

Press Kit Guide

What is a Press Kit?

A press kit is a compilation of documents and media about your organization usually given to members of the media.

Who sees your Press Kit?

Typically, journalists and bloggers would use your press kit to construct their stories. It would give them a clear picture of who you are, content for their story, images or videos to embed in their stories and other sources of information to offer their readers. Other media who would possibly want access to your press kit include television news reporters or publicists at performance venues. **It is best to have a regularly updated, basic press kit available on your website**, because it gives a basic yet thorough idea of who you are and what you have to offer. Even if you are not the main topic of a journalist's piece, he or she may include more information about you if it is readily available on your website.

Overall Guidelines

- **Offer a cohesive appearance of all materials.** Consider: Font, layouts, appearance of logos, color schemes, tone of voice in writing
- **Consider the reason you are giving someone a press kit.**
 - Will a journalist be writing about an upcoming event?
 - Does a blogger want to highlight a new collaboration involving your ensemble?
 - Make sure your press kit includes relevant materials, and consider adding new items (e.g. collaborator bios, press release, fact sheet) as you see fit.

Potential Press Kit Elements

- Biographies
- Brand Deck
- Images
- Video
- Audio
- Upcoming Performances
- Press Releases
- Fact Sheets
- Contact Info

In most cases, the point of a press kit is to offer content others may use. Make sure to offer a format press kit recipients can use. For example, if you give a physical copy of your press kit and want to include digital images for distribution, include a CD, or a link to an online file. Note: Electronic press kits are commonly referred to as EPKs.

Press Release

A press release is a one-to-two page story focused on recent news regarding your organization. In general, people reading press releases are journalists or bloggers, but press releases may be kept as an archive on your website to offer visitors a history of your organization. **It should be very easy to read**, and provide the most relevant and compelling information about you and your event, with the most important information first.

As you write, consider who your target audience is. Who will be reading this press release, and what information are they interested in? You may have two very different audiences, for whom you will want to change the angle of your press release.

Ultimately, you will provide your press release to targeted members of the media. Their job is to cater to their audience and remain true to their voice and style. Your job is to give them a story that they will want to publish, and make their job easy by giving them all the information necessary. Then, you may reach their readership, possibly acquiring more attendees at your event, and a media presence.

Structure of a Press Release (see example on last page)

The structure and format of your press release should give your reader the most important information in a simple and user-friendly fashion. Try to keep a similar format for all of your press releases, especially if you are presenting an archive of them on your website.

- **Include your contact information** either at the top of the first page, or the bottom of the last.
- **The title of your press release** should very concisely say the news your press release contains in about 7-10 words. In the title, try to convey the tone of your subject matter as well; for example, your story may be edgy, exciting, serious, or something more specific. You may include a subtitle, but try to keep your title to one line.
- **The body of your press release** should be written in the “upside-down pyramid” style. This means that the most relevant information is at the top of your document, and the least pertinent at the bottom.

Fact Sheet

The purpose of a fact sheet is to show information regarding a single topic that helps your audience understand your organization’s purpose, or providing need-to-know information in a concise way. Examples of topics include information on performance venues, collaborations, or historical background. If your organization’s mission is driven by a humanitarian cause, you may create a fact sheet about that social issue.

A fact sheet may be visually interesting, and may be presented as an infographic. An infographic is a document that uses shapes and basic images to help present your information in a narrative form. This Pinterest board includes many examples of fact sheets in an infographic form: <http://www.pinterest.com/kauffmanfdn/infographics-and-fact-sheets/>. Most major organizations make press kits readily available on their websites. You would find fact sheets in press kits.

Brand Deck and One-sheet

A brand deck or one-sheet is basically a summary of who you are, what you do, and what you have to offer.

A brand deck allows you to present your organization more in-depth, and is typically presented as a small brochure. It is laid out like a PowerPoint presentation, with each page explaining a single aspect of your brand; each page includes images, and a few bullets detailing an aspect of who you are and what you do.

A one-sheet ultimately accomplishes the same thing, but includes all of the same information on one page. One-sheets don’t give as much liberty to include as many images, or to offer information topic- by-topic like brand decks allow. One-sheets are more inexpensive to print, and are often called for by venues. Unless you are a larger organization, a one-sheet is a more practical media to explain who you are than a brand deck.

Brand decks and one-sheets should have a cohesive and appealing visual theme. Information you may include in either document are: organization name, brief bio or “who we are,” at least one photo of your organization, contact info, what services you have to offer (e.g. playing in social venues, operatic singing, conducting small ensembles).

Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Dec. 11, 2013

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Joe Noschmoe
123-456-7890
pdec@sfc.edu

PDEC Handout Concisely Explains How to Write a Press Release

This first sentence says what the news is. This second sentence says more of why the first sentence is important.

Your second paragraph will say other necessary details like when and where something is happening, or who your collaborators are. You decide what’s most important to your readers, and put those things first.

Consider that your job in writing is to keep your reader alert and focused on the story; short paragraphs help make writing more easily digestible (even if they are only one sentence).

In general, keep your writing concise. Don’t use unnecessary words, or descriptive words that don’t carry a specific meaning. Consider: “my awesome performance,” versus, “my highly visual performance.”

Your font does not need to be any specific font such as Times New Roman. Simply pick a font that appears professional.

The last paragraph should still include pertinent and interesting information. None of your document should be boring or even seemingly pointless. That said, your last paragraph would include the least pressing bits of information.

The three hash marks signify the end of your press release.

If it weren’t the last page, it would instead say, “- more -”.

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