

PR Newswire®

Rethinking the Press Release Innovations for a New Era of Earned Media

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Introduction

GOING BEYOND TRADITIONAL PRESS RELEASES

Today's media environment is vastly different from what it was just a few years ago, and still evolving so quickly it can be hard to keep up. With the need to position your brand as an industry leader in an ever-changing media landscape, can the press release still be an effective communications tool? Yes and no.

YES—When you're thinking of sending engaging, timely and media-rich content to a strategically selected list journalists and influencers they can easily adapt for their news outlet or media platform.

NO—if you mean blasting out a one-time, one-page, all-text announcement to every journalist and influencer you can find. In an oversaturated media landscape, that approach no longer works.

Just as the media environment has evolved, so have press releases (and the means for distributing them).

Thanks to digital innovations and new, multi-channel distribution capabilities, the press release is much more powerful as a way to get your message in front of the audiences who are ready to engage with your brand. If your press release strategy isn't delivering the earned media coverage you need, now is time to rethink your strategy and tactics.

This guide can serve as your blueprint to getting started with the latest tools and best practices for strategizing, planning and executing powerful press releases that effectively amplify your brand story.

Tapping Into the Power of the Press Release

The modern press release is much more than just a longform announcement in a standard format. With the latest innovative tools and methods, it becomes an engaging visual medium that can be repurposed in multiple ways. In our most recent **State of the Media Report**, we asked nearly 3,000 journalists what content they want most—and find most useful—from brands and PR pros. The top answer, by far, was press releases. Sending a well-crafted press release to the right people doesn't just get your story out there—it helps initiate and deepen relationships with the media, establish brand trust, drive search traffic and increase audience engagement.

5 REASONS THE PRESS RELEASE STILL MATTERS

A well-thought-out, expertly targeted press release can:

- 1 Establish and strengthen relationships with reporters
- 2 Bolster credibility and help you control the story
- 3 Drive search traffic
- 4 Boost engagement with your brand
- 5 Give journalists what they seek

10 REASONS TO WRITE A PRESS RELEASE:

- 1 Company news
- 2 Employee or executive news
- 3 New/updated products/services
- 4 Upcoming events
- 5 Financial disclosures
- 6 Recognition/awards
- 7 ESG initiatives
- 8 Reaching goals or milestones
- 9 Responding to a crisis
- 10 Celebrating philanthropy

Crafting a Powerful Release That Gets Attention

Every day, journalists are inundated with messages from brands and organizations; according to the State of the Media Report, nearly half of journalists receive more than 50 press releases a week, and 21% get more than 100. The lesson: You only have so much time to grab a journalist's attention, so make sure you maximize it.

We've outlined some press release writing best practices below that have shown to increase engagement.

10 WAYS TO CREATE A MORE COMPELLING PRESS RELEASE:

- 1** Keep your headline concise (less than 110 characters), making sure to outline the "who," "what" and "why."
- 2** Use SEO-friendly keywords in the 55-70 characters of the headline (where most search engines will cut it off)
- 3** Connect your message to current news/trends—the more relevant, the better!
- 4** Have a strong call to action early in the copy (don't bury it at the end!)
- 5** Break up long blocks of text into shorter sections separated by bold headers and use bullets to highlight key takeaways.
- 6** Add images, videos and other multimedia assets (more on that later).
- 7** Include executive quotes to increase credibility.
- 8** Put the company name and logo at the top for added brand awareness
- 9** Always include media contact information – make it easy for journalists to follow up!
- 10** Avoid hyperbole, clichés, and trite, overused words such as "unique," "world-class," "state-of-the-art" and "best-of-breed."



Innovating with Multimedia Increases Impact

Adding high-quality, relevant multimedia is one of the fastest ways to dramatically increase your press release's views and engagement.

Not only does the State of the Media report show that 7 in 10 journalists use multimedia in their published stories, a recent analysis of more than 300,000 PR Newswire press releases showed that reach and engagement is significantly higher for those featuring images.

