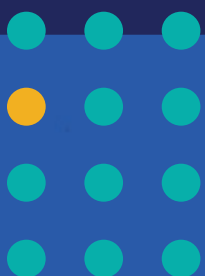


60  
Years



# Celebrating 60 Years With 60 Tips

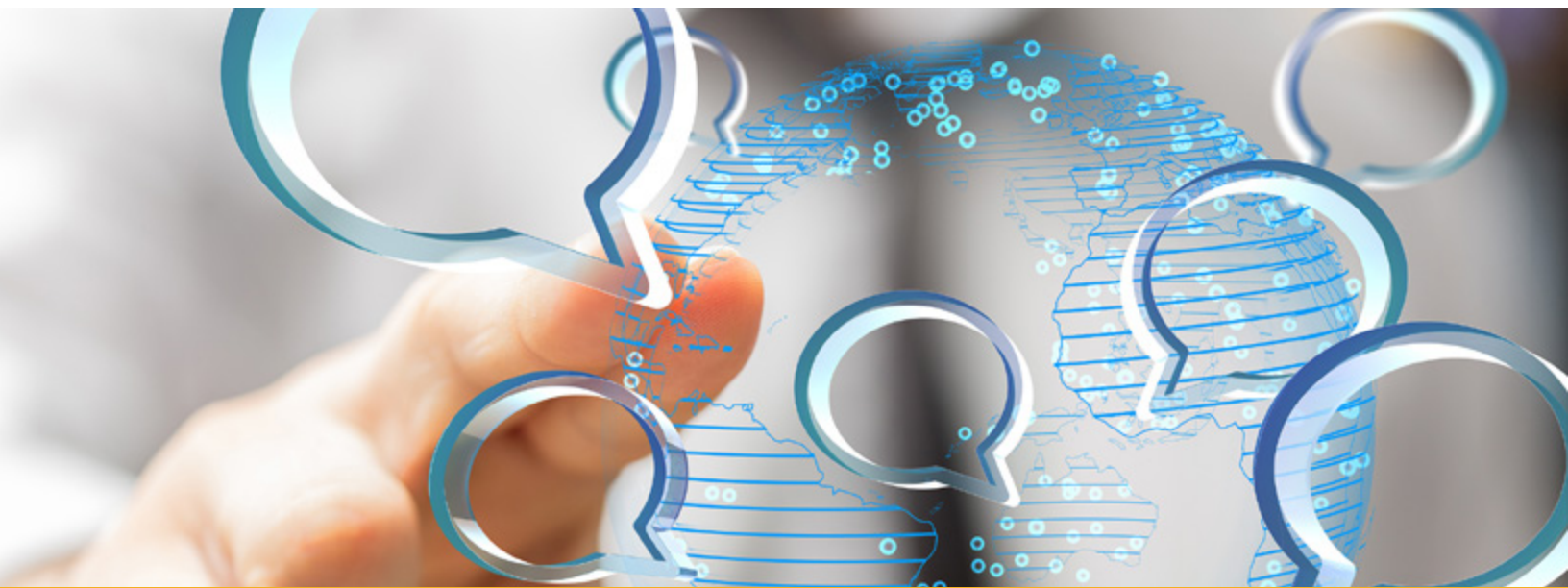
Communications and PR Best Practices  
in Advancing Today's News Adoption  
and Consumption

- ● **As the world changes, so does journalism. As journalism**
- ● **changes, so do communications practices.**

For the past 60 years, Business Wire has been a credible, trusted partner of media outlets and organizations alike. Our commitment to the industry and our customers places us at the forefront of news creation and consumption changes. From this position we can identify the best practices today's communicators should follow to meet the needs of those who report on the news, act on the information, and experience the content.

To celebrate our 60th anniversary, we've gathered our top 60 actionable media relations recommendations that reflect today's communications landscape.

- 1 Getting Started**
- 2 Recognizing the Value of Multimedia**
- 3 Best Practices for Pitching and Amplifying Your News**
- 4 Activating Multicultural and International Markets**
- 5 Measuring Success: Always Be Testing**





# Getting Started

The beginning of any good communications strategy comes from understanding your target audience. You need to consider your audience in both broad and narrow terms.

When you think of broad audiences, think about search engines and general media. Your headline or release summary will be categorized with similar content by topic, industry, and keywords. Narrow audiences comprise active stakeholders, the news media in your region, your community, industry peers and publications, customers, and investors.

