

Online Appendix D: A Sample of a News Release Soliciting Script Submissions

"First-ever" ensures that it's newsworthy, so get it in the lead.



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For Immediate Release

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Albeeville Community Theatre Seeks New Scripts for Contest

ALBEEVILLE, NY — Albeeville Community Theatre (ACT) is now seeking new scripts for its first-ever playwriting contest.

Two one-act plays will be chosen for production, and each winning playwright will receive a \$100 cash prize.

"In the past, we've provided opportunities for actors, directors, and technicians to practice their craft, and this year, we wanted to expand that to include playwrights," says ACT President Darren Felshaw. "Just as actors must audition for roles and directors must go through a screening process, we felt playwrights should go through a similar selection process, so a contest seemed to be the natural avenue."

The winning scripts will be produced on a double bill together as part of ACT's mainstage season next year. "We're interested in doing one-acts because it allows us to work with more playwrights," explains Felshaw.

Each submission package should include a cover letter, a resume, a self-addressed stamped envelope, and a complete script. Submitted plays should not exceed one hour in length. Only previously unpublished, unproduced work will be considered. There is also a \$10 contest

(more)

Use your full name in the press release title, even if the newspaper always abbreviates it in its headlines. Promoting your name in subtle ways like that assists in the overall name recognition your theatre enjoys.

Setting this in a paragraph by itself gives it more emphasis, drawing attention to those big incentives.

Here's a way to educate your public about what you're doing and why.

Whether your president (or executive director) has anything to do with the actual running of the contest or not, he should have something to say about it. Your president is an important figurehead, so promote that figurehead status.

Let editors know you didn't intentionally chop things off and that there's an additional page to look for.

Be as specific as possible with your criteria, and be sure to mention any entry fee you have. You don't need to mention it in the first paragraph or two—let the reader get hooked into the story before mentioning it. On the other hand, don't bury it so much that the reader feels like you're springing something on her, either.

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A single word floating all alone like this is called a widow. Avoid them because they can cause confusion and break up the continuity of the text for the reader.

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entry fee.

Plays can be of most genres, including comedies, dramas, or mysteries, although musicals will not be considered.

There are no limitations on cast size, although plays with smaller casts stand a better chance of being chosen over plays with larger casts.

“We also ask playwrights to keep in mind our audience base,” says Felshaw. “Because we try to keep our season family-friendly, plays dealing with highly controversial or extremely mature themes are discouraged.”

For more details, log on to ACT’s website at www.albeeactors.com.

Now celebrating its fourth season, Albeeville Community Theatre seeks to promote, encourage, and produce community-based live theater in the greater Bradford area. By making live theatre available and accessible to the public, ACT provides opportunities for community participation, appreciation and education, thus enriching the community and increasing interest in the arts.

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Again, any information like this you can supply not only clarifies things for potential submitters, but it also makes your release longer and, therefore, more noticeable in the newspaper. However, at all costs, **DO NOT** try to achieve length by adding fluff. Stick with the facts.

A fact of life in the theatre with any play.

If there are special considerations like this, you might as well let people know right up front. It'll save their time and yours. Don't be afraid to stand up for the values you articulate in your mission statement.

Slip that web address in one last time. It never hurts.