



## **The Elements of a Press Kit**

*Information from "Press Kit Elements That Work" by Bill Stoller*

### **The Cover:**

A simple colored folder with your business name imprinted upon it will work just fine. Some businesses choose to get stickers printed up with their logo and place them on blank folders, which is fine too, as long as the stickers are neatly applied. Either way, don't obsess over it -- it's what's inside that counts.

### **Letterhead:**

The first page of each press kit element should be on your letterhead.

### **The Lead Release:**

If your press kit is going out in support of an announcement, an event, a trend story or for another specific purpose, the release that lays out the news should be the first thing a journalist sees upon opening the folder. This "lead release" should be positioned at the front of the right side of the folder.

### **Backgrounder:**

This is the piece of your kit that provides the background information to support your pitch. It is formatted in the fashion of a standard news feature. This is typically the longest element in a press kit, often going 2 or 3 pages. Generally, if a journalist is reading your backgrounder, chances are he's already interested in your pitch. If he wasn't, he wouldn't bother with it.

### **Bio:**

Only include bios of people who are relevant to the information contained within the kit. A bio of your sales manager in a press kit designed to support a claim of technological superiority is pointless. A bio of your head of R&D is valid. Keep bios short (three paragraphs at the most) and include only information relevant to the pitch.

### **Fact Sheet:**

The fact sheet should distill the entire press kit into an "at a glance" document. Keep it short, use bullet points and bold headings. For example, I might start with the heading

The Story: and include a bullet point repeating the pitch. The next heading might be Why It's Important: followed by some bullet points putting the pitch into a broader industry-wide (or perhaps even worldwide) context. Finally, I might use the heading Why (name of my company) is at the Heart of this Vital Story: and run some bullet points taken from the backgrounder giving support to my claim. Put this fact sheet at the front of the left side of the folder, just across from the lead release.

This sort of fact sheet is amazingly powerful and almost never crafted in the fashion I just laid out. I've sold countless stories because of this style of fact sheet and you can too.

### **Other Stuff:**

Filling out the kit with a company brochure and a photo or two is reasonable, but don't get carried away. Keep your kit simple, stick to your clincher and think like a journalist, not a marketer, and you'll have crafted a first class press kit!