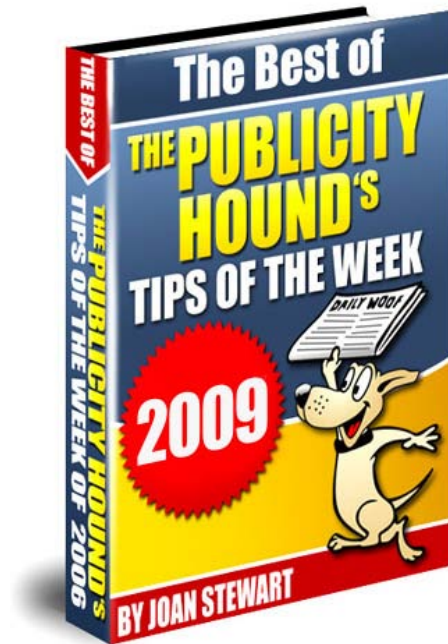


**The Best of
"The Publicity Hound's Tips of the Week"
of 2009**



**26 publicity tips to help you
generate the publicity you deserve
for your product, service, cause or issue**

Excerpted from the popular weekly newsletter

By Joan Stewart, The Publicity Hound®

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The Publicity Hound

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About the Author

Publicity expert Joan Stewart shows you how to use traditional and social media to establish your credibility, enhance your reputation, sell more products and services, promote a favorite cause or issue, and position yourself as an employer of choice. Her free publicity campaign started at age 10 when her hometown newspaper wrote a story about a blue ribbon she won for a 4-H sewing project at the Ohio State Fair. She was hooked on newspapers from that point on and she knew she wanted to be a newspaper editor. She eventually worked as a reporter and then an editor for 22 years at three daily newspapers in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin and at the weekly Business Journal in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She left the newspaper industry in 1996 to start her own business.

Today, she works as a media relations consultant, speaker and trainer and publishes the popular online news "The Publicity Hound's Tips of the Week" at <http://www.PublicityHound.com>. The newsletter, read by publicist and self-promoters everywhere, shows you how to build and maintain strong relations with the print, broadcast and online media.

Joan is past president of the Wisconsin Chapter of the National Speakers Association. She has created more than 100 educational tools, from special reports and ebooks to CDs, to help publicists and self-promoters manage a strong media relations campaign. You can read more about them at <http://www.PublicityHound.com>.

The ebook is a compilation of the very best tips from her weekly ezine, "The Publicity Hound's Tips of the Week." You may reprint any item from this ebook in your own print newsletter, ezine, blog or at your website as long as you reproduce the item in its entirety and link to the page where your readers can download the ebook.

You are also free to "regift" this ebook to your customers using this link: <http://tinyurl.com/bestof2009tips>

Create Your Own Holiday

Jan. 14, 2009

If you haven't created your own holiday, or your own day, week or month of the year, you're missing out on the chance to generate tons of print, broadcast and online publicity.

Take a look at some of the cool holidays that members of the National Speakers Association have created. I found this list in the current issue of NSA's Speaker magazine:

--Steve Hughes created "Be Kind to Lawyers Day" the second Tuesday in April.

--Laura Stack created "National Leave the Office Earlier Day" on June 2 to promote her book, *Leave the Office Earlier*. It coincides with her birthday. Problem is, so many media outlets want to interview her that she ends up working 12 hours on her birthday just to accommodate them all.

--Publicity Hound Michelle Nichols created a wildly successful nationwide campaign to promote National Hug Your Kids Day, the third Monday in July. She convinced Clear Channel Outdoor to donate 135 digital billboards, eight Gannett newspapers to run "Citymoms.com" contests, and three Major League baseball teams to announce it on their Jumbotrons.

--Publicity Hound Carol Copeland has christened June as Student Safety Month.

--Marilee Driscoll has designated October Long-Term Care Planning Month.

What are you waiting for? Now, it's your turn.

If you're on LinkedIn, you can use that popular social networking site to actually promote your holiday, just like Michelle Nichols did. Scott Allen, an expert on LinkedIn, critiqued Michelle's LinkedIn campaign and made several suggestions which she used. They resulted in instant feedback from the LinkedIn community within only 48 hours.

Scott explained how he helped her with her campaign when he was my guest during a teleseminar on "How to Use LinkedIn to Promote Anything--Ethically & Powerfully." It's available as electronic transcripts and your choice of MP3s or CDs. Read more about how to launch a publicity campaign on the world's largest business networking site at <http://tinyurl.com/5zvzyd>

Regift this ebook to your own clients, customers and social media friends with this link:
<http://tinyurl.com/bestof2009tips>

Grade Your Facebook Profile

Feb. 3, 2009

If you're on Facebook, find out how well your profile stacks up against the profiles of the millions of other Facebook users.

Go to <http://facebook.grader.com>

It's a fun little application that will instantly calculate your "grade" based on things like how many friends you have, the power and reach of those friends, how many groups you have joined, how many wall posts you've written, and whether the information is complete.

There's one problem with the grader, however.

It doesn't accurately reflect the appeal of the thumbnail bio that appears under your photo. An app like this one can't possibly determine whether or not you sound interesting. That's up to the reader to decide.

After you've graded yourself, go back and review your thumbnail bio. Does it encourage your target audience to connect with you? Does it convey a little about your personality? Does it encourage visitors to friend you and stay to read more?

What about your bio on LinkedIn? I can't count the number of bios I see on that site that are as potent as sleeping pills, even though LinkedIn users can use as much space as they need to describe themselves.

As for Twitter, few profiles I see actually make me smile or visit the person's website.

I interviewed social networking expert Nancy Marmolejo during a teleseminar we called "Can Your Social Networking Bio Pass the 10-Second Test?" She explained the key elements of your profiles on the major sites like Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, and the three traffic-killing mistakes that even the professionals are making.

The transcripts and audio recording of the teleseminar are available at <http://tinyurl.com/yz3f4sd>

You can also check out Publicity Hound Judy Lederman's incredibly clever Twitter bio at <http://tinyurl.com/ledermanbio>

Like this tip? Subscribe to my ezine at <http://www.PublicityHound.com/ezineinfo.htm>

Cool Tool for Hounds & Journalists

Feb. 10, 2009

I just discovered a new service that costs you nothing and helps connect Publicity Hounds with journalists who are looking for specific types of sources.