The PR Newswire analysis found that including just one image can triple views compared to a text-only release. Additional images, videos or downloadable media can increase engagement even more, so don't forget to confirm that your chosen distribution platform will render all your images downstream, not just the first one. (Speaking of distribution platforms, consider partnering with one that comes with expert consulting for your multimedia strategy.)

Multimedia is essential for raising awareness and audience engagement through earned media. Audiences have come to expect it, journalists increasingly use it, and the data proves that it works. If you aren't including high quality visual content in your press releases, you could be missing a tremendous opportunity to amplify your story. Plus, multimedia content does more for you because it's easily adapted into engaging messaging for all kinds of communications.

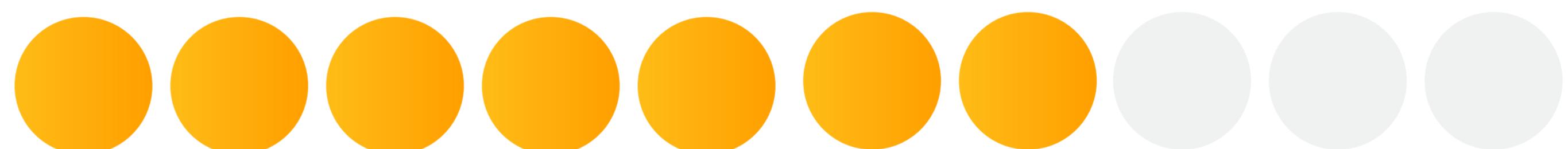
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Compelling multimedia elements break up text, provide context in an engaging visual element, and are easy for the media to grab and include in their coverage.

GLENN FRATES

VP of Global Distribution

Cision



7 in 10

Journalists publish with multimedia

Innovating with Multimedia Increases Impact

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You don't need a huge production budget to take advantage of increased engagement with multimedia: DIY content such as phone videos can be just fine, provided it's good quality and clearly connected to your story.



Multimedia Dos and Don'ts:



DO USE:

- 1** Easily downloadable, high-quality photos
- 2** Images clearly related to your story
- 3** Simple, short videos (60 sec., max!)
- 4** Eye-catching infographics
- 5** Links to media hosting services (YouTube, Vimeo, etc.)
- 6** Material you own and can legally share



DON'T USE:

- 1** Generic/stock photos
- 2** Anything poor quality (low-res, blurry, badly lit)
- 3** Too many images—use just what's needed
- 4** Anything you don't own/don't have permission to share
- 5** Complicated, technical graphs/charts

Cross-Channel Content Takes Your Story Further

A powerful press release is the gift that keeps giving — because its content can often be repurposed for other platforms, reaching new and wider audiences. The more ways you can repurpose your message, the greater its reach. Here are a few ideas to try:

1

Short video that drives engagement

Transform your press release content into captivating short video that drives engagement on social platforms. Video has been shown to produce better results than any other type of content on social media.

2

News headlines on curated video news feeds

Explore new ways to reach influential and engaged audiences, such as highlighting your news headlines on curated video news feeds that offer brand-safe environments with high credibility.

3

Use media tours, webcasts, live events

Use press releases to kick off media tours, webcasts, or live events. Virtual events, especially, are rapidly gaining popularity as effective ways to connect brands with audiences.

Keep potential ways to creatively re-use your content in mind as you craft new press releases. Images, video links, infographics, stats and quotes all make great social media content bites. Pithy headlines and interesting data points work well on out-of-home video.





Getting Your Press Release Seen by the Right People

Once you've crafted a fantastic press release that includes the key information reporters need and tells a terrific, timely story, how do you make sure it lands in the inboxes of the right journalists and media outlets at the right time? How can you make sure your story gets seen—even if reporters don't pick it up quickly? In other words, what are the best tools to ensure a successful distribution strategy?

