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# Biotech and Healthcare News:

## Five ways to inject impact into your press releases



## Do you know the best time to send a healthcare or biotech news release?

Do you wonder who the best spokesperson is? In a recent webinar, Hinda Chalew, Vice President of Product Marketing at Business Wire, brought together two experts in this area to discuss the data and techniques behind more powerful releases.

**Dan Beltramo** – CEO of Onclusive, the data science and media monitoring company for the PR industry

**Kena Hudson** – Senior Vice President with Fleishman Hillard, one of the world's largest communications agencies

The critical difference between healthcare and biotech and other industries' press releases? The absence of spin or positioning. **"I think communications are and should be held to a higher standard in the healthcare space,"** says Kena Hudson. "What we say really matters. We're talking about the lives of patients." However, while the session, and the advice from Hudson and Beltramo, were targeted for these industries, much of what they shared can apply to any industry.

For comprehensive news release benchmarks across all industries, see our previous whitepaper: [The 2019 News Release Benchmark Report](#)

## Five ways to improve the impact of your press releases

- 1 **TIMING IS IMPORTANT, BUT...**
- 2 **THE RIGHT SPOKESPERSON MIGHT NOT BE WHO YOU THINK**
- 3 **RELATIONSHIPS ARE EVERYTHING**
- 4 **GETTING HEARD ABOVE THE HERD IS QUITE POSSIBLE**
- 5 **REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS KEEP YOU SANE**

## Our Expert Panelists:



**DAN BELTRAMO**

CEO  
Onclusive



**KENA HUDSON**

Senior Vice President  
Fleishman Hillard



**HINDA CHALEW**

Vice President, Product Marketing  
Business Wire

## 1 Timing is important, but...

One of the questions PR teams ask most often is, “**When is the best time to distribute a news release?**” Timely placement, according to our experts, is part art and part science.

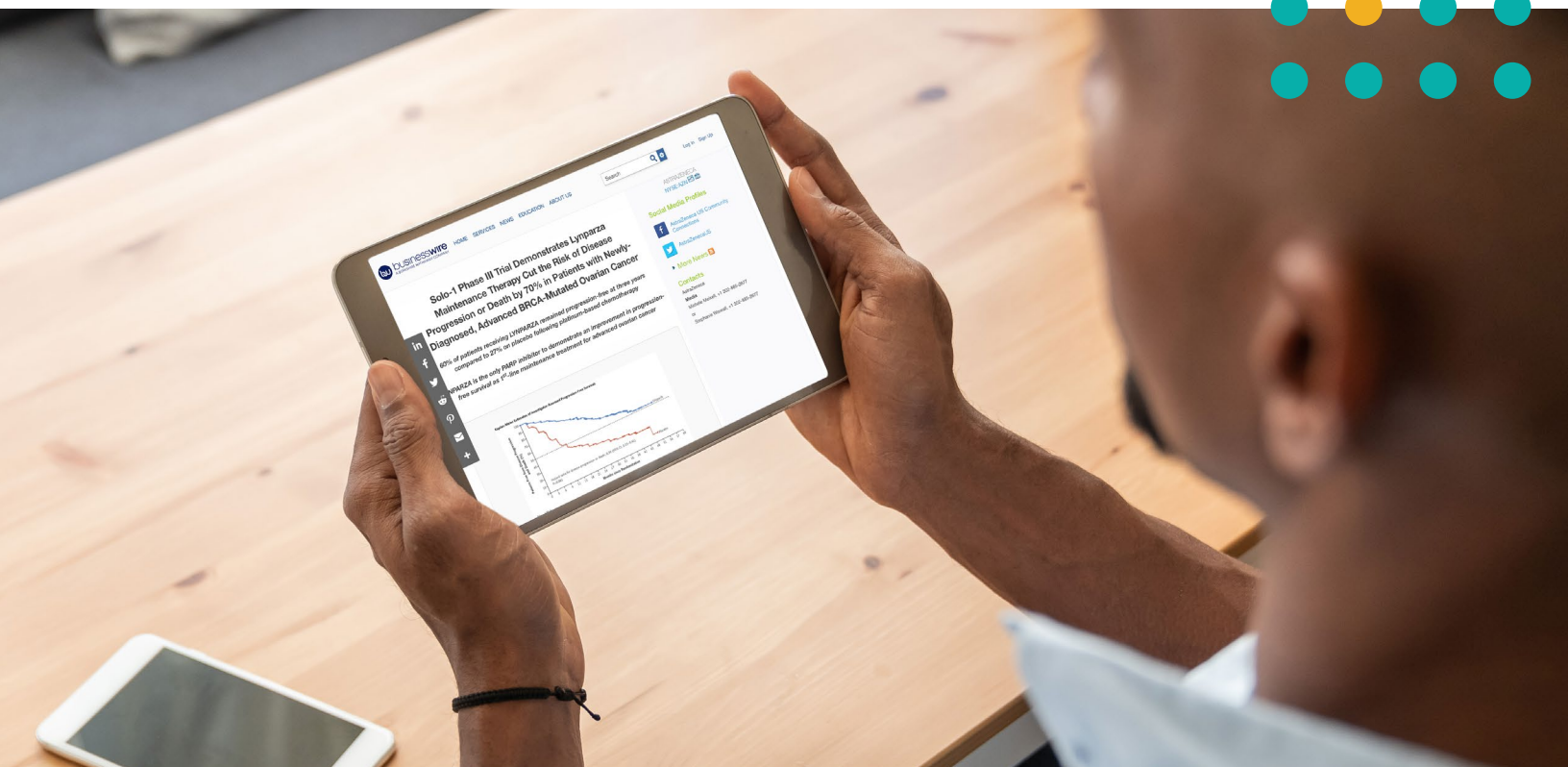
Dan Beltramo comes at the question from a data analysis perspective. He notes that Onclusive’s analysis of six months of healthcare and biotech releases shows most news releases are sent Monday through Thursday, with a large percentage going out at 6:00, 7:00 or 8:00 in the morning, eastern time, a little earlier than other industries. Also, there’s usually another batch released in the late afternoon. The data also indicated that more earned media tended to be from releases that were distributed earlier or later than the most common times.

