

Optimizing Press Releases for Search Engines

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There's really no difference in optimizing press releases and optimizing web pages. The major hurdles to press release optimization are education, and the number of stakeholders involved (PR personnel / agencies, Marketing, executive level management, etc).

The foundation of any solid search optimization & marketing program focuses on driving awareness with target audiences by understanding how they use search engines, applying these keywords to a site to describe the company, products and services, and then building links from related sites. Press releases and news coverage provide an excellent opportunity to leverage these principles to maximize a site's presence online.

By educating all of your key stakeholders about the importance of using the same words (keywords) that your target audience does to describe a product or service, and then integrating these into your press release strategy as outlined below, you'll be able to leverage your PR efforts and improve the success of your search marketing campaign.

Tips for Press Release Optimization

Copywriting with Keywords

Let's set the stage with a fictitious example. In this example, we'll be optimizing a press release for **Acme Software**, which makes "**Legalese**" software for legal case management.

- Utilize keyword research; identify top couple of words - preferably in a phrase format
 - Example: "legal case management software"
- Use keywords / phrases in headline, sub-head & 2 or 3 times in the copy
 - Tip: Rather than "Acme Software", describe Acme Software with keywords
 - Headline Example: *Acme Software Releases Legalese - Legal Case Management Software*
 - Sub-Headline Example: *About Acme Software - Legal Case Management Software*
- Unless products, services & brand names are very well known (think "iPod"), then use category terms & descriptions (from the keyword research) in conjunction w/ product names.
 - Tip: "**keyword phrase software, product name**" or "**product name, keyword phrase software**" rather than "product name"

- Example: “Legalese legal case management software”
- Substitute keyword phrases for pronouns like “it”, “its”, “you”, “this”, “that”, etc.
 - Example: “By using Acme Software, **you** can better manage legal cases” vs. “By using Acme’s Legalese Software, **paralegals** can better manage legal cases”

Additional Optimization Tips

- Hyperlinks: Be sure to include a link to your site use ‘<http://www.sitename.com/>’ rather than ‘sitename.com’
 - Hyperlink to your home page in the boiler-plate
 - Within the text of the release hyperlink product names, solutions, etc to the most appropriate pages on the site. Moderation is key - once each is sufficient. Too many links is distracting to readers & looks “spammy” to news search engines (place no more than 6 links)
 - Consider a release-specific landing page with a specific call to action
- Select a wire / distribution service that offers SEO friendly options
 - Live hyperlinks
 - Extended life (6 months minimum)
 - Reporting on keywords used to find your release
- Other Press Release Components:
 - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE should appear at the top left-hand margin of the release, all letters capitalized
 - Dateline: Include the city the release is issued from, and a release date in the first paragraph that syncs with the actual release date
 - Target length 400-500 words
 - Contact information

By embedding hyperlinks in a release, and using keywords to describe a company, product or service, you will improve the impact of the release within news search and regular search results, and you will help to ensure that any news outlets or journalists that pick up the release will be encouraged to do the same when posting a story online. Journalists will also be more apt to find and use your release when researching a story because they are also conducting keyword searches. This kind of organic ‘buzz’ effect is what can make search marketing so powerful for an organization.



About Amplify-Interactive: Search Engine Marketing... Amplified

<http://www.amplify-interactive.com/>

With over 6 years of experience, Amplify Interactive provides custom Search Engine Optimization & Marketing (SEO / SEM) services, including Pay-Per-Click (PPC) and Link Development campaigns. All of our services are tied to metrics and analytics that drive ongoing campaign improvements, which allow us to maximize your online visibility and to amplify your online marketing investment.