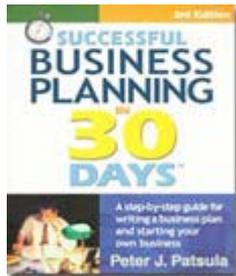


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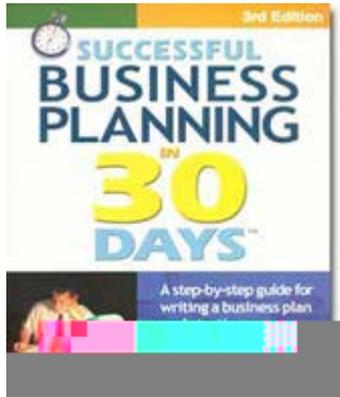


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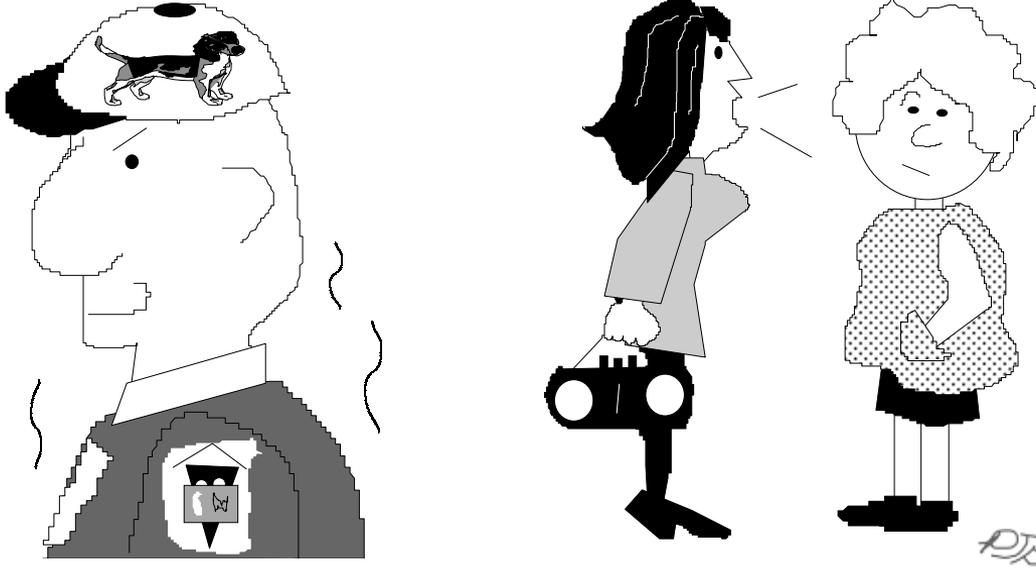
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“Harry says it builds company recognition and gets free publicity. But he's been wearing it for weeks now and quite frankly he's starting to smell!”

Smallbusinessstown.com

GETTING FREE PUBLICITY

THE concept of “publicity” or “free advertising” is a curious one. What may not cost you up front may cost you in the form of time consuming preparation, planning and distribution. For example, a news release, discussed in more detail later on in this guidebook, can get you free local, national and even international coverage.

However, you may have to send out hundreds of PR kits to magazines and newspapers, complete with photos, all of which cost money, in order to have a reasonable chance of getting that coverage.

UNDERSTANDING PUBLICITY

DANGEROUS IN the hands of an amateur and an incredible marketing tool in the hands of a seasoned professional, publicity can dramatically change the perception of your product, company or service, in some cases, overnight.

Publicity can be considered advertising, good or bad, that you don't pay for. It is more desirable than any other form of advertising because of the credibility it gives you. People attach great importance to the opinions of electronic and print mediums which supposedly are neutral, unbiased, and have nothing to gain from promoting your company. When you say your

There is really no such thing as free advertising . . . even free publicity isn't really free. It too must be patiently and skillfully nurtured.

POWERPOINT

product is great and wonderful in an obvious self-serving paid-for ad, a few people may listen.

However, if a well-respected, disk-jockey, newscaster, columnist, or journalist praises your company or product, a whole country can be suddenly caught in a massive product buying hysteria.

Drawbacks to Getting Free

Publicity – Unfortunately, free publicity has some serious drawbacks:

FIRSTLY, it's not really free. Even though you don't pay for it up front, it requires a very deliberate and sometimes costly effort on your part to get it. For example, if submitting a news release, al-

though there is no charge by the newspaper or other medium for carrying the news release or feature, there will be an internal cost for the preparation of copy and photography. To make matters worse, most newspapers, magazines, and especially broadcasting stations tend to ignore you unless you are professionally associated with a public relations firm or marketing company.

