



10 Steps to an Effective Press Release

1. Only issue press releases that are newsworthy

Here are a few newsworthy angles that you may wish to send a press release to the media about:

- *A significant win for your club (Cup Match, National Competition, Local Derby, important NVL match)*
- *Your club organizing a national tournament or local volleyball event*
- *One of your players makes an England or GB team (Juniors/Cadets etc)*

2. Define Target Press List & Tailor

Obtain local press contacts through websites like www.mediauk.com and build up a list of contacts. You can also obtain key contacts through Volleyball England's Marketing officer

Always remember to highlight the regional angle, make it clear where your club is based and what town a player or volunteer is from. It may also be helpful to put ages in brackets.

3. Capture the reader's attention with the headline

The headline and first paragraph should tell the story and should be no more than one or two sentences.

The rest of the press should provide the detail. You only have a few seconds to grab the attention of the journalist to tell your story.

4. Include a quote if possible

It's always positive if you can get a brief quote from your players/chairman or supporters to add body to the release. Remember to give the full name and position/connection with your club before or after the quote.

For Example Volleyball England's Chief Executive said "This is a magnificent result for the players in their first SWATCH world series event"

5. Beware of Volleyball Jargon

The best way to communicate your story is by speaking plain ordinary language. Unless you know the media is familiar with the sport, stick to basic information. If your release is about your club winning a match, keep to the results and opponents rather than detailing too many techniques and scores. Too much information may put them off altogether.

6. Include availability and pricing information

If you have open sessions or are welcoming members to join, include brief details of how interested readers can join or just come along to watch.

7. Ending your release and contact details

Your press release should end with a short concluding paragraph to sum up the story. A 'Note to editors' section can also be included to direct a journalist to a website or provide more details that would not be included in the story. Press may wish for more information they will wish to contact you or visit your website for example. Put 'Contacts' under the release with your email/phone number/address.

8. Checking your release

Read through the release to make sure the content is correct and the angle is newsworthy. If your press release reads like an advertisement- rewrite it. It should always read like a newspaper article. A busy journalist is more likely to use your release if it is already in a suitable format.

Try and keep the release to a maximum of one page A4. It should always have MEDIA RELEASE in the top left corner and the date just below it. Also try and include your club logo.

9. Pictures tell a thousand words

If you are fortunate enough to have pictures of an events or member in digital format always send them through.

10. Distributing your press release

The most effective way of sending a press release is by attachment on email. Alternatively, you can always send it by fax or by post. If you send by email always put the press release title in the subject box and the first paragraph in the main body of the email. This way the journalist can see what a story is about before they open the attachment.

Remember to try and keep a copy of your press release for reference and future use.

To Summarise....

Always make sure your press release is newsworthy and think about what makes the story interesting to the reader.

Make sure you consider the regional angle for local press

Grab the reader's attention early on

Don't include too much Volleyball technical talk. Keep it simple

Always provide good contact details, if journalists can't get hold of after contacting you a couple of times they will move onto another story

Frequently Asked Questions

Should I ring my local press?

If you think you have a truly newsworthy story it is worth ringing a journalist. However, try to ring as early as possible to avoid afternoon deadlines. Make sure you get through to the right person. If you don't have a name you should ask to speak to the Sports Desk for tournament/results related stories and the News Desk for anything else.

Typically, results and tournament information will not need a follow up call as a press release will suffice. If a journalist requires more information they will definitely be in touch. If you have a special news story, which you think needs further attention then make the call!

How about TV- will they be interested in featuring my club?

Yes! But it will depend on the regional angle and whether the story is newsworthy. A large proportion of television opportunities in fact come into the main press office at Volleyball England.

Volleyball England is often contacted for information or to find clubs/players to film at short notice. If you think you can help by taking part in this type of activity, please let us know.

If you think you have a newsworthy story suitable for television please contact Volleyball England who may be able to help get the story into your local television channels for you.

Will public relations support my event?

If your club is organising a tournament/event, your local media will be interested to hear about it. Always issue a press release to inform them of your event including details of when is the best time for them to send photographers. After the event, contact any papers that have covered your event to tell them how it has gone as a follow up.

Next Steps.....

Those who have promoted their club in the past will understand that it is easier to get their club in the media once a relationship has been made with a journalist. For those that are new to this type of activity, it is worth considering having a designated Club Public Relations Officer. This way, the media have one consistent contact that they can approach with potential stories and vice versa. Opportunities to create press opportunities will therefore become easier once this person has developed contacts and also an awareness of what succeeds with the various channels of communication.

If you are completely new to promoting your club or would like some help taking your publicity to the next level, please do not hesitate to contact Volleyball England's Marketing officer for a brief chat or assistance.