



# The Ultimate Toolkit for Social & PR Branding

 MOO |  HubSpot

# Why consistency matters to your brand



Every brand has a story. Every great brand knows how to tell that story well. Why? The reality is, whether you're selling coffee, bookcases or enterprise software you've got more competition than ever before. Making sure your story is compelling is the absolute key to getting the edge. And of course, we're not just talking words. Your brand story is communicated in many ways: through your visual identity, tone of voice, PR and social media channels.

It's a lot to think about, and churning out endless content hoping something hits the mark is definitely not the solution. In order to rise in rank, you have to connect with your audience – and there's no 'one size fits all' formula for that. Some channels will work better than others for certain businesses, and some subject matters will gain more traction. In many ways, it's about trial and error, and above all, being consistent.

How does that work? Consistency comes from knowing who you are as a brand. What you stand for. What you care about. What your products or services do for people. Once you've taken the time to cement your brand story (and worldview), you can build content plans, marketing activities and themes that are in line with that. It's not a creative straitjacket – instead it brings a sense of cohesion to everything

you put out into the world. It's also a powerful way to gain brand recognition, helping you connect with like-minded customers, building familiarity, liking and loyalty. Take an artisan shoemaker, for example. They've built a loyal following of customers who love their range of handcrafted, down-to-earth, luxury footwear.

Just imagine how those customers would react to the launch of a new line of high-top sneakers – complete with high-profile marketing campaign featuring a famous basketball star. It's a complete disconnect. Fans would be alienated and disappointed, and those new to the brand would be confused as to what the company was all about. The same applies to what you share online, and how you share it.



“Consistency comes from knowing who you are as a brand. What you stand for. What you care about. What your products or services do for people.”

Look at your audience. Is there consistency in how you interact with customers, prospects, journalists and your blog readers? Do you have a clear brand idea that anchors all of your content and messages? Can you identify clear themes in what you send out into the world? In the following pages, we'll walk you through the process of communicating your brand story online, offline, in social media and in the press – to help you win new customers, retain existing ones, grow your brand recognition and gain a competitive edge.

### Identify your goals

Before we begin, ask yourself what your objectives are for investing in branding across social and PR channels? Knowing this up front makes it easier to know what's working and gives you a direction to pull towards. Examples might include:

- Increasing brand awareness - more social media followers
- Creating an emotional connection with your customers
- Encouraging long-term brand and product loyalty
- Driving sales

### Not sure where to start with your brand story?

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Download *Branding Essentials: A Guide to Branding Your Business* for everything you need to craft an authentic, inspiring brand.

# Crafting your About Us page

If there's one place that it's entirely appropriate to talk about yourself, it's here. Your business's About Us page is a window into your company's world – your people, mission, important milestones, etc. You can include as much or as little detail as you want. It's an opportunity to share the real-life story behind the brand, and engage with people on a very human level.

Before you start writing yours, here are a few considerations to bear in mind. Remember, your goal is to present your story in a way that's authentic, succinct and in line with your brand values.

Don't concern yourself with appealing to everyone – you want to connect with likeminded site visitors in order to convert them into customers. So be true to yourself. We've included some of our favourite examples to help you. The following pages show some great examples.

Make sure your page includes:

- 1 A mission statement**  
Why does your brand exist in the first place? Tell your customers what you offer, and why it matters.
- 2 A value proposition**  
What makes your brand different?
- 3 Photography**  
Include pictures not just of your products or services, but also of your founders, staff and customers. People want to connect with people.
- 4 A call to action**  
Now that consumers are sold on your brand, make it easy for them to act on it. Include one or two of the following:
  - Contact details
  - A link to your blog
  - A newsletter sign-up field
  - A share button that lets them tell their friends about your business
  - A Google Map to your physical store, if you have one
  - Click through to read more/see more/or buy.

