

The ABCs of Garnering Local, National and Industry Press Coverage **By Lisa Raleigh, Associate Publisher Rock and Ice**

Workshop Goals:

1. Identify strengths and convert them into marketable assets
2. Simple, tangible strategies and approaches
3. Increase profile and offerings in the community and industry
4. Be viewed as a resource/expert to the media

What is PR and why is it important?

Public Relations: The methods and activities employed to establish and promote a favorable relationship with the public.

- Simplest, most affordable ways to raise the profile of your gym in your local community
- Identify your gyms strengths
- Develop simple media strategy
- Keep your gym in the forefront of the public's mind
- increase your gym's overall exposure and traffic

Advertising vs. Public Relations

Benefits:

- control the timing
- control the image
- control the message

Drawbacks:

- consistent advertising is often cost prohibitive
- response to advertising may be different than editorial coverage

Ideally any marketing strategy is comprised of an advertising component in addition to an ongoing PR effort.

Media's Need for Information

The media NEEDS information and content!

if you understand the writer/editor/reporter's needs PR is the most cost-effective way to have significant exposure in your community or industry.

In-House PR

You don't need to hire a PR firm if you have a staff member that can add PR to their job description.

Traits for the perfect in-house PR rep:

- "People Person"
- Sincerely enjoys interfacing with others
- Good list of press contacts
- Organized
- Full of ideas and energy

Identify Marketable Strengths

Events your gym hosts...

- Comps
- Philanthropy
- Community

These often are eligible to list for free on community calendars

Demographics...

- Core climbers?
- Family?
- Fitness?

Media Vehicles for Events

Remember to hit up local, regional, and national outlets!

1. **Identify** ALL media
2. **Pare** list down to outlets that reach your customer base
3. **Contact** each outlet and garner all information needed
4. **Create spread sheet** with all information, including lead times
5. **Create template** that includes all pertinent information
6. **Submit** event information in timely manner

Demographics and Media Coverage

Key 1: Identify demographic strengths you enjoy

1. Core Climbing Base
2. Family Base
3. Fitness/Crossover Base

Key 2: Identify potential media outlets in your area

newspapers, TV stations, regional magazines, etc.

1. Core Climbers = sports, outdoor, recreation
2. Family = family, kids, recreation, outdoor
3. Fitness/Crossover = sports, indoor fitness, recreation, outdoor

Mountain Miser Example

TV Stations

- Shop employee would go live on TV with morning anchors to describe the product while showcasing Mountain Miser as go-to shop for your outdoor needs
- Find morning show to go on-location as part of their programming

Newspapers

- Major new weekend outdoor adventure section
- Needed ongoing content

- Miser provided hot gear picks and outdoor tip to section editor
- Created list of tips to be used continuously

TIP 1: Pitch stories that encourage others to get out and try an activity.

TIP 2: Do your homework. Find the right editor to send your ideas.

TIP 3: Ensure not only climbing gets into the media, but also your gym!

Industry/Trade Strategies

Create backgrounder on your gym by identifying:

- Success and failures
- Current strengths
- Perspective on gym and market

Write detailed 1-page historical overview in lively but educational style. This will become the foundation of conversations with trade/industry professionals.

The Priority of PR

When added to an existing employees job description, PR can go from the bottom of the to-do list, to a daily priority. Spending as little as 1 hour per day can make a **SIGNIFICANT** difference!

Summary - The Bottom Line

You are in business to attract customers to your gym.

The more customers you have, the more successful your gym.

The media has an **ENDLESS NEED** for information.

Free exposure strengthens your brand and the public's awareness.

With a little up-front elbow grease and day-to-day maintenance, you can make sure your gym gets the exposure needed to run a successful business!

Contact Information:

Lisa Raleigh lraleigh@bigstonepub.com

970-704-1442 x19

WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

List 3 annual events you have that are appropriate for “community calendars” or free event listings:

List 3 media vehicles you can think of in your market that run such listings (newspaper, radio, regional magazine, etc.)

List your top 3 demographic breakouts you see in your gym and the approximate percentage they represent (core, kids, seniors, family, etc.)

Take your 2 top demographic categories and brainstorm a press worthy angle that would work with your local newspaper and TV stations.