

HOW TO WRITE A GOOD PRESS RELEASE

When you need to contact the local media with your press release or news alert, email is almost always the best way to do it. You want your email message to be opened, to be read and to spark interest. In the worst case scenario, your email might not even get seen by a living, breathing person, because a computer program filtered it out. Many news desks have automated systems called spam filters that are designed to prevent junk mail from reaching inboxes. To avoid getting filtered, don't use any kind of attachments with your email, either documents or images.

Never Send a Press Release as an Attachment

Sending your press release as an attachment to your email message (for example, as a Microsoft Word document) is a fairly common and very big mistake. Many news media outlets will not accept an email that contains attachments, because they can contain computer viruses.

Instead, simply copy your text and paste it into the body of your email message. It's also best to stick with "plain text" and stay away from special text formatting in your message. Send images only to people who have requested them, or who already know who you are and what to expect.

Make a Great First Impression

The subject line of your email is the most important part of the message, and it can make or break your email campaign. A good subject line will give the editor an instant feel for what your press release is about, so they can decide if your story offers a good fit. If you have a strong press release headline, use it in the email subject line.

Use Both Upper and Lower Case Letters

DON'T TYPE IN ALL CAPS! It's annoying, hard to read, and suggests that you don't know what you are doing.

Address Your Emails to Recipients Individually

It's best to send each email individually and to address each one to a specific person. This is much more effective than doing "mass emailings," because people like personal attention and to be addressed by name.

Sending your emails one by one is time consuming but highly recommended. It also gives you the chance to personalize your press release email with special comments to the recipient. If you must send email in groups, this is one way to do it: take a group of email addresses, paste the group into the blind carbon copy ("Bcc") field of your email message. Placing the emails as a group in the Bcc field will prevent the multiple recipients from seeing who else received the message.

Sample of a good press release

CONTACT:

Your Name

Contact phone number

contact e-mail

BATTLE AT THE BORDER: FIRST Robotics Competition Hosted by Local Robotics Teams Celebrates Science and Technology Leaders; City of San Diego Proclaims FIRST Day

San Diego, CA. October 11th, 2011 - On October 15th, "Battle at the Border", a robotics competition, will take place at Francis Parker High School in Linda Vista. In addition, the competition will play host to the San Diego County's FIRST Day. FIRST Robotics Teams 1538: The Holy Cows from High Tech High, and 2485: W.A.R.Lords (We Are Robot Lords) from Francis Parker, will be co-hosting this event.

"Battle at the Border" is an off-season robotics competition where FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) teams from around Southern California will come to compete. This event will give the San Diego community an opportunity to see the impact that FIRST robotics has on students. The public is highly encouraged to come and watch the teams compete.

Teams competing will also be raising money for charities. Fundraisers will be held throughout the day, supporting the Breast Cancer Society and San Diego Food Bank. This event will also play host to San Diego County's annual FIRST Day, a day dedicated to showcasing FIRST programs around San Diego, spreading appreciation for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) professionals, spreading awareness of FIRST, and encouraging young people to pursue STEM careers.

HOW TO WRITE A GOOD PRESS RELEASE CONT.

FIRST is an organization founded by Dean Kamen (known for inventing the Segway and the portable dialysis machine), to promote a culture change where science and technology are truly celebrated. FIRST consists of four major programs, Junior FIRST Lego League (for ages 6-9), FIRST Lego League (for ages 9-14), FIRST Tech Challenge (for ages 14-18), and FIRST Robotics Competition (for ages 14-18), all of whom will be attending to present to the public. These programs engage students with exciting mentor-guided activities which help build skills in science, engineering, and technology, as well as inspire innovation, and foster well-rounded life capabilities. Through FIRST, students also gain self-confidence, communication and leadership skills.

The "Battle at the Border" committee consists of FRC Team 1538: The Holy Cows and Team 2485: The W.A.R.Lords, who have made it their goal to spread the message of FIRST throughout their communities.

The Holy Cows are a nationally ranked team whom have won the Chairman's Award, FIRST's most prestigious award, three years in a row at the San Diego Regional, and were Champions at the Silicon Valley Regional in 2011. Through outreach, community service, and mentoring, The Holy Cows are determined to create a culture which truly celebrates STEM professionals.

The W.A.R.Lords spread the message of FIRST by mentoring FIRST Jr. Lego League and FIRST Lego League teams to help kids discover a passion for STEM topics. In addition, they help generate interest in FIRST via on and off-site demonstrations, new curriculum at their school, and encouraging other members of the community to get involved with FIRST and STEM related activities.

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Pictures available upon request

About The Holy Cows: Team 1538 - The Holy Cows are a local FIRST Robotics team competing in this season's game along with 30 other San Diego FRC teams. Based in High Tech High, The Holy Cows are an internationally ranked team whom have won the Chairman's Award, FIRST's most prestigious award, four years in a row, at the San Diego Regional and were Champions at the Silicon Valley Regional in 2011. Through outreach, community service, and mentoring, The Holy Cows are determined to create a culture which truly celebrates STEM professionals. For more information visit: www.team1538.com

About FIRST: Accomplished inventor Dean Kamen founded FIRST® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) in 1989 to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people. Based in Manchester, N.H., FIRST designs accessible, innovative programs to build self-confidence, knowledge, and life skills while motivating young people to pursue opportunities in science, technology, and engineering. With support from three out of every five Fortune 500 companies and nearly \$14 million in college scholarships, the not-for-profit organization hosts the FIRST® Robotics Competition (FRC®) and FIRST® Tech Challenge (FTC®) for high-school students, FIRST® LEGO® League (FLL®) for 9 to 14-year-olds, (9 to 16-year-olds outside the U.S., Canada, and Mexico) and Junior FIRST® LEGO® League (Jr.FLL®) for 6 to 9-year-olds. Gracious Professionalism™ is a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community. To learn more about FIRST, go to www.usfirst.org