SECONDLY, to a large extent you have no control over its exact timing, content, and even whether or not it will be shown at all. Getting publicity involves understanding what magazines, newspapers and TV stations consider of interest to the public and of news value. It also involves understanding what they require in order to process your news release. If your material does

not fit the bill, it ends up in the trashcan, or worse yet, edited beyond recognition.

And **LASTLY**, it can ruin you just as easily as it can make you (it is of no great surprise that many companies spend more time and money preventing and lessening the impact of bad press rather than creating good press).

NOTE *Publiciaae-.8 o-.8r2sEFt0c Tn2rs-.8rs-*

WRITING A NEWS RELEASE

WHEN YOU wish to release information to the press, to help:

- generate positive publicity,
- inform the world of new products, and
- update everyone on important newsworthy events that you are associated with,

This information is released usually in the form of print media called a news release, press release, or media release. In certain circumstances, a video may ac-

Get attention with a powerful headline and a banner that reads “for immediate release” or something equally urgent on the cover of your news release.
SUPERTIP

company a news release targeted towards a TV broadcast station.

Types of News Releases

There are three basic kinds of news releases:

- publicity
- product
- financial

Each of these are explained in greater detail below:

Publicity Release – This type of news release covers any information occurring within an organization that might have some news value to local, regional or even national media.

Product Release – This type of news release covers information regarding a company's specific products or product lines. It is usually targeted to trade publications within individual industries. It focuses on the product itself, consumer use of the product, or a particular business or marketing angle.

Financial Release – This type of news release covers information of concern to shareholders. However, often, since this information is of interest to financial media, as well as local regional and national general media, it is thus a good idea to have a financial highlights section that these media sources can quote.

Format of a News Release

Although public relations practitioners often

incorporate the conventions of their organization into their own news releases, they do follow a standard news release format. Below are some guidelines for you to follow when writing a news release (also see **pages 35 to 38** at the end of this guidebook for samples, explanations, and a handy “News Release Worksheet”):

More and more news releases are being submitted on disk and via modem.
FUNFACT

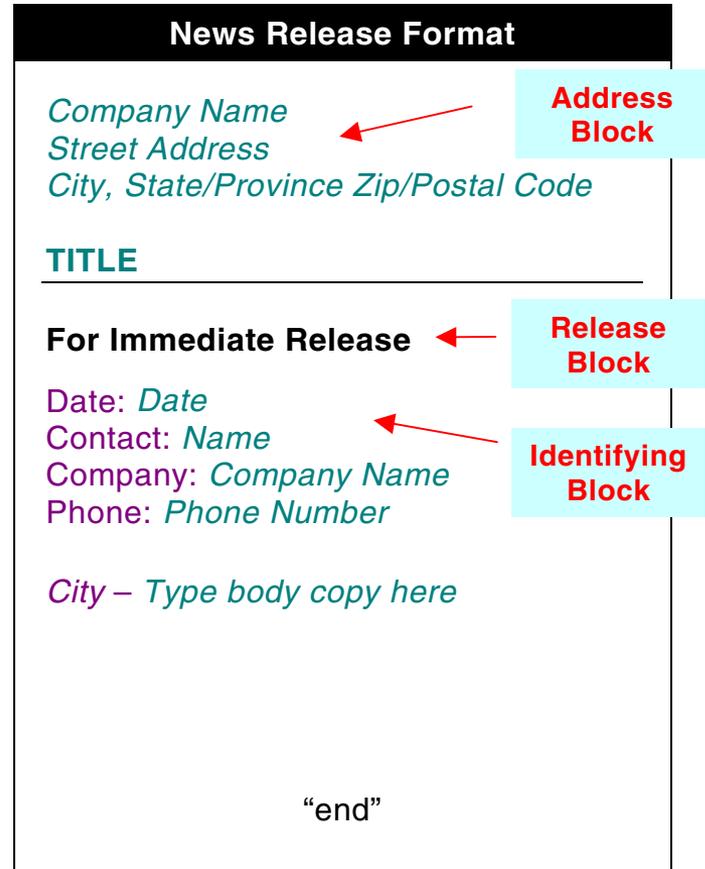
1. **Type of Paper** – News releases are usually written on plain, white bond paper with no decorative border.
2. **Margins** – Margins should be one to one and a half inches on all sides.
3. **Address Block** – The address and company name of the sender is placed in the upper left-hand corner of the first

page.

4. **Title of News Release** – If there is to be a title, and titles are entirely optional, it should come between the address block and the body of the release, flush left. Typically, the title does not extend beyond the address block by more than a few characters, which usually means that it will be stacked (broken into two lines on top of each other). The title should be in all caps, single spaced, with the last line underlined.

