

Guide To Writing a Creative Media Release

By Creative Dundee



We've drawn up a handy guide with key things to remember when writing a media release to encourage media publications and bloggers to feature your news.

1

TIMING

To create the biggest impact consider coordinating the release alongside other actions for example, at the same time tickets go on sale.

If you have your release ready early, don't hold back! Sending it out early gives those covering the story time to research and write their articles.

To ensure the story isn't published early include the line 'Embargoed until (DATE) at (TIME)' in bold above the main body of the media release.

2

HEADLINE

Before your story can reach the readers it first has to get past the desk of the journalist or content editor. If you only get one shot to grab their attention then the headline is it. A strong headline will both clearly reflect the topic of your media release and also let editors know why your story is of interest to their readers.

3

INTRODUCTION

Include a summary paragraph at the start of the media release covering briefly who you or your organisation are, your involvement in the story and any important context that will help the journalist and readers to understand the story.

4

TELL THE STORY

This is where you can explain your news in a bit more detail but remember to write in plain English and avoid using technical jargon. Sell your story with a quote or 2 from yourself or a partner if applicable to expand upon the information already mentioned.

5

POLISHING OFF

The final paragraph is where you want to restate the key messages. If you have a call-to-action, e.g 'Tickets available from...'; this is the place to include it.

Write 'END' to conclude.

6

FURTHER INFO

Under the media release include contact details and any web links where writers can follow up on any queries they might have.

You should also include a boiler plate (a paragraph or two) about the organisations involved in the story to provide further context.

MEDIA RELEASE TEMPLATE

MEDIA RELEASE

(if applicable) UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL XX/XX/XXXX

1

TITLE HEADING

2

(If applicable) more images available from 'contact details or shared Dropbox link'

First Paragraph – Introduction. Summary of the key information, should answer the 5 w's (who, what, when, where and why).

3

Paragraph 2 – Provide more details to the information previously outlined.

Paragraph 3 – If applicable provide a quote from you/partner to back up the first 2 paragraphs

Paragraph 4 – Any additional information on the release

Paragraph 5 – An additional quote if applicable to expand on what has previously been mentioned.

4

Paragraph 6 – conclusion. End the press release with a summary of any further information and summarise what has already been mentioned.

ENDS

5

Notes to editor:

6

For further information on XXX please email XX from XX via example@email.com or call XX on 01234 567 890.

Boiler plate: Background information on your organisation and any partners/sponsors mentioned in the release. This allows the reporter to gain a deeper understanding of your organisation and the types of businesses they work with if they are unfamiliar with the organisation.

Example boiler plate:

About Creative Dundee

Creative Dundee supports creative talent to base, grow and sustain their practice in and around Dundee, by connecting and amplifying the city's creativity.

Creative Dundee leads projects which generate local, national and international opportunities for people and the city. As a small social enterprise, Creative Dundee is supported in part by Creative Scotland and Dundee City Council, with additional income generated through trading activities.

Creative Dundee started life as a side project blog in 2008, became an organisation in 2013, and is now a key platform for Dundee's creative scene.



Advice from Industry Experts

Brian Ferguson (@brianjaffa), The Scotsman

Brian Ferguson @brianjaffa · 3h
@Creative_Dundee OK, here goes... think about where you would like coverage. Tailor your release to their audience if possible. #toptips

Brian Ferguson @brianjaffa · 3h
@Creative_Dundee Don't bury the story down the release (a common trait!)... if there are several angles, sell them at the top. #toptips

Brian Ferguson @brianjaffa · 3h
@Creative_Dundee Always send a couple of good quality images with a release and have others available. Video also v useful. #toptips

Brian Ferguson @brianjaffa · 3h
@Creative_Dundee Think about the use of embargoes, which can give journalists a bit more time to work on a story. #toptips

Brian Ferguson @brianjaffa · 3h
@Creative_Dundee Ensure a release has quotes from 2 or 3 from people if possible. No limit on what media outlets will use online! #toptips

Brian Ferguson @brianjaffa · 3h
@Creative_Dundee Don't be shy about chasing up journalists. Emails can go astray or may be missed completely. #toptips

Brian Ferguson @brianjaffa · 3h
@Creative_Dundee Write a release in language that time-pressed journalists will understand! Make the angle you're pushing clear. #toptips

Brian Ferguson @brianjaffa · 3h
@Creative_Dundee Think local. Can you get coverage by homing in on a local angle? Lots of local papers, radio stations out there. #toptips

Brian Ferguson @brianjaffa · 3h
@Creative_Dundee Think about trying to place a story by approaching an individual journalist you think may be interested. #toptips

Brian Ferguson @brianjaffa · 3h
@Creative_Dundee Try to avoid sending releases out in the afternoon. First thing is better for daily papers. Avoid evenings! #toptips

Brian Ferguson @brianjaffa · 3h
@Creative_Dundee Try to work out what makes a project/story unique. Is it a genuine first? Quirky angle? Historic links? #toptips

Brian Ferguson @brianjaffa · 3h
@Creative_Dundee Best send emails to individual journos, rather than general email media addresses, as long as they're relevant. #toptips

Catriona MacPhee (@catmacphee), STV Dundee

Catriona MacPhee @catmacphee · 20m
@Creative_Dundee Include quality images, provide quotes, contact tel no (not just email), be avail, quirk good, human interest even better.

Jennie Patterson (@jennie_patt), Patter PR

Jennie Patterson @jennie_patt · 17h
@Creative_Dundee if you can think about framing it in a wider context of trends, interesting developments - make it topical

Graeme Ogston (@gramster), BBC Scotland

Graeme Ogston @gramster · 18h
@Creative_Dundee Think photo opportunities EVERY time!

Christina Miller (@The_Daydreamer_), The Daydreamer

Christina Miller @The_Daydreamer_ · 13h
@gramster @Creative_Dundee I agree! Photos (good ones) are what sell the release. Plus good subject line.

Gayle Ritchie (@C_GRitchie) Dundee Courier

Gayle Ritchie @C_GRitchie · 4h
@Creative_Dundee Hmm! Make it snappy! Make the usual unusual! Include some quotes, if relevant. Maybe include a wee gift! (very cheeky).

Creative Dundee's Top Tips

- Always write a release in third person - imagine that someone else is telling your story at all times. Have a look at any newspaper and see how stories are written.
- Hyperlink mentions of your and other organisations in media releases to direct the journalist to further information if applicable e.g. mention of a sponsor in the release should hyperlink to their website.
- Triple check your release for spelling errors.

