

# CREATIVATION

## PRACTICAL PRESS KIT PREPARATION TIPS

### WHAT IS A PRESS KIT?

A press kit is a great tool you can use to generate publicity for your business. As a package of comprehensive information on your business, editors recognize this tool and use it regularly in preparing their stories. Because their time is limited, it's important to prepare a kit that grabs their attention and offers useful information. The goal is to interest a reporter and entice him or her to write about the kit's contents and/or contact you for more information.

### WHAT'S IN A PRESS KIT?

There are key ingredients that make up the foundation of a press kit. You can and should add to these basics as you grow your business and services, but these items offer a good starting point.

- FOLDER
- PRESS RELEASE(S)
- FACT SHEET
- BACKGROUNDER
- PHOTOGRAPHY

#### FOLDER

Your basic portfolio pocket folder is certainly an acceptable option here, but not the rule. Since this is an area where our industry truly shines, don't hesitate to be more creative in how you package your materials. The key is to make sure your company name or a form of brand recognition appears prominently.

#### PRESS RELEASE

When it comes to press releases, there is no need to reinvent the wheel as there is a preferred "cookie cutter" format that editors recognize. Plan to use company letterhead or make sure that your company name is prominently featured at the top of the page. In addition, include a contact person, phone number and address. It's also a good idea to include a "dateline" as the start of the release highlighting the date of issue and the city of origin. Create a headline that helps the editor quickly size up the essential nature of the release. *In constructing your release, a good rule of thumb is to use the "inverted pyramid" style.* Begin with your most important information first and end with the least important. Your first paragraph needs to quickly summarize the main points –who, what, where, when, why and how of your message. From there, keep your text simple. Don't overload

your sentences with too many ideas. If you're describing products, be sure to include key details like sizes, colors and suggested retail pricing. Lastly, keep it short – one to two pages at the most, typed/printed and double-spaced.

## **FACT SHEET**

This should be a single page of facts about your company. It should serve as an "at-a-glance" resource for the reporter, providing details about your business such as the address, contact information, product/service offerings, special features and other key, basic points you'd like to get across quickly and easily.

## **BACKGROUNDER**

An optional item, a backgrounder tells the story behind your business. It details your company history, how you got started, how you've grown and other points of interest. The idea here is to provide the editor with additional background information on your company-separate and apart from the news you've outlined in your press release. Often times if a reporter is preparing a full story on your company, this backgrounder becomes a great reference tool.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

When possible, always try to include photography in your press kit, especially if you're introducing a new product. It certainly helps increase your chances of press coverage. You can furnish color prints or digital images and here are a few pointers:

**HIGH RESOLUTION DIGITAL IMAGES** – These should be at least 4" x 5" and no smaller than 300 dpi. The most recognized formats are jpeg, tiff and eps. Include captions for each photo. The caption should include descriptive information about the item, size, pricing details and, most importantly, your company name and contact information.

## **PRESS RELEASE POINTERS**

A press release is a statement prepared for distribution to the media designed to give journalists information that is useful, accurate and interesting. So before you start putting words on paper, think about:

*What's in it for the press? Why would anyone want to know about this?*

*Is it timely?*

*Is it new, innovative?*

*Is it unusual or different?*

*Is it something that's never been done before, or never been done in our industry?*

*Does it tie in with a current item in the news?*

*Does it tie in with a trend?*

*Does it tie in with a particular trade show, season or holiday?*

Consider the "10 second rule." That's about how much time you have to get the press members' attention. Start strong, tell them something newsworthy that will be of interest to their target audience, and keep it simple and straightforward.