



## Speaker Fulfillment Services

speakerfulfillmentservices.com



# News Notes

• Volume 7 •

**WELCOME** to another issue of Speaker Fulfillment Services' *News and Notes* newsletter. We've rolled into the dog days of summer and the heat index is into the triple digits here in Indiana. Gotta love those humid Indiana summers

We just completed Mike Filsaime's "7 Figure Code" product launch within the last couple weeks and have finally caught our breath. Our production and shipping teams did an incredible job as we ran 24/7 operations for two solid weeks to handle the launch and some of the numbers are kind of staggering.

Here's just a sampling — 44,825 DVDs were produced, almost 3.2 million (yes, I said million) pages were printed, and nearly

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## How to Write a Persuasive News Release

*Contributed by SFS Client Michel Fortin of TheCopyDoctor.com*

The most profitable and often overlooked free publicity generator is the news release (also called "press release," although news release is a better term).

News releases are not only great marketing tools but also far more credible and believable than advertising since they appear to come from an objective third party. While publicity is the most powerful promotional tool there is, it is the one that is the least effectively used.

All too often, business owners view news releases as a form of advertising. The copy is self-serving, promotional in tone, and one-sided, and offer no real value to a news-reading audience.

Don't get me wrong. The media's goal is to report on stories that affect, or are of interest to, their readers or viewers. So, news releases are their best friends — but only if they follow a few important guidelines.

The media are constantly on the lookout for good stories that are of interest

to their audience. Reporters, writers, producers, and editors have a particular interest in reporting on stories that help to enhance sponsorship interest in the medium that they represent.

The first and most important thing to keep in mind is, news releases are not ads. The media are not in the business to provide free advertising. If you're guilty of this, they will most likely tell you that you should have called the advertising department instead.

But if done right, they can provide an incredible amount of free exposure, generate instant credibility, and persuade audiences more effectively than most paid advertisements can.

So, what makes a good story?

While the answer to such a subjective question can be difficult, here are a few pointers in order to guide you in writing and targeting your news releases.

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## **Be Newsworthy, NOT Promotional**

Reporters are always looking for newsworthy items on which to report — that's what reporters do. But they specifically like human interest stories, stories that are related to current events or important issues, or those that have some emotional appeal.

Larger media also like stories that appeal to a wide audience. Targeted or specialized media, on the other hand, love to report on stories that appeal to their specific market and thus help capture more of it. In turn, they can qualify interested prospects far more effectively than some mainstream, large-circulation medium.

Of course, the foundational component of the news release is the news aspect. A good story must be newsworthy for it to be considered.

While there are thousands of ways to present a news release, there is no one “correct” way of doing it. There are as many different ways to present a news release as there are publications out there.

For example, in my experience the news release should not tell the entire story. If you do have a good story to tell, your news release should provide enough informa-

tion to generate interest and it must say just enough to incite the media to want to know more.

A news release is like a résumé, which is not meant to land a job but to land an interview. In the same way, a news release is not meant to get instant media coverage but should be used as a tool for sparking interest and curiosity among a very busy and exceedingly leery staff of reporters and editors — and it must do so quickly and efficiently.

Therefore, the headline as well as the first few lines should instantly communicate something worthy of their attention. In fact, news releases should at least possess certain key elements, which are:

- A strong, compelling headline;
- An appealing, informative story;
- A professional, tasteful appearance;
- A number of quotes & reactions;
- The sender's contact information.

More important, your news release must be devoid of any conspicuous fluff. Unlike hard-hitting, hype-filled salesletters, news releases are more intriguing, content-driven, and informative or educational in nature.

Remember that a reporter is not just a middleperson whose job is to

report your story for you. Your release must sell the reporter on your story as well. Therefore, write it to read like a story. Look at it from the reporter's perspective. In other words, write the story for them.

An excellent news release can also be a powerful business tool for gaining free media coverage for your company, product, or service — and keep in mind that media coverage tends to be a more effective form of promotion than advertising since it is coming from an objective third party.

It can be used for announcing important company changes, special events, new appointments or recruits within your organization, or the launch of your company's new product, service, or website.

