

## **PRESS RELATIONS FOR INDUSTRIAL SMEs**

By Ian Deavin BSc, M.D. – The Industrial Marketing Agency

e-mail: [ian@theindustrialmarketingagency.co.uk](mailto:ian@theindustrialmarketingagency.co.uk), [www.theindustrialmarketingagency.co.uk](http://www.theindustrialmarketingagency.co.uk)

Paradoxically PR has for a long time suffered a “bad press” in the eyes of the industrial marketplace – perhaps because it has been associated in people’s minds with the tabloid press and the antics of celebrities and their promoters – not to mention the celebrity budgets!

*It is time to disabuse ourselves of this linkage - Industrial SMEs need PR and can easily afford it.*

But first we must accept that *Industrial B2B PR is not the animal we all see in B2C business* – so let us rather think of it as Press Relations to differentiate it from Public Relations. Simply put – we do not deal with the public – we deal with the trade press and trade customers – and that makes a world of difference to what we do and what it costs.

We are concerned with the *creation and passing on of valuable, often technical, information* from the people who have it, i.e. manufacturers and distributors, to those who want it, i.e. design, production and installation engineers and buyers.

This process has much to do with *education and information updates* and operates via a multiplicity of channels such as printed journals, internet journals, video sharing sites, trade directories etc. The process involves dissemination of *valuable content in the form of articles* and depends on their being of genuine interest to potential specifiers or purchasers.

*Modern Industrial PR encompasses: “content marketing”, “article marketing”, Social Media and Search Engine Optimisation (SEO).*

So how can we do industrial PR – and how can we do it cheaply?

1. *Submit press releases to the journals you know in your industry.* This is the most cost-effective promotion you will ever do. You can even do it yourself – at least on a small scale.
2. I really would recommend that you *use a specialist P.R. agency* who understands the technology and the business of your company – they can spread your information further, faster and in a more readable and usable format than you can, saving you time and money. Well I would wouldn’t I – but it is still good advice.
3. *Support your PR with a Social Media package* – we have found that this can increase your Webprofile by around 80% - again you can do this yourself or get a SM Manager to do it for you. We incorporate this within our agency.

4. *Support your P.R. with a reasonable advertising budget* – it can significantly enhance your web traffic/enquiries, although at higher cost than the P.R. or Social Media.
5. *Support your P.R. people with more material than they can use* – 2 releases a month is a fair guide.
6. You have a lot to say – *imagine you are talking to a prospective customer* – what products/ services would you describe – tell your P.R. people.
7. Find what your customers are doing with your product/service – explain to your P.R. how you have solved your customer's problem or otherwise improved their business so they can *produce application stories*.
8. *Source appropriate quality photography*. - from a local photographer; from your supplier; from your head office; if not available take your own if possible on a white background – get an attractive background added later.
9. *Use the internet publications as a first step* if only because they can use lower-cost, lower-resolution photography. They can also use more material than the printed magazines.
10. *Send high-resolution pictures to printed journals*.
11. *Start now*. Internet editorial is often archived indefinitely so the sooner you start the more material you will accumulate on the net.
12. If you have something broader in scope that you would like to see in print as a feature then *talk to an appropriate editor before you write it*.
13. *Put your details on directories*. Use free entries – and consider enhancing them as part of your advertising program.
14. *Press release your presence at exhibitions* – link also to the exhibition websites.
15. *Publish articles on sharing sites*.
16. *Submit press release to free distribution sites*.

*Keep doing this* – regard it as a production process that you have invested in and will only bring returns if you keep it going.