

# **Wait, How Do I Promote My Business?**

**100+ Attention-Grabbing Templates  
for Websites, LinkedIn, Press Releases,  
Crowdfunding & More**

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## DEDICATION

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## Chapter 2

# How to Do Your Own PR

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## How to Write a Press Release

### General Outline

If you want the media to know about a recent accomplishment or upcoming event for your business/organization, the first step is a press release. In the following chapter, I explain how to write each section of the release and make the biggest impact on the audience (ex: bloggers, media).

**The most important point about a press release: you must explain the “why” as soon as possible.** That means you need explain high up in the release why your announcement matters to the general public or a particular industry if you’re being more targeted in the approach.

General information about a press release:

- ▶ Company contact info and media contact info must appear at the top
- ▶ A headline and subheadline combination are ideal to include the most pertinent information possible at the beginning

- ▶ Do your best to keep the release the size of one Word document — even if you paste the release into an email. One page worth of information is enough. Anything more and you'll likely lose the reader's attention.
- ▶ Provide links to websites, PDFs, etc...when possible but don't overdo it with the links or hashtag campaigns. In general, 3-4 links (and one hashtag) is plenty for a single release. If you have too many, the reader won't know which ones are most critical.
- ▶ Write in the third person about your company. For example, "**Acme Corporation** is excited to announce" and not "**We** are excited to announce." For the release to feel professional, you can't use "I," "us" and "we."

Now let's build the press release step by step. Up first, the header information.

## **Header and Contact Information**

To give the press release proper structure, the top portion should include your company/organization logo in the upper left and your business address in the upper right.

Below the logo and contact info, it's customary to put the point of contact. The person may either be someone at your company or a public relations/marketing professional. Typically, you provide email address and phone number(s) for the point of contact.

If the person is comfortable giving his/her cell number, include it. We all know it's easier to track someone down by cell than through an office line. Let's say the media jumps on your release and would like to provide coverage. Well, you want the reporter to reach the point of contact ASAP. If the person is difficult to find, the reporter may move to another story. MAKE THE PROCESS SEAMLESS.

Here's what the header and contact information area can look like.

COMPANY LOGO

COMPANY NAME

123 Main Street

Anywhere, USA 12345

**Media Contact:**

Jane Doe, Acme PR

Jane@acmepr.com

Office: 555-555-5555

Cell: 555-555-5555

## **Headline and Subheadline**

The headline and subheadline are the first place to explain to the reader what’s going on and why the story matters. The headline is the lead and the subheadline provides backup details to enhance the “pitch.”

Typically, press releases come in two varieties: big announcement or upcoming event. Let’s walk through a headline/subheadline for each scenario.

## **Big Announcement**

### **Acme Corporation Becomes First Company in Florida to Offer Student Loan Buyback Program**

*Decision could impact as many as 200 employees,  
spur other companies to do the same*

The headline tells the reader why the news matters. A company has made a bold decision about the student loan debt of its employees. Then, the subheadline gives more context around the “big news.” In this case, we learn the student loan program could impact up to 200 people and may encourage other companies to launch similar programs. If we only read the headline/subheadline, we would already understand the main idea of the “big announcement.”

Notice how the headline is large and bold while the subheadline is the size of the press release message itself and not in bold but rather italics.

Also make sure to use standard rules of capitalization according to AP style.

## **Upcoming event**

### **Acme Corporation to Kick Off “First Friday” Happy Hours in Downtown Sacramento**

*Celebration will take place on June 2 from 5-8 p.m.  
and feature live music, carnival games*

With the event headline/subheadline, lay out the basic info in the first line and then provide additional info in the second line (ex: day/time and event details). Again, give the reader the most pertinent info you can in the headline/subheadline, especially the day/time so a reporter/producer doesn't need to search for it.

## **Body of the Press Release**

OK, we've written our header information and headline/subheadline. Now comes the meat of the release: the body itself.

Let's use the “student loan buyback” announcement from the headline/subheadline section to craft the body of the release.

Many PR veterans will tell you to open the press release with a standard, traditional line. Something like, “Acme Corporation has announced a decision to offer a student loan buyback program...”

But that's a snoozer of a sentence. So formal and rigid, right? I don't advocate a total creative writing exercise here; you need to be professional and polished. But you can still catch the reader off-guard with something a bit unconventional.

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**ORLANDO, FL (October 12, 2016)** — With student debt in the tens of millions for recent graduates in Florida, Acme Corporation has unveiled a new way to help young professionals pay off their loans. The Acme Student Loan Buyback program

will help to alleviate student debt for employees who work at least three years for the company.

