

**PRNews'**  
**WRITING BOOT CAMP**  
NOVEMBER 19 | CHICAGO 

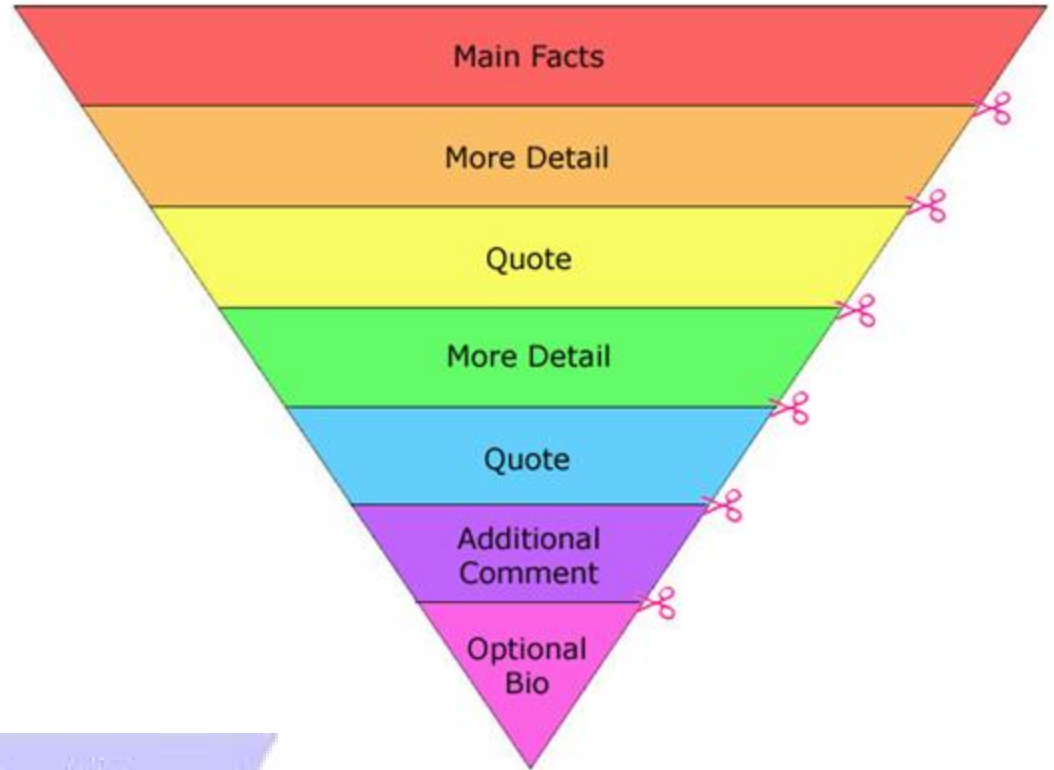
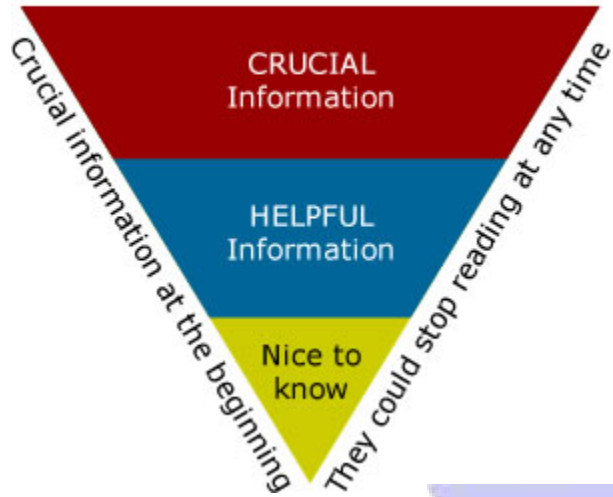
The Press Release:  
Creating Content Reporters  
Will Actually Read

**Ben Lincoln**  
Writing Director  
**Golin**  
@BenTilious  
@GOLINGlobal



**Dan Santow**  
EVP, Director,  
Editorial Services  
**Edelman**  
@SantowDan  
@EdelmanPR

# "CATCHY" TITLE





#prnews • @SantowDan



BEN & JERRY'S

Betty Crocker

Cadbury

Coca-Cola

DANNON

Doritos

Fanta

Ovaltine

OREO

Lay's

pepsi

PATAK'S  
Original

Milka

Special  
K

pop-tarts

OLDELPASO

Sprite

m&m's

Mazola

SNICKERS

Nesquik

NESCAFÉ

Uncle Ben's

Lipton

WRIGLEY

Minute  
Maid

Slim-Fast!

Trident

Green  
Giant

Cheerios

Galaxy

DASANI

Kellogg's  
CORN  
FLAKES

evian

BONAFO  
EL PAPA LIGERA









Not all those who wander are lost.

– Tolkien



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*Everybody, soon or late,  
sits down to a banquet  
of consequences.*

– Robert Lewis Stevenson





*One's destination is never a place but rather a new way of looking at things.*

– Henry Miller

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*Just as there is no free lunch,  
there is no free transformation.*

