

Part 3 of 3

Start Cashing In On Thousands of Dollars Worth of FREE Publicity By Sending Out Your Own News Releases

Distribution: Options for Getting the Word Out

Introduction:

In [Part 1](#) you learned how you can use news releases to literally gain thousands of dollars worth of free publicity for your business. Newspapers, magazines, radio stations, and television are all hungry for entertaining, informative, or shocking "news" that will keep their audience reading, listening, and watching.

In [Part 2](#), you learned the technique of "creating news" by tying into "hot" topics of the day. You also learned how to format your news releases to industry standard by simply copying the template that was included.

In this article, we'll show you how to distribute your news release by either:

- A. Doing everything yourself OR
- B. Hiring an agency to distribute your news release for you.

You'll learn how to get your message to the reporters and broadcast personalities who can help you most. Soon you'll be targeting the media with laser-like precision to blow away your competitors who don't know the "tricks" you are about to learn. So without wasting any more time, let's get right into...

Option #1 – The "Do-It-Yourself" Method

By building your own contact list **you maintain complete control and save on distribution costs**. As soon as a major story breaks, you'll be able to react quickly by announcing your "related" news item. Someone else built the media bandwagon... you just jump aboard.

Each time you find a reporter who covers your type of product or service, simply add that person to your media list database. The most important information to include is their:

- Name (correctly spelled)
- Title
- Name of publication or station
- Department
- E-mail address
- Phone and fax numbers
- Complete mailing address
- Titles and subject matter of articles they have written or shows they have produced

As you read trade journals, specialty magazines, and the sections of the newspaper that report on your field, pay particular attention to the articles that relate specifically to your business. You may also decide to record the name of the newspaper's business editor, lifestyle section editor, or whoever handles the section your product or service falls into. You'll find contacts anywhere and everywhere your target market goes for information.

Your media contact information will really help you build rapport with each reporter, editor, and producer, since you will not only know their names and titles, but also have background information on each one.

As you contact each person on your list, here are some important "dos and don'ts" to keep in mind...

- **Don't make reporters have to "hunt" for the story.** You may choose to set up a special URL on your site just for the media to download photos and review facts **in point form** about you, your company, and your products or service.
- **Respect their time.** Don't follow-up your e-mail with a phone call to the reporter or editor. They are already busy enough and you will actually hurt your chances of having your story run. Also, be sure to respond quickly if asked for additional background information.
- **Never add an attachment** -- ever. The concern of getting a virus will prevent many reporters from opening it.
- **Don't send out the same press release** addressed to several reporters. Either send one at a time or use a mail merge program that personalizes each e-mail.
- **Don't ask what angle** the reporter is going to use or for an advance copy of the article. You'll get your copy at the same time everyone else does.
- **Include a FedEx or Airborne air bill** if you enclose some software or other product with your mailed news release and expect it back.
- **Don't ask the reporter to download** or go to an ftp site; instead, provide a pre-registered disk so that no access code is necessary.

The easier you make reporters' jobs, the more likely they will want to work with you. With your list, you can sort and shuffle until you find exactly the right people to send your particular message to. Sometimes you will have technical or financial news to announce, and at other times, perhaps a lifestyle or "human interest" story. Always **look for the**

hook that you can use to relate your message to the readers of that section of the newspaper or audience of that particular radio or television personality.

Doing it all yourself will definitely save you money and provide valuable "hands on" experience, but if you want to **fast track your publicity campaign**, then you may prefer to go with Option #2.

Option #2 – Purchase a List of Media Contacts

If doing it all yourself seems too slow a method, you can purchase media contact information from Gebbie Press or Bacon's Media News. These companies have the names, addresses, e-mail addresses, and more in both print and C/D versions. Links to these services are listed in the resource section of this article.

There are also a number of other online agencies that will both write and/or distribute your news releases for you. They know the industry, have the contacts, and can get your message out quickly to the media contacts who specialize in your industry. Some focus on business news releases, others offer an extensive list of categories to help you pinpoint your audience, and others offer an "editing and polishing" service after you provide the basic outline and key points.

You are hiring expertise and a distribution channel. The cost for their services could be less than running a single display advertisement in your local newspaper, and yet can potentially reach a far wider audience.

Prices range from roughly 12.5 cents a news release to 25 cents for each one distributed. Most charge a minimum fee in the \$50 - \$250 range. The key point is to work closely with the service to ensure that your news release is being sent to reporters and editors who **want** to receive it and have signed up with opt-in lists.

If you are really serious about publicizing your business, I suggest that you study the services listed below to find the one that can distribute your news release to a tightly defined category that matches your market.

Whichever method you choose, either the "do-it-yourself" way or by using a distribution service, the most important decision you can make right now is to... just to start doing it. You are only a few clicks away from reaching a whole new audience of prospective buyers.

Resources – Media Lists & Third Party Services

Think of this resource section as an overview rather than a complete list. I have selected just a few of the many services available. The more service sites you visit, the broader understanding you will have of the business and also which of their services you need and don't need.

A. Media Contact Information Sources:

Using the lists of contacts provided by Gebbie Press or Bacon's can save you time and give you a large base of media contact information immediately. Once you have the list you can use it over and over.

- **Gebbie Press**

Gebbie Press offers media contact information in both print and C/D versions so you can build your own database and select which newspapers, radio stations, etc. to send your news releases to. <http://www.gebbieinc.com/order.htm>

- **Bacon's Media News, Services and Information**

Bacon's has 70,000 media contacts nationwide that you can use to build your database. They also offer a news release distribution service. <http://www.bacons.com>

B) Writing and Distribution Services:

As you compare services, look beyond mere numbers of media contacts each one can distribute your message to. Focus more on how closely their recommended list matches your needs. Do the reporters on the suggested list write to an audience that includes your potential buyers? How recently updated are their lists? You also might want to test their lists on a small scale before launching a major campaign.

Here's a list of news release distributors:

- **Internet Media Fax** <http://www.imediafax.com>
- **PR Newswire** www.prnewswire.com
- **USA News** <http://www.usanews.net>
- **Automated Press Releases** <http://www.automatedpr.com>
- **Xpress Press** <http://www.xpresspress.com>
- **Press Release Network** <http://www.pressreleasenetwork.com>
- **Internet News Bureau** <http://www.internetnewsbureau.com>
- **Newstream.com** <http://www.newstream.com>
- **Business Wire** <http://www.businesswire.com>
- **internetnews.com** <http://www.internetnews.com>
- **Canada Newswire** www.newswire.ca

Conclusion:

News releases are a great tool to help you build your business. Cultivate business relationships with the reporters who cover your area and give them real "news" tailored to the interests of their audience... not hype.

With the knowledge you now have from this series of articles, you now know how to write a press release that becomes "news," how to format it to industry standard, and how to

get it into the hands of the reporters who cover your industry.

Take this knowledge and put it into effect. Write a news release today and send it off -- even if to a free "weekly" for your area or the local "penny saver." Once you start, keep at it. You now have a road map of the "publicity territory" and are headed straight down the road to free publicity, personal fame, and on the way to fortune.

Get the skills without the spills...

Finest Regards,

Boris Chow
Internet Marketing Challenge

*Additional content provided by The IMC Content Research and Development Team.

About The Author

Boris Chow is a seasoned Internet marketer and member of the IMC Think Tank, the team of Internet marketing professionals who gather in the IMC Private Site to spill the beans about Web marketing breakthroughs -- as they happen!

To learn their profitable secrets (and avoid the costly mistakes) so you'll have more time to grow your business, visit <http://www.marketingchallenge.com> for instant access.