It's called PitchRate.com and here's how it works.

-Journalists write a query explaining the types of sources they're seeking. If they're from a top-tier media outlet, they have the option of cloaking their query and not revealing exactly where they work. When you sign up for the service, you can see all the journalist queries and decide which ones you want to respond to.

-The technology behind the platform automatically rates your pitch on a five-star scale. It then delivers all the pitches from a particular query to that journalist, who can then sort them according to how many stars each receives.

-Journalists will open the five- and four-star pitches first and, most likely, disregard all the others. This saves them valuable time.

-If they contact you for an interview, they can then rate your interview on your PitchRate.com profile so other journalists can tell instantly if you're helpful and worth contacting.

Is that cool or what?

I've already signed up as both an expert and a journalist. Bloggers and newsletter editors, I suggest you sign up as a journalist, too. This is a terrific place to find sources.

Drew Gerber, who owns the site, tells me it's in its infancy but that response from journalists has been so overwhelming that the site doesn't have enough experts to respond to all the queries.

So sign up NOW while there's less competition among experts.

Go to <http://www.pitchrate.com/publicityhound> (Even though this service is free, PitchRate pays me a commission if I send them customers who buy other products or services.)

Like this tip? Subscribe to my ezine at <http://www.PublicityHound.com/ezineinfo.htm>

Use Twitter Hash Tags for Publicity

March 10, 2009

If you're planning a special event like an industry convention or a speaking engagement, even a teleseminar, invite the Twitter community to buzz about it.

At the opening session, announce from the stage that audience members who tweet about the event should use a hash tag, and then tell them what it is.

A hash tag is the character # followed by a short word that describes the event, or a particular topic, on Twitter.

For example, at the Stompernet Internet marketing event I attended over the weekend, audience members were asked to mark their tweets by typing "#Stompernet" within each one.

That makes it easy for other attendees, and even people who didn't attend the event, to go to Twitter's search box at <http://search.Twitter.com> and type in "#Stompernet" and find all the tweets about the event.

You might be asking: Why would Stompernet want the rest of the world to take advantage of information at an event that only members and their guests can attend?

Here's why:

--It creates interest in their membership site. I guarantee that if you search for all the "#Stompernet" tweets and read them, you will find at least three tips you can start using today to increase your bottom line.

--Of the 500+ people who attended the Stompernet event, many tweeted about it. Each of those people has an army of followers. Some of those followers might think the tips are so valuable that they're worth "retweeting," thereby exposing millions more people to Stompernet.

--No more whining that "The Daily Tattler didn't cover our event, boo-hoo." By using hash tags, you turn your entire audience into journalists and let THEM report on the event for you. Often, their reach on Twitter will be far greater than the reach of many top-tier media outlets like CNN and the New York Times. Plus, those tweets live online forever, just waiting for the search engines to find them.

There are lots more ways to use hash tags for publicity. Tell us how you use them by adding comments to my blog post at <http://tinyurl.com/cjr3ot>

If you sell anything online, you should know about StomperNet, a network of like-minded entrepreneurs who constantly compare notes on how to run a successful online business. They have lots of content you can access for free at <http://www.stompernet.net/jvp/aw.aspx?B=25&A=332> (I earn a commission if you join or buy products from them.)

Regift this ebook to your own customers, clients and social media friends with this link:
<http://tinyurl.com/bestof2009tips>

10 Dead or Dying PR Tactics

March 24, 2009

If you work in PR, you might be discouraged to learn that you're spending the better part of your day on what Steve Mullen identifies as "10 Dead or Dying PR Tactics."

He's a social media PR blogger who stirred up a controversy recently with his list:

--Newspaper-based media relations strategy

--Deskside reporter meetings

--Media packets

--Video news releases

--Audio news releases

--Media Map

--Blast faxing

--Mailed newsletters

--Cision's Media Guides

--Mailed reporter pitches

You can read his reasons, at <http://budurl.com/mn5s>

I agree with most of his choices except for mailed newsletters. With postage skyrocketing, fewer businesses are using them.

That means top-quality newsletters packed with helpful content can really attract attention.

My vote for the one PR tactic I wish would make the list but it refuses to go away: those ubiquitous ground-breaking, ribbon-cutting, check-passing photos. Will somebody please slay these ugly dinosaurs?

No self-respecting Publicity Hound would even THINK of resorting to them, particularly those who hear PR guy Dan Collins' ideas for cool media events and clever publicity stunts that attract far more attention than the cliché photos.

"Fun Alternatives to Boring Ground-breakings, Ribbon-cuttings & Check-passings" is available as a CD or electronic transcript that you can be reading as soon as your order is approved. Read more about your clever options at <http://budurl.com/9pyj>

Like this tip? Subscribe to my ezine at <http://www.PublicityHound.com/ezineinfo.htm>

Journalists' Blogs a Gold Mine

March 31, 2009

Dying to pitch a certain journalist at a top-tier media outlet but confused about how to make your pitch stand out among all the others?

Keep reading for the inside secret.

I've never met Deborah Kotz, a woman's health columnist for U.S. News & World Report.

We've never emailed each other or talked on the phone. I've never pitched her.

Yet I know intimate details about her, including the type of birth control she has used and whether her two sons are circumcised.

You'll never find those kinds of details in the pricey media databases you're buying.

But in some cases, you CAN find them buried within the blog posts of journalists you want to pitch. Most PR people, unfortunately, are too busy or too lazy to search for them.

To make your job easier, I've explained in step-by-step detail how to find out if a journalist blogs and how to navigate the blog to find all the juicy tidbits you need to customize your pitch.

Read the blog post I wrote at <http://budurl.com/1634>

If you think my tips are valuable, please share that link with your Twitter followers, Facebook friends and LinkedIn connections.

Knowing how to research journalists, and doing it correctly, is the one important step that many people skip when creating a publicity plan. And it's the one step that can generate mountains of valuable information that you can use to make your pitches stand out from those of your competitors.