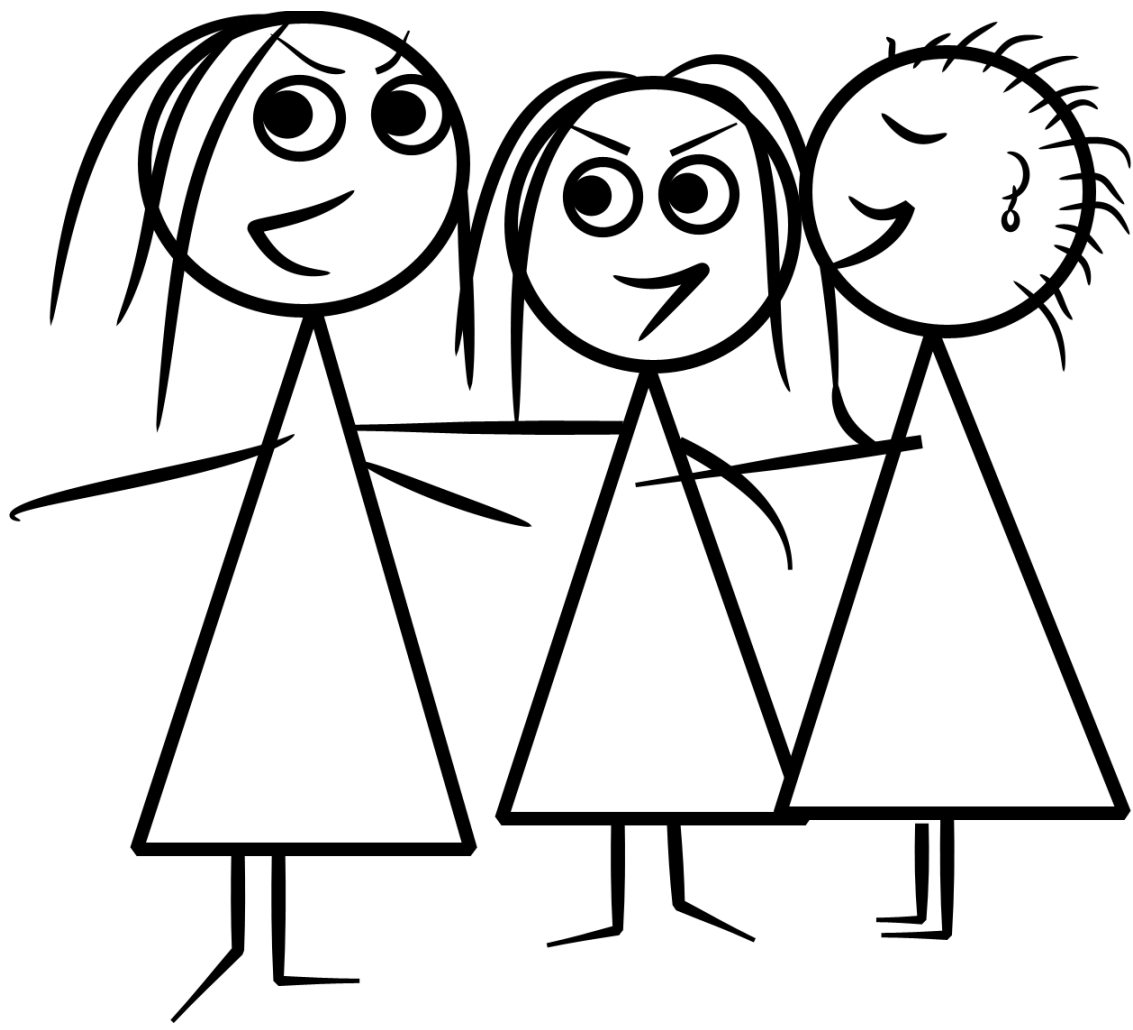
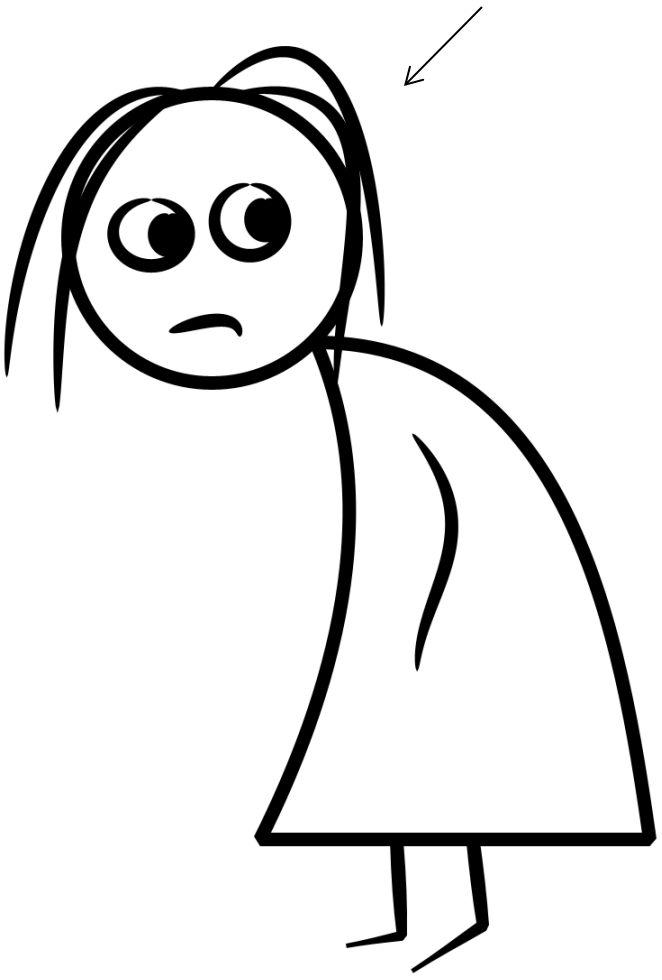
– Mary Pipher

PRESS RELEASE

IS IT DEAD?



