

How to Write a Press Release



and have it get picked up

by

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WHAT DO YOU GIVE YOUR
ATTENTION TO?

Do you read ads?

Do you watch commercials?

Do you listen to promotions?

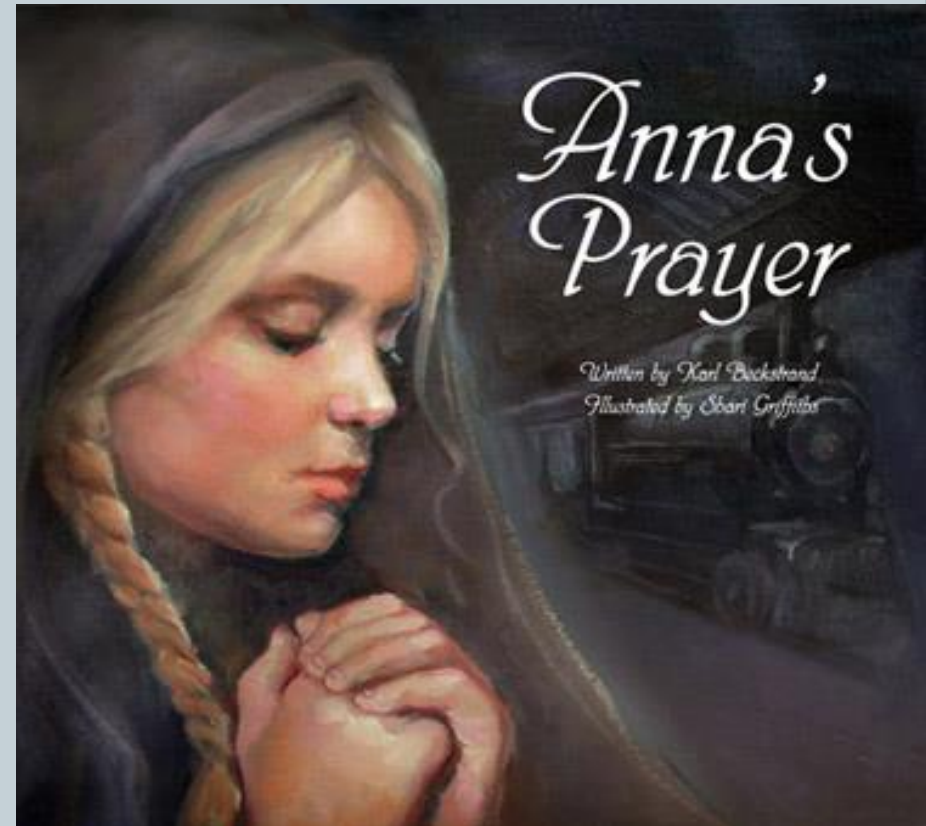
Do you look at banners and pop ups?

Of course, NOT!

Librarians (and everyone else)

READ
WATCH
LISTEN TO
STORIES

ups kid
I heart radio



STORIES GRAB!

(So, you really want a blog that reporters and others will read:)

What's your story in one sentence?



Know Your Audience & Message



WHO would benefit from your story? Make a short list.

- What are they interested in?
- What do they do (hobbies/habits)?
- Demographics/Geography
- Research (personas, organizations)

Benefits over Features



Tailor your message to your audience

- ❑ Converse in a foreign language
- ❑ Help your child stay in their bed all night
- ❑ Retire ten years early
- ❑ Have harmonious family nights

NOT Features or Fluff – “Has Spanish text”

NOT Sales or Hype – “The best diet ever”

Newswriting is:

- True (CREDIBLE)
- Clear/specific
- Balanced (not opinion)
- Concise! (short sentences & paragraphs)
- Accurate (attributed—3 sources)
- Compelling

Proximity, prominence, unusualness,
conflict, timeliness, impact

WHERE to START?



Three sources of information:

- Eye-witnesses/news creators
- Interviews (of the above — prepare questions, follow ups, record it and take notes)
- Records: verify and document everything

Leads & the Inverted Pyramid



- WHO
- WHAT
- WHERE
- WHEN
- HOW/How much/How often
- WHY (if possible)

Summary, Straight, Direct Address,
Direct Quote

Sample Lead (summary/dir. quote)



Juneau, Ala., May 22, 2015 – A three-alarm fire destroyed 11 buildings downtown and “melted a power converter when a chemical truck lost control on black ice, colliding with the city power station,” Friday morning, according to fire Chief Hector Araya. Seven people were injured in the accident, but only the truck driver perished. (conflict, proximity)

Media Advisory vs. Press Release



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HEADLINE

WHAT/WHO:

WHEN:

WHERE:

