

Public Relations

Donna, public relations is an important part of any business. I am not talking about the sort of public relations you think of when you talk about IBM or Microsoft...I simply mean the management of your company's image in the marketplace you serve. You don't need a department of people or some high powered, expensive agency to help you. In many cases ,with some simple guidance you can get great results.

I personally understood the value of creating a good company and personal image in the marketplace. I chose to invest in hiring a firm called Corbett Public Relations only a few years after I started my business. It has been an invaluable relationship that has helped my company achieve the necessary notoriety in the marketplace.

From getting in the local newspapers, regional magazines and even some potential television spots, PR helps raise awareness of your company and helps you bring in more business. Now, if you are looking for an absolute dollar indicator of how much money PR brings in, you are not going to find it. PR is a long term investment in branding. It is also only one piece of a well rounded strategy to bolster your bottom line.

Here are a few approaches you take to get started:

- *Stand for something...and let people know.* For example, my company is known in the region as an advocate for small business owners. Pick what makes sense for your firm.
- *Contact your local newspaper reporter.* They are literally WAITING for good content. If you have a newsworthy story, don't be afraid to get their email and contact them directly. However, be careful not to try and SELL them anything. Your idea must be needs to be newsworthy and interesting.
- *Consult with a pro.* You may not actually hire a firm....but it is worth it to consult with one while planning your overall strategy. Some basic advice will help you avoid potential major mistakes. Once you see how well PR works...you may go back to that pro and bring them on to maximize results.