In this section of our paper, we look at best practices in crafting highly relevant, media-rich press releases and pitches that attract both reporters and readers.

- ➔ [Writing a Press Release](#)
- ➔ [Constructing a Great Pitch](#)
- ➔ [Adding Relevancy to Your Press Releases and Pitches](#)

## Writing a Press Release

Secure the kind of editorial coverage that moves prospects in and through your sales funnel by providing reporters with the timely, relevant, textual, and visual news content their readers want to know. Award-winning coach Ann Wylie offers these recommendations:

1. Write a concise headline. Skip the jargon, fluff, and adjectives, and focus on the verbs to make it easy for readers – and reporters – to understand the impact of your news.
2. Write for your audience, not for yourself. Make sure your news appeals to those who need it by putting the reader at the center of your story.
3. Increase readability. Break up big blocks of text with bullets, italics, bolding, and white space to create a visual flow that keeps reader attention.
4. Summarize it all in the first paragraph. Tell the full story, describing your news and impact, in the first 30 words of your press release. Include links to key landing pages to maximize opportunities for inbound traffic.
5. Think visually. Increase coverage and attention by creating images or videos specifically for reporters to use to tell your story.

[Learn more: Ann Wylie's Writing Tips](#)





## Constructing a Great Pitch

With fewer reporters in the industry than ever before, securing editorial coverage is not easy. To increase the likelihood of a reporter opening your pitch and using it, we recommend the following tips.

6. A great pitch takes hours, not minutes, to write. Take the time to craft a detailed, concise pitch.
7. Be relevant. Your pitch should answer the questions: What is the news? Why should this reporter's readers care? How does this news impact the reader?
8. Use your pitch to connect the dots from your news story to each reporter's audience.
9. Be thorough. Even with a concise pitch, add any relevant information including data and sources.

[Learn more: Media Pitching Tips](#)

### Pro tip:

When emailing a pitch to a reporter, do not include attachments. Instead, include a link to your distributed press release that contains your full story, quotes, additional information, and supporting multimedia.

## Adding Relevancy to Your Press Releases and Pitches

Before you write any media-facing materials, you need to understand who you are trying to reach. From there, build a release and pitch around the relevance of your audience and your news. The more relevant your release is to end audiences, the easier it is for reporters to cover.

- 10.** Be timely, be flexible. News today is breaking faster than ever. Before you distribute your release and initiate your pitches, see what other news is impacting your audience. When possible, insert timely elements into your release and pitch. And, of course, be ready to move your launch date if the industry focus is elsewhere.
- 11.** Understand what makes your industry tick. Highlight your innovations and the impact they have on your industry to position your news to stand out.
- 12.** Understand what makes your readers tick. Write your press release from the viewpoint of your end audience. Make the impact your news has on their lives the center of your story.
- 13.** Speak the language of your audience. Understand regional dialects or language preferences to maximize your reach, understanding, and impact.

[Learn more: News Relevancy](#)





# Recognizing the Value of Multimedia

While a great headline will catch attention, text-only press releases no longer interest reporters or activate news readers. The proliferation of mobile devices has cemented visual fluency's role as the world's most used language. It is time for communications teams to own the earned media creation process and provide authentic supporting content that, with a single glance, will broadcast the meaning and drive the connections intended by their press release.

- ➔ [How to Connect with PR Audiences Visually](#)
- ➔ [Optimizing Imagery for Your Release](#)
- ➔ [Enhancing Your Press Release to Drive Engagement](#)

Years ago, media outlets would never take a video or a photo that was supplied by outside organizations. That's no longer the case. They're not only taking these assets, they're grateful for them.



Terry Lynam  
Consultant and former Head of Communications, Northwell Health



## How to Connect with PR Audiences Visually

Multimedia is no longer optional when it comes to successful news distribution and media relations. Reporters require it and consumers love it. Images and video content capture audience attention instantly and can quickly propel the story. They are an effective way to achieve a level of personal connection and interaction, something companies and journalists both strive to do.

- 14.** Multimedia increases open rates. Multimedia news releases attract 3x more attention than text-only news.
- 15.** Visuals are global. The business world has adopted the ancient global language of visuals.
- 16.** Visuals do not require translation. Visuals tell your story, at a glance, to your entire audience.
- 17.** Visuals simplify complex stories.
- 18.** Visuals expand your audience. Providing visuals gives readers the power to consume your news in their preferred learning method, while omitting visuals restricts audience adoption.