NOTE A subtitle below the title is also optional.

5. **“Release Date” Block** – When you submit a news release you should provide the editor with exact information concerning the appropriate timing for



the release (release dates and times). This information should appear below the title, flush right. Two possible ways of designating this include.

- *Releases with no Specific Time Frame* – By far the most common type of release. Usually designated by, “For Immediate Release.”
- *Releases with Specific Date* – An example would be, “For Release January 23 or Thereafter.”

6. **Identifying Block** – The identifying block is placed below the address block, title and release date block. It should include the date the news release was sent, name of the contact person (usually the person who wrote the release), and a

Hollywood is the only place in the world where an amicable divorce means each one gets 50 percent of the publicity.
LAUREN BACALL
Actress

telephone number. It is especially important to include a nighttime as well as a daytime number. Remember that newspapers don’t shut down at night and if an editor needs further or clarifying information and can’t reach you, the release may get dumped.

7. **Body Copy Format** – The body of the release begins about one-third of the way down the page allowing some white space for comments, or notes from the editor. The body of the news release is double-spaced - never single-space a news release. Paragraphs are usually indented with normal spacing between graphs. Often the city of origin of the news release begins the copy.

NOTE Some companies prefer no indention and triple-spacing between paragraphs, but the standard is indented.

8. Releases More than Two Pages –

If the release runs more than a page, the word “more” is placed in brackets or within dashes at the bottom of the page. Following pages are identified by a slug-line followed by several dashes and the page number at the top of the page, usually either flush left or right.

There are a million definitions of public relations. I have found it to be the craft of arranging the truth so that people will like you.

**ALAN
HARRINGTON**

9. **End of Release** – The end of the release is designated in one of several ways: use the word “end,” the number “30” either in quotation marks or within dashes, or the symbol #####.

10. **Photos** – Photos should be glossy, black and white, and 8 by 10 inches. Color is better, but expensive. To save money, take both color and black and white negatives, then mail out the black and white photos and write color photos available upon request at the end of the release.

News Release Writing Strategies

Use the following strategies to improve and refine your basic news release writing method and style:

Be believable. To be believable keep you news release as factual as possible.

Choose a newsworthy news release topic.

A good news release is newsy above all else. Editors look for material with a lively “newsy” story. Wildly enthusiastic news releases without editorial substance are disparagingly referred to as puffery by seasoned pros. And puffery invariably ends up in the wastebasket. Use the ideas listed below to help come up with a list of ideas or angles to help make your news release newsworthy:

Newsworthy News Release Topics:

- awards and honors won by your organization or its employees
- background of your company
- case histories of successful applications & installations

Wildly enthusiastic news releases without editorial substance are disparagingly referred to as puffery by seasoned pros.

- change of company name, slogan or logo
- charitable acts or other community involvement
 - controversial issues
 - expert opinion on any subject
 - joint ventures
 - major achievements, such as number of products sold, increase in sales, quarterly earnings or safety records
 - major contracts awarded to your firm
- management reorganization
- new accessories available for an old product

- new application of an old product
- new employees
- new revolutionary product
- new sales reps, distributors, agents
- new stores, branch offices, headquarters, facilities
- new version or model of an old product
- old product available in new materials, colors, or sizes
- old product with a new name or package
- opening of a new business
- original discoveries or innovations (such as patents)
- product improvement

*The only truly
bad publicity is
no publicity.
E.M.
WELLINGS*

- promotions within the firm
- special events such as a sale, party, open house, plant tour, contest, or sweepstakes
- speech or presentation given by an executive
 - the publication of new or revised sales literature brochures, catalogs, data sheets, surveys, reports, reprints, booklets
 - tips and hints (how-to advice)
 - unusual people, products or ways of business

Consider using the format, advocated by E. Joseph Cossman, to structure a news release for a new product. Joe Cossman, writer of *How I made \$1,000,000*

in Mail Order and You Can Too! believes that the content of a news release should be as follows:

- name of your product followed by a 100 or 200 word description of your product covering its best points
- a good sharp 4 by 5 glossy photo of your product
- special features of your product; price of your product including postage
- the statement “satisfaction guaranteed”
- your business name, contact name, address, Fax and phone number; a P.S.

"The Working Press of the Nation" is published by the National Research Bureau, Inc., 310 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL. It gives a complete listing of the newspapers, magazines and radio stations, as well as key personnel in all communications media.