# Sittercity

**Why it works:** The company is built on trust (parents won't leave their kids with someone they can't rely on), and of course, ease of use – parents are busy people! The page includes statistics on how quickly the company can match parents with sitters, explains how its services are different from its competitors: "We help parents find more than childcare... We help them find the best sitters and nannies who will challenge, nurture, and enrich kids."

## Our Mission



Kids are kids for such a short period of time. But even the most dedicated parents can't be available every moment of their children's lives to help them learn and grow.

That's why we're committed to helping parents find more than child care. We help families find the best sitters and nannies who will challenge, nurture, and enrich kids when mom and dad can't be there.

Whether she's a native Spanish speaker, has patience with tricky math problems, specializes in infant care, or even all of the above, the best sitter is different for every family. Our focus is connecting each family with the one who best matches their needs.

## Safety Matters

Follow these steps to gather information, evaluate your child care options, and identify the best fit for your family.

### 1 Screen

Review caregiver profiles, read parent reviews, and run background checks

### 2 Interview

Conduct phone interviews, then meet your favorites in-person

### 3 Evaluate

Check sitter references and run in-depth background checks

### The best sitters are here.

We make finding that perfect sitter or nanny a better experience for families. Everything we do — the technology we build, the companies we partner with, and everything our business embodies — strives to attract, cultivate, and feature the industry's top sitters and nannies.

### Sittercity

@Sittercity

We're proud to be the Web's leading #parent-#babysitter matchmaking site & we're dedicated to making your sitter search simple, safe & secure.

Chicago, IL

Sittercity.com



"Parents won't leave their kids with someone they can't rely on."



# Prynt

**Why it works:** It's an inspirational story of a startup that went from grassroots in Paris to a 20-strong team in San Francisco, bolstered by the team's people-focused 'unique selling point' statement: "We started on Kickstarter. This makes us different, special. Our users are literally part of our company."

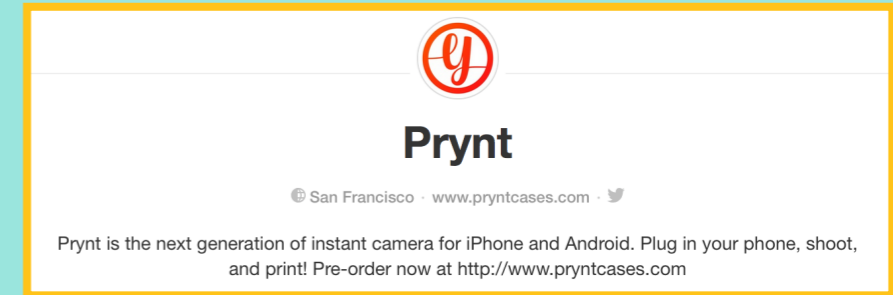
Over on Twitter and Pinterest, Prynt's short bio drills down on its value proposition - instant photos - while on LinkedIn, the longer profile ties this value proposition with the people-centric brand story: Prynt helps people create their stories through beautiful instant photos.



Prynt is the first ever instant camera case for smartphones. Just plug in your device, take a picture, and voila: get a beautiful photo in your hands within seconds. The case is simple — no ink, wifi or bluetooth — and is compatible with iOS and Android phones.

Plus, when you take a photo with Prynt, our app embeds a video inside of it, giving you a creative new way to tell your story. Hold your phone over any printed picture and watch it come to life in augmented reality on screen!

Share more than an instant, share an experience with Prynt.



“Prynt helps people create their stories through beautiful instant photos.”

# Rent the Runway

**Why it works:** This innovative tech page draws you in with real people, engaging out-of-office photography, and detailed descriptions of the team and company operations.

They use bold, aspirational language (they're not just a flash in the pan, they're creating a genuine industry revolution) in order to build confidence in what they do and create a buzz.

On Fridays, we have a "meeting of all meetings" where we brainstorm solutions for a problem someone's roadblocked on.

