.**

I like email because it is easy to save. Best would be short email with links to fuller content online, so if I am interested I can pursue, but if not interested it won't take up server space. I hate getting attachments in email. Would prefer links.

Prefer to receive e-mails with no attachments (which are often hard to open due to size or software issues).

I much prefer to have the news release pasted into the email rather than as an attachment to the email. When it is an attachment, I have to open it to find out if the news is useful--and often it isn't.

Flyers, pdfs, or any form which requires me to re-input the information is discouraged, and directly decreases the chances I'll use the release

Release should be in a txt or doc format. PDFs are not useful as most cannot be copied and pasted. At our location, we cannot open a docx format

If you send it via e-mail, please include website URLs and put the text in the e-mail itself, not in an attachment. Please don't ever make me download a pdf release from a site, just put the text and links to images, etc. up.

Text should be in body of e-mail, not as an attachment

I prefer getting a "link" to images in a press release than to have photos emailed with a release. Those overflow my mailbox and I have to delete hundreds of emails each day to keep it from filling up.

Although I prefer getting press releases via email, I can no longer deal with the amount of images and PDFs that are sent to me. So, I prefer to receive lookbooks or lengthy press kits on paper, or be able to request an electronic version

## **Easy access to images, high and low res, is particularly important:**

An image and logo on the first contact press release is IMMENSELY helpful. We spend hours of our days chasing down logos/images that can be spent generating content. Also, know what is on the client's Web site. Is it a template-based site with a thumbnail logo? If so, that is of no use to us. Additionally, use photos in your pitches, especially when you are pitching a product of any kind. It doesn't need to be high res for the pitch. I edit family magazines and I receive countless emails telling me about an adorable new baby product with no image! I want to see it. The emotional/visual impact will save you hours of slaving over a press release.

Clear, simple, organized information, easy to download hi-res photos. Information that doesn't require me asking a million questions or waste my time trying to figure out.

I wish photos or artwork would accompany stories so I wouldn't have to follow up.

## **Some journalists share tips regarding best writing, subject lines, headlines, and formatting:**

Correct spelling certainly is always appropriate, but this is only a small local problem with local law enforcement agencies.

Wording and phrasing in AP style would be extremely helpful.

I am not a fan of long, narrative press releases. I prefer advisories

Write clearly. List the facts. I have little time to read extraneous words and only want press releases about local events. Oftentimes I receive press releases that are formatted in such a way that's either difficult to read or does not catch my eye. It's helpful to have bold headlines that demonstrate the value immediately, as I sift through dozens of press releases each day.

Just formal releases. No ad copy style designs

Releases should be short and sweet with relevant attachments and bulleted information

## **As in past years, our respondents told us they don't like receiving irrelevant or untimely releases:**

We receive a great number of press releases that just don't apply to our readers. We welcome and look at everything, though!

I always appreciate it when PR folks make an effort to understand what general topics I write about and target their press releases. I get a lot of releases about things I don't write about (local events in Los Angeles, for example, even though I'm located in Seattle), and that's just e-mail clutter I don't need.

Delivery method is not as important as time factor--we often receive releases too late.

Occasionally I get a press release sent TO every recipient, which really annoys me and is an egregious breach of privacy.

We only print LOCAL information. If it is not from our five towns, it does not get in.

If it isn't specifically about the six-neighborhood area of Portland, Oregon, we serve with our monthly neighborhood newspaper, it doesn't have any chance at all of being used. But it appears you are not asking me about that sort of thing.

## **And a few just share etiquette advice:**

stop the phone calls, please

I find myself occasionally frustrated with some of the PR people who submit information. Our space is limited, and I recognize that individuals who call are just doing their job, but there's a real lack of trying to understand anything about the issues confronting newspaper journalists and there's sometimes barely an acknowledgment that a caller could be phoning at the most inopportune time to see if a press release was received or if I would be willing to listen to a five-minute pitch