

# How To Identify Positive Stories That Will Get You

By George McKenzie

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What's The Story?

How To Identify Positive Stories That Will Get You  
Positively Free Publicity In The Media

by George McKenzie

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Do you find yourself watching TV news sometimes and thinking, "Why did they waste my time with a story like that? Surely there was something more interesting happening they could have covered."

Or have you seen a competitor on the air talking about a new trend in your field...something you knew about MONTHS ago?

The truth is, the station ran that story you hated, and talked to your competitor (which you probably hated even more) because someone simply suggested the idea to them.

HOW to make that pitch is the subject for a whole separate article. For now, let's just look at some common opportunities to make news that are commonly overlooked by almost everybody.

\*\*\*New ideas and technologies. Remember when credit card gas pumps became available? When restaurants started offering take-out orders sent in via e-mail? Anything that makes life easier or more convenient for people makes for a good story.

For instance, in 1993, my wife and I opened the

first combination convenience store/Subway Sandwich Shop in South Texas. I called a reporter from the San Antonio Business Journal, who ran a lengthy front page story a few weeks later. It included a color picture of us standing in front of our location. Buying an equal amount of ad space would have cost about eight thousand dollars.

\*\*\*Follow-ups. Have you seen a newspaper article or a TV story about a product similar to yours? Call the reporter who did the story, and offer "another angle" or a "follow-up."

Recently the San Antonio Express News ran a story about some new software that had just hit the market. Darrin Schroeder, VP of a San Antonio based browser producer named CrystalPort, called the reporter and offered a "follow-up" about his company, which had just rolled out a similar product.

Result: front page story, with a color picture, in the business section several days later.

\*\*\*\*"Piggybacking." This simply means putting a fresh or different twist on something that's already in the news. Have you seen a story on the Today Show that reflects something that's happening in your industry? Call the station that airs the Today Show and offer a "local angle." They'll probably interview you as part of the story. You can piggyback on news items, trends, holidays, or community events--the possibilities never end.

The two most important things to remember:

1) opportunities to get free publicity from radio, TV and newspapers are EVERYWHERE. But you just have to train yourself to spot them.

2) you have to pitch the idea to the media. If they don't already know who you are, they're probably not going to come looking for you.

Remember what hockey Wayne Gretzky once said..."One hundred percent of the shots you DON'T take, DON'T go in." Take your shot with media often enough--and use the ideas above--and you'll be surprised how often you score big profits through free advertising and publicity.

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George McKenzie has almost thirty years experience in radio and TV. His work has appeared on ABC, NBC, CBS, ESPN and CNN, and he currently hosts several radio talk shows in San

Antonio, Texas.

George is the founder and CEO of The Academy Of Free Advertising, Marketing And Publicity, <http://www.get-free-publicity.com> . He invites you to subscribe to the Academy's free ezine, Get Free Publicity, at <http://www.get-free-publicity.com/subscribe.htm>

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