

STOP Sending Press Releases!

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**STOP Sending Press Releases!**

**By Susan Carter**

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Whether you are in business or in the PR profession, you have been taught that the way to disseminate publishable information is by using the press (or news) release. Companies with good intentions do it, and public relations firms do it. The practice of sending press releases has been pounded into our brains and rarely questioned. But, for 99% of my clients, that's the harder - not smarter - way for small business owners to attract publicity.

Why?

By its very nature, a press release is designed for distribution to a wide range of media. It is not targeted to any particular format, media or editorial focus. Because it has to be written in very general terms, news releases do not usually fit a particular audience of reader. When reviewing a news release, an editor must search for a story angle in the text of the release that would interest readers. Most editors do not have the time or the desire to have to do this. There are plenty of other proposals in the month's "IN" basket prepared by writers who have already done this for them.

Does this mean that a news release will never generate a story? Of course not. Editors use anything and everything that fit the needs of the publication. Press releases can spark some well-deserved company feature stories. Yet, savvy business owners (like you and me!) are interested in minimizing the effort while maximizing results. A press release is low on that list.

So what should you do instead?

If you want the job done right, go directly to the source--the writers!

BUT, not just any writer. I'm talking about the writers who are already being published in the magazines you want your company to appear in.

Here's why.

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Editors of publications develop strong relationships with their recurring writers. Confidence in the writer's ability to deliver what the publication wants is established. The editor trusts the writer to pitch a good, usable story. With each published story from a specific writer, the editor relies more and more on the writer to continue to feed the publication good stuff. The writer becomes an important extension of the publication's staff.

When a writer and editor have a well-developed relationship, two things happen:

1 The editor is more likely to take notice of anything the writer sends because that editor knows the writer is very aware of the types of articles the publication uses.

2 When an editor is 'stuck' to find additional last-minute filler information for a specific topic, the writer becomes a reliable last-minute resource.

So what are the advantages to YOU for writing to the writers instead of the publications?

1. Writers who write for specific publications are paid by the publications that print their articles! Since writers are paid by the publication, it is FREE to you.

2. Writers who have already been published in specific magazines have an established relationship with its editors—editors are more receptive to people they already know, have used before, and trust. Writers who know what specific magazine editors are looking for keep an eye out for stories that can be turned into cash for them. With this kind of motivation for the writer, your less-than-perfect introductory letter won't be dismissed as quickly as it would by an editor.

3. It's obvious, but needs to be said: writers are writers. It's their business to take the information you give them and turn it into a story proposal that an editor will want to use. You don't have to worry about writing the perfect headline. That's the writer's job. It is worth money to the writer to find and enhance the aspects of your business that will be interesting to the readers of any specific magazine.

4. Published writers know exactly what the publications they write for want from a story. This often shortens the submission and acceptance cycle so that your story gets printed sooner.

### Types of Stories You Can Participate In

1. Professional profile.

Exceptional leadership qualities, or a business owner who uses a very unique management style, are of interest to many business publications. While you may prefer to seek publicity for your company, a professional profile puts a favorable spotlight on your company, too.

2. Company profile.

An aspect of the company's operation is of interest to a specific type of publication. For instance, Human Resource magazine might be interested in you if you have a unique employee benefits or

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incentive plan.

### 3. Multiple source feature story.

Feature stories often use interviews from several companies regarding one topic. For instance, Human Resource magazine may prefer to present several incentive plans used by different companies. You become one of those companies as a small part of a larger article.

### 4. Expert resource.

A magazine may cite you as an expert in a certain industry to lend credibility to its article's main point. For instance, if you are a financial analyst, a magazine covering a story about investing may want to back a statement made about how the roller-coaster stock market will affect today's Baby Boomers' financial portfolios. You would have the industry knowledge and access to research to offer an educated (and credible) opinion.

Any of the above ideas (and many more) can result in valuable publicity - and useable marketing

materials - for you. All without extensive research or learning how to craft a perfect headline.

How much easier (or cheaper!) can the quest-for-publicity get?

## **Top Secret Tool Builds Traffic**

**By Larry Johnson**

Is it possible that today's internet marketers are missing one of the best, most powerful marketing methods available to them today.

Something that is lying right under their noses and still they have overlooked it.

Something that is free, yes I said it, "free", and they have missed the opportunity to seize it and use it to its fullest.

There are many methods of promotion available on the internet and off line too. For several years I have tried just about everything, but there is one that I have not utilized fully. Along with others, I had underestimated the value and power of a press release.

Many entrepreneurs are not using the best promotion tool available, according to one expert in the field. Angie Dixon, the Press Release Diva, advises that press releases are the best marketing tool most people aren't using.

A well-written press release, distributed by the several high-quality free press release distribution services on the Net, can bring a wave of traffic, says Dixon.

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"I recently ran a press release through a free service. The release was picked up by Google Alerts. I got a subscriber every 87 minutes for 24 hours. I couldn't buy that kind of result," Dixon says.

Yet most entrepreneurs aren't using press releases at all, or aren't using them correctly. This is all about to change.

Dixon gives two reasons for this. Many people, she explains, aren't aware that press releases can be such a powerful marketing tool. Others know about press releases but do not know how to write an effective release.

Angie Dixon, the Press Release Diva, offers an interactive online course in press release writing. You will discover all of the necessary skills and tools to develop, distribute and track your press releases.

The additional traffic you will receive from the press releases will be welcome and best of all it is free.

Angie Dixon is the Press Release Diva. Learn more about Angie Dixon's online interactive course, visit:

The first session begins January 16. Course openings are

limited. Enroll now. This article may be freely reprinted as long as this resource box remains intact.



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