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PUBLICISE YOUR BUSINESS (PART 2)

In the first part of this article I suggested a few things to help start streamlining and publicising your business: a) Try for editorial rather than ads or advertorial; b) Make sure that what you do rises above the clutter of competing promotional or advertising activity; c) Get involved in a corporate social responsibility (CSI) process with your immediate community; d) Engage with your local Caxton tabloid format newspaper; and e) Talk to community radio stations in your area – they want to publicise ‘local’. Now to add to that, implementing some of the following business-growing and promotional ideas:

- 1 Talk to your local Chamber of Commerce about doing something together to benefit business owners and managers in your area.
- 2 Use the free ‘what’s on’ portion of newspapers serving your area to publicise events where you engage with the community.
- 3 Do something ‘rad’ (radical) as the saying goes. In the whole boring grey classifieds pages of the New York Times, a gardening company placed a tiny low-cost green-ink ad. The caption? ‘It’s amazing the difference a little green can make’. They stood out for creativity and visibility reasons. It generated discussion and their business skyrocketed.
- 4 Don’t aim only at the purchaser of your services or products. Target the purchase influencers as well. So if you’re aiming at dad, see how you can engage with mum and the kids as well. They’ll often drive the purchase decision.
- 5 Use technology, SMS (with permission) or an e-newsletter with useful snippets of info.
- 6 Make sure you have a website, that it’s updated, if possible interactive and route people to it. Keep changing something on the home page so they can see there’s new info available.
- 7 In an era of specialisation, it makes sense to hook up with your opposition in what’s called ‘co-opetition’ to deliver something to clients that you or your opposition can’t do alone. Try it. It works surprisingly well.
- 8 Offer an internship (you don’t necessarily need to pay a salary to the individual) to a young person in your business.
- 9 Have a ‘career open day’ where you invite students to come see how your sector works.
- 10 Offer educational sessions to local media about your business sector so they can write from a more informed perspective.
- 11 Get involved with Take a Girl Child to Work Day.
- 12 Organise that you write a column in magazines or websites reaching your sector. Offer your services as the ‘resident expert’. Engage readers with Q&A.
- 13 Do investment marketing every now and again. No-charge but goodwill-building stuff.
- 14 Remember the pay it forward concept. If someone helps you, help another five people without expectation of a return.
- 15 What part of your service is indispensable in tough economic times? Focus on it.
- 16 Go for the key opinion leader (KOL) concept. Pocket your pride and ask influential people to endorse you, your products or your service.
- 17 Tell your clients what you’re doing to reduce costs and enhance value in tough times to help their budget stretch further.
- 18 When you brainstorm ideas, always ask, how can we leverage this in the media?
- 19 Look carefully at the 80/20 rule of energy. Make sure you put your efforts with the clients that are the least hassle. Get rid of prima donnas if they’re hijacking your resources and energies out of all proportion to their business value.
- 20 Avoid the risk of ‘all eggs in one basket’ – you lose that one big client, you’re a gonner.
- 21 Avoid single relationship-based business transactions. Widen your contact and influence base in an organisation so when the contact person leaves, you still keep the business.
- 22 Leverage the media power of blogs, podcasts Facebook and Twitter to help build your brand. Get involved with them. You can’t understand what you don’t use.
- 23 Focus on the actual client/customer benefits deriving from your business. Don’t try to sell them features. Offer them solutions.
- 24 Remember there’s no single thing or approach that will keep your business in the public eye. It’s a combination of small things, given regular attention that will do this. You’ve got to set aside a portion of each day – even fifteen minutes – and ask: what am I doing to market my business tomorrow?
- 25 Finally, not every idea or initiative will take off or work immediately, well or even be sustainable. Don’t get depressed about it. The characteristic that makes for success is tenacity. Show lots of it.

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