



PR - A Collection Of Insights

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Promoting Relationships With the Public

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There are two ways of obtaining good PR:

PRESS RELEASES

One way is through press releases, in which you share news about events or accomplishments within your company or organisation. This form of PR gives you full control over how your company looks to the public. Your public, is anyone who has an interest of one type or another in your business such as your employees, customers, suppliers, competition and the press. How you are perceived by the public has a huge impact on the future of your business.

When issuing a press release make sure that the information provided is of interest to the readers or viewers of that particular publication. The heading of the press release should grab the readers attention and prompt them to continue reading. Make sure you are targeting publications which would be interested in your information. You wont have much success submitting a press release about christmas ornaments to a publication which targets outdoor life.

TESTIMONIALS & CASE HISTORIES

Testimonials and case histories are useful when overcoming objections, building credibility, and demonstrating customer satisfaction with your company and products. Generally, testimonials do not make up the bulk of a press release. Although it helps to add in a positive quote from a satisfied customer, make sure the comment is in direct relation to the focus of your press release.

Good PR from satisfied customers can bring you a whopping customer base, yet at the same time one shred of negative PR from an unhappy customer can cause your business considerable damage. When in a one-on-one meeting your customer should do most of the talking. Your customers are worth listening to and their feedback is valuable information! Take the time to listen to their questions and comments as it will help you to understand their needs and make sure they are satisfied with your service. If you are doing most of the talking, chances are, your customers are going to feel pressured or turned off and you run the risk of losing a sale as well as a customer.

Building a relationship with the public is an important aspect of promoting your business and building a solid customer base. Staying in touch with your customers will not only improve your customer relations, but will keep your name foremost in the minds of your customers and prospects and keep them coming back.

I hope you enjoy this ebook. Read on...

Communication & Corporate Social Responsibility

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In the past few years, the anti-corporate movement (including those opposed to globalization) has gained a bit of steam.

What many people in the movement promote now is called Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the idea that corporations should be responsible to all of society and the environment, as well as to shareholders.

It's a shame they've gained momentum. After all, without modern corporations we would all be poorer, and in particular, few of us could expect to retire comfortably. More than anything else, modern corporations exist to provide pension income.

Sure, corporations used to be owned by a few, extremely rich people. But, with the widespread adoption of pension funds and mutual funds, corporations now belong mostly to working people.

While it's true the average working person has far, far less wealth than the average billionaire, there are many, many times more working people. That means company and government pension plans can invest vast sums of money into capital stock, making working class people the largest shareholders of many corporations.

From a communication perspective, I'm interested in knowing why Corporate Social Responsibility gets such good media coverage and so much attention. I'm also interested in knowing what we, as communicators, can learn from them.

For starters, the anti-corporate movement has a simple message: "Corporations have too much money and power; working people don't have enough," or some variation on that theme. On the other hand, my defence of corporations above is anything but simple, even though I'm pretty good at capturing ideas in words. Did your eyes glaze over as you read my description?

The 'anti' movement also enjoys the luxury of making a good (poor working people) versus bad (rich corporations) argument. That's a moral argument, one that adds spice to any news story. On the other hand, the 'pro' side works largely with rational discourse and the ideas of economists.

Third, the protestors bring passion to the anti-corporate message. After all, this is a battle of good against evil, isn't it? Again, the defenders of modern corporations and globalization have to rely on the prosaic science of economists.

Fourth, the label 'Corporate Social Responsibility' also helps the anti-corporate movement. Not only does the name act as a unifying point for its advocates, but it also implies that CSR is a good thing. After all, who could be against 'social' and 'responsibility'?

Now, despite their high media profile and ubiquitous presence, the advocates of CSR have a problem. They may be able to win the attention of reporters and editors, but they haven't had much clout with the real decision makers, the people who run companies, pension plans, and mutual funds.

And, the decision makers aren't likely to be swayed. They understand the role of corporations, and they know where their responsibilities lie. Even widespread public sympathy for CSR isn't likely to have much effect, since they report to shareholders, not to society as a whole.

So, perhaps the final lesson we'll take from the anti-corporate movement today is that, sometimes, great communication can only take you so far by itself.

10 ways to identify if your public relations company is right for you

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PR plays a key function in a successful business. And for PR to be productive you will need to trust more than friendship or basic instincts in choosing an ideal PR company. Since public relations are about communication and steering the company towards realistic targets, you must consider a number of crucial and tangible issues.

