

# Help

# public relations

Artists are known for their passion for what they do. They want to reach people through their work. But how can art reach people if no one knows about it?

One of the most important things an artist can do when planning a performance, exhibition, or other event is to create a public relations strategy, and carry it through.



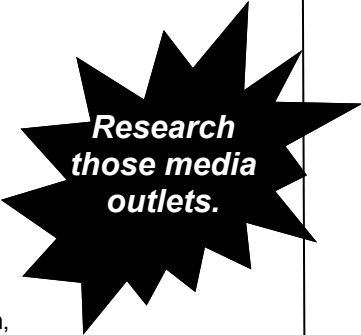
**Know your audience.**

Ask yourself who you are trying to attract and figure out how to reach them.

- What newspapers or magazines do they read?
- What radio stations do they listen to?
- Does your project have the mass appeal desired by network television producers?
- Or is your project for a niche audience that frequents very specific websites or social venues?

Once you figure out what your potential audience is reading, watching, visiting or listening to, it's time to find out how to get the information about your event included in those media outlets. So find out:

- their publication/production schedule and deadlines
- their preferred method of receiving your story (fax, email, mail)
- their preferred format for photographs (slide, print, digital)
- the full name and title (all properly spelled) of the proper contact person into whose hands you want to get your story



**Research those media outlets.**

For a concentrated directory of contact information, try Bacon's Information, which provides a media outlet guide to New York. Their contact info is: 332 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago IL 60604-4301 Ph: (800) 621-0561



**Send out press releases.**

Public relations personnel will often create an entire folder of materials about the item they are publicizing, called a **press kit**. The contents would include a **press release**, photos, short biographies of key personnel, and other relevant information.

Whether or not you have the time and resources to put together such a kit, you should always send out a press release. Sending a photo is also a good idea. Digital photos are easy to attach to email releases. Always include an SASE if you want hard copy photos returned.

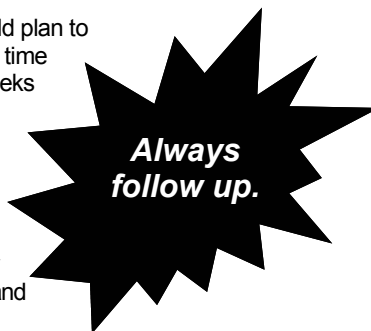
A press release is your official way of informing the media about your event. You tell them the *who, what, where, when, why, how, and how much* of your event. They tell their viewers, readers, or listeners.

Make sure your press release is neat, professional, accurate & enticing. (*See the reverse side of this sheet for more tips on writing your press release.*)

Once you find out the schedule for each outlet, you should plan to send out your press releases so that you give them enough time to incorporate your story into their long-range plans. Four weeks should be more than enough time in most situations. However, this does not mean that your work is finished.

You should always follow up your press releases with a phone call 7-10 days after mailing. Then follow up by phone again 3-5 days before the event. Even though you have put effort into your press relations, you may find that your press release has fallen by the wayside, and **you may actually need to email, fax, or deliver another.**

However, you never would have known this if you didn't follow up!



**Always follow up.**

→ (more)



*Celebrating 10 Years of Service to the Community*

public relations

Even if the mere thought of writing sends you into a panic, writing a press release does not have to be a cause for stress.

Follow the general layout of the sample press release below, keep it simple but enticing, and remember to spell check!

If you are writing your own press release, then you are the press contact, unless you want to direct all inquiries toward one of your dedicated volunteers.

Use letterhead if applicable, create your own with your logo at the top of the page, or just use good quality paper.



For immediate release

For press information contact:

Your press contact name here  
Your press contact phone number here

You can put a centered, boldface announcement of the basic facts about your event for greater impact (and to make sure the details aren't lost in the shuffle). Include whatever you want to highlight.

The Absolutely Brilliant Arts Company

Presents

WHAT A BRILLIANT PRODUCTION!

At

A Really Convenient Location

July 1-31, 2003

All Tickets: FREE!

May 27, 2003—The Absolutely Brilliant Arts Company is proud to present WHAT A BRILLIANT PRODUCTION!, a work that...

More fabulous text goes here

Notice the date of the release is about 5 weeks before the opening of the project.

Following the date is a strong lead sentence that tells the who and what of the event, and a simple description.

Don't weigh your press releases down with "artspeak". Just tell them what they should expect to see.

A paragraph about your project goes here. What are audiences going to see? What is the format, or the plot? Two or three simple descriptive sentences are all you need.

When you write your fabulous text, just be sure not to go overboard. Don't include excess hype or statements that will make you sound too self-important.

A paragraph about your company and/or people involved in the show goes here. You can include a short history of your organization as well as your concise mission statement.

Wrap it up by crediting any funders or sponsors. For COAHSI, use the "mention of support" sentence from your contract.

Use your discretion to decide what is important, or what best describes your organization. You can also reiterate the venue and admission details, and provide an address. If you have a good quote from a reputable critic, publication, artist, or organization, you can end with that for greater punch.

For performance projects: Keep in mind, that unless you have well-known performers your production, listing names may not be the best usage of space.



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