



ULTIMATE RESOURCE GUIDE TO PROMOTING YOUR WORK

Part 1:
Press
Releases

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PRESS RELEASES

Most journalists receive hundreds of these every day, so keep it short (a single side of A4 is plenty), divide up the copy with subheadings and into short paragraphs so that it is easy to read, and make it interesting. Cut out long sentences of introductory copy and background information (unless strictly relevant). Try to evoke the atmosphere, or the issues raised by a book, rather than recount its full content.

Bear in mind that the publication of a book may not be the most interesting news to a journalist. What the journalist wants is a story. It could be something in the book, or something in your background, or in the news, or a publicity event. In my own experience, what attracts me to a particular piece, book or story is whether the human element of how our readers will benefit is addressed. That can be from a spiritual, economic, professional, emotional, health and wellbeing, intellectual or entertainment aspect – or anything that has an appealing, greater good, purpose. In addition to press releases I get between 10 and 20 books arriving in the course of a week, also accompanied by PR material, so the volume of material to choose from is huge.

If you are emailing an editor or journalist with information, incorporate your PR message in the body of the email – don't send attachments, but offer further information if required. It's also a good idea to add a PRESS/MEDIA area to your website where journalists can download all your information – a bio, high resolution and web quality photos, the image of your book cover, a synopsis of the book and even a free chapter or two.

Adam Shaw, the award winning journalist and presenter, once told me how at the BBC's Working Lunch programme they had the Fax machine positioned over the waste bin – because so much of the information sent in to the show was badly presented!

“Put it before them briefly so they will read it, clearly so they will appreciate it, picturesquely so they will remember it and above all accurately so they will be guided by its light.”

Joseph Pulitzer, newspaper publisher and Founder of the U.S. award for achievements in newspaper and online journalism, literature and musical composition.



PRESS RELEASE GUIDELINES

THE DOS

START STRONG:

You only have a matter of seconds to grab your readers' attention, so you want to capture it with a strong opening. Your headline, summary and first paragraph should clarify your news. The rest of your release should provide the detail.

IDENTIFY YOURSELF:

If your release does not identify the source of the information within the first few paragraphs, you may lose the promotional value your release can provide.

WRITE PROFESSIONALLY:

If your release contains hype, slang, excessive exclamation points or some other common mistakes chances are it will be viewed as an advertisement rather than a news release, which may hurt credibility. Or worse, a media outlet may pick up your release and publish without modification, opening any sloppy writing to a larger audience.

LIMIT JARGON:

The best way to communicate is to speak plainly using ordinary language. Using an abundance of technical language and jargon limits your reading audience.

MAKE SURE YOUR INFORMATION IS INFORMATIVE AND TIMELY:

Think about your audience. Will someone else find your story interesting? Answer the question, "Why should anyone care?" Make sure your announcement contains information that is timely, unique, highlights something new or unusual, and provides useful information to your audience. In other words, don't make it an advertisement for your business.

AVOID CLICHÉS:

You don't listen to clichés. Neither will your audience. Avoid phrases like "customers save money" or "great customer service" to announce or describe. Focus on the aspects of your announcement that truly set you apart from everyone else.

PICK AN ANGLE:

Make sure that your release has a good hook. Tying your information to current events, recent studies, trends and social issues brings relevance, urgency and importance to your message.

USE ANCHOR TEXT AND FEATURES:

News releases can accommodate multimedia files like images, video, links and other features that will capture the attention of your readers and highlight your news. Attach logos, head shots, product shots, photographs, audio files,

video files, PDF documents or any other supplemental materials that build up your release. Use anchor text and hyperlinks to point readers back to your site ensures both your Website and your important keywords receive simultaneous promotion in your press release.

ILLUSTRATE THE SOLUTION:

Use real life examples to illustrate how your company or organization solved a problem. Identify the problem and why your solution is the right solution. Give examples.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO TOOT YOUR OWN HORN:

Online news or press release distribution is a successful way to create expert status. If your company has reached a milestone, celebrated an anniversary, hired a new president, experienced significant growth or received an award, tell the world what you did right. Or, write a release that offers readers “tips” or help in your field of expertise.