At Ops Olympics, there was an event that required the men on each team to dress up in their favorite dress and be judged, pageant

We start every company meeting with "core value stories" — people recognize how another team member exemplified one of our core values. At the end of the year, the top five winners get two tickets to a dream vacation wherever they want. I went to Paris!

When I first started, Customer Insights had 1000+ emails and was swamped with chats. Everyone from the CEO to the engineers helped CI get the emails under control. It was amazing to see everyone at the company come together, no matter their position, to help their

Most importantly, they keep it human – showcasing the company philosophy that "we" are all in this together, alongside pictures of happy employees.

On Facebook, Rent the Runway's profile states its value proposition - women get access to thousands of designer gowns - along with a compelling tagline describing its story ("The world saw a dress, we saw an opportunity") and a reinforcement of the brand's humanity (it's not just about dresses, it's about how women feel wearing them).

**WE'RE NOT DISRUPTING AN EXISTING MARKET. WE'RE CREATING A NEW ONE.**

While many life necessities have evolved into the 21st century (music, movies, car rides, hotel rooms), the closet has been left behind. By rethinking it, we're championing a new model and reinventing retail to be smarter and more in line with how we actually live our lives. We exist because we believe a beautiful product shouldn't only be experienced by owning it.

**WE'RE NOT DISRUPTING AN EXISTING MARKET. WE'RE CREATING A NEW ONE.**

Let us help! Send a note to [Help@renttherunway.com](mailto:Help@renttherunway.com) or call 800-509-0842 with any questions, comments or concerns.

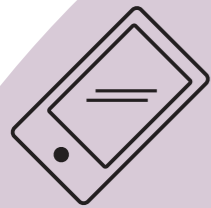
The world saw a dress, we saw an opportunity. Rent the Runway is revolutionizing fashion by giving women access to thousands... See more

Dresses  
Handbags  
Jewelry  
Bridal Accessories  
Jackets

[social@renttherunway.com](mailto:social@renttherunway.com)

<https://www.renttherunway.com>

# How social media enhances your brand



No matter what industry you're operating in, your customers are on social media, and they're open to interacting. In recent years, 43 percent of marketers have reported finding a customer via LinkedIn, while 36 percent have done so on Twitter.

In fact, more than 70 percent of consumers say they're more likely to buy from a brand that they're following on a social site. Crafting a strong social media presence on the channels your audience uses, and succinctly communicating who you are as a brand, means you can connect with your customers in a space they're already in – but you'll have to be consistent if you want to keep them close.

Studies show that 45 percent of a brand's image is directly connected to what it says and how it says it, on social and everywhere else. Imagine a consultancy firm whose 'About Us' page is a formal and concise rundown of its expertise areas and big name clients, but whose Facebook profile is a chatty description of its founder's inspirations. You'd wonder if it's the same company, or perhaps doubt the integrity of its services.

Once again, it's about being consistent. The same goes for the colors and style of images you use on social media – your visual branding. A company's Facebook cover photo that's at odds with the line-drawn graphic on its YouTube channel is a missed opportunity to build brand familiarity.



“A conflicting brand voice confuses customers and erodes your brand. Keeping imagery and tone consistent across social media channels sharply defines your brand – and boosts your potential customers' ability to remember it.”



# Start to identify your social goals



Social sites and platforms are the perfect place for your fans and customers to spread the word about your business, whether they're retweeting, liking or sharing your posts, but they can also meet many other marketing needs.

Before you develop your strategy, think about what you want to achieve.

Your objectives might include

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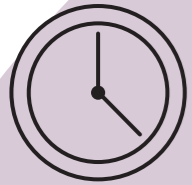
- 1 **Drive traffic to your site**
- 2 **Engage new customers**
- 3 **Grow your brand awareness**
- 4 **Increase content shares**

You can measure progress by looking at:

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- 1 **Volume of brand mentions**
- 2 **Reach (how many people have seen your post?)**
- 3 **Volume of post retweets, replies, likes and shares**
- 4 **Share of voice (how chatter about your brand compares to your competitors)**

# What to post, why, and when



A social media strategy doesn't mean creating accounts on dozens of sites and then bombarding people with friend requests and product updates. It's a constant process that takes time, planning, and, yes, love of that thing called social networking.

