

Writing a media release: Instructions and template



The following media release template is just a guide and can be modified to fit your Doors Open Ontario event.

As a rule, media releases should be distributed two weeks before the actual event. This heightens the news value of the media release and gives newspaper editors enough time to assign a journalist to cover the event and run a story.

The headline at the top of your media release should be enticing – the shorter the better.

At the beginning of the media release, write the name of the host community in block letters, followed by a space and a dash. Then, insert the copy points that speak to your Doors Open Ontario event. The copy should be engaging and informative. View the media release as a sales tool – you are attempting to convince readers to attend your Doors Open Ontario event – and the media release may be one of your best opportunities. **Limit the media release to a maximum of one page in length.**

Add a backgrounder page to your release, listing all of the sites participating in your Doors Open Ontario event. (Ensure that all site and property owners have confirmed their participation first.)

Don't forget to add **- 30 -** at the bottom of your media release. This indicates to the editor that the media release has concluded.

Check the media release for accuracy before distributing it. The release can be sent to media outlets by email or fax. If sending by email, paste the text of the message into the body of the email. Because of threats of viruses, some media outlets will delete messages with attachments.

An editor may call for additional information or to arrange interviews or photo coverage of your event. By co-operating with the media, you stand a better chance of receiving positive coverage. Invite the media to your launch celebration and host the media at a number of your open sites during your event. You may also wish to host a media night a week before your Doors Open event occurs, allowing the media to report on the event before it occurs – and thereby encouraging visitation to your event when it actually happens.

After your Doors Open Ontario event is over, it is a good idea to follow up with the media – especially if you have received positive coverage. By forming a relationship with an editor or reporter, you stand a good chance of receiving positive media coverage again next year.

Media release

<<Current date>>
For immediate release

Anytown hosts Doors Open Ontario on <<Date>>

ANYTOWN – Insert an engaging description of your Doors Open Ontario community event here (state date, time, place and address, parking availability, building descriptions, describe on-site exhibits and displays, state if tours are guided or self-guided, etc.). Highlight the sites that are not normally open to the public and their intriguing stories. If possible, add quotes from a local celebrity or historian, or from the mayor or local MPP. Quotes add important credibility to an event and often influence its success.

For more information about **Doors Open Community name**, contact:

Community contact's name

Telephone number

Fax number

Email address

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Doors Open Ontario is a program of the Ontario Heritage Trust.
Visit www.doorsopenontario.on.ca for an updated list of Doors Open Ontario events.