

Let's Talk About...

How to write a press release that gets results

including free exposure for your nonprofit



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Writing your first press release for a nonprofit or charity can be a daunting task. It can be one of the most important avenues to get a nonprofit's message out there, but it can be difficult to effectively communicate your story in this format.

Remember, every nonprofit has its own unique story and when written thoughtfully, these stories have the power to spark engagement and donations.

Not sure where to start? That's why we have put together this guide to help you write an effective press release for your nonprofit, including copywriting tips, examples, templates and a press release checklist.

Are you ready to create your first press release? Let's begin...

So what is a press release and can I really write one myself?

Writing press releases for nonprofit organisations is a great way to spread the word about the important work being done by charities and other nonprofit initiatives. Not only does it help get the information out there so that more people can benefit from these services, but it also helps generate interest in your cause and increase dialogue around solutions to social issues. A well-written press release ensures that nonprofit organisations have the chance to make an impact with their message, no matter how large or small the organisation may be. By clearly communicating your cause through a concise and engaging message, you can reach new audiences and make valuable connections that will help lead to positive change.





SO LET'S START BY EXPLAINING WHAT A PRESS RELEASE DOES...

Have you ever seen a news story about a business or charity and wondered how on earth the journalist picked up that story to include in the newspaper? The chances are, they received a press release from the organisation.

A press release is a formal statement or announcement sent to the media with the purpose of providing information to journalists and editors covering a particular topic or event.

Journalists love them! After all, they need to fill the pages of their publication and a well-written press release is practically a self-written space filler for their next issue!

BUT CAN I REALLY WRITE MY OWN PRESS RELEASE?

Absolutely! Writing your own press release isn't as daunting as you may think. The key is having a well-thought out plan and knowing how to approach the task in order to get the attention of the media.

It's important to consider who your audience is, what information you want to include, and how you structure your content so that it's relevant and compelling. Take some time to craft an eye-catching headline that sums up the story clearly and effectively, then let the facts - informed by anecdotes or quotes - do the talking!

BUT WHERE DO I SEND MY PRESS RELEASE?

When you start planning a media outreach campaign as a nonprofit, it's important to begin by asking yourself "Where is my ideal audience going to be?".

By pinpointing this vital first question, you'll have a much better idea of which publications or outlets can most effectively spread the word about your cause. If, for example, you're a small charity helping to rehome animals in one

particular area, it makes little sense to try and target global magazines like Vogue or Men's Health. Starting at a local level, look for newspapers in your town or city – they usually have generic email addresses – and then research which editors could best help promote your work. Then add these emails to your contact list so you're ready for action!



Let's not stop there...

What about smaller publications? Every city, town and village has smaller publications that are delivered door to door in specific areas, usually with names like "Living Villages" or "The City Diary". Spend some time researching what goes out in your target locations, and then use the same method we talked about with local newspapers to start collecting contact information.

Remember...

- Journalists have **MINUTES**, not hours, days or weeks to read your release and decide if it's right for them, so make your headlines stand out.
- Avoid spamming with trivial stories. Only send important newsworthy announcements. You don't want to get in their bad books!

Tips for Writing and Distributing your Press Release

Do

- Use proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling throughout the press release copy
- Create compelling headlines that draw attention without being too sensationalistic
- Make sure the opening paragraph is brief but tantalising enough to encourage further reading
- Always write in the third person and avoid getting personal

Don't

- Pack in too much information – Keep it concise and stick to the main points
- Beat around the bush – Make sure you get to the important information straight away and avoid long introductions
- Ignore legal issues - Make sure your press release doesn't break any laws, such as copyright infringement or intellectual property theft
- Neglect proofreading - Double check your work for spelling errors, typos, inconsistencies, incorrect grammar and syntax mistakes

Example:

Press Release for a dog rehoming charity

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 10/01/2023

Anna Smith

Stamford Dog Rescue

07733465463

anna@stamforddogrescue.org

Event: The Spring Puppy Picnic

A fun-packed family day to help raise funds for dog rehoming

Stamford, Lincolnshire: Stamford Dog Rescue today announced the tenth annual Spring Puppy Picnic, a fun-packed event for families and their furry friends. The Spring Puppy Picnic is an action-packed day with games, prizes and displays and offers a great way for local families to support them and raise much-needed funds that will help to rehome abandoned dogs in the local area.

“We are excited to return with the tenth annual Spring Puppy Picnic. Last year's event was our most successful ever, raising over £10,000, we are hoping to raise even more this year!” says Anna Smith, Fundraising Manager at Stamford Dog Rescue. “Last year's fundraising efforts have allowed us to provide veterinary care and rehome over 100 abandoned dogs.”

Features and benefits of Stamford Dog Rescue include;

- Last year they successfully rehomed over 100 abandoned dogs.
- They were able to fund emergency vet treatment for over 50 dogs in need.
- With a portion of the funds raised, they are able to offer life-long residence for more than 20 dogs that are unable to be rehomed.

