

NEWS RELEASES
THE PR TOOL YOU NEED RIGHT NOW

Agility | PR
Solutions



A SPECIAL REPORT FROM AGILITY PR SOLUTIONS

The media landscape is continuously evolving. Currently, the stimulus is a global pandemic that's forced every business to pivot and has sent employees home to bedroom offices, makeshift standing desks, and video conference calls.

While certain industries and activities have slowed down, media distribution and consumption have ramped up.

Nielsen data shows that in recent US history, during major crises that forced people to stay home, TV consumption increased by almost 60 percent. Though no one can say yet whether COVID-19 will match this record, it has the potential. People want information and journalists want to give it to them.

WHICH MEANS THERE COULD BE A SPOT IN THE HEADLINES FOR YOU.

*"It's been really tough, the media landscape has just totally shifted. However, a silver lining has been that ***I'm now getting global coverage for my clients*** which they could never have imagined before."*

PR pro working from home

WHY IS NEWS RELEASE DISTRIBUTION IMPORTANT?

“Marketing and public relations professionals use news release distributions with the aim of generating coverage on major news outlets, increasing brand awareness, reach, and visibility, and in some cases to boost search engine rankings.”

[NEWSWIRES 101: EVERYTHING YOU'VE EVER WANTED TO KNOW](#)

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

We analyzed our clients' use of our news release tool over the past four months

JANUARY - APRIL

and made some interesting discoveries.

USAGE OF OUR NEWS RELEASE DISTRIBUTION SERVICES IS STRONGER THAN EVER.

Our clients are getting their stories out there, using the trusted tools at their disposal.

OTHER KEY DISCOVERIES INCLUDE:

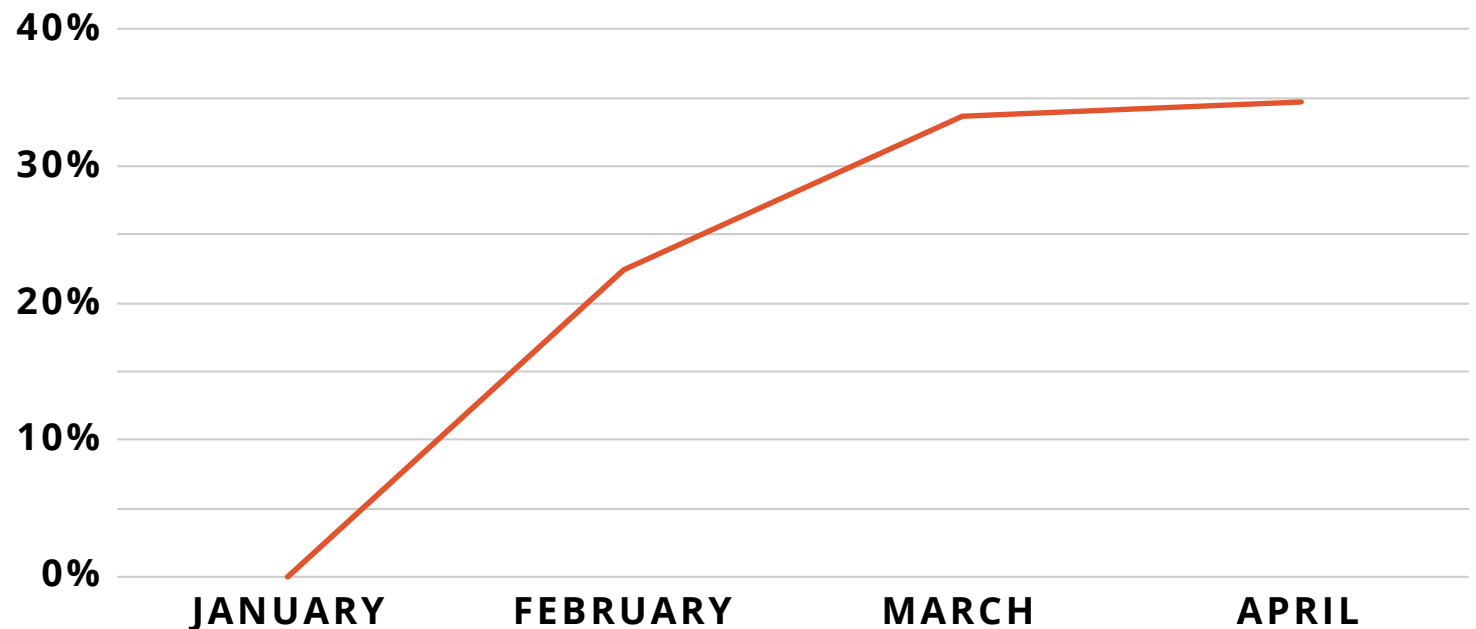
- PR targeting and outreach has increased
- More clients are joining the conversation about COVID-19
- COVID-19 communication hasn't peaked yet
- Industries seeing the greatest impact of news releases include healthcare and pharmaceuticals, government, and education

