

Prospecting for Customers with Press Releases and Articles

By Denise McGill

Budget a little tight to spend on additional advertising? Then publicize your business and “expertise” within your community and global market with little to no expense involved. A well-crafted article or press release can be just the vehicle you need to drive customers and clients to your website.

Your business *is* newsworthy!

Give your business plenty of exposure by issuing a press release. If you are announcing the grand opening of your business, have a new product or service offering to promote, announcing an upcoming event or company milestone, then a press release is just what you need. The key to having your press release accepted is that it must be ***newsworthy*** for your intended audience-not a sales pitch or business ad. You will be given the opportunity to promote a brief “call to action” at the end of the release to get people to visit your website.

You can issue a press release in a couple of ways: by submitting your release to your local paper or submitting electronically for an online posting. Contact local newspapers, digests, journals etc and ask for the contact info of the copy editor. For online press releases, there are plenty of free services, as well as pay, to utilize as well. One such site is PRLog.com. They offer valuable tips as well as distribution to various search engines.

You will find various press release template sites on the web that provide the proper format for issuing a press release. Simply Google “press release template” or “press release format” to receive a wide selection of examples. A good Press release must also answer the questions of who, what, where, when and how within the body of the release.

Share what You Know through Articles

Articles are particularly good for showcasing knowledge or “expertise,” if you will. Articles offer tips, training, strategies, trends or general information. The list goes on, but more importantly, you establish yourself as the “go to person” for your niche. Remember though, your article must also be informational – not a blatant sales pitch. This prompts an automatic rejection of your article. Submit your articles to on-line newsletters or traditional print media.

You will find many on-line newsletter editors hungry for info. They will actually request articles for their sites and you will see your article posted quickly! They typically provide your byline and a line or two of copy to promote yourself and your business.

Better still....

Articles can have an added, often overlooked benefit. Not only do you set yourself apart from the pack as an expert in your field, you can also receive a check in the mail! Advertising with perks! Many consumer magazines and trade journals will pay for your knowledge. The only downside is you may have to wait several months for your article to appear in an upcoming issue. Be sure to check the editorial calendars for the magazines you are interested in – some are posted on their website. The editorial calendars will let you know the theme of each issue for the coming year. Use that information to your advantage and increase your odds of publication!

Articles and press release are an excellent marketing tool. You build name recognition and establish yourself as knowledgeable in your field or niche. Just be sure that your releases and articles provide valuable information that is useful to your audience and you will soon find more traffic driven to your website.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Can't seem to find the right words to sell your product? Denise McGill is a freelance copywriter specializing in catalog product description, copy makeovers, sales letters, articles, press releases and more. Visit her website at <http://mcgillcopywriting.com> for more information on giving your business the competitive edge. While there, take a moment to subscribe to her online newsletter to receive more [writing tips and hints](#).