## **Be Unique, NOT Superior**

Focus on leadership rather than superiority. This can be easily achieved by being the first in some category. When you're the first in something or in some way, you not only attract attention but also generate implied superiority, which is more powerful than some nebulous claim or platitude.

Other than using controversy, or better yet riding the coattails of a

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# Your Idea Checklist – Hiring a Ghostwriter

Contributed by SFS Client Stu McLaren of [www.MyIdeaGuy.com](http://www.MyIdeaGuy.com) and [www.IdeaSeminar.com](http://www.IdeaSeminar.com)

**I**NSTRUCTIONS: Hiring a ghostwriter has some major advantages. First and foremost it takes a HUGE burden off your shoulders when creating original content. Secondly it frees up a lot of your time. Follow this checklist to ensure the best all around experience when hiring someone else to write content for you.

## Before You Even Hire Someone

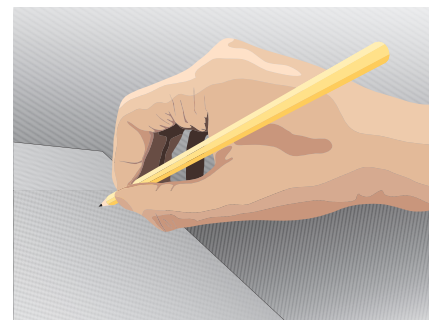
- Think through the type of content you are looking to get created. The type of writer may vary depending on your project. Here are some quick examples of content you could have created using a ghostwriter.
  - Content for your website
  - E-book
  - Article
  - Manual
  - Autoresponder Series
  - Salesletter
- Create an outline of exactly what you are looking for. Be sure to include main points and sub points.

The more details you include the better.

- Put your outline in some logical order so that the content will “flow.”
- Find some websites of similar content that you would like your ghostwriter to use as a reference point for the type of material you would like covered.

## Hiring Your Ghostwriter

- Post a project on one of the many “freelance” sites. Here are three recommended freelance sites:
  - [www.Elance.com](http://www.Elance.com)
  - [www.Guru.com](http://www.Guru.com)
  - [www.Rentacoder.com](http://www.Rentacoder.com)
- Be very specific in the details of your project. For example, list items such as required page length, font size, font type, margin size, and time of completion (1 week, 1 month, etc.).



- State that you require 100% exclusive original content.
- Outline any other expectations such as unlimited revisions.
- Request to see example of their writing before you hire them.
- During discussions with the freelance writers bidding on your project, feel free to negotiate extra items such as “mini articles” to use as lead generators or a price break.

*“Ghostwriter” continued on page 8*

major news item or an important social issue, being unique in some way helps to generate a lot of buzz almost instantly. It's an effective tool that can also help spark more interest in your news release.

Remember, your news release is selected because — and often, only because — of what it can do for the medium.

Buzz generates higher readership. Since the media profits by selling advertising, and prices it based on their audience size, then the more interesting your story is to their readers the greater the chances will be they will select your story.

For example, if you can support the fact that your product is the first in its category, that your service is the first to be delivered in a certain way, or that your event is the first or largest of its kind, you can and should use that information in your news release.

Obviously, a company claiming to be the best is never a news item. But a company claiming to be the first at something always is. Capitalize on it when approaching the media. Look for ways to market your story differently by presenting it with a different angle or a unique twist.

For example, think of the times you've seen a story

about someone starting a business. While it may sound trivial or insignificant, if that person is also a local politician, suffers from a disability, or has 10 children, then the story isn't as trivial.

In other words, bring your own unique angle or experience into your news release. Never discount the power of telling your own personal story.

Here's a real-life example. One of my clients was an inventor and entrepreneur. His product was a backpack with special, large straps that made carrying it a little more comfortable.

The funny thing is, after some questioning I later discovered that he lost one leg in a car accident. After some prodding, he confided that his invention was the result of wanting to lessen the pressure of the backpack's weight on his shoulders because of his single leg.

At first, he felt his story was insignificant. Since most hikers are two-legged and comprise the bulk of his target market, he concluded that his story would take away from the benefits of his product.

Well, I told him to capitalize on his seemingly "insignificant" story.

Even though he wasn't a hiker, the news release talked about his lack of one leg as being the inspira-

tion behind the creation of his backpack. The headline? "One-legged man lightens hikers' loads."