Be clear that PR cannot be handled just by the firm it is a partnership between you and the PR experts. It is your inputs that will provide the PR firm with direction. You must on your side provide complete and updated information, be available to advice on or check material put together by the firm and spend time with the PR team on ideation. Only when the grounding is laid clearly will PR be successful.

1. The company must have worked for a business such as yours before or have at their fingertips the strategies they will employ to meet your PR objectives.
2. The PR firm must have updated its systems to include all the latest in media and communications.
3. The company must understand your business thoroughly and know in no uncertain terms how much strategic versus tactical support they can provide.
4. Determine whether the staff deployed for your project has both experience as well as expertise. Find out about their successes and failures.
5. Ascertain whether they can comfortably reach out to your target market and if they can quantify their value.
6. Study the proposals presented by them on your project and use your in depth knowledge of your business and the market to determine to what extent this will work.
7. A dedicated PR firm will not hesitate to disagree with you on any aspects of your plan they are not in agreement with. They know the ins and outs of their business and know what works and what does not.
8. The firm must not just have a series of meetings there should be constant interaction as well as reviews of work undertaken and subsequent results.
9. The contract must be clear and transparent with no hidden clauses. The PR firm must have a system where it clearly understands and then delineates in a contract its responsibilities.
10. Be sure to check their testimonials and credentials. Go through their case studies to determine their efficacy and do some research to find out their standing in the market.

10 ways to identify if your public relations company is right for you

The most apt definition of a PR relationship is "A successful relationship between client and public relations firm or counselor has as a fundamental: a match of capabilities and needs, a 100% agreement on objectives, constant and instant accessibility, full information sharing, interaction at all levels, regular updates as well as progress review, and a clear contractual agreement".

PR's Only True Measure

Sure, you could measure the rather narrow results achieved by tactical subsets of your public relations programme like special events, brochures, broadcast plugs or press releases. On the other hand, you as a business, non-profit or association manager might better measure the results of your strategic efforts to alter individual perception among your key outside audiences leading to changed behaviours, which then help you achieve your managerial objectives.

I mean, can we agree that managers **MUST** plan to do something positive about the behaviours of those important external audiences of theirs that most affect their operation?

And especially so when they persuade those key outside folks to their way of thinking by helping to move them to take actions that allow their department, division or subsidiary to succeed?

But it takes more than good intentions for any manager to alter individual, key-audience perception leading to changed behaviours, something of profound importance to ALL business, non-profit and association managers.

He or she needs a plan dedicated to getting every member of the public relations team working towards the same external audience behaviours which ensures that the organisation's public relations effort stays sharply focused.

The plan could be based on a foundation that looks like this: people act on their own perception of the facts before them, which leads to predictable behaviours about which something can be done. When we create, change or reinforce that opinion by reaching, persuading and moving-to-desired-action the very people whose behaviours affect the organisation the most, the public relations mission is accomplished.

Results can materialize faster than you might suspect. For example, bounces in showroom visits; new proposals for strategic alliances and joint ventures; customers making repeat purchases; prospects starting to work with them; membership applications on the rise, and capital givers or specifying sources looking their way.

Watch the real performers at work. They find out who among their key external audiences is behaving in ways that help or hinder the achievement of their objectives. Then, they list them according to how severely their behaviours affect their organisation.

Next they must determine how most members of that key outside audience perceive the organisation. If the resources to pay for what could be costly professional survey counsel aren't there, Ms. or Mr. manager and his or her PR colleagues will have to monitor those perceptions themselves. Actually, the PR folks should already be quite familiar with how to gather and assess perception and behaviour data.

Doing so means meeting with members of that outside audience and asking questions like "Are you familiar with our services or products?" "Have you ever had contact with anyone from our organization?" "Was it a satisfactory experience?". If you are that manager, you must be sensitive to negative statements, especially evasive or hesitant replies. Watch carefully for false assumptions, untruths, misconceptions, inaccuracies and potentially damaging rumours. When you find such, you will need to take steps to correct them, as they inevitably lead to negative behaviours.

Now comes the challenge of selecting the specific perception to be altered which then becomes your public relations goal. You obviously want to correct those untruths, inaccuracies, misconceptions or false assumptions.

