



# **12 EFFECTIVE PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES**

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Are you missing out on valuable opportunities because your small business can't afford a fancy PR firm? Organizations of any size can benefit from public relations, and there are many techniques that you can use on your own.

In fact, you probably engage in PR as you go about your customer service and other daily tasks. Becoming more intentional could make you more successful in communicating strategically, building a positive reputation, and increasing your sales.

While PR requires time and effort, the payoff is big because it's usually less expensive than paid advertising and regarded more favorably. See what it can do for your business.

# General Principles for Public Relations for Small Businesses

Public relations is how you shape your image and build relationships between your business and the public. That usually includes customers, employers, and investors, as well as other audiences that matter to you.

Keep these relationship-building strategies in mind:

1. Tell your story. Put a friendly human face on your business. Demonstrate what makes you special and unique. Forge an emotional connection by being sincere and authentic. Ask your loyal customers what they love about you. Your message will sound even more persuasive coming from them.
2. Stay informed. Keep up with what's going on in your field. Network with others, attend conferences, and read industry publications and local news.

3. Be helpful. PR is more successful when you concentrate on what you can do for others. Try to give customers and reporters what they need instead of thinking only about promoting your own interests.

4. Do your homework. Journalists and social media influencers receive mountains of pitches and requests. Show them that you respect their time. Research will help you to identify their needs and customize your approach.

5. Follow through. Lasting relationships depend on trust. Be prepared to deliver what you promise and ensure that you have data to support your claims.

6. Spot trends. You can learn from PR experts even if you don't have the budget to hire them. Pay attention to what other businesses are doing and adapt some of their initiatives to reach your own goals.

# Specific Strategies for Public Relations for Small Businesses

You have plenty of options, so find the mix that works for your business. You may get your greatest return from traditional media, digital platforms, or live interactions.

Try these techniques:

1. Take advantage of media coverage. Greater visibility is one of the rewards of PR, especially if you receive favorable treatment from respected sources. Pitch your story and do interviews. If you're skillful and persistent, reporters may start calling you.
2. Share your expertise. Put your knowledge and experience to work. In addition to providing content for news stories, you can publish your own materials, book speaking engagements, and participate in online forums.

3. Monitor your mentions. Keep track of what others are saying about you. Sign up for Google Alerts or other notification services. Respond promptly to criticism and thank others for their feedback.

4. Give back. Support your local community and worthy causes. Donate money and encourage your employees to volunteer. Sponsor a fun run or clean up a beach for Earth Day.

5. Create resources. Develop an accessible archive of high-quality content. That way, you'll be prepared to make a positive impression when potential customers are searching for information or reporters need quick answers while you're on vacation.



6. Consider outsourcing. While there are many things you can handle yourself, you may want to explore professional PR services too. The investment could be worthwhile if you're trying to manage a crisis or launch a major new campaign.

You can communicate effectively and build mutually supportive relationships with a DIY approach to public relations. Strategic outreach will help your small business to stand out and succeed.

