

5 CREATIVE WAYS TO AMPLIFY YOUR NEWS BEYOND THE PRESS RELEASE





Gaining the attention of journalists, influencers and consumers is harder to come by today more than ever: nearly half of journalists receive 50 or more pitches a week, while consumers are bombarded with content from every device they encounter. So, when you have valuable news to share about your client or brand, how can you make your message rise above the cacophony to reach your target audience?

As a PR pro, you know that sending a press release is one of the most efficient ways to share your brand's news. However, because journalists are stretched so thin, it can be difficult to get coverage of your news in publications your target audience reads and trusts. When it comes to sending press releases, **42% of PR pros** said that ensuring their story reaches the right people is their top challenge. Another 36% claimed making their release stand out is their greatest challenge.

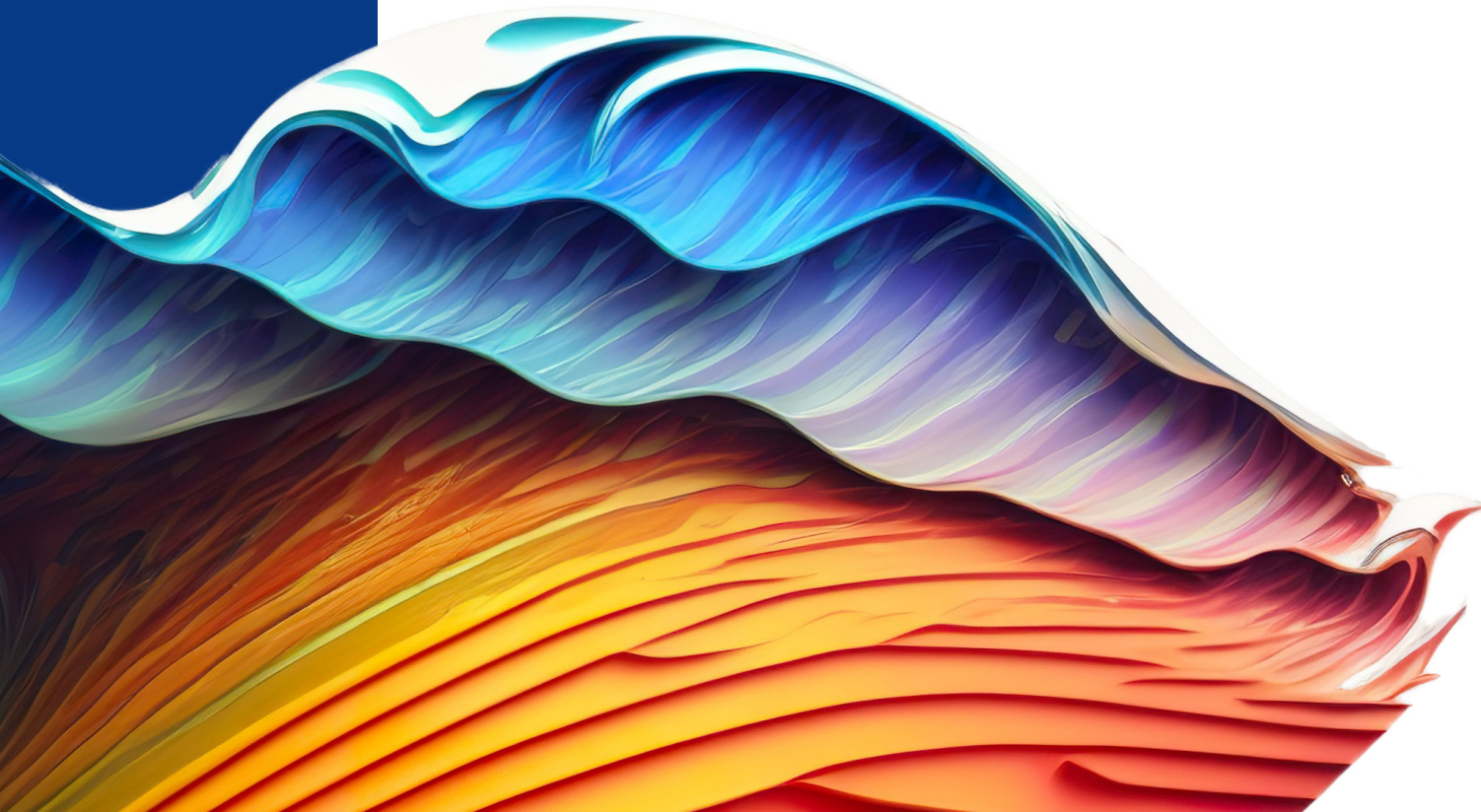
While the press release is a crucial tool in any comms strategy, there are other—often overlooked—creative, multichannel methods PR pros can apply to boost their client's message and amplify their story.

