

After setting up shop, the first thing many start-ups ask is how to build awareness for their product or service. While an organic lead generation program can help drive sales, public relations (PR) plays an important role in growing brand awareness. From positioning the brand as a leader in the space to engaging effectively with target audiences, PR can help any company achieve its business goals – regardless of its size or its marketing budget.

Affect shares 10 PR tips to help start-ups of any size achieve brand success:



- 1 Create a PR plan.** Develop a plan that has specific PR objectives, such as increasing brand awareness among women ages 25 and up. Be sure to include metrics and leverage tools like Google Analytics in order to evaluate program results.
- 2 Develop a brand message.** Creating a messaging document that tells the story of your brand, products and/or services is a key first step. Start by asking yourself, “If you could only include one quote in a newspaper story, what would it be?” After developing the messaging, create key talking points that will help communicate those messages during media interviews and other discussions.
- 3 Know your audience.** Understand whom you’re communicating with. Are you trying to reach other businesses? Are you targeting consumers of a specific age and gender? The more you know about your audience, the better your message will resonate with them.
- 4 Identify a spokesperson.** Having a company spokesperson helps put a face to the brand. The spokesperson should be briefed on the brand messages, and if possible, be professionally media trained to successfully deliver the messages in a concise and media-friendly manner.
- 5 Create media materials.** Develop branded materials including fact sheets, Q&As, biographies and product shots. These materials should require minimal updates and can be leveraged for marketing and media outreach.
- 6 Include a call to action.** When you create the messages and media materials, include a call to action. This not only makes it easier to measure results, but it gives the audience a reason to respond.
- 7 Construct a media list.** Maintain a list of relevant reporter contacts, and monitor what the reporters are covering to determine where you can insert your brand. Remember that reporters have specific coverage areas, so be sure you are targeting publications and journalists that are appropriate for your product or service.
- 8 Introduce yourself to the media.** A reporter should be your best friend. Developing relationships with appropriate journalists will provide a good foundation for obtaining coverage around company announcements and initiatives. The goal is to become an expert thought leader among your media contacts.
- 9 Develop contributed articles.** Work with a target publication to secure a contributed article, written by a company spokesperson. The article should not be self-promoting, but rather focus on providing tips, insight and advice to potential customers and others in the industry.
- 10 Leverage your website.** Your website can be your best media asset. Ensure your messaging is front and center, and your media materials are available so reporters can quickly and easily access information as needed.

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