FUNFACT

which says, “We’ll be pleased to send you a sample for your inspection”

- an optional accompanying letter stating any important information not covered in the publicity release

Don’t mention advertising possibilities. Don’t try and bribe editors. They aren’t dumb.

Don’t try and make an old product sound new. You will lose your credibility with the editors.

Incorporate facts and details into your news release.

Honestly describe your event or product as the largest, the smallest, the newest, the oldest, even the second largest, or one of

the oldest can make your story stand out. Also, describe exactly what is it that makes your news unusual. You might have to do some creative thinking to find a new angle or a little known detail, of interest to newspaper readers.

Incorporate human-interest angles into your news release.

Sometimes including a few words about someone's personal life can spark media interest. An editor might not care a great deal about a key promotion of an employee for example, but if there's something unusual about the employee (he or she was a political refugee from Cuba or the sole survivor of a major airline catastrophe 20 years ago etc.), mentioning it in your news release could be reason enough to get coverage.

Too many adjectives in a news release make it sound too much like advertising.

Keep the news release under two pages, preferably one. The best length for a news release is one or two pages.

NOTE Editors are more likely to use a news release they don't have to retype.

Limit the use of adjectives. Too many adjectives in a news release make it sound too much like advertising.

Study the format of the magazine you are sending the news release to. Before writing your news release, get an idea of the type of writing needed by the target magazine. Check their shopping or new products columns.

Use quotes to give your news release news appeal. Quotations and reaction statements can give a news release news

appeal. They also can add color to a news release as they are the only acceptable way to use subjective language and exclamations.

Without quotes in a news release, for example, you would be limited to stating, “Ms. Jackson, VP of Sandor Inc. received the Employee of the Year award.”

On the other hand, by quoting you could write, “Ms. Jackson accepted the Employee of the Year award saying, “This is the most important thing that’s happened to me since my daughter was born! I’m very proud to be associated with such a fine company!”

Write your news release like a news story. The basic style of the news release is that of the straight news story: it begins with a lead, expands with a summary lead,

Write your news release like a news story.

and then proceed to present newsworthy information in decreasing order of importance.

- *Lead Statement* – The lead is like a headline. Put your most newsworthy information here.
- *Summary Lead* – A good summary lead, follows the lead statement. It answers the key questions – who, what, when, where, why and how. Your summary lead contains supplementary newsworthy facts and information.
- *Newsworthy Content* – When writing your news release, concentrate on the new and unique (hence newsworthy) aspects of your product or service. This is what editors want.

Write your news release using normal inverted pyramid style of decreasing order of importance. Product releases normally proceed from a general statement concerning the product (often an announcement that the product is on the market) to specific information about the product's attributes, characteristics and applications. The end of the release is usually reserved for company background – full name, relationship to parent or subsidiary companies, and branch locations or the location at which the specific product is made.

Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some hire public relations officers.
DANIEL J. BOORSTIN

NOTE This inverted pyramid style allows an editor to perform his or her job – that is, edit – from the bottom up.

Avoid the following news release writing sins. News Releases can be rejected for many reasons. Some of the more common ones are listed below:

- *Content is of no interest to the medium's audience* – Make sure that your product will actually be of interest to the readers of the chosen magazine. For example, an editor of a motor-cross magazine is unlikely to promote a new anti aging skin cream.
- *Content of your news release is ho-hum* – Although news releases should be written almost like straight news stories, and therefore must be informative, they don't have to be boring.
- *Content of your news release just isn't*

good enough – You must be a persuasive writer in order to persuade an editor to advertise your product for free. Free press is difficult to get.

- *Presentation is mediocre* – As far as the editors are concerned, your offer just isn't good or unique enough to warrant special attention.
- *Story format does not follow the magazine's or newspaper's editorial requirements* – Make sure you contact the magazine or local newspaper if they have specific news release formats. For example, a magazine might limit the length of the news release to 100 words. If you send them a 3-page essay, they will likely toss it into the trash.

If your story was already presented in a different medium, editors won't want it.

- *Story is already printed* – If the story was already presented in a different medium, editors won't want it.
- *Story is fake* – Most editors can smell puffery a mile away and have no patience for it.
- *Story is too controversial* – If your news release is too controversial, it will likely be overlooked. Editors typically have a wide enough choice to choose from that they can't be bothered rocking the boat.
- *Story reads too much like advertising* – Don't "pitch" the product or service. Product publicity has little or nothing to do with advertising. You must be able to construct informative passages concerning a given product

without actually “pitching” the product. The minute an editor detects a sales pitch, the release gets pitched. Once, again stick to the facts.

NOTE Sometimes editors are wary of public relations personnel and prefer getting it from the source.