The core reality of the whole drill is that a PR goal without a strategy to show you how to get there, is like corned beef and cabbage without the cabbage. It's just not the same. So, as you select one of three strategies (especially constructed to create perception or opinion where there may be none, or change or reinforce it) what you must do is ensure that the goal and it's strategy match each other. You wouldn't want to select change to an existing perception when current perception is just right.

Now the time has come when you must create a compelling message carefully constructed to alter your key target audiences perception, as specified by your public relations goal.

Remember that you can always combine your corrective message with another news announcement or presentation which may give it more credibility by downplaying the apparent need for such a correction.

The content of the message must be compelling and quite clear about what perception needs clarification or correction, and why. Naturally you must be truthful and your position logically explained and believable if it is to hold the attention of members of that target audience, and actually move perception in your direction.

Occasionally, folks in the PR business will allude to the communications tactics necessary to move your message to the attention of that key external audience, as beasts of burden because they must carry your persuasive new thoughts to the eyes and ears of those important outside people.

Luckily, there is a wide choice because the list of tactics is lengthy. It includes letters-to-the-editor, brochures, press releases and speeches. Or, you might choose radio and newspaper interviews, personal contacts, facility tours or customer briefings. There are scores available and the only selection requirement is that the communications tactics you choose have a record of reaching people just like the members of your key target audience.

Of course, you can always move things along by adding more communications tactics, AND by increasing their frequencies.

PR's Only True Measure

Right about now, the subject of progress reports will arise, but you will already be hard at work re-monitoring perceptions among your target audience members to test the effectiveness of your communications tactics. Using questions similar to those used during your earlier monitoring session, you'll now be on sharp alert for signs that audience perceptions are beginning to move in your general direction.

Throughout, keep your eye on the core of this approach: persuade your most important outside audiences with the greatest impacts on your organisation to your way of thinking. Then move them to take actions that help your department, division or subsidiary prevail.

Thus, instead of measuring the rather narrow results achieved by the tactical subsets of your public relations programme like special events, brochures, broadcast plugs or press releases, you will have discovered the only true measure of public relations: the results of your strategic efforts to alter individual perception among your key outside audiences leading to changed behaviours, helping you achieve your managerial objectives.

Whos the First Person to Greet Your Customer?

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The receptionist is quite often the first person to greet your customers and this can give the very first impression of what your company or business is like. A welcoming smile and a pleasant greeting is quite often all it takes. However, one does tend to hear (and experience first hand) of first impressions which are not at all acceptable.

I am fully aware that in certain situations, the receptionist or clerk, for example, has seen so many demanding and grumpy people that day, that when it's your turn in the queue, they expect you to be just the same and that you are ready to give them a hard time!

I have disarmed many clerks and bad tempered receptionists by smiling and giving them the pleasant greeting instead. This quite often works wonders! Everybody can have a bad day but it is not acceptable to give your customers a bad one too. Leave the troubles at home... you are now at work.

Here is a story I found which is very apt...

"I approached her sliding glass window and stood behind a gentleman whom I assumed she was helping. After about three minutes, I realized he was waiting for the office manager and she could have acknowledged my presence. I stepped up to the window; she did not say good morning; she did not smile; she just glared at me. I started to speak; she pointed a finger at a clip board with a paper to fill out. I placed the completed sheet in front of her, perhaps expecting a thank you or a smile or at least have a seat; the doctor will see you soon."

"I was so intrigued by her manner that I watched her interaction with the other patients. The man sitting next to me started to tell me that even though he had an appointment he had been waiting a long time. He told me he was extremely dissatisfied with the way the place was run and was starting to regret his association with this office. With a bit of humour, I told him I was watching the receptionist and asked if she had uttered a word to him. He started to laugh, and said, Come to think of it, not a word!"

"The next patient to come in was an older woman with a walker. The receptionist was not at her desk so the woman took a seat and waited for her return. She again pointed at the clip board, took the form, threw her sliding glass door closed and said nothing. The next one was the postman, who I'm sure she sees daily. Again, not a smile or a hello; she stuck out her hand for the mail and handed him the outgoing mail."

"Now my new disgruntled friend and I were sort of enjoying this and decided that maybe she was a mute. and then it happened. A good-looking delivery man came in. Lo and behold, there was a big smile and a voice that was able to say good morning! That was short lived. She treated the rest of the patients in her same rude uncaring manner, a total lack of personality."