Whether your press release announces a new product launch, a breakthrough FDA approval, or a nonprofit public awareness campaign, getting expert strategic advice is the best way to ensure you've captured all your key targets and aren't missing any opportunities to put your content where audiences will see and engage with it. Distributing your press release through a wire service that has an in-house agency to get expert consulting goes a long way towards ensuring success.

Working with an industry-leading media communications partner that has the resources, technology, and know-how to support you—and is passionate about finding powerful new ways to magnify clients' messages—enables you to make confident, informed decisions about distributing your press releases for maximum impact. Cision and PR Newswire are continually launching innovative products and services that give PR professionals the tools they need to tell brand stories in ways that get seen and heard by relevant, targeted audiences—capabilities other media communications platforms simply can't match.

If you want to take even more ownership of your story and augment your newswire distribution even further, consider pursuing guaranteed paid placements in premium publications or guaranteed minimum impressions/views. These methods can remarkably increase visibility, while providing solid metrics that demonstrate ROI to your stakeholders.

More than 1 in 4 journalists see over 100 press releases a week. The best way to break through the clutter is to send a release from a distributor they trust.

Conclusion

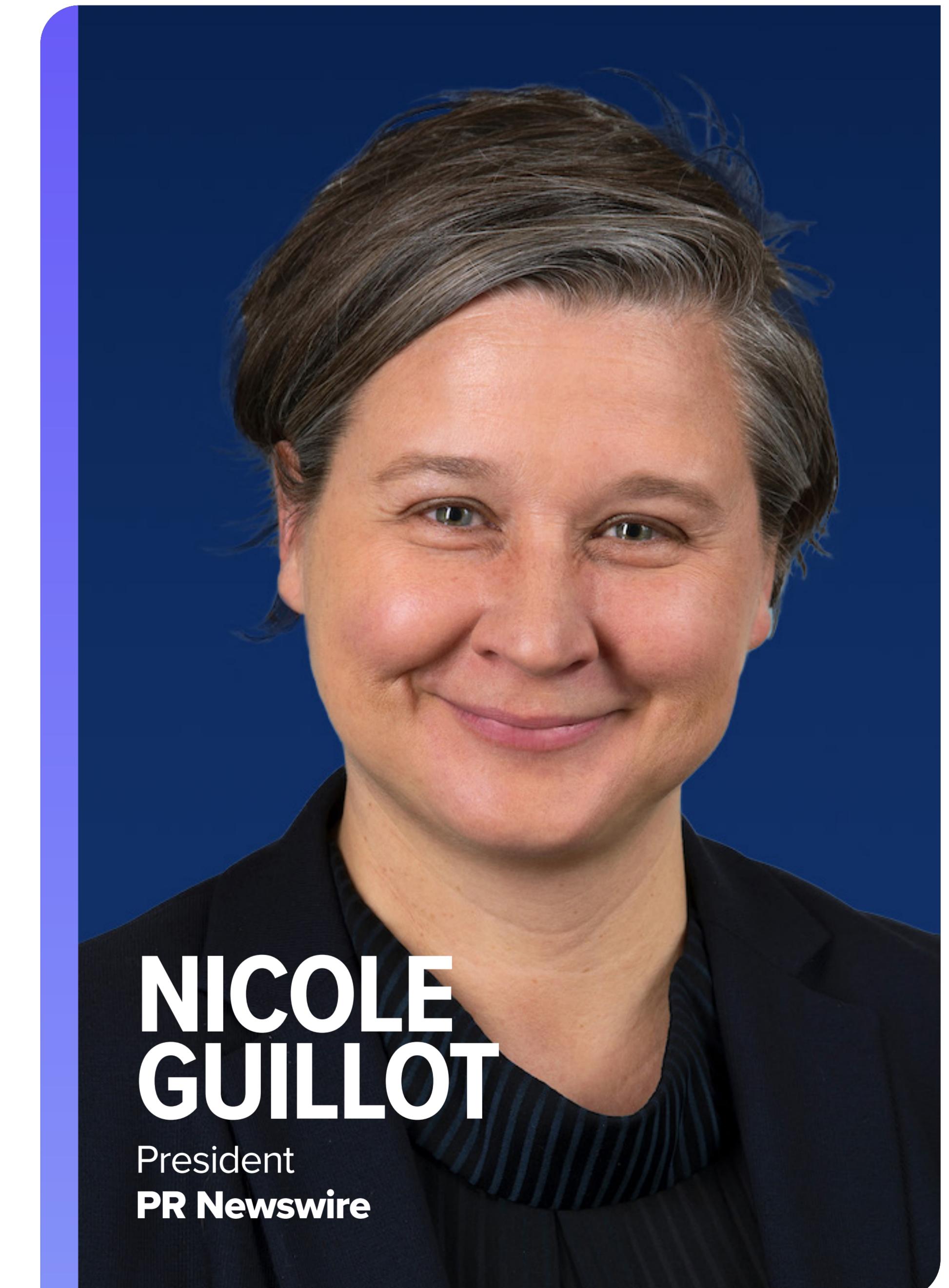
While even the most well-crafted press releases may not lead to a front-page story, they can foster new media connections that grow over time. In short, sometimes the true payoff of a press release isn't an immediate earned media placement; oftentimes, it's that first essential step either to establishing a relationship with media that may have exponential benefits down the line or to informing new

