

THE BASICS OF
PRESS RELEASES

WHY, WHO, & HOW



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WHY WRITE AND SEND OUT A PRESS RELEASE?

A well-written press release can do big things. First — and probably most importantly — it allows you to tell the story you want about an artist's music. Media outlets that receive your press release will use it as a guide for determining if it fits their audiences, what they'll ask in an interview, what to look for while listening for a review, etc. You have complete control over what your press release says. And more and more media outlets are posting press releases in their entirety on their websites. Having a press release — and a well-written one — can up your chances of it being shared.

Second, a press release is an easy way to get information to a lot of people at one time. It can be tedious to send individual emails to a long list of contacts. With a press release, you can reach a large target group at once and adjust the release for multiple groups, if needed. More on that soon.



WHO DO I SEND MY PRESS RELEASE TO?



The answer to this question will depend on your goals. Are you using a press release to attract media attention? Do you want radio DJs to know about a new single? Are you promoting a tour?

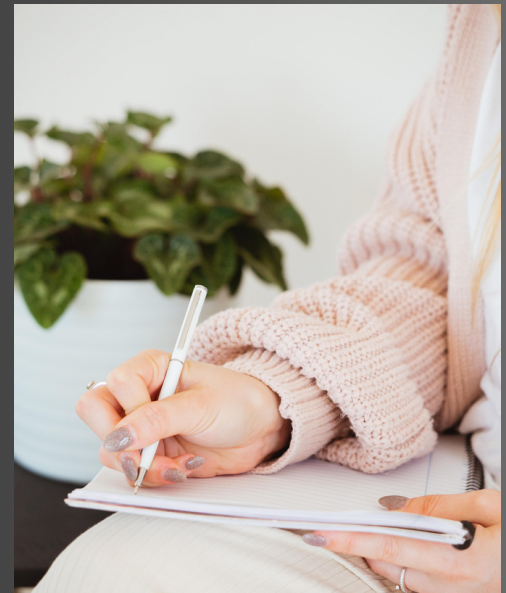
All can be necessary throughout a release cycle. Meeting each of these goals requires a different target audience that will need unique information. And it's important to not send the same press release to all of them.

Once you determine your goal, let it guide what information goes into your press release. Use whatever program you're using for sending emails (MailChimp, Constant Contact, etc.) to build contact lists for each of these target groups so you have them on hand. Doing so makes it easy to send your press release, but it also gives you data you can use when sending out future ones.

HOW DO I CRAFT A PRESS RELEASE?

What information goes in your press release? Going back to the “why,” start with the story you want to tell. Use artist quotes to capture that story in their voice. It can also be helpful to give context for where a certain release fits into the artist’s career. It’s not really just about this single or tour, is it? It’s about where they came from, where they are, and where they’re going. Use each press release to share that information.

Once you have the story, add in the information your target audience needs. For media, let them know when the music is coming out. For radio, let them know how they can download the song for airplay. For tours, include ticket sale information and dates.



COMMUNICATION

- The music release date
- A link to where people can hear the music
- Links to social media pages and websites
- A quote from the artist
- The single/album cover image
- A hi-resolution press photo of the artist with photo credit
- Contact information so people can follow up and get more information

I'VE SENT IT. NOW WHAT?

Once your press release is sent, keep an eye out for who shares it or asks for more information. Respond promptly to any requests. The point was to generate interest, so reply if people reach out.

Now is also the time to look at data you receive from the press release. What was the open rate? What links did people click on? Did a lot of people unsubscribe? Use this information to fine-tune future press releases. If you saw a lot of unsubscribes, maybe what you sent wasn't tailored well for the audience. If people clicked on your social media links, they wanted to learn more. All of this knowledge can help you craft better press releases in the future.

AUDREY FLETCHER

MEDIA OUTREACH COORDINATOR | CROSSROADS LABEL GROUP

Audrey Fletcher joined Mountain Home Music Company and Organic Records in 2018 as the labels' publicist and part of the marketing team, working on press outreach, social media and graphic design. She's worked publicity for several chart-topping songs and albums — with a few debuting at No. 1 on the Billboard charts — for artists like Balsam Range, Sister Sadie, Tray Wellington, Lonesome River Band, The Grascals, Unspoken Tradition, Chris Jones & The Night Drivers, Aaron Burdett, Kevin Daniel, Jon Stickley Trio, Zoe & Cloyd and more.