“When it comes to sending press releases, 42% of PR pros say ensuring their story reaches the right people is their top challenge.”

Creating an Appetizing Comms Strategy

Think of building your comms strategy like creating the perfect sundae. The first step is to scoop ice cream into a bowl (because without the ice cream, let's face it, it's not a sundae). Equivocally, the first step to generating attention and awareness, for many PR teams, involves writing and sending a press release to targeted audiences. Then what truly takes the dish from ordinary ice cream to a decadent and memorable treat, come the fixings (and that proverbial cherry on top).

In this guide, we will give you some creative, multichannel "toppings" you can add to your comms strategy – beyond the press release – to create an outside-the-box (and delicious!) content experience that helps your brand stand out from the pack.



1

Create a Multichannel News Release

Much like how chocolate, caramel or fruit sauce is a must-have topping on a sundae, multimedia is essential to a good press release. At Cision PR Newswire, we always encourage customers to include a photo or video in their press releases because multimedia has been shown to increase reader engagement by up to six times.¹

If your press release includes a dynamic piece of content like a video, consider turning it into a **multichannel news release** (MNR).

An MNR is like a marketing campaign for your press release. Your news gets a dedicated landing page that includes the press release and relevant multimedia assets, including video, images or animation. Your assets are housed in an interactive gallery targeted to different audiences.

Because it's a multichannel solution, an MNR targets your audience through social media and broadcast placements. As a bonus, the impressions you receive through an MNR are measurable and reportable – so you can prove that your message is getting in front of the right audiences and having its desired impact.

Not only does multimedia bring a unique and, ahem, flavorful visual element to your story, we know for a fact that journalists are often looking for multimedia elements to use in their stories. In other words, you're giving journalists even more incentive to cover your press release. Like the flavored sauce that is essential to making a satisfying sundae, an MNR can make your press release more appealing to your audience.

Why Multimedia is important

Studies show that visual content is processed in the brain faster than text and that viewers remember visual imagery more than words.

¹We analyzed more than 160,000 press releases and found that multimedia impacted the levels of engagement with press releases.

 **1x**
THE ENGAGEMENT
OF TEXT ONLY

 **2x**
THE ENGAGEMENT
OF ONE IMAGE

 **3x**
THE ENGAGEMENT
WITH ONE VIDEO

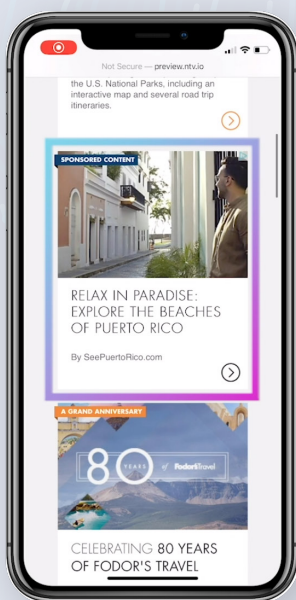
 **6x**
THE ENGAGEMENT
WITH MULTIPLE IMAGES

Press Releases

This data was collected as part of an analysis of more than 160,000 PR Newswire press releases distributed in 2020.
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Add some colorful sprinkles to your comms strategy

PR Newswire can help add some colorful sprinkles to your comms strategy through our **Guaranteed Paid Placement** powered by Nativio. Through this exclusive partnership, PR Newswire customers have the opportunity to turn their press releases into sponsored content that will appear on websites relevant to their audience.