Acme is prepared to spend \$4 million over five years, which will help upwards of 200 employees with their student loans. Company executives feel they need to help younger employees strengthen their finances so they can make milestone purchases like homes and cars. The program is also a way to reward employees who make a longer-term commitment to the company.

“We are excited to roll out the Acme Student Loan Buyback Program and hope our employees are receptive,” said John Doe, vice president of human resources. “Student debt is holding back so many of our employees and, in turn, it hurts our company’s chances to grow. We think the decision is a win-win.”

The buyback program will begin in March 2017. Employees can apply to the program now as long as they will have worked at Acme for at least three years by March 2017.

**Media: Acme executives will stage a formal press conference to announce the decision on Wednesday, October 19 at 11 a.m. ET at our corporate offices (123 Main Street, Anywhere, USA). Please arrive no later than 10:30 a.m. ET to ensure you capture the entire announcement. You can also watch the press conference online at this link.**

## Deeper Insight

*There are several points I want to make about the press release copy.*

- ▶ The intro line is still traditional and “newsy,” but it’s more engaging than “Acme Corporation has announced...”
- ▶ Remember, you should treat a press release like a news article. That means it should not feature opinion. See how I wrote “...to help young professionals pay off their loans.” I did NOT write “...to help young professionals pay off their **backbreaking** loans.” “Backbreaking” is opinion. That’s because, for some people, student loans may not be as difficult to pay off. Use quotes in the release to inject opinion — the rest of the text should be the facts.

- ▶ Lean on numbers to make your case. In the second paragraph, I use “\$4 million,” “five years” and “200 employees.” Those stats give size and scope to the project so the reader thinks, “OK, now how I know how big this news really is.”
- ▶ In the third section, I include a quote. HERE is where you add opinion because it’s a person talking and not the company itself. That’s why it’s OK for the person to use phrases like “Student debt **is holding back** many of our employees.” It’s what he, as a company official, thinks.
- ▶ At the bottom, I direct a message in bold to the media. If there’s a “call to action” for the media (ex: attend an event or press conference), put the information in bold so they don’t miss it.
- ▶ The ### at the bottom is the standard way to say “This is the end of the press release.”
- ▶ Notice I have links in the release, but I don’t overdo it. In this example, I have three:
  - Link about the student loan buyback program
  - Link for people to apply to the buyback program
  - Link for the media to watch the press conference online
    - Don’t toss in too many links because then the media won’t know which ones to click. Same goes with a hashtag campaign, Twitter handles and other social media messaging. Decide internally the keywords and social content the media needs to know and then leave the rest out. Less is always more.



## Chapter 3

# Networking and Outreach Emails

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## Making Connections

### How to meet with someone to ask for advice

Important people in business are exceedingly busy...until you ask for their advice. Then, many are willing to stop in their tracks and spend time answering your questions. Remarkable how that happens :)

Here's a template to ask for a meeting and seek someone's wisdom (and ultimately, add him/her to your network).

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**Subject line: [Your industry] professional who could use your advice**

Hi \_\_\_\_\_,

*NOTE: Refer to my chart on page \_\_\_\_\_ to determine the best way to address the person.*

I hope you're doing well.

## WAIT, HOW DO I PROMOTE MY BUSINESS?

I work for/own [name of company], a/an [one sentence about your business; for instance, “a new children’s dental practice in Columbus.”

*NOTE: Link the name of your company to the website.*

[Then, explain the purpose of your email and why you would value the person’s insights; for instance; I’m writing to seek your advice as I grow my small business. As someone who has spent many years in the Columbus business community — albeit in a different medical specialty — I think you could provide insights that would make a big difference for me.”]

[If you write someone you don’t know, a smart way to make the pitch even stronger is to google his/her name and read something the person has written or been quoted in; for instance, “I read an Acme Daily News article in which you were quoted about the importance of entrepreneurship. Your words stuck with me, especially the part about how you need to push through when the going gets tough.”]

*NOTE: It’s not enough to tell the person you liked the article or interview quotes. You need to explain WHY you enjoyed and reference a specific part that stood out to you.*

Again, please let me know if you have time for coffee over the next several days.

Thanks, and I hope to hear from you.

– Your first name

Email signature

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### **Deeper Insight**

The two big keys with the “advice” email.

1. Tell the person high up in the email what you want. That way, you're direct and to the point.
2. Explain why you seek the person's knowledge and, when possible, be specific about how much you respect what he/she has to say.

## **How to thank someone after the networking meeting**

After the meeting, you need to send a thank-you email within 24 hours to recap the meeting and build on the relationship.

