

# Work At Home PR Made Easy

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Public relations is an important part of marketing your business, although it is often overlooked by many entrepreneurs. Public relations refers to any appearance of your company name in the press, but without you having paid for it. As you can probably guess, there is both good and bad types of public relations. Some businesses will suffer due to a story that puts a negative spin on their product or services; a huge example of this can be seen with a company like Enron. Most of us do not even know what the heck Enron was or what services it offered, or even what they did wrong, but just the generally sour tone of the reporting in the case would have turned many people right off of the business. On the other hand, good PR will have people talking about your business and choosing your services over your competition. Here are some ways you can get the word out by utilizing good PR.

## Use the Press

Sometimes reporters are starving for a story, and the prospect of a local business starting up might catch some attention from your local press. Have a look at your local newspapers and television news stations and see which ones tend to put out a lot of stories of local interest, particularly when it comes to small community-based businesses. Call up a reporter who is featured in such reports and find out if they are interested in doing a story on your business. Remember that they are doing a service for you and they both know it; be polite when you call and make sure that they are not too busy before pitching your idea.

Another way to utilize the press is through press releases. This gives the media a little bit of flexibility, in that they will be able to decide on their own if your business warrants some attention. Cover the basic ideas of your business in the release, and always try to incorporate a catchy headline. Again, work the human interest angle, as these types of stories are what local outlets are really interested in. Single mom makes living from home through small business savvy, is one way to get a second look, and you can also bring up items like a sale or the third-quarter profits.

## Use Every Opportunity

When it comes to creating PR buzz, use every opportunity that you can, especially if you know the press is going to be in attendance. Big events are always crawling with local media, so make sure that you donate to charities, do volunteer work, and host your own events. Never be shy when the media approaches you; be sure of what you want to say about your business and keep your answers short and simple.

## Be An Alchemist

Even bad opportunities can be turned to gold. There is a saying that no press is bad press. You might be thinking of the Enron example we used above, but that was just one incredibly awful story. Most businesses welcome any mention of their name, because what might appear bad to some or even most people will actually be thought of as a positive by some. I work on an online auction site where I bid on jobs for my services; this site does not really do anything for me besides hooking me up with clients. In fact, a lot of their services are downright shoddy; they charge a lot of money to bid, they take a lot of money off the top of projects I gain, and they are not really interested in mediating disputes. You would think that all of these things would add up to a bad story, but the fact is that many people whom the site is looking for- namely freelance writers- are more than willing to pay the price for the opportunity to make some cash. The story may appear negative to the general public,

but will probably end up working in favor of the business.

Even if you have a story put out there about you that is pretty negative, the press is usually fair and will allow you to tell your side. If you are not good at spinning, you might want to employ the services of a professional PR firm at this point.

Remember, there is never any guarantee that the story that you offered or did will make it on air or in print. The media has a lot of different areas to cover, and your small business might end up getting bumped. That's okay, because if you are savvy in your approach, you can be assured of many more opportunities.