

# How to Tap in to the Holiday Publicity Bonanza

By Bill Stoller

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Bill Stoller's Publicity Insider <http://www.PublicityInsider.com/>

Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas -  
How to Tap in to the Holiday Publicity Bonanza

by Bill Stoller Founder, PublicityInsider.com  
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If your product or service can be given as a gift, a publicity windfall awaits at the end of the year - but you need to start working in June. Each December, media outlets cover the newest, the hottest and the most unusual Holiday gifts. The reporters assigned to develop these pieces typically depend on two sources of information:

1. Phone interviews with local store owners

- and -

2. Press materials that have been sent by publicity seekers.

Let's deal with Point 1. Here's a cool trick: In early November, write a letter to stores and major websites that carry your product. Remind them that they may be hearing from journalists soon about hot gift ideas, and request that they consider mentioning your product when that happens. Point out a few reasons why your product is the newest, coolest, best or whatever. Ask the vendor to drop you an e-mail or give you a call if a story results that mentions your product.

Now, on to old-fashioned publicity. When to contact the media depends on the publication or program's lead time (how far in advance of publication or airing the material is developed). Magazines like Woman's Day have a lead time up to six months, so get materials to them now. Newspapers have a lead time as short as a week for feature material, so send materials in November. In between are wire services, medium-lead magazines, "in-flight"

magazines and others. To learn the lead time of a particular media outlet, call the editorial department. If that doesn't work, try the advertising department.

What you send should be kept simple -- a press release about your product/service, a pitch letter explaining why it's such a great gift idea, and, if applicable, a disk with color product photos. See our articles "How to Write a Great Pitch Letter" <http://www.publicityinsider.com/pitch.asp> and "How to Write a Great Press Release" <http://www.publicityinsider.com/release.asp> for more details.

As you craft the materials, think about where your product/service fits. Based on its nature, cost, rarity or usefulness, it may work with a variety of typical Christmas Gift stories such as: Great Stocking Stuffer Ideas, Gifts for Teenagers, Gifts for the Person Who Has It All, Gifts for Executives, Gifts that Relax, etc. By suggesting a category for your product, rather than simply stating "Here's a product that would make a nice holiday gift", you're making yourself stand out -- and maybe even giving the journalist an idea for a story angle that he or she wouldn't have thought about otherwise. Either way, your chances of getting coverage are greatly improved.

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About The Author:

Bill Stoller, the "Publicity Insider", has spent two decades as one of America's top publicists. Now, through his website, eZine and subscription newsletter, Free Publicity: The Newsletter for PR-Hungry Businesses <http://www.PublicityInsider.com/freepub.asp> , he's sharing -- for the very first time -- his secrets of scoring big publicity. For free articles, killer publicity tips and much, much more, visit Bill's exclusive new site: <http://www.publicityinsider.com>

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