

How to Write a Media Alert

MEDIA ALERT

Date: Today's Date

Contact: Your Name

Your Phone Number

Your Email Address

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEADLINE (and email subject line): Media Alert: Summary in Bold Type

WHAT: Describe the event or reason for the alert.

WHO: Talk about your organization and its role. Or, list the people who will be attending or are invited to an event or participating in an activity.

WHEN: Provide the date and time.

WHERE: Include specific location information, including street addresses and directions if necessary.

WHY: Explain the relevance. Why is this important to your community or to your organization?

HOW: If applicable, provide information on how people can register, get involved, donate, etc.

MORE: The last paragraph of the alert can be "boilerplate" information about you or your practice.

Useful Tips for Writing Media Alerts

- The order of these can be rearranged depending on your situation. Perhaps the “Who” is more important than the “What” or the “Why” is more important than the “When” or “Where.”
 - List “Who” at the top if the event has a notable name or guest of honor.
 - List “What” at the top if the event itself is most important (80 percent of the time, this is the case).
 - List “When” at the top if the date/time of the event is most important.
 - List “Where” at the top if the location is the most important.
 - List “Why” at the top if the reason is the most important (such as a charity event).
- Don’t attach anything. Media Alerts are meant to be quick – which means loading quickly, not being weighed down with extras, and above all, getting someone to open your email without fear of a virus. Including a link to a promotional website is acceptable, but if they want anything else, such as a jpeg picture file, they’ll ask for it.
- Keep it simple – choose a simple, easy-to-read font, in black.
- If the event has a price included, be sure to include it after the date and time.
- Target media that will be interested in your event. Targeted media alerts sent to a few relevant journalists is more effective than a general blanket email sent to dozens of journalists.
- The email subject line should begin with the words “Media Alert,” a colon, and something short about your event. Media representatives are more likely to look at an email if they know it was meant for them and not spam.
 - Example – Media Alert: Local Dermatologic Surgeon to Showcase New Technique

Write **MEDIA ALERT** in all caps and boldface

MEDIA ALERT

Provide today's date and your contact information, including your name, email and phone

Today's Date

Dr. John Smith

john@smithdermatology.com

800-555-1212

Write **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** in all caps and boldface

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Write a short, catchy **headline**

Removing Tattoo a Big Step in Starting Over for Ex-con

Having rehabilitated his life after a 13-prison sentence, a 36-year-old man **[WHO]** from Boston wishes to have a swastika tattoo removed from his chest.

Write the body of the Alert, answering most if not all of the following questions when relevant: Who? What? When? Where? Why?

I am going to treat him with laser tattoo removal **[WHAT]** to remove this symbol of hate. As a public service **[WHY]**, I am performing these procedures at no cost. The laser procedure will take several treatments to fully remove the tattoo.

This former inmate is available to be interviewed in person and on camera both before and after his laser treatments to talk about what having this procedure means to him.

When: Treatment is scheduled for week of Aug. 4. **[WHEN]**

Where: Smith Dermatology, 555 Derma Drive, Boston, Mass. **[WHERE]**

Copy and paste Media Alert into an email – avoid adding attachments.