Leading the Media to your Business

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Ever wonder how it seems some businesses are always in the news?

Does it seem that only the big guys can afford to get media coverage?

Feel like you don’t have any “news” to share with the media?

Media relations is one way you can help leverage the playing field when it comes to promoting your business. Whether your business is just starting out or you’ve established some brand recognition, your business can benefit from media outreach.
Advertising vs. Publicity

Advertising: paid and controlled coverage.

Publicity: non-paid but the decision about what runs in print or broadcast is done by the media.
Your Story

• Doing great work isn’t a story.
• Your story has to be about how your organization, product or event helps serve the community better (the community can be your own neighborhood or the nation as a whole).

• An editor’s job is not to drive more traffic to your Web site or get you more business. Her job is to communicate interesting and news-worthy info to her audience.
How to best reach the media

• Press Release – most used
• Tip Sheets – under-used but powerful!
• Media Alerts – for special events
• Press Kits – a folder that includes your backgrounder, fact sheet, press release, photos, and pitch
• Pitch Letters – needed to sell your story or idea to an editor or producer
• PSAs – popular among non-profits since they don’t have to be “news-worthy” and are available at no-charge to non-profits. Great for promoting special events!

• Another idea: if you can write well, consider writing articles about certain topics that establish you as an expert
You’ve prepared your release, alert or pitch…now what?

• Make sure to send your information to the right media outlet and contact

• HINT: it’s usually not the editor! For example, if you’re trying to get into Oprah’s magazine, don’t send your info to Oprah Winfrey.
my favorite fashion find: a colorful bag

It was love at first sight when Amy Smith laid eyes on her bold handbag. Here’s her story, plus 12 vivid purses to light up your life.

OUT SHOPPING with her husband two years ago, Amy Smith spotted an aqua Isabella Fiore handbag and was instantly smitten. Dropping a hint or two, the 53-year-old from Jackson, Tennessee, hoped her husband would buy it. He didn’t that day, but he did surprise Amy with it on their anniversary.

Amy embraces the bag’s striking shade, finding it revitalizing and so surprisingly versatile that the purse is always by her side: “It goes everywhere I go—running errands or to a cocktail party,” says the boutique saleswoman. Faithful, complementary, and it looks good on her arm: What woman wouldn’t fall for that?

WRITTEN BY JULEE A. WILSON
PORTRAIT BY BRIAN DOBEN
STILL LIFES BY GABRIELLA IMPERATORI-PENN

“Beauty without colour
Develop a Media Database

- Read the newspaper, magazines and blogs you think would cover your news
- Watch the television news or listen to the radio station
- Capture the media’s contact info by visiting their Web sites or looking at the mastheads
Not Covered?

There are so many reasons your information may not get covered, but most of the time it’s because:

1) You sent it to the wrong contact (don’t send a special event notice to a business reporter)
2) That media outlet recently covered something similar
3) Your information wasn’t appropriate for this outlet
4) Not enough editorial space to cover your info
Keep the Media Informed

• Send them your postcard mailings and other info you send to your customers.
• Invite them to your special events
• Develop a relationship with them – and when they are ready to cover your topic, become their “go-to” source!
A reporter is calling!

- Respond IMMEDIATELY. Not later today, not tomorrow, not next week. NOW.
- Reporters are usually on deadline and need information quickly.

Tip: magazines have lead times of about 2-3 months; newspapers from 1 day to 2 weeks; radio and television (depending on the news” and segment) anywhere from 2 weeks to hours)
You’re Covered!

• Don’t forget to send a thank you note to the reporter or producer who covered you.

• Send the coverage to your customers, friends and family!

• Don’t be surprised if other media start calling!
Goals and Next Steps

- Be consistent with your messaging and make it a point to send out releases and/or pitches to the media regularly.

- The more you do it, the easier it gets!
Questions?

Thank you!

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