News Release Promotion Tips

Use the following strategies to improve and refine a news release publicity campaign:

Always have a good photo.

Thousands of words have never made the printed page because there wasn't a decent picture to accompany them. Photography is the weakest link in the PR chain. Employ the best commercial

photographer available. If you have the time and money, try and get at least three or four different ideas from different photographers, then take the best from each.

Once you have a good photograph, send that photograph to a company specializing in quantity photographs.

NOTE E. Joseph Cossman recommends in his book, *How I Made \$1,000,000 in Mail Order and You can Too*, instead of the larger 8" x 10" print, use the 4" x 5" for two reasons: no special envelope or stuffer is required, for they fit into a standard business letter, and mail weight is less than one ounce; second reason, the 4" x 5" is cheaper.

If you have the time and money, try and get at least three or four different ideas from different photographers, then take the best from each.

Contact your local press for special feature stories about your products or business. If you've got nothing to hide, it doesn't hurt to ask.

Don't ask for tear sheets. Tear sheets are copies of the page on which the ad runs. Editors are too busy to bother mailing you a copy. Buy the magazine yourself.

Get to know the editors of your target publications. Learn their first names, their deadlines, and in particular, the editorial problems they face regularly.

Include a free sample of your product. If possible, give your editors a chance to try your product. They want to know if what you say is true.

If possible, give your editors a chance to try your product. They want to know if what you say is true.

Include a letter to the editor for special circumstance. Generally, you won't need a cover letter for a release press. Editors are use to receiving news releases without one. However, if you want to add something important, that would not be appropriate in your news release, you may decide to use one.

Know what to expect after your news release has been printed.

If you're news release is promoting a product you are selling, expect some or all of the following things to happen:

- *You will get some orders* – In most cases you will get some direct orders from consumers. Some orders may request COD shipment.
- *You will get some inquiries* – If the

release was published in a trade journal you may receive inquiries from dealers and jobbers.

- *You might get a call from a sales representative* – These people might like to buy your product or represent your product.

Send your news release to all the magazines and newspapers you advertise regularly in. When advertising is placed on a regular basis, an attempt at some point or another, should be made to try and get some free publicity from that medium. With trade magazines and small-town newspapers this kind of quid pro quo is understood and always rendered – you scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours. With larger media, it is more difficult

PR cannot overcome things that shouldn't have been done.

HAROLD BURSON
CEO, Burson-Marsteller
Public Relations

because of the historic division between the editorial and the advertising departments – but not impossible.

Send your news release to all magazines, if you can afford it. According to Joseph Cossman, the following is an important little-known fact regarding a news release: “Ask any agency in the country where you should send your news release, and it will tell you to send it only to those magazines who maybe interested in your particular product. This advice is wrong. Use the shotgun approach not a rifle approach. If you can afford it send it to every magazine listed in Standard Rate & Data.”

Send thank you notes. Be sure to send a thank-you note for an editor that pub-

lishes your item. It is also a good idea to key the news release so you know how well it draws. Then you can let the editor know he picked a winner if your item is successful.

Use every promotion or addition of personnel as an opportunity for free publicity.

Business expansion, remodeling, automation or changes in product name also deserve a publicity program or news release sent to various media.

Be sure to send a thank-you note for an editor that publishes your item.



PUTTING TOGETHER A MEDIA KIT

THE MEDIA or press kit contains a news release along with various other kinds of promotional materials, ranging from records and T-shirts to books, photos, and a fact sheet that has become known within the industry as a “publicity backgrounder.” Media kits are often prepared to woo high profile individuals and organizations with media connections.

Media kits are often prepared to woo high profile individuals and organizations with media connections.

Contents of a Media Kit

Described and listed below are some of the key materials and items found in a media kit:

- annual reports
- backgrounder, or in the very least, a fact sheet
- basic facts sheet outlining the participants at the press conference
- biography (or biographies) and accompanying photos of key personnel in your company
- brochures of the product and its uses
- clipsheet of illustrations and company logos and illustrations that can be used by the advertising medium
- color photos of other products made from the manufactured material (with captions)
- color photos of product (with captions)

- company magazines or newsletter
- cover letter explaining what the kit is about
- cover letter for TV stations
- feature story or sidebar, if appropriate to the subject matter
- hard copy of the product presentation speeches
- in-house magazine article tear sheets on the product
- magazine ad folder with sample return order card
- news release describing another application of the material
- news release on new materials being developed
- news release on the product's content (the material used to manufacture the product)
- radio and TV scripts
- storyboard for TV spot
 - table of contents or list of what is in the kit

Publicity back-grounders, also known as back-grounders, are in-depth information pieces.