2

Convert Your Press Release into Guaranteed Paid Placement

Looking for another tasty addition to your comms strategy? Give guaranteed placement a try. Guaranteed Paid Placement, otherwise known as native advertising or sponsored content (or "sponcon" if you're cool), is editorial content – seen everywhere from online-only sites like BuzzFeed and HuffPost to legacy publications such as the New York Times and Wall Street Journal – that's written and paid for by a third party. Chances are you've come across sponsored content and possibly not even realized it. That's because it's designed to match the look and feel of the publication on which it appears.

Build trust and credibility for your message

Research has shown that **81% of consumers** say they trust content that appears on publishers' websites. Brands can leverage the credibility of publications their customers trust by advertising their editorial content on sites their customers are already visiting. The seamless format of native advertising enables brands to reach their audiences in a format they prefer, which increases engagement with a brand's content.

Increase visibility of your news

Even if your story receives substantial media pickup, choosing to place your content in a native ad will always increase the number of views your story receives. On the other hand, if you are struggling to obtain coverage for your story, you are guaranteed to receive impressions with native advertising. Guaranteed placement is a simple way to increase your impressions for a modest price.

Control your brand's story

While earned media coverage is typically the top goal of PR professionals, its biggest downside is the lack of control over your brand's narrative. Journalists write with their audience in mind—not yours—so they may overlook or not prioritize the key messaging you want to emphasize. When you publish your story as sponsored content, you have complete control over the messaging and aren't at the mercy of anyone else getting it right.

Create Bite-Sized Derivative Content for Social Media

There's a reason ice cream parlors are quick to offer free samples: providing a taste of the product creates awareness and interest in consuming a full serving. Nowadays, many brands turn to social media to tease their content as a way to spur curiosity and encourage viewers to take a deeper dive.

Take this example from [Cision's Instagram account](#). We were promoting our global State of the Media report, which included survey data collected from over 2,700 journalists from across the globe. To make the report's concept digestible for social media, we highlighted one of the more compelling data points and deconstructed it across a galleried post.

There are myriad ways to approach creating derivative content for social media, and it can quickly get overwhelming. If you're just getting started, we recommend easing into it.

Consider derivative content the crumbled up cookies atop your comms strategy sundae – adding a new flavor and experience for your social media followers to enjoy.

Keep it simple

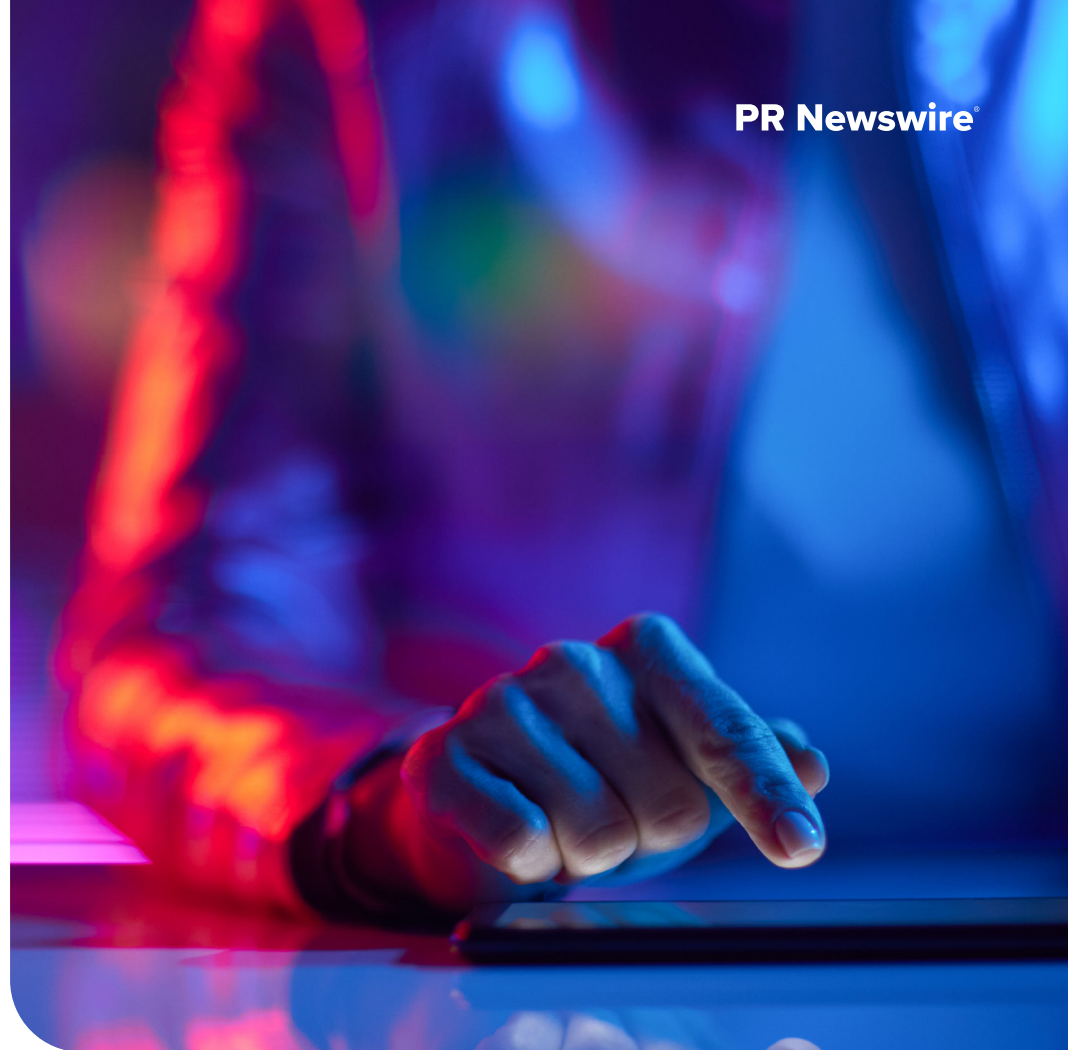
Stick to one small idea per post. If you have multiple themes you want to explore, turn them into multiple posts and spread them out.