For IR releases, the opening or close of markets in different regions is likely to drive timing. “There seems to be greater discipline in the healthcare industry and tighter windows in which they distribute their IR releases than one finds across other industries,” says Beltramo.

However, Hudson argues that, outside of broad guidelines, such as Monday through Thursday being better than Friday for distribution, **timing may be less important than the subject of the release.** For her, the key is rather to focus on giving reporters enough time and access to spokespeople and assets to cover the story more fully.

### PRO TIP:

The key is rather to focus on giving reporters enough time and access to spokespeople and assets to cover the story more fully.





## 2

## The right spokesperson might not be who you think

Generating earned media, where journalists write original content based on the release, is a critical goal. PR teams can improve the likelihood of garnering earned media by having spokespersons who provide more context.

For Hudson, that means doctors and scientists, rather than the company CEO. **“The best spokespeople are independent people who can add credibility,”** she says. While the CEO can speak to the company’s goals and progress, “you always want to make sure someone else is saying you’re doing a great job.”

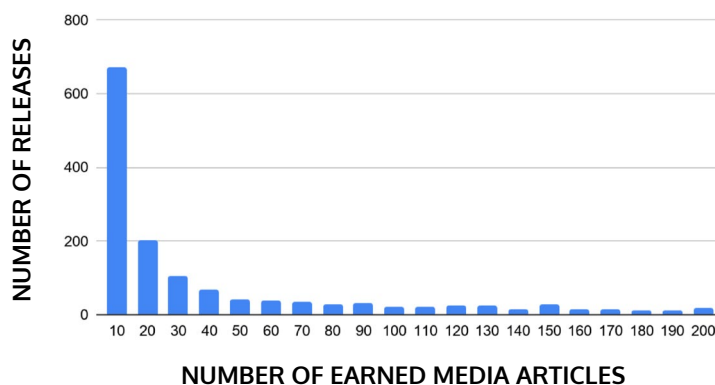
“You always need to consider the patient perspective.”

KENA HUDSON  
Senior Vice President, Fleishman Hillard

**The patient voice can also be a valuable addition** to a news release. Sometimes, that won’t be possible, but Hudson recommends a practical solution. “You always need to consider the patient perspective,” she says. “If you can work with an advocacy group and have someone who can speak to the promise and how patients feel about something, that can be incredibly valuable.”

