

# Five Steps to More Effective Press Releases

By Henry Stimpson

## 1. **Make it a real news story.**

What's truly new or different here? Does your news indicate an industry trend? Does your product or service help people save or make money or improve their lives? The news media won't run free advertisements lightly disguised as news releases. Superlatives and fluff just hide the real news editors and reporters are hungry for. Feed them real meat and they'll bite!

## 2. **Customize your releases according to your audience.**

Let's say you have a new service or product that's of interest to both your distributors and your customers. An effective release for the trade publications will read differently than the version for consumer media.

## 3. **Make the writing clean and easy to understand at first glance.** So many companies

are so eager to stress that their product or service is so state-of-the art that they pack in so many adjectives that the poor editor has no idea what it's about. Never make readers strain to get your meaning. Use easy words. Simplify and dramatize, especially in the lead paragraphs. More technical, difficult information can be brought in lower down in the story.

## 4. **Maintain well-tended, up-to-date mailing lists that include everyone who's relevant.** Make sure to

include freelance writers on your lists and maintain separate lists of consumer and trade media.

## 5. **Supplement your own lists with distribution via Business Wire, PR Newswire or a similar service.** For a

reasonable price, these services will distribute your release to both consumer and trade media—and, perhaps



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most important, to thousands of Web sites worldwide. That means that many people can read your release before the traditional print media pick it up.

