

10 Creative Ways to Get PR

Think outside the box with these easy ways to promote your business.

By Margie Fisher | February 06, 2006

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On the road to success, every business needs great public relations vehicles. Innovative public relations strategies will take you where you want to go.

Here are some creative ideas to get the quality of PR that can enhance your reputation and grow your business.

1. Create a holiday. In 1991, while teaching business etiquette courses, Jacqueline Whitmore, founder-director of the [Protocol School of Palm Beach](#) in Florida, was often asked about cell-phone etiquette. "I realized the issue needed exposure," she says, "so I decided to create a special holiday to recognize it." She submitted an application to Chase's Calendar of Events, the calendar used by businesses and the media for both traditional and newly created holidays. In July, 2002, National Cell Phone Courtesy Month became official, and Jacqueline has received ongoing local and national publicity as well as many new corporate clients. You can apply for a holiday submission online at www.chases.com.

2. Write a book. Prospective customers are impressed with authors, even if your book is self-published. The fact that you've written a book says you're knowledgeable and credible. Plus, you can sell your book or use it as a give-away, which constantly promotes your name and ideas. Best of all, an author is the media's preferred source for interviews.

3. Win a business award. If you think it's too much work and not enough payoff to submit yourself for a business award, think again. Many business awards are sponsored by publications that'll announce winners' names and print their stories--a terrific PR opportunity. And you, in turn, can announce the award to your current and prospective customers on your website and in your sales materials--positioning you as a leader in your field.

4. Get on a reality show. Recently I read a great book, [Starting from Scratch](#), by financial advisor Wes Moss, a former contestant on *The Apprentice*. I couldn't help thinking that Wes might not have gotten published without the exposure he received on the show. Now, with a published book under his belt, his name and reputation are considerably enhanced.

5. Put on a free educational workshop. Jacqueline Bonfiglio-Naja, a licensed aesthetician and owner of [Jacqueline's Advanced Skin Therapy](#) in North Dartmouth, Massachusetts, has put on many free skin care workshops over the years. "Every one of them has gotten me publicity, new customers and recognition in the community," she says.

6. Produce an electronic newsletter. Sales expert [Jeffrey Gitomer](#) of Charlotte, North Carolina, has over 100,000 people on his weekly e-mail newsletter list. It's a hugely successful PR tool, keeping his name in front of current and potential clients. In addition, promoting his services in his newsletter has led directly to over a half-million dollars in revenue.

7. Co-locate with another business. Sharing retail space with another business is a winning proposition. Each business benefits by being exposed to the other business's customers because customers of the business you co-locate with can learn about you just by seeing you there. Example: Specialty cake boutique [We Take the Cake](#), Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, created a small area within a local [Field of Flowers](#) store where they offer cakes to Field of Flowers clients. Having the visible presence of your products rather than a simple brochure near the cash register dramatically increases the chances that a customer will buy your product or services.

8. Head up a local trade organization. A few years ago, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, professional organizer Barb Friedman, owner of [Organize IT](#), served as president of the Wisconsin Chapter of the National Association of Professional Organizers. At that time, *The Dr. Phil Show* was putting together a story about the "worst spouse in America"--a woman who was very disorganized and also happened to live in Wisconsin. Because Barb was president of the Organizers Chapter, she was the person contacted to appear on the show--reaping PR dividends and business ever since.

9. Create a contest with a twist. For the fourth year, [Land of Odds](#), a bead company in Nashville, Tennessee, is holding its annual "Ugly Necklace Contest," which gives the company beautiful publicity every year. Holding a contest with a "twist" makes your business stand out from the hordes of other business contests out there and drives more attention to your product or service.

10. Do pro-bono work. Think of pro-bono work as an investment that'll showcase your talents to prospective paying clients.

When Bloomington, Minnesota-based ad agency [Colle+McVoy](#) did pro-bono work for the Environmental Trust Fund in St. Paul, Minnesota, the positive response to their ad led to paying work with the Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance. Who says good guys finish last?

These 10 creative ways to get PR will work for just about any type of business. Implementing any one (or more) of these ideas will get you great PR, and it'll take you to the level of success you and your business deserve.

Margie Fisher, president of Zable Fisher Public Relations, is the author of the Do-It-Yourself Public Relations Kit. For more information on her kit and to sign up for her free PRactical PR newsletter, visit www.zfpr.com.

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