

Global Edition

# 10 NEWSWORTHY REASONS TO SEND A PRESS RELEASE

Why and how leading PR and communications teams use press releases to disseminate their news, amplify their story and drive brand awareness



# Introduction

Of all the tools public relations professionals have in their arsenal, the press release remains one of the most powerful for getting a client's story in front of a wide range of audiences. Cision's annual State of the Media report consistently shows that three out of four journalists want to receive press releases from PR pros. Our data also show that millions of visitors go to PRNewswire.com every week specifically to view press releases.

Some organizations, however, don't always take advantage of the press release as a platform to announce newsworthy information to journalists, customers and other key stakeholders. Oftentimes, that obstacle lies in not realizing which information is newsworthy.

**In this guide, we're uncovering all the newsworthy reasons to send a press release – and how to go about it – so you don't miss an opportunity to promote your brand or engage current audiences while winning over new ones.**



# Reason 1: Company Growth

If your company is growing and progressing, you've got a story to tell. Why? Highlighting your growth through press releases shows consumers, potential investors and other stakeholders your company is one to watch and invites them to be a part of your success.

## Consider these opportunities to write a company growth-related press release:



**Opening a new business.** Starting a new business requires grit and fortitude, so when it's finally ready to launch, the announcement should be as splashy as a debutante ball. Creating a press release with multimedia elements showing how your business came together and what it will offer customers is an excellent way to demonstrate that you are open for business.

### Celebrating a company milestone or anniversary.

Facebook announces your birthday, and LinkedIn shouts out your job promotion (if you remember to update it!), so shouldn't you use a press release to do the same for your company's milestones or anniversaries? Of course, you should! Each year your company is in business and each

milestone your company reaches is cause for celebration, and who likes to celebrate alone? Invite your stakeholders to share in your success with a press release announcement.

**Announcing an acquisition or merger.** As the saying goes, two heads are better than one. So, when two companies come together, you want your customers to know that you're now twice as powerful as before. If your company is public, this news is not only important to report to your shareholders but is also a required disclosure.

**Relocating or opening a new office.** Cities love welcoming new companies, so don't pass up the opportunity to broadcast your move or expansion to local publications in your new city. Opening an office in a new location will demonstrate confidence that the local economy is a great place to conduct business, which is a news story a local journalist will likely not want to pass up.

**Announcing a company expansion.** Public companies are required to disclose an expansion to a new territory, as it is considered a "material event" that will have an impact on their stock prices. For private companies, announcing an expansion is a feather in the cap worth sharing (and, let's be honest, worthy of a not-so-humble brag).

## PRESS RELEASE TIP: INCLUDE EXECUTIVE QUOTES.

For a company-growth press release, a quote from a senior executive, customer or industry expert can add a sense of authority to the news.

Journalists also continue to pull quotes directly from press releases for use in their articles. Make sure your quotes sound natural and add to the story (they shouldn't just repeat the headline or sound like they were said by a robot).

Sharing news of your company's growth is a feel-good story that both trumpets your success and encourages others to participate in what you're building.

# Reason 2: Employee News

## PRESS RELEASE TIP: LINK TO YOUR “ABOUT US” OR “CAREERS” WEB PAGES.

Invite readers to learn more about what makes your company tick and why it's growing by linking back to your website or social media pages.

Better yet, while you're on the subject of employment, consider linking out to your careers page or job listings – after all, your press release could fall into the hands of your next high performer.

Employees are a company's most valuable asset. News about employee growth—individual or collective—is a celebration of your staff's contributions to the success of your business. Publicly recognizing your employees' importance to your business is a great morale booster.

### Here are some opportunities to write an employee-related release:



**Introducing a new executive.** Publishing a press release to announce a new executive has joined your organization is almost as exciting as making a new relationship official on social media. Like any new relationship announcement, most will be happy for you and some will be jealous.

**Announcing an internal promotion.** A sign of a healthy company is one that regularly promotes its employees. Sharing news of your employees' promotions demonstrates your commitment to their advancement and acknowledges their excellent work.

**Announcing a retirement.** Choosing to retire from a career is a brave decision. Unfortunately, you may not be able to hang

jerseys from the rafters to acknowledge the contributions of those who've retired from your organization. However, you can send them off with a celebratory press release.

