

How to Write a Press Release

You've got your announcement in mind, and now it's time to get it down in words to share with your community, industry, and followers. Take Catbrella Inc., a fictitious ad agency, which just gained its 10th Twitter follower after two years of paid social media efforts. To announce its achievement, Catbrella could issue a press release like the one we've dissected below.*

Sample Press Release:

*Disclaimer: HubSpot is entirely responsible for the silliness of this faux announcement.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 10/30/13

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Catbrella Inc. Celebrates Their Tenth Twitter Follower
Customized Cat Umbrella Company Experiences Rapid Growth on Twitter

Boston, MA: Today, Catbrella Inc., a custom umbrella company specializing in umbrellas for cats and kittens, announced that they have reached 10 followers on the social media platform Twitter. After creating a Twitter account two years ago using the handle @catumbrella, Catbrella is seeing a return on its Promoted Tweets with their follower base reaching an all-time high this morning. Catbrella's tenth follower is @kittenhatz, who tweets frequently about cat couture. **2**

Of the company's recent Twitter success, Catbrella CEO Max Litter said, "Reaching 10 Twitter followers this morning has been one of my proudest moments in my 20 years at Catbrella. We have a pretty niche offering and adapting to the digital age has really helped us increase our reach; ten years ago, @kittenhatz never would have heard of us. I couldn't be more elated. Who knows, this time next year we could have 30 followers." **3**

To gain this momentous following, Catbrella planned and executed the following tactics:

- After deciding, based on gut instinct, that Promoted Tweets were far easier to leverage than organic content, Catbrella allotted \$500.00 to Twitter in their social media budget.
- By using phrases like 'The purr-fect way to stay dry' and 'Next time it rains, paws and think' in their tweets, Catbrella was able to optimize the 140-character limit. **4**

About Catbrella Inc.: [Catbrella Inc.](#) is a cat umbrella company based in Boston, MA. Founded in 1982, Catbrella has designed, produced, and distributed over 2 million custom umbrellas for various types of cats and kittens. Catbrella was voted Most Innovative Company of the Year in 2007 by the Feline Business Awards.

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Rule 1: Make Your Headline Irresistible

Just like writing the perfect blog post title, setting up your press release for success starts with your headline. You only have one line to work with, which can seem scary, but consider diction carefully to make your headline captivating.

Use action verbs, clear, understandable language, and keep your headline simple and short -- fortune (and search engines) reward the brief, so keep your title to one line to clearly focus people's attention on your topline message.

Most importantly, make it interesting: Keep in mind that reporters get dozens, if not hundreds, of releases each day, so invest the time to write a compelling headline. It's worth the time and effort on your part.

Rule 2: Don't Play Hard to Get

For reporters, analysts, influencers, or followers to be inclined to share your announcement, you have to tell them upfront why they should care.

The first paragraph of your release should cover the who, what, why, where, and how of your new launch, update, or development. Reporters don't have a ton of time to sift through details and fluffy background information -- they just need the facts that'll help them tell your story to someone else from a position of authority. There shouldn't be any new, crucial information covered after this section that the reader could potentially miss.

Rule 3: Offer a Tempting Quotable

Once you've set the scene, it's time to bring your details to life with a quote that reporters can use for context around your announcement and help paint a picture of how your news affects the given industry, customer base, and landscape.

Ideally, quotes will be from key stakeholders in your company including your executive team, project leads, or those directly impacted by your announcement. Quoting key figures and authorities underlines the importance of your development. The chosen quote should shape your narrative and emphasize the core of the announcement. Don't ask everyone in your office for a comment or feel compelled to quote all 25 people included in the acquisition -- pick 1-2 critical spokespeople and focus the quotes around their unique perspective.

Rule 4: Provide Valuable Background Information

In this last paragraph, keep in mind that the reader already has all of the vital details and information they need to file a story or spread the word.

It can be tempting to provide superfluous facts and tidbits about your company or the development of your announcement -- we sometimes think a piece of writing is lacking if it isn't drawn-out and just shy of being a novella. However, a press release **needs to be helpful and concise**.

Offer details here that strengthen your narrative, like creative or noteworthy ways your company developed the project or announcement at hand. Or, when applicable, comment on future implications of your announcement.

Rule 5: Make the "Who" and "What" Obvious

Twitter is chock full of reporters lamenting press releases or pitches that don't clearly explain what the company does or what the announcement is actually about, so instead of being the butt of a joke, make your release incredibly easy to reference.

Describe what your company does in clear, plain English, include a link to your company's homepage early on, and make your boilerplate succinct and straightforward. If you cite data, include a reference link for the data source, and make sure every name in the release has an associated title and company as well.

To keep yourself honest on this front, ask a friend or colleague to read the release without context and ask if they can easily and readily explain why the announcement matters, what your company does, and why the executives included are quoted. If the answer to any of those questions is no, get back to the drawing board.

The key to keeping your PR strategy new school is forgetting preconceived notions of what public relations is and instead focusing on creating highly remarkable content. Traditional press releases can still be really valuable when executed well, so instead of ditching releases as a tactic, give them a modern makeover to make them more useful for your marketing.

Think about how you've used inbound methods to transform your marketing strategies to be more personalized, approachable, and build relationships. Those same principles apply to your PR strategy: Create content to craft your own story and use tactful outreach to get reporters and analysts familiar with your brand.