The key is to be able to capture the interest of reporters who are bombarded with literally thousands of news releases each and every business day.

As in this case, human interest aspects are wonderful tools to spark interest. Adding a special human element or some emotional appeal — even blending it with an important social issue — will up your chances.

### ***Don't Inform, Connect!***

For a great sample of an effective news release, look at the one by work-at-home mom Leslie Spencer at [www.Bizine.com/prhbwm.htm](http://www.Bizine.com/prhbwm.htm). She operates an online professional association called "Home-Based Working Moms (HBWM)," which offers education and resources for mothers who run home-based businesses.

Her goal was ultimately to get exposure to, and to increase memberships of, a specific target market. (By the way, Leslie follows another important rule of online marketing — niche marketing, which is also a great way for gaining attention from the media.)

*"News Release" continued on page 6*



# Why do My Shipping Rates Seem to Fluctuate Slightly?



In a word – fuel surcharges. Well, I guess that’s two words. Each month UPS, FedEx, and DHL all adjust their fuel surcharge based on prevailing fuel costs. This fuel surcharge can range from 4% to 15% of the base shipping charge depending upon the delivery method selected and the ship to destination.

Obviously, given fuel prices lately this number goes up more frequently then it goes down on a month to

month basis. So, a package shipping somewhere may cost \$7.50 one month and then it’s \$7.65 the following month. Same package, same location, different cost.

This fuel surcharge is automatically calculated by the UPS shipping software and the appropriate charge is what appears on your weekly log of shipments.

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## A Salute to All Speakers

Well, I just completed my first “official” speaking engagement, speaking for 90 minutes at the SMART Seminar Marketing event July 21st in Atlanta. The topic was “Back of the Room Sales” and, while I feel the presentation went over well, I have a whole new appreciation for those of you who do this on a regular basis.

I don’t think speaking will become a regular thing for me, but it was good to step outside my comfort zone and do something different for a change. It definitely looks entirely different from up front vs. my usual spot hanging out in the back.

I’ll be returning to our usual “back of the room” location next at Big Seminar X in Atlanta from October 5 to 7. If you’ve never attended the Big Seminar before I would highly encourage you to make it to this tenth edition of what is the premier Internet marketing event around.

The real heavy hitters are there, the networking is outstanding, and Armand Morin and his team really know how to take care of you.

Go to [BigSeminar.com](http://BigSeminar.com) for all the details.

### Testimonial Hotline

To leave your comments about your experience with Speaker Fulfillment Services please call our toll-free audio testimonial line at 800-609-9006 ext. 1669. Thank you.

## News Release *continued from page 4*

She wrote an excellent news release that successfully tied-in the benefits of her business with the current challenges faced by most stay-at-home moms — women who want to be more involved with their children while at the same time contributing to the family's income.

Her news release, entitled “The New Entrepreneur: Shorts, Shirt and... a Stroller? Moms Find Ways to Combine Career with Children,” provides the media with a great story to tell.

That said, you may feel that you're not a skilled writer — either that or you probably don't have the time to write one let alone distribute it.

The following are great sources for help in writing, targeting, and distributing news releases, particularly electronically. Many provide the full service while others only provide guidelines as well as lists of media contacts.

- Press Release Workshop — [www.CanadaOne.com/promote/pressrelease.html](http://www.CanadaOne.com/promote/pressrelease.html)
- Press Release Profits — <http://PressReleaseProfits.com>
- PR Easy — [www.PREasy.com](http://www.PREasy.com)
- Dr. Kevin Nunley — [www.Bizine.com/biznews9.htm](http://www.Bizine.com/biznews9.htm)
- Gebbie Press, Inc. — [www.GebbieInc.com](http://www.GebbieInc.com)
- PR Web — [www.PRWeb.com](http://www.PRWeb.com)
- News Bureau — [www.NewsBureau.com](http://www.NewsBureau.com)
- Profnet, Inc. — [www.ProfNet.org/press.html](http://www.ProfNet.org/press.html)
- Direct Contact Publishing — [www.owt.com/dircon](http://www.owt.com/dircon)

- Automated Press Releases — [www.AutomatedPR.com](http://www.AutomatedPR.com)
- How to Get the Press on Your Side — [www.FrugalMarketing.com/dtb/press.shtml](http://www.FrugalMarketing.com/dtb/press.shtml)
- Free Press Release Submission — [www.Write-Promotion.com/postpressrelease.php](http://www.Write-Promotion.com/postpressrelease.php)

## Target Your Market... And Your Media

A news release sent to the general media often gets lost in a sea of others. Most often, it will end up on some editor's desk where your story will be screened and, if judged newsworthy, passed along to a particular reporter in the organization.