What Exactly is a Publicity Backgrounder?

Of special importance to a media kit is the publicity backgrounder. Publicity backgrounders, also known as *backgrounders*, are in-depth information pieces. They provide detailed product or company information for any public medium wishing it, such as reporters, ad copywriters, speechwriters and editors. Backgrounders frequently accompany news re-

leases in press kits. They usually supply enough information so that the media can fill in any gaps left by the release. Often they save you from getting called in the middle of the night to verify a fact or feature of your product.

How to Write a Publicity Backgrounder

Use the following strategies to improve and refine the writing and content of your publicity backrounders:

Begin your backgrounder with a concise opening statement. This statement should address the content of the accompanying news release. Try to make it as interesting as possible. This opening statement should lead logically into the next section.

Begin your backgrounder with a concise opening statement.

Follow your opening with an historical overview of the issue. You can trace its evolution – how it came to be – and the major events leading up to it.

NOTE It is permissible here to use outside information.

Work your way to the present.

Explain the issue you opened with and its significance. Discuss present implications of your product or service. Be factual. Also, point the direction for future applications.

Use subheads where appropriate. Subheads negate the need for elaborate transitions and allow you to order your information logically.

NOTE Backgrounders should not be more than four to five pages in length.

Don't preach. A backgrounder should never be used to preach company policy or philosophy. That is reserved for controlled media, such as ads, and editorials.



*Backgrounders
should not be
more than four
to five pages in
length.*

OTHER WAYS TO GET “FREE” ADVERTISING

THE FOLLOWING list of free advertising mediums (at least there's no upfront charge) is given to help entrepreneurs just starting out, and who have more time than money. In any situation, incorporating them into your overall advertising plan will likely improve your cash flow position.

Bulletin Boards

Free bulletin boards can generally be found anywhere people congregate or have to sit down and wait. More specifically, they can be found at:

- beauty saloons

Every community has no- or low-cost advertising opportunities, such as placing business cards on bulletin boards, speaking before various community groups, or using special events to get publicity.

POWERPOINT

- bookstores
- bus stations
- community centers
 - health club and fitness centers
 - hospitals
 - laundromats
 - medical clinics
 - plane stations
 - service centers
 - staff rooms of almost all businesses
- universities

Before posting your bulletin, heck to see if you need to have your message pre-authorized. Usually, there will be a mes-

sage on the bulletin boards outlining the procedures for doing so.

NOTE Many bulletin boards specialize in displaying business cards only.

Car Windshields

Car windshield wipers make excellent holders for small flyers. However, keep in mind that this sort of advertising can easily be perceived as a nuisance. Thus, keep your message short. So short in fact, that as the recipient yanks it out from under their wiper and begins to crumble it up into a tiny ball, they are suddenly hooked with something interesting and stop to read it (maybe it looks like a parking ticket).

Although, it's debatable which is better –

Free classified sections can be found in small neighborhood magazines, trade journals, bargain finder journals and even newsletters.

to have the message facing the inside or outside of the car – if you can afford it, have it printed on both sides.

NOTE This kind of advertising works better if the promotion is related to where the people parked. For example, restaurant owners or lounges may hourly go through nearby parking lots and put special 2 for 1 coupons on cars.

Donating Services

Donating your services to an industry function is a great way to call attention to yourself and your company, especially if you're in public relations, graphic design, event planning, or advertising. Be visible in your industry. Make sure you're mentioned a lot.

Free Classified Sections

Free classified sections can be found in small neighborhood magazines, trade journals, bargain finder journals and even newsletters that are using them to promote readership. They are good starting points for generating leads and even sales. Keep your eyes open for new magazines. Sometimes, they will begin free classified sections in order to build a list, and then later charge money, once their section is large enough and has a recognized drawing power.

NOTE In order to get classified free services, you may have to word your ads differently than you would like.

Free Mailing Lists

Free mailing lists can be found in direc-

ories available at your local library.

Free Seminars

By offering free seminars your company can provide information to potential clients who later may show their appreciation by becoming your customer. Conducting a free seminar can also give you access to new potential clients.

By offering free seminars your company can provide information to potential clients who later may show their appreciation by becoming your customer.

Guest Speaking

Guest speaking at a community functions can be good PR for your company. However, keep in mind you have to have something interesting and relevant to say to them. Plus, it helps to be charismatic.

Industry Directories

Businesses are frequently solicited for information to be used in industry directories or professional pages. Although it's a good idea to be listed in such mediums, don't give out too many details about your clients or billings. Leave things as open as possible – give them your name, address, and phone number.

