

The following information will assist you when writing a press release for distribution through the Polyurea Development Association (PDA). A well-crafted press release captures a reader's attention and is optimized for distribution over the Internet, through e-mail and for print in PDA's various publications.

## Press Release Content

Content refers to the story you are telling and the way it is positioned. Keep the following points in mind when writing your press release:

- **Is your news "newsworthy?"**

The purpose of a press release is to inform the public of your news item. **Not everything is news.** Your excitement about something does not necessarily mean it's newsworthy. Keep your audience in mind.

- **Do you have answers to all of the "W" questions?**

Providing readers with useful information (the Who, What, Where, When and Why) about your organization, product, service or event lessens confusion, showing readers that your company is a professional authority.

- **Does it start strong?**

Your headline and first paragraph should tell the story. The rest of your press release should provide the detail. You have a matter of seconds to grab your readers' attention.

- **Have you written it with the media in mind?**

On occasion, media outlets, especially online media, will pick up a press release and run it in their publications with little or no copy changes. More commonly, journalists will use a press release as a springboard for a larger feature article. In either case, try to develop your story as you would like to have it told.

- **Does your press release illustrate your news item?**

Use real-life examples about how your company or product solved a problem. Identify the problem and explain why your solution is the right solution. Give examples of how your service or product fulfills a need. If you're reporting a corporate milestone, make sure that you attribute your success to one or more events. If your company has experienced significant growth, tell readers what you did right. Show the cause and effect.

- **Did you stick to the facts?**

Tell the truth. Avoid fluff, embellishments and exaggerations. If your story sounds too good to be true, you are probably hurting your own credibility. Even if it is true, you may want to tone it down.

- **Is it written in active voice?**

Verbs in the active voice bring a press release to life. Rather than writing "entered into a partnership" use "partnered" instead. Do not be afraid to use strong verbs. For example, "The committee exhibited severe hostility over the incident" reads better if changed to, "The committee was enraged over the incident." Writing in this manner, engages the reader.

- **Are you applying word economics?**

Use only enough words to tell your story. Avoid using unnecessary adjectives, flowery language or such redundant expressions as "added bonus" or "first time ever." Wordiness detracts from your story. Keep it concise.

- **Have you cut out the jargon?**

The best way to communicate your news is to speak plainly, using ordinary language. Jargon is language specific to certain professions or groups and can be confusing. This goes for abbreviations and acronyms (i.e., PDA) as well – you're better off if you spell it out, at least on the first reference.

- **Did you end it right?**

Your press release should end with a short paragraph (company boilerplate) that describes your company, products, service and a short company history. If you are filing a joint press release, include boilerplate for both companies.