**Introducing hiring initiatives/goals.** Prospective employees want to work at a company where they see the potential for growth and new opportunities. Investors want to put their money behind a company that's growing. Clients, customers and prospects want to do business with organizations committed to equitable hiring practices. Announcing your hiring objectives lets all of these stakeholders know you're investing heavily in your company's most important resource: your people.

**Recognizing an accomplishment.** If an employee or team has won an award or has gotten special recognition for something, hopefully, you are sharing it internally, but we also encourage you to share it externally. (In other words, go ahead and brag.) Employees are a reflection of their company, so when others see your employees accomplishing great things, they know you've done something right by hiring them.

Celebrating your employees is good for both employee morale and strengthening the organization. Taking the time to recognize your people publicly shows you are proud of their success and recognize the value they bring to the team.

# Reason 3: Product or Service News

Companies toil for months or years to create and update their products and services, and not only does it make sense to keep customers and prospects in the loop about it all, but all that hard work deserves to be celebrated. Needless to say, this is a popular subject of many press releases PR Newswire distributes.

## Some of the most common product- or service-related releases are:



**Launching a new product or service.** While you're likely to notify current customers and investors about a new product or service via your internal database and customer service teams, a press release can bring awareness to a whole new audience of potential customers and investors.

**Unveiling a product name change.** As the saying goes, the only constant is change. Sometimes change is necessary to better reflect the current moment or indicate where a company is heading. Using a press release to fully outline why you are making the change will help your customers understand the transition.

### Introducing a product/service update or feature

**enhancement.** What better way to show your customers you have heard their feedback than to announce updates or upgrades to your existing product or service line? Again, while you are already likely to do this via customer-focused newsletters, putting out a press release demonstrates to a larger audience that your company is committed to providing the best customer experience.

**Announcing a new partnership or collaboration.** Some of our most talked-about press releases involve two brands revealing a surprising mashup. Distributing this type of news through the wire not only generates buzz, it often leads to heavy press pickup.

Because product or service news is often the most high-profile release your company sends all year, it's critical to adhere to press release best practices in order to increase your chances of getting media pickup. Check out [this infographic](#) for a refresher.

## PRESS RELEASE TIP: INCLUDE MULTIMEDIA ELEMENTS.

In the words of your eighth grade English writing teacher, "Show, don't tell." Multimedia elements bring your press release to life and are particularly critical to a product- or service-related press release.

Consider including a photo of the product or someone using the service, or even better, a video or infographic that demonstrates how the product or service works.

# Reason 4: Branding and Marketing

At Cision, we know PR and marketing teams occasionally face challenges when aligning their efforts; however, a press release is one area where these teams can often find common ground. It presents an opportunity to collaborate with your marketing team to highlight all the impressive and creative work they're doing toward a common goal: To bring awareness to – and raise the status of – your brand. In addition to bringing marketing and PR together, a release that outlines key marketing strategies gives your stakeholders a peek behind the curtain of what's new and next for your client or company.

## Branding and marketing opportunities to send a press release include:



**Launching a new campaign.** The most successful marketing campaigns excite customers and lead to increased business. Kicking off a new campaign with a press release builds anticipation for your company's new creative direction.

**Announcing a new spokesperson.** You likely paid a pretty penny for your new spokesperson (but don't tell anyone how much!). Get your money's worth with a splashy press release revealing who your audience can look forward to appearing in your upcoming campaign.

**Launching a new website.** Don't you love when a company improves its website? It's like a breath of fresh air after being trapped inside for a long time. Let your stakeholders know that they, too, can experience this feeling by going to your new site.

**Unveiling a company rebrand.** Rebranding your company is one of the most newsworthy marketing efforts a company undertakes. You don't want to confuse your customers by suddenly using new branding without announcing you are doing so. Like changing your products, your customers need a transition to become accustomed to your company's new branding.

**Announcing a contest or competition.** You can stumble across all sorts of fun contest promotions and competition announcements on PR Newswire. Brands use the wire to amplify the audience for these campaigns and you should too.