types of content for distribution on owned, shared and paid channels, giving your release a "second life."

Your press release is often your brand's first introduction to the journalists you want to connect with. With the right tools and techniques, you can make a stellar first impression with a compelling release that accurately and powerfully portrays your brand story.

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Fundamentally, public relations is about relationships. Don't be discouraged if your press release doesn't get picked up right away. Even the most well-crafted releases don't always lead to immediate coverage—but they often create connections with journalists that pay off down the line.”



Cision Leads Innovation in Press Release Distribution

From concept through analytics, you can apply the latest innovative methods to ensure success by partnering with Cision, the industry leader, and PR Newswire, the largest and most current media.

| PR Newswire | Social Video | Captivate | Content Services by MultiVu | MNR Multichannel News Release | Guaranteed Paid Placement |
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| <p>With the most current and comprehensive media database, a dedicated staff of editors, and distribution expertise for every industry, PR Newswire offers unparalleled reach, visibility, reputation, and credibility. PRN generates more online articles and more search traffic than other wire services, and it's fast, easy, and intuitive to use.</p> <p>Learn more.</p> | <p>Video content and marketing presents huge opportunities for reaching new audiences, increasing awareness, and driving engagement in today's competitive social media environment. Cision's innovative new Social Video service is the only solution that combines short-form social video creation, social media placement and guaranteed engagement.</p> <p>Learn more.</p> | <p>PR Newswire's new partnership with Captivate delivers press releases distributed in North America directly to editors at one of the largest out-of-home video networks: more than 14,500 lobby and elevator screens in premier office and residential buildings generating more than 78,000 impressions per month.</p> <p>Learn more.</p> | <p>Content Services focuses on data-driven media strategy, bold content creation and targeted distribution for a global roster of clients. Solutions include video, webcasts, live events, and satellite, radio and virtual media tours that can generate millions of impressions.</p> <p>Learn more.</p> | <p>Turn your press release into a sharable pitching tool, with branded landing pages, 10,000 guaranteed page views, guaranteed placement in 200 local broadcast sites, online video distribution through the largest multimedia distribution network of any newswire, and industry-leading reporting and analytics.</p> <p>Learn more.</p> | <p>Amplify your story and demonstrate ROI to the C-suite with guaranteed paid placement in a new native article format on premium publisher websites such as NPR, Reuters, Rolling Stone, and more. Choose from industry-specific, national, or custom campaign options to suit your goals and budget.</p> <p>Learn more.</p> |
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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.

[Get Started](#)