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SMPR - THE NEW SOCIAL MEDIA NEWSWIRE AND PRESS RELEASE PHENOMENON

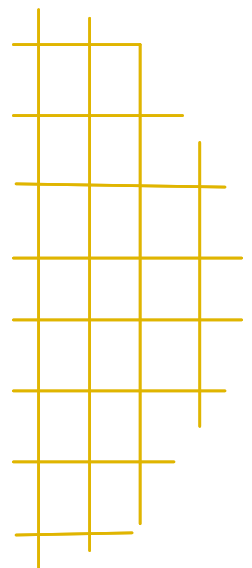
SMPR News & Press Releases - How They Bring You Business

by Chris Clark
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Examples covered | Like.com
The Carole Spiers Group



Carole Spiers Group
International Stress Management and
Employee Wellbeing Consultancy
Established 1987



About the Author: Chris Clark is MD of Clark Marketing Ltd, www.clarkmarketing.co.uk, a London Search Marketing Agency. Chris is an internet marketer with 25 years Hi-Tech Marketing and Sales. He is experienced at solving \$multi-million marketing problems of major blue chip companies, and helping SME businesses consistently win sales, enquiries, and seize the attention of new clients.

A dedicated supporter of all things SME Chris is a Speaker, Writer, and Associate of the Professional Speakers Association, The Institute of Direct Marketing, and member of The Open Document Foundation.

Chris holds an MBA from Warwick University.

For over 100 years there was little change in press release methodology until the arrival of the Web.

This allowed businesses employing electronic press releases punch above their weight, but over the last 2-3 years, this has become less effective.

To explain this in simple terms, Web 2.0 can be imagined as not only whole new ways for people to relate to each other using blogs, sharing pictures, videos and IM, under the concept of User Generated Content, but they could also see how large new communities of interest were.

A Brief History of On-Line Press Releases

Businesses have used the Press Release as a medium to communicate exciting news about their products for over 100 years. From printed pages, telex, and to beautifully crafted paper products the world changed more often than the press release did.

The idea of using the Internet for On-Line Press Releases got going in 1997 with a new idea from a start up company called PRWeb.

Run by David McInnis, PRWeb hit on the idea of making it easy for businesses to submit a electronic press release for it then to be found or distributed via the web or early news feeds straight to armies of waiting journalists. And the great news to businesses that to use it was Free!

The Press Release was just a simple text file and header when compared to the crafted and colourful print versions. But businesses who got smart at online press release media soon found they could dis-proportionally make a big impact over their competitors.

As time went by, many new press wire services sprung up, categorised distribution to media hounds pre-selecting their interests became the norm.

The use of basic search optimisation and selection of keywords in press release 'tags' to better direct information to their media audiences looking for relevant releases became sought after. Free went to Fee, though most basic services could still be had, with deteriorating pickup rates and rising 'spam'.

In the meantime, media outlets and journalists got savvy with video and audio news, use of photographs, case studies, downloadable media of all types, but the press release stayed in a simple text form.

2004 - 2006. Web 2.0 and The Rise of the Social Media Community

Late in 2004, the Web started evolving again in its usual and confusing way, to introduce new ways for people to share and communicate with each other.

Some of the names are more familiar only with younger generations, such as Blogging, MySpace, Technorati, where people can share and comment on experiences and comment, others such as Newsvine, Reddit, and the geeky Techcrunch are now gaining space in particular areas allowing a hitherto unknown freedom of expression and shared opinion.

All of this was variously tagged Web 2.0, or Social Media, with many different takes. So if you are getting very confused about this, you are in good company. Essentially, these new websites offered the opportunity for readers to vote up an interesting

The explosion in high traffic websites such as MySpace, Technorati, Digg, NewsVine became magnets for web-advertisers to launch products and journalists/ media to write about the issues of the day, completely bypassing traditional Web and email channels.

product or story, share that vote, and let hundreds or thousands of other people know of their interest.

Now anyone intending to write or comment on an article could see in advance how much interest there was in the topic and its trend.

The media picked up on this very quickly. Major advertisers quickly cottoned on to the fact that here were websites with millions of new pairs of eyes to view ads, together with new tools to make the ads more relevant - essential for traffic driving and conversion to sales.

It became absolutely possible to run major ad-campaigns that win results from buyers who never used the traditional search engines or were influenced by their results.

Introducing SMPR - The Social Media Press Release

But still the On-line Press Release remained in its simple text form, at least until May 2006 where a new format idea - called Social Media Press Release, got released to an unsuspecting world in May by SHIFT Communications (www.shift.com) a Bay Area Public Relations Company.

The Social Media Press Release - SMPR - is the world's first agreed electronic format that allows words, pictures, videos, PDF downloads, audio files and links to be displayed in one electronic document.

