

HOME	NEWS	FEATURES	SUBSCRIBE	ADVERTISE	PRWEEK CONTACT	EVENTS	CONTACT US	JOBS	ABOUT US
Healthcare	Technology	Media	Consumer	Public Affairs	Financial	Crisis Comms			

You are here: US > Search > [The new, lightweight press kit](#)

[Refine Search](#)
[New Search](#)
[Search Tips](#)
[Back to Results](#)
[RSS](#)

The new, lightweight press kit

Craig McGuire - 15 May 2006 11:00

Many press kits have gone virtual, measured in bytes, not pages. **Craig McGuire** discovers what to include

The press kit, that fundamental cornerstone of any PR outreach, has come a long way. So-called "e-kits" brim with CDs, DVDs, MP3s, RSS feeds, Web links, satellite feeds, and many other treats.

Like e-mail and e-commerce, an e-kit may never totally replace its predecessor. But it is a vital part of the arsenal. An e-kit still possesses the same core components a traditional one would have included.

There should be a well-written, fact-filled description of the subject, as well as product/event sheets, press releases regarding newsworthy items, bios and backgrounders on key subjects, testimonials, articles from archives, perhaps a calendar or itinerary, and always a contact sheet.

What has vastly improved is the way these materials are presented.

"We're constantly balancing the ability to add interactivity and rich content with a journalist's desire for client news to be communicated in the most direct, straightforward way," says Jeff Beringer, director of GolinHarris' Web relations group. "Form should never surpass the function."

Journalists' use of technology varies widely, so the onus is on the sender to accommodate their needs.

"Some may access e-mail remotely, some read incoming news via BlackBerry, and some now prefer RSS feeds for news delivery instead of e-mail," Beringer says.

Design full kits with multiple pieces of information in a variety of formats (text, video, audio, animation, etc.), all within a custom interface in the body of a single e-mail message, he advises. You have great flexibility and are not locked into clunky single-focus print runs. There is no longer any excuse for carpet-bombing the media.

"The most essential item is a tailored pitch letter and multiple press releases," says Dianna Booher, CEO of Booher Consultants, a communication training firm. "Technology enables you to customize each pitch and press release easily and e-mail them with a click to the appropriate editor."

Broadcast media are particularly more receptive to DVDs, which are much less bulky than tapes and much more compelling than stills.

[Email this article](#)
[Print this page](#)

[Subscribe to PRWeek](#)

[Newsletters](#)

Get weekly news alerts on the consumer, healthcare, or technology industry. Newsletters include news round-ups, features, and jobs tailored to the particular sector.

"When pitching our authors for interview opportunities with national television programs, such as Today, we always include a DVD of video clips from the author's past television interviews," says Jennifer McAndrew, senior publicist at for the publicity division of BookPros. "This helps the producer gauge an author's interview style and talent as a guest."

A visual aid is also a great way to sell print media on a story idea for a difficult-to-explain concept. One of McAndrew's clients, Lisa Tener, author of *The Ultimate Guide to Transforming Anger*, developed innovative "anger-obics" exercises to help people manage anger.

"These exercises were difficult to describe, so we included a DVD demonstration of some of the exercises with the press kit," McAndrew says. "This encouraged outlets such as *USA Weekend* and *Fitness* magazine to write about the concept."

E-kits are also extremely valuable for campaigns where a picture is worth much more than 1,000 words. Jill Van Nostran, PR consultant at Ackermann PR in Knoxville, TN, recently created an interactive e-kit for the Estates at Norton Creek, a luxury real-estate development in the Smoky Mountains.

"Using technology, reporters can more fully grasp a company's messages and image, so get creative," Van Nostran says. "With the Estates at Norton Creek press kit, because one of the property's biggest features is a world-class fly fishing stream, we placed the CD case in a tackle box."

But, says Glen Stone, public affairs manager at the Toronto Board of Trade, don't completely ignore the power of paper.

"For a reporter at a remote location, a CD will not be useful until he or she gets back to the office," Stone says. "I give electronic information to journalists via e-mail and in kits, but my kits always include paper versions of the essentials so that reporters, particularly radio reporters who have 24 deadlines a day, have something they can use immediately."

Technique Tips

DO

Research and tailor your kit to appeal directly to the media you are targeting

Review plenty of samples and strategies, including those of your closest competitors, and solicit non-biased feedback

Review your press kit regularly for updates and to consider adding new elements

DON'T

Overdesign and add in bells and whistles that do not help tell a story

Use dull visuals, dry copy, overly long press releases, unusable artwork, and difficult-to-open files.

Forget about spam filters - keep attachments small, and advise the journalist it's coming

Related Stories

There are currently no related news stories for this item

Related Links

[Purchase a Reprint](#)

[Send a Comment to the Editor](#)

[Subscribe to PRWeek](#)

SPONSORED LINKS

[On The Scene Productions - Full Service PR Video and Multi-platform Media Services](#)

The leader in broadcast and multimedia production services for television, radio and internet: SMT/RMT's, B-roll, VNR/ANR, POD/VODcasting, Precision Placement, Digital Signage, Phone/Webcasting, and Content Syndication. Go to <http://www.onthescene.com/contact.htm> for more information and a **free DVD brochure**

[Choosing the Right Webcasting Platform: How to Avoid Costly Mistakes](#)

This webcast, hosted by industry analyst Ira M. Weinstein of Wainhouse Research, provides insight and analysis into selecting the right service provider to meet your global requirements. [Register today](#).

[Affordable PR Writing & Distribution](#)

eReleases features more than 190 target categories, subscribing journalists, talented writers, and traditional newswire posting. Let us target your next press release. [Click here for more information](#).

Gebbie Press - A Name You Know

No Bells. No Whistles. Just the Essential Media Contact Facts

In 1970 the first Gebbie Press All-In-One Directory was published. We haven't missed a year since. Available as software, importable text files and - as always - in an affordable, portable print edition.

Owned & Operated by the Gebbie family since 1955.

Copyright © 2005 PRWeek