[Learn more: Earned Media Visuals](#)



## Optimizing Imagery for Your Release

If visuals are mandatory, what is the best way to create compelling imagery that truly captures reporter attention and drives reader actions? Consider these tips.

Match your visual approach to your audience and channel. Understanding your audience and their channels of choice will help you choose your final content types.

Use these four tips to create newsworthy images:

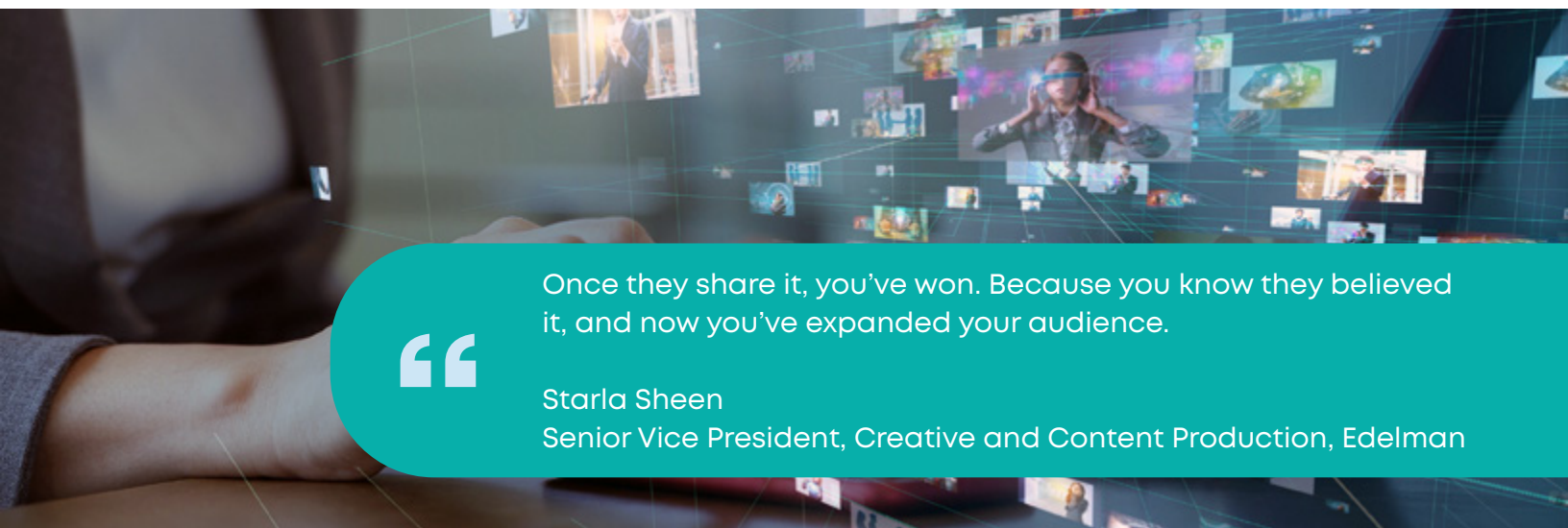
19. High resolution (2400 pixels on the longest side) increases the chance of media usage.
20. Avoid having those being photographed wearing solid black or white, which skews lighting.
21. Pay attention to usage rights for stock photos and other created imagery.
22. Brand with images, not logos. Overly branded content is not newsworthy. Place your logos in the background of your imagery, not the forefront. Focus on telling your customer story, not your corporate story.

Include multimedia captions that feature the impact of your news, not the sales pitch. Captions provide context to your images and allow you to retell your story in a new way.

Use these five tips for reporter-friendly videos:

23. Think in compelling soundbites.
24. Like photographs, lighting matters – and so does sound quality.
25. Customize your videos to speak natively to the audience you are pitching.
26. Provide B-roll videos (show the process – not just beauty shots) so video editors can shape their own story.
27. Avoid stock footage and overlay text.

[Learn more: Visual Imagery](#)



Once they share it, you've won. Because you know they believed it, and now you've expanded your audience.