My series of teleseminars on "How to Create a Media Plan" walks you step by step through the entire process. It shows you how to save time and effort by targeting your efforts to a smaller group of traditional media, bloggers and ezine editors.

Read more about it at

<http://www.publicityhound.com/mediaplan.htm>

Social Networking Annoyances

April 21, 2009

Stuff I'm starting to hate in the social media world:

--The glut of invitations to every teleseminar on earth is bad enough. I RSVP to all of them and comment. I explained why in the blog post I wrote at <http://budurl.com/5jzh>. But please, don't write back and thank me for my RSVP. Enough already.

--People who ask questions on LinkedIn but fail to give enough information so I can offer an intelligent answer. If you want my help marketing your book, don't make me visit your website to find out what the book is about. Tell me in one or two sentences or I'm bailing out.

--People who invite me to connect on LinkedIn but don't explain how they know me. This results in back-and-forth emails that could have been avoided.

--People who thank me for following them on Twitter and then pitch a book, ask me to sign up for their ezine or--this is the worst--buy a product that will help me get a zillion Twitter followers in only five days. I don't want a zillion followers. I want only people who are interested in what I have to say. If you're promoting something as soon as we meet, I will no longer follow you. If you have interesting, helpful content, let's follow each other on Twitter. You can find me at <http://Twitter.com/PublicityHound>

Warren Whitlock's how-to-Twitter tips, his etiquette advice and the smart strategies he advocates for promoting on Twitter have helped me offer a lot of value to my more than 6,600 followers. Learn what I've learned.

The teleseminar I hosted with him on "How to Use Twitter to Amass an Army of Followers, Customers & Valuable Contacts--and Promote" is available as an audio and electronic transcript. Read more about how to stay out of trouble on Twitter, and endear your followers to you, at <http://budurl.com/bupu>

Like this tip? Subscribe to my ezine at <http://www.PublicityHound.com/ezineinfo.htm>

Bloggers, What if You're Sued?

April 28, 2009

If you woke up tomorrow and discovered that someone who you wrote about in your blog had sued you for libel, what would you do?

Regardless of how many blogging books, online courses, tutorials and other materials you've devoured on blogging, I'm betting you wouldn't know what to do next.

I'm also betting that you don't know exactly what constitutes libel, defamation and invasion of privacy.

Do you know what you can and can't write about that celebrity you loath? What about your busy-body neighbor next door? Is she immune from public criticism?

What if you're researching material for a blog post and you cut and paste a few paragraphs from somebody else's blog post into your own blog, but fail to rewrite it? Is that copyright infringement?

There's nothing like a big fat lawsuit dumped right in your lap to make all those other blog topics we're always sweating—like Typepad vs. Wordpress, or moderated vs. unmoderated comments--seem so irrelevant.

When the former headmistress at Oprah Winfrey's school for girls in South Africa sued me in October last year, I was lucky enough to find the Media Bloggers Association, a membership-based organization that helped me when I didn't know where else to turn.

It was founded in 2004 by dozens of leading bloggers as a "mutual defense pact" for bloggers facing legal threats. The MBA promotes, protects and educates its members and supports the development of "blogging" or "citizen journalism" as a distinct form of media.

I blogged about the lawsuit, how the MBA helped me, and what you can learn from my mistakes. Read all about it at <http://tinyurl.com/d5fh9x>

Regift this ebook to your own customers, clients and social media friends with this link:
<http://tinyurl.com/bestof2009tips>

Lazy Way to Create Fun Video

May 12, 2009

Producing video has never been my idea of fun.

I have almost no technical abilities. I sometimes find video so confusing that it eats up hours of precious time.

Talking head videos require me to fix my hair, wear make-up, put on something that looks half decent, and clean my office.

During post-production, I hate tinkering with a video's resolution, frame rates and bit rates so it looks crisp.

If you're like me, you'll fall in love with Animoto, a subscription service that lets you create TV-quality videos from photos you've taken yourself, or from stock photos you've purchased.

You can even add text. When you're done, add a musical accompaniment, or let Animoto choose one for you and—voila!—you have a really cool video you can use in a publicity campaign and share on the social media sites.

I created a two-and-a-half-minute video in less than an hour, from start to finish, to promote my local garden club's plant sale. You can learn more about Animoto and see the video at my blog at <http://budurl.com/p3hs> (I earn a commission from any products or services that my customers buy from Animoto.)

Here are six ways Publicity Hounds can use Animoto videos:

--Authors, promote a new book.

--Speakers, create a video showing you at various presentations--and the audience applauding and laughing.

--Nonprofits, appeal for volunteers or donations. And visit my blog to learn how you can apply for a complimentary account.

--Artists, you can create a video showing your artwork in various stages of completion, or show a collage of different works.

--PR people, publicists and virtual assistants, add this to your line-up of services. Your clients will think you belong in Hollywood.

--Business owners, create a video demonstrating how to use your products or services.

Share your Animoto video links with other Hounds in the comments section at <http://budurl.com/p3hs>

(Editor's Note: I have been critical of Animoto's Terms of Service that require you to remove any videos from the Web if you not renew your paid subscription. Thankfully, Animoto no longer requires that.)

Also see "9 Clever Ways to Use Video to Become a Publicity Darling in Your Industry or Community" at <http://tinyurl.com/5pbgzx>

7 Deadly SEO Mistakes

May 12, 2009

If bringing more traffic to your website isn't very important, skip this item.

Stompernet, the Internet marketing membership association, has identified seven deadly mistakes that people are making when optimizing their web pages for the search engines.

Here's Mistake #1: Badly written page titles.

On Windows, the page title is on the blue bar at the top of the screen. I see this mistake all the time, and it's one of the first things I mention when I do telephone consultations with clients.

My nominations for the worst page titles:

--"Home"

--"Welcome to my website"

--The name of your company

--Your name

--Your tagline or motto

Missing from all of the above are keywords that people would type into the search engines if they didn't know you but were looking for the kind of information, products or services you provide.

