



PR101

Funding Announcement PR & Media Guide

NORWEST | VENTURE
PARTNERS



Overview

Norwest Venture Partners provides these guidelines to help you write a great first draft of your funding press release. We'll explain the do's and don'ts of press release structure, give you tips on writing and style, and make suggestions on working with journalists and bloggers, too.

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Planning

Timing is everything

That's true for successful startups and it's true for successful press releases. This means you should plan to write your release three to four weeks in advance of the actual release date. This will allow sufficient time for review and approval.

Don't disclose news of your investment to anyone in the media until your press release has been officially issued. If you do, and if a reporter contacts your investors before the release has been issued, they will not confirm that an investment has been made.





Press Release Structure

Headline and Subhead

Put your company's name first. The headline should be between 70-120 characters, including spaces.

Example: "Company X Receives Funding from Norwest Venture Partners to Accelerate Growth."

The subhead should complement the headline, and have 20 words or less. It is not a required element.

Opening sentence and first paragraph

The opening sentence must quickly grab the reader's attention. Include only the most essential information you want to convey, and spend time to get it right. Put your company's name first.

Example: "Company X today announced an investment of \$X from Norwest Venture Partners."

After the opening sentence, use the rest of this paragraph for a short description of what exactly your company does, how it's different and why it matters.

Second paragraph

Lists investors leading the funding round, followed by others who participated in the round.

Third paragraph

Provides an investor quote (if you have more than one, put each into its own paragraph).

Fourth paragraph

Include specifics on the momentum your company has created in the market so far.



Consider describing how you will use the funding. For example, it might "help fund technology development" or "help hire engineering talent" or "help expand marketing activities."

Keep the release short and focused on the investment. Don't clutter it with excessive chatter about marketing plans and products. You might want to mention the appointment of new board members.

Ensure your claims are accurate and verifiable. Use terms like "leading," "first," "best," etc. only if they can be supported by facts.

Contact Info

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Headline

[Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted]

Subhead

[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Opening Paragraph

[Redacted] [Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Second Paragraph

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Third Paragraph

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Fourth Paragraph

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Boilerplate

[Redacted]
[Redacted]

End Notation

[Redacted]

End Note

[Redacted]





Writing and Style

Writing tips

Write brief, declarative sentences. Don't use long words where short words will serve just as well.

Begin sentences with subjects and verbs. Don't use passive, formal language. Use active voice in which the subject performs the action stated by the verb (active: The team spent 10 years developing the software. vs passive: The software was developed by the team over 10 years).

Use strong verbs to create action, save words and reveal the players.

Be ruthless when you're editing your work. If you don't absolutely need it, delete it.

Avoid jargon like "paradigm shift," "move the needle," "disruptive," etc.

Don't use foreign phrases and scientific terms if you can think of a plain English equivalent.

Prefer the simple to the technical. Use shorter words, sentences and paragraphs at points of complexity.

Be specific. Explain exactly what it is your company is trying to do, especially when it comes to how something works and why it's important to consumers and/or businesses.

Don't include ticker symbols of other companies without their approval.



Use the Associated Press (AP) Stylebook, which is an A-Z guide to capitalization, abbreviation, punctuation, spelling, numerals and other language usage. In AP Style, for example, you should always capitalize months. Also, job titles are always lowercased if they appear after a person's name.





Working with Journalists and Bloggers

Media interviews

- When being interviewed, remember to stay on those same key points you've developed in your funding announcement.
- Do not disclose revenue, valuation or any other key financial information.
- Focus on the specifics of what your company is doing with your product(s) in your market. Talk about things you know and your insights about the market that are grounded in your company's work.



Often reporters interview company founders to learn more about a certain market sector. When they talk to you, they'll decide if you're a good source—if you're reliable, quotable, etc. So talk specifics and cultivate a relationship with reporters. This will be good free press for your company. If you're in a hot market and a reporter thinks you're clear and concise, you'll likely be called in the future. But it's also important to establish boundaries around what you can and can't talk about.

Terms reporters use

- "On background": Reporters can use what you tell them but can't quote you by name.
- "Off the record": Reporters can't publish anything you tell them.
- "Not for attribution": Reporters will not identify you by name but may identify by job or position, a description that you will agree on with the reporter.



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