INFO: (typically company information *end in PR)

STORY IDEA:

San Jose, Calif., Aug. 13, 2015 – (lead and body here)

Headlines & Summaries



- Grab
- Subject (Noun), Verb, Object
- Abbreviations, no articles, no “is”
- Almost no adjectives or adverbs
- Present tense
- Match tone of the story
- Double meanings are okay — as long as you’ve considered all possible interpretations

Often a short summary goes below headline

AP Style



- Titles (works/roles)
- Addresses/States
- Days/Dates
- Times
- Acronyms
- Abbreviation
- Numbers/ages
- Organizations
- “Very”
- “There is/are”
- Copyrights & liabilities

Grammar, Punctuation **and** Spelling



... & —

Capitalization
(geographic regions)

Agreement

“percent”

Apostrophes

Hyphens

Commas & periods ALWAYS inside quotes

“SAID”



NOT “stated,” “remarked,” “drawled,” or “spat”

Quotation marks don’t make it true.

Quotes don’t make you safe from libel suits.

Humor — IF it is clean, not offensive — and
REALLY funny

Hire a publicist, editor, PR firm



- Ask associates for referrals
- Join germane organizations
- Join LinkedIn Groups
- AP Stylebook
- Dictionary

What to do with your story



- Submit it to publications/organizations that cater to your target audience (*read their content to conform to their style*).
- Web sites
- Blog and guest blog
- Compile email lists of customers/potential viewers and send to them
- Local reporters
- Online calendars

INCLUDE



- Links
- Key words (metadata)
- Images (with captions)
- Company logo

Where to submit your story



TV, radio, magazines, social media

- PRLog
- PR.com
- PRWeb, Vocus
- Marketwire
- 24-7 Pressrelease
- i-NewsWire
- StraightLinePR
- TusMedios.es
- PressReleasePoint

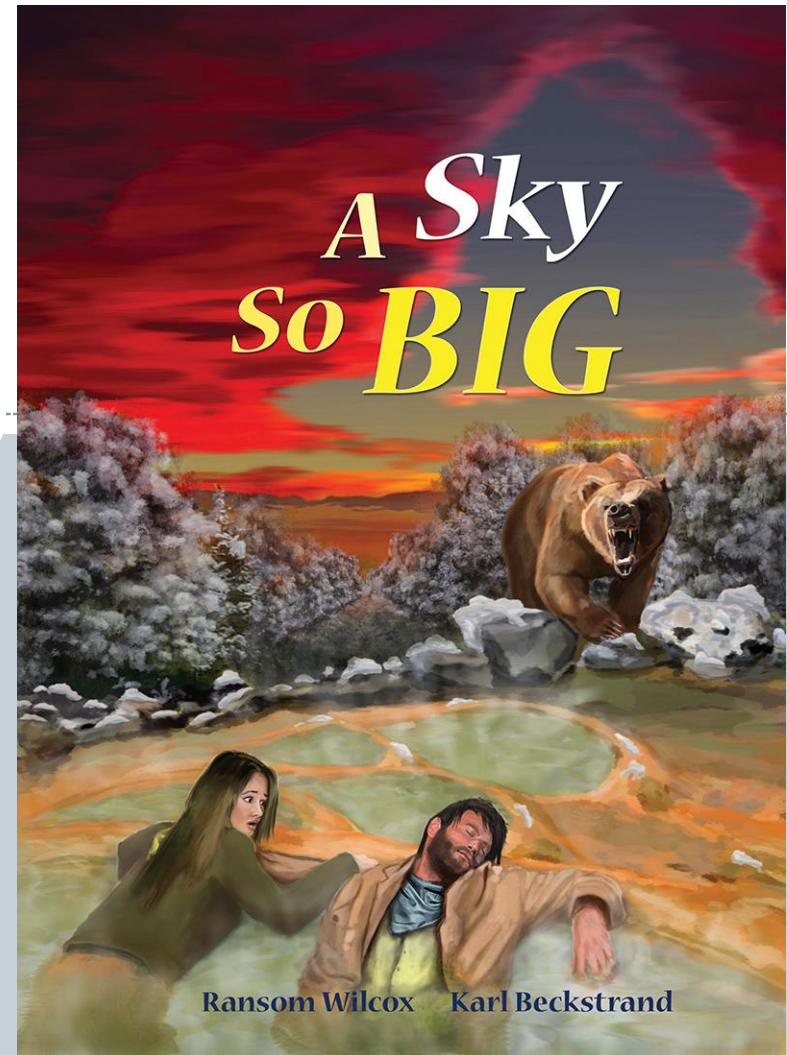
Follow up with a phone call.



**DID YOU GET MY STORY
ABOUT ... ?**



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