The fix is fairly simple, but only if you know what you're doing. Full instructions, including the maximum length of each page title, is in the free report "7 Deadly SEO Mistakes."

I'm a StomperNet member and give them my enthusiastic "two paws up" endorsement. I also earn a commission if you access your free tips from the link below, and then later subscribe to their membership site.

Claim your course here:

<http://budurl.com/37uz>

Like this tip? Subscribe to my ezine at

<http://www.PublicityHound.com/ezineinfo.htm>

25 Reasons to Hate Facebook

May 26, 2009

If you've ever been confused, befuddled or aggravated by Facebook, raise your right paw.

I know how you feel. These three things almost drove me crazy when I started using Facebook:

--The incredibly elaborate user interface which seems to have no rhyme or reason. Sure, anybody can figure it out, but only if they have several hours to kill so they can make a bunch of mistakes and then learn from them.

--Two of the most powerful things you can do on Facebook—create pages to promote your business and create a special interest group--are hidden behind teeny, tiny Applications icons in the lower left corner of the screen.

--Everybody keeps referring to the Wall. So where the heck is my Wall? I found it accidentally--it's the first tab buried under the "Profile" page.

--And speaking of the Profile page, what's the difference between Profile, Home and the "Joan Stewart" page?

You probably have your own complaints. I listed many more of them in the blog post I wrote at <http://budurl.com/s59t> It includes the link where you can watch Julian Smith's popular YouTube video on "25 Things I Hate About Facebook."

With a lot of patience and a little direction, you can figure out those basic problems. Then, it's time to take it a step further and use the other cool features on Facebook, like adding videos to your YouTube channel or offering your Facebook friends a special coupon.

My virtual assistant, Christine Buffaloe, who manages Facebook for many of her clients, has identified 11 missed opportunities that leave money on the table. She was my guest during a teleseminar I hosted for beginning and intermediate Facebook users.

The audio recording and electronic transcripts are available at <http://tinyurl.com/facebookwithchris> and come with 28 pages of illustrated handouts.

Regift this ebook to your own customers, clients and social media friends with this link:
<http://tinyurl.com/bestof2009tips>

Publicize on Bank Marquees

June 2, 2009

When my garden club sponsored its annual plant sale a few weeks ago, we asked customers at the check-out counter how they heard about the sale.

We were surprised that several people read about it on the scrolling marquee outside a local bank.

Add these marquees to your publicity campaign because they provide great exposure, particularly on busy streets. Banks see this is a valuable community service.

In the rush to cover all the bases online, don't forget about these other tried-and-true offline publicity tools that can be just as effective if you're publicizing something local:

--Flyers on bulletin boards in the supermarket lobby or at the check-out counter

--Church bulletins

--Local newsletters

--Local shoppers, those weekly publications that are mostly paid ads

--Flyers at colleges and universities

--Bumper stickers

--Banners and signs

--Statement stuffers

--Door hangers

--Posters

--Calendar listings on local cable TV channels

--Flyers at colleges and universities

--Flyers in company cafeterias

You'll find thousands more ideas in my ebook "How to be a Kick-butt Publicity Hound," a one-stop shop for everything you need to know to create a publicity campaign for any product, service, cause or issue. The 2009 update has six new chapters on social media.

Read more about what you'll learn at
<http://budurl.com/wvtn>

Attention-Grabbing Phrases

July 7, 2009

Ever feel like you're talking to yourself at your blog and at social networking sites?

If so, try this experiment. It will lead to more comments at your blog, on your Facebook wall, on Twitter, and even at niche social networking sites.

Choose one of the following phrases and add it to the end of your blog posts or messages:

--"Am I wrong?"

--"Am I crazy?"

--"What do you think?"

--"Do you agree?"

--"What's your best advice?"

--"How many of you are guilty of this?" (I use this phrase after linking to an article that talks about "the biggest mistakes.")

--"Your thoughts?"

--"What's your best tip?"

--"What's your Number One pet peeve?"

These are all conversation-starters. They show your readers that you're curious about what's on their minds.

Sometimes those magic phrases lead to a lively give-and-take. When I end my messages with one of those questions, I generate more comments [at my blog](#) and more retweets from my followers on Twitter.

You can also use those phrases when pointing to controversial content at somebody else's site. Don't shy away from sharing other people's information on Facebook.

One of the best ways to do that is by creating a Facebook Note, where you can upload photos, link to other websites and use HTML to command attention.

Not making good use of Notes is one of the mistakes we discussed during the teleseminar on "11 Ways to Avoid Missed Opportunities on Facebook." You can read about the other 10, and learn how to access the transcripts and recordings, at <http://budurl.com/jfgw>

How many of those opportunities are you missing?

Regift this ebook to your own customers, clients and social media friends with this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/bestof2009tips>

Share Your Best Food Nuggets

August 11, 2009

On Twitter, do you get tired of reading about what people ate for lunch?

I do.

But Internet marketer Sherman Hu says his Twitter followers react most favorably to tweets about unusual food he has eaten, or links to photos of spectacular restaurant meals he has enjoyed.

Here are food-related ideas to discuss in social media without boring your friends and followers. If you can somehow tie this information to what you do, that's even better.

--Yummy recipes for seasonal foods.

--The best and worst restaurant food you've eaten recently.

--Fun foods you've tasted at summer fairs and festivals. I wrote about eating a pickle on a stick, rather than a fattening cream puff, at the Wisconsin State Fair and got lots of comments from my Twitter and Facebook friends.

--What are you doing with all those veggies in your garden? My recipe for Tomato Pie at <http://budurl.com/5gl6> gets fabulous feedback from my followers.

--Your favorite mixed drinks and summer beverages.

--Fast and healthy back-to-school lunches for kids.

If you're using Twitter for business, learn how to promote without beating people over the head with an obnoxious sales pitch. See "How to Use Twitter to Amass an Army of Followers, Customers & Valuable Contacts--and Promote" at <http://budurl.com/bupu>

Foodies, check out "Publicity Tips for Restaurants, Chefs & Foodies" at <http://tinyurl.com/clr26>

Follow me on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/PublicityHound>

Huge Payoff for 15 Minutes a Week

August 18, 2009

If you want to boost the ranking of your blog or website on Google by getting more authoritative sites to link to you, you only have to spend five minutes a day, three times a week, on social bookmarking.

