Tips for great news releases

A news release can be an effective way to get your story out. Whether you've written many or none, these tips can help you get your best message in front of your audience.

ASK YOURSELF: IS IT NEWS?

(Hint: changing your menu isn't news. Hiring a superstar new chef is!)

Is it clear what the story is?
Will it be clear to your audience?

Upgrading to new software that allows you to collate inputs three times faster is not a clear story for your audience.

That you are now the only shop in town with same day service because you've invested in new technology is a clear story that is relevant to your audience.

WHO? WHAT? WHERE? WHEN? WHY? (AND SOMETIMES, HOW?)

ANSWER THE 5 JOURNALIST QUESTIONS

Often answering some of these is easy, and that's why it is easy to miss an important piece of information because you missed one of the five (or six) questions.

STAY ON TOPIC

Don't dilute your message with too much information.

Add a backgrounder, chart or infographic if you have additional helpful information.

STICK TO ONE NEWSWORTHY ITEM PER NEWS RELEASE

THE QUOTE IS A VALUABLE PART OF THE NARRATIVE, SO MAKE IT WORTH QUOTING.

INCLUDE A QUOTE

Include a quote that furthers the story.
Don't use a quote that says:
"We are very pleased to announce..."
Obviously you are pleased or you wouldn't be sharing the news!
Use the quote to share your key messages.

WRITE A CATCHY HEADLINE

It may not be the headline that the media uses, but it is aimed at the reporter or editor whose attention you need to capture.

Use your headline in your email subject line to make your message effective.

YOUR HEADLINE IS YOUR FIRST AND BEST CHANCE TO CATCH YOUR READER'S ATTENTION.