Your social feed is more than a functional exchange of information with your followers.

On Facebook and Twitter, go with timely and insightful responses to news and trends, entertain people with fun links, and share content that reflects the things your brand loves and believes in – whether it's Tuscan olive oil, or the state of American cuisine today. The audience you'll find on these sites is looking for information and entertainment in equal measure, and are open to engaging with brands. For example, Facebook posts that end in a question can increase consumer interactions by 162 percent. Bonus: you can use your followers' answers to brainstorm future content topics.

On Instagram and Snapchat, behind-the-scenes photos and video, whether taken at your most recent trade show or inside your brewery, can spark your audience's interest and increase the humanness of your brand.

LinkedIn is perfect for posting white papers, interviews, and research reports. Here too, users are happy to interact with businesses. When LinkedIn polled its users on the best company pages, brands that routinely ask questions of their followers came out on top.



“To build an audience, you have to sound human – not like a product-pushing bot. And to capture their attention, you need to know what to post, where to put it, and when to share that content.”

# 10 things to share on social media

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- 1 Product news**  
Got a new organic lipstick color to promote, or a newly launched flavor of craft beer on the shelves? Definitely tell.
- 2 What's trending?**  
TV shows and pop culture stories are fodder for sparking chat with followers. See what hashtags are being used, and join the conversation by incorporating them in your own posts.
- 3 Quotes**  
Inspire and delight your followers with a famous quote – bonus points if it happens to relate to something trending that day.
- 4 An interesting fact**  
“Did you know” posts can educate as well as entertain, and they're eminently sharable.
- 5 Seasonal content**  
Go beyond Valentine's Day and Halloween and post about the weather, tax season, back to school, the World Series, the Academy Awards, etc.
- 6 Unofficial holidays**  
Ice Cream for Breakfast Day! World Laughter Day! International Clients Day! Look for the holiday that best complements your brand.
- 7 A question**  
Get your followers talking by asking how they feel about a popular subject, your recent product update, even their favorite book or movie.
- 8 A contest**  
Invite your customers to share and tag photos of your product, pick a winner, award a prize. Don't forget to include a memorable hashtag.
- 9 A word of thanks**  
Each out to new followers and longtime fans. This shows your audience that you're grateful for their loyalty (and that you're paying attention).
- 10 Day-of-the-week hashtags**  
If you're stuck for an eloquent way to turn your brand into a hashtag, cash in on #MotivationMonday, #ThrowBackThursday, and #FlashbackFriday (and dozens more).

# Which social network is right for your brand?



## Facebook

Over 1 billion people use Facebook, including 82 percent of 18 to 29 year olds, 79 percent of consumers 30 to 49, and 64 percent of those 50 to 64.

It is, therefore, the first port of call for most brands, particularly if you sell consumer products – though you'll most likely need to pay to reach the right audience.

Write a snappy summary of your brand story, and populate your page with great product and team pictures. Fans of your Page can expand your network by sharing your posts with their friends.



## Twitter

To curate a killer Twitter feed and win followers, you'll need the resources (and inspiration) to post regularly, as it's all about responding quickly to news and trends.

You get just 160 characters for your Twitter bio, so focus on your brand's unique features with keywords related to your product. For a fee, you can get your tweets seen by a wider audience. Thirty percent of online adults under 50 currently use the site, and it's well suited to brands that sell consumer products, and those that sell to businesses.





### Instagram

Instagram users – half of whom are 18 to 29 years old – are highly engaged and love great imagery. Using well-chosen hashtags allows like-minded consumers who don't follow you to view your content, making it a great lead-generation tool, and a nice fit for both B2B and B2C brands.