That's it. Just 15 minutes total. You can even delegate this task to an assistant.

Colin Martin, who was my guest during a teleseminar on "[How to do Social Bookmarking to Promote Your Expertise, Attract Followers & Pull Massive Amounts of Traffic,](#)" said that's how much time he spends to help get many of his sites in the Top 10 positions on Google.

That's practically nothing, compared to all the time you spend tweeting, retweeting, joining the conversation on Facebook and checking your direct mail on all the social networking sites.

By sharing content, including your own, with other bookmarkers, you're making it easy for people to find you and connect.

There's one other way to encourage people to bookmark your blog posts, articles at your website, your videos, photos and other content. (I delegated this to my assistant, and you can, too.)

You'll learn what it is and how to do it when you listen to the recording or read the electronic transcript from the call. Read more about how to use bookmarking to enhance the power of everything you do online at <http://budurl.com/mdn5>

Like this tip? Subscribe to my ezine at
<http://www.PublicityHound.com/ezineinfo.htm>

Sample Social Media Policy

August 25, 2009

If it's time to write a social media policy for your company or nonprofit, don't panic.

It doesn't have to be a thick tome that goes ker-plunk when you drop it on the table. And it doesn't have to get the legal department all worked up into a lather.

The entire policy can fit nicely onto a single sheet of paper. Here's the best part. It's ready and waiting for you at <http://tinyurl.com/nf5le7>

The "Top 10 Guidelines for Social Media Participation," a copyright-free document, is courtesy of Todd Defren at Shift Communications, a PR firm in Boston and San Francisco.

Shift helped a client write it, and Todd invites you to use it with or without attribution to his firm. The attorneys have already given it their blessing. Some highlights:

--Transparency rules. If you're writing about your company or a competitor, you must use your real name and be clear about your role.

--Never participate in social media when the topic can be considered a crisis situation.

--Be polite. No criticizing. No flaming.

--Yes, you can write about the competition, but you'd better have the facts straight, behave diplomatically, and have the appropriate permissions.

You can cherry-pick guidelines from more than 30 other social media policies I discuss at my blog at <http://budurl.com/t7rs>

Run the final version by your own attorney.

My "research," by the way, took about 10 minutes. Rather than spending hours on Google searching for social media policies, I simply went over to LinkedIn and asked whether anyone had a sample they'd be willing to share.

LinkedIn's Q&A feature is one of the most powerful research tools if you're in a hurry, and a terrific way to flaunt your expertise if you're willing to take the time to respond to questions. See my article "How to Use LinkedIn to Promote These 7 Ways" at <http://budurl.com/2jla>

Regift this ebook to your own customers, clients and social media friends with this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/bestof2009tips>

Texting in the Dentist's Chair

September 1, 2009

Text messaging has become so pervasive that in a recent study, four out of five dentists said patients send or receive text messages while in the dentist's chair.

When the Chicago Dental Society took the survey, Dr. Alice Boghosian, a dentist from Niles, Ill., reported that one of her patients, a young boy, told her to stop what she was doing when he heard his phone beep. You can read more about the survey results at <http://budurl.com/wtww>

Compulsive texting, and how your company or organization is dealing with it, is a great story to pitch to journalists and bloggers.

--What's the texting policy in the classroom? Pitch this as part of back-to-school coverage.

--Are people texting during worship services? If so, is anybody doing anything to stop it?

--What's the policy regarding texting among doctors, nurses and other health care providers while on duty?

--Can compulsive text messaging lead to carpal tunnel syndrome? Doctors and chiropractors, are texters complaining about wrist and hand pain?

--Speakers and sales trainers, do you admonish those who text during your presentations? Does shaming them do any good?

If you can think of other story ideas that tie into texting, pitch!

You can still participate in social media without letting it consume you. Blogger BL Ochman, an active social networker, explains "How to do Social Networking, Run a Business and Still Have a Life." See <http://budurl.com/7gck>

Like this tip? Subscribe to my ezine at <http://www.PublicityHound.com/ezineinfo.htm>

Sell 120,000 Books with One Phone Call

September 8, 2009

Dr. Neil Baum tried lots of ways to promote and distribute his book, *Marketing Your Clinical Practice*.

But most of them didn't work, and he ended up frustrated.

Then, he thought that perhaps a big pharmaceutical company might want to buy his book in mass quantity and give it away to doctors as a gift. Pharmaceutical companies have very strict regulations on what they're allowed to give to doctors. But giving them educational products wasn't a problem.

So Dr. Baum contacted Bayer, the aspirin company, and asked if they'd like to give his book away to their customer doctors as a way of showing appreciation for their patronage. Within a week, Bayer bought more than 120,000 copies and sent it to doctors throughout the U.S. Today, his book is on the shelf of virtually every medical clinic in the U.S.

And it all happened from just one phone call.

These kinds of deals happen all the time. But few authors understand the step-by-step process of how to make that happen.

Matthew Bennett, a self-published author who's relatively unknown to the general public, has had even greater success than Dr. Baum. He has sold more than 5 million books in quantity to Fortune 500 corporations, including Disney, Reebok, NBC, Abbott Labs, Pfizer, US Healthplans, Subway and many others.

Want to learn how he does it--and how you, too, can get started selling your books by the truckload to big companies?

If you sign up at this website, Steve will notify you of future teleseminars with Matthew:

<http://www.freepublicity.com/mattbennett/?10011>

How to Promote Local Events on Twitter

September 22, 2009

You can find some of the best tips by reading comments at blogs.

For example, if you're curious about how to use Twitter to publicize local events, you'll find a slew of tips in the comments at <http://budurl.com/uymm>

They include:

--Use Twitter Grader at <http://twitter.grader.com/> After entering your Twitter username and getting your grade, click on your city, state or country. A list of local tweeters will appear. If you find them of like mind, you could choose to follow them. Then tweet about your event so they'll see it.