Equally important is **ensuring spokespeople are fully briefed and available to talk with journalists when the release goes out.** If a journalist can’t reach your spokesperson, they may move on to the next story, and your company misses the opportunity for earned media.

### EARNED MEDIA ARTICLES PER HEALTHCARE RELEASE



- 47% of releases received 1–10 earned media articles
- Average number of earned media articles was 21

### 3 Relationships are everything

Along with making sure the right spokesperson is prepared and available to journalists at the right time, building relationships and leveraging them can increase a company's likelihood of cutting through the noise.

First, **develop trusted relationships with reporters** so your first conversation isn't on the day a release goes live. "You should be having ongoing authentic conversations," advises Hudson. "They should already know about your company and know what you're doing."

Hudson continues that if you have strong relationships with trusted journalists, you can share the news in advance so that they can interview your spokespeople before the release goes out. "Friday isn't a great day to put out new news," she says. "But it is a good day to start having conversations with reporters." Understanding the angles that are interesting to a reporter or publication will help you tailor the information appropriately while also improving the chances that a reporter will take notice of your release.

Our experts pointed out that the internal review process can often take longer than the PR team would like.

**Developing relationships and consulting with your legal, medical and regulatory reviewers at every step can make for a smoother progression through the necessary review cycles.**







## 4

### Getting heard above the herd is quite possible

Another frequent challenge, particularly for smaller companies or those with news that doesn't relate to the current coronavirus crisis, is getting attention over their larger peers. At Onclusive, Beltramo talks about both share of voice—how much coverage you're getting relative to your peers—and Power of Voice™—an adjusted share of voice based on the quality of the coverage relative to your peers.

Quality of coverage is more important in many ways. The fact is many small companies are never going to be able to “compete” with larger organizations with global reach and resources, and Hudson questions whether that should even be the goal. **“You're not necessarily out to beat Pfizer,” she says. “You're trying to communicate your news to the right audience.”** The metrics and data you look to should be those that indicate how well you're reaching that audience.

#### PRO TIP:

Including multimedia and visual storytelling assets can make it easier for journalists to notice the release and create their own stories using the assets provided.

Even if a smaller company isn't going to break through in the same way as Pfizer, there are still plenty of ways to amplify the release's impact.

For instance, Hudson talks about highlighting data coming out of a conference or other event that can add more context to the release. Including multimedia and visual storytelling assets can make it easier for journalists to notice the release and create their own stories using the assets provided. Visual assets, such as infographics, can be picked up and used in various ways, both by employees and journalists. The ease of sharing across different social channels can also boost the audience numbers for your story.

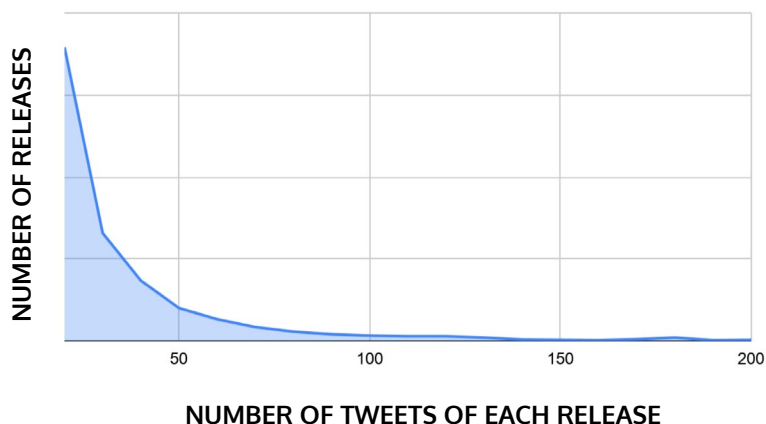
Hudson also advises the release should be just one part of a holistic strategy that includes both internal and external communications. For instance, on social media, “It's not just putting your press release on Twitter, but it's also understanding how people are engaging with it. You're sharing your multimedia assets and, as reporters are covering your story, you're sharing their stories as well.”

