

How to write a Press Release

Providing press releases to the media can produce valuable extra publicity for your bridge club. A press release, news release, media release, or press statement is a written or recorded communication directed at members of the news media for the purpose of announcing something of news value.

A press release provides reporters with the basics they need to develop a news story. Press releases can announce a range of news items such as: scheduled events, personal promotions, awards, news products and services, sales, etc. For example, you could send a press release to your local media if your bridge club or one of its members has won a competition, is celebrating a special anniversary, has been given a medal, is organising a new course, raised funds for a charity, or achieved something else which might be newsworthy.

Essentially, a press release is a one or two page, typed document of news or information. It's a mini-article that you prepare and then send to the media (newspaper, radio, television, magazine, etc.) for their use. The press release will be used either as background information or verbatim.

What you need in a Press Release

- Contact information: Bridge club name; the name of the contact; phone number and email address.
- Release Date: When the press release can be released (if immediately, simply put: For Immediate Release).
- Headline: Quick snappy headline to get the Editor's interest.
- Body: The information you want to tell the media about.
- For more information: Always add this at the end to help remind media about contact details.

News in the Press Release

It is so important to put news in your Press Release. Editors get hundreds of press releases during the week, and will throw away 99% of them. However, a good press release (especially locally) is one that has content which will be read and used. These tips will assist you in having that perfect press release:

- The subject of your press release needs to be important for the publication's readers: If it's a local newspaper – is your press release interesting and relevant to locals? Or is it relevant to potential bridge players?
- Make sure the release is news and not just an advert. Editors will not publish advertisements and will discard anything that is an obvious advert.
- Make sure the release benefits readers; the release is more likely to get published if it contains something of benefit to the publications readers – so maybe mention the health benefits of bridge, etc.
- Keep it short and to the point. Space is always limited, especially in local newspapers. Tighten the writing and keep sentences concise.
- Include the facts to back up statements. The editor needs the who, what, when, where, how and why details too.
- Make sure the press release stands on its own. Never include a covering letter - anything you want to say in the letter should be in the press release.

- Keep your news at the top. At the start of the press release make sure you mention the news. Don't hide it in paragraphs or summary.
- Use straightforward headlines.
- Send in your press release before the news 'goes cold'.
- End releases properly. End each release with contact details and a generic paragraph about your club, as the media may choose to use it.

How to send a Press Release

Always try and send as an email, but paste the release into the body of the email and not as an attachment. Afterwards, follow up the press release with a phone call to confirm the receipt of your email.

Further help and information

For further assistance in dealing with the media contact the EBU's Press and Communications Officer on comms@ebu.co.uk. We are always willing to help and will be happy to check your proposed press release before you send it out.