--Download and install [Tweetdeck](#), a browser that will let you organize your tweets and see everything all at once. Then set up search columns based on your local area. You'll then "see" people talking about that area. Chances are that if they are talking about it, they either live there, or visit regularly, so follow them. Chances are also good they'll follow you, too.

--Follow the premiere local tweeters in your area, including bars, hotels, clubs and local businesses whose target customers are the people you want to attract. Retweet events and posts they tweet. This will tell them you're interested in promoting what they're doing and, in turn, they may follow you and promote your event.

--Two good tools for finding Twitterers in your area are <http://TwitterHawk.com> and <http://Twellowhood.com>

Be sure to read the rest of the comments for lots more tips.

Now that you have the tools, adopt a good strategy. Warren Whitlock shows you how. See "How to Use Twitter to Amass an Army of Followers, Customers & Valuable Contacts--and Promote" at <http://budurl.com/b8nj>

Regift this ebook to your own customers, clients and social media friends with this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/bestof2009tips>

Five Social Media Marketing Ideas

September 22, 2009

Social media is more than just collecting Facebook fans, sending tweets and joining the conversation. It's also about making all that hard work pay off.

Here are five great social media marketing ideas, courtesy of DP Dialogue, a social media marketing agency in Australia. All of them are free. Pick and choose which ones are best for you:

--Start a Twitter account and give people incentives to follow you. Read their blog post to see how Domino's Pizza did this at <http://budurl.com/8flq>

--Use Google's keyword tool at <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal> to find whatever keywords related to your business are being searched for the most. Blog about them and make videos about them.

--Become an expert and start blogging or podcasting. (Read the excellent Expertise Imperative White Paper that explains how to become an expert at

<http://www.PublicityHound.com/expertise.pdf>

It was written specifically for professional speakers from a wide variety of backgrounds. Use it as a starting point to enhance your own expertise.)

--Start a Facebook group that people will want to join and subtly sponsor it. If you sell candles, start a Facebook group for people who are afraid of the dark. (See "11 Ways to Avoid Missed Opportunities on Facebook" at <http://budurl.com/wcxb>)

--Figure out who the key influencers are for whatever it is you're selling. Read their blogs and leave comments on them regularly. (When it comes time to pitch them, see "How to Pitch the Best Bloggers & Create a Publicity Explosion" at <http://budurl.com/xlgw>)

Like this tip? Subscribe to my ezine at <http://www.PublicityHound.com/ezineinfo.htm>

The #1 Press Release Writing Mistake

September 29, 2009

When a consulting client asks me to critique a press release, one of the first questions I ask is, "What keywords are you using to pull traffic?"

Silence.

It isn't a trick question. But it stumps nine out of 10 people.

Most press release writers fail to use the right keywords, or any keywords, in their online releases, which renders the releases impotent.

People who know a little about keywords go overboard and stuff too many into their releases, making it all too obvious that they're trying to trick the search engines.

Keywords are like magnets. Let's say somebody wants to buy boots online. The buyer types "patent leather boots" into the Google search box.

Google goes looking for that phrase. It sifts through billions of pieces of content. Within a second or two, it delivers a long list of articles, videos, blog posts and press releases that have the same keywords. If you sell patent leather boots and have written a press release about them, but you haven't used the correct keywords within your release, it won't be on Google's list.

But if you **HAVE** used keywords correctly, your release could end up on the first page of Google, bringing a rush of traffic to the release, and eventually to your sales page.

Too many people spend too much time sweating the right headline, a clever news hook, or a killer quote. But all those are useless without keywords. What good is a press release if nobody can find it?

Janet Thaeler, an online press release specialist and search engine optimization expert, explained the often confusing topic of keywords during a teleseminar I hosted with her. The illustrated handouts included links to two videos that demonstrate how to do keyword research. They also include a template for a press release and a handy cheat sheet that explains, step by step, how to research and use keywords. You can refer to it every time you write a release.

The transcripts and audio recordings are available at <http://budurl.com/7ttk>

Want more press release tips? Sign up for my free tutorial "89 Ways to Write Powerful Press Releases" at <http://www.89pressreleasetips.com> It's so thorough that it's like earning a PhD in press release writing and distribution.

Get Retweeted These 9 Ways

September 29, 2009

One of the measures of your influence on Twitter is the number of times your followers retweet your tweets.

Viral marketing scientist Dan Zarrella, an avid Twitterer and author of *The Social Media Marketing Book*, spent nine months analyzing roughly 5 million tweets and 40 million retweets. Based on his scientific research, he offers these nine tips for getting retweeted:

--Link, but don't use Tiny URLs. (BudURLs fared better.)

--Ask your followers to retweet your posts. "Please" and "retweet" were his third and fourth "most retweetable" words.

--Avoid idle chit-chat like what you're eating for lunch. Do NOT answer Twitter's question, "What are you doing?"

--Don't be stupid. Use words instead of abbreviations and emoticons. :-)

--Use punctuation, especially colons, periods, exclamation points, commas and hyphens. But don't use semicolons.

--Break news.

--Use proper nouns correctly.

--Bottle your emotions. Nobody cares about your problems at work. They don't like swear words either.

--Tweet at 4 p.m. on Friday.

Give Dan your email address and get his entire report at <http://budurl.com/cnp7>

Do what Dan does. Capture email addresses by giving away something for free, and then keep in touch with people on your list regularly, just like I do when I send you this newsletter weekly. See "Special Report #51: 55 Free Things You Can Offer to Generate Publicity or Capture People's Email Addresses." Only \$10. Read more at <http://budurl.com/qnu4>

Regift this ebook to your own customers, clients and social media friends with this link: <http://tinyurl.com/bestof2009tips>

Trunk or Treat & Thanksgiving

November 3, 2009

Get a head start pitching stories for Thanksgiving this month, and for Halloween next year.

These ideas are courtesy of publicist Michelle Tennant of Wasabi Publicity. They're almost guaranteed to bring the TV cameras to your school or company.

Just before Halloween, host a "trunk or treat" event in your parking lot for parents and kids. Everyone dresses up. Parents open the trunks of their cars, decorate the insides with a Halloween theme, and give treats to the kids who make their way from car to car.