Whos the First Person to Greet Your Customer?

"To me, the ability to positively interact with the customer, no matter what the business, is most essential. Hire your receptionist with as much thought as you would hire a sales person. Some smart person once said If today you give a stranger one of your smiles, it might be the only sunshine he sees all day."

My point exactly.

What Impression do you leave your clients?

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Impressions, as we all know, are blurry ideas in which confidences are given. Marketing materials such as business cards, posters, postcards, flyers, brochures and catalogues must satisfy the customers confidences even at the very first sight of the material.

Catalogues, for instance, must leave a lasting and positive first impression. Before they can encourage potential readers to read on, they must entice them first to come closer and take a look at them. They must have fascinating design and facade to lure the would-be receivers.

To complete the marketing formula, the company or its marketer must entrust the potential masterpieces to a master in catalogue printing. If you have hesitations and worries regarding the printing process, the colours and materials like paper and ink to be used, ask the pool of experts that surround the printing company. They will help you seek solutions to your catalogue printing dilemmas.

Catalogues are made to have easy access on your products and service. You do not have to bring them with you. With catalogues around, there is no need to present the literal product or demonstrate the services that your company is offering. All it takes is an effective modern catalogue.

In the production of catalogues, areas of concentration must be established and considered. One area is the product or service. Some product need not be included in the catalogue while some are indispensable. Choosing which are to be incorporated from which are not must be carefully done.

After selection, the next area of concentration is categorisation or grouping. There are products that can be grouped as one while there are products that need to be presented singly. Samples of these products are the feature for the month and the freshly released products. Same thing should be considered in marketing services. In this area, you have to master one thing and that is sorting.

Next to categorisation is the process of creating descriptions. Descriptions must be exact or definite. You can begin by writing the name of the product or service followed by its features. Ideal number of words range from 30 to 60 words for every product or service.

Make a good impression by selecting clear pictures and crisp texts. Be reminded that the heart of every catalogue is it's overall appearance. Thus, superior artsy taste is a marketing edge.

Public Relations Strategies For Manufacturers and Industrial Suppliers

What you are about to read here is not what you would expect to learn about marketing industrial products via public relations, or what you would normally find from other PR sources. The reason is because the majority of public relations articles you'll find online are nothing more than hidden sales pitches from PR firms that offer advice based on what's best for their agency – and not the client. You know the ones – that always end their article with an offer to purchase or learn more about their promotional services. In this article you'll get none of that.

Don't Outsource Your Public Relations

Writing and submitting press releases and stories to the media is one of the most cost effective ways to promote your industrial products. However, unless your company has deep pockets and money to throw away, writing and distributing press releases is much more cost-effective when you do it yourself. Forget traditional PR firms – they charge ridiculous fees just to write and submit your press release. You'll get much better results by using the services and tools of online companies like PR Web and PR Leap to distribute your press releases to your target media. In result you can generate some relevant and often permanent back links to your Web site. An additional benefit that can drive traffic to your site for months or even years.

Reaching A More Highly Targeted Audience

Services like PR Web are excellent for promoting your company and products to mass media. But remember, the biggest benefit comes not from the distribution of those press releases, but when editors or producers that see your press release contact you to follow-up on your story for their publication or station. That is where the most exposure will be generated.

In addition to using services like PR Web, you can and should submit your press release directly to the most relevant media sources you can find, such as trade publications that are read by your target audience. But do it yourself – don't waste your money on PR firms that claim to specialize in the trade press. All they are actually doing is snail mailing your press release to trade magazines or journals that you can easily find yourself using media directories like Gebbie Press. Besides, there are probably no more than 5 to 10 trade publications that are ideal for your press release. So don't pay some PR firm thousands of dollars to submit your press release to hundreds of magazines when only a handful may be interested in publishing it.

Writing A Good Press Release

Writing a good press release is not that difficult if you focus on what makes your story newsworthy. Just ignore the marketing hype and write about your product's features, user benefits and what makes it different (superior) than similar products in the marketplace. That is what makes a press release newsworthy and more likely to be published by the media you are targeting.

