

Ten Reasons To Send A Press Release

By Ramona Creel

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You might be thinking, "Why should I send a press release to the media -- they aren't going to care about what I'm doing with my business." Well, you are dead wrong! Editors and producers earn their living by finding interesting stories -- they see you as a resource, rather than an inconvenience. As long as you let them know about a NEWSWORTHY event, they will be thrilled to hear from you. So what counts as "newsworthy"? Here are ten great reasons to send out a press release:

GRAND OPENING

If you are a new business owner, this is the perfect publicity piece for you! Let your local media outlets know who you are, what you do, where you've set up shop, and what sets you apart from the competition. Look for newspapers, magazines, and shows that highlight NEW BUSINESSES.

TRADE HOLIDAY

Send out a press release for "Professional Speakers Day" or "Get Organized Week" or "National Hotdog Month" -- whatever relates to your industry -- and include some free tips or statistics about your field. Your story will pack an even greater punch if you will schedule a public event to coincide with the holiday.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Your business gains credibility and you are seen as a concerned member of the community when you participate in civic events. Sponsor a little-league team, host a fundraiser, or participate in a volunteer project -- and extra bonus points if you can find an event that is even tangentially related to your industry (like donating clothes at a women's shelter if you run a fashion boutique or building playground equipment if you are a handyman).

SEASONAL EVENT

You can come up with a good excuse to promote most businesses just about any time during the year -- spring cleaning, tax time, back to school, winter holidays, summer vacation -- the possibilities are endless! Just be sure that you submit your press release well BEFORE the season starts so you get a jump on any potential clients.

NEW PRODUCT

Small business people are notorious for cranking out the products -- books, gadgets, tools, software, and systems. And there is no better way to boost sales than by announcing your creation to the media. Better yet, schedule a product demonstration that is open to the public (great photo opportunity!)

NEW SERVICE

Maybe you are a residential organizer who is planning to start offering business services. Perhaps you have a chain of health food stores that are expanding into a new neighborhood. Or you might have decided to change your classification from general law to "estate attorney." Let the media know if you are moving into a new market, geographic area, or specialization.

HOLIDAY OR OBSERVANCE

"Give Mom a little pampering Mother's Day!" (for a spa) or "Will you keep your New Year's resolution to get in shape?" (for a personal trainer) are attention-grabbing headlines. Many national and international holidays lend themselves quite nicely to business themes. And be sure to take advantage of gift-giving holidays to offer gift certificates or promote your products.

SPECIAL AWARD OR RECOGNITION

Have you been named local "Small Business Person Of The Year," been nominated to serve on your professional association's board, or received an award for service to a charitable organization? It's okay to blow your own horn! People love to celebrate others' success -- and be sure to include an invitation to the ceremony (another great photo op!)

BUSINESS ANNIVERSARY

Let reporters know how long you've been at it ("Local entrepreneur celebrates first year in business!") Showing that you are a long-standing member of the business community not only builds credibility, but it also shows consumers that your company is stable and dependable.

PUBLIC APPEARANCE

Do you have a product demonstration or speaking engagement scheduled in the near future? Are you planning to set up a booth at the next local business expo? Invite your media contacts to the event and encourage them to bring a camera-person with them!

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