



Marketing 101

Everyone's An Expert These Days!

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Everyone's an expert these days. Well, don't make light of the notion, because that kind of thinking can add to your bottom line. Positioning yourself in your industry as one with a wealth of knowledge is one of the best ways to attract attention to your company. As a credible resource for information, tips, insider news or analysis, you switch roles from being the hunter to the prize.

Executive Positioning is effective. It is not expensive, but it is not easy, either. It takes determination and a bit of an understanding of the media. In short, it is the process of leveraging the media for interviews to get your message across. This can happen by booking talk shows, submitting columns in daily, weekly and trade publications, and watching for trends in the national media that apply to your industry locally.

How to build credibility with the media

Feeding solid information to reporters, which is not self-promoting, displays your knowledge of the field and your willingness to be a reliable resource – and that builds trust and credibility. Don't always make that call to your local reporter about getting a story for yourself. Give that reporter the latest stats for your industry, or information on coming trends, or simply call with a hunch or perception. Make yourself a resource, and reap the rewards when that reporter calls you for your opinion when his next story is due.

How to localize national stories

Taking national topics and applying them to local situations is a key strategy to help your new media contact fill his or her publication's pages with interesting material – and get ink or air for yourself. Reporters have the daily duty to file stories. If you see a national story developing that affects your industry locally, call your reporter and tell him. Offer to give him your thoughts on the matter. You've now done two things: You've not only given that reporter something to write about, but you've given him his interview subject, as well.

How to keep your name in sight

Do you know where journalists go to find an expert? If you don't, and you're not registered, you're passing up free publicity. There are Internet-based clearinghouses that list "experts" in a multitude of areas. And, getting on these lists is relatively simple. At the least, send your bio and what your area of expertise is to the editors in your area. Let them know you're there!

Everyone is, indeed an expert these days. And these are the people who are profitable and enjoying success. Not necessarily because of their smarts, but because they know how to leverage their knowledge for free publicity. If you're not on this bandwagon, you're losing out on a lot of excellent opportunities.

About the Author

A two decade, award-winning veteran of marketing and communications, Michelle works with organizations and companies of all shapes and sizes to help them implement marketing strategies to further their businesses. She can be reached at michelle@michellemerlo.com or 412-475-0425.