

Press Release

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Concept Schools Chicago Math & Science Academy and Michigan Math & Science Academy Earn Top Honors as Best High Schools In Nation

Des Plaines, Illinois: *U.S. News and World Report*, a leading provider of service news and information that improves the quality of life of its readers by focusing on education, recently released its annual rankings of the Best High Schools across the nation.

Two public charter high schools that are managed by *Concept Schools* have earned Silver Medal rankings for 2016: Michigan Math and Science Academy (MMSA) and Chicago Math and Science Academy (CMSA). The schools were recognized for their high student achievements and college readiness.

"We are delighted and proud that two of our Concept High Schools have received such a tremendous rating," said Sedat Duman, CEO of Concept Schools. Both schools serve students in urban communities and are composed primarily of minority and economically disadvantaged students. Student graduation rates and participation in rigorous Advanced Placement (AP) courses weighed heavily in the ranking process.

"Over 88 percent of MMSA students participated in AP courses," stated Principal Oguzhan Yildiz, "and we are excited continue to challenge our students in and around the Detroit-metro area."

Like all Concept Schools, CMSA takes a data-driven approach to supporting students in safe learning environments that effectively prepare students for college. "Not only are we proud of our students for their continued social and academic growth," Principal Ali Kuran said, "we have a dedicated staff and community that always put the needs of our students first." *U.S. News and World Report* also identified CMSA as the top rated charter school in Chicago for college readiness.

Concept Schools is a charter school management organization that manages or operates 30 public charter schools throughout the Midwest. Our college-prep curriculum is STEM-based, and like any other public school, each school in the Concept network is highly regulated and overseen by their respective school districts and charter authorizers. Schools within the Concept Network are continuously recognized for their excellence in education.

If we're thinking about public relations strategy for our business, we'll certainly be considering press releases. Although many know what they are, few know how and when to use them.

A press release is a written communication that reports specific but brief information about an event, circumstance, product launch, or other happening. It's typically tied to a business or organization and provided to media through a variety of means.

**Issuing a press release
doesn't mean the media will
automatically run with it.
Media outlets will ask the
same questions they always
do: Does it interest their
readers? Does it benefit the
community in some way?**

We should also consider other outlets that might pick up our press release. If we're lucky, bloggers, tweeters, and others on social media may find it worthy of promoting within their social networks.



Timing is Important

Most press releases are available for "immediate release"

This means anyone can share the information as soon as we make it public.

If we're publicizing an upcoming event, or product, for example, we probably want to encourage as much timely coverage as possible.

Other press releases may have time limits to when media can begin reporting or may allow only certain media sources to report them immediately.

They may be offered to other news services, websites, or blog owners for publication at a later time.

If we're sharing something that needs to remain secret until the right time, we might specify a date coverage can begin.

The Goal of a Press Release

The main purpose of all press releases is to promote something significant and specific, and to do so clearly. Beyond that, a press release is a document that adheres to a strict format and serves three marketing and promotional purposes:

01

- ❑ To notify the media about an event in hopes that they will spread the word.

02

- ❑ To share something about our business, hoping a reporter will see a story in our press release and write an actual news article about it.

03

- ❑ To promote your business' appearance on the internet via blogs, websites, and social networks.

There is a debate about whether that last approach really fits a press release, or if "news release" is the more appropriate term.

In any case, social media presents a more direct line to our customers than traditional media outlets.



Tips for Writing a Press Release

Press Release Writing

A press release typically begins with the name of the city where it originates from and the current date.



Attention-Grabbing Headline

Always write in the third person, sharing riveting information from an outsider's perspective (in the other words, as the media would).



Add Something Interest

Of course, that "something" has to happen. We can't mention that an A-list celebrity will show up when we know full well they won't. Linking our press release to a current trend or timely occurrence



Avoid Dry, Rigid Wording

We don't want to lose our reader in the first sentence. The bottom line is that if our event is boring, our press release may be yawn-worthy too. So, why would any media want to chase the story?



Should Not be Mere Recitation of Facts

Effective press releases always employ quotes from someone significant to the company or event—a corporate executive or a representative from the charity benefiting from the event, for example.

What a Press Release is Not



A press release is not a guaranteed marketing tool

Temper our expectations. Don't anticipate that mainstream media will jump on every press release you write. But don't give up, either.



Successful publicity depends on sustained effort

And press releases are a key part of our PR strategy. Continue looking for ways to make our press releases stand out, and we're bound to get some coverage.

How to Create a Press Release



Press releases can be a great way to earn some free publicity for our business or nonprofit, but we have to know how to use them.

