



PR COUTURE



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8 ESSENTIAL PR SKILLS TO LAND MORE PRESS AND GET PROMOTED

Written by Katherine Rothman, CEO of KMR Communications

You just landed a new job or have been working away at great PR firm you're excited about. Now that you've gotten your foot in the door in the industry you love, you know it's time to focus on making the best impression possible, with an eye toward quickly moving up the ladder. Great. The best way to do that is with consistent and quality media results for your assigned clients. While every employee at your firm is likely to have access to the same "tools of the trade," it's how you

implement them that sets you apart. Here are eight tips to help ensure you stand out quickly as a rising star in the office.

SET UP GOOGLE NEWS ALERTS

You will need ideas for client pitches, and Google alerts are a great way to keep track of when your clients make headlines, and to figure out trending topics that you can jump on for timely media outreach. If you work in fashion, you might set a google alert for specific fashion trends, fashion events or specific designers.

REMINDE THE MEDIA OF YOUR CLIENT LIST

Editors and bloggers receive hundreds of PR correspondences per day. It is a good idea to remind them of who you represent when they are looking for a source. For example, if you have three tech clients, send a brief description of each to ascertain if they are working on stories that correlate with your clients. The goal here is to get media members to add you to their list of regular contacts for upcoming story opportunities.

WORK FROM A PR CALENDAR OF RECURRING THEMES, TRENDS, SEASONALITY AND EVENTS

Sending a pitch that doesn't tie-into specific, time-sensitive opportunities means that your best bet is that your editorial contact holds on to your email for a day when she needs filler content. If you want media to take action quickly, create a PR calendar for each client, and input the most obvious pitch angles. This should be a living document, informed not only by what's standard media fare in any particular month but also includes what's in the news and what is trending on Instagram and other social media. For example, if "glass skin" is all over Instagram, and you represent a skin care expert, pitch tips on "How to

Get Glass Skin.” If you represent a physician and there is a measles epidemic, send a media alert to short leads and offer up your doctor and his/her bio to address this crisis. With a PR calendar in hand, you can be more proactive and ensure relevancy for your media contacts.

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GO DIRECT TO THE SOURCE WHEN BUILDING YOUR MEDIA LIST

If you’re not getting traction from the contacts, you can pull through Cision or Meltwater, go directly to the websites and see who is writing the kinds of articles that would be an excellent fit for your client. These days many outlets are relying on freelance writers, so it’s vital to notice whose name is popping up across the sites you’re targeting. As you are looking for contacts, use the opportunity for a quick content audit of the site itself. Ask yourself: What topics do these outlets seem particularly interested in? When you send your pitch, be personable and make sure you reference previous work to demonstrate you’ve done your research and understand their beat.

REGULARLY REVIEW THE PRESS SECTIONS OF COMPETITIVE BRANDS

Ever publicist has had the experience of a client sending over a story and asking, “why aren’t we included?” It’s important to know not only your clients’ top competitors but to keep track of where they are featured. Once you know this, you pitch your clients to those outlets with a fresh spin.

REWORK PITCH ANGLES TO BROADEN COVERAGE OPPORTUNITIES

If you represent a cosmetics company with a great travel kit, of course, you are going to pitch the beauty media – but don't stop there! A beauty travel kit can be a great item for bridal editors, travel editors, gift guides, working women, new moms, etc. Sometimes all this entails is a quick change to your subject line, your opening paragraph or a key message or two.

ALWAYS CHECK RECENT COVERAGE BEFORE PITCHING

Sometimes as a publicist you think, “Eureka!” I've got the perfect angle for this publication. Perhaps that topic is on a new body fat melting technique, and your physician client is the first in his/her area to offer it. Before you go crazy pitching, do a media audit. Google the topic and see if/where it's been picked up previously. If it's all over the Internet or was recently featured just weeks ago, you are too late to the party. Go back to the drawing board and devise another idea.

KEEP A VIP LIST

As you start to build contacts and place articles, keep a separate VIP list of editors/bloggers/producers who have used your content and seem responsive to receiving it. At first, there might only be a half dozen people on that list. After some time, your list of tried and true contacts can grow to hundreds of people who trust you as a PR professional who will meet their deadlines, give them valuable content, not spam them, and go out of your way to assist. Be extra generous with those on this list, promote their work even when your clients aren't covered. When you have an exclusive opportunity or need to call in a last-minute favor, these people are your go-to's.

Being a publicist means that your brain doesn't turn off when you leave the office. Keep a note pad or use the notes app on your phone to jot down ideas that come to you in the shower, while driving, grocery shopping, etc. As you are implementing each of the strategies discussed above, continue to learn as much about the landscape of the types of clients you work with. Consume all the relevant media you can, from trade magazines/websites to podcasts.

Finally, never burn bridges with the media, and don't forget to send a thank you e-mail when your story has been published. The difference between a good publicist and a great publicist is someone who goes beyond the obvious and literally "dissects" an account to avail themselves of every appropriate opportunity for her client list.

About KMR

KMR Communications is a public relations firm founded by CEO Katherine M. Rothman in 1998. The firm specializes in beauty, health and fitness PR. Some of their clients have included: Rene Furterer Hair Care, Klorane Haircare, Bosley Medical, The Bar Method, Aubrey Organics and Sothy's Skincare. The firm was named one of the top 3 beauty PR firms in the nation by www.everything-pr.com

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