For Thanksgiving this year, Michelle suggests you round up a bunch of kids, dress them as Pilgrims, and give them a big basket of fresh vegetables and a box of toothpicks. Let them make "Pilgrim people" out of the veggies, and ask them to explain why the Pilgrim people are thankful.

TV stations that are scrounging for ideas during Thanksgiving week will love this one--great for schools, chambers of commerce, brick-and-mortar businesses, churches, libraries, day care centers and even home schoolers.

You'll find 22 publicity ideas for October, 23 more for November and 10 more for December on the handouts that accompany the CD, "103 Sizzling Story Ideas from July through December." These ideas are yours to steal when you buy the CD. Read more about them at

<http://budurl.com/guu5>

Gary V's 5 Commandments

November 11, 2009

The friend that listens is better than the friend that talks.

So says Gary Vaynerchuk, aka Gary V, one of the hottest stars in the social media world. The thirtysomething son of Russian immigrants hosts weekday podcasts about wine at TV.WineLibrary.com.

His brash style and unpretentious approach to wine appreciation have attracted an average 40,000 viewers to each podcast, more than 85,000 followers on Twitter, and more than \$60 million a year in sales at the Wine Library, the New Jersey wine store he co-owns with his father.

Here are Gary V's 5 commandments for social media, as listed in the Wall Street Journal:

--Treat it like a cocktail party. Don't pitch as soon as you meet someone.

--Don't draw lines in the sand and call sites like Twitter "stupid" just because you don't know how to use them.

--Humanize yourself and your brand with personal information, but only 2 percent of the time.

--Understand the authenticity and the incredible power of social media sites and the voices of consumers to make or break companies.

--Interacting with potential clients and becoming part of the community is a real job. Listen before you talk.

Read the entire interview with him at
<http://budurl.com/lmru>

Learn more about the teleseminar I hosted with blogger and social media consultant BL Ochman on "How to do Social Networking, Run a Business & Still Have a Life" at
<http://budurl.com/wmv2>

How to Promote Your Experts

November 17, 2009

If you're an expert in your industry, or you have a team of experts, let the world know.

During a recent teleseminar for members of [The Publicity Hound Mentor Program](#), I shared 14 ways to promote your experts. Here are four of them:

--Create an Experts Directory. If you have many experts, list them by category, in alphabetical order, and include all contact information. Make sure your experts have given you permission to include their names. If they're at all shy about talking to reporters or bloggers, pay for media training or don't include them. Send hard-copy directories to targeted media, and make the directory available at your website, in your media room.

--Include one page at your website for each expert. Make sure the title bar includes a keyword phrase that will help the media find your expert quickly through the search engines. Example: "Employee recruitment and retention expert."

--During a big breaking news event that ties into an expert's topic, call or email your media contacts and offer your expert for background, commentary and story ideas that tie into the breaking news.

--Give your experts prominent exposure in online experts directories.

Each year, I subscribe to Expertclick: The Online Yearbook of Experts. PRWeek calls this the "Dating Service of PR" because it connects experts and journalists. I've had a complimentary subscription for years, and my Press Room Page has helped me capture the top two or three positions on Google for the phrase "publicity expert."

Learn more about the service at <https://www.ExpertClick.com/Discount/Publicity-Hound> and take advantage of their special for Publicity Hounds. They'll shave \$100 off your subscription. Or call 202-333-5000. They answer their phones live and have great customer service. I earn a commission for customers I send to them.

Like this tip? Subscribe to my ezine at <http://www.PublicityHound.com/ezineinfo.htm>

Stop Talking About Yourself

November 24, 2009

If social media were a cocktail party, many of us would be heading for home by 8:30.

That's because everybody seems to be talking about themselves:

"I'm standing in line at Starbucks."

"I'm starting my day with a hot bowl of oatmeal."

"I just dropped my kids off at school. It's pouring rain!"

Chris Brogan, who is arguably one of the top social media experts in the world and whose blog has been ranked Number 1 by Advertising Age magazine, says we should be spending 12 times as much time talking about other people as we do about ourselves.

He spoke at the Web 2.0 Expo in New York City. A 10-minute snippet of his presentation at <http://budurl.com/chrisbroganvideo> may be one of the most valuable videos you'll watch all year. His tips:

--If you're not spending time using <http://www.Search.Twitter.com> or the search part of your social media application, you're missing one of the best opportunities that social media offers. That's because you can search for people who are talking about specific topics. Following conversations is often more valuable than following people.

--We should be listening far more than worrying about what to say.

--When we share helpful tips and information from other people, that makes us more valuable to the people who follow us. Eighty percent of his Twitter posts are responses to things other people have tweeted.

--No continual "barking" (his words, not mine) about your products.

--The difference between an audience and a community is the way you turn the chairs.

As you watch the video, notice the tweets that show up on the screen behind him. Many of them are from audience members who are tweeting about his presentation. They're using the hashtag #w2e in their tweets. That makes it easy for anyone searching for information about the conference to find it at <http://www.Search.Twitter.com>

Read more about how to use hashtags for publicity at my blog at <http://budurl.com/usehashtags>

Regift this ebook to your own customers, clients and social media friends with this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/bestof2009tips>

Other Resources The Publicity Hound Highly Recommends

Click on the titles below to visit these websites that will help you with publicity and social media. Even though I earn a commission from these sites, I stand behind all of them.

[7 Deadly SEO Mistakes and How to Avoid Them](#)

How many of these 7 mistakes are you making with your website? A free email course from Stompernet.

[Blog Squad](#)

Denise Wakeman answers all your questions about how to promote a product, service, cause or issue, using a blog.

[Capture Email Addresses](#)

Before you start writing press releases, be sure you capture email addresses at your website by giving away a free report, or a list of tips or other information. The best tool is the Hover Ad Creator. Your webmaster can install this HTML coding on your website. I used this to create the box that pops down from the top of the screen at my website at PublicityHound.com

[College Speaking Circuit with James Malinchak](#)

If you're a speaker or trainer, let James Malinchak show you how to get onto the college speaking circuit. This is often so much easier—and different—than trying to get speaking engagements from corporations or nonprofits.