DISCOVERIES

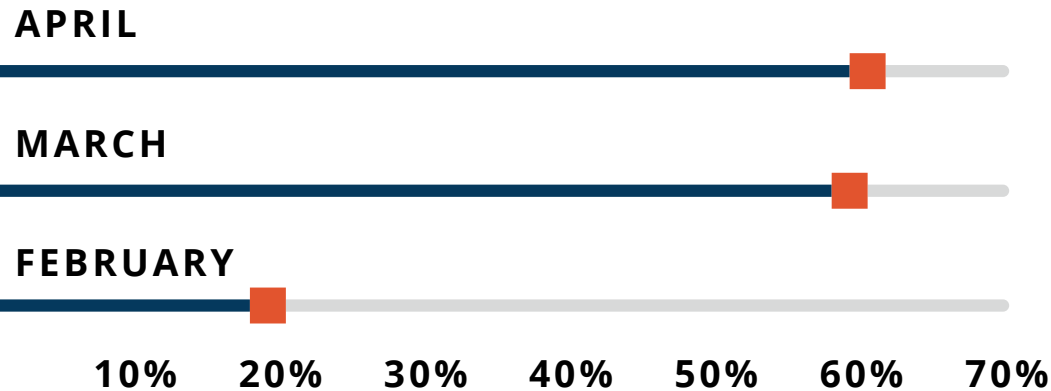
USAGE OF OUR NEWS RELEASE DISTRIBUTION SERVICES IS STRONGER THAN EVER

The number of releases sent per working day using Agility PR Solutions' distribution tools for direct targeting emails and newswires **increased by more than 30 percent** in March and April.

PERCENTAGE
INCREASE IN
NUMBER OF
RELEASES
SENT PER
DAY



DISCOVERIES

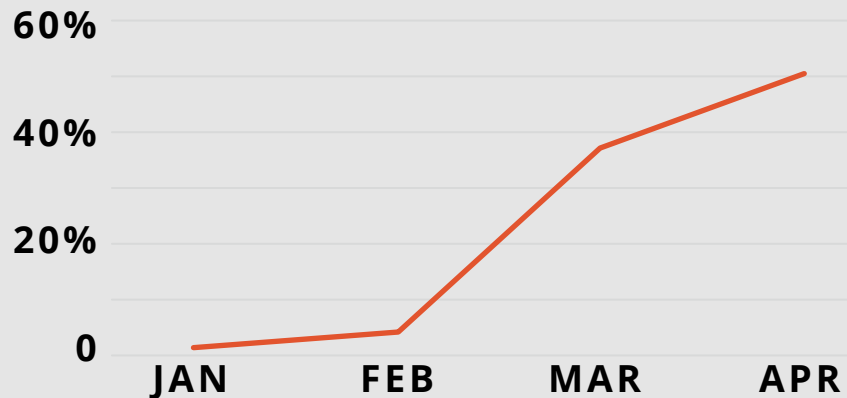


PR TARGETING AND OUTREACH HAS INCREASED

The amount of outreach targeted to journalists per working day using the Agility platform has **increased by more than 60 percent** since January.