Some public relations companies will charge up to £250 or more to write a press release. You can find freelancers online or at local colleges that will do it for much less. Still, you'll always get better results by writing it yourself. After all, if you're the person responsible for public relations at your company, then you know more about your products and the benefits they offer than anyone else. So doesn't it make sense that you are the most qualified person to write a solid press release?

One of the best ways to learn how to write a powerful press release is to know everything there is to know about your product and the exact market you are targeting. Secondly, analyze the press releases your competitors are putting out on the Web. Make sure your release indicates unique benefits such as the technical edge your product has in the marketplace... since new technology is always a newsworthy topic. Lastly, make sure to include a good headline, such as one that might propose a solution, build curiosity or express some kind of benefit.

Distributing Your Press Releases

Distributing your press releases is not a matter of what delivery method you prefer, but rather which method the editor prefers. There are editors that want it sent by email, while others prefer it's delivered by fax or snail mail. If you're not sure, give them a call and find out which delivery method and format they prefer, if any. It makes a good impression and can also make a significant difference whether it gets published or not.

Whatever you do, you should never mass mail, or bulk email your press releases. I guarantee you'll be wasting serious money and a lot of time. For now on, focus on fewer but more relevant media sources. It's easier and much more productive to work with 10 to 50 solid media sources that serve your target market.

Some Final Words

If there is one tip in this article you remember and follow, make it this. The need to gain a competitive edge through public relations is greater now than in any other time in history. Due to the Internet, promoting your company and products has never been easier or faster than it is right now. The key is to remember that when it comes to public relations, people's needs will always change, so you must aim well ahead of the target to hit it.

What Are We Teaching PR Students?

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How to do brochures, throw parties, talk to reporters and write press releases? Or, are we teaching them what PRs fundamental premise says we should be teaching them?

In so many words, whether they go to work for a business, non-profit, government agency or association, students will soon discover that people act on their own perception of the facts before them, which leads to predictable behaviours about which something can be done. When we create, change or reinforce that opinion by reaching, persuading and moving-to-desired-action the very people whose behaviours affect the organisation the most, the public relations mission is usually accomplished.

Which is why, after public relations students digest THAT basic touchstone, they should be made aware that, as future managers, their core public relations mission will be to pull together the resources and action planning they need to alter individual perception leading to changed behaviors among their most important outside audiences.

But that's not all! Then PR students should learn that they will have to persuade those key folks to his or her way of thinking, then move them to take actions that allow their subsidiary, division, department, group or office to succeed.

What we want for our new crop of PR students is the knowledge that the right public relations planning really CAN alter individual perception and lead to changed behaviours among the very outside audiences who will help them succeed as managers.

Should you find yourself explaining the role of public relations, you must ask your audience to remember that their PR efforts will demand more than the use of special events, news releases and talk show tactics if they are to receive the quality public relations results they deserve.

As to the results they can expect, tell them how glad they'll be that they took your advice when capital givers or specifying sources begin to look their way; customers start to make repeat purchases; membership applications begin to rise; new proposals for strategic alliances and joint ventures start showing up; politicians and legislators begin looking at them as key members of the business, non-profit or association communities; new bounces in show room visits occur; prospects actually start to do business with them; and community leaders begin to seek them out.

Discuss with your audience why it's SO important to know how your most important outside audiences perceive your operations, products or services. Above all, be sure they really believe that perceptions almost always result in behaviours that can help or hurt their operation.

Go over with them the need for monitoring and gathering perceptions by questioning members of their most important outside audiences. Have them ask questions like these: how much do you know about our organization? Have you had prior contact with us and were you pleased with the interchange? Are you familiar with our services or products and employees? Have you experienced problems with our people or procedures?

What Are We Teaching PR Students?

They should learn that the cost of using professional survey firms to do the opinion gathering work will be considerably more than using their PR colleagues who are already in the perception business. But whether its their people or a survey firm asking the questions, the objective remains the same: identify untruths, false assumptions, unfounded rumours, inaccuracies, misconceptions and any other negative perception that might translate into hurtful behaviours.

Public relations students need to know that here they must establish a goal calling for action on the most serious problem areas they uncovered during their key audience perception monitoring. Will that goal be to straighten out a dangerous misconception? Correct a gross inaccuracy? Or, stop a potentially painful rumour before it really gets started?

