

TEN TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE PR

1 – BE CREATIVE

Get together with a group of friends and think of things which have grabbed your attention and put you in touch with a service or product. Brainstorm ideas, make a list and turn your ideas into a reality.

2 – FIGURE OUT WHO YOU WANT TO TALK TO

Take this one seriously. Don't just say, hey I'm a plumber and eventually everyone will need a plumber. Think about who usually makes the call to your business or who buys your product? Are they male or female? How old are they? Where do they spend time? At the school ground? The local park? Do they read the local newspaper?

3 – DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY

Think about what you want to say and develop three clear messages about your business then stick to them.

Test out your messages on other people, get feedback, take suggestions and be willing to see yourself as other people see you.

4 – IF YOU AREN'T A GOOD COMMUNICATOR, USE SOMEONE WHO IS

Whether you are doing an interview or writing a brochure, if you can't string two words together then don't try. This is your image and reputation at stake. Get a colleague or a family member to write your information or hire a professional.

5 – SEEK OUT GOOD IDEAS

Spend time looking at things around you – in your home, your street, in shops or in other businesses. Don't be afraid to adapt a good idea and apply it to your business.

6 – IF YOU ARE GOING TO THE MEDIA BE PREPARED.

- Make sure you have all your facts.
- Make sure your message is clear and easy to understand – only give as much detail as needed.
- Send your press release to an actual person at the media outlet, don't just address it to a 'title'. Media outlets get thousands of press releases each day. Basically, they won't care about you unless a helicopter has fallen through the roof of your building.
- Once you send your press release, be sure to follow it up. Ring the person, converse with them about your idea and ask them if that is something they would be interested in.

- If you are going to be interviewed, decide on your three key points.
- Try and be positive – complaining on talkback may give you coverage but what does it say about your business.

7 – HAVE A BUDGET, EVEN IT IS SMALL

Clever communication tools don't need to cost the earth but if you put all your PR expectations in getting an article in the newspaper, then you are likely to be disappointed.

Don't underestimate the power of small things, like the humble fridge magnet, the printed balloon, or the donation of goods or services.

Then again, don't underestimate the power of big things, like a celebrity endorsement with appearances, an unveiling at a trade show or the sponsorship of football team.

8 – DELIVER ON YOUR PROMISES

This is your reputation at stake. If you say something in your PR then it better be true and you better be able to back it up.

There is a reason why so many people use the old line – 'We stand behind our products.'

9 – REMEMBER THAT WORD OF MOUTH IS A POWERFUL TOOL

Communication goes on working without you being directly involved through word of mouth. If you do something fantastic then rest assured that a few people are going to know about it. If you do something badly then rest assured that everyone will know about it.

PR never stops – it's the proactive things you do, it your business in motion and it is still happening long after you completed the job or delivered the service. How you present yourself and your business leaves a long lasting impression with your clients. They will talk about you – the good, bad and the ugly.

10 – KEEP YOUR MOMENTUM

Once you get the momentum going don't rest on your laurels. Get yourself a modern day vision statement, not one that says 'We are committed to delivering the best in customer and quality assurance for the benefit of our customers.' Write a story which describes your business then print it out and put it in your office to remind yourself of what the business represents.

Keep thinking of how you can tell people about your product or service. Remember, this is the way you want people to perceive your business so with this in mind, develop ways to tell people, 'Here we are, ready to do business with you.'