Starla Sheen  
Senior Vice President, Creative and Content Production, Edelman

## Enhancing Your Press Release to Drive Engagement

A good reader experience increases the likelihood of message adoption among media, financial, and consumer audiences, and even the general public. To that end, before you distribute your press release, take a minute to make sure it contains as many branding and action-oriented options as possible, including:

- 28.** Add your logo. Build brand mindshare by including your logo within your press release and linking it to your website.
- 29.** Add pull quotes and calls to action. Increase inbound traffic and advocacy by adding hyperlinks and social messaging directly into your press release.
- 30.** Include social media profile links. Encourage readers to join conversations across your social channels by showcasing your active platforms in each news release.
- 31.** Include contact information. Allow reporters and key audiences to act fast by including your contact information within your press release.

[Learn more: Improve Reader Experience](#)



### Pro tip:

B2B, where the products are often complex or intangible, presents a perfect opportunity to use visuals to communicate what a product does or how it works.



# Best Practices for Pitching and Amplifying Your News

Now that you have written your press release, it is time to get your news into the hands of your end audiences. In this section, we will share best practices as it relates to identifying, reaching, and activating your consumers, analysts, and reporters.

➔ **Choosing How to Best Reach Your Audience**

➔ **Media Relations Basics**

Being more precise with your communications and tailoring the storyline will help you make waves.



Brian Mossop  
Senior Vice President, Methods+Mastery



## Choosing How to Best Reach Your Audience

When it comes to amplifying your news, one of the first steps you must take is to identify which target audiences your news impacts, and from there, the reporters and storytellers who reach them. Be selective; reaching too broadly may not activate anyone, and thinking too narrowly may limit your actual potential.

- 32.** Who is your audience? Are you trying to activate small audiences, or large groups? Are you trying to tell multiple stories to multiple audiences, or one clear message to all? Understanding your desired results will allow you to work backwards to identify the audiences you need to reach to meet your goal.
- 33.** What is the best way to reach them? Understand that email delivery-based media relations may not be ideal unless you or your brand is well-known. Journalists receive dozens of emails and yours may get lost in the shuffle. A newswire partner can help in unfamiliar markets.
- 34.** Local or global, or both? Think local and global. For many companies, press release audiences include a mix of global news, local media outlets, industry trades, and online services to reach your target audiences. Reporters prefer to be pitched/receive news earlier in the week.

### **Pro tip:**

Successful pitches frame the story and provide journalists a direct link between the information presented and their readers' needs.



## Media Relations Basics

Every good media relations program includes news distribution and news pitching. Follow these basic rules to successfully engage with reporters.

- 35.** Tuesdays are the most popular day to distribute press releases.
- 36.** 8-10 AM is the best time to pitch local TV stations.
- 37.** Send your pitch off-hour – 8:07 AM instead of 8:00 AM.
- 38.** Time your pitch to match the local media you are trying to reach.
- 39.** Never distribute a pitch or press release to a mass list of reporters and journalists.
- 40.** Get each reporter and media outlet name right.
- 41.** Know what the reporter covers and their audience.
- 42.** Know the voice of the media outlet you are pitching.
- 43.** Remember, reporters keep pitches for future use.
- 44.** Support targeted pitching efforts with broad access provided by a commercial newswire such as Business Wire.

[Learn more: Best Times to Pitch](#)



# Activating Multicultural and International Markets

Today's communicators are expanding traditional communications programs to include multicultural and/or international markets. Success in these endeavors depends on several key components. In this section, we will outline the importance of building authentic relationships, cultural fluency, and the difference between speaking at an audience via translations or with an audience via transcreation.

- ➔ **Building Authenticity**
- ➔ **Building Diverse Relationships**
- ➔ **Increasing Visibility in International Markets**

“You're making sure that your communication strategy, when filtered through the screen, is successful, and it's not harming the culture that you want to communicate with.”

LaTricia Harper Woods,  
President/Founder of Mahogany Xan Communications

## Building Authenticity

Understand the importance of authenticity when it comes to pitching to diverse audiences. The more authentic your brand communications program is, the more likely these audiences will be to trust your brand.

- 45.** Many populations are composed of multiple cultural identities. Research thoroughly and develop content that embraces the cultural insight of the demographic you're targeting.
- 46.** Modify your messaging accordingly to fit diverse audiences.
- 47.** Be aware that our own biases can create unintended barriers when trying to understand differing cultures and backgrounds. Remember to take a step back and reflect on your news and consider how it will appear to a multicultural audience.
- 48.** Building trust will help your message be amplified through word of mouth and social media.