An equally important lesson is this. Setting a PR goal requires an equally specific strategy that tells you how to get there. Only three strategic options are available to you when it comes to doing something about perception and opinion. Change existing perception, create perception where there may be none, or reinforce it. The wrong strategy pick will taste like mushroom gravy on your apple pie, so be sure your new strategy fits well with your new public relations goal. You certainly don't want to select change when the facts dictate a strategy of reinforcement.

Most students of public relations already know the importance of good writing. Explain to them that now is the time that good writing comes to the fore. They must prepare a persuasive message that will help move their key audience to their way of thinking. It must be a carefully-written message targeted directly at their key external audience. They must come up with really corrective language that is not merely compelling, persuasive and believable, but clear and factual if they are to shift perception/opinion towards their point of view and lead to the behaviours they have in mind.

This step many of your students will find especially interesting. They must now select the communications tactics most likely to carry their message to the attention of their target audience. There are many available. From speeches, facility tours, emails and brochures to consumer briefings, media interviews, newsletters, personal meetings and many others. But be certain that the tactics they pick are known to reach folks just like their audience members.

Another reality PR students need to know is that the credibility of any message is fragile, so how they communicate it is also a concern. Which is why they may wish to unveil their corrective message before smaller meetings and presentations rather than using higher-profile news releases.

As always, the need for a progress report should cause them to begin a second perception monitoring session with members of their external audience. Fortunately, theyll want to use many of the same questions used in the benchmark session. But now, they will be on strict alert for signs that the bad news perception is being altered in their direction.

Reassure your student audience that, should programme momentum slow, they can always speed things up by adding more communications tactics as well as increasing their frequencies.

What Are We Teaching PR Students?

Students everywhere need reassurance that they're on the right track, and future business, non-profit, government and association managers getting their first exposure to PR are no different. What they need to know about public relations are three realities.

First, as outlined above, they must marshal the resources and action planning needed to alter individual perception leading to changed behaviours among their most important outside audiences.

Second, they must help persuade those key folks to his or her way of thinking.

And third, move them to take actions that allow their division, subsidiary, department, group or office to succeed.

Press Releases

Press releases are not the best way to get major media coverage, but they can be used to increase the frequency with which your company name appears in the press.

Press releases will get you coverage in set features like business notes, and new personnel columns. They also provide a good way to let allies, employees and customers know what you are doing. For these purposes, post releases on the company website, send out by e-mail, or distribute by outsourced firms.

Here is a quick list of 32 possible reasons for you to write and distribute a news release.

1. New Products Business Start-Up
2. Partnership
3. Strategic Alliances
4. New Or Innovative Business Strategy
5. Restructuring The Company
6. Going Public/Going Private
7. Company Comeback From Adversity
8. New Employees
9. Important Executive Retiring/Resigning
10. Executives Comment On Business/Economic Trends
11. Employee Promotions
12. New Branch Offices
13. New Divisions Established
14. Headquarters Relocating
15. Research Results Announcement
16. Major Anniversary
17. Major New Client Acquisition
18. Company Revenue, Sales or Profit Growth
19. Company Name Change
20. Winning Major Awards Or Receiving National Recognition
21. Company Presenting An Award
22. Receiving Important Accreditation or Certification
23. Holding Free Seminar or Workshop
24. Employee Appointed To Civic/Government/Professional Board
25. Availability Of Guest Articles Or White Papers
26. Issuing A Position Statement On Topical Subject
27. Free Consumer Information Available
28. Company Speakers Bureau
29. Company Philanthropic Support
30. Major Company Milestone
31. New Board of Directors
32. New Website

Quite a lot of very good reasons. It doesn't have to be major news but something eye-catching and worth finding out about is the way to go.

It all depends on how you word things... perhaps you are about to take on a junior to run the printing and mailing aspects in the office, as you have a new client requiring an intensive marketing campaign... you could word your headline "Local firm increases workforce due to successful client acquisition".

Writing Killer Press Release for Massive Publicity

Online marketers are always on the lookout for promotional channels that are novel and are yet to be saturated with the unfortunate stigma of marketing abuse. Different people are constantly trying to find new ways by which they could promote their online enterprises.

One of the newer, and most effective, marketing strategies are press releases. Press releases are informative and objective pieces which are supposed to be newsworthy, and are circulated in PR wires for pickup by various news groups and editors. Once a press release is picked up, it can be published in various channels all over the Internet, or even through print publications.