[ContactAnyCelebrity.com](#)

A subscription to this service gives you instant access to a fully-searchable online database of 54,696 celebrities, 6,890 celebrity representatives (agents, managers, publicists & attorneys), plus 4,131 entertainment companies. Great for authors trying to get celebrity testimonials for their books or for press release writers who want to piggyback onto celebrity news.

[Corporate Sponsorships](#)

Learn how to get major companies and nonprofits to sponsor the promotion of your book, product or service.

[ExpertClick—Yearbook of Experts Online](#)

If you're an expert, this is the resource guide you must be in because print, broadcast and Internet reporters use this to find expert sources on a wide variety of topics. A subscription also lets you post up to 52 press releases a year. And the releases are picked up by the Google and Yahoo news feeds. This is the service I use, and I love it.

[Gift List](#)

This subscription service delivers contact information for U.S. and Canadian magazines, newspapers, television, newswires and radio, and websites that are looking for consumer products for holiday gift guides. Take a 7-day test drive.

[Hitslink](#)

This is the statistics program I use to learn who visits my websites, how they found me, how they navigate my site, and if they buy.

[Internet Association of Information Marketers](#)

If you like my business model of a great website, an opt-in email list and kick-butt products, and you want to enter the world of Internet marketing, or sell more online than you already are, join the Internet Association of Information Marketers. You'll have monthly access to Tom Antion, my Internet marketing mentor, and you'll be able to post questions to a discussion board and participate in helpful monthly teleseminars, for as little as \$15 a month.

[Internet Marketing](#)

"Click," written by my mentor, Tom Antion, is the very best ebook to study if you're entering the world of Internet marketing. Tom will show you how to build a great website, create info products and create an opt-in list of customers. I refer to this book at least 6 times a week.

[Landing Page Cash Machine](#)

I thought I had a pretty good website until I learned what Mark Widawer had to say. Since then, I've made a long to-do list of all the things I need to add or change. Learn how to make more sales on your website every day by signing up for his free tips.

[Magazines.com](#)

Use this website to research "formula headlines" on the covers of magazines. You can adopt many of these formulas for your own use by substituting one or more words.

[National Publicity Summit](#)

Meet top journalists face to face and pitch your story ideas.

[O Magazine](#)

Overnight, you can go from being an unknown to a household name. Susan Harrow shows you step-by-step how to get into O Magazine. It's one of the best ways to then get onto "Oprah."

[PitchRate.com](#)

PitchRate.com is a free service that connects journalists with the highest rated experts for free media coverage. If you're an expert or publicist, you can pitch yourself (or your PR clients) to journalists by viewing PitchRate's incoming requests. Requests can be sorted quickly and easily according to category or keywords by visiting the "Search Requests" tab once you've signed in. Once you've found a request you're interested in, simply make a pitch and all of your contact info contained in your profile will automatically be attached. Then, just wait to be contacted for an interview and free publicity to promote yourself, your book, product, or business.

[PressKit24/7](#)

Online PressKit 24/7 makes you a star by giving the media what they want, when they want it. It keeps your information organized and works for you 24/7.

[PRWeb](#)

This is my favorite press release distribution service if you're sending fewer than about 8 press releases a year. (If you're sending more, you'll get greater value with [Expertclick.](#)) Write the release yourself and they'll distribute it, or they'll write it for you.

[Quantum Leap for Authors](#)

Would you like to attract a lot more media attention for your book, while also making a name for yourself as an expert in your field? Steve Harrison sponsors free teleseminars and offers videos throughout the year that show you how.

Speak on Cruise Ships

Learn how to trade your talent for free luxury cruises. Free special report.

Top National TV Talk and Interview Shows

Get the directory/database that's been featured in Entrepreneur Magazine and the front page of Investor's Business Daily...

Traffic Geyser

Stop wasting precious hours uploading video. Traffic Geyser lets you upload video to several dozen sites with just one click of the mouse.

White Papers

Perry Marshall, one of my coaches, has an excellent free 5-day email course on how to publish and publicize White Papers. It's free, and it explains how you can write a short White Paper in just a day or two. After you've written your white paper, write a press release about it.

Wooden Horse Publishing

Specializing in magazines, complete with expanded descriptions, reader demographics, writers' guidelines, and editorial calendars for more than 2,000 print magazines (consumer and trade) in the U.S. and Canada. Take a test drive for \$1.99.

WordTracker

Find the best keywords for your website, press releases and articles. Amateurs guess. Professionals know. With WordTracker, you'll know which are the best keywords to drive more traffic.

Free Stuff from The Publicity Hound

The Publicity Hound website at <http://www.PublicityHound.com> is chock full of free information to help you generate free publicity for your product, service, cause or issue

- Download a free sample chapter of my e-book "How to be a Kick-Butt Publicity Hound" at <http://publicityhound.com/publicity/publicityhound.htm>
- Subscribe to "The Publicity Hound's Tips of the Week" ezine and receive free the handy checklist "89 Reasons to Send a News Release."
<http://www.publicityhound.com>
- Download two free ebooks: "The Best of The Publicity Hound's Tips of the Week of 2006" and "The Best of The Publicity Hound's Tips of the Week" of 2005.
<http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity-products/free.html>
- Subscribe to my free email tutorial "89 Ways to Write Powerful Press Releases."
<http://www.PublicityHound.com/pressreleasetips/art.htm>
- Visit my ezine archives where you can read back issues of my weekly electronic newsletter "The Publicity Hound's Tips of the Week."
<http://www.PublicityHound.com/tipsoftheweek>
- Relax, enjoy and learn valuable tips from more than 50 free articles on how to get free publicity on the "Free Articles" page <http://www.publicityhound.com/free.html>
- Read the columns I wrote for Entrepreneur.com at <http://www.Entrepreneur.com>
(In the search bar at the top, type "Joan Stewart" and you'll get a list of my columns.)
- Visit my blog, where you can read hundreds of postings, by topic, depending on your particular needs. <http://www.PublicityHound.net>