DON'T GIVE AWAY ALL THE SECRETS:

If you're running a new promotion this season, tell readers where they can go to learn more. Provide links in your press release directly to the page on your Website where readers can learn the specifics about your news and then act upon it. If you give your readers no reason to click through to your site, they're not necessarily going to.

STICK TO THE FACTS:

Tell the truth. Avoid fluff, embellishments, hype and exaggerations. If you feel that your press release seems sensational, there's a good chance your readers will think so too.

USE ACTIVE VOICE:

Verbs in the active voice bring your press release to life. Rather than writing “entered into a partnership,” use “partnered” instead. Do not be afraid to use strong verbs. For example, “The committee exhibited severe hostility over the incident” reads better if changed to “The committee was enraged over the incident.”

ECONOMIZE YOUR WORDS:

Be concise. News search engines sometimes reject news releases with overly long headlines, excessive lists and high overall word counts. Eliminate unnecessary adjectives, flowery language or redundant expressions such as “added bonus” or “first time ever.”

PROOFREAD:

Write your press release in a Word or other text document instead of writing it directly on the online submit page, so you can print it, proofread, rewrite and proofread again. The more time you take to do it right, the better your company's impression to the world.

THE DON'TS

HERE ARE A FEW THINGS THAT SHOULD NOT BE IN ANY PRESS RELEASE:

- All capital letters to emphasize anything.
- Grammatical errors.
- Lack of content and substance.
- Advertisements or promotional/fluffy language.
- Hype.
- The words “you”, “I” or “we” outside of a quoted statement.

TOPIC IDEAS

ANNOUNCING A NEW PRODUCT OR FEATURE.

Product launches are fundamental to fuelling your company's growth. Generate maximum online visibility for your next product launch with online marketing tools and promotions.

WINNING AN AWARD.

Awards give your company credibility with your customers—and sending out an online news release is a great way to get the attention your award deserves. Whether you are a local restaurant celebrating your Zagat Rating or your company has been voted best place to work—let the world know.

HOSTING A FUNDRAISING DINNER OR TECHNOLOGY SUMMIT.

Successful events need publicity—and what better way than to announce your event online, where millions of people can learn how they can participate in or support your event. Whether you are hosting a fundraising dinner, or launching a technical summit, keep your prospects up to date while driving traffic to your web site by promoting your event.

ANNOUNCING AN EMPLOYEE CHANGE.

Employee promotions and new hires can be big news. And sharing that news with the world shows that your business is growing and that you value your team.

LAUNCHING A NEW PARTNERSHIP.

Sharing news about your business partnerships is one of the best ways to promote your success, highlight your company's growth, build credibility for your company and your partner's company, and potentially lead to new customers for both organizations.

SHARING SURVEY RESULTS.

Market research is an effective tool to build credibility and awareness for your key initiatives—especially when the information is broadly communicated. Whether you're using survey data to identify industry trends or to build support for a key program, share that information.

A FEW MORE TIPS:

SECRETS OF A PRESS RELEASE

- ✓ Should sound like news, not an advertisement
- ✓ Concise - keep it punchy and don't use unnecessary language
- ✓ Don't overestimate the intelligence of your audience. Use short sentences.
- ✓ Only send your press release to the media related to the topic of your press release.
- ✓ Objectivity - don't over hype the story
- ✓ Keep your press release one page in length.
- ✓ Create a Catchy Headline. Your header and first few sentences should grab the reader's attention.
- ✓ Timing - make it topical and give it a time and date.
- ✓ Try and make it unique

TO BYPASS THE MEDIA, THINK LIKE THEY DO

In order to implement a successful press release strategy, think like a publisher. Marketers at the most enlightened organizations recognize the fact that they are now purveyors of information and they manage content as a valuable asset with the care a publishing company does.

One of the most important things that publishers do is start with a content strategy and then focus on the mechanics and design of delivering that content. Publishers carefully identify and define target audiences and consider what content is required in order to meet their needs. Publishers consider questions like:

Who are my readers?

