



MASTERING

Press Release Writing

**Publiqly's 5 Proven Steps to Writing Press Releases
That Journalists and Bloggers Can't Ignore**

Thank You

Thanks for downloading this Compact Guide to help you write effective press releases in 5 easy-to-follow steps. The method used in this guide is based on Publiqly's proven system for writing press releases that journalists and bloggers can't ignore. For more information, please visit [Publiqly.com](https://publiqly.com)

CASE STUDY: CAR JUICE

Throughout this guide, we show you how a fictitious company called Car Juice followed our step-by-step method to write an effective press release about a new contract.

Jill Smith is the secretary for Car Juice CEO Karen Stewart. Although she never had any PR training, Jill is the person responsible for writing press releases at Car Juice. Here are the key facts she collected from her boss and sales director:

- » **Who:** That's an easy one - Car Juice.
- » **What:** A new multi-year contract from the New York City Department of Transportation.
- » **Where:** New York City.
- » **When:** A five-year contract that Car Juice won today.
- » **Why:** To help New Yorkers switch over to electric cars.
- » **How:** Car Juice will install 800+ charging stations across five New York boroughs, deploy and run the network, as well as offer its smart energy management services.

STEP 1.

Gather Your Input

Preparation is everything when writing effective press releases. Before you start, you need to get a clear picture of the news that you're about to announce by gathering all the key facts.

The most effective way to do that is to sit down and interview your most important sources or send them an email with targeted questions. Your sources could be your boss, your sales director, your product manager and/or any external parties involved such as customers and vendors.

Which Questions to Ask?

Journalists use six basic questions to make sure they get their facts straight: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How. Depending on the topic at hand, these magic questions can take many shapes and forms. More on that soon.

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In our example, Car Juice wants to use publicity to strengthen its reputation as a young innovative company that is moving forward while keeping its customers' interests in mind.

Framing the News

This is a very important contract for Car Juice. After the Paris climate deal in December 2015, Car Juice launched a charging concept specifically targeted at metropolitan areas that are looking for a solution to reduce CO2 emissions. New York is the fifth city to sign up this year - and by far the largest.

For New York drivers, the availability of fast charging stations throughout the city will make it much easier to go electric.

Our Desired Headline

Based on the above, this is the headline we want to read in our target publication:

» Car Juice Wins Multi-Year Contract to Help New York Drivers Go Electric

STEP 2.

Determine Your Key Messages

You're writing your press release with a reason. You want customers, business partners or other audience groups to know about your company and the news that you're sharing. But you also want them to think favorably about your business. To get there, you need to zoom in on your key messages.

If possible, sit down with your sources and challenge them on the following issues:

- How do we want people to think or feel about our company?
- Framing the news in the most favorable way:
 - › What's the significance for our company?
 - › How will it help our customers and other audience groups?
 - › What statements can we make and do we have enough facts to back up our claims?
- What headline do we want to read in our target publication?

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In our example, Car Juice is targeting environmentally conscious New York area customers. The company is telling potential customers that its charging stations will be ubiquitous in New York, making it easier for them to charge their cars.

Car Juice is also targeting other cities and potential business partners to support its nationwide expansion plans.

STEP 3.

Zero in on Your Target Audience

As we discussed in the previous step, you want the news to land in such a way that your target audience thinks more favorably about your business.

But who is your target audience? Is it all your customers, or only those in a certain niche or geographic location? Maybe it's your business partners, investors or the general public in the communities you operate in?

You have to ask yourself: "Why are we even writing this press release?" "Who are we writing this for?" and "Why do we want them to know about this?"

Effective communication requires a clear view on your target audience, so we recommend you to consult with the sources we talked about in Step 1 to make sure you're focusing your press release on the right groups of people.

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In our example, two News Hooks rise to the top:

- » **Tie it to a Trend:** Environmentally friendly products are popular and Car Juice is capitalizing on that.
- » **Names Make News:** In this case, Car Juice may not be the most well-known company. But its new client, the City of New York, is possibly the most famous city in the world. This will grab readers' attention.

STEP 4.

