

The Press Release Planning Checklist

A practical pre-launch worksheet for small businesses

eReleases



Use this before you draft, approve, and distribute your next press release. Check each item or mark it N/A.

1. Confirm the news

- ☐ The announcement answers the question: why now?
- ☐ The release is tied to a real change, event, milestone, or useful update.
- ☐ The story explains who is affected and why it matters.
- ☐ The news is more specific than 'we want attention.'

2. Define the audience and angle

- ☐ The primary reader is clear: customer, investor, trade audience, local market, partner, or job candidate.
- ☐ The angle matches what that reader cares about.
- ☐ The lead paragraph states the news in plain English.
- ☐ The release avoids trying to serve every possible audience equally.

3. Gather and verify the facts

- ☐ Names, titles, dates, locations, numbers, and links are confirmed.
- ☐ Claims are supported by proof, examples, data, or customer context.
- ☐ Partner, customer, investor, or legal approvals are handled before launch.
- ☐ The media contact is correct and available after distribution.

4. Strengthen the story

- ☐ The release shows what changed instead of relying on hype.
- ☐ The quote adds perspective rather than repeating the announcement.
- ☐ The headline is clear, specific, and easy to understand quickly.
- ☐ The boilerplate explains the company without sounding like a brochure.

5. Prepare distribution and follow-up

- ☐ The target media list includes relevant trade, local, and niche outlets.
- ☐ A short pitch note explains why the story fits each audience.
- ☐ Any images, logos, screenshots, or links are ready and easy to access.
- ☐ Someone is assigned to answer journalist questions quickly.

6. Measure what matters

- ☐ The team knows which results will be tracked after launch.
- ☐ Useful measures are chosen: pickups, traffic, leads, backlinks, inquiries, or sales conversations.
- ☐ UTM links or tracking links are used where appropriate.
- ☐ A simple post-launch review is scheduled to capture lessons for the next release.

Launch notes

Best target outlets:

Main follow-up owner:

Review date:

Keep it simple: clear news, useful proof, right audience, timely follow-up.