NOTE Keep in mind that if your name gets listed alongside larger companies with a good reputation, this will help give your own company more credibility.

Interview Talk Shows

If you have something interesting to say, and something novel to sell, there's bound to be a talk show around somewhere that

might be interested. Write and send everyone of them a letter. Send them a news release and maybe a video. It can't hurt.

In general, interview shows and talk shows can provide you with an excellent opportunity to promote your company or product. However, they can also prove to be a P/R nightmare. To prevent this, prepare yourself following this rule:

For every one minute of interview do one hour of preparation.

For example, prepare a list of sample questions to keep your host on topic. If you fear your host might think you're trying to control the show, bring along the answers instead of the questions, or rather the facts. Also, select the right clothing. This usually means

An after-dinner speech should be like a day's dress: long enough to cover the subject and short enough to be interesting.
ANON

wearing subdued conservative clothing. Have a conversation, don't lecture. Also, be prepared to be distracted. The studio will be full of moving cameras and people talking into their headphones.

Letters of Praise

It is good public relations to write upbeat response letters to those who help promote your business by either giving you referrals or free advertising in their own promotional material. Write the letter promptly after you have learned of any of their activities that have benefited your business. Don't get flowery. Use hard facts and/or numbers to support your praise. Speak on behalf of the others you work with. And don't write with an ulterior

In per inquiry deals you agree to pay a publication, TV or radio station a fixed percentage of the price of the product you are selling for each order you receive, instead of a regular advertising rate.

motive. Above all, sound sincere.

Per-inquiry Deals

In per inquiry deals you agree to pay a publication, TV or radio station a fixed percentage of the price of the product you are selling for each order you receive, instead of a regular advertising rate. The media profits from commissions rather than service rates. In other words, you pay no upfront advertising charges, other than perhaps a small fee before you get started. Start by sending an inquiry letter to your local TV and radio stations. A few TV stations that have offered per-inquiry deals in the past are listed below:

- KAJL-TV Fresno, Calif. WTAF-TV Madison, Indiana

- WUH-TV Milwaukee, Wis WABG-TV Greenwood, Miss.
- WSEE-TV Erie, Pa. WKAB-TV Montgomery, Ala.
- WJZB-TV Worcester, Mass KSTV Fort Dodge, Iowa
- WAKR-TV Akron, Ohio KRSD-TV Rapid City, So. Dakota
- KXGN-TV Glendive, Mont WCCB-TV Charlotte, N.C.

NOTE PI marketing is great. However, you will likely not be able to get enough of it. Stations that sell PI ads, usually do so only when they're having a difficulty moving their airtime inventory. Furthermore, only the weakest stations generally make PI deals. With a PI campaign, you also have no idea when your

spots are going to run.

Personal Selling

Personal selling can take place at parties, social gatherings, and practically anywhere people congregate. It can include holding seminars, being a guest lecturer, or standing on a street corner wearing an animal outfit. Personal selling can be one of the cheapest and strongest mediums of promotion. However, you can easily lose many of your friends and become the most boring person in the world if all you do is sell your company non-stop wherever you are.

PI marketing is great. However, you will likely not be able to get enough of it.

Posters

Posters can be pasted up around construction sights and bulletin boards down-

town, telephone poles, bus stops and anywhere where they are likely to catch pedestrian traffic. However, make sure you check with your city for any applicable fees or restrictions.

Promotional Goods

Design T-shirts, hats, pens, and buttons with your company logo and slogans on them, and then sell them at cost or even for a little profit. People then walk around displaying your advertising for free.

Street Seminars & Demos

Who says you can't set up a street stand anywhere you like. Religious zealots do it, why can't you.

NOTE Check city restrictions before you do

anything too radical.

Swapping Customers Lists

Offer to swap your customer list with those of another manufacturer, wholesaler or retailer.

Video News Releases

If you have the resources, send a video news release to your local and national news sources. If you need help doing this, *Medialink*, a New York-based company who developed the nation's first dedicated video newswire, has become a leading distributor of VNRs. *Medialink* wires to over 600 television newsrooms around the country.

Word of mouth advertising is not only the least expensive but also one of the most effective types of promotion.
SUPERTIP

Walking Billboards

Put a sign on the back of your kid and have them walk around a busy street a few times. Treat them to Dairy Queen.

Word of Mouth Referrals

Word of mouth referrals constitute one of the most effective means of gaining new business. In fact, if you sell an exceptionally good product or provide an exceptionally good service, or if people in your business community speak highly of you and your work, and pass the word on to others, it is quite possible for you to already gain a large portion of new business by referral alone – absolutely free.

