

This Free E-Book is brought to you by Natural-Aging.com.

100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

The PR Rainmaker Always Has a Plan B

By Rusty Cawley

The PR Rainmaker Always Has a Plan B by Rusty Cawley

PR Rainmakers know they can do everything right, and still fail to make news.

It is a fact of life. Accept it now.

All news is affected by whatever else happened that day. All news is relative.

Newspapers have only so many columns to fill. The TV news has only so many minutes to devote. Even Web sites have only so many slots to fill with news of the day.

Even on a slow news day, more copy is thrown away than is ever used. More emails are deleted than followed. More faxes are trashed than considered.

There is also a hierarchy to news, especially in the mainstream media. Breaking news will supplant soft news, such as features and analyses. News of broad interest will supplant news of specific interest; for example, a tornado that wipes out your downtown area will likely push a suburban school board meeting to the back pages, if not out of newspaper entirely.

You can arrange the most visual, most intriguing media event possible. But if City Hall is burning down at the same time as your event, then that is where the news cameras are going to go. The news demands it.

We all know what happened on Sept. 11, 2001: Two passenger jets slammed into the World Trade Center, while a third crashed into the Pentagon and a fourth was forced to the ground in a Pennsylvania field.

Just think how many important and interesting news events were chased out of the news media on Sept. 11 and during the weeks that followed - not to mention all of the soft news features and media events that were canceled.

The PR Rainmaker Always Has a Plan B

So how do PR Rainmakers handle this reality? By leaving nothing to chance.

In others words: Always have a Plan B.

Keep the time window for your media event as open as long as is reasonably possible. If you arrange for a media event to last only one hour, then you severely limit the media's ability to attend. You may force the media to choose between your event and breaking news. If you force that choice, you will lose. Keep the window open for at least three hours. If the participants (such as the CEO), balk at this idea, ask them bluntly: "How badly do you want to be in the news?" The media are in control of whether you get coverage, not you.

Choose a time that will work best for the news media. Generally, the best time for any event is between

10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. These are the times when the news media have the most resources available to cover events. These windows also give the reporters plenty of time to meet their deadlines.

Have your own video crew on standby. Almost any city will have a company that provides video services for a variety of needs. Arrange to have a crew on standby, ready to step into the situation if breaking news draws the media away. Your crewmembers can shoot video and audio of the event, just as if they were the news media. They can then edit the raw footage into what is known as a "B roll," which is a videotape of event highlights that you can provide to the local media. You must move quickly. Shoot the footage, prepare the B roll and get it to the TV stations on deadline. You cannot wait for tomorrow.

Be prepared to move to another date. When designing a media event, be sure to compare the event date with other events around the city. Avoid conflicts whenever possible. Monitor the news media as your event approaches. Have a back-up date in mind, in case other events threaten to eclipse your own. And if the newsworthiness of your event is threatened, especially by breaking news, do not hesitate to make the change.

PR Rainmakers understand and accept they are not fully in control. They know the daily news is driven by immediate events, not by advanced planning.

The only insurance policy is a sound Plan B.

Copyright 2003 by W.O. Cawley Jr.

How to Sell Your News to Reporters

By Rusty Cawley

How to Sell Your News to Reporters by Rusty Cawley

The PR Rainmaker Always Has a Plan B

If you want create a PR campaign that is effective and consistent, you must learn to market your story to the news media. You must learn to treat reporters as the customers who will either buy or reject your product: raw news.

You should apply the techniques of PR Rainmaking, which is the practice of using the news media to attract customers and clients to your enterprise.

Any effective campaign of PR Rainmaking is grounded in three fundamental ideas:

- a) The reporter is the consumer.
- b) The story is the product that must be tailored for and sold to that consumer.
- c) Reporters will buy your story for their reasons, not yours.

First, the reporter is the consumer

Today's PR specialists often forget this basic principle. The bad ones - the ones that reporters ridicule as mere "flacks" - never learn it.

To some of these folks, the reader or the viewer is their primary consumer. Others consider their client or their CEO to be the consumer of their work.

Wrong.

The PR Rainmaker knows: When it comes to getting your story into the media, you must look upon the reporter as your consumer.

Without the reporter, nothing happens. There is no story for your target audience to view or to read. There is nothing for your CEO to show his directors. There is nothing for your sales team to hand out to prospects.

Without the reporter, all you have is a story idea.

The reporter is the consumer. The reporter is the customer. And you must act accordingly.

Second, the story is the product

It is not enough that you want to sell something. Countless enterprises have lost money trying to sell a product they wanted to sell and no one wanted to buy.

No matter what you produce, you must find a market that wants to purchase your product.

The same holds true when placing your story in the news media. The PR Rainmaker knows that the story is the product. The story must be tailored for the consumer, who is the reporter. Then it must be

The PR Rainmaker Always Has a Plan B

sold to that reporter.

This is where PR flacks lose their direction. They look upon media relations as mass production. They want to build an assembly line. They want to crank out one press release after another, send out a blast fax, and read their story in the newspapers the next day.

By using these "spray and pray" techniques, a company may well generate media coverage. But that coverage is likely to be ineffective. The key messages will be distorted. The story will go to the wrong audiences. The company will receive no return on its investment other than some newspaper clippings and perhaps some videotape.

The PR Rainmaker knows: The best news stories are earned one by one.

The assembly-line approach rarely works well in media relations. Reporters do not like to buy "off the rack." Each wants a story of his own. Each demands a custom fit.

So it becomes the PR Rainmaker's job to take stock of a reporter's needs and wants. We must tailor the story to fit that reporter. Then we must take that product and sell it to the reporter. We must convince the reporter that our story solves the reporter's problems.

We must keep in mind during every step of developing the campaign: The reporter is the consumer and the story is the product.

Third, reporters buy for their reasons, not ours

It is not unusual to spend hours designing a story for a specific reporter, only to have the reporter reject the idea. This can become incredibly frustrating.

This is one reason why so many flacks resort to assembly-line, blast-fax methods. "Why should I bother?" they say. "Why not just send out a thousand press releases and hope someone somewhere picks up the story?"

But PR Rainmakers understand and accept the challenge of executing an effective campaign. They know that, when it comes to convincing a reporter to buy any particular story, failure is far more likely than success.

As with any sales prospect, a reporter is more apt to say no than yes, even when you have tailored the story especially for that reporter.

Why? Who knows?

Maybe the reporter is working on a seven-part investigative series and doesn't have time. Maybe the reporter is being moved to another news beat. Maybe the reporter is coming down with the flu. Maybe the reporter is going on vacation. Maybe the reporter is just a jerk.

Who knows? Who cares?

When the reporter says no, move on.

Don't argue. Don't rage. Don't resort to spray and pray.

Advance to the next proposal with the next reporter.

Reporters will buy for their reasons, not ours. Keep telling yourself this and you will have a much better chance of holding your temper, maintaining your sanity and placing more stories in the news media.

Copyright © 2003 by W.O. Cawley Jr.



This Free E-Book has been brought to you by Natural-Aging.com.

[100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment](#)
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!