**Announcing a sponsorship.** There's a reason sponsors are often introduced as "proud to present" an endeavor. Being a sponsor sends the message that your company is aligned with a venture and its audience. Show your sponsor pride with an enthusiastic press release.

Branding and marketing releases can be some of the most buzzworthy news your brand shares. Explaining the "why" behind the "what" is critical when crafting these types of releases.

## PRESS RELEASE TIP: INCLUDE YOUR BRAND LOGO.

Your company's logo is a calling card. You undoubtedly put your logo in your ads, on your website and social channels and in customer communications. Why not your press releases as well?

Not including your logo in a brand or marketing press release is just a missed opportunity. The objective of a brand release is to raise visibility of your brand, and there's no better way to do that than by putting your logo front and center.

# Reason 5: Events

## PRESS RELEASE TIP: PROVIDE A COMPELLING REASON TO ATTEND YOUR EVENT.

Every good press release answers some version of the question, “Why should I care?” For event-related press releases, the question to answer is, “Why should I attend?”

When crafting the body of your press release, focus on the benefits of attending the event and why your organization is uniquely qualified to host it. Talk about the participating speakers or the core benefits of the event. Also answer how it can help your target audience and why it is worth their time.

Hosting an event is one of the best ways to engage with an audience and help them better understand what your brand or company is about. Nothing helps personalize your brand and “put a face” to a company more than inviting your audience to come together in a shared space.

When it comes to most events –virtual, in-person or a combination of both – the phrase “the more, the merrier” usually applies. Sending a press release to announce an event your company is hosting or participating in can quickly grow the registration list.

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### The following are notable occasions to send a press release:



**Hosting a webinar or in-person event.** If you’re hosting an event, you want to channel Lumiere from “Beauty and the Beast” and invite people to be your guest. Sending a press release amplifies your invite beyond prospective attendees already in your database or social media network.

**Participating in a national or local event.** There’s an exciting event coming up, and your brand will be there. Don’t you want to publicize how cool your company is because it’s participating in this can’t-miss event? We know you do.

**Presenting at a conference.** Let’s be honest: We usually only attend a conference if we’re interested in hearing from the list of presenters. Your presentation could be the reason someone decides to attend a conference, so shout from the rooftops that you’ll be there with something to say.

When distributing an event-related release, it’s critical to only target a relevant audience in an appropriate location. For example, a journalist who covers local news in Poughkeepsie, New York is unlikely to be interested in a community fundraiser event in Kenner, Louisiana. Additionally, a reporter who covers the finance industry is very unlikely to write about your food and wine-tasting event

# Reason 6: Original Content

## PRESS RELEASE TIP: CREATE A CAN'T-MISS CALL TO ACTION.

Make it easy for readers to engage with and share content. Include a clear and compelling call to action (CTA). In other words, go beyond the standard “click here” and provide relevant context.

Choose a phrase like “Download the full report” or “Visit our website to learn more.” Put your CTA “above the fold” as a standalone line from the rest of the text to ensure readers (and scanners) see it right away.

Sharing helpful, relevant and educational original content can help better position your company as an expert in your field or industry and gain new customers.

### These are the main types of content to share via press release:



**Survey or study results.** Any good content strategy will include reports or whitepapers using research and survey results. Amplifying the findings from your research with a press release broadens the audience for your message and reiterates your organization’s position as an authoritative voice in your industry.

**Executive thought leadership.** As a leader in your field, you have insight to offer your audience. They want to hear what you think about issues affecting your industry and how those will impact them. With a press release, you can provide context for why you wrote this content and how you hope it helps your readers.

**Tips, expert advice or guidance.** Publishing press releases with tips and tricks in the body copy is more common than you might think. If you send this type of content to a targeted industry newswire, you’re more likely to reach a relevant audience.

**Free training or educational resources.** Build a rapport with your target audience by providing no or low-cost training and resources. If your organization offers information and education to an audience at no cost, we have found that organizations can gain additional loyal followers.

Press releases sharing original content should offer some highlights, but you don’t want to give away the farm. Provide a preview of the most intriguing bits of information as a way to pique your readers’ interest and encourage them to find out more by clicking on your CTA.