The new Press Release format is an astounding development. It organises your valuable press release into a true multimedia document that now includes your article, precisely designed for skim reading by journalists using the Outlook Preview feature.





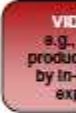



It has live feeds to special web-pages for more details, includes downloadable photos, PDFs, video and audio files, white papers and so on. Quotes and testimonials from partners, early customers, analysts etc, can be included.

Then straight away the press release effortlessly connects you to other coverage of your story for different 'takes' a ready and waiting interested community, your news/blog feeds for other news.

Example Format of the Social Media Press Release (overpage)

**SOCIAL MEDIA PRESS RELEASE
TEMPLATE, VERSION 1.0**

For a company promoting their latest products, the new SMPR allows journalists to swiftly 'disassemble' the release contents, i.e., audio clips for radio broadcast, video for TV News, and downloads and statistics for detailed articles to newspapers.

CONTACT INFORMATION:	Client contact Phone #/skype Email IM address Web site	Spokesperson Phone #/skype Email IM address Biog/relevant post	Agency contact Phone #/skype Email IM address Web site
NEWS RELEASE HEADLINE Subhead			
CORE NEWS FACTS ▪ Bullet-points preferable			
		LINK & RSS FEED TO PURPOSE-BUILT DELICIOUS PAGE The purpose-built del.icio.us page offers hyperlinks (and PR annotation in "notes" fields) to relevant historical, trend, market, product & competitive content sources, providing context as-needed, and, on-going updates.	
 PHOTO e.g., product picture, exec headshot, etc.	 MP3 FILE OR PODCAST LINK e.g., sound bytes by various stakeholders	 GRAPHIC e.g., product schematic, market size graphs, logos	 VIDEO e.g., brief product demo by in-house expert
MORE MULTIMEDIA AVAILABLE BY REQUEST e.g., "download white paper"			
PRE-APPROVED QUOTES FROM CORPORATE EXECUTIVES, ANALYSTS, CUSTOMERS AND/OR PARTNERS Recommendation: no more than 2 quotes per contact. The PR agency should have additional quotes at-the-ready, "upon request," for journalists who desire exclusive content. This provides opportunity for Agency to add further value to interested media.			
LINKS TO RELEVANT COVERAGE TO-DATE (OPTIONAL) This empowers journalist to "take a different angle," etc. These links would also be cross-posted to the custom del.icio.us site.			
BOILERPLATE STATEMENTS			
		RSS FEED TO CLIENT'S NEWS RELEASES	
		"ADD TO DELICIOUS" Allows readers to use the release as a standalone portal to this news	
		TECHNORATI TAGS/"DIGG THIS"	

Extract from the PRWeb Press release (view online [on this link.](#))

“ If you run your own business, or have managerial responsibility for personnel within a larger organization, the chances are you will already have introduced measures to protect the continuity of your systems and operations, if the worst should happen. But what you may not have considered is the parallel need to ensure the wellbeing of your staff is similarly protected ”

uma support programme needs to include: dangerous or aggressive environments; well ogramme detailing potential hazards; dedicated ological support as needed); and how

ATTACHED FILES

 Carole Spiers Group
Carole Spiers Group Logo
Uploaded: Nov 18, 2006
File Name: CaroleSpiersGroupLogo.jpg

 Carole Spiers
Carole is Managing Director, The Carole Spiers Group
Uploaded: Nov 18, 2006
File Name: CaroleSpiers.jpg

In this example taken from PRWeb, video, audio, PDF files and other useful PR material can be added and quotes can be highlighted.

Your message can provide full information and impact.

A media person can rapidly disassemble the press release and forward or merge elements into other publications.

Lastly the new format document allows the recipient to bookmark

Example:

'Digg-ing' for News Coverage

A company launching a new fashion line, creates the new SMPR and forwards it to the few Online Agencies that have amended their systems to handle them.

It has videos of models wearing apparel, a statement from the Chief Exec, and another from a major buyer. A full PDF catalogue can be downloaded through the release, and the release is already tagged to be picked up by del.icio.us and Technorati.

The company's media department hits the blogs, which in turn get picked up by hundreds of fashion writers, re-purposing the content to their own blogs for consumption by fashion followers.

As the Press release is picked up by other wire agencies and detected using news alerts, the company media teams and fashion writers 'digg' the articles, placing them on social newspapers Digg and Reddit, for reader to vote up or down. The news takes on a life of its own. Hundreds or thousands of fashion followers react to the news, hitting shops and catalogue sites with credit cards in hand ready to purchase. And how long might all this take? 8-24 hours. And the cost of this media storm? Far less than all conventional alternatives.

the press release as a de.licious.com web-page, and forward it to self drive newswires such as Digg, to send the story on to a wider world.

Expanding coverage in hours!

