

ss marketing solutions

Manage Your Marketing Like a PR Pro

~ Sandy Spadaro

A good PR strategy involves spending time defining your target market and finding ways to communicate to them via the press, developing a media kit and making the contacts. While a PR strategy won't ensure an immediate increase in sales, it WILL provide you with the opportunity to increase your prospect's perception of your skill-sets and talent. In other words, if the media "paints" you as being the expert in your field, credibility is enforced and the public will believe in your expertise.

The press release is a wonderful tool to getting your achievements, accomplishments, and/or community activities noticed by the papers AND the public. You should NOT, however, EVER use press releases as attempts to promote a clearance, sale, or new product line. This type of self-serving material will be ignored and left for the janitor on the press room floor. Instead you must write, read and re-read your material to focus on what you've done for the community lately. That's it.

Once the press release has generated interest in the subject from the press, a media kit may be sent to the source. An effective media kit is comprised of a detailed biography, a headshot photo (best if placed within the biography), any recent press releases (to notify them of other worthy material about you), testimonials, a company brochure if you have one and two business cards (one to retain, one to pass along). Any more information than this is overkill and could cost you the very real chance that your recipient will call you for more if he or she wants it. The media kit needs to be printed on good paper, though fancy texture, colors and graphic gimmicks are not warranted here, and must be organized in a visually reader-friendly format; large papers in the back, brochures and cards in the front with the bio/photo being on the front right-hand side in order to capture attention first and foremost.

Making contacts can be more than just networking functions and joining trade associations. Begin by booking yourself at venues with which you can showcase your expertise by speaking on topics that you are comfortably knowledgeable in. Call the library, Chamber of Commerce

or local trade associations whose prospects you might benefit from getting in front of and share your knowledge. The media will also pick up on these stories as "Community News" items...Wallah! You're in the paper.

The gift of gab is not something everyone has. Consequently, if you can't bear the thought of speaking in public, then write down your knowledge and offer it to parties of interest; trade magazines, small local newspapers, local associations and online E-newsletters (by all means, start your own if you have enough material to distribute on a regular basis). And then put out a press release telling every other newspaper publication that you have enough credibility to be published elsewhere...competition is a trigger in the news world.

Marketing is an important skill based on both knowledge and experience. The fastest way to gain that knowledge is to find someone who knows what works and has done it successfully. Ask about his or her specific experience in generating marketing results, as well as references, or testimonials. Reasonably priced marketing materials, like books, courses, workbooks, newsletters, audio cassettes, etc. can be excellent resources that allow you to learn and apply effective marketing systems at your own pace and budget.

Sandy Spadaro continues the drive toward utilizing skills in freelance writing and public speaking for multiple professional organizations through her firm, SS Marketing Solutions in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. Given recent recognition, Spadaro has been named one of South Jersey's Top Business Women, showcased in the Fall 2006 issue of South Jersey Magazine and is 2007s VP of Programs for the South Jersey chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners. Services and events information can be found on www.ssmarketingsolutions.com.