MORE CLIENTS ARE TALKING ABOUT COVID-19 WITH THE MEDIA

PERCENTAGE OF CLIENTS SENDING RELEASES RELATED TO COVID-19

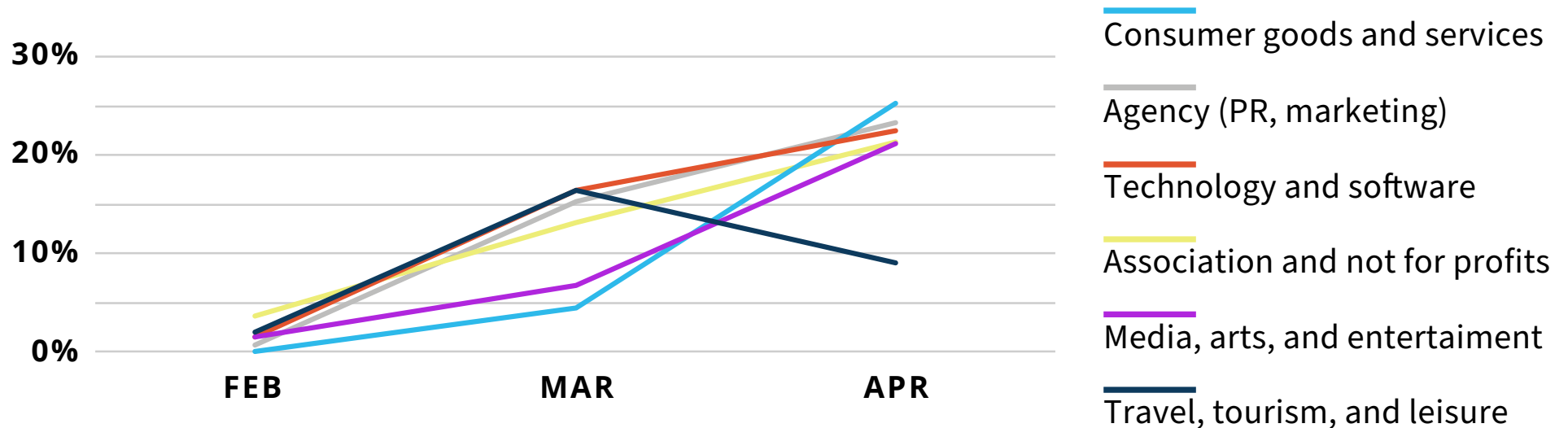
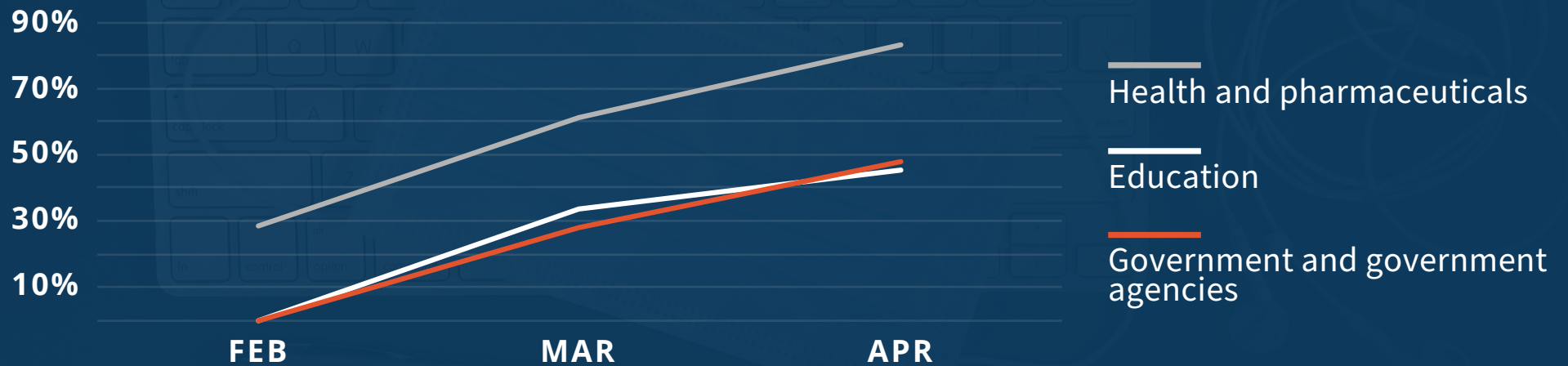


In January, only 1 percent of our clients were issuing news releases that were identified as relating to COVID-19. In March, that number increased to around 38 percent, and then increased again to 51 percent in April.