## Realistic expectations keep you sane

Keeping things in perspective will help PR teams view metrics and performance more accurately and avoid knee-jerk reactions. For instance, Beltramo notes that Onclusive's analysis reveals that **47% of healthcare and biotech releases generate fewer than 10 tweets**. If a company generates more than 50 tweets, that puts it in the top 5–10% for social media coverage. Not only does that temper expectations, but it also indicates there is low-hanging fruit via social channels. "You don't need to be putting up huge numbers," Beltramo says. "I think a lot of us get lost in thinking about the consumer-oriented tweet counts, but for a typical business, 50 tweets that matter from the right people will make a big difference." Putting energy into improving that can be valuable.

Reviewing the data and performance of previous releases—how much social engagement did they receive, how much earned media was generated—can help set realistic expectations while also pointing out areas for improvement. "It's a good practice to compare yourself to what else is happening in the industry and how other companies are doing," says Hudson. "But you have to be realistic about the story you have in front of you and make sure you're bringing together all the pieces to tell the full story."

### TWEETS PER HEALTHCARE RELEASE



- 71% of PR Releases receive 1–10 re-tweets
- 5% of PR Releases receive 50 re-tweets or more
- The average number of tweets per release is 20

## HOW ONCLUSIVE ANALYZES NEWS RELEASE DATA

We based this discussion on a study of healthcare and biotech news releases distributed by Business Wire from January to June 2020.

Onclusive separated them into two groups, Investor Relations (IR) and more general news releases. The two types of releases behave in slightly different ways and have different characteristics and purposes, so they need separate analyses.

The company looked at social media engagement and analyzed data to see how often releases were tweeted out. Onclusive then used its technology to identify how much original earned media, "PR gold," was based on releases. Onclusive also tracked how often releases were syndicated, where a media outlet simply reprinted the release.

Onclusive then sorted the data by every hour of every day and analyzed for patterns and trends.

"I think a lot of us get lost in thinking about the consumer-oriented tweet counts, but for a typical business, 50 tweets that matter from the right people will make a big difference."

DAN BELTRAMO  
CEO, Onclusive

## Trust our experts

While there is never an absolute guarantee your news or IR release will get picked up or generate earned media, the steps our experts advise can help you get the timing right, have the most credible and compelling spokespeople, prime the pump by cultivating authentic relationships, and keep proper perspectives on your "competition" and metrics. Information that can potentially save a life deserves no less.

## 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.

## About Onclusive

[Onclusive](#) is the data science company for communications. The inventors of [PR Attribution™](#) and [Power of Voice™](#), Onclusive measures the true impact that content is having on a company's bottom line. The Onclusive platform is built upon a proprietary news crawler, which analyzes millions of earned, owned, and newswire articles every day globally and in over 100 languages, organizing each piece of content based on dozens of dimensions for aggregate and entity-level analysis. The world's leading brands and agencies including Airbnb, H&R Block, Lyft, Intercontinental Hotels Group, 23andMe, and Experian use Onclusive to modernize communications.



**Ensure your story gets heard.** If you would like more information on how Business Wire can help your business, please contact us today:



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# Data Appendix

## HEALTHCARE PR RELEASES – TWEETS PER RELEASE INDEXED BY HOUR OF THE DAY

	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Index
Midnight ET	0	113	92	114	100	116	171	<b>107</b>
1:00 a.m.	0	117	232	124	96	82	88	<b>136</b>
2:00 a.m.	0	81	64	162	191	118	99	<b>129</b>
3:00 a.m.	0	102	105	209	67	121	0	<b>120</b>
4:00 a.m.	0	137	94	98	74	56	342	<b>102</b>
5:00 a.m.	0	130	255	120	125	123	36	<b>157</b>
6:00 a.m.	110	159	126	101	149	106	55	<b>133</b>
7:00 a.m.	83	86	121	95	72	81	0	<b>92</b>
8:00 a.m.	0	63	62	68	107	109	116	<b>78</b>
9:00 a.m.	77	80	53	73	47	77	113	<b>63</b>
10:00 a.m.	182	59	54	43	85	90	57	<b>64</b>
11:00 a.m.	562	181	42	42	100	68	28	<b>89</b>
Noon	74	63	51	97	60	47	207	<b>70</b>
1:00 p.m.	0	39	62	59	51	154	88	<b>67</b>
2:00 p.m.	59	119	42	74	63	112	88	<b>76</b>
3:00 p.m.	90	97	103	87	84	174	50	<b>101</b>
4:00 p.m.	72	86	88	103	88	87	80	<b>92</b>
5:00 p.m.	76	265	65	180	138	324	0	<b>186</b>
6:00 p.m.	96	539	66	84	91	68	61	<b>164</b>
7:00 p.m.	69	143	60	116	382	193	0	<b>178</b>
8:00 p.m.	48	170	118	171	77	249	0	<b>137</b>
9:00 p.m.	0	194	307	145	91	0	0	<b>179</b>
10:00 p.m.	33	73	182	77	52	39	50	<b>85</b>
11:00 p.m.	68	145	72	123	137	0	0	<b>109</b>
Index	<b>91</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>100</b>

