

Please don't let this scenario happen to you...

By Bob Brolhorst

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I write freelance feature articles for a community newspaper and recently approached a new business in town hoping to get an interview for a feature.

Both owners turned me down because another competing newspaper was doing a similar story; they were afraid too much publicity at the same time would hinder their ability to satisfy too many customers at once.

I believe they let a golden opportunity slip by. I may not be available next time when they are ready or any number of things can change before a feature gets written.

Seek out ways to get publicity for your company. Contact your local community newspaper and let them know you have a great new product to offer, or you are opening a new branch, or one of your employees just did something great for the community.

Think of ways to entice the publication to write up your story. Come up with the angle for the reporter; help the editor do his job.

Public relations is different than advertising, and there are several vehicles you can use to promote your business through publicity.

Favorable publicity through the news media generally carries more weight than advertising.

Use press releases that sound like professionally-written news copy.

Reach customers through your own media such as newsletters or websites.

Appear on local radio or talk shows.

Stage or sponsor an event.

Never miss an opportunity to make news media contacts.

Strong public relations requires creativity and outstanding verbal and written communications. A cost-effective strategy!

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