DISCOVERIES

PERCENTAGE OF RELEASES RELATED TO COVID-19 BY INDUSTRY

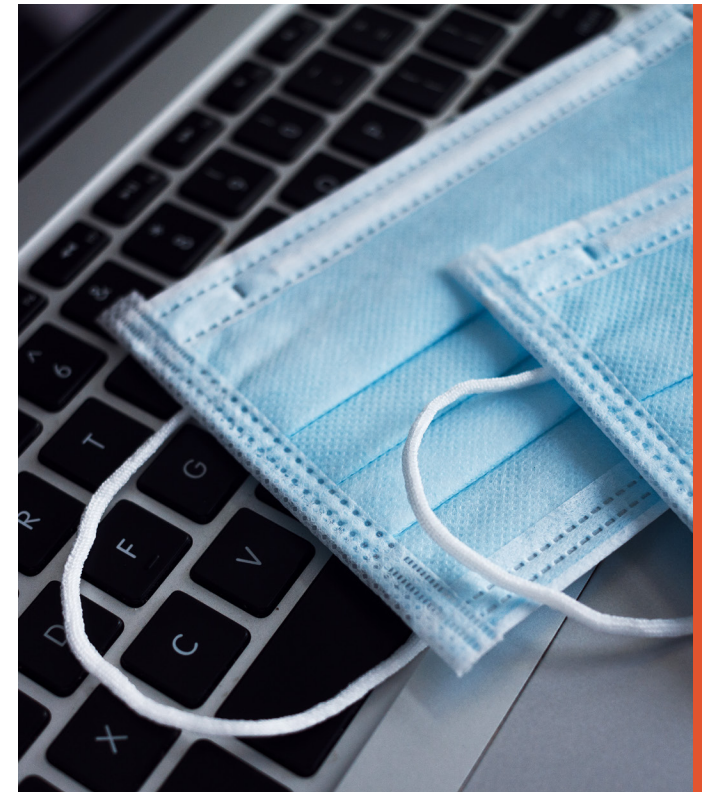
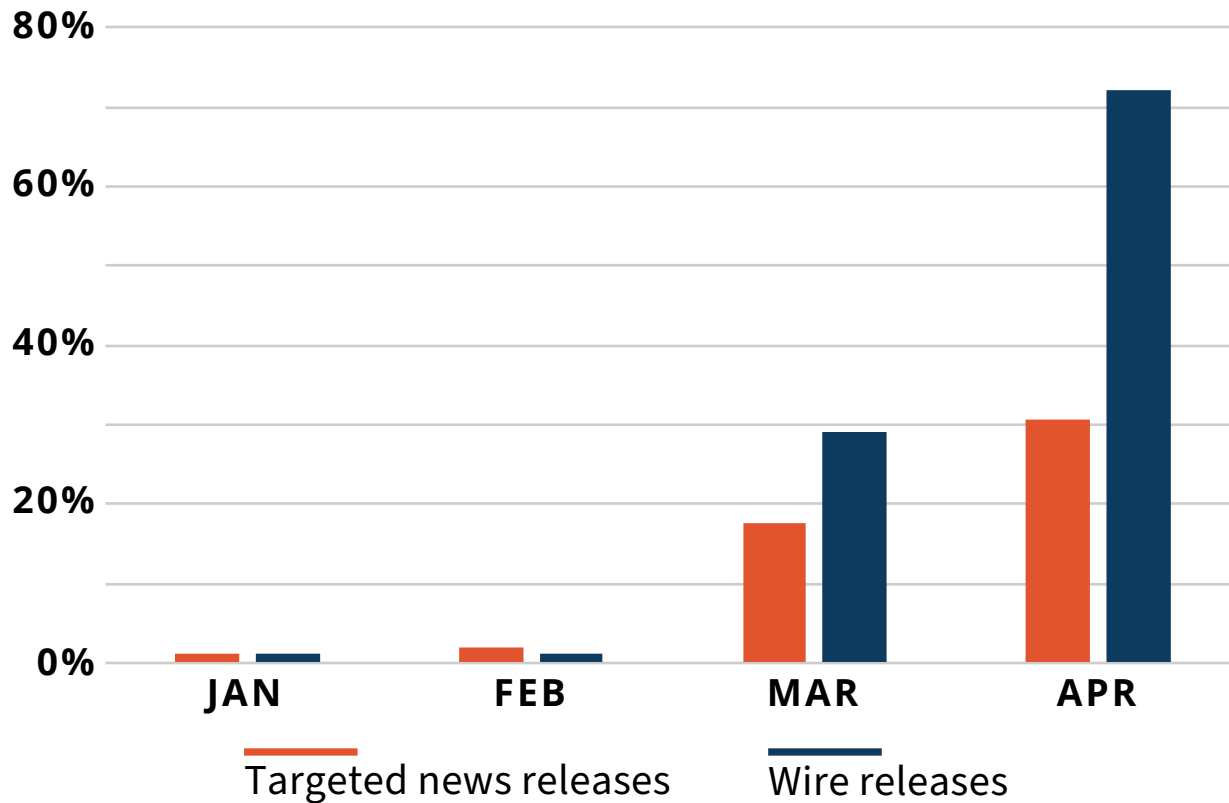
The three industries that had the highest percentage of COVID-19 related releases were healthcare and pharmaceuticals, government and government agencies, and education.