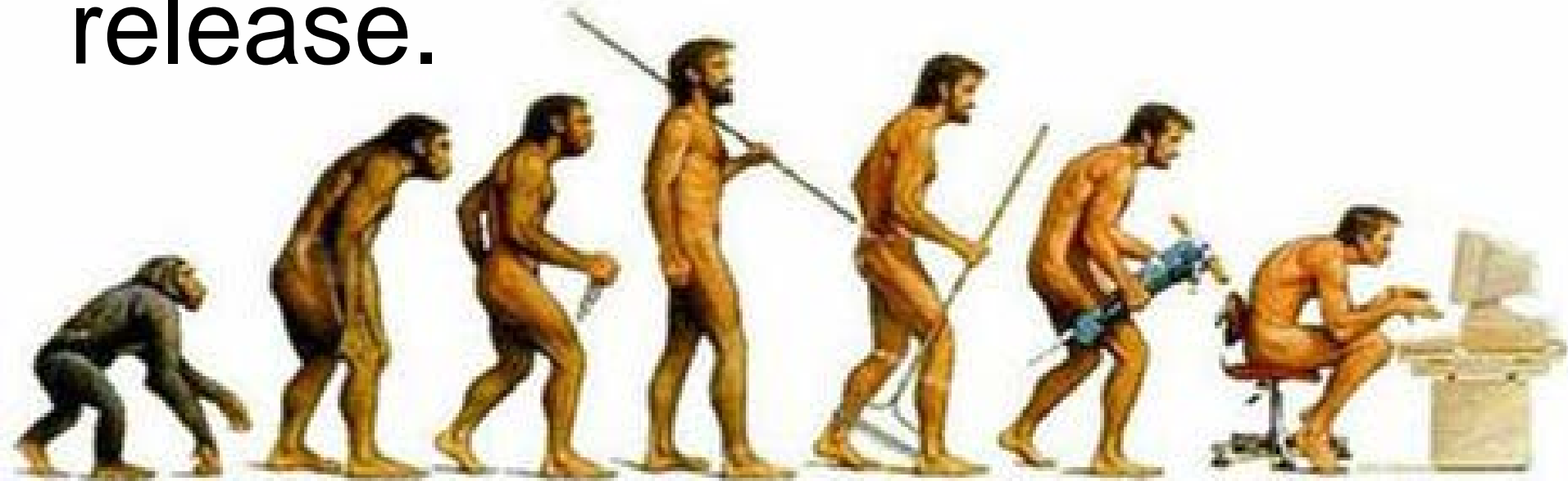
press release



**EVERY DAY,  
THE THREE LEADING  
WIRE SERVICES  
DISTRIBUTE  
MORE THAN 1,700  
PRESS RELEASES**



The press release has caught up with the Internet.  
Most PR people haven't caught up with the press release.







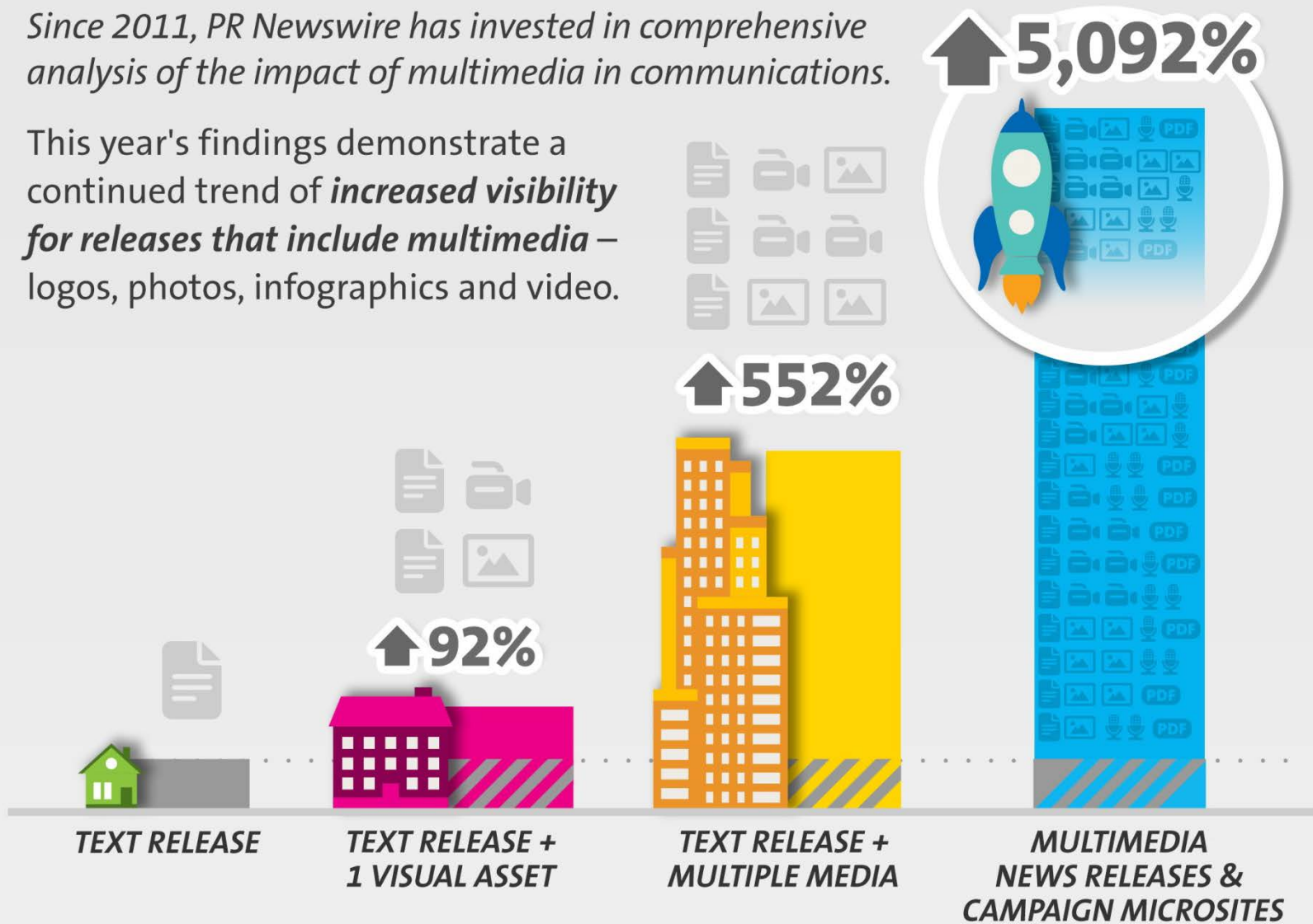
# DISRUPTING THE PRESS RELEASE

Breaking through the clutter and engaging journalists with credibility and value

“More than one-third of the journalists we surveyed get story ideas from press releases, **and a full 88% find them valuable.**”

Since 2011, PR Newswire has invested in comprehensive analysis of the impact of multimedia in communications.

This year's findings demonstrate a continued trend of **increased visibility for releases that include multimedia** – logos, photos, infographics and video.



See more news releases in [Food & Beverages](#) | [Restaurants](#) | [New Products & Services](#) | [Surveys, Polls and Research](#)

## Outback Steakhouse's New Click Thru Seating Helps Eliminate The Wait

The new technology provides real wait times and lets hungry guests know exactly when to arrive






Outback Steakhouse

TAMPA, Fla., Oct. 29, 2014 /PRNewswire/ – Outback Steakhouse is introducing Click Thru Seating - the easiest way to get a table without the wait. In a recent survey\*, Outback asked consumers about the wait times at their favorite restaurants and found that, on average, people have waited nearly 40 minutes to be seated - a long time for hungry guests. So as a leader in the call-ahead seating movement, Outback is excited to be the only national restaurant chain to provide guests with convenient online access to real-time wait time data, helping them put their name on the waitlist to get seated faster.

