

Company Logo

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January 25, 2010

For Immediate Release

Headline: **Washington Beer Commission Announces Hand-Crafted Beer Tasting and Celebrity Chili Cook-Off Event**

Subhead: **Ken Griffey, Jr., Matt Hasselbeck, Dave Mathews and Eddie Vedder expected to participate in inaugural summer event**

City, State: **Seattle, WA** - This is the introductory, and it should briefly summarize the entire press release. The paragraph should be approximately 3 to 5 sentences. Be sure to mention what's happening, the date, time, where it happens, and the important people involved. The first paragraph will make or break the potential story. If it's not clear, concise and informative, most people will not read the rest of the release.

The middle paragraphs go into more detail. For example, explain the importance of the event and why it's taking place. This is a good place to provide detail about the participants, who stands to benefit, who stands to lose, etc. In general, remember that most important information should be placed at the beginning of the article - information at the end is less likely to be read. Be sure to answer who, what, when, where, why, and how early in the release.

Another section could discuss the history of the particular event, program, or news event. This is where you'll go in detail about how it got started and what services have been offered in the past. Discuss how things are changing for the better. Once again, you should keep paragraphs at about 3 to 5 sentences in length.

The very last paragraph is called the "boilerplate." It is usually no more than 3-4 sentences. Example: The Washington Beer Commission, established in 2007, is supported by revenue from beer festivals and special events. It was established to represent the interests of the brewing industry and to promote Washington beer as fresh, local and recognized for great quality and value. Washington's beer industry supported more than 20,000 jobs and had a total economic impact of nearly \$3 billion in 2009.

Writing for the Internet

When it comes to getting your press release seen online, the rules for writing may be slightly different from what you've been taught. Use these tips to help you write a release that people will read and search engines will find.

1. Choose and use your keywords. Think like your reader: What words are most likely to be searched for by people looking for what you want them to find in your release? Choose/use those words multiple times.

2. Use bold, italics, and underlined text for emphasis. To make key phrases and keywords more visible to search engines and people, use the formatting features provided in your word processing program to emphasize the most important language in your press release.

3. Keep your headlines short. Google recommends headlines between 2 and 22 words for optimum visibility and search results. And Google results display only the first 63 characters of each headline.

4. Add a sub headline. If you're looking to amplify your headline, the sub headline is the perfect place. The sub headline displays directly below the headline and will be recognized on many search engines. Write a succinct headline and add additional details in the sub headline field.

5. Keep it readable. While your goal is to appear high in search engine results, don't miss the mark by writing copy that's overly repetitive, keyword or link stuffed or unreadable. You want search engines to find your press release and for readers to click through to it. Strike a balance.

6. Be careful with puns, innuendo and double meanings. Search engines have no sense of humor. Keep this in mind when trying to attract their attention.

7. Write timely content that provides useful information to readers. Provide tips, advice, or analysis in your press release that is relevant to your industry or your customers' interests. Search engines reward press releases that provide useful, relevant content.

8. Utilize hyperlinks and anchor text, but don't overdo it. Too many links can flag your release as spam and get you blocked by search engines. One link max per 100 words is recommended. Choose relevant links that direct traffic to the specific pages you are promoting rather than generic links. And avoid links in your headline — they won't display on search engines.

9. Be consistent. Some words have multiple spellings — such as t-shirt and tee-shirt, or email and e-mail. Stick with one spelling to avoid appearing unorganized, preferably choosing the more frequently searched spelling.

10. Keep it fresh. As press releases age, they tend to drift lower in the search engine results pages. A campaign of several press releases is more likely to drive results than a single press release.

11. Publish on your own website. Be sure to make your press releases available on your own website. If you have a blog, repurpose the press release content as a blog post. Since links are like votes, use them to drive traffic to appropriate pages that you host. And work with your web team to make sure your own site is optimized for the same keywords that are used in the release.

Additional Press Release Writing Tips

- Have a strong and solid news angle that's worthy of coverage in your target media outlets.
- Write "for the media," and not necessarily for the company's target market. Your customers are much more likely to read a picked up story in the media than your actual press release.
- Format your press release properly.
- Keep the release to one informative page whenever possible.
- Include full media contact info (at least a full name, phone number, and email address).
- Don't forget to add your company's URL, where more background can be found.
- Add a boilerplate with some general background on the company issuing the news.
- Answer the basics of who?, what?, when?, where?, and why? early in the press release.
- Get to know your local media outlets and the writers and reporters themselves.
- Know the media deadlines.
- Keep your media database current.
- Send out a release only when you have actual news.
- Proofread your press release! Have another set of eyes take a look as well.