New tools on the market help your company increase coverage through online self subscribe news sites which are read by people with special interests. They can 'vote up' or 'vote down' or add comments to the article to increase its visibility and interest, bookmark the site for future reference, and in so doing, indicate their interest to a wider community. These are just some of the tools you will see popping up in blogs and on websites.



How the Media can use the new Social Media Press Release

Let's now look at how a time pressured journalist might review the new format press release. First, she can scan the press release for community interest and newsworthiness. Next, she can assess how well connected your company is using Socialmeter, a social measuring tool. She can 'disassemble' your information in seconds, edit and broadcast the video file to BBC News, use the audio file for a Local Radio broadcast, then re-purpose your additional information to create in depth coverage for a complete article to sell to a newspaper, and perhaps write a trackable blog about it.

Small wonder the major newswires are fast modifying their systems.

However, this is not the end of the story. Because this new format is so easily followed on line, a whole range of tracking tools can be used to monitor pick-up rates, blog conversations, review users opinions, assess social commentator and website social standings, measure traffic to and through websites, all to identify the impact on news stories, and ultimately, sales.

Let's look at two very different ways of using these techniques in action.

A new shopping portal www.like.com was launched on Nov 8th 2006. The marketing plan extensively used social media marketing techniques driven by an Associated Press article also used in Yahoo News. The site was immediately picked up by 556 fashion blogs in 3 days, virally marketed through visitors emailing their friends, got to the New York Times on 13th November. The company also went on a Blogging spree to spread the message, and Like's CEO; Munjal Shah ran a blog of the whole launch. The effect on November 10th

was to drive more unique visitor traffic to Like.com than the might Shopzilla.com organisation. Visitors have subsided now, but the traffic to merchants has continued to rise.

And the SEO/Search Marketing/Banner/PPC Campaigns? Not One! That is the power of this new SMPR medium.

The Carole Spiers Group used a version of this approach to promote an up-coming speaker session that took place between 26-30th November in Dubai.

So how did our trial go?

This trial was done in conjunction with the Carole Spiers Group and PRWeb, aimed at getting as much coverage of writer, speaker, and broadcaster Carole Spiers forthcoming speech at The 4th Middle East Safety Management Congress, Dubai, and 26-30 November 2006.

Working with PRWeb, we took identical steps, ensuring the social bookmarking was done. A number of blogs were written and sent, and when a reference to the news article appeared, it was forwarded to Newsvine and Reddit.

Getting attention for your company as a trainer and adviser in the crowded stress management and workplace counselling arena can be difficult. Clark Marketing therefore tied up with PRWeb (www.prweb.com) and the client to deliver a promotional campaign using the SMPR approach.

The coverage received for the speaking tour was the highest by far in recent years.

A style conventional press release was first drafted by CSG. This release was then reformatted to the SMPR principles, and uploaded to PRWeb for vetting and scoring. We built search and category terms into the press release, uploading photographs, identifying and marking quotes, and rewriting to maximise PRWeb's editorial score system.

Within the new system we added RSS information for readers to connect to CSG blogs, tags to help Technorati users find CSG blog postings, and added in SEO terms to target the release. Upon release, as soon as the PRWeb article reference became available, we pushed it through Digg and Reddit news publishers.

The results were rapid!

At time of writing, 24 hours after release, the release received over 25,000 page reads, been picked up 140 times for closer attention. The first of two two specially crafted blogs is available through Google to a wider audience of readers and is being picked up by other bloggers. The website has received new quality links. Over the next few weeks, we expect about 500 pick-ups, more bloggers writing their own take on CSG, and an increased readership for future blogs. CSG are very pleased indeed with the results.

One remarkable point about the new Social Media Press Release format is that it is not expensive in its own right to launch. However, the expense will be in developing the additional materials, videos and audios, which, depending on the industry, may need to be well crafted productions.

Is this new approach expensive?

The actual placing of the SMPR press release is not hugely greater than current methods. However, your information needs to be compiled, you may need to create a video clip and get it approved, find quotes and endorsements from key partners, have materials ready for uploading in advance, and these can offer significant costs. Guide prices from Clark Marketing at this moment are £397 - £597 excluding video/audio taping costs & production, with large reductions in creation/editing price available possible if the press release is written in house to the correct formats.

Where can I see an example of the new Press Release?

To view an example of the PRWeb Finalised Press Release for The Carole Spiers Group, go to:

<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2006/11/prweb480895.htm>

For more information about SMPR and Search Marketing, contact Chris Clark at Clark Marketing Ltd, tel: 44-1-895 623 845, web: www.clarkmarketing.co.uk, email: campaign@clarkmarketing.co.uk.

References

O'Reilly Media
www.oreilly.com

A Web 2.0 opinion leader company credited with defining the 7 principles a company should adopt to claim to be a Web 2.0 company.

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