

The Power of Publicity: How Publicity Can Take Your Business to New Levels

No matter what type of business you're in, you can't beat the power of publicity for drawing attention to all that you have to offer. Whether you're selling luxurious cashmere sweaters, nutritional supplements or painting murals, your fine products or natural talent won't matter if your target clientele doesn't know about you. Simply put, it's your opportunity to put a friendly face on your business and acquaint your target audience with who you are and what you do.

Before we go any further, let's take a close look at what publicity actually is. It's non-paid media exposure that promotes your company in a positive light. That's right; it's when you're interviewed by phone on talk radio shows around the country, or appear as a guest on TV shows and/or get editorial coverage in newspapers and magazines.

Being on the air and in the news is undoubtedly one of the best ways to create a "buzz" about you and your business. Let me give you an example. In the early days of my career, I worked for a Beverly Hills based money manager who had about \$20 million under management. As Director of Sales and Marketing, my job was to generate leads and bring in new clients who had a minimum of \$100K to invest.

One day a reporter from The Robb Report called because they were writing a story on money managers. While talking with my boss, the reporter discovered that he lived in the 90210 zip code (this was during the height of the TV show's popularity), drove a brand new Mercedes and was married to a famous actress. When all was said and done, my boss's picture was plastered on the magazine cover and inside was a feature story detailing the great earnings he'd made for his clients.

Once the story ran, I practically became an order taker because the phones were literally ringing off the hook with investors who had \$100K and more and wanted their money managed by my boss. As you can imagine, that \$20 million under management prior to the magazine article hitting the stands, became \$50 million in an incredibly short period of time.

Now let me tell you why this phenomenon occurs. Publicity helps alleviate the apprehension some people feel when trying a new business. Publicity also helps you develop a rapport with your target audience. And there's just no better way to boost your credibility because the media has chosen to put you in the spotlight as their expert authority! Anyone can pay for an ad in The Robb Report -but not everyone is featured in a cover story – the difference is universes apart.

Let me give you some basic tips on how to attract media attention:

- The best way to gain credibility with the media is by writing a book. Short of a book, you need a booklet or at the very least a white paper. Don't be intimidated by this idea-- if you don't have time or the skill to write a book hire a ghost-writer who will capture your voice and pen the book for you.
- Pay attention to current events. Find ways to tie your expertise or business into relevant and newsworthy topics.
- Present yourself as an expert. Don't pitch yourself, though. Instead, pitch the issue then offer your insights as a knowledgeable expert.
- Write a press release focusing on a problem that your product solves. Again, don't pitch the product. Pitch the problem and the solution.
- Create photo opportunities such as a fundraising event and invite the local media.
- Write a 'tips' or 'how-to' article for the newspaper or magazine journalists who covers your industry. You're generating goodwill by 'giving away' valuable information while also establishing yourself as an expert.

I promise, once you've learned how to harness the power of publicity, your business will never be the same.

About the Author

Marsha Friedman is the CEO of Event Management Services, Inc. a leading publicity firm that has represented many well known clients such as Motown's Temptations, Teamsters Union President Jim Hoffa, Jr., National Security Advisor Robert McFarlane, Bristol Myers Squibb, Financial TV personality, Jim Rogers and Dr. Barry Sears. Website: www.emsincorporated.com