If this is not the case, you must take steps to work very hard and build an image

To start getting good word of mouth referrals, especially if you are in the service business, be prepared to give them.

and a reputation of excellence. Remember though that the reputation you build over months and years can be easily harmed by one act of indiscretion, one error in judgment, one faulty product badly handled by your business, or one demonstration of indifference to the needs of your customers.

NOTE To start getting good word of mouth referrals, especially if you are in the service business, be prepared to give them in return.



New Product Release #1

Company Name & Address
Telephone Number

NEWS RELEASE

Date: *Jan 12, 1998*

Contact: *Your Name*

For Immediate Release

Days: *Phone*

Evening: *Phone*

“New Technology Saves Water in Seconds”

Now every homeowner can save gallons of water, everytime they use Cromdale’s new shower adapter, the Water Miser.

The Water Miser takes only seconds to install and saves gallons of water everytime you take a shower.

The portable adapter is about the size of a small grapefruit and fits easily over any standard showerhead, with little fuss and no tools, using a new patented leakproof technology.

“You can take it to a friends house,” says Walter Cromdale, president of Cromdale Innovations. “It’s that fast and easy. Plus, turn up the hot water, vary the flow to a fine mist, and PRESTO!” he adds. “You have a steam bath.”

Priced at \$19.95, the Water Miser is available at hardware stores coast to coast. For further information, phone Cromdale Innovations at (555) 555-5555.

-end-

Cover Letter

Company Name & Address
Telephone Number

COVER LETTER

Date: *Jan 12, 1998*

Dear Member of the Media:

Cromdale Innovations of Vancouver, British Columbia, has recently introduced a brand new product, Cromdale’s Water Miser Showerhead, which allows any homeowner to save gallons of water while taking a shower.

Until now, these types of adapters required tedious installation procedures. But now, with the Water Miser, even a child can complete installation in less than 10 seconds.

Because I am convinced that consumers will want to know more about this convenient new device, I am sending you a packet of information and a free sample.

Please call me if you have any questions or if I can be of any help.

Sincerely,

Walter Cromdale

Walter Cromdale
President

Grand Opening News Release #2

Company Name & Address
Telephone Number

NEWS RELEASE

Date: *Jan 6, 1996*

Contact: *Your Name*

For Immediate Release

Days: *Phone*

Evening: *Phone*

“New Store Features Novelty Telephones”

Beginning Thursday, July 25, 1998, at 10 a.m., fans of cartoon shows will be able to talk directly with their favorite characters – or rather through their favorite characters turned into telephone. When owner Tom Talker opens the doors to his shop in Centerville Mall it will mark the end of more than three years of planning.

“I plan to stock novelty telephones of every sort,” he said. “My own house is overflowing with unusual phones I’ve collected all my life.” Mr. Talker said he ordered a large supply of one unusual phone, sculpted to resemble a kitten. “I expect that to be the one cat lovers will go to first,” he said.

-more-

PAGE 2

Telephone (name of product)

– 2 –

The new store, which will be open Mondays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., will also feature a service center where customers can bring in any phone for repair or recondition.

For further information, call (555)555-5555.

-end-

Writing a News Release Summary

(Letterhead)

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release . . .

Contact: Your Name (404) 555-5555

Headline

Type a descriptive, clever and catchy headline in capital letters and center it. Lure the editor to read more. Then space down four lines and get into the body of the release.

Issue or problem

The lead paragraph is designed to invite the largest number of people to read the article. It must have broad appeal; make it interesting. The release should be *issue oriented*; write about the *problem*, not the book. The release should begin by stating the problem and telling why this is an important subject. Make it provocative.

Development

Spend a second paragraph developing the message. Put the most interesting information first to keep the reader reading. Recite the most important items in descending order so that if some are cut from the end, the most important will remain. Provide interesting facts and statistics.

How the product/service solves the problem

Now move from a *what* orientation to the *how* orientation. It is not necessary to dwell on the product or service. Anyone who finished the article will be interested. Describe features. Continue with some background on the product and service and show why it is unique, useful and timely. Recite benefits to the reader.

Company

Write a paragraph on the company and tell why this company is a leader in the field.

Ordering information

Give the price and mention where the product or service is available from. List your address so the reader will know where to send the money. Code your address.

End the release with the newspaper termination sign: -30-

News Release Worksheet

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release . . .

Contact:

Phone #:

Headline

Lead Paragraph (Attract Readers: *State Problem*)

Development (Explain the *What*)

How the Product/Service Solves the Problem (Explain the *How*)

Company Information (*History & Interesting Facts*)

Ordering Information (Include *Address & Price*)