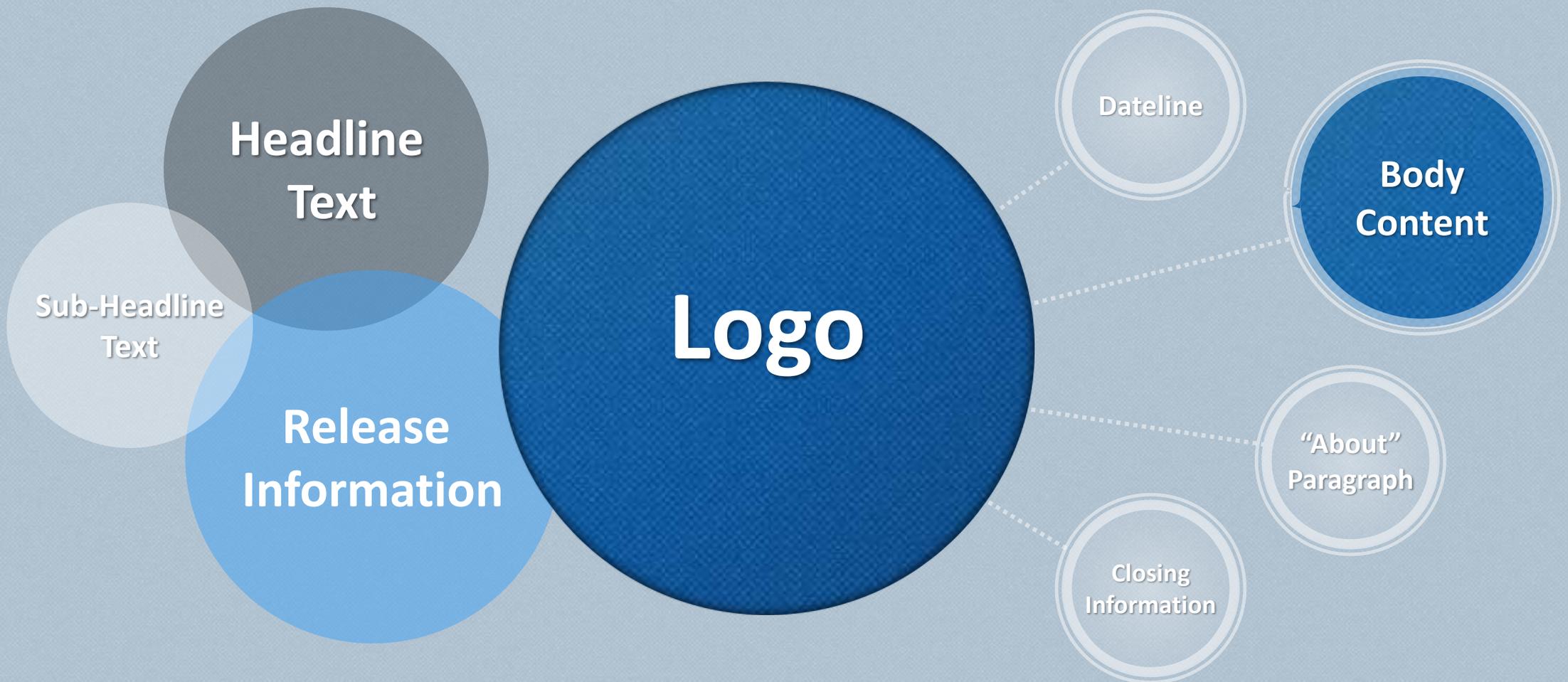
Media and news organizations usually publish press releases exactly as submitted. For that reason, creating a press release involves presenting information in a journalistic style that they can publish with little additional effort. The release should fit the specific needs of our event as well.

**Overall, we should
keep a press release
to one page (usually
about 500 words)**

When we're done writing, have someone check it for grammar mistakes, typos, and other errors. Also be sure to double-check all links, facts, statistics, data, and contact information before we publish our release.

Our goal is to make the journalist's work as easy as possible. The less they have to do to rewrite information or follow up, the better.

Creating Press Release



Logo

The company logo or related brand or event imagery should be prominent at the top of the press release

Release Information

The words "For Immediate Release" should appear at the top of our press release, under the logo, in capital letters. Sometimes we may want to share a press release with media outlets or others ahead of its intended publication, but we don't want them to distribute the information publicly before a certain date and time. This would be an embargoed press release, and we would use the following format in place of "For Immediate Release":

Embargoed for Release Until Sunday, October 7, 2018, at 2 p.m., EDT

Headline Text

Our headline should be in initial caps. Be creative and compelling but succinct, and don't use all uppercase letters or punctuation—especially not exclamation marks.

Sub-Headline Text

We can use a sub-headline next, although it's not necessary. If we use one, it should be catchy and informative, explain or quote something, and be written as a brief sentence. A sub-headline should not repeat information that's already in the headline.

The Dateline

Use the following format to identify the location and the date of the release:
CITY, State, Month, Day, Year

Body Content

Press releases should be at least three paragraphs long, including the opening paragraph, supporting paragraph(s), and a closing paragraph that restates or summarizes our main points.

Our opening sentence should be clear and strong. The first paragraph should contain the most important information and entice readers to continue reading the story. However, the first paragraph should also contain enough information that it could stand on its own. Typically, the opening paragraph offers information about who, what, where, when, why, and how.

The second and subsequent paragraphs make up the body of the press release and should contain more detailed information. The body often contains quotes from others (customers, clients, staff, or industry experts) to support our message.

The Boilerplate ("About" Paragraph)

Just below the last paragraph of the release, include a short, positive statement about our company. This is a promotional sound bite that often contains a website address, the size and scope of the business, its tagline, and other relevant information.

Closing Information

Close the entire press release with contact information and a series of three pound signs (as shown below) to indicate the end of the press release.