

Simple steps can achieve effective PR



**Mary Mathews
President
Northeast
Entrepreneur Fund**

Building an effective publicity or media relations program doesn't have to be difficult or expensive. There are several steps any business owner can use to gain media coverage.

What PR is and isn't

It's important to distinguish "publicity" or "public relations" from advertising and other forms of marketing. Advertising is paid for and controlled-you buy a certain amount of space or time in the media, and you control the message and the appearance of your ad. Publicity or PR (so-called "earned media" coverage) is generally unpaid and uncontrolled. You can submit information or suggest a story idea to a reporter or editor, but there is no guarantee he or she will use it the way you want-or use it at all. That means you must think through your business objective, craft your message appropriately, and distribute it to the right media in the right way.

Reach out

Don't wait for the media to cover your business. Reach out to reporters, editors or producers whenever you have an opportunity to

showcase your business. Common opportunities include: Launching or opening your business, Expanding your business-whether it's moving to a larger location, offering a new product line, or adding equipment that better serves your customers, Capturing a major account, Adding new staff, Winning an award, Reaching a milestone, like a business anniversary, or holding or sponsoring a special event. Depending on the nature and complexity of your news, you can contact the media through a simple phone call, a news release, or even a full-fledged media kit (which may contain supplementary information like fact sheets or biographical information). The most common communication format is the news release.

Create a news release

You can often use your company letterhead for a news release. Make sure it is dated and contains a contact person's name, phone number and email address. Label the contents "for immediate release." Write a headline (and possibly a subhead) and a news brief that gives the basics - who/what/when/where/why-of your announcement or story. Conclude your news release by centering the word "END" or "30" (an old editorial practice). Most news releases today are distributed via email, either as an attachment or in the body of the email (or both). If possible, direct the news release to the individual who is most likely to use your news, such as a business editor. Invite recipients to contact you if they have questions, but it is usually not a good practice to call busy media representatives (who may receive dozens of news

releases every week) and ask "Did you get my news release?"

Be newsworthy

Just because you think something is interesting or notable about your business doesn't mean that an editor or reporter will agree. They are looking for information that is newsworthy-that is, something that is important or interesting to their readers, listeners or viewers. Try to think like a reporter. Take note of whether and how a newspaper, for example, has covered businesses like yours in the past. Try to figure out what captured the reporter's attention-what was new, innovative, unusual or different about the business.

Be a helpful resource

Position yourself as a helpful resource to the media. It's OK to pitch a story or send a news release, but keep in mind the difficult decisions and deadlines that a reporter, editor or producer faces each day. Try to be a source of credible information, not just another business person trying to squeeze into a crowded news section. In the long run, you'll more likely be rewarded with the favorable news coverage you seek.

Mary Mathews is president of the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund, which helps people start and grow successful small businesses. NEF provides training, consulting and financing to emerging and small businesses in northeast Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin. To learn more, visit www.entrepreneurfund.org, or contact Jane Bymark, business developer in Grand Rapids, 218-326-9411, janeb@entrepreneurfund.org.

Mining is an industry that is more important than many realize

By Tim Arnold

It is ironic that there is so much opposition to mining, drilling for oil and other resource industries in the news. What is ironic is that Americans use more of these materials than other countries, and the critics would not be able to function without mining. The computers they write letters on, the Internet, the books they read to educate themselves ...every part of their existence is related to mining, oil or logging. Every person born and raised in the United States will need 3.7 million pounds of minerals and energy fuels in his or her lifetime. Just some of the minerals mined in Alaska that they would need include 1,400 pounds of copper, 773 pounds of zinc, 911 pounds of lead, 578,056 pounds of coal, 1.7 millions pounds of stone, sand and gravel, and 68,000- plus pounds of other minerals and metals.

The computers we use have gold and silver in them, along with many other minerals. Hybrid cars have an extra 50 percent more copper in them than the gas burners. Where do you think all of the silicone, copper, lead and nickel will come from to cover the desert with solar panels? Gold is used for electronics, dentistry, medicine, computers, aerospace, as well as financial backing for struggling countries. The average American house contains slightly more than a quarter-million pounds of minerals and metals, and there were 126 million housing units in

the country. There were an estimated 247,421,120 registered passenger vehicles in the United States, weighing an average of nearly 3,000 pounds each. There are 3.9 million miles of roads and bridges in the country that require maintenance and repair. Some 85,000 tons of aggregates are required for each mile of Interstate highway. More than 100 billion aluminum beverage cans are shipped each year; about 60 percent are recycled.

The average American uses about 120 pounds of newsprint each year - the equivalent of one tree - and more than 500 pounds per year of other types of paper. Some 90 percent of the electricity used in the U.S. is generated by fuels obtained from mining: 49 percent from coal; 20 percent from natural gas; 19 percent from nuclear power; and 2 percent from petroleum. Only 10 percent of our electricity is generated by hydro and renewable sources. There were 1.1 billion cell phones sold worldwide in 2007, each containing about \$1 worth of gold plus 42 other minerals and metals. I can go on and on.

But you can see for yourself at this Web site: www.mii.org. Unfortunately this misunderstanding (by people who complain about mining) of what it takes to live in our world is more the norm than the exception. In 1996, the annual consumption of minerals was 45,931 pounds for each of the 265 million Americans, and their life expectancy was 76.1 years. Today, the annu-

al consumption of those same minerals is 47,769 pounds per capita and there are 300 million people in the USA, expected to live to an average of 77.8 years. And when you compare America to the extraordinary growth in China and India, those numbers pale in comparison. Even if we recycled 100 percent of all metals we use (a physical impossibility) the growth of the population in the world would necessitate mining. So what does stopping mining in the United States, Canada, and other first world countries do? It forces it into countries with fewer environmental laws. It forces it into countries with no budgets for enforcement of the laws they do have. It forces it into somebody else's back yard. I ask you: If you are forcing mining out of your back yard and into countries that cannot possibly manage the industry well, are you truly an environmentalist, or are you just an elitist? So next time anyone feels like banging out a letter to email the local paper about stopping mining, remember that none of it would be possible without mining, and your consumptive habits are the reason we need mining. And until you are ready to give up all those things mining provides you (like a house?), then your complaints are just a wee bit hypocritical.

Tim Arnold is the former vice president and general manager for Coeur Alaska Inc. in Juneau.

August 2008

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
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4 Chamber Luncheon 11:45 a.m. Sawmill Inn Hosted by: Myles Reif Performing Arts Center Speaker: Mark Adams Coordinator of Applied Learning Institute (see front page)	5 Membership Meeting Cancelled	6	7	8
11	12 8:30 a.m. Program Committee Meeting Chamber Conference Room	13 8:00 a.m. Ambassador meeting Chamber of Commerce Conference Room	14 12:00 noon Young Professionals Meeting Chamber of Commerce Conference Room	15
18	19	20 7:30 a.m. Past Leaders Forest Lake Restaurant 12:00 p.m. Workforce Development Committee Meeting Chamber Conference Room	21	22
25 Chamber Board Meeting 11:30 a.m. Forest Lake Restaurant	26	27 8:00 a.m. Breakfast Connection hosted by: Myles Reif Performing Arts Center (see front page)	28 Area Business Committee Meeting Cancelled	29 7:30 a.m. Government Affairs 9:00 a.m. Forestry Affairs Both meetings held in the Chamber Conference Room

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