# Reason 7: Recognition

## PRESS RELEASE TIP: WRITE A HEADLINE THAT PROVIDES CONTEXT FOR YOUR AUDIENCE.

A headline like “Company X Wins Award” might not hold much interest to anyone other than Company X, but a headline like “Company X Wins Award, Proving Excellence in [Specific Field]” provides some extra context around why your company got the award, reinforcing your value to current customers and giving potential customers a reason to give you their business.

Whether getting or giving accolades, shining the spotlight or being in the center of it, recognition of or by others presents a prime opening to send a press release – and is a great way to get key stakeholders to stop and take notice.

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**If any of the following applies to your company, brand, client or organization, don't miss an opportunity to gain positive exposure:**



**Receiving an award.** If your company, an employee or a team has won an award, you have every reason to shout about it from the proverbial rooftop. Your stakeholders should know that others think your company and its employees are as awesome as you do. By the way, you don't need a trophy to brag. It's also a (newsworthy) honor just to be nominated.

**Achieving a certification.** Industry certifications can give your company more credibility and engender customer or client trust. Make them aware of your upgraded status.

**Recognition as an industry leader.** Getting recognition as an industry leader among respected peers or renowned institutions is yet another opportunity to highlight your company.

**Giving out an award or honor.** Taking time to elevate others can also boost your brand. When you show that you value others and what they stand for, it is a direct reflection of your brand's values – at a time when stakeholders are more likely to do business with brands that align with their personal values.

Don't forget to dedicate some space in your press release to providing background information about the award or the recognition itself. This gives you a chance to explain to your audience why the prize or honor is a big deal – for them and to you.

# Reason 8: Financials

While there are many reasons organizations may (wisely) choose to send a press release, sometimes companies are required to send particular press releases disclosing financial information.

Publicly held companies are required by the SEC to release their financial numbers every quarter – and issuing a press release is a fast, effective channel for such communication. But for privately held companies hoping to attract investors or file an Initial Public Offering (IPO), sending a press release with updates on your financial news can drive interest in the company.

## Various types of financial press releases include:



**Sharing impressive sales reports.** While this isn't a required disclosure, sharing a monthly sales result that was better than forecasted can generate interest and investment in your company.

**Announcing financial earnings results or forecasts.** Public companies know this is an SEC-mandated disclosure. If your business is growing and considering filing an IPO, a positive forecast can drive up the share price.

**Announcing an earnings call.** In addition to putting it in writing, your company may consider inviting audiences to their earnings call for an added layer of context and commentary. A press release is a great way to spread the word.

**Announcing a new investor.** Hearing a trusted investor has bet on your company might attract other investors to do the same.

**Issuing a letter to shareholders.** Some companies' annual shareholder letters are widely anticipated. Give yours a boost by sharing that it's ready for primetime via a press release.

**Restructuring your business.** Restructuring is a way to help your company clear the decks and find a path to a better future. Current and prospective investors want to hear this news.

Just because sharing financial information isn't the jazziest topic for a press release doesn't mean that the press release itself needs to look or sound boring. Incorporating visual elements or using powerful language to help tell your financial story can go a long way in making the news digestible and easy to understand.

## PRESS RELEASE TIP: PAY ATTENTION TO FORMATTING.

Good formatting can help ensure your audiences more easily read and absorb information that can sometimes be complex and often dry. Use strategic formatting to keep audiences from skimming over information and possibly missing key details in the process. Consider the following:

- Break up long blocks of text into shorter (2- to 3-sentence) paragraphs.
- Divide your release into key themes and topics and use bolded headers to 'announce' each topic.
- Use bullets to outline key takeaways.
- Include graphs to help visualize trends or growth areas.

# Reason 9: ESG

## PRESS RELEASE TIP: ENSURE YOU'RE ONLY SHARING ATTAINABLE ESG MILESTONES.

While it is important to set and share tangible goals, make sure they are realistic. Saying that your company will become carbon neutral by 2050 sounds laudable, but is it achievable for your brand? If not, focus on smaller, more manageable goals your organization can reach.

