

Are You Sending the Right Stories to the Media?

Media coverage offers a free outlet for businesses to gain publicity for their services or products.

However, the more influential the media, the harder it is to get their attention. If you want to get past the media's defense, you have to know just what it is that they are looking for.

Reporters tend to be more receptive towards certain story ideas. They are always interested in topics such as sex and relationships, saving money, school and violence, corruption, sexual harassment, health and fitness, Hollywood and celebrities, sports, money making, and travels.

Here are some examples to help you take full advantage of every opportunity presented to publicize your business:

1. Human-interest stories. Whether it's about a person or a project, the media always loves a good human interest story. One effective approach is to tell a rags-to-riches tale in your business. You can discuss how you or someone in your organization has transformed from being a regular teenager in high school unsure of her future to being the proud owner of one of the most successful restaurants in town.

2. Tie soft news with a big current event. Take recent headlines and tie it in with the services or products that your business offers. For example, if you are a women's health specialist, you can establish yourself as an expert concerning the various methods of birth control. You can comment on recent studies proving how the birth control patch has a tremendously higher risk of blood clots than the pill and proceed on to talk about the alternative protections available. You are taking a headline that has already captured the attention of the audience and is providing a helpful solution.

3. The result of a customer survey or research. The media is always interested in findings of a research or a survey. Be sure that the topics are suitable for your area of expertise and also to include controversial questions that will surely capture the media's attention.

4. A top 10 list. The simplicity of a top 10 list is fun to read and sure to attract attention. Use your area of expertise to create lists that will attract your media of choice's target audience. If you are a spa owner, you can target working women through magazines or the Life & Style section of the newspaper with lists such as 'The Top Beauty Treatments to Transform into a New, Glowing You' or '10 Quick Fixes to Rejuvenate Your Tired Body'.

5. Prove a popular belief wrong. Take a general assumption and put a controversial perspective to it. If you are trying to gain publicity for a credit card company, you can grab attention with headlines such as "If you think your credit card company will protect you against identity theft, think again!" However, do not turn this into an advertisement. Simply talk about the statistics of identity theft and the helplessness that accompanies it. Later in the article, provide the edge that the credit card company you represent has over its competitors in protecting its customers against the slightest possibility of being victimized by identity fraud.

6. Cash in for being the first. If your business is the first to have a free insurance protection plan or a 150% satisfaction guarantee policy, capitalize on it! The media will be attracted to this story because the audience will be attracted to how they can benefit.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

About the Author

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