



Are you ready to

# TRANSFORM

your store?



SPRINGFAIR  
AUTUMNFAIR

SAVE THE  
HIGH STREET

Retail  
MAKEOVER  
MISSION



## INDEPENDENT RETAILER PR TOOLKIT

Your practical guide to getting press coverage,  
winning awards, and building local buzz for your store.

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## Build your press kit

If your offer doesn't fit your market, nothing else will work. The strongest marketing in the world can't sell something your local audience doesn't want or understand.

### ACTIONS

- Write an 'About Us' press release
- Structure your release clearly:
  - **HEADLINE** – clear, engaging title (e.g., "Local gift shop celebrates 10 years on the high street")
  - **OPENING PARAGRAPH** – who, what, where, when, why
  - **SECOND PARAGRAPH** – expand with background/relevance
  - **QUOTE** – from the owner or team member
  - **EXTRA DETAILS/CALL TO ACTION** – store address, website, opening hours, product highlights
  - **BOILERPLATE/ABOUT US** – short 100-word blurb
  - **PRESS CONTACT** – name, phone, email
- Press assets to prepare
  - "About Us" press release
  - 2–3 high-quality store photos (inside & outside) Images should be at least 2mb in size.
  - 1 owner/team photo

**TIP:** Create a digital folder for your assets and generate a QR code link (many free tools available, e.g., Adobe Express).

**EXAMPLE:** Nest Gift Shop in Winchester prepared a press kit and was featured in the Hampshire Chronicle when they launched a new eco-friendly range.

# Create a Local PR plan and Create Press Releases

Regular press releases keep your store in the news. Here's how to write and send them effectively.

## HOW TO WRITE A NEWSWORTHY PRESS RELEASE

- **CHOOSE THE ANGLE**
  - What's the story? (anniversary giveaway, new range, award, workshop)
  - Why does it matter now? (local relevance, seasonality, community benefit)
- **WRITE A HEADLINE**
  - Clear, short (8–12 words) Why does it matter now? (local relevance, seasonality, community benefit)
  - Example: "[Town] gift boutique marks 10 years with free-gift weekend"
- **OPENING PARAGRAPH** – The key facts first
- **SECOND PARAGRAPH** – Context and background
- **QUOTE** – Add personality from owner/team
- **PRACTICAL DETAILS** – Event dates, prices, website, socials
- **BOILERPLATE/ABOUT US** – 100-word blurb about your store
- **PRESS CONTACT** – Name, role, phone, email

## FORMATTING TIPS

- Keep it 1–2 pages max
- Use a readable font and add your logo and date at the top
- Save file clearly as a word doc or pdf

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# How to Distribute a Press Release (Step-by-Step)

## 1. BUILD YOUR MEDIA LIST

- **LOCAL/REGIONAL:** Newsdesk, lifestyle/features, business editor, What's On/events, picture desk, influencers, Facebook groups, local community groups
- **BROADCAST:** Local radio producers (breakfast/drive-time), community radio, local TV newsroom
- **TRADE PRESS:** Relevant to your industry

## 2. CHOOSE YOUR TIMING

- Send in the morning Tues-Thurs if possible
- Events: 3 weeks ahead (+ a reminder the week of)

## 3. SEND BY EMAIL

- Short, personalised intro (why it's relevant to them)
- Paste full release into the body or attached as PDF
- Add one inline photo and link to your press kit
- Avoid big attachments (keep under 1MB; use links for high-res images)

## 4. FOLLOW UP

- If no reply, send one polite nudge after 2–3 days
- For events, send a short reminder in the week they happen
- Respond quickly to requests (extra images, prices, interviews)
- Always send a thank you to anyone who features you.

## 5. LOG & LEARN

- Track: Who you sent to, coverage gained, social engagement
- Save strong subject lines and intros for reuse
- This will help build contacts and your database

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# Award & Recognition Calendar

## ACTIONS

- Research awards and build a 12-month calendar
  - **LOCAL:** Winchester Business Excellence Awards, Telford High Street Heroes, Let's Celebrate Towns
  - **NATIONAL:** Small Business Saturday, Great British High Street Awards
  - **TRADE:** The Retas, Drapers Independent Awards, Boutique Star Awards
- Prepare Ahead: Keep good photos and press kit ready
- Promote Success: Post on socials, include in newsletters, frame certificates, use stickers in store windows, share with

**EXAMPLE:** Little Acorns Bookshop entered the British Book Awards 'Independent Bookshop of the Year' and gained local coverage just for being shortlisted.

# Event & Seasonal PR

Customer experience is your strongest defence against competitors and your best driver of word-of-mouth.

## ACTIONS

- Plan small but visual events:
  - Workshops (candle-making, wreath making, embroidery, styling)
  - Seasonal launches (Christmas preview, Summer in Bloom weekend)
  - Community tie-ins (charity raffles, school partnerships)

**EXAMPLE:** A boutique hosted in-store styling sessions with a stylist, sent a release + photos to local press, and was featured online and in print.

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# Social Media & Newsletter Integration

## CONTENT IDEAS

- New season drops
- Brand spotlights
- Collaborations / interviews with founders
- Styling videos
- Behind-the-scenes content
- Competitions
- Press clippings & award news
- Limited-time offers
- Engage and respond with your followers

**TIP:** Encourage social followers to join your email list.

**EXAMPLE:** A homeware store shared their Country Living feature on Instagram and gained 500 new followers in a week.

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# Quick-Start Checklist for retail PR success

- Prepare your press kit (press release, photos, bio, quotes)
- Identify 6 local influencers to work with
- Map award deadlines for the next 12 months
- List 3 local story ideas to pitch
- Plan at least 2 seasonal events
- Share every win on social and in your newsletter
- Track results (press coverage, social engagement, sign-ups, footfall)
- Refresh press assets regularly

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