

# For quality PR, learn tricks of trade

Here are 30 events in life of any business that can be transformed into newsmaking opportunities.

By Al Lautenslager  
Entrepreneur.com

**Question:** I want to publicize my business, but I can't think of a topic worthy of a news release. What are some ideas, and will it really help my business?

**Answer:** It's a well-known fact that a company's visibility will increase with powerful publicity. After all, publicity aims to bring the news of your company to the world. The basic weapons you will need to do this include a media kit, a company background piece, news releases, story ideas and articles or columns about your business. The most important of all, though, is the news release.

If you are wondering what exactly should be covered in a news release, think along the lines of "newsy" and interesting topics. Examples include: your online presence; important information and tools regarding a change in management or the business components you offer; special information that can be obtained online; any proprietary product or methodology that you offer through your consulting services; the announcement of articles, events and appearances; relevant worksheets, tips and techniques; and so on.

A publicity campaign that uses news releases should begin with a master plan. The more newsworthy you make your company, the more coverage you will get. And coverage is important because it earns the kind of credibility that advertising just can't buy. When writing a news release, your goals should be uniqueness, timeliness and top-of-the-mind awareness. Once you achieve publicity and visibility, both your company profile and your client and prospect levels will rise. One successful story about your company resulting in free publicity is

advertising worth hundreds and thousands of dollars.

There is definitely a knack to writing a "newsworthy" release, even though the ultimate goals usually are awareness and promotion. Editors don't like promotion, though, so crafting a news release to appeal to an editor is key. If you provide reporters with news that appeals to their readers, you will gain instant credibility and be on your way to forming a valuable promotional relationship. This can be very powerful from a marketing point of view.

For more real-world publicity tips that cost next to nothing, check out *Guerrilla P.R.: How You Can Wage an Effective Publicity Campaign . . . Without Going Broke* by Michael Levine.

There's no guarantee that any news release will ever be published, but by taking a consistent, professional and newsworthy approach with the reputable editors of respected publications, the probability is good that you will get some coverage. News releases also are great vehicles for communicating with clients and prospects. Putting them on your Web site is an effective means of promoting to your captive markets. It also further substantiates your marketing efforts, as well as your credibility.

If you're not sure about what you should cover in a news release, consider these ideas to see if any apply to your business:

- Starting a business.
- Introducing a product.
- Celebrating an anniversary.
- Announcing a restructuring of the company.
- Offering an article series for publishing.
- Opening up branch or satellite offices.
- Receiving an award.
- Receiving an appointment.
- Participating in a philanthropic event.
- Introducing an unusual strategy/approach.
- Announcing a partnership.
- Changing the company or

product name.

■ Earning recognition of the company, product or executives by a publication.

■ Announcing that you are available to speak on particular subjects of interest.

■ Issuing a statement of position regarding a local, regional or national issue.

■ Announcing a public appearance on television, radio or in person.

■ Launching a Web site.

■ Announcing free information available.

■ Announcing that you have reached a milestone.

■ Obtaining a new, significant customer.

■ Expanding or renovating the business.

■ Establishing an unusual vendor agreement.

■ Meeting some kind of unusual challenge or rising above adversity.

■ Restructuring your business or its business model.

■ Setting up a customer advisory group.

■ Announcing the results of surveys you have conducted.

■ Announcing that an individual in your business has been named to serve in a leadership position in a community, professional or charitable organization.

■ Sponsoring a workshop or seminar.

■ Making public statements on future business trends.

■ Forming a new strategic partnership or alliance.

Of course, these are just a few ideas to get you started. Just remember this: If a news release is well-written, almost any event can be turned into news.

■ Alfred J. Lautenslager, Entrepreneur.com's PR Expert, is a principal of marketing consulting firm Marketing Now, and president and owner of The Ink Well, a commercial printing and mailing company in Wheaton, Ill. Visit [www.market-for-profits.com](http://www.market-for-profits.com), [www.1-800-inkwell.com](http://www.1-800-inkwell.com), or e-mail him at [al@market-for-profits.com](mailto:al@market-for-profits.com).