[Learn more: Authentic Communication Tips](#)



We have to speak the language, we have to know that market that we're directly reaching and trying to touch.

Bernadette Morris  
CEO, Black PR Wire Inc.



## Building Diverse Relationships

Connect authentically with multicultural and non-local audiences with a listening-first program. With customers and news consumers growing more global and more diverse, it's important to communicate in a way that reflects our multicultural society.

- 49.** Pay attention to cultural norms and language choice to understand formality and politeness, as these are key components of brand building within these audiences.
- 50.** For credibility, mention previous work or offer to hop on a call (if pitching by email). Extend gratitude for their consideration and include your phone number for easy follow-up. This also helps solidify your relationship.
- 51.** Stay in touch with your connections year-round for ongoing communication. Consider local market partnerships to better understand cultural intricacies and keep the conversation going.



## ● ● Increasing Visibility in ● ● International Markets

When looking to increase brand and news visibility within international markets, the first step is to localize your news to the markets you want to reach.

- 52. Taking the time to reach local markets, in their contextual language, demonstrates your commitment to building a relationship and can increase your chance of coverage.
- 53. Don't translate, transcreate your text. Translations are mechanical and speak a generalized language. Transcreations speak in local market language and idioms. The more you can speak to your audience in their language, the better.
- 54. Images and logos are required for international news releases. Every press release you distribute is an opportunity to build your visual brand. Include logos and imagery to increase story adoption and brand reach.

[Learn more: Contextual Translations](#)

[Learn more: International News Requirements](#)



### Pro Tip:

Did you know that translations are included in most of Business Wire's international distributions? This is an inexpensive and easy way to outsource your news translation process.

# Amplifying Your News Reach with Business Wire

## Six ways Business Wire can maximize your press release reach:

**Trust:** Business Wire is trusted and used every day by media. We have the industry's most stringent vetting and coding process. Reporters know that our news feeds are relevant and to be trusted. This allows them to act upon our news instantly – a huge benefit for reporters trying to publish news as quickly as possible.

**Reach:** We have been building relationships with media outlets for 60 years. With more than 1,600 news distribution options, Business Wire provides every client the opportunity to reach relevant reporters locally and around the globe.

**Visibility:** A partner of the world's leading search engines since they launched, Business Wire's news distribution provides unparalleled visibility to your news. The more access audiences have to your news, the more reader engagement and activity your news receives. We also provide detailed analysis to help you optimize future releases.

**Accessibility:** Business Wire's patented news delivery system provides reporters instant access to story elements and translated content, streamlining their reporting process.

**Financial Disclosure:** Business Wire is actively involved in the investor relations space. We understand disclosure regulations across global markets and offer tools and partnerships designed to make meeting disclosure requirements easy.

**Longevity:** Business Wire's online archiving ensures your news is available over time, so as your organization grows, so will your story. Business Wire can help you establish history and credibility.

[Learn more: Longevity of Your News](#)





# Measuring Success: Always Be Testing

Tracking your results, from views to inbound clicks, is a key component of today's communications program. From the words in your headline, to the time your news was sent, to the audiences who received it, taking a close look at each input can easily provide communicators with areas to adjust for future success. Here are our top tips for measuring the success of your news release and media relations program.

## ➔ Understanding Your Results and Looking Forward

“You want to measure everything and use your data to assess your new work, its effectiveness, and how it can be used again moving forward.”

Serena Ehrlich  
Director of Product Marketing, Business Wire



## Understanding Your Results and Looking Forward

Every distributed press release generates useful data. Use this valuable information to test, measure, and implement new strategies for future releases. Here are some key metrics to review:

- 55.** Open rates: Who opened your release and which media outlets and platforms drove views?
- 56.** Earned coverage: For many PR pros, this is the top tracked metric for their efforts – where was their coverage placed and published?
- 57.** Overall relevant conversations: How many requests for interviews or additional information did you receive from your news release? What comments, shares, or engagement did you receive on social media?
- 58.** Multimedia usage/engagement: How did your photo or video content perform? How can you better optimize multimedia with your next release?
- 59.** Inbound traffic: How many visitors came to your website from your release? Track inbound traffic to best understand your audiences' interests.
- 60.** Website reactions: Did your release include links to content downloads, newsletter sign-ups, or lead generation pages? If so, how many new registrants did you receive during launch week?