Find Your News Hook

In the previous steps you collected all the relevant input, developed your key messages and identified who you are trying to reach with your press release. Now it's time to spark some creativity to help make your press release even more compelling to the audience you've decided to go for. Why would your customers, investors or potential employees care about the news that you're about to announce?

Welcome to the magic world of News Hooks, which allow you to write press releases in such a way that people immediately feel they're relevant to them and start reading. To master News Hooks, you first have to understand what makes news.

What Makes News?

The most obvious rule is that news actually has to be new. It also has to be surprising, unique and relevant to your target audience, which is why disasters are far more likely to show up in the media if they happen close by. Also, big names make news, and so do big numbers. It's important to find a News Hook that resonates with your target audience. For example, if you're trying to reach potential customers in a certain niche, it usually works well to connect your news to a hot industry trend that everyone is talking about.

CASE STUDY: CAR JUICE

Car Juice's Jill Smith followed our 5-step method to write an effective press release about this fictitious company's prestigious contract win. Scroll down to see the full press release.

STEP 5.

Write!

Now it's time to get behind your computer and use your News Hooks to start writing your press release.

Here's a sneak preview of what that entails.

First of all, you need a short and compelling headline that piques interest and gives away enough information for people to understand what the press release is about.

Together with the lead and second paragraph, the headline is the most important piece of real estate in your press release. Most people won't read any further and they shouldn't have to because – like newspaper articles – your press release has to be written like an inverted pyramid, putting the most important facts first.

The rest of your press release is focused on putting the news into context and explaining why readers should care. To pull that off, you'll need a strong quote and solid background information, which you've collected in the previous steps.

Example Press Release

Car Juice Wins Multi-Year Contract to Help New York Drivers Go Electric

Car Juice, which runs the largest electric-vehicle charging network in the eastern U.S., won a multi-year contract from the New York City Department of Transportation to help New Yorkers make the switch to electric mobility.

As part of the contract, Car Juice will install more than 800 electric-vehicle charging stations across New York's five boroughs. Car Juice will deliver the X45-AC fast chargers and deploy and run the network, as well as its smart energy management services. The New York City Department of Transportation expects that the availability of fast charging stations throughout the city will convince New Yorkers to buy or share hybrid or full-electric vehicles. Market researcher Drive By has estimated that 85% of the city's car owners would consider an electric vehicle if there were more charging options available.

"The fear of getting stranded with an empty battery is one of the main reasons why New Yorkers hold on to their combustion engine cars," said Robert Blair, director at the Transportation Department. "To reach our 2020 CO2-emission targets, we really need more drivers to grab their bikes or go electric. We are confident that this charging network will convince many New Yorkers to make the switch."

After the Paris Agreement in December 2015, Car Juice launched a charging concept specifically targeted at metropolitan areas that are looking for a solution to reduce CO2 emissions. Car Juice's concept relies on a wide network of partners, such as restaurants, hotels and parking garages, to provide convenient locations across town to install the chargers. New York is the fifth city to choose Car Juice this year alone. "With its compact, city-friendly chargers and its smart approach to finding nearly a dozen suitable locations in each precinct, Car Juice was really the only provider that met our criteria," Blair continued.

"We are very pleased and proud to win this contract," Karen Stewart, Car Juice Chief Executive Officer, said. "This shows that we were right betting on the metropolitan market by developing a solution customized to the needs and challenges of major cities. We also want to congratulate the City of New York for making this bold move, which will contribute to creating a healthier living environment for its inhabitants."

Car Juice will deploy the New York charging network in close collaboration with its preferred partners Excel Engineering and Jones Construction. The first charger will be installed on July 1 between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. at the parking lot of New York City Hall. This occasion will be marked by a ceremony, which is open to the press and will also be attended by Robert Blair from the Department of Transportation.

Wrapping Up...

We hope this Compact Guide was extremely helpful to you. If you still have some questions, don't worry. You'll be hearing from us soon as we dig deeper into the press release writing process.

At Publiqly, we provide access to a library of step-by-step workflows to help you write targeted press releases about the most common news events in the business world.

Thanks so much for reading!

The Publiqly team.