However, users can't click to your site from your individual posts, only from your profile, so be sure to include your website address with your company tagline.



### Pinterest

Pinterest is primarily visual, too, but its audience is evenly split between the ages of 18-29 and 30-49. Whether you sell business or consumer products, showcase them with gorgeous photos on pin boards and learn about your target audience by tracking what they post, repin and more.

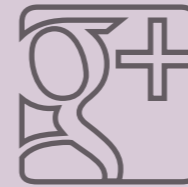


### Snapchat

It's no longer just for teens - many brands are using Snapchat to take consumers behind the scenes at product launches, conferences, photo shoots, and fashion shows. If your brand is involved in a lot of live events, Snapchat can deliver a new audience of 13 to 34 year olds.

A major benefit is the ability to post video content quickly, while photos and videos can easily get a fun spin with overlaid emojis.

It's worth noting that 28 percent of 15 to 34 year olds use the site, and a whopping 73 percent of users are male.



### Google Plus

Having a presence on Google Plus makes your business or brand readily available on Google. Racking up the +1s (or likes) on your Google Plus posts improves your Google search rankings - all the more reason to post great content, respond to customer reviews and build your audience on this lesser-used network.

It's worth noting that 28 percent of 15 to 34 year olds use the site, and a whopping 73 percent of users are male.



### YouTube

A lot of companies are sitting on a wealth of video content from conferences or company events that they're not making the most of. Maybe you've recorded a workshop demonstrating how you make your metal art, or how you use Himalayan salt in your gourmet spice rub? Get it out there for the world to see.

A YouTube Brand Channel can benefit all kinds of businesses, as YouTube reaches more 18 to 49 year olds than any cable network in the country. It's regularly visited by more than 98 percent of 18 to 24 year old internet users in U.S, and 74.4 percent of those 65 years and older.



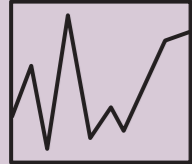
### LinkedIn

For business-to-business companies, a LinkedIn Company Page is key. Use it to demonstrate expertise in your industry with LinkedIn longform posts, get in front of potential new clients with Sponsored Updates, and suss out other brands that may need your services.

LinkedIn is the only social site with more users between 30 and 64 than 18 to 29 years old, and its recently redesigned mobile app will connect you with your audience wherever they are.

# Is your social media strategy working?

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Dig into the data on how many people share or like your posts, when they do it, and whether those turn into site visits or sales. Use what you learn about what resonates to plan future content. Monitor progress with tangible achievements – are you driving more traffic to your site, increasing followers, and improving engagement?

## Keep your social media strategy on track

There are many scheduling tools – both free and paid-for – that can help you plan your posts in weekly blocks, a month in advance, or even further in the future. Such social media calendars are a useful visual aid to keep other employees in the loop, and log how much time each channel requires. For a robust social scheduling solution that makes publishing easy, try HubSpot Social Inbox.

**Bonus:** We've provided a social calendar planning template in the toolkit.

## Writing your social media profile

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### **Need a three-line Facebook summary, or a catchy tagline for your Instagram or LinkedIn?**

Draw from the content featured on your 'About Us' page. Distill your key message down to the who, what and why of your business, and don't forget to include your web address. Also, make sure your tone of voice is consistent – particularly if your bio and About Us page are written by different authors. Consistency counts (as mentioned earlier!), and your brand voice should feel familiar and recognizable to people no matter which social site they visit.



# What is PR and why do you need it?



Public relations, or PR, is how you talk about your brand to the public – and therefore potential new customers – through the media and social influencers. And though it can seem daunting when you come across campaigns like a pop-up “cuddle cafe” designed to promote a biscuit, PR doesn’t have to be costly. A PR campaign can just as easily involve a few great emails to key reporters and a smart hashtag.

