

Be Seen, Be Heard

by **Cynthia L. Schick**

Using the media to tell your company story can be very effective and broad in its reach. It can position you as a local, regional or national expert in your industry. But how do you decide what media should be targeted? Traditionally, there have been two main categories - trade and consumer.

Today, the online media has also become a powerful voice and tool for information dissemination, especially if your market is global or your market is a very niche market.

When making a decision to use the media to help you build brand equity for your company, product or service, reflect on what your goals are for your business and the particular markets that you are targeting.

Public Relations and Goal Setting

If your goal as a company is to serve the local or regional community, then you want to build a relationship with the local publishers in your market.

One way to do this is to position yourself as a resource or expert in your craft or industry with your local media. When there is a trend story in your area of expertise, they will know who to go to for valuable insight. Local paper's primary goal is to publish news around local businesses and residents. Start a routine of sending news stories about your company to the business editor in the form of a press release or media advisory.

If your company has a product or service to offer the global community of consumers, your goal-setting will be different.

Let's say you have a five-year plan to grow your business and achieve a greater percentage of your market's share. To do this, you will need to become very visible in your target market and separate yourself from your competition. You can achieve this by creating a distinctive set of key messages and aggressively communicate them to your market through advertising, marketing and public relations tactics. These tactics should position your company as the thought leader

or visionary in your industry, who has the answers to the questions that keep your customers up at night. Targeting the greater set of national business publications like The Wall Street Journal and Business Week, along with many of the business online publications, will bring your company more visibility and help you achieve your long-term goals.

When the market for your product or service is industry specific, targeting the magazines and journals that write about your industry can be an effective use of both ad dollars and editorial.

There used to be a definitive line of demarcation between advertising and editorial with both trade and consumer journals. With shrinking ad pages in magazines and trade journals, this line has become more blurry. More and more companies are leveraging their advertising budgets to influence editorial coverage of their products or services.

Again, start a routine of sending news stories about your company to the editor of these trade journals in the form of a press release or media advisory. You can also pitch a trend story to editors for their consideration.

Using in-house resources is one way of focusing efforts on building your brand with the press. Another is to hire a local or industry public relations professional who already has relationships with the media, knows how to work with them and can be a spokesperson for your company.

- CLS



CYNTHIA L. SCHICK

STRATEGIC MEDIA PLACEMENT

CLS Communications specializes in providing small-to-medium size companies with results-driven strategic media relations designed to help raise client profiles among its various constituents. We leverage our unmatched media relations skills and understanding of business to secure editorial articles or placements for our clients in local, industry and national news outlets.

Are you seen as a player in your industry?
The press has enormous influence on how a company is viewed by investors, consumers, suppliers and peers. A positive write-up in a credible publication can be a deciding factor in whether a customer turns to you instead of one of your competitors. An effective media relations campaign can create the 'buzz' companies need to be seen as a credible player in industry.

CLS
COMMUNICATIONS
MEDIA & MARKET POSITIONING

CYNTHIA L. SCHICK – President
Cynthia@CLSCommunications.net
Office (908) 236-2989
Cell (908) 303-9099

Cynthia L. Schick is the president of CLS Communications, a media and market positioning public relations company.

About CLS Communications

CLS Communications creates and implements public relations programs that make a meaningful, positive impact on each client's reputation, brand and bottom line. CLS Communications specializes in providing small- to medium-sized companies with results-driven strategic media relations designed to help raise client profiles among its various constituents.

"We leverage our unmatched media relations skills and understanding of business to secure editorial articles or placements for our clients in local, industry and national news outlets."

You can get in touch with Cynthia via email at Cynthia@CLSCommunications.net or by calling CLS Communications at 908-236-2989.

CLS Communications work has been honored with industry awards by the Business Marketing Association (BMA) and from The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA).