

Writing Press Releases

Getting more positive fraternity stories out.

A press release (a.k.a. a news or media release) is an important promotional tool and a fundamental component of any content marketing strategy. Press releases need to be newsworthy. If they aren't, not only will they not get picked up, over time you also lose credibility making it harder to get media coverage when you do have something newsworthy to report.

When would I issue a press release? *Some great reasons to consider...*

- Drawing attention and media coverage to an upcoming event or philanthropy
- Recapping a success or accomplishment such as a large community service event, funds raised for charity, campus partnership or growth in membership
- Individual success and scholarship of IFC

THE HEADLINE

- Make it genuine: Be brief and clear. Use the key points or attention grabber.
- Write it in bold: A bold headline also typically uses a larger font size than the body copy.

WRITE THE BODY COPY

- The press release should be written **as you want it to appear** in a news story.
- Start with the date and city in which the press release originates.
- The lead, or first sentence, should **grab the reader and say concisely what is happening**. It expands the headline enough to fill in some of the details and brings the reader further into the story.
 - The next one to two sentences should then expand upon the lead.
- The press release body copy should be **compact**. Avoid using very long sentences and paragraphs. Avoid repetition and overuse of fancy language and jargon. Strive for simplicity, and **no wasted words**.
- Deal with actual facts — events, services, people, goals, plans, projects. Try to provide maximum use of concrete facts.

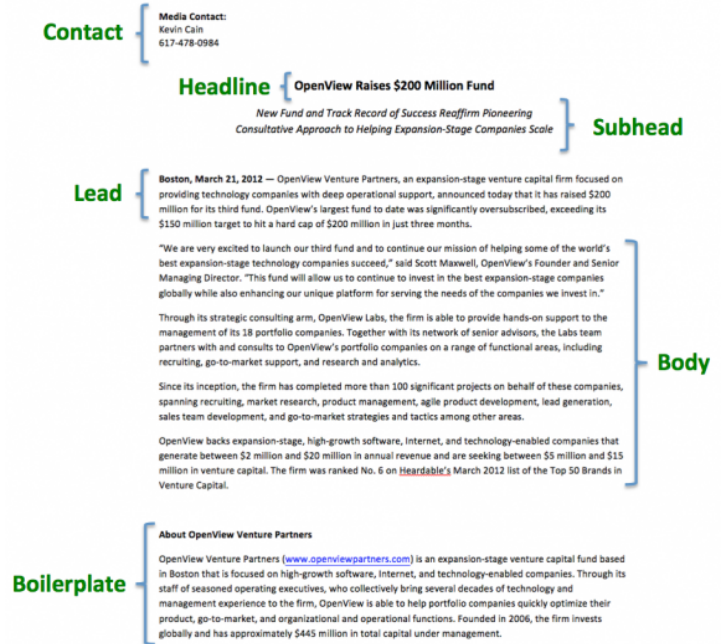
COMMUNICATE THE 5 Ws AND THE H CLEARLY

- Start with the who, what, when, where, why —and how— should tell the reader everything they need to know.
- Consider the checklist in context with the points below:
 - Who is this about?
 - What is the actual news?

- When does this event happen?
- Where does the event take place?
- Why is this news? *This is crucial for positive fraternity stories!*
- How is this happening?

THE STRUCTURE

- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE should go at the top of the page, on the left margin.
- The headline, usually in bold, should be centered below.
- Dateline: It is good practice to include the month/date/year of the press release as well as city and state below the headline to start the first paragraph.
- First paragraph: most important information. Consider: This may be all the recipient reads!
- Second and third paragraphs: include facts, data and quotes from a specific person such as the IFC President, event organizer or an advisor.
- Boilerplate information: more information on the IFC – Who are you? What’s your mission?
- Contact information: More on the writer. Be sure to include their email and phone number.
- Multimedia: What social media channels do you want to include? A link to your website adds credibility.



Advancing fraternity.

The mission of an Interfraternity Council (IFC) is to foster a healthy and vibrant fraternity community on campus and provide interfraternal leadership and positive change. nicfraternity.org/ifcsop

