

Ten Easy Ways to Get YOUR Company In the News!

1. Remember to appropriately publicize all new contracts, hirings, awards, etc. with local business media (Business Times, Post-Gazette and Tribune-Review). *See companion handout for details.*
2. Remember to publicize all professional organization appearance, public speeches and other events of broad public interest to the local business media and other media that might be interested. *See companion handout for details.*
3. They call it public relations because it's about RELATIONSHIPS. Get to know local business editors and the reporters who cover your industry. Meet them at events. Invite them to lunch. Offer them a background briefing on your industry. It's easy. Look them up on the publication's web site -- you'll find phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Search company names or keywords to find out who might cover your industry.
4. Look for opportunities to appear in the newspaper in news sections or columns that are hard for journalists to fill. Some examples:
 - a. Investing It, Business Times: Semi-regular column on how local business people invest their portfolio.
 - b. PBT Q&A, Business Times: Semi-regular short profile column of a local business leader.
 - c. Diversity Works, Business Times: Short profiles of local business leaders, often women and minorities, who have championed diversity initiatives.
 - d. Small Business Diary, Post-Gazette: Regular column by Don Hammonds profiling unusual small businesses in the business section.
 - e. Profile of the Week, Post-Gazette: Column with picture, in Q&A format, every Wednesday on the Dateline Pittsburgh page in the business section.
5. Write it yourself! The Business Times, Post-Gazette and Tribune-Review often run columns written by local business leaders. Columns must be topical and not promotional of your company. Contact the top business editor at each paper for more information:

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6. Read the Wall Street Journal, identify an interesting trend in your business and localize it for your company, then call one of the business editors to suggest a local version of the trend story. Example: Gift cards during the last holiday season.
7. Look for seasonal tie-ins that beg for a trend story. Examples:
 - a. If you are in a health-related business, diets are always big in the first quarter of the year. How does your business help people get healthier?
 - b. If you are in a retail business, look for opportunities to feature what you're doing for the next upcoming holiday (not just Christmas, but St. Patrick's Day, Easter, Fourth of July, Halloween, etc.). Again, it's got to be a trend story, not something that's simply promotional about your business alone.
8. Look for "man bites dog" stories. By its very definition, anything that's NOT ordinary is news. Example: It's tax season. What if you are an accountant ("tax doctor") who makes house calls? What if your business offers free back rubs for people stressed out by doing their taxes? Batteries for calculators? Erasers? Use your imagination.
9. Think people. Great stories always begin with people. Business milestones (anniversaries, birthdays, etc.) are inherently boring and won't get any coverage. Put people in there and BOOM! everything changes. A friend of mine, while in hospital PR years ago, decided to hold a birthday party for all the babies born in the maternity ward of her hospital over its 100-year history. There were special prizes for the oldest "baby" and the newest. Did the media cover it? Of course! All the way up to Good Morning America.
10. Finally, be persistent. Wayne Gretzky, once asked why he was hockey's greatest goal scorer, supposedly shrugged and said, "I don't know. All I know is 100 percent of the shots I don't take, don't go in the net." It's the same with PR. The more you try, the better the relationships you develop, the better you understand what reporters want, and the greater success you will have in "scoring" a story.

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