Good PR drives brand awareness and sales. Successful PR makes your brand image even stronger. And the foundation of successful PR is – you guessed it – a strong brand. In the next pages, we’ll show you how to pitch your company, its mission and its products to reporters and bloggers who can help you grow your audience and connect with new customers.



“Good PR drives brand awareness and sales. Successful PR makes your brand image even stronger. And the foundation of successful PR is – you guessed it – a strong brand.”

# Start to identify your PR goals



As with your social media strategy, before you invest time and resources into a PR plan, know your main objective and how you intend to measure your progress. Set your performance metrics from the start.

## Your objectives might include

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- 1 **Increase awareness of your brand or company**
- 2 **Increase awareness of your product**
- 3 **Enhance your search rankings**

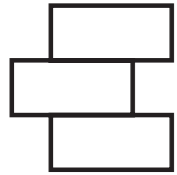
## Your measures of that might be

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- 1 **Traffic to landing pages**
- 2 **Social shares / social conversation volume**
- 3 **Media coverage**
- 4 **Higher search result**

# How to build relationships with the media

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Building a rapport with reporters can be a great (and free!) way to get your brand into widely read publications, both local and national, print and digital.

Being featured in an article online gets around the challenges of paid-for marketing, like “banner blindness” and ad blockers. But before you fire off an email about how readers can benefit from your products, remember the basics of building good media connections.

## How to find and partner with a social influencer

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- 1 Know a reporter's beat**  
Sending a press release and story pitch on your new pug parka business to an emerging tech reporter isn't going to get you anywhere. Instead, read up on your target journalists to understand what they're interested in covering – and what they've covered recently.
- 2 Personalize your pitch**  
Calling reporters by name (spelled correctly, of course) and personalizing your message can help you stand out. You may be sending the same general message to everyone on your list, but it doesn't have to look or sound that way.
- 3 Respect their time**  
Reporters are busy people, so try not to pester them with repeated emails. A customized email that includes your media release, followed by a nudge a few days later, will do.
- 4 Use social media to your advantage**  
Twitter is a popular network for journalists, and a social connection could lead to high-profile coverage. Read, share and comment on a reporter's stories to get on their radar and show you're well informed about their work.
- 5 Become a trusted resource**  
Help a Reporter Out (HARO) is a free tool that sends reporter queries straight to your inbox, creating opportunities for you to become a source and be quoted in the press.

# How to work with social influencers



You can aim marketing efforts directly at your audience – or get a boost by working with social influencers. Influencers are trusted sources of information and opinions, generally in particular fields; an influencer in vintage fashion circles won't necessarily hold as much sway in haute couture.

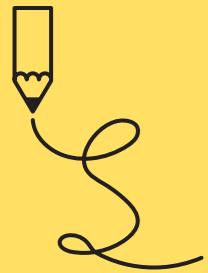
They usually have large followings, on social media and their personal blogs, but more importantly, they have highly engaged followers who frequently share and react to their posts. Getting your brand mentioned by an influencer can be a powerful way to grow your social media followers and reach a much wider audience.

## How to find and partner with a social influencer

- 1 Monitor social media**  
Look for regular users of hashtags related to your business on sites like Twitter and Instagram. Search for your brand name to find fans of your products who have a large following – and whose tone of voice is complementary to your brand. Remember, an influencer also has a brand image that, like yours, needs to be consistent.
- 2 Reach out to bloggers**  
A blogger outreach program may sound overwhelming, but it's really just a matter of finding bloggers in a space related to your business (moms, health nuts, soon-to-be grooms) and connecting over email or through a social site. For example, Skype partnered with half a dozen bloggers and recorded them conducting their daily activities while communicating with each other via the Skype mobile app. The result? A product demo with authenticity, fronted by online personalities with highly engaged audiences to share it with.
- 3 Encourage content shares**  
When you've found some good candidates, offer to create a guest post for their blog, or to feature them as a special guest on your own. Invite them to review your product, or explain how it's relevant to what they cover. Show them where you fit into their world. Just like your customers, influencers love a great brand, product or service.  
  