## HEALTHCARE PR RELEASE – EARNED MEDIA ARTICLES INDEXED BY HOUR OF THE DAY

	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Index
Midnight ET	0	16	23	23	20	19	0	<b>20</b>
1:00 a.m.	0	14	9	11	20	11	65	<b>14</b>
2:00 a.m.	0	9	8	19	16	40	3	<b>16</b>
3:00 a.m.	0	7	21	24	15	22	0	<b>17</b>
4:00 a.m.	0	66	4	36	8	12	653	<b>37</b>
5:00 a.m.	0	71	176	85	262	169	3	<b>142</b>
6:00 a.m.	14	65	49	60	58	179	0	<b>69</b>
7:00 a.m.	0	42	44	126	56	23	0	<b>58</b>
8:00 a.m.	0	149	25	14	212	60	0	<b>99</b>
9:00 a.m.	6	25	21	13	146	14	3	<b>48</b>
10:00 a.m.	4	47	5	16	43	9	8	<b>24</b>
11:00 a.m.	911	16	32	61	77	102	3	<b>61</b>
Noon	3	2	55	172	8	6	358	<b>69</b>
1:00 p.m.	0	17	550	20	36	16	9	<b>124</b>
2:00 p.m.	10	89	146	14	3878	79	0	<b>1242</b>
3:00 p.m.	7	104	126	73	241	319	1	<b>155</b>
4:00 p.m.	110	60	98	40	95	24	30	<b>65</b>
5:00 p.m.	256	276	213	9	57	23	0	<b>121</b>
6:00 p.m.	173	32	61	5	102	1	0	<b>50</b>
7:00 p.m.	35	7	2	5	6	33	0	<b>13</b>
8:00 p.m.	21	101	2	5	14	167	0	<b>43</b>
9:00 p.m.	0	10	97	5	14	0	0	<b>26</b>
10:00 p.m.	0	6	5	11	1	35	12	<b>8</b>
11:00 p.m.	15	17	9	7	58	0	0	<b>25</b>
Index	<b>86</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100</b>

## HEALTHCARE INVESTOR RELATIONS RELEASE – EARNED MEDIA ARTICLES INDEXED BY HOUR OF THE DAY

	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Index
Midnight ET	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	<b>10</b>
1:00 a.m.	0	0	10	0	2	0	0	<b>4</b>
2:00 a.m.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
3:00 a.m.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
4:00 a.m.	0	19	0	0	0	122	0	<b>71</b>
5:00 a.m.	0	125	109	112	95	39	0	<b>104</b>
6:00 a.m.	0	72	149	261	120	62	0	<b>129</b>
7:00 a.m.	0	77	84	64	117	44	0	<b>88</b>
8:00 a.m.	0	47	98	1	77	21	0	<b>63</b>
9:00 a.m.	0	0	77	0	0	0	0	<b>77</b>
10:00 a.m.	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
11:00 a.m.	0	16	0	1	1	0	0	<b>5</b>
Noon	0	5	16	7	4	0	0	<b>10</b>
1:00 p.m.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
2:00 p.m.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
3:00 p.m.	0	85	107	136	120	0	0	<b>113</b>
4:00 p.m.	0	100	139	86	120	55	0	<b>110</b>
5:00 p.m.	0	16	5	0	33	0	0	<b>24</b>
6:00 p.m.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
7:00 p.m.	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	<b>4</b>
8:00 p.m.	0	38	0	0	0	0	0	<b>38</b>
9:00 p.m.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
10:00 p.m.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
11:00 p.m.	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
Index	<b>0</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>