

**September 12, 2014**

## **Press Releases**

Press releases are free and an excellent tool. You just need to use a standard format, secure a good contact list, and keep coming up with newsworthy news that has broad appeal (at least within the culinary and small business field). Format – there are a dozen “experts” who will tell you how a press release is to be formatted – each with their own idea. The basics are the same – title, subtitle, body and closing. Contacts – you’ll do yourself a huge favor to learn who your local contacts are, and how best to submit information to them. Call or stop by your newspaper (big daily papers and small weekly circulars – and all in-between). You should come away with a name, perhaps a direct contact line, and their requested format (email, fax, etc) for submissions. Content – this is the big one – you need to have actual news that affects others. A press release is not a blog, where you’re tossing out your ideas and opinions. You are providing the editor with local flavor news that they wouldn’t know about otherwise. You are sharing sometime good and big. Maybe you win an award. Maybe you donate a service for a local charity or cause. Maybe you reach a milestone (25 new clients in a year, 4 years in business, expanding your business, etc). Then tell the story in the right manner – to get good at this, just start reading other press releases that come from a known good source. Internet searching can assist here as well. Finally, create a boiler plate close – a standard close for each press release – this will include information about your business, how to contact you, etc. And keep your press release short and to the point – if you send a 3 pager – it simply won’t get attention. One page, short and to the point with the type information that makes the reader want to know more. A good press release will have the editor contacting you for a few more details – that’s when you know you’ve done a good job.