Immediately, the sharp marketing mind would be able to see the grand potentials of press releases as amazing tools that would help them spread the word about their business. Imagine the promising things that await if ever a press release is picked up or print or online publication. Such would be tantamount to instantaneous exposure for your business to entirely new audiences!

However, you cannot simply write a press release the same way you would an article, or a content piece, or a sales letter. To employ the same style with press releases would be to court disaster. Your press release wont be accepted by newswires, hence, it wont have the chance to get picked up.

So how exactly should you write a press release? Lets take a look at the guidelines below.

* **Pay attention to the 5 Ws.** These are Who, What, When, Where and Why. These are the questions which your press release should focus on. If youre going to write a press release for your dog grooming business, for example, you should be able to state who you are, what your business is about, when it will, or was, launched, where it can be found and why it was established. If you are going to launch, or just launched, a new product, you would have to state who the creator is, what the product is all about, when it was or will be launched, where it can be bought, and why it was introduced to the market.

* **Be objective.** Remember, a press release should be a newsworthy item. News is never subjective. Stay away from flowery words that merely tend to hype up what you want to discuss. Stick with the facts, and **ONLY** the facts. You are writing news, not a promotional piece.

* **The ultimate aim is to promote your product, but be subtle about it.** To do this, reorient your focus. Try to make your press release informative instead of persuasive. Remember, youre not writing a sales copy. You're writing something that would announce your business or your product.

* **There are three parts to a press release:** the headline, the summary, and the body. The headline is the title of your piece. The summary is a paragraph that would serve as an introduction to your press release, or a summary of its most salient contents. The body is where you objectively discuss the 5 Ws.

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* **Length is not a factor.** Dont ever think that if you write a longer press release, it would have a better chance of getting picked up. Often, the rule is, the more concise your press release, the better its chances are of success. A 1,000 word piece is considered a little too lengthy for a press release. 300 to 700 words are succinct enough for this purpose.

Press releases can win for your business the exposure it needs. It is capable of instantaneous results for as long your press release gets picked up and published. A lot of Internet marketers have testified to the power of press releases as marketing tools. So put on your thinking cap and commence to write an objective and informative piece about your business or product, observe the guidelines we have delineated above, and ready yourself for the new audience youre most certain to garner.

Of course this section only gives you a brief guideline about writing effective press release. If you wish to learn more then I suggest you do some further research which will give you more insight about how to promote your business using the power of the press release. It's worth finding out more...

Six Tips For Perfect Email Pitches

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Your media pitches can go straight over the plate. With a little forethought, and a few tips, you can throw fewer balls and more media relations strikes.

Brevity is the soul of wit. Shakespeare could have been giving media relations tips when he penned this gem several hundred years ago. If you can't get to the point in your subject line in 10 words or less, you need to work on your message. Keep the subject line short and to the point, and include the time frame if it is important to the pitch. For instance: "Entrepreneurs Storming Council Assembly, Tuesday"

Surprise! If you have a startling or interesting fact, use it as a hook. I am developing a story idea about local home prices. My initial thought for a subject line is: "Average Edinburgh Home Listing Price Spikes To £325,000." Recently I used these subject lines to get coverage: "Interest Rates Hit Six Month Low" and "No Credit Score, No Problem".

Humour Me. Humour is not for everyone. It is best to use it only if you know the reporter has a sense of humor or appreciates quirky items. Maria Stainer, assistant managing editor of the Washington Times, was quoted recently about an email pitch that got her attention and coverage. "Teach Your Dog To Meditate" was the line that hooked her on a story about a new book on animal behavior.

Don't Get Too Attached. Don't ever attach word documents or photos files to an email pitch. Did I mention that you should not send attachments? To get past email filters and to avoid hacking off your media contacts, wait until they ask for additional information before sending photos and documents. And, if you make them mad, your next pitch may be deleted before it is ever read.

Be Cool. You're fired up to fire off that media pitch you have just written. Don't. Let it cool off a bit first. Ask for input from others before you send the pitch to the media, particularly if you are trying to use humour or be quirky. You don't want your pitch to fall flat.

Be Relevant. Friend David Edwards, a reporter at a Business Journal, has the best tip of all. "I think email pitches can be effective for all the obvious reasons: If they contain news relevant to the publication and its readers, if the pitches are concise and if the pitches are understandable," he says.

Wind up and start pitching.

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