



## **A Dozen Reasons to Send Out a News Release** **By Lois Carter Fay, APR**

### **Credibility**

News releases are an excellent, inexpensive way to promote your business through public relations. The stories they generate are, in fact, a much more credible source of information about your company than advertising.

Advertising, as you may know, is sometimes looked upon by consumers with skepticism because they know you are trying to sell them something and suspect companies may not be entirely truthful in their ads.

On the other hand, news articles and advertorials that appear in a newspaper or magazine are very often seen as factual, with the media's "stamp of approval," and as a recommendation of your product by an impartial third party. In general, the larger the article, the more believable the information.

### **Knowledge**

Sending releases to the media on a regular basis can keep the public abreast of what your company is doing, as well as keep you in the forefront of your customers' minds. The practice can also cut your advertising budget significantly, while accomplishing the same task...making your customers aware of your products, bringing your products to your customers' "top of mind," and spurring them to action.

### **Interest**

Often, small business owners think they don't do anything exciting enough to warrant a news release. Well, that's just not true. Every business should have a few things happening that would interest the media. Some happenings, of course, would warrant more news coverage than others.

Following are just a few questions to make you think about using public relations to promote your business. The first six are probably worthy of short, one-page releases resulting in small mentions in the media. The last six show potential for larger feature articles. A simple release, however, is not generally sufficient to convince editors to run larger pieces. Personal contact is a must.



Lois Carter Fay, APR  
Publisher, MarketingIdeaShop BRAINY Tidbits Ezine  
Marketing Idea Shop • Strategic Business Partners  
411 Rainier Road • Massanutten, Virginia 22840  
Voice 540.289.3840 • Fax 540.289.3839 • Toll Free 800.203.8660  
Email [lcf@marketingideashop.com](mailto:lcf@marketingideashop.com) • On the Web at [www.marketingideashop.com](http://www.marketingideashop.com)

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## Questions

1. Have there been any personnel changes, promotions or additions in your firm? Have you signed up a new client?
2. Are you conducting educational seminars? Or, are you planning to speak at a professional organization's meeting?
3. Have you, or anyone on your staff, received an award in your industry? Has your regulatory board or trade association cited you for excellence?
4. Have you just elected your board of directors? Have you, or any of your staff, been elected to serve on the board of directors for another company or volunteer organization?
5. Has your company sponsored a charitable fundraising event in the community?
6. Do you offer an award or prize to your employees? This might be something like "Best Salesperson," "Most Health-Conscious Employee," or even "Give Me a Break!" (for employees who are never tardy or absent).
7. Have you started a new business? Significantly expanded your current services? Moved to new or larger offices? Substantially renovated your offices?
8. Have you developed a new or improved product? Have your existing products been on the market for 10, 15, 25, or 50 years? Can you celebrate your product's "anniversary?"
9. Have you purchased any major new equipment? Is it breakthrough technology?
10. Have you increased your sales since last year? Is that unusual for your industry in today's economy? Or, have you maintained your volume in a declining market?
11. Is there something unusual about your company, such as having a totally smoke-free staff, or every employee in your firm driving an American-made car and recycling aluminum and newspaper?
12. Do you have a strong opinion on a local situation or community problem? Can you offer a solution? For example, a real estate salesperson might devise a creative answer to the homeless problem.

## Think

These suggestions are just the tip of the iceberg. Put your mind to work! You are sure to discover many newsworthy ways to promote your business.

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Self-employed since 1990, Lois Carter Fay is the owner of [Strategic Business Partners](#), a marketing consulting firm that develops ideas and strategies to grow your business, [Words For Websites](#), a website writing and strategy business, and the [Marketing Idea Shop](#), an online resource for marketers and small businesses. She works with small business owners and managers to help them with all of their marketing and public relations issues. Find out more at <http://www.marketingideashop.com> .

If you have questions about anything included in this article or you need marketing consulting help, please contact Lois Carter Fay via email at <mailto:lcf@marketingideashop.com> or call +1.540.289.3840 or toll free +1.800.203.8660.

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