Stakeholders are increasingly demanding that organizations make progress on environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues. Consequently, more and more companies are sending out press releases outlining their ESG initiatives. Show audiences you're doing your part to address the most critical issues of our time.

### Here are some ESG topics to consider announcing via a press release:



**Launching efforts to reduce environmental footprint.** From implementing advanced recycling initiatives to reducing packaging or lowering energy consumption, there are myriad ways organizations can improve their impact on the environment. Customers, investors and employees strongly support and encourage any steps organizations take to limit their harm to the environment. So, if there is an effort to be a better corporate citizen, that's more than enough reason to create a press release sharing it.

**Publishing a sustainability report.** More and more organizations are choosing to include sustainability goals and metrics in their quarterly and yearly disclosures. To provide that information in one place, many companies have taken to publishing annual sustainability reports outlining their progress. Because investors and customers seek this information, it's worth sending a press release to share the findings.

**Setting or reaching goals to increase diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).** Customers and investors prefer to patronize and invest in companies committed to creating a fair and equitable workplace for their employees and business partners. (Not to mention a more diverse, inclusive work environment will only make your organization stronger.) If your organization is making

concerted efforts to create a more diverse and inclusive environment, sharing the reasons for doing so – and how you're going about it – can go a long way in generating brand loyalty.

### Creating an environment that sets employees up for success.

Treating employees well isn't just goodwill – it's good for business and your brand rep. Not only will you attract (and retain) more talent the better you treat your employees, but you will also be more attractive to potential customers, who increasingly want to conduct business with companies that do well by their employees. Show your stakeholders how you are investing in those who create the products and services your organization delivers, and your stakeholders will invest in you right back.

**Announcing changes to the company board.** For public companies, investors want to know that significant decisions have the oversight of an independent and capable board. Announcing an addition to your board in a press release shows investors that your company is committed to transparency.

When it comes to ESG issues, some organizations can feel paralyzed by fear of saying the wrong thing. However, companies should not let this reticence keep them from declining to share their ESG initiatives completely. As long as you commit to achievable goals, speak authentically and don't make proclamations that contradict existing practices, your ESG release should be received in the manner in which it was intended.

# Reason 10: Philanthropy

## PRESS RELEASE TIP: MAKE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN YOUR BRAND AND THE CAUSE YOU'RE SUPPORTING.

Audiences who demand authenticity from brands will be curious to know the “why” behind the philanthropic efforts. Explain to your stakeholders why you chose to support this particular endeavor.

When you can put meaning behind your efforts, it humanizes your brand for audiences, and it tells stakeholders there's genuine intent to make a difference (thus dispelling any preconceived notions that this is simply a play to drum up goodwill for your brand).

Philanthropic efforts generate meaningful change and strengthen communities. For non-profit organizations, receiving money for your cause is a consequential event. When for-profit companies announce support for a charitable organization's mission, it can generate a snowball effect by drawing more attention to the cause. A side benefit of sharing news of your contribution to important causes can also produce feel-good stories for your brand.

**Receiving a donation.** Charitable contributions are the lifeblood of non-profits, so it is a newsworthy event when a company or individual steps up to provide financial support for an organization. A press release can serve as both a thank-you to your benefactors and a way to spotlight your cause.

If your brand participates in any of these activities, sharing your participation and support can amplify that message, driving awareness and further support for a cause meaningful to your brand.

### Here are some occasions to send a philanthropy-focused press release:



**Supporting a non-profit or cause.** Stakeholders are increasingly insisting that companies operate with purpose and take a stand on important issues. By declaring monetary and philosophical support for a cause, your organization can prove its commitment to remain a good corporate citizen.

**Employee volunteering.** If your employees have given their time to help an important cause, sharing this news can serve as an opportunity to thank them for their generosity and draw attention to the mission they worked to progress.

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As you can see, there are numerous newsworthy reasons to share via press release what your brand is building and contributing. But sending a release does not need to be the period at the end of your story. Think of the press release as your story's first stop on a multi-leg journey that can include your owned and shared channels, earned media and outside-the-box, creative paid media.

PR Newswire's experts can help you improve your press releases to increase the odds of receiving higher engagement and media pickup. If you're ready to share your company's latest news, find out how we can help you enhance your next release.

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