However, special features writers, columnists, radio show hosts, news anchors, specialized media representatives, special interest publishers, trade publication editors, specialty channel producers, radio show (or segment) hosts and so on are particularly beneficial.

First, a news release sent to a specific person (and not the general newsroom or media entity) has definitely better chances of being noticed and reported — it doesn't have to go through so many hands.

While it may require a little research, remember that the media are made up of people too. They like the personalized approach just as much as your clients do.

Second, targeting your news release is far more effective, for the results you want your release to achieve will be substantially higher when reported in a medium that targets your specific market as precisely as possible.

Ask the following: “Where does my niche or target market hang out? What do they read? What shows do they watch? What programs do they prefer? To which ezines or blogs are they subscribed? What websites do they surf? On what discussion boards or

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## News Release

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forums do they participate? With what associations or trade organizations are they affiliated?"

The media's greatest concern is their audience and especially their ratings (because it leads to advertising revenue), not the stories on which they report. Therefore, targeting your media is just as important as targeting your market.

Often, specialized publications or media will be much more receptive to your news release than a larger, more generic entity, since it specifically and more directly relates to their audiences.

But the added benefit is, not only your chances of being reported will increase, but also you will, in turn, attract qualified, targeted prospects.

### About the Author

*Michel Fortin is a direct response copywriter, author, speaker and consultant. Spy on Michel by watching videos of him in action, working with real copy from real clients, and get tested conversion strategies proven to boost response at [www.TheCopyDoctor.com](http://www.TheCopyDoctor.com). Watch a FREE 2-hour sample video!*

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### SFS Welcome

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5 miles of bubblewrap were consumed in the packaging of this product.

You shouldn't have noticed any impact whatsoever on the regular shipments of your products. It was business as usual for everything else in the midst of this massive product launch.

Which is the way it should be. We love new product launches, but it's the steady day to day business that helps you grow your business into the steady cash machine you'd like it to be.

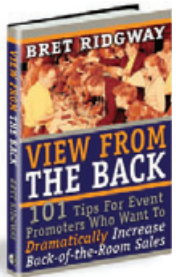
*Bret Ridgway &  
Bryan Hane*



# The View from the Back:

## Tips for Increasing Back of the Room Sales

This regular column is pulled from Bret Ridgway's book *View from the Back: 101 Tips for Event Promoters Who Want to Increase Back-of-the-Room Sales*.



### Tip #6

#### What Did I Buy Again?

I've seen it time and time again. A speaker delivers a fantastic presentation

and people are flocking to your sales table to order the speakers product or service. But they're not quite sure what they're ordering but they know the offer sounded too good to pass up.

So what do you usually have from your speaker? If you're lucky you have an order form that lists what people will receive for signing up for their offer. But you may have only a fill in the blanks order form with no offer details whatsoever.

Insist your speakers develop an "Offer Summary Sheet" that details exactly what people will receive when they sign up. This can be handed to people when they order or to those that need clarification on the offer prior to ordering. I've witnessed a lot of lost sales because the participants didn't clearly understand the offer made from the stage.

*Can't wait for all 101 tips? Buy the book at:*

[101TipsForEventPromoters.com](http://101TipsForEventPromoters.com)

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## Ghostwriter *continued from page 3*

### Working With A Ghostwriter

- Once you hire your ghostwriter, send them your outline and research materials.
- Establish an open dialogue whereby they send you regular updates on the development of the material.
- Review the initial rough draft with a fine tooth comb to prevent the writer from going in a direction you didn't want to go. This isn't any small task, but it is well worth the effort because it ensures the product will be of a high standard.
- Send back the rough draft with suggestions.
- Read the final draft and give the final ok.
- Request all source documents and additional research materials including a listing of sources used for content.