

MARKETING RESOURCES

WRITING A MEDIA RELEASE: INSTRUCTIONS AND TIPS



AUSTRALIAN
GLASS & WINDOW
ASSOCIATION

HOW DO I WRITE A MEDIA RELEASE?

- Before you start to write the release, refer to the media release examples in the Media Resources section of the AGWA website for guidance.
- Consider your target audience. Do you want to hit end users, builders, glaziers, the window industry, architects, etc. with this story? This vital question will determine the content, language, style and tone of the release. Maybe you want to target each of these groups? If this is the case I recommend writing different versions of the one release, as you should have different messages for each audience.
- Consider the media target. Research all local media options – newspapers, street press, websites, online newsletters, local radio station, local social media etc. Determine where you want the story to appear and then write the media release in the same style and tone of the publication.
- If this is for any local media, you must make the information as localised as possible! This is one of the most important tips, as your paper will run the story if there is enough of a local slant. Include images of locals, write about upcoming events or offers, discuss local sponsorship news, etc. Basically, try to inject as much local news into the media release as possible and your chances of media pick up will sky-rocket.
- In most cases, the first paragraph of a media release includes the what, where, when, who and why – i.e. set the scene. What is the most newsworthy fact, or, what would your audience most want to hear about, what effects them? Consider the ‘what’s in it for me’ principle. The answers to these questions will shape the lead paragraph.
- Media releases must be 100% factual, avoid ‘advertising-speak’ at all costs, i.e. no exaggerated claims, unsubstantiated promises or emotive language.
- Must be written for the journalist, i.e. write it as if you’re the journalist speaking to your readers.
- Include quotes from a company spokesperson (quotes can be more emotive and can make stronger claims than the rest of the information).
- Consider other third parties to quote in the release to give it balance. You must ask their permission first and have their approval on all quotes and mentions before it is distributed anywhere. Include their title and their company.
- Call the paper and ask for the right contact. May be the editor, but it may be a house and home journalist or special feature writer. Ask whether they like to receive information via email, and if so ask for their email address.

HOW DO I LAY OUT A MEDIA RELEASE?

- The words “Media Release” must appear at the top of the release.
- Date of distribution must be at the top of the release.
- Needs an impactful and engaging headline. Great if you can get your company name in the headline in an interesting way.
- The word “Ends” must appear at the bottom of the release, to indicate where the story concludes.
- Can include “For further information about **(your company name)**, please contact **(insert the name and details of the relevant contact from your company)**”. This would appear before “Ends”, so that the story includes your contact information. This is different from the ‘media contact info’, explained in the next point.
- “For further media information, please contact...” should be included after “Ends”. This is the name, title, phone number and email address of the person in your company the media should call for images, interview, further info, etc. This comes after “Ends” as it is not meant for inclusion in the actual article.
- Images can make or break a story. Include a jpeg, at least 300dpi and A5 in size.
TIP: Include a local person in the shot and increase your chances of media pick up.

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- Insert your logo in the top right hand corner of the release.
- A media release should never be more than two pages. If you have generic information that may entice the publication to run the story, e.g. statistics, local facts and figures, etc., create a separate document and instead of Media Release call it a Fact Sheet and email it with the release.
- Best not to let one publication know the story has been sent to another, as it may deter them from covering the story if they know their competitors have access to the information too. If sending a group email with many media contacts, use the BCC option. You should be forthcoming though if asked directly who else was sent the information.
- When you're booking an advertisement, always ask for editorial support as a 'value add' to the deal. If you lock them in from the outset, you will have no trouble leveraging your advertising budget.

FOLLOW UP

The day after you send the release, call your media contact and ask:

- Was it received?
- Is it of interest?
- If not, why not (politely)?
- If yes, need anything further?
- When will it appear?
- Can you please send me a copy once it runs?

Please send a copy of all clippings generated to melissa.baker@agwa.com.au

HOW TO USE THE AGWA SAMPLE MEDIA RELEASE?

In the member's only section of the AGWA website, a 'Swiss Cheese' media release is available for you to download.

This release was written by AGWA regarding compliance and energy, and has been created specifically for members to download and disseminate themselves.

It's called 'Swiss Cheese' release as there are holes within the information, awaiting your input. For your media release to be seriously considered, you need to tailor the information with your company's information, and inject it with as much local relevance as possible.

The areas awaiting your input are marked clearly with orange text.

To ensure I can help maximise the opportunities for you, and if you need assistance with the final edit of the media release, please send your final version, with your information included, to melissa.baker@agwa.com.au