With Click Thru Seating, guests simply visit [Outback.com](#) to view the current wait time at their local Outback restaurant and put their

### More by this Source

-   
Outback Steakhouse® Honors Military Mates This Veterans Day  
Nov 10, 2014, 09:05 ET
-   
Outback Steakhouse® Heats Things Up with Date Night Menu Beginning October 23  
Oct 22, 2014, 09:10 ET
-   
Outback Steakhouse® Welcomes 'Mates' in Auburn to Celebrate Grand Opening of Newly Designed Restaurant  
Oct 20, 2014, 09:05 ET

[View all news by Outback Steakhouse](#)



# U.S. NEWS

Home > Corporate > U.S. News

## LATEST NEWS



Nov. 13, 2014

### Nissan North America expands U.S. regional leadership roles, promotes two executives

Nissan has promoted Judy Wheeler to the role of vice president, Nissan Southeast Region and Randy Parker to the role of vice president, Nissan West Region. Each previously served as the regional vice president for the same geographic areas. They will continue to report to Fred Diaz, senior vice president, U.S. Sales & Marketing and Operations, Nissan.



Nov. 10, 2014

### Nissan introduces certified collision network consumer referral program

Nissan today announced major new enhancements to the Nissan Certified Collision Repair Network program, launching a consumer-focused referral initiative that ties Nissan vehicle owners with Nissan Certified Collision Repair Providers.



Nov. 10, 2014

### Nissan expands multi-year sponsorship of NBC's "The Voice" through partnership with Adam Levine

Nissan North America, Inc. announced its new partnership with Adam Levine, lead singer of Maroon 5 and coach on NBC's Emmy Award winning "The Voice," today.



Nov. 10, 2014

### From Chicago to Santa Monica during the "Altima-te Rogue Trip"

More than a dozen Canadian journalists are driving new 2015 Nissan Altima sedans and 2015 Nissan Rogue crossover vehicles on historic U.S. Route 66 from Chicago to Santa Monica during a seven-day, 4,000-km plus driving adventure.

## LATEST VIDEOS



INTERVIEW: Pierre Loing shares thoughts on the EPA's annual fuel economy review



VIEW MORE VIDEOS

## LATEST PHOTOS



Judy Wheeler and Randy Parker



VIEW MORE PHOTOS



A GREAT  
ONLINE NEWSROOM  
ISN'T JUST  
FOR MEDIA.

IT'S OF MEDIA.

# Know what you need to know



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# Do I know...

1. how this release fits in with the brand story we are trying to tell?
2. what the new is? am I sure?
3. the who, what, when, where, why & how?
4. who am I quoting? is he or she the best person to quote? do I have all the stats I need?
5. what to include to optimize search?

1 **company inc.**

2 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

3 **HEADLINE GRABS READER'S ATTENTION IN <65 CHARACTERS**  
4 *Subhead/summary adds relevant context to headline, doesn't repeat it*

5 **SMALLTOWN, Ill. (Month, Day YEAR) – [Company Inc.](#)** produced an informative lead paragraph today. It included a strong opening message that was void of jargon, hyperbole and hype. The first 150 words of the release featured a descriptive keyword phrase like [Smalltown Italian restaurant](#) that was hyperlinked to a website to increase search engine ranking.

6 People tend to scan the first sentence in each paragraph (remember from Week 3 how people read in an "F" pattern?). If the first sentence isn't relevant to the reader, they'll skip the rest of the paragraph. The rest of the graph is important only if people are still reading it. Also, did you notice how this news release is single spaced? Still reading? Super.

"This is about where I drop in a compelling quote and then include the speaker's name after the first sentence is completed," said Susie Client, PR director at Company, Inc. "On the back end, I could say something pedestrian like 'I'm so thrilled to have an Italian restaurant in Smalltown,' but no respectable journalist would print it. So why not use the quote to say something reporters couldn't have said better themselves? That'd be the smart thing to do."

7 Here's is a good place to include supporting messages and proof points. Keep in mind that information this far down should be less important than what's in your lead. We're using the inverted pyramid style of writing, after all. Meaning, hit your reader in the mouth way up at the top – in your lead paragraph – not this far down in the release.

This is as good a place as any to remind you that it's OK to use a conversational tone in your writing – contractions, colloquialisms, etc. – if it's appropriate for your brand. Media trust brands that write the way people talk. Doesn't make them sound any less authoritative or intelligent or credible. It actually increases the odds of being read.

8 **About Company, Inc.** Briefly summarize the company and include a call-to-action for people who are seeking more information. Visit [www.entireURLofwebsite.com/AboutUs](http://www.entireURLofwebsite.com/AboutUs) for more information.

###

9 **Contact:**  
Susie Client  
Company, Inc.  
555-555-5555  
[susie.client@companyinc.com](mailto:susie.client@companyinc.com)

# HEADLINES

"All the News That's  
Fit to Print."

# The New York Times.

**THE WEATHER**  
Fair today and tonight; disim-  
bating northwest winds.  
60° to 70°; and for tonight and tomorrow 50° to 60°.

VOL. LXVIII. NO. 21,298.

NEW YORK, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1918 TWENTY-FOUR PAGES

TWO CENTS

## ARMISTICE SIGNED, END OF THE WAR! BERLIN SEIZED BY REVOLUTIONARIES; NEW CHANCELLOR BEGS FOR ORDER; OUSTED KAISER FLEES TO HOLLAND

**SON FLEES WITH EX-KAISER**

Kaiser Fought Hindenburg's Call for Abdication;  
Failed to Get Army's Support in Keeping Throne

**BERLIN TROOPS JOIN REVOLT**

Do Not Shall Buildings in

Socialist Chancellor Appeals to All Germans  
To Help Him Save Fatherland from Anarchy

BERLIN, Nov. 10. (Associated Press.)—In an address to the

**WAR ENDS AT 6 O'CLOCK THIS MORNING**



# GET TO KNOW US

Welcome to the press room for YMCA of the USA, the national resource office for the Y.



