

Tool 7.4: Contents of a Press Packet

HOW TO PREPARE A PRESS PACKET

The purpose of a press packet (a.k.a. a press kit) is to provide the media with concise, useful, and compelling documents or information regarding your organization, its issues, and the event for which you want to receive coverage. The materials included in a press packet should be graphically appealing and easy to read. Generally, press packets are distributed to journalists when they arrive at a press conference, briefing, meeting or interview. Materials included in a press packet can vary but should generally include the following:

Press/News Release

The press release is a news story which is written in an objective way so that reporters can reprint the release in its entirety as a news story. The release should always include a catchy headline, the main point of the report, several quotes from at least two spokespeople, and references to any detailed materials regarding the organization, the event, or the issue that are available to the press. This should be as short as possible with the most important information at the beginning because journalists often only skim press releases. The release should also include contact information for someone at your organization who will field calls from the press.

List and Short Biographies (Bios) of Speakers

The name of each speaker should be listed on a sheet according to their speaking order at the event. In addition, you should include a short bio with the title, organization and other pertinent background information for each speaker. The bio should be very short and specifically tailored to the issue or event that you are organizing.

Testimony

Printed statements from each event speaker and, if appropriate, from other supporting individuals or organizations not present at the event should be included in the packet in the proper speaking order. The statements should be in the first person voice and should be directly related to the issue or event you are organizing.

Background Statement

An organizational information sheet or brochure should also be included. This statement should not exceed 1-2 pages and should include the following items:

- The organization's name and logo.
- The mission or main purpose of the organization as well as short highlights of the organization's main accomplishments
- When the organization was founded
- The organization's recent accomplishments



Report and/or Fact Sheets

A copy of the report, document or item that is the focus of the event should always be included in the press packet. Additionally, you might include fact sheets that highlight your most significant findings.

Print Visuals

If possible, include one or two visuals (e.g. photos, illustrations, cartoons, charts, tables, illustrations) that the press can use to illustrate the story. You can use black-and-white or color materials that are 5" x 7" or larger. Also have these visuals in electronic format and be prepared to email them to journalists as requested.

Press Packet Folder

All the above-referenced materials should be distributed in a standard, color folder with two pockets on the inside flaps. A business card for your organization's media contact should be inserted into the slot found on the inside of the folder. A printed sticker, which has a graphic design and words that reflect the key message of the issue, event and the organization sponsoring the event should appear on the front of the folder. Alternatively, the sticker can also be an enlarged version of your group or organization's logo.