Make it visual

If your post doesn't catch your viewer's eye, they will scroll right past with barely a glance. Avoid using images that are too busy or wordy

Customize for each platform

As tempting as it is to post the same piece of content on each of your social channels, the audience on each platform is different, and the same messages don't always resonate.



According to [research](#), online users prefer video over any other forms of content. Video also increases the time a viewer spends on a site, so consider turning your press release into a short video specifically curated for your social media. Our award-winning Content Services team can create and distribute your [Social Video](#) and target audiences through our PR Newswire social channels, providing guaranteed results.



4

Turn Your Employees into Brand Ambassadors

For many employees, sharing news about products or initiatives their company has been working on – and that they've had a role in creating – is exciting and rewarding. While your customers may look forward to seeing what solutions you've scooped out for them, don't forget that some of the people most passionate (and vocal) about your brand are the ones who make it come to life.

Like dropping a handful of chocolate chips onto your nearly perfect sundae, deploying your employees to spread your company's news is an excellent addition to your comms strategy. Having your employees serve as brand ambassadors to talk about new product launches, service upgrades or diversity or sustainability initiatives gives credibility and authenticity to your company's news.

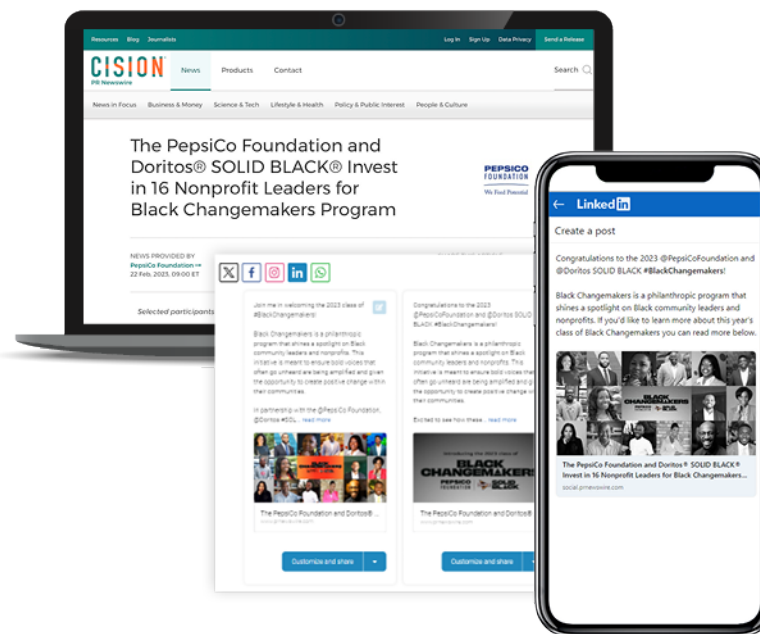
Apple is a great example of how to use brand ambassadors. We all remember Steve Jobs' legendary product announcements for Apple. His speeches were well-known for building anticipation and excitement around Apple's latest technological innovation. But Jobs was not the only Apple employee who appeared onstage extolling the virtues of the company's latest product line. Jony Ive, who led product design and development during the Jobs era, was also a featured speaker in Apple's product announcements. Because Ive's team was designing and building Apple's products, Ive was the face of the product (while Jobs was the face of Apple), and his presence added credibility and authenticity to the announcement.