HOME

NEWS & MEDIA

## NEWS RELEASES

November 1, 2013

**The Y Encourages Everyone to Increase Their Diabetes IQ During National Diabetes Awareness Month**

September 26, 2013

**Statement from YMCA of the USA Chief Government Affairs Officer Neal Denton on Senate HELP Committee Passage of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2013**

September 6, 2013

**Sam's Club Giving Program Helps the Y Expand Healthy Living Programs to Communities in Need**

August 22, 2013

**The Y Receives \$1M Grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to Expand Early Learning Readiness Initiative**

## MEDIA COVERAGE

October 23, 2013

**YMCA Preschools Fill a Need By Trying to Close Education Gap**

—*McClatchy DC*

October 15, 2013

**Feelin' Good — Sixth-Graders Get Moving in Y Program**

—*mtstandard.com*

October 7, 2013

**Young Leaders Go Global**

—*fox4kc.com*

October 4, 2013

**YMCA Makes Spending Time with Family a Priority**

—*tcpalm.com*

October 1, 2013

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FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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OUR FOCUS

BE INVOLVED

NEWS & MEDIA

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

GIVE

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## News Releases

September 30, 2014

**YMCA of the USA Names New President and CEO**

August 26, 2014

**YMCA of the USA and The Trust Team-Up to Help Former NFL Players Improve Their Health**

August 7, 2014

**Donna Bembenek Joins YMCA of the USA as Vice President of Marketing Communications**

July 23, 2014

**The Y Expands Mentoring Program for Kids and Teens Nationwide**

June 24, 2014

**YMCA of the USA President and CEO Neil Nicoll to Step Down at End of 2014**

## Media Coverage

November 14, 2014

**Give the Gift of Education on Giving Tuesday**  
—*HuffingtonPost.com*

November 12, 2014

**Veterans Share Experiences with YMCA Kids**  
—*Mineral Daily News-Tribune*

October 23, 2014

**Celebrating Lights On Afterschool, Oct. 23**  
—*Reformer.com*

September 24, 2014

**Missoula Y Supports Sister Y in Sierra Leone during Ebola Outbreak**  
—*NPR*

September 12, 2014

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# PRESS RELEASE

## **International Conference on Intellectual Property Crime Focuses on Empowering those who Combat Transnational Organized Crime**

**Northbrook, Ill. – Oct 15, 2013** – UL, a world leader in advancing safety science announces its partnership with the seventh annual 2013 International Law Enforcement Intellectual Property (IP) Crime Conference, co-hosted by Interpol and An Garda Síochána. The event begins today through Wednesday, October 17 in Dublin, Ireland. The theme for the three day event “Borderless Enforcement- Empowering those who Combat Transnational Organized Crime through Training” bring together law enforcement from public and private sectors around the world to share and develop best practices to fight counterfeiting and piracy crimes.

The annual conference is a unique forum where delegates have the opportunity to learn about and discuss operational best practices that can be utilized to combat transnational organized IP crime. The conference brings together more than 500 delegates representing law enforcement, regulatory and custom agencies, private sector IP crime investigators, and prosecutors from at least 60 countries.

The event features plenary sessions, operational workshops, interactive round tables and specialized IP crime learning sessions as well as one-on-one networking opportunities to enable delegates to discuss operational matters with representatives of investigative agencies and other organizations.

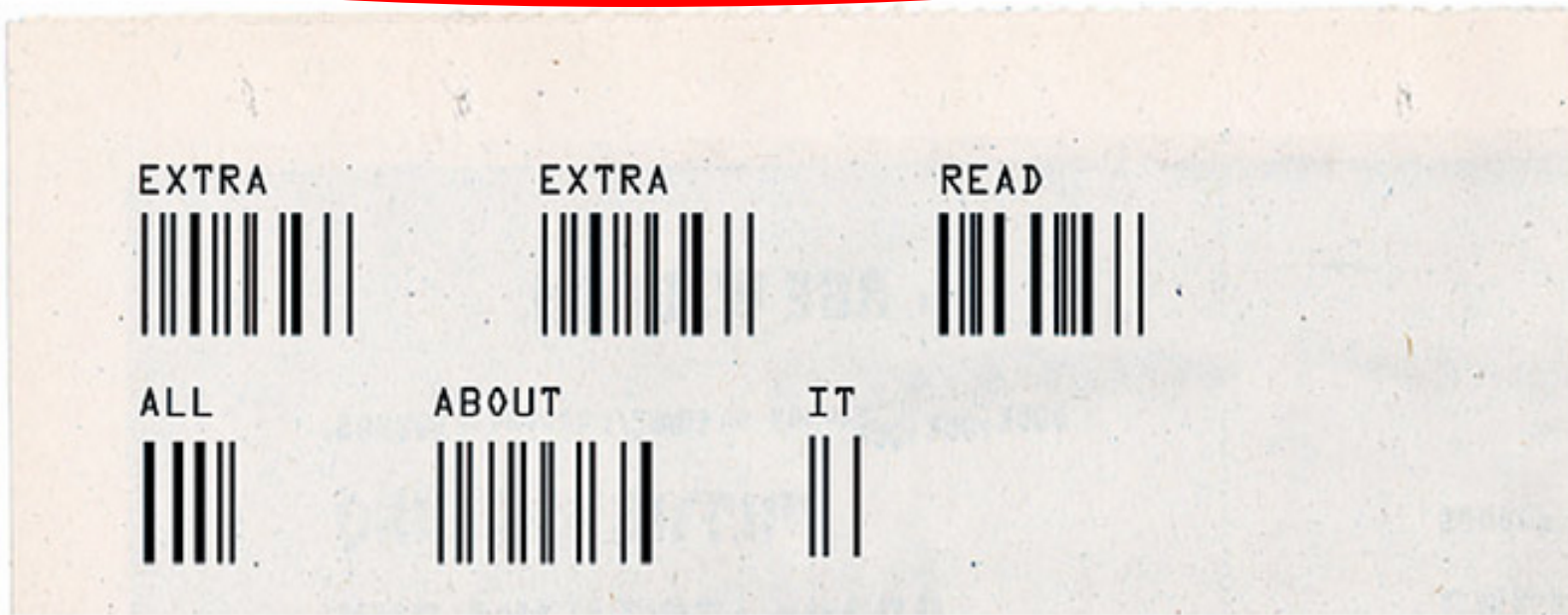
Today's headlines are clearer than they are clever

