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Write a Press Release

**Get News Coverage**

Ad2Reno.com

Ad2 Reno is dedicated to public service by helping non-profits thrive.

# Plan Your Press Release Like A Pro

By Rebecca Wikler & Chris Shaffer

Ad2 Reno President & Treasurer Respectively

## When is your story worthy of a press release?

Have you raised a significant amount of money, cans of food or school-books? Do you have an upcoming event or fund-raiser? Will dignitaries be present showing their support? These are all newsworthy. If you don't have any big-ticket facts or figures to draw in a reporter, think about the human interest. Journalists like an interesting story about an oddball donor or a story of human triumph over adversity.

## Whose voice belong in a press release?

Remember, you're writing for the news media, who have to remain unbiased. Therefore, you should be writing your press releases in the same way that an unbiased observer would write about the content in your release. This not only makes it easier for journalists to translate your press release into a story for their organization, it also lends more credibility when publishing your release to your website or social media networks.

## So, how do I achieve "unbiased voice?"

Remember to refer to your organization in the third person. Think about it in the way a journalist would report on your event, fund-raiser or annual report – they'll refer to you by your organization's name, and they'll keep the facts in the forefront. Journalists look for impressive facts and figures. Dollars raised, meals served, acts of kindness tracked.

## How to put together your media list

Building and using your media list is one of the most critical elements of your press release process. The list should be made up of journalists and media organizations who are likely to cover your story.

The easiest way to get started is by searching local or regional media outlets for similar stories to see which outlets covered them and which reporter was assigned to the story. For example, a nonprofit that focuses on children and education would reach out to a reporter who might have recently covered the school district. Find their email address or preferred contact method and send them your press release in the email and as a PDF attachment. Don't forget to include how to contact you if they have questions.

Another great way to build your list is by using social networks, such as Twitter and Facebook, to locate traditional journalists and bloggers who may be interested in news. □

**See a Press Release Example On Page 3 >>**

Ad2Reno.com

## Write For

# ONLINE

By Kristin Larsen

Ad2 Reno Public Service Codirector

Press releases don't have to be for media-eyes-only. Many organizations increase their audiences and website traffic by also posting the information to their website or blog.

According to HubSpot, Inc., developer of the popular website analysis tool, Website-Grader.com, businesses that blog at least 20 times per month generate five times more traffic than those that only blog a few times per month.

To maximize your benefits from writing a press release, it's best to write for two audiences - those interested in your press release's information and the search engines that deliver the information to those who search for it.

Start by asking yourself, "If I were to look for this information online what words would I type into a search engine like Google, Bing or Yahoo?"

You can also compile a list of preliminary keywords using research tools such as WordTracker, Keyword Discovery or Google Keyword Tool. To get an idea of how popular a keyword or phrase is, view the average number of global monthly searches it receives.

Then strive to use those words in headlines, bolded text, url addresses and page titles. Using your chosen keywords in those contexts can encourage search engines to rank your page as more relevant for that keyword or phrase.

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# Anatomy of a Press Release

## Contact Information

Whoever is tasked with speaking to the media and/or setting up interviews.

## Headline

Keep in mind many reporters will decide whether or not they are interested in your news based on the headline alone. Make it catchy and put the most newsworthy aspect of your release here!

## Lead

Use your lead to convey the most interesting and important details in a concise, easy-to-read sentence.) 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.

## Body

Include the rest of the relevant details. Keep it short! Make sure it is informative and timely. Answer the question, "Why should anyone care?" Make sure your announcement contains information that is unique, highlights something new or unusual, and provides useful information to your audience. It shouldn't sound like an advertisement.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



### MEDIA CONTACT

Brian Williams – 775.636.8026  
President, Think Kindness

## LOCAL GOES 5 DAYS WITHOUT SLEEP TO RAISE \$1 MILLION FOR AIR RACE VICTIMS

RENO NEVADA – Stewart Campbell is attempting to stay awake for 5 days, or until \$1,000,000 is raised for the Think Kindness Family Assistance Fund (FAF). All proceeds from the fund will go to provide assistance to both the victims and families of the recent Reno Air Race tragedy.

