

# A guide to announcing community software releases

## Amplifying your release message

One of the major functions of any open source project is releasing software, with the goal of reaching as many users as possible. To help these projects succeed, the message must be released in a timely fashion, to the widest relevant audience, and with the right information.

These guidelines for coordinating release announcements will ensure that your project's work does not get overlooked. Remember that these are only suggestions. Your own community practices can be adapted to existing processes and workflow.

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### General guidelines

No matter the type of software release, follow these best practices:

- Do not set a release date for a Friday or a significant holiday. The ideal release day of the week is Tuesday.
- If possible, coordinate major releases with relevant conferences and events.
- Tailor release announcements and blogs to encourage the use of software, as well as contributions to your project.
- Talk about how a project benefits the user instead of focusing on technical details.

### Release candidate (RC) and final release for major point release X.0

No less than three weeks from release date:

- Create a collaborative document (using an Etherpad or Google doc) to include highlighted features for the release announcement, press release, and blog post.

Two weeks from release date:

- Generate a changelog that includes notable changes to the release that will need to be documented and included within the main changelog file.

- Merge any relevant content from the updated changelog into the release announcement, press release, and blog post.
- Create a press release and send to your public relations (PR) team for approval.

One week from release date:

- Have social media content in place for scheduled or live distribution before, during, and after the release date.

Three days from release date:

- Get sign off on release announcement and blog from release manager and engineering lead.
- Gain PR approval on press release.

Two days from release date:

- Complete all final quality assurance (QA) tests.
- Place build on appropriate servers.

One day before release date:

- Send press release to relevant media outlets.

Day of release:

- Make code visible to the public.
- Publish release announcement, social media, and blog as scheduled.
- Post press release on newswires via PR.

## RC and final release for point release X.Y

No less than two weeks from release date:

- Create a collaborative document (using an Etherpad or Google doc) to include highlighted features for the release announcement and blog.

One week from release date:

- Have social media content in place for scheduled or live distribution before, during, and after the release date.
- Generate a changelog that includes notable changes to the release that will need to be documented and included within the main changelog file.
- Merge any relevant content from the updated changelog into the release announcement and blog.

Two days from release date:

- Get sign off on release announcement and blog from release manager and engineering lead.
- Complete all final QA tests.
- Place build on appropriate servers.

Day of release:

- Make code visible to the public.
- Publish release announcement, social media, and blog post.
- Send press announcement to relevant media outlets.

## Final release for minor point release X.Y.Z

No less than one week from release date:

- Have social media content in place for scheduled or live distribution before, during, and after the release date.
- Generate a changelog that includes notable changes to the release that will need to be documented and included within the main changelog file.
- Merge any relevant content from the updated changelog into a release announcement.

Two days from release date:

- Get sign off on release announcement and blog from release manager and engineering lead.
- Complete final QA tests.
- Place build on appropriate servers.

Day of release:

- Make release artifacts visible to the public, if they are not already. (A release can be synced to mirror ahead of the actual release announcement.)
- Publish release announcement and social media.

## After all major releases and significant point releases

- Complete post-mortem follow up to see what, if anything, could be done to improve the next release cycle.

## Create a sample press release or announcement

While distributing a release announcement seems relatively straightforward, it should be written in a certain way to get picked up by the media.

To help you get maximum impact from your release, we have provided an announcement template. Please note: This is a guide and should be modified for your project.

Some general guidelines:

- Be matter-of-fact about information shared in public statements. Avoid hyperbole (“the best project ever!!!”) and speculation (“the only project that can do this.”) Avoid the temptation to hype your project.
- Thank your hard-working community. This practice gives the community credit and emphasizes the free and open source nature of the project.
- Be clear, concise, and use facts and supportable information with citations.

## Sample release announcement

Project X, the [main purpose of project: goals, functions, governance] project, today announced the general availability of Project X x.y, a community-driven [description of project]. This latest community release includes several new features, including [list of newest features].

Developed by a global community, Project X [a detailed paragraph of what the project is, what it does, and any other pertinent information should be included here].

Notable enhancements to Project X x.y include:

- [Detailed paragraph describing a first major feature]
- [Detailed paragraph describing a second major feature]
- [Detailed paragraph describing a third major feature]

A complete list of Project X x.y features is available on the Project X community release announcement page [URL]. Project X x.y [detailed description of a two or three additional features].

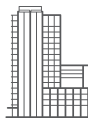
[If possible, add a quote from a prominent community member or technical lead about the new release here.]

### Additional resources

- Read more about the Project X x.y release highlights [URL].
- Get more Project X updates on Twitter [URL].
- Read more about Project X community events [URL].

### About Project X

Project X is [a very detailed description of what the project is and what it can do].



### About Red Hat

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