

Communications Toolkit for Beer Distributors

# Traditional Media 101



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# Tell your Story



Distributors are doing incredible things throughout the states and communities in which they work and live, and we know that **reporters want to hear about it!**

This deck **contains tactics** distributors should consider using to **engage media and garner positive media attention.**

**Remember to use NBWA as a resource.** We can help you identify appropriate media, establish key messaging and draft press collateral.  
Have a question or need help? Please email [ajones@nbwa.org](mailto:ajones@nbwa.org)

# How to Draft a Compelling Press Release

Press releases are a great way to **make an official announcement** to the media about your company and community efforts. A compelling press release can result in multiple published articles about your business, employees and products.

Some tips for writing a captivating press release include:



Share a newsworthy story



Provide good quotes



Develop a catchy headline



Write concisely



Write like a reporter



Confirm all information is accurate

# The Structure of a Press Release

A press release usually follows the format below.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
<INSERT DATE>  
<CONTACT INFORMATION>

HEADLINE  
*DESCRIPTIVE LINE IN TITLE CASE*

<INSERT DATE LINE> - INTRO PARAGRAPH

QUOTE

BODY OF THE RELEASE

QUOTE

###

<INSERT BOILERPLATE>

**SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release  
Date:

Name of Press Contact:  
Phone:  
Email:

[HEADLINE]  
*Example: XYZ Distributor Lends Temperature-Controlled Truck to XYZ Food Bank*

[CITY], [STATE] – *Introductory Paragraph with a few sentences about the actions you took.*  
*Example: XYZ Distributor today donated a refrigerated truck trailer to XYZ Food Bank in XYZ state or community to ensure perishable products remained cold and fresh. These efforts were critical in helping to ensure # of families received # of meals.*

[QUOTE] - *Quote from distributor executive.*  
*Example: "In times of need, XYZ distributor is committed to assisting the XYZ community," said XYZ, president and CEO of XYZ distributor. "The people we serve are not just our customers. They are our friends, family and neighbors. So many people are facing unprecedented hardship, and the only way we will overcome the effects of COVID-19 is by working together."*

[Second Paragraph] - *Additional information about your efforts.*  
*The XYZ Food Bank has seen an xx% increase in demand since the COVID-19 crisis began. The temperature-controlled trailers provided by XYZ Distributor allowed the food bank to serve more families at their drive-through food pantry. The XYZ Food Bank serves XX counties in XYZ state and fills a critical need as more people battle food insecurity each day.*

[QUOTE] - *Quote from community partner or NBWA President and CEO Craig Purser*  
*Example: "Nationwide, beer distributors are going above and beyond for their communities," said Craig Purser, NBWA president and CEO. "XYZ Distributor's leadership and commitment to their community demonstrate the values that have always been at the very core of our industry."*

[BOILERPLATE] - *Your company's information.*

For examples of NBWA member press releases announcing their COVID-19 work, click [here](#) and [here](#).

# How to Write an LTE

A letter to the editor (LTE) is a **short opinion piece** (between 150 and 200 words) from a member of the public, and it is posted on the opinion page—one of the most widely read sections of a newspaper. Writing and submitting an LTE is an **effective and easy way to share information about your efforts with a large audience.**

- **Be direct!** This is a short piece, so you have a limited number of words to make your case.
- **Relate it to home and make it personal:** this makes a piece more compelling for readers and it helps with placement.
- **Be timely:** tie your LTE to a news hook or current event. Additionally, you can look for opportunities to respond to an op-ed or article with an LTE.
- **End with a call to action!**

# How to Write an Op-ed

An op-ed derives its name from being opposite the editorial page in a newspaper. Today, the term is used to represent a **column with the strong, informed and focused opinion** of a writer on an issue of relevance. Here are some tips for writing an op-ed:

- **Identify your audience** and position/issue/call to action upfront.
- **Understand the guidelines** of your target publication.
- **Do your research!** You should also look for data and evidence to back up your opinion.
- **Write a strong opening paragraph** using a relevant news hook.
- **Be persuasive!** Make your point early in the opening paragraph, then back it up with supporting evidence or examples in each paragraph afterward.
- **Conclude the piece** with a call to action and connect back to the opening paragraph.

Check out an op-ed by NBWA President and CEO Craig Purser [here](#).

# Identifying Media Outlets

The **first step** in media outreach is **identifying and targeting appropriate media**. If you are announcing an award or publicizing the distribution of a new craft beer, print media may be the best target. If you are looking to do general promotion or have compelling visuals or audio to offer, broadcast media (TV or radio) may be where you should focus your efforts.



# Types of Media to Engage

When determining whether a news outlet is appropriate for your particular story, consider the following:

- What newspapers are in your market?
- Which newspaper do most people read in the state or region?
- Which local TV news stations air in your market?
- Are there any regional or community publications that cover your area?
- Does your local community have a local news site or blog?
- Are there local beer bloggers who would appreciate the news?

For assistance identifying media outlets in your local market, please email NBWA's Communications Team at [ajones@nbwa.org](mailto:ajones@nbwa.org).

# The Importance of the Pitch

It is important to **build personal relationships** with reporters to potentially generate favorable coverage of your business and the beer distribution industry. Since a press release is often not enough to generate a story, it is recommended that someone from your organization **reach out directly to local reporters to offer story ideas.**



# Making the Pitch

Members of the media receive hundreds of calls, emails and text each day pitching them on news stories. So, **how do you break through the noise?**

- **Choose your target:** know what you're pitching and identify which reporters at your target outlets cover stories like yours.
- **Do your research:** read stories from the author with an eye for interests, themes and the ways your story would help them engage their followers.
- **Craft a story:** don't just pitch the company, product or event; make it personal.
- **Get to the point and provide all the information:** make your pitch short and compelling and lay out the information so they have to do as little work as possible.
- **Be persistent, but not a pest!** Try email first. If a reporter doesn't respond within a few days, you can call. When you call, make sure you get to the point and are respectful of his or her time.