DISCOVERIES

COMMUNICATIONS AROUND COVID-19 ARE STILL GROWING

The percentage of news releases identified as relating to COVID-19 has increased substantially among our clients. COVID-related targeted emails jumped from approximately 2 percent in February to 31 percent in April, while newswire releases jumped from approximately 1 percent in February to over 70 percent in April.



WHAT'S THE POINT?

News release tools are a relevant, strategic, and affordable PR tool, especially now. They get you into a broad range of outlets and newsrooms, helping your story receive the pickup it deserves.

INTERESTING FACTOID:

67 percent of journalists rely on news releases with as many as 37 percent checking press release feeds or press release distribution services daily, according to a study by Vitis Business Consulting.

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR NEWS RELEASE TOOL

If you're thinking about incorporating a news release tool into your media relations strategy, get started with these tips to make the most of your announcements:

QUALITY CONTENT

Quality content stands out. Include relevant data, links, visuals and multimedia whenever possible, and most importantly, have a killer headline.

INCLUDE YOUR TICKER SYMBOL

If you're simply looking for the broadest potential reach possible, include your ticker symbol so that your release is picked up by the websites that syndicate to wire services.

BE READY TO FOLLOW UP

Remember, putting a press release out will not guarantee you calls from journalists. Figure out your targeted list, and once your release is out, follow up!

BUILD CONTENT FOR THE LONG TERM

Even if your story doesn't get picked up, share it on your website, with your email lists, and on social media. Educating the public through your own channels still has value and can help build your position as a thought leader for media opportunities down the road.

HOW TO WRITE AN IMPOSSIBLE-TO-IGNORE PRESS RELEASE

STEP 1: DETERMINE IF IT'S NEWS

For the sake of the journalists who wade through a massive volume of press releases every day, make sure that yours is in fact news. Remember the boy who cried wolf? If you send releases for every bit of information coming out of your organization, you'll quickly find yourself in journalists' "spam" folders and risk getting overlooked when you do have genuinely exciting or important news to share.

Think long and hard about the message you're putting out and remember, there are lots of other venues to communicate information with your target audiences—social media, blogs, live-stream. Is a press release really the best tool for this message?

If the answer is a resounding yes, proceed to...

