

HOW TO WRITE A GREAT PRESS RELEASE



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Events: Visit online to submit your event at transylvaniatimes.com



HOW TO WRITE A GREAT PRESS RELEASE

GUIDELINES FOR CREATING AND SUBMITTING AN EFFECTIVE PRESS RELEASE

The Transylvania Times is pleased to receive press releases regarding your business, organization or event. Whenever your organization has a major change or event – new location, major hire, significant anniversary, etc. – it's a great time to send us a release. Keep in mind that events that are part of your regular business activities – e.g. sales – are not appropriate for a release, and should be submitted as an advertisement. All releases are published once as space allows.

As you prepare your press release, think about the things you like to read, watch and listen to in the media. Most of us are generally interested in things we haven't heard before, find surprising or help solve our problems. Consider these things to help you sculpt an effective press release.

Press Release Format

Press releases are most effective when they are under 500 words.

You will want to report in the third person, using "he," "she" or "they." Do not use "I," "we" or "you" unless they are part of a direct quotation, which needs to be attributed to a specific person.

Correct: According to John Doe, the next event will be held at ...

Incorrect: We invite everyone to attend the event.

Correct direct quotation: "We invite everyone to attend the event," said John Doe.

Headline

Make it attention-grabbing but straightforward. Keep it to one sentence. It's often easiest to write the headline after you've written the press release. Due to space considerations, we often rewrite headlines but attempt to remain true to the spirit of any submitted headline.

Paragraph 1

Begin with a strong introductory paragraph that captures the reader's attention and contains the information most relevant to your message, such as the "Five W's" of (W)ho, (W)hat, (W)hen, (W)here, and (W)hy, when applicable. This paragraph should summarize the news release such that if it was the only part seen by a reader, it would tell your entire message, and it should include a hook to get your audience interested in reading more.

Following Paragraphs

These paragraphs should contain more detailed important information about new products or services, performers, speakers, etc. If possible, it helps to include quotes from key staff, customers or subject matter experts.

Additional Information

Provide avenues for the reader to obtain additional information (phone number, website, etc.). Please make certain this information is accurate. One wrong number in a phone number creates havoc.

Photographs

You are encouraged to submit pictures with your press releases, as well as stand-alone pictures that would be of interest to our readers (community activities, wildlife, etc.). While we don't always have room for them, we like to have the option of running a picture, and a photo can help draw attention to your release.

Image Size

Printing requires higher resolution than viewing on a computer; even though a picture looks great on your screen, it may be too small to print. We request jpg files that are 5"x7" @ 300 pixels per inch (1500x2100 ppi). That said, there are many factors that can affect the quality of an image in addition to size. If submitting pictures, please submit your photos and release early enough so that if we have problems with your pictures, we have time to try and resolve those issues.



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Caption Information

Provide correctly spelled first and last names for everyone in a photograph. Provide a photo caption for each photo that you submit, as well as photo credit information.

Content

If possible, take pictures of people involved in an activity, rather than posed. Out of necessity we run a lot of group photos, but we prefer "action" shots, and we do not publish photos of financial contributors handing over checks. Try to find a more interesting way to illustrate the story: a portrait of a contributor, documentary photos of the program or facility being supported, etc.

Common Problems

The most common problems with photos include: subjects that are too small within the frame, incorrect focus, and low light issues (blurriness caused by shaking hands or moving subjects, and graininess.) Any of these problems can make your photo unsuitable for publication. We strongly encourage people to take a little time to understand their camera. The Internet is a great "how to" resource for photographers. If you have a friend who likes photography, getting tips from him or her can greatly improve your pictures.

Submitting Your Release And Photos

Press releases should be sent to news@transylvaniatimes.com. Please submit everything related to your press release – article and photos – at the same time. When we receive multiple revisions, or photos sent at a different time or by a different person, there is a greater likelihood of an error on our end.

If possible, have one person in your business or organization responsible for publicity. We are not sure what information is correct when we receive two different press releases from two different people about the same event.

Please send releases as Word, .txt or .rtf attachments, or as part of the body of the email. (We are unable to accept Publisher or Works files.)

Photos should be emailed as .jpg attachments. They should not be embedded into the news release, or sent in other formats, such as .bmp, .gif or .png. If you have a hard copy of a photo that you need scanned, drop your photo off at our office (37 N. Broad Street, Brevard) and we'll scan your photo free of charge. You will be able to pick up your photo from the front office once it has been scanned.

Deadlines

As of Jan. 1, 2015, the deadline for the Monday edition is Friday at 4 p.m. The deadline for the Thursday edition is Tuesday at noon. If you have an upcoming event to publicize, we suggest you send us the information about 10 days ahead of time. That allows readers time to plan for possible attendance at the event and gives us ample time to make sure the event notification is published.

Your Contact Number For Our News Department

With your submission, please include contact information for our news staff in case we have a question about your release: name, title, email, telephone, etc. Be sure that the contact person noted on your release is the person who can best answer questions about your press release.

Calendar Of Events

Submitting a press release does *not* automatically place your event on our community calendar. Be sure to add your activity to the community calendar by visiting our website, www.transylvaniatimes.com, where you should click on Calendar tab, followed by the Suggest Event button.

