

Using the media

You may be surprised at how interesting your story is to the newspapers (in relation to the general public) about starting or operating your unique business. A press release is not a novel, it is more to the point and much simpler to write. If you have some writing expertise, test your skills at writing a press release and send it to an appropriate newspaper editor.

Creating a media release

A media release is the simplest and most-often used method of alerting the media to newsworthy activities. It should be kept to one, easy-to-read page with the words 'media release' at the top and your contact details and any timing information at the bottom. People who work in the media can receive hundreds of press releases each day. The challenge is to make yours stand out. Try some of the following ideas:

Create an angle or picture

The 'angle' is the point of interest a journalist can use to attract people to your story. What is the human interest?

What is the local relevance?

What are the exciting or worrying or surprising aspects of your story?

Once you have identified a 'good angle' you can think about pictures.

Press and television are very visual media and journalists in these fields will want to know where they can find relevant pictures.

Create a 'catchy' headline

Being witty is helpful. Ask friends to help with creating a 'catchy' title for the press release. For example, take a word from your story and make it a statement, or a question.

The first paragraph should contain the most important things you want to say.

Don't forget to include vital information you'd like included in the story, eg: opening hours or price, time, location. Remember, this is not an advertisement, it is a story about you and your business, so journalists usually edit out any inappropriate commercial references.

Indicate at the end of the press release what photos are available and where they can be located. Offer to be interviewed, or suggest new photographs could be taken if required.