Nonstop from Chicago to Beijing  
In December, 4 Departures per week

> Learn more

IDEAS & TRENDS

This Boring Headline Is Written for Google



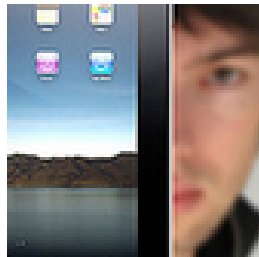
By STEVE LOHR

Paul Sahre #prnews • @BenTilious

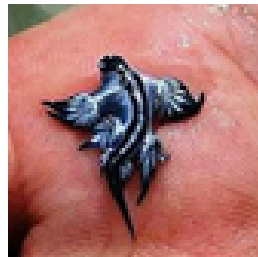
## SPONSORED LINKS



How Penny Stocks Create Millionaires Every Day



How to Get iPods and iPads for Under \$40



Korean BioChemist Makes Blood Pressure Breakthrough



Tricks Car Insurance Agents Don't Want You to Know



How to Exercise Your Brain to Make It Strong



## ALSO ON RD.COM



15 Secrets the Emergency Room Staff Won't Tell You

32 Cheap Christmas Decorations You Can Make Yourself

13 Weird Tricks to Clean Your Car

## FROM AROUND THE WEB

[The One Smell Women Can't Resist](#) (Nick Mom)

[How TO Design Your Living Room Like A Millionaire On Any Budget](#) (Lonny)

[6 Snacks That Are Making You Fat](#) (Answers.com)

[Top 10 Secret Menu Items at Fast Food Restaurants](#) (Mainstreet)

[An Attitude of Gratitude](#) (FFA New Horizons)

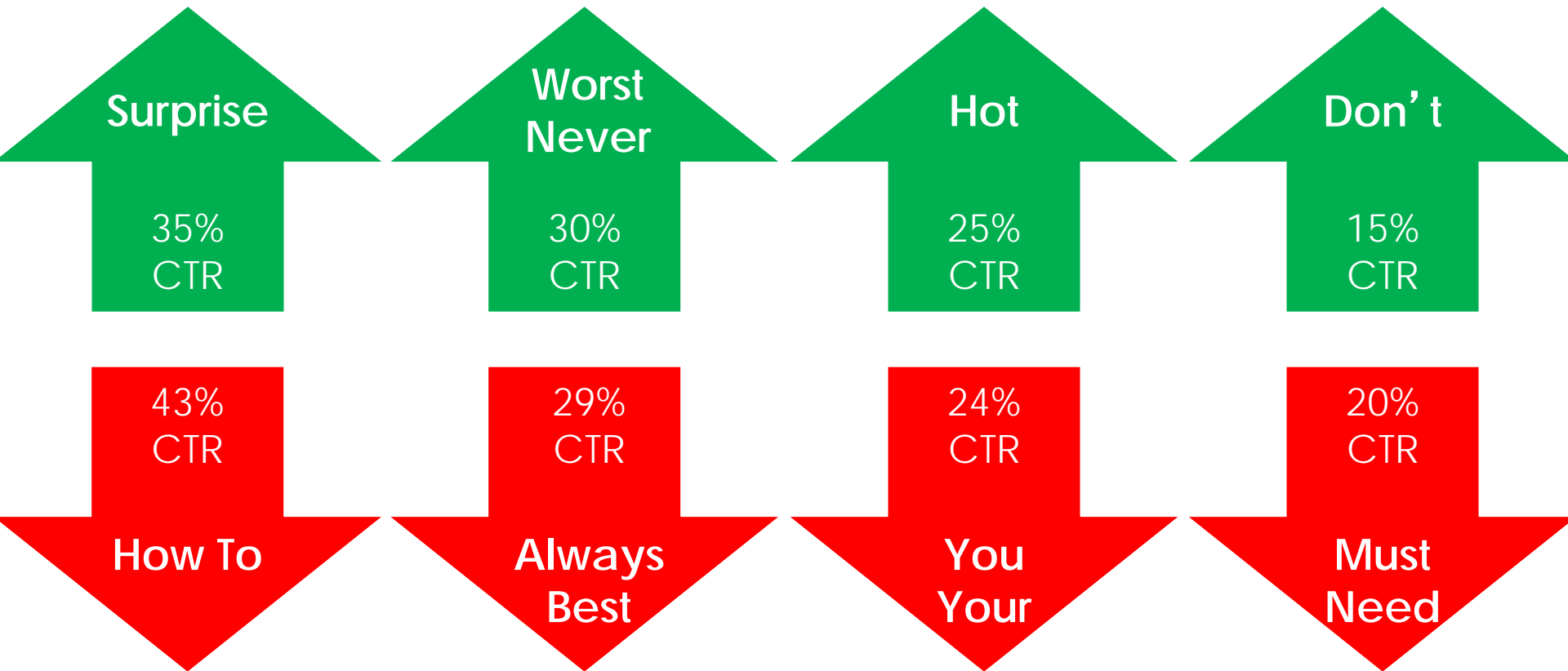
[The Weekend Guide](#) (DailyCandy)

Recommended by 

#prnews • @BenTilious



# Headline Study





Reader's  
**Digest**





# SUBHEADS

See more news releases in [Food & Beverages](#) | [Restaurants](#) | [New Products & Services](#) | [Surveys, Polls and Research](#)

## Outback Steakhouse's New Click Thru Seating Helps Eliminate The Wait

The new technology provides real wait times and lets hungry guests know exactly when to arrive



TAMPA, Fla., Oct. 29, 2014 /PRNewswire/ – Outback Steakhouse is introducing Click Thru Seating - the easiest way to get a table without the wait. In a recent survey\*, Outback asked consumers about the wait times at their favorite restaurants and found that, on average, people have waited nearly 40 minutes to be seated - a long time for hungry guests. So as a leader in the call-ahead seating movement, Outback is excited to be the only national restaurant chain to provide guests with convenient online access to real-time wait time data, helping them put their name on the waitlist to get seated faster.

With Click Thru Seating, guests simply visit [Outback.com](#) to view the current wait time at their local Outback restaurant and put their

### More by this Source



Outback Steakhouse® Honors Military Mates This Veterans Day  
Nov 10, 2014, 09:05 ET



Outback Steakhouse® Heats Things Up with Date Night Menu Beginning October 23  
Oct 22, 2014, 09:10 ET



Outback Steakhouse® Welcomes 'Mates' in Auburn to Celebrate Grand Opening of Newly Designed Restaurant Oct 20, 2014, 09:05 ET

[View all news by Outback Steakhouse](#)



Outback Steakhouse's New Click Thru Seating Helps



Web

Shopping

Images

Videos

News

More ▾

Search tools

About 15,100 results (0.54 seconds)

### Outback Steakhouse's New Click Thru Seating Helps ...

[www.prnewswire.com/news.../outback-steakhouses-new-click-thru-seatin](http://www.prnewswire.com/news.../outback-steakhouses-new-click-thru-seatin) ▾

Oct 29, 2014 - **Outback Steakhouse's New Click Thru Seating Helps** Eliminate The Wait The new technology provides real wait times and lets hungry guests ...

