

Freeform editor 2.0

Exactly a year ago pr.co launched a new way to write news releases, the Freeform editor. This new editor gave our users more freedom in how to tell their stories and paved the way into a wider range of message sent through pr.co.

Growing popularity

Since the introduction of this new editor we have seen a continuously increasing share of Freeform news releases compared to the Classic type of releases; last month more than one-third of all releases sent on pr.co were Freeforms. Because of this growing popularity within our user base and the fact that Freeforms are applicable for a much wider range of messages (not only press releases) we have been working on a new generation of the Freeform editor.

Freeform editor 2.0

We built this editor from the ground up using the latest technologies and it is probably the most ambitious piece of software we've ever worked on. The editor will become the primary way to write content in pr.co, so you'll be able to write news releases, emails and more in the same way. It will be available for selected beta testers today, more people will follow soon.

Stable and durable

The main focus of the new editor has been stability and durability. To achieve this we have tried to make it look and feel a lot like a native application as much as we could, software packages like Microsoft Word have been used as inspiration. Working with a cursor through the running document might feel strange at first, but you'll notice that it feels consistent and familiar after a couple of seconds.

Update: Header block

Since we've built everything from the ground up we had the opportunity to change some choices we've made with the original Freeform editor. The Header block for instance doesn't have a Title and Subtitle field anymore, instead there is now the 'Title' block for which you can set the size (H1, H2, H3).

Update: Media block

The Media block has been renamed to 'Media gallery'. This block now behaves like a simple gallery of thumbnails of media items. If a visitor of the release clicks on one of these

thumbnails a preview lightbox will show its contents. It will no longer automatically change its grid size based on the amount of media items in the collection, we've learned that some users found this really annoying.

New: Inline media block

Because the Media block became a gallery block we have created the 'Inline media' block. You can now use this block to add inline media elements in your content, like an image or video embed. You can change the appearance of an inline media block to: 'default-width', 'text-width' and 'full-width'. It's also possible to add a caption to these media elements, for instance to provide the source.

New: Link block

With this block you can add a link to a website, it'll automatically grab all the metadata from the website to generate a nice preview block. The metadata we can grab from the website are the title, description and logo/image, but don't worry, these are all fields you can change in case of an error.

Future steps

Right now the editor will just replace our 'old' freeform editor, in time it should also replace the Classic editor and the email editor that's used in the distribution Compose window. Next to that we're looking forward to add features like auto-save, version control, templates and also custom templates so you can save projects for repetitive use-cases.

ABOUT PR.CO

Pr.co is an online platform for engaging press releases aimed at companies and PR agencies. The Amsterdam-based company launched in April, 2010 at The Next Web Conference. Pr.co has now over 10000 clients worldwide and is changing the way news is written, read and distributed.



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