This will sometimes involve a fee, but the right blogger endorsement can drive traffic and even sales. Just make sure to research the best targets.
- 4 Live and let live**  
Allow influencers to talk about your product in a way that's natural to their voice and try not to insist they integrate a set list of points. Influencers have put a lot of time into developing trust with their audiences, and you'll get the most out of a partnership when an influencer weaves your brand into their narrative, not yours.



# How to write a great press release



Every day, brands cumulatively email thousands of press releases in the hope that they'll pique the interest of reporters and bloggers who'll feature their news. Press releases are a great tool but should be used sparingly and only when there is substantial news to report (e.g. a new product or new business location). In the absence of that, a well crafted and individually targeted pitch to the right reporter will have much better results than simply sending a press release to a long list of reporters.

With that, how do you make yours stand out?  
By telling a story.

Weave a narrative that draws readers and incites a response from the busiest of journalists. Narrative elements make it easier for reporters to envision the story you hope to tell, and encourages them to quote your release in their reports.

For example, you can kick off your release in a couple of ways:

"Company X announced today the release of our new coconut-lime-scented sunscreen..."

OR

"The sea, the sand, and the smell of sunscreen: nothing says summer quite like it. Today Company X is proud to release our new coconut-lime sunscreen, an update on the classic beachgoer scent!"

Which would get your attention?

## Not sure where to start with your press release?

The toolkit includes a press release template on everything you need to pique the interest of reporters and bloggers.

# 6 elements of a killer press release

- 1 Have a strong hook**

Why are you deploying your press release? Did you launch a new product? Is your news seasonally relevant? Does it tie into a hot news story? That's your hook, and you should lead with it in the first paragraph and title. Without a strong news angle, a press release might not be the best way to go.
- 2 Add spice with quotes**

Incorporate some thoughts and insights from relevant people in your business to add interest and a human touch, but keep them to one or two max. Bonus: These are handy for reporters to include in articles.
- 3 Focus on the story rather than your brand**

When reporters read press releases, it's the story they look for. When writing your press release, ask yourself:

  - Is this right for the publication's audience?
  - Is the news unique?
  - Is it timely and relevant?

A great press release will, of course, include all pivotal facts – just make sure to frame it in the context of a larger story to make it more compelling for reporters.
- 4 Use multimedia**

By that we mean visuals, like your company logo, executive headshots, photos and videos. These can be included with the press release when distributed for an additional fee, or simply offered to reporters in your pitch email. While not necessary, they can make your story more compelling and result in media interest. Unique multimedia like a making-of video or infographic that describes timely industry news can even be the story itself.
- 5 Limit Links**

You want your readers to focus on your release, not leave the page to explore related but secondary information. Keep hyperlinks to a minimum; three or fewer is best.
- 6 End with a boiler plate**

Conclude all releases with an About the Company paragraph. Take the best bits from your About Us page and boil them down into an elevator pitch. Journalists will reference this for important information like your business's age, location and how you like your brand to be described in the media.


# Outro

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Itching to apply all this good stuff? Great. Armed with your newfound knowledge of all things branding, PR, and social media, it's time to dive into the challenge of bringing your brand story to life across all channels.

Use the bonus Press Release template to help you along the journey and make sure you keep on track by printing out the checklist too.

Good luck!



The Ultimate Toolkit for Social & PR  
Branding has been produced in  
partnership between MOO and  
Hubspot because we both love  
helping businesses grow and develop.

**HubSpot**

is an inbound marketing and sales software platform that helps companies attract visitors, convert leads and close customers.

**MOO**

is an online print and design company that makes it easy for everybody to create seriously beautiful stationery, like Business Cards, Notecards, Stickers and Flyers.

 MOO | 