### Outback Steakhouse innovates reservations with mobile ...

[www.mobilecommercedaily.com/outback-steakhouse-streamlines-reserva...](http://www.mobilecommercedaily.com/outback-steakhouse-streamlines-reserva...) ▾

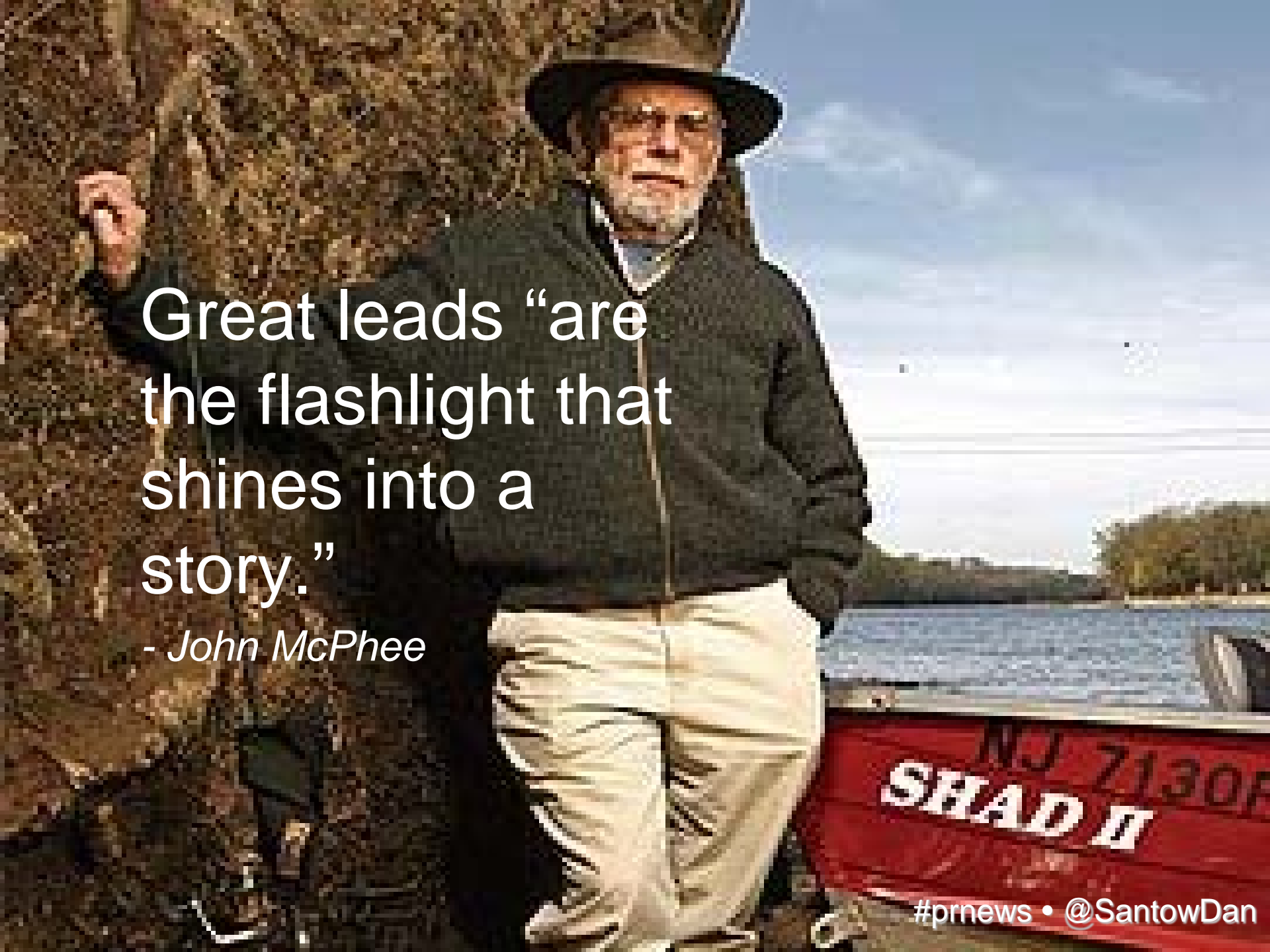
Oct 30, 2014 - **Outback** is the first chain to offer **Click Thru Seating**. **Outback** ... Alex Samuely is an editorial assistant on Mobile Commerce Daily, **New York**.

### Outback Introduces Click Thru Seating to Cut Wait Time ...

[www.fsrmagazine.com/.../outback-introduces-click-thru-seating-cut-wait...](http://www.fsrmagazine.com/.../outback-introduces-click-thru-seating-cut-wait...) ▾

Oct 29, 2014 - **Outback Steakhouse** is introducing **Click Thru Seating**, allowing guests to view wait time ... wait time data, **helping** them put their name on the waitlist to get

# THE LEAD & BODY

A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a dark jacket and a hat, stands on a boat. He is looking towards the camera. The boat has a red banner with the text 'SHAD II' and 'NJ 7130F' visible. The background shows a body of water and a cloudy sky.

Great leads “are  
the flashlight that  
shines into a  
story.”

*- John McPhee*

# A press release lead

- Announces what you have to say.
- Answers most or all of the: Who, What, When, Where, Why and How.
- May repeat information in the headline and subhead.
- Takes many different forms...



# A press release lead

Can seize the reader's attention

“The four pizzas lay sprawled out on the kitchen counter. Two of them were neat and tidy, as gorgeously tanned as homemade bacon, still attached to their pubic bones and exuding an appetizing aroma of wood smoke.”

Can be very concise

“Baseball breaks your heart. It is designed to break your heart.”

# A press release lead

## Can provoke a question

“In the last three years, perhaps the boldest thing Chef David Chang has done with food is let it rot.”

## Can ask a question

“Brain damage has unleashed extraordinary talents in a small group of otherwise ordinary individuals. Will science find a way for everyone to tap their inner virtuoso?”

# A press release lead

## Can focus on the big picture

“As final school bells ring and summer begins, more than 21 million American children will be at risk of going hungry.”

