

## Writing a Media Release

### Advantages of Media Releases:

- You have more control over the message
- Saves time for you and the journalist
- Helps media get the facts right
- Enables you to inform a number of journalists and stakeholders at the same time

### News Stories Contain at Least One of the Following Elements:

- Well known people – politicians, celebrities, identities
- Timeliness – it has to be current e.g. opening a new lodge
- A local angle – makes it relevant to a community, e.g. tourism industry overtakes agriculture as Southland's greatest earner
- Public Interest – useful for people to know, e.g. free entry into Southland Museum for local residents
- Novelty – quirky, unusual or a first, e.g. Minus Five Ice Bar
- Achievement e.g. winning a tourism award
- Emotion – humour, conflict, tragedy, e.g. historic hotel gutted by fire.

### Hard and Soft News:

Hard News – serious stories e.g. political announcement, police incidents

Soft News (most tourism stories) – human-interest stories that are amusing, moving interesting e.g. celebrity sighting, local events, public activities

### Examples of Hooks:

- Opening of a new operation
- Anniversaries
- Environmental initiatives
- Introduction of new technology
- New product launches or developments
- Visiting dignitaries

### Writing a Media Release:

- What is the hook? What is the most interesting and relevant angle?
- Content must be newsworthy and relevant to the media outlet – answer all the “W” questions (who, what, where, when and why).
- Start strong – your headline and first paragraph should tell the story. You have a matter of seconds to grab your reader's attention. Do not blow it with a weak opening.
- Stick to the facts. Tell the truth; avoid fluff, embellishments and exaggerations.
- Change the angle to interest specialist publications
- Match the right media to your story
- Releases should be short – no more than a single page
- Have good images available
- Include contact information including name, email, phone number and web address (at the end of the release)