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### **Subject line: Thank you again for meeting with me**

Hi [Mr./Ms. or first name depending on how you wrote the message to ask for a meeting],

*NOTE: Refer to my chart on page \_\_\_\_\_ to determine the best way to address the person.*

Thanks again for meeting and giving me advice about [topic at hand; for instance, "how to grow my dental practice."] I appreciate your time and all you had to say.

[Then, give a specific example of the advice the person told you; for instance, "I appreciate how you explained the best way to make a cold call. I will put that advice to use this week as I have several people I need to reach."]

Of course, I am happy to help you any way I can. Don't hesitate to task.

Thanks again, and I hope to see you soon.

- Your first name

Email signature

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## Deeper Insight

Repeat the person's advice back to him/her — it's an ego boost and will prove you listened. Plus, the strategy helps you build on the relationship.

Also, if you and the other person have plans to see each other again, reference your upcoming meeting rather than "I hope to see you soon."

## How to announce you started a new business

When you launch a new venture, you'll want to tell everyone, right? Before you spread the news, make sure the email contains the right info.

If the email goes to one person (rather than a group), here's the template.

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**Subject line: Introducing my new [company/organization], [name of company/organization]**

Hi [person's first name],

I hope you're doing great. [Then, one line of small talk about the other person before you discuss your new business; for instance, "How is everything going at Acme Real Estate? Have you been busy with new leads this summer?"]

[Then, explain right away the purpose of your message and link to your new website; for instance, "I'm writing to tell you I started a new company, [Acme Arts Discovery](#), a program for special-needs children in Portland that provides hands-on art instruction."]

[Then a line to explain why you felt the need to start this new venture; for instance, "I had such positive feedback from the arts classes I led last summer that I decided to go a step further and make an entire business out of the idea."]

[Then, what do you want from the person? You should always have a call to action and a way to engage the email recipient; for instance, “Here’s the upcoming class schedule. Do you know of any families who might want to participate?”]

[Finally, allow the other person to provide other ways to promote your business and help you network; for instance, “If you have other ideas on how I can spread the word, please let me know.”]

Thanks, and I hope to hear from you.

– Your first name

Your new email signature

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### **Deeper Insight**

People are busy so make your “new business pitch” quick and painless. Make sure you have all your ducks in a row before the email goes out. That means your new website must be live with all the kinks worked out. And don’t forget to give the person the floor to brainstorm ways he/she can help. The person might come up with an idea or connect you to someone you never considered.

If you’d prefer to send this email to a group of people, here are the modifications:

- ▶ Send the email to yourself and BCC everyone else
- ▶ Open the email with “Hi everyone,”
- ▶ Don’t include the lines of small talk. Instead, write “I hope you’re doing great.”
- ▶ The rest of the email flows the same if it’s to one person or a group



## Chapter 6

# Website Content

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## Common Pages

### Mission statement

A company's mission statement is a classic situation where we feel the need to use stuffy, corporate language as I discussed on page \_\_\_\_.

We think, "OK, this is our *mission*. We have to go big here and blow people away with a line that shows we're the greatest."

That's when we end up with a mission statement like:

*"At Acme Corporation, our mission is the pursuit of quality and excellence in all its forms."*

It feels like a grab bag of corporate jargon all mashed together — "pursuit of" and "all its forms." Who talks like that? No one.

Also, it's unclear how Acme Corporation helps people. What problem does it solve?

A better mission statement accomplishes two goals:

1. Sounds like something a person would actually say
2. Explains how you solve a problem

Here's an example for Acme Corporation, which provides e-newsletter software for small businesses.

*Our mission is to help you write better e-newsletters so you can grow your audience and build a successful business.*

Doesn't it feel like the writer talks *with* us (not *at* us) in a conversational tone? Sections like "help you write better e-newsletters" and "so you can grow your audience" are phrases people say to each other in real life. It's authentic and believable.

Plus, the mission statement explains how the product/service solves a problem and makes other people better. In one sentence, we covered both goals I listed above.

When it's time to compose your own company mission statement, ask yourself:

- ▶ Do I talk *with* the audience or *at* the audience? You want a tone that suggests "I'm right here with you, and we're in this thing together."
- ▶ Do I explain how I provide a solution?
- ▶ Am I speaking from the heart? Trust me, the audience can tell. To put yourself in that frame of mind, do this exercise.

Imagine you are face to face with a customer and have one sentence explain why your company matters to him/her. What would you say?

The answer is the foundation of your mission statement and a great place to start as you write it down for the website.

## **About Us**

With the "About Us" page, I break the topic into two categories:

1. Short "Who We Are" description
2. Longer "Our History" description

In the following section, I provide templates and my thoughts on both.



## About Us — Short Description

On this page, you want to give the reader a quick overview of your company, what you offer and why you matter. If the page has four or five huge paragraphs, you will lose the person's attention.

Short and sweet is the way to go.

You will see the template has the same structure as the LinkedIn company page description from page \_\_\_\_\_. Why? The website and LinkedIn company page both require brevity and description on why your business matters.

**Step 1: Who are you, really?** — “nuts and bolts” description of your company and the work it does

**Step 2: What do you do?** — deeper explanation on your products/services

**Step 3: Bring ‘em home** — why your business matters and the impact you make on the world

Here's the “About Us” short description for the Acme Corporation website, which sells used sports equipment in the Tulsa area.

### Step 1: Who are you, really?

At Acme Corporation, we have the largest selection of used sports equipment in the Tulsa area.

*NOTE: In one clear line, this is who we are and what we do.*

### Step 2: What do you do?

Since 1987, we have provided high-quality gear so people can stay active and play the games they love. We have seven locations across Tulsa including our 22,000 square foot superstore in East Downtown. Basketballs, soccer balls, lacrosse sticks — even complete disc golf sets. You need it, we got it. If you're looking for a unique item, visit our online product directory or give us a call.

*NOTE: Deeper explanation contains details like the number of store locations, size of the superstore and types of equipment it sells (ex: "even complete disc golf sets"). Be specific when you describe your business like service offerings and niches you occupy. Vague gets you nowhere.*

### **Step 3: Bring 'em home**

At Acme, we believe sports are central to a healthy lifestyle. Get out and play!

*NOTE: Closing line that sums up why you're passionate about the work and enjoy helping others.*

### **Deeper Insight**

You might think, "That's not a very long 'About Us' section." You're right — it's not. People are busy and only need the quick summary on an "About Us" page.

If you explain who you are, what you do and why you matter, you cover all of your bases in a section of content that takes about 30 seconds to read.

### **Staff Bios**

The professional bio, in my opinion, follows a simple formula for everyone from recent grads to people with work experience.

- ▶ The job title and role you currently have
- ▶ Short description of the current job
- ▶ Short description of past work/jobs
- ▶ List of a few hobbies/interests (not necessary or always appropriate but helps to show your personality)
- ▶ Your education (ex: where you attended college)

Your company might ask you to include other info or write the bio with a particular tone. Go with the flow but keep in mind the five-point list.

## **How to write a professional or executive bio — recent grad who’s new to a job**

(1)John Doe is a junior account manager at Acme Industries who supports various projects in our new acquisitions division. (2)He specializes in data analytics, social media management and event logistics. (3)In college, John co-founded AcmeGo+, a startup that monitored traffic flow across campus to help students avoid crowds and save time. (4)Outside of work, John plays classical guitar and grows vegetables in a small garden on the roof of his apartment. (5)He has a B.A. in philosophy from Big State University.

### **Deeper Insight**

Let’s go back to the five-point list.

1. The job title and role you currently have
  - One clean line sums it up
2. Short description of the current job
  - Provide specific job duties (ex: social media management)
3. Short description of past work/jobs
  - Again, specifics. Tell people not only where you worked but also what you did.
4. List a few hobbies/interests (not necessary but helps to show your personality)
  - Instead of “guitar,” I wrote “classical guitar.” Instead of “likes to garden,” I wrote “grows vegetables in a small garden on the roof of his apartment.” Details make you more interesting!
5. Your education (ex: where you attended college)
  - College comes at the end of your bio. It also should appear at the bottom of your resume. Lead with the job you have. That’s the most important part of your bio and should come first.

## **How to write a professional or executive bio — someone with work experience**

(1)Jane Doe is a senior account executive at Acme Industries who leads our renewable energy division. (2)She focuses on bringing solar power to new industries and oversees current solar projects. (3)Prior to Acme, Jane worked for Big Nonprofit on a team that improved the quality of drinking water in third-world countries. She also spent time at Little Nonprofit and studied the impact of oil spills on a local seafood industry. (4)Outside of work, Jane likes to ride her bike around Houston with no particular destination and read mystery novels (she’s also writing one of her own). (5)She has a B.A. in art history from Tech University.

### **Deeper Insight**

Again, our five-point list.

1. The job title and role you currently have
  - One clean line sums it up
2. Short description of the current job
  - Provide specific job duties (ex: oversees current solar projects)
3. Short description of past work/jobs
  - Since Jane has worked for a bit, she described her role at the past two jobs.
4. List a few hobbies/interests (not necessary but helps to show your personality)
  - Instead of “ride her bike,” I wrote “ride her bike around Houston with no particular destination.” Instead of “read books,” I wrote “read mystery novels (she’s also writing one of her own).” So much more colorful this way!
5. Your education (ex: where you attended college)
  - Again, lead with the job you have. Finish out with education.