How do I reach them?

What are their motivations?

What are the problems I can help them solve?

How can I entertain them and inform them at the same time?

What content will compel them to purchase what I have to offer?

FREE PRESS RELEASE SITES

We're often asked for details of free press release sites, so rather than having to dig out the list all the time, we've put together this document.

The sites in the list all work as of today, (16th February 2009), and all accept submissions for free.

Of course, submitting to lots of press release sites is no substitution for decent PR, but we hope that you find this list useful.

<http://www.1888PressRelease.com>
<http://www.businessscene.com>
<http://www.eCommWire.com>
<http://www.FreePressIndex.com>
<http://www.FreePressRelease.co.cc>
<http://www.FreePressReleases.co.uk>
<http://www.i-NewsWire.com>
<http://www.IndiaPRWire.com>
<http://www.MediaSyndicate.com>
<http://www.MyFreePR.com>
<http://myeasyonlinepay.com/press-releases/>
<http://www.NewswireToday.com>
<http://www.PageRelease.com>
<http://www.PR.com>
<http://www.PR9.net>
<http://www.PR-Inside.com>
<http://www.PRCompass.com>
<http://www.PRlog.com>
<http://www.PressReleasePoint.com>
<http://www.pressbox.co.uk>
<http://www.pressflow.co.uk>
<http://www.PR.com>
<http://www.PR9.net>
<http://www.storebuilder.co.uk>
<http://www.TechPRSpider.com>
<http://www.TheOpenPress.com>

A SAMPLE

Here's a sample email that is short and snappy:

Dear Press Colleagues & Friends in the Bridal Trade,

Sarah Haywood Wedding Design is delighted to announce the latest phase of our Wedding Planning Apps have today (Monday 6th September) been released and are in the iTunes App Store now. They are free to download until **MIDNIGHT TONIGHT ONLY** - just search for "Sarah Haywood" in the App Store or click on the Apps Icon on the homepage of our website at: <http://sarahhaywood.com> to be taken direct to our Apps page.

Top-selling bridal author and party planner to the stars Sarah Haywood, is the first wedding coordinator **globally** to produce a suite of Wedding Planning Apps. Our 'Wedding Planning Timeline', 'Wedding Budget Manager' and 'Bow Tie Tutor' apps join the free 'Wedding Countdown' released in May and which has enjoyed thousands of downloads world-wide from Matlock to Mumbai and Nepal to Nebraska!

For further information please contact us.

Kind regards,

Rachel Brzezinska

Press Office

Sarah Haywood Wedding Design

ENDS

On the following page is a typical Press release for a book sent out by a major publisher. You will see that it is two pages long – and you may cry that we have been urging you to keep yours to one page. The reason is that PR coming from publishers in this way is often printed and sent along with a review copy of the book. It is also usually being sent to an established contact rather than as a prospecting tool. So to first attract attention in doing your own PR, you really do need to be concise.

The alternative is to employ the services of a publicist who specializes in helping authors build their profile, and this is naturally dependent on budget.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Senior Publicist

Contact:

**THE FIRST BOOK TO OFFER SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE FOR THE POWER OF
INTENTION**

**THE INTENTION EXPERIMENT
Using Your Thoughts to Change Your Life and the World**

By Lynne McTaggart

*“We can no longer view ourselves as isolated from our environment and our thoughts the private, self-contained workings of an individual brain. Dozens of scientists have produced thousands of papers in the scientific literature offering sound evidence that thoughts are capable of profoundly affecting all aspects of our lives. As observers and creators, we are constantly remaking our world at every instant. Every thought we have, every judgment we hold, however unconscious, is having an effect. With every moment that it notices, the conscious mind is sending an intention.” — Lynne McTaggart, **THE INTENTION EXPERIMENT***

From one of the world’s leading human consciousness experts and award-winning science journalist, comes **THE INTENTION EXPERIMENT: Using Your Thoughts to Change Your Life and Your Thoughts (Free Press; Jan. 9, 2007; \$26.00)**, a comprehensive overview of the science of intention and the first resource to explain how to use this power in your life, individually and collectively. Part science, part personal growth, **THE INTENTION EXPERIMENT** is both instruction manual and living experiment—engaging readers in what is to be the largest mind-over-matter experiment in history.

