

PRESS & PUBLICITY

Casual Market Chicago, September 12-15, 2017, attracts key editors, writers and bloggers from the casual and outdoor furnishings, home furnishings, pool and spa, hearth products, and garden industry as well as consumer and feature writers from major newspapers and magazines. It is important that exhibitors utilize these press opportunities to your advantage before, during and after Casual Market Chicago.

In an effort to provide the media with comprehensive information about Casual Market Chicago, we invite you to display your company's press kits, brochures, etc., in the Casual Market Chicago Press Room. Read this section of the manual soon, and plan any submissions in advance. Publicity efforts to promote the September Casual Market Chicago are already underway.

Public Relations Support

To provide public / media relations support to showroom personnel and temporary exhibitors, Casual Market Chicago and theMART have retained the services of Jo Chicago, seasoned PR professionals in the Design and Trade Show Industries.

A focus is being placed upon organizing showroom- / exhibitor-submitted product information and photos for media relations purposes. Jo Chicago will be writing and managing a series of press release campaigns, social media content, casual industry trends information, and other aspects to create buzz for the market and its participants.

During the Casual Market, Jo Chicago will be on site in the Press Room to assist showroom staff / exhibitors. They will help manage social media during the show, interviewing participants for Facebook, as well as circulate throughout the permanent and temporary spaces to offer tours to interested media members. You are welcome to contact Jo Chicago with any questions you might have regarding publicity and social media.

Jo Chicago Public Relations

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Before Market

The Merchandise Mart invites the media to attend Casual Market Chicago, including all special events, and to tour the various show floors to review the hundreds of products displayed during Market. We recommend you call or write to press members and inform them of your products or services prior to Casual Market. To obtain Casual Market Chicago's pre-registered press list, please e-mail Jo Chicago at info@jochicago.com **three to four weeks** before the show. Optimally, we suggest sending your information to members of the press you may have on file by the beginning of July to mid-August, depending on the publication deadline for editorial. Thus, you might want to begin your media submissions as early as this timeframe, or sooner. You are welcome to contact Jo Chicago with any questions or for advice and insights in advance.

Additionally, our PR team will be working to submit select exhibitor, showroom and product information to various media outlets on your behalf. Media members want to know more about your new products at Casual Market Chicago, and we invite you to submit new product information to support a Casual Market Chicago Trend Report. If you are introducing a new product or showing products for the first time at Casual Market Chicago 2017, please send your new product information/press release as well as images to Jo Chicago. **Please be sure to write "CASUAL MARKET CHICAGO NEW PRODUCT / YOUR COMPANY NAME" in the subject line.**

Photo Submission for Press Pitches

Do you have a high-resolution digital photo of your new product?

NOTE: Emailed photos must be formatted as JPGs and sized at 300 dpi (dots per inch), no more than 8x10 inches, and approximately 2 to 5 MBs each.

Please e-mail no more than one new product, so it is recommended to submit the product of most importance to you (of relevance to the market's attendees). If the product is part of a collection, please include a short description of the collection and how the product fits into the overall line.

At-Market

Casual Market Chicago's press room will be located on the 7th Floor | Main Show Floor in theMART throughout the course of the show, September 12-15, 2017

We recommend you send no more than **30 press kits**. Please clearly mark your company name and Showroom/Market Suite number on each item. It is important to place your location on the cover of your press kit so the media will know where to reach you. **Send all media kit materials to the address below by Friday, September 1, 2017 to:**

**2017 Casual Market Chicago
c/o PRESS KITS
MMPI
222 Merchandise Mart Plaza
The Merchandise Mart West Dock
Chicago, IL 60654
Attention: Chris Basoirka**

IMPORTANT: If an outside public relations firm is handling your media relations, kindly forward this information to them.

Note: You can also drop your press kits off in the press room during show move-in on Sunday and Monday.

Please pick up your remaining press kits by 5 p.m. on Friday, September 15. Remaining press kits will be recycled after 5 p.m. if they are not picked up.

How to Prepare a Press Kit

It is important that you present your product and/or services to the press. Some commonly asked questions about press kits include:

- ***What is a press kit?***

A press kit is an important packet conveniently assembled for the media to review. Most public relations professionals use simple tools to compile a press kit, starting with a two-pocket folder, plastic envelope, or even a paper envelope. **Though, we highly suggest jump-drive press kits in lieu of the more traditional folder format.** This makes it easier for media members to travel with your press kit.

- ***What goes into a press kit?***

A press kit usually consists of the following:

- Press release(s) written in Associated Press style to maximize media use
- An easy-to-read complete list of important new products with product names and brief descriptions
- CD with high-resolution images (JPGs, 300 dots per inch or dpi at 5 x 7 inches minimum) and descriptions
- Company brochures
- Company fact sheet/brief company history
- Related company news

- ***What is a press release?***

A press release is a brief announcement that contains newsworthy material. Explain the innovative aspects or the benefits of your product. A release is written in the style of an article (in the third person). This means that part of – or the entire – release could be used word for word in a publication. It can conclude with a paragraph about your company's background. On the first page, always include the date, the appropriate contact's name and professional title, phone number, and email address for people to call for more information. Press releases are usually one or two pages in length. Press releases are good opportunities to report on industry news relative to your product categories. When reporting trends information to the media, be sure to include information regarding where or how you uncovered the trends.

- ***Is it necessary to put our company's name and booth number on the cover of every press kit?***

Yes. If an editor or reporter picks up your kit, wants to stop by, and readily sees the booth number on the press kit, he or she saves time by not having to look up the location in the show directory.

- ***Does every photo on the Drive need to be identified?***

Yes. Again, an editor will be more inclined to work with a manufacturer who is organized and presents an array of choices. Corresponding captions should be named or numbered clearly so the task of matching photos to captions is easy for editors / writers.

- ***Should past articles be enclosed in the kit?***

If your company was written up in a major newspaper or magazine, you may wish to add a copy of the article, but it is not an essential component for your press kit. However, a company backgrounder, concise information about your company and products, is often a helpful tool to editors.

- ***Is a business card necessary in a press kit?***

No. A business card may be enclosed, but it is not necessary. But, the contact name, telephone number and e-mail address on the press release should be the person whom the press can call for more information. Be sure to include at least one contact.

We look forward to working with you to maximize your publicity opportunities!