Stamford Dog Rescue' Spring Puppy Picnic will take place on Monday 1st May 2023, at Stamford Meadows. Entry is £5 for individuals and £10 for Families (dogs get free entry). For more information on the Spring Puppy Picnic, visit:

<https://www.stamforddogrescue.org/the-spring-puppy-picnic>

About Stamford Dog Rescue: With their 11th year of success in action, Stamford Dog Rescue has continued to change the lives of hundreds of dogs in need. Their team of 15 tireless and passionate volunteers have enabled 475+ rehomed furry friends to experience all the love a forever home can offer. The dedicated part-time volunteers continue to provide support and care throughout the entire rehoming process, while also caring for 20+ doggos in permanent residence.

The Important Elements:

Contact details must be complete and accurate so you can be contacted with any questions.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 10/01/2023
Anna Smith
Stamford Dog Rescue
07733465463
anna@stamforddogrescue.org

Let the Headline and Sub-headline say it all.

Event: The Spring Puppy Picnic
A fun-packed family day to help raise funds for dog rehoming

The first paragraph needs to tell the reader What it is and Why it is happening.

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Informative quotes and a list of features/benefits can give journalists additional information to work with.

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Where, When and How to get involved is essential. Always include a link to more information.

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A few sentences about your charity and its recent accomplishments will help add a little back story and give any journalist an insight into your cause and what you do. This information can help the journalist write a complete story.

Your Press Release Templates

What do you need to announce?

So you are ready to write your first press release, let's find the best template for your announcement.

The content and structure of the press release will, of course, be determined by the nature of the announcement. It could be;

- A new service you are introducing
- An upcoming event
- A milestone that you have reached in terms of fundraising

We have put together a template for each type of press release to make it easy for you to create your first press release...



Event Press Release

Use this template for announcing an event

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: {Date}

{Contact Name}

{Organisation Name}

{Phone Number}

{Email}

{Press Release Headline}

{Press Release Subhead (One Line Maximum)}

{City, County}: {Charity name} today announced {name of event}, a {Brief description of event}. {Name of event} is {full description of event} and offers a way for {target audience} to {desired outcome of the event}.

“{Quote from higher-up in the charity about the event},” says {name}, {title} at {charity}. “{Additional quote}.”

Features and benefits of {event name} include.

- Benefit/feature #1
- Benefit/feature #2
- Benefit/feature #3

{Event name} will take place on {date/time of event}, at {Location}. For more information on {Event}, visit {URL of event page/blog}.

About {Charity}: {Add a short description of your charity and its recent accomplishments, if applicable}.

Service Press Release

Use this template for new products/services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: {Date}

{Contact Name}

{Organisation Name}

{Phone Number}

{Email}

{Press Release Headline}

{Press Release Subhead (One Line Maximum)}

{City, County}: {Charity name} today announced {name of new product/service}, a new {product/service}. {Name of new product/service} is {description of product/service} and offers a new way for {target audience} to {benefit or features}.

“{Quote from higher-up in the charity about the product/service},” says {name}, {title} at {charity}. “{Additional quote}.”

Features and benefits of {Product/service} include.

- Benefit/feature #1
- Benefit/feature #2
- Benefit/feature #3

{Product/Service} will be available from {availability date}. For more information on {Product/Service}, visit {URL of service page/blog}.

About {Charity}: {Add a short description of your charity and its recent accomplishments, if applicable}.

Fundraising Milestone Press Release

Use this template for major milestone announcements

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: {Date}

{Contact Name}

{Organisation Name}

{Phone Number}

{Email}

{Press Release Headline}

{Press Release Subhead (One Line Maximum)}

{City, County}: {Charity name} today announced {description of fundraising milestone}. This milestone is a major achievement for {charity name} on its mission to {main goal of charity}.

“{Quote from higher-up in the charity about the milestone},” says {name}, {title} at {charity}. “{Additional quote}.”

This news comes as a result of many recent fundraising efforts and accomplishments of the charity, including:

- Initiative/accomplishment #1
- Initiative/accomplishment #2
- Initiative/accomplishment #3

{Additional quote, if required}.

To learn more about {milestone}, click here {link to page/blog about the fundraising milestone}.

About {Charity}: {Add a short description of your charity and its recent accomplishments, if applicable}.

DAVID & GAYNOR RAMSDEN

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Communicate Your Brand!
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Convert Them Into Paying Customers



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SO WHAT NOW?

We hope you enjoyed this e-book and found some of the ideas useful to implement straight away in your business

WANT MORE?

Get in touch with us to discuss any of our services or to book a power hour or discovery call around how we can help you grow your micro business.

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY

Getting Your Local Brand Found & Noticed. We are on Facebook and our group supports other businesses like you to grow.

We have workshops, weekly Q&A's and regularly share growth tips and advice.

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Checklist



Tick off the steps as you go along



Draft a new website page or draft a blog post about your new service, event or milestone.



Draft your press release using the most appropriate template and make it stand out using creative copywriting.



Circulate website page, blog post and press release drafts internally for feedback, comments and notes.



Finalise all marketing assets, taking into account the notes you receive from internal stakeholders.



Schedule press release - Make sure your website pages/blog posts are live and send your press release out to your media list.



Create social media promotion assets - images, hashtags, social post captions and start promoting.



Monitor responses from journalists requesting more information as well as comments, likes and shares on social media.



NOTES
