

Get your name and message in the media

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By George Torok

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When the media talks about you – that builds credibility, image and respect. Whether you call this promotion, public relations or publicity, remember two important points; 1. It is free. Well nothing is free – you pay in time and effort. 2. We believe more what others say about you. This is doubly so when the media talks about you. Follow this five step proven process to get your name and message in the media.

1. Target the media where you want to be seen

Of the three forms of traditional media print is the best. Clients might not have seen you on TV or heard you on radio. But when you are in print you can send them a photocopy.

Be seen in the publications read by your prospects and clients. Ask your clients what they read or check the magazines in their lobby. Appearing in the national dailies may feel glamorous but does that help your business.? All publicity helps but focus your time and effort on where you get the biggest impact. That could be a community paper, association newsletter or an industry trade magazine. For example if you sell to hair dressers you should appear in "Hair Today".

2. Build a Database

Start recording contact information about editors and reporters for the publications in which you might appear. Watch for publications that might be able to use your expertise. Pick up a copy and read it. Search for articles on your industry or area of expertise. Take note of writers whose style you enjoy. If you like their style it is because you are like them or would like to be. There is a good chance that they will also like you, so start with them.

3. Make contact

First contact; shall we dance? There is no right way but some work better than others. These worked best for me; call, introduce yourself and offer an article or interview, send a note of congratulations on an article they wrote or mail a post card from an exotic location, (sign your name clearly).

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It may take a while to build rapport. The media are just like customers. They are skeptical. Be persistent and consistent to be remembered. Be patient and realize that free media exposure is a long term plan. I appeared on a TV station after two years of contact and follow-up. The director finally stated. "George, your timing is impeccable, we need someone like you." Now I ask you, "Why did it take two years for my timing to be impeccable?" If I had given up after 18 months I could have believed that it doesn't work. It does – you just never know how long it will take.

Treat the media like hot prospects. Once you've made first contact never let them forget about you. Be in contact every two to three months. Call them, send them an article you wrote, call them, send a post card, ask to meet for lunch or coffee, send a news release, call, send a note about one of their articles,

The cycle is unending – until they or you go out of business. Don't waste time. Keep your calls brief and

to the point. Sometimes call when they are not there just to leave a short message on their voice mail. They must remember you when they need you, (George your timing is impeccable). Use a computer database to help track your contacts and remind you when to make next contact.

4. You appear in print

You desire most to have them quote you as the expert or talk about your growing business. But, first they must believe you are the expert. And once they call you the expert you can quote them as having called you the expert. It is a circular argument but it works because perception is reality.

Your second choice, write an article for publication. This must be informative and not advertising. Ask the publication for guidelines – word count and style. The simplest article to write is a tips list; the five myths of your business, the seven secrets of shopping for..., the 10 tips to getting value from your... Both editors and readers like tips lists.

The third way to get your name in the media is by writing a letter to the editor. Based on your expertise you agree with a previous article, disagree, or supplement.

Whenever you appear in print send photocopies to your clients, prospects and media contacts so they begin to see you as the expert. The more publicity you get the easier it is to get more. It's like money.

5. Follow-up

After you appear in a publication send the editor or reporter a personal thank you note, then go back to step 1, do not pass go, do not collect \$200. Start all over again – and laugh at those who exclaim, "You are so lucky".

The Most Important Lesson Of The Past That Media Scholars Should Keep In Mind

By Jonathon Hardcastle

Before the emergence of television and radio, print media dominated the majority of known societies.

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However, the technological innovations that were introduced during from the 19th till the 21st Century have created a new global marketplace, transcending national borders and culture barriers. This proliferation of news and their homogenous nature is evident in almost all media mediums used and it is far more forceful and dynamic than the print press news initiators could have ever imagined. Nevertheless, although the technological changes that have occurred have increased the speed and the amount of the exchanged information, especially though the use of the Internet, it has been almost impossible for scholars to accept a universal definition of what constitutes today the news, or how this vast increase in outlets and media will influence news production, distribution, or consumption in the future.

Regardless of how well–designed and targeted a message may be, or what it may desire to transmit, it will not succeed its original purpose unless it is disseminated to the selected targets through the most appropriate medium. What is the appropriate medium? One that complements the message, one that addresses individuals consistently, and most importantly, one that delivers the message at the right time, when the target is most receptive. By selecting the most appropriate medium, the message can generate a positive reaction from the target, transform it to a prospective audience, and finally mature it to a friendly receiver.

According to media scholars, one valuable lesson from the early ages of news release has been the effective selection and combination of the appropriate media vehicles, known in contemporary marketing studies as the media mix. This process has proven to be complex, while it required careful identification of the target segment. Vested upon this fact, lies another important realization. The media environment has been changing almost cyclically in reaction to technological, economic, market, cultural, and political forces. Contemporary media scholars, if they wish to acquire an important lesson from the past communication practices, have to take under consideration that the latest forms of news gathering, have turned their current focus on entertainment and "soft news." This shift is not a recent outcome. It has happened in the past and it's based on the notion of complying with the existing consumer beliefs, the social norms that prevail, the economic models that emerge, and of course the competitive trends in the media industry.

This news quest resulted in an important shift in the contemporary journalists' work. Today, in comparison to the past, the desired audiences tend to have an active and not passive role during the news consumption process. This shift is strengthened by the fact that citizens globally are aware the news hidden purpose. News nowadays are not disseminated, as indented originally, to educate, unite and inform the societies they penetrate, but rather to entertain, mislead and hide the important essence of the messages from public attention. News has ceased to be news compared with its past definition. Media scholars, along with today's consumers, must research and understand the underlying principles of this noticeable change before attempting to alter the scenery and claim back the news' utility. It's not only another public interest topic. It's a practice that will alter consumers' present role and the future course of media practices.

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