[Learn more: Track Inbound Traffic](#)

[Learn more: Key Metrics to Review](#)

### Pro tip:

Look at your headlines, multimedia assets, story angles, outreach, distributions, and timings to see which elements can be modified for better results.

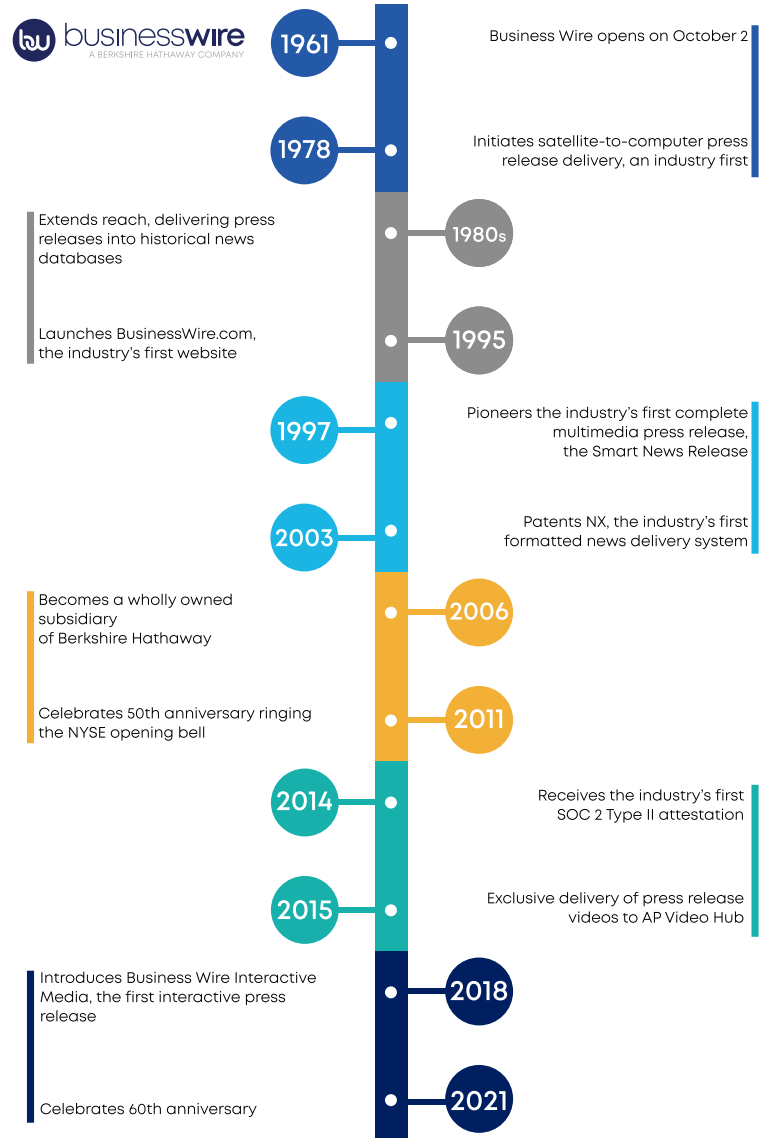
# 60 Years and Counting

## Final Words

Journalism, public relations, and media relations have evolved dramatically in the last 60 years. Today, media relations is a blend of relationships, relevance, science, and reach. Following these 60 best practices – from best times to launch your news to adding media-friendly imagery to reaching unfamiliar markets – will help you build a successful, authentic communications program that resonates with new and existing audiences.

## A Look Towards the Future

From our unique position at the intersection of news creation and news amplification, Business Wire plays a vital role in the news industry. From 1961 to 2021, we have focused on our customers, designing programs that strengthen and grow our media reach and relationships around the world. As we look to the future, we will continue to seek out the best practices, tools, and innovations to help your news be seen and acted upon in the years to come.



## About Business Wire

[Business Wire](#), a Berkshire Hathaway company, is the global leader in [news release distribution](#) and [regulatory disclosure](#). Public relations, investor relations, public policy, and marketing professionals rely on Business Wire for secure and accurate distribution of market-moving news and multimedia. Founded in 1961, Business Wire is a trusted source for news organizations, journalists, investment professionals, and regulatory authorities, delivering news directly into editorial systems and leading online news sources via its multi-patented NX Network. Business Wire's worldwide newsrooms are available to meet the needs of communications professionals and news media globally.