We're sharing top tips here, but you can find our in-depth process on writing press releases, including a Microsoft Word template in our

PRESS RELEASE ANATOMY GUIDE



HOW TO WRITE AN IMPOSSIBLE-TO-IGNORE PRESS RELEASE

STEP 2: FIND YOUR “BIG WHY”

You’ve decided that your news is news. Now, why should anybody care? More specifically, why would a journalist and their audience care? The answer to this question is crucial and gives you your hook or story angle.

Answers to these questions will help you write your headline, position the messaging of the release, craft your individual journalist pitches, and increase your chance of pickup in the media.

During COVID-19, relevant questions to ask yourself would be:

- Does your story have a local aspect?
- Is it relevant to a topic or theme that’s been popular in the news lately?



STEP 3: WRITE THE BODY OF YOUR PRESS RELEASE FIRST

Once you’ve found your “Big Why”, you can start on the body of your press release. Generally, the headline is easier to write once the release is written and you have all the info in front of you.

STEP 4: CRAFT YOUR HEADLINE

Your headline is perhaps the most crucial aspect of getting your release picked up. It needs to grab attention, and convey exactly what your release is about and why a journalist should care. Revisit your “Big Why” and the body paragraphs for inspiration.

HOW TO WRITE AN IMPOSSIBLE-TO-IGNORE PRESS RELEASE



STEP 5: GET YOUR QUOTES

Usually, you will be writing quotes on behalf of your organization—but check your organization’s policies. For most PR pros, quotes are drafted and then sent to senior management for approval.

STEP 6: SPECIFY YOUR REGION, RELEASE TIME, AND TIME ZONE

When distributing your press release, make sure you specify which region you want, the specific time you want it released (typically, early in the morning is best, such as 6 a.m.) and the time zone. *Do not forget to specify the time zone!*

STEP 7: STYLE YOUR RELEASE

Once you’ve got the meat of your press release (headline, body, and quotes), you can add all the other components and style them to suit your needs. This will often dictate the placement of the logo, header, contact information, release date, and multimedia. Don’t forget to consider where your press release will be posted as this may change how you want to style your release. To finish with a flourish, it’s a good idea to consult your regional style guide. Match your grammatical and stylistic writing standards to those used by journalists in the area.

“As a former reporter, I can say with certainty that journalists still pay attention to press releases and find them a useful tool to stay informed about the companies and industries they cover.”

