

Getting good PR for your business

Regardless of who or what it is you are trying to promote, PR is a tool that can really help a business grow.

The media is part of people's daily lives, which makes it a very useful tool for promoting and growing your business. The media (newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, internet) consists of both paid advertisements and other content that is of interest to readers, listeners and viewers. **PR** is all about tapping into the "other content" to get free publicity for your business.

A PR strategy will help your business use the media to: - inform potential customers about a brand new product or service - tell the general public or specific target markets about your business and why it's special - shape the way it's perceived in the eyes of customers and potential customers

Gaining consistent media coverage for your business can increase new enquiries and traffic to your website, attract new customers, boost sales and give you an edge over your competitors.



Public relations is about maintaining relationships between an organisation and its publics

People's views on what PR is, versus for example marketing, vary widely.

Handing out samples? Having lunch with journalists?

Advertising – paid for; PR – not paid for (as a general rule)

Advertising – low trust; PR – high trust

About generating awareness and word of mouth in support of sales.

In the broadest sense, it is anything that build relationships / communication between you and your target audiences or public.

What is PR?



Examples of some typical activities that might fall under a PR campaign, things that PR people do:

- Number one activity - Media relations – getting ongoing media coverage.
 - Government relations/lobbying – legislation that impacts your ability to do business. Pharmaceutical companies, Forestry, Agriculture, Tourism.
 - Events – e.g. jeweller Samantha Andersen in Queensland – opening of first store with African dance band and ‘models’ sporting her jewellery
 - Speaking – are there opportunities for you to speak at an industry function?
 - Community relations – e.g. property developers, real estate agents
 - Research – e.g. survey or web poll and promote the results
 - Writing – newsletter or other customer publication
 - Sponsorships: lesson is to ensure they are relevant. Example: Robin Powis – Defining Style. Sponsored business women’s groups, started a blog, uses Twitter and Facebook, BRW, ABC 736 Hobart.
 - Positioning yourself as an expert: Example: David from I Hate My PC – columns in Flying Solo, Australian Anthill, now commenting in Dynamic Business, Paul Healy – poultry farming columnist in Organic Gardener magazine and weekly segment on ABC Radio gardening program. Are you a budding columnist / expert commentator in your field? Media are increasingly desperate for content.
 - PR is about two-way communication – which is why social media is a PR tool rather than a marketing one. It is about generating discussion or conversations with your customers/potential customers.
 - And last of all, something you hope you never need – crisis communications. It’s important to have a plan for how to respond if, for example, an employee is injured or killed at your workplace, someone is poisoned at your restaurant, your top customer goes bankrupt.
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Working with the media

- Build a media list
- Understand their audience
- Be aware of deadlines
- Know what makes news
- Write a media release
- Use social media
- Build relationships
- Prepare for media interviews
- Tell a good story
- Be brave!



Be bold and brave – e.g. Ruslan Kogan, John Symonds

DIY or hire a professional?



If you decide that PR is something that could benefit your business, you then need to decide whether to DIY or outsource it to a professional.

If you know that writing and communication is not your strength at all, then of course I recommend getting professional help.

Keep in mind that you often can't outsource everything – your PR consultant will still most likely need you to act as a spokesperson for interviews, get information from you and so on.

If you really only need to reach the immediate local area and the extent of your activities will reach to the Huon News or The Mercury, I would suggest doing your own PR.

But for example if you are a business with a broader target market and a specialist audience – e.g. winery, tourism operator, educational toys, organic chocolates – then I'd recommend finding a professional PR consultant to help.

Resources

- Public Relations Institute of Australia
- PR Wire
- Google News
- www.sourcebottle.com

Find a PR consultant: PRIA or Yellow Pages, ask other businesses for recommendations or ask a journalist!

There are freelance and solo writers and PR people here in the Valley who can help e.g. here in Huonville, Merlene Abbott of Write Angles

PR Wire and other distribution services - Distribute your media release for free

Track issues and trends in your industry using Google News

Source Bottle – “call outs” from journalists looking for people to interview, products to review and many other things



Thank you

Questions?

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I hope that has sparked a couple of ideas of things that you could do or that might work for your business, helping more people to know what you do and how well you do it! If you have any questions, I'll try to help.