The event is going to take place at the Grand Sierra Resort starting Thursday at 11:00 AM and will be streamed live via Livestream.com for the entire duration.

"I've always been a fan of the air races, and of Mr. Leeward. He always encouraged people to set goals, take risks, and live life. So I decided live it 5 days straight, no sleep, to help those who need it most." Says Campbell.

During the Reno Air Race Tragedy, Livestream received over 5 million views online. The website is joining forces with Campbell and Think Kindness to grow those numbers in an effort that will hopefully raise a million dollars for the Family Assistance Fund.

Behind the scenes is not only a full production team, but the University of Nevada Business Fraternity. "UNR is ranked as one of the Top 100 schools in the United States. The business students wanted the chance to take their marketing and online branding education and put it work in a way that will make a big difference." Says Brian Williams, President of Think Kindness.

The event dubbed as a "Restless Act of Kindness", will feature spots for students to plug in their computers and volunteer to help spread the message throughout the internet.

Stewart admits that he's scared and nervous, the last time he stayed awake for 5 days was during his Royal National Life Boat training. (British version of U.S. Coastguard). "Then it was different, we had drill Sergeants yelling at us and cold water constantly splashed in our face." Says Campbell.

To help him through his challenge, he will have certain milestone to hit during his 5 day broadcast. "In order to get a cup of coffee or an energy drink, he'll need to raise \$1000." Says Williams

For more information about the event and for ways you can get involved, please visit [ThinkKindness.org](http://ThinkKindness.org)

# Anatomy of a Press Release (continued)

## Date

Keep the lead-time for different media organizations in mind when you write your press release. If you're sending it to a weekly for example, remember they need more than a week's notice before your event.

## Identify Yourself

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

## -- more --

If you have a two page press release type "-- more --" at the bottom of your first page to let reporters know they should read on. It is good practice to make your press release as concise as possible.

## PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
DATE: September 14, 2011



GIRL SCOUTS OF THE  
SIERRA NEVADA

605 Washington St  
Reno, NV

###.###.####  
www.gssn.org

MEDIA CONTACT  
Pam Cxyz

Director of  
Development  
and Communications

P: ###.###.####  
E: example@email.com

## 2012 is The Year of The Girl

Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada to Kick-off 100<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration at UNR Homecoming Game

Reno, NV – Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada are thrilled to announce their 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary during the halftime show at the UNR Homecoming game on Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011. More than 300 Girl Scouts and countless Girl Scout alumnae will flood Mackay Stadium to celebrate 100 years of Girl Scouting in America. The girls will participate in the halftime show, by singing the Girl Scout favorite "Make New Friends" on the field with the UNR marching band.

"Over the last 100 years, Girl Scouts has been the preeminent organization providing leadership opportunities for girls," said Julia Ratti, CEO of Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada, "we are pleased to have the chance to share our 100 year legacy with the Wolf Pack community."

In 1912, Girl Scout founder Juliette Gordon Low envisioned an all-girl organization that gave every girl the opportunity to unearth her leadership potential. Since then more than 50 million women enjoyed Girl Scouting as children; many have become community leaders, politicians, business leaders and even a Supreme Court Justice. Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada is encouraging all Girl Scout alumnae, from any council, to go to [www.gssn.org](http://www.gssn.org) to reconnect and join the 100 year celebration. Several events and parties are planned to honor our area's Girl Scout alumnae during 2012.

## PRESS RELEASE

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For more information on how to join our free alumnae association, become a member, sign up a girl or become a volunteer, call Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada at (775) 322-0642 or visit their website at [www.gssn.org](http://www.gssn.org).

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Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada is the preeminent organization for and leading authority on girls, serving over 4,500 girls with assistance from 2,000 volunteers in 23 counties in northern Nevada and northeastern California. For over 70 years, Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada Council has been building girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place. For more information on how to join, volunteer or donate to the Girl Scouts, please call 800.222.5406 or visit [www.gssn.org](http://www.gssn.org).

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This informs the reporter that your release is over and there is no more information on a second page.

## Boilerplate

If your organization has a short boilerplate, keep it at the bottom of your press releases to give a quick three-sentence overview of your cause