Presenting scientific evidence that every thought we have is a tangible energy with the power to transform and that consciousness affects matter, Lynne McTaggart sets the stage for the practice of using effective guided intention. By recounting some of the most significant experiments ever conducted in the field of human consciousness, from research by a young graduate student at the University of Chicago that proves non-locality and quantum entanglement extends to objects outside of the quantum world, to the work of German physicist Fritz-Albert Popp who discovered that all living things constantly emit a tiny current of light, McTaggart offers readers comprehensive knowledge of how the components of our physical universe are capable of being fundamentally altered.

THE INTENTION EXPERIMENT calls on the work of people who have managed to master intention and perform the extraordinary—spiritual healers, Buddhist monks, *Qigong* masters, shamans—to reveal the transformational process they underwent to use their thoughts for powerful effect. Extrapolating a program from her mountains of research on this very subject, McTaggart offers a blueprint for using intention effectively in our own lives with a series of exercises and recommendations for how best to “power up” to arrive at a level of consciousness necessary to most powerfully affect change.

“We are only beginning to understand the vast and untapped human potential at our disposal: the human being’s extraordinary capacity to influence the world,” she writes. “This potential is every person’s birthright, not simply that of the gifted master. Our thoughts may be an inexhaustible and simple resource that can be called upon to focus our lives, heal our illnesses, clean up our cities and improve the planet.”

Knowing the great potential for readers to do just this, **THE INTENTION EXPERIMENT** offers a springboard for readers to incorporate intention into their everyday lives. With a chapter devoted entirely to personal intention experiments, McTaggart outlines goals for readers to consider, inviting us to choose goals that seldom occur or is particularly unlikely—from having your child help with the dishes, to improving the weather—and asks readers to report their results by writing in to the book’s website: www.theintentionexperiment.com

For her own first intention experiment, McTaggart assembled 16 experienced meditators in London and asked them to use their intention to four remote targets in Fritz Popp’s lab in Neuss, Germany: two types of algae, a plant, and a human volunteer. The meditators were asked to attempt to lower certain measurable biodynamic processes. Using *Acetabularia*, beautiful algae known as “the mermaid’s wine glass,” common in the Caribbean and Mediterranean, Popp determined it would be possible to demonstrate with a fair degree of certainty the result of the meditators’ remote influence. McTaggart guided the meditators through a schedule of directed intention and the group focused on altering the tiny light in the algae. The results created a major healing effect.

Building on the success of this experiment, McTaggart now endeavors to undertake the world’s largest mind-over-matter experiment in history and invites readers of **THE INTENTION EXPERIMENT** to participate in a massive group intention. With Dr. Schwartz at the University of Arizona, McTaggart is preparing a “mini-Gaia” with an artificially raised temperature. The plan is to ask readers, through her website, which will form the hub of this entirely self-funded research, to attempt to lower the Gaia’s temperature at a particular moment. Instructions and results, as well as future experiment announcements, will be posted online. Experiments will be ongoing as more and more readers come to participate through buying the book.

THE INTENTION EXPERIMENT is an ode to the possibilities of directed will and a guide to positive thought. It takes, after all, just one thought to change the world.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Lynne McTaggart is an internationally recognized spokesperson on the science of spirituality and is the author of five books, including *The Field*, which has been published in fourteen languages and informed the wildly successful cult classic movie, *What the BLEEP Do We Know!?* She is also the co-executive director of Conatus, which publishes some of the world’s most respected health and spiritual newsletters, including *What Doctors Don’t Tell You* and *Living the Field*. She lives in London.

ABOUT THE BOOK:

THE INTENTION EXPERIMENT: Using Your Thoughts to Change Your Life and the World
By Lynne McTaggart

Publication date: January 9, 2007 / Hardcover price: \$26.00 / Pages: 290 / ISBN: 0-7432-7695-7
Alternate selection in One Spirit Book Club’s Winter 2007 Catalog

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