Empower Better Social Sharing

“Click to share” buttons on a press release are a helpful way to spread your message, but they don’t go far enough. Typical social sharing buttons enable readers to share a link to your content but require them to write their own post copy. **SocialBoost**—powered by SoSha—you provide social post copy that adheres to your brand’s message and makes it easier for your audience to share your story the way you want it to be seen.

How it Works

The SocialBoost widget is embedded into your press release, enabling readers to share your news through various social media networks. With each social share button, the reader can share both the link to your content and your pre-written social post copy.



Generate
up to 100X
more social media
engagement for
your content.

Using your CEO as the face of your brand can be effective, but tapping employees to speak on behalf of the brand can be even more powerful. **Consumers are more likely to relate to an "everyday" employee, whom they see as a peer (without a clear agenda) and trust their endorsement.**

Finally, employees love sharing work they're excited about with their social media network. While some will be proactive about sharing, others may need a little push. Make it easy for them to share your story by creating content — such as banners, images and even videos — that employees can post to their social accounts. (You might even consider producing sample messages they can easily modify to their personalities.) Social media content is easy (and free) publicity you can foster in house.



5

Conduct a Virtual Press Day

The cherry on top of any comms strategy is a Virtual Press Day (VPD). When many companies had to pivot their typical in-person events to a virtual format in the wake of the pandemic, they relied on VPDs to make that happen. A VPD enables a brand to showcase their news story to TV, radio and online outlets across the country without leaving their home or office. A VPD is set up through an interactive webinar where media outlets are presented with information and can ask questions.

Pizza Hut crushed the launch of their Detroit-style pizza

Pizza Hut partnered with Cision MultiVu to create a VPD for their "media friendlies," providing them with access to spokespeople, b-roll footage of a "test kitchen" and informational content about the product ahead of the launch. Registrants got embargoed content two weeks before the product launch, allowing them time to write a thoughtful story without the pressure of a tight deadline. Pizza Hut even sent registrants their very own Detroit-style pizza to taste and enjoy. The result was extensive coverage of their product launch from publications such as Business Insider, CNBC, UPROXX and Thrillist.

Using a VPD saves time and money—in fact, many clients tell us they're so pleased with the results they may never fully resume their in-person press tactics. If you have a story to share about your brand, why have just a press release when you could have a highly-visible virtual press event? (Doesn't that just sound delicious?)



Conclusion

Before you're ready to dip a spoon into your perfect sundae, you want to ensure you have all the right toppings to make sure it's delicious. Whether you choose one or all of these "ingredients," using creative ways to take your message further beyond the press release will make your story stand out from the rest.

Your press release is only the beginning of your story. PR Newswire has the tools to help you leverage your release content to get noticed and reach your target audience. Find out how we can creatively amplify your message.

[LEARN MORE](#)



About PR Newswire

PR Newswire is the industry's leading press release distribution partner with an unparalleled global reach of more than 440,000 newsrooms, websites, direct feeds, journalists and influencers and is available in more than 170 countries and 40 languages. From our award-winning Content Services offerings, integrated media newsroom and microsite products, Investor Relations suite of services, paid placement and social sharing tools, PR Newswire has a comprehensive catalog of solutions to solve the modern-day challenges PR and communications teams face. For 70 years, PR Newswire has been the preferred destination for brands to share their most important news stories across the world.

