

"Performance-Based Publicity" Revs-up

By Power PR

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As the Demand for
"Performance-Based Publicity" Revs-up,
Will Manufacturers Leave Traditional PR in the Dust?

Guaranteed published stories, month-to-month contracts, and finely-tuned marketing strategies - the hallmarks of the new Performance-Based Publicity. One firm handling manufacturing and technology companies, Power PR, is leading the charge and clients are eating it up.

By Patrick Roberts

John Elliott seldom goes with the flow. For the past seven years, as Founder and CEO of Power PR, he has led this manufacturing and technology product publicity firm into a whole new realm of public relations, in fact a whole new category of public relations, called Performance-Based Publicity. Elliott, not your typical PR man, mild-mannered and soft-spoken, is yet the architect of one of the most significant methodological changes to affect the public relations industry in years. Namely, guaranteed published stories, month-to-month contracts, razor-sharp marketing strategies, and an unusual performance/statistics-driven account management team set-up. Their manufacturing and technology clients are loving it, getting more bang for their PR-buck than they have seen in a long time, if ever.

"Performance-Based Publicity can bring a company from non-existence into national prominence in a matter of days," says Elliott. "It can educate prospects about a complex product at a fraction of the cost of display advertising. It can establish credibility for a company and its products like no other marketing tool. Nowhere is this better exemplified than with manufacturing corporations."

In the manufacturing sectors, companies are more vertically dependent upon publications for exposure and lead generation. Performance-Based Publicity typically produces its best results in manufacturing environments. "Results like 1,000 inquiries from a single article are not uncommon," according to Elliott, when using Performance-Based Publicity. "We have had as many as 450 inquiries in one day, from one article. It is not unusual for a client to get 10 to 15 articles published in a month. We guarantee a client from 3 to 5 stories a month; with statistics like these we have no problem meeting that quota. Our manufacturing clients clearly see there are real benefits to our Performance-Based Publicity over traditional 'unsecured' PR."

Elliott points out the biggest single reason advertising doesn't work or pulls with poor results, is

because Performance-Based Publicity was not used first. "Done right, Performance-Based Publicity can increase the advertising response rate by 200% or more," says Elliott. "Performance-Based Publicity is to mass media what word-of-mouth is to one-on-one contact. Its effectiveness is based on the power of objective third party endorsement. Everyone agrees that word of mouth is powerful promotion. Our program is like having thousands of word-of-mouth messages happening at once. Because of the number of stories we get published, it makes a very efficient form of marketing compared to advertising."

In the development of Performance-Based Publicity, Power PR has basically stripped public relations activity to its bare bones and rebuilt it based on the fundamentals of sound product marketing techniques, including classical market research, competitive analysis, and strategic positioning. This allows the firm to provide an unprecedented strategic marketing capability for its manufacturing clients, and integrate this marketing strategy throughout every aspect of their PR campaigns. The result is stories with a high level of acceptance by both the client's targeted audiences and publication editors. This is the first cornerstone of Performance-Based Publicity, one that clearly differentiates it from "traditional" publicity efforts, which are typically based on little, if any, real product marketing strategy.

Second, Power PR's Performance-Based Publicity deals with editors and industry publications quite differently, communicating with and interesting them directly in the story being presented, one-on-one. This, by the way, is completely different from the traditional shotgun method, which is comparatively less effective, but used by PR firms consistently. In doing so, editors are more willing to facilitate the story into the publication's editorial format. Consequently, the stories tend to be more comprehensive and better position their manufacturing clients to their targeted audiences.

Finally, Power PR's Performance-Based Publicity mandates a very highly tuned project management team, each member of which is fully accountable for the success of the client's program. This team encompasses the hands-on marketing, media, creative and account management personnel, as well as senior-level account supervisors, who use daily production targeting and statistical management to maintain optimum production for their clients. It also ensures that clients receive continual communication on their projects, and that the team is available to their clients whenever desired. This level of project management and client accountability is relatively unheard of in the PR world, but necessary to bring about consistently successful campaign results.

With the above systems in place, the Performance-Based Publicity program can then provide and deliver upon its published article guarantee of 3 to 5 stories monthly, depending on the program. But also, it gives Power PR the confidence and leverage to offer clients a month-to-month contract, which, of course, is very appealing to any client. The point being that if the program is delivering, clients have no interest in leaving.

"Using traditional PR methods, no PR firm could offer a guarantee or a month-to-month contract and stay in business very long," says Elliott. "The only way you could do it is to provide a Performance-Based Publicity program, based on sound marketing strategy, personalized publication handling techniques, and truly accountable client management. Only that could ensure published stories, such as we have in place here."

Power PR's Performance-Based Publicity program is not for everyone, however.

First, the firm specializes only in product publicity. Second, localized or regional campaigns are not accepted. Clients must be willing to go at least national. And third, Power PR is very selective in what companies it takes on board, with only a limited number of clients accepted at any given time. Frequently, there is a waiting list.

But if you do get on Power PR's roster as a client, results are pretty much guaranteed. "Power PR can deliver to your organization an audience exposure that is more cost-effective and credible than advertising," says Steve Johnson, Marketing Director for DPI Labs, Inc., an aerospace manufacturer in La Verne, California. "They have shown a consistent ability to place within industry-specific publications high-quality, detailed articles about our products and services. The result has been our exposure into the minds of prospects and customers - hundreds, if not thousands of major decision makers."

As more and more manufacturers are exposed to Performance-Based Publicity, and become accustomed to the volume of published stories and the client-agreeable business climate, it is only a matter of time until "traditional" public relations approaches become obsolete.

For more information Power PR and their Performance-Based Publicity program contact Robert Randazzo at (310) 787-1940; Fax (310) 787-1970; 3711 Lomita Blvd., Suite 200, Torrance, CA 90505; E-mail robertor@powerpr.com; www.powerpr.com .

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