## Can give social/cultural context

“Perhaps the most feminine of all feminine products to have ever existed on earth is Love's Baby Soft. Its packaging, all soft curves and pale pink and frost, was basically an homage to the tampon.”

# A press release lead

Can be very human

“As careers go, Carl Eric Wickman’s stint in the car business was less than auspicious.”

Can be written the way humans talk

“Jacques Morali and Henri Belolo had been spending a lot of time in Greenwich Village that spring. It reminded the two music producers of Paris, and besides, the gay clubs had the best DJs.”

# “F” it



- Jakob Nielsen

#prnews • @BenTiliious



# DISRUPTING THE PRESS RELEASE

Breaking through the clutter and engaging journalists with credibility and value

- 70% of the journalists spend less than a minute reading new press releases.
- 53% would find it helpful if key facts were presented in bullets. 36% would be open to the idea.
- **68% of journalists just want the facts.**



**DO:** Get to the point, quickly

**No:** “On X (day), at X (location), X (company) will do X (activity) with X (celebrity).”

**Yes:** “X (celebrity) joins X (company) to do X (activity) on X (day) at X (location).”

# SEO & LINKS

# Google Search scratches its brain 500 million times a day

On a daily basis, 15 percent of queries submitted have never been seen before by Google's search engine.

by [Dan Farber](#) / @dofarber / May 13, 2013 6:46 PM PDT

 5 /  9 /  17 /  4 /  /  more +





GOOGLE DOESN'T  
WANT YOU TO  
FIGURE THEM OUT.

WHAT  
DOES



REALLY  
WANT?





Would you trust the information presented in this article?

Does this article have spelling, stylistic, or factual errors?

Does the article provide original content or information, original reporting, original research, or original analysis?

Was the article edited well, or does it appear sloppy or hastily produced?

Does this article contain insightful analysis or information that is beyond obvious?

Would you expect to see this article in a printed magazine, encyclopedia or book?

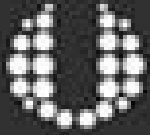
Are the articles short, unsubstantial, or otherwise lacking in helpful specifics?



RAGAN'S

**PR Daily**

1. Encourage click-throughs by embedding a clear and prominent call to action in your content.
2. Include images.
3. Write naturally, using a mix of keywords, key phrases and related acronyms.
4. Go long.



PR Newswire

A UBM plc company

“One of the more interesting changes is the advice to stop including anchor text and instead, include the full URL (shortened with link shortening tools in some cases).

“Include no more than three links in a release and they should be broken down as follows: the first link be something associated with a "call to action", the second to one of your company's social media site and perhaps the third to your corporate website.”

- *Sarah Skerik, PR Newswire's vice president of strategic communications and author of the ebook Driving Content Discovery.*

## **PRESS RELEASE: Paw Paw District Library earns LEED Silver certification**

**Kalamazoo, MI-** CSM Group is proud to announce that Paw Paw District Library has earned Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

LEED is a nationally-recognized rating system that provides building owners and operators with an outline for identifying and implementing measurable, yet practical, green building design, construction, operation, and maintenance solutions.

The 16,432-square-foot facility, built in a spacious 2-level brick building, includes a large community room that can be divided into two separate spaces, as well as three study rooms for group or one-on-one tutoring. The living area of the library is warm and inviting, with a large fireplace and surrounding seating. There is also a new technology center with a larger quantity of computers for patrons to use.

One of the unique features of the library is the exterior Brampton brick, which mimics the look of the Carnegie Center in Downtown Paw Paw. Keeping the theme of local history alive, the library also features a local history room, which is full of unique, historical books and facts.

CSM Group is a construction management (CM) firm established in 1983 with locations in Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids. The company provides CM services in the Healthcare, Commercial, Industrial, Food & Beverage, and Education markets. CSM also collaborated on the project with FTC&H, a full-service architecture and engineering firm.

# WHAT NOT TO DO

PLEASE, DON'T ANNOY PEOPLE WITH...

# Bad writing



#prnews • @SantowDan

# Robotic language



# Clichés

the sky's the limit - crunch time - going around in circles - maintain the - status quo - uphill battle - unwritten law - par for the course - come to a head - last but not least - pushing the envelope - after all is said and done - best-laid plans - by leaps and bounds - few and far between - in the nick of time - this day and age - other things being equal - make or break - ahead of the pack - sooner rather than later - unsung hero - a clean sweep - a whole new ballgame ...



# Really?



unique  
seamless  
integrated  
soared  
synergistic  
robust  
solutions  
turnkey  
leading  
utilize  
facilitating  
strategic  
leverage  
pain points  
value add  
uber  
game changing  
win-win

proactive  
empowered  
granular  
bandwidth  
industry-leading  
next-generation  
best-in-class  
innovative  
paradigm-shifting  
revolutionary  
integrated  
alignment  
up-level  
organic  
inflection point  
unpack  
deep dive  
meta

PLEASE, DON'T ANNOY PEOPLE WITH...

# Superciliousness

**“One often contradicts an opinion when what is uncongenial is really the tone in which it was conveyed.”**

*- Frederick Nietzsche*

# Grammatical errors

Every time you use an  
apostrophe to make  
a word plural, a  
puppy dies.



someecards  
user card

# Fake Excitement

**“I'm so excited and I just can't hide it  
I'm about to lose control and I think I like it  
I'm so excited and I just can't hide it  
And I know I know I know I know I know  
I want you”**

# Know what you need to know: Part II



- Does every sentence progress my story?
- Does every sentence set up the next sentence or paragraph?
- Is everything I've said *true*?
- Does every sentence give my readers more news, keep them interested?
- Have I been as concise as possible?
- Have I kept my audience in mind?
- Have I kept my readers' expectations in mind?
- Have I included the right search words?

# Know what you need to know: Part III



- What do those folks at [your company name here] want me to know?
- What do they want from me?
- Are they telling me information my audience wants to know?
- Are they telling me everything I need to know?  
Are they giving me a way to find out more?
- Are they wasting my time by telling me stuff I already know? old news?
- Are they making my life harder, or easier?



# NEWS RELEASE DOS

- Start strong
- Think like your reader
- Write professionally but like a human
- Economize your words
- Proofread

## NEWS RELEASE DON'TS

- Grammatical errors
- Inconsistency with capitalization
- Advertisements
- Promotional/fluffy language
- Hype
- First or second person

#

#

#