Brandon Glenn, former editor of Medical Economics

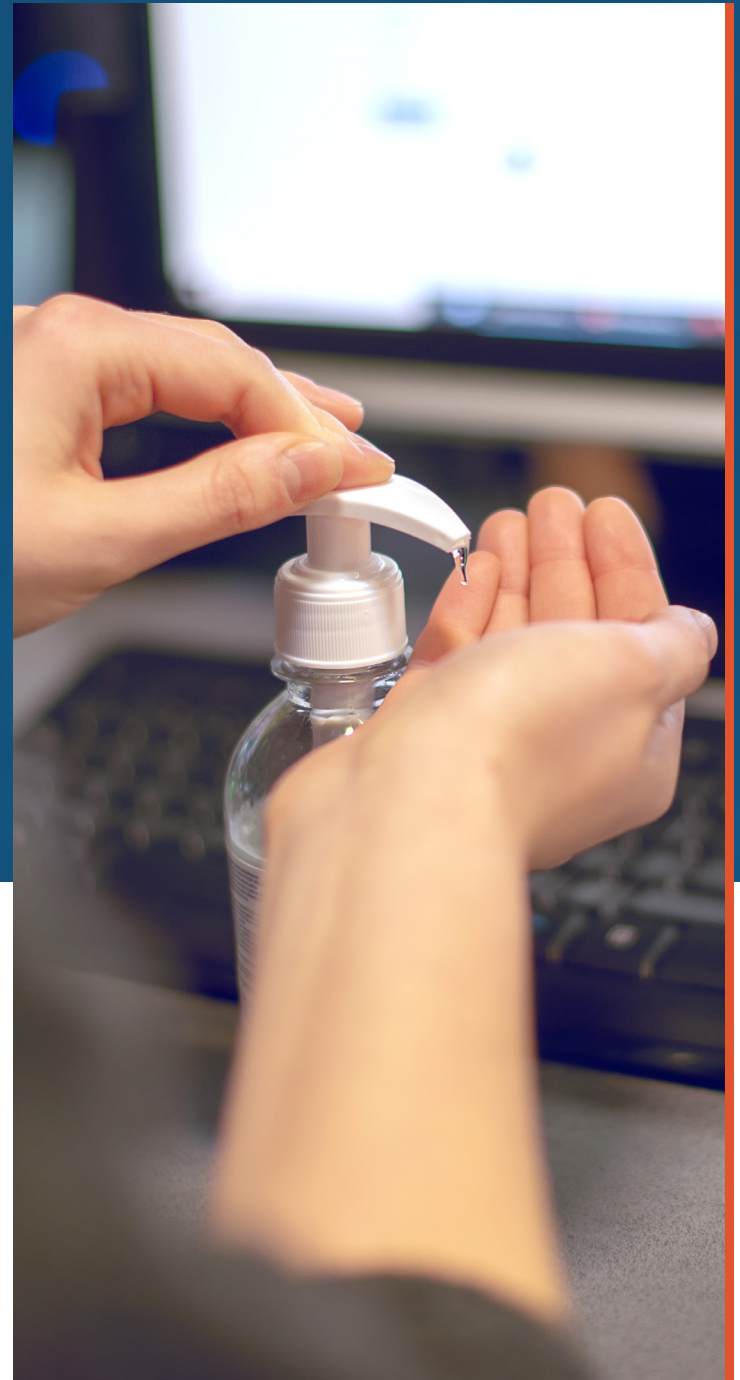
PRESSING ONWARD DURING COVID-19

COVID-19 is a hot topic and its prominence in the media doesn't seem to be going away anytime soon. As our news release tool analysis indicates, it hasn't even reached its peak yet.

As more and more organizations realize the benefit of being able to disseminate information quickly to earn their place in the global narrative, we're confident news release usage won't be slowing down anytime soon either.

*“The world of marketing, communications and PR is now faced with the daunting task of juggling the severity of the situation and the importance of remaining upbeat without being insensitive. **This will undoubtedly change communications forever.**”*

***Cindy Riccio, President and Founder of Cindy Riccio
Communications, Inc., New York City***



PRESSING ONWARD DURING COVID-19

EXPRESS YOUR UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE

If you're experiencing some hesitation, wondering if you have actual news to share or what you can contribute to the narrative, remember, you are an authority in your industry. Since the coronavirus impacts every single industry, you have something no one else does... you! And it turns out, journalists and their audience want to know your story.

BE THE EXPERT YOUR AUDIENCE NEEDS

During the current pandemic situation, expert opinions are important. As one author writes: *“People seek explanations, advice and new strategies in times of emergency. They want to know what to do and how to do it with minimal losses. That is why your expert advice and recommendations in a specific field will be appreciated more than ever.”*



FEEL-GOOD STORIES ARE RESONATING

With negative messages overwhelming readers, acts of kindness are gaining prominent coverage by media. Look for ways to share not only information, but the good news customers or employees have experienced. See if there's a free benefit you can share with the public that will improve their daily situation.

PRESSING ONWARD DURING COVID-19



WORK RESPECTFULLY WITH JOURNALISTS

As you're doing your job providing expert advice and recommendations, remember there's a person on the other end of your press release doing their job too.

“Strong media relationships begin and end with trust: being a helpful, honest broker while recognizing what journalists are going through and how they do their jobs.”

*Aaron Perlut, Brand Reputation Builder
at Elasticity*

WITH ALL OF THIS IN MIND, GO FORTH AND DISSEMINATE YOUR NEWS!

IF YOU'D LIKE TO LEARN ABOUT AGILITY PR SOLUTIONS' INTEGRATED NEWS RELEASE TOOL, WE'D LOVE TO TALK TO YOU! LEARN MORE AT [AGILITYPR.COM](https://agilitypr.com).



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