

mei-ster:
Suffix denoting
a professional
practitioner

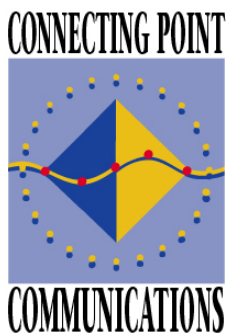
ProfitMeister

M A X I M I Z I N G Y O U R M A R K E T I N G M O N E Y

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“You have the ability to focus, to work with our marketing plans and augment them with other strong ideas.”

D.J. Heckes
Owner, EXHIB-IT!
www.EXHIB-IT.com



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Media kits double as hard hats

Prepare your media kit in advance so you're always protected

After two years of construction dust, beams and hard hats seemed normal. Planning for an official grand opening week included scheduling tours, receptions and special events. Staff teams sifted through lists of dignitaries, vendors, neighbors, family and friends; they ordered the favors, organized menus and reviewed plans. When a reporter requested a media kit, the staff looked at each other blankly. No media kit existed.

The why of media kits

Media kits provide an abridged version of you and your business to many sources. From background to company highlights, media kits include information that may be of interest to those writing an article, producing or conducting an interview, or otherwise providing the public with features and facts. Online or digital press rooms serve as repositories on the web for all your press materials, downloadable and accessible 24/7.

Compiling your media kit takes organization and preparation. Like construction, it may feel chaotic while you're putting it together. Outlining and producing this element of your company's promotion guarantees peace of mind when you're asked for information or interviewed by media.

Elissa Breitbard, owner of Betty's Bath and Day Spa in Albuquerque, spoke openly about her experience in building a media kit. "Once we pulled everything together it was as if we'd moved to a new level com-

pany-wide. After five years in business we'd finally arrived."

The when of media kits

Any newsworthy event might result in a request for a media kit. Your business would be well served to have a package ready for any of these specific opportunities:

- ◆ Grand opening or ribbon cutting
- ◆ New product introduction
- ◆ Celebrity appearance
- ◆ Groundbreaking ceremony
- ◆ Partnership announcement
- ◆ Book publication
- ◆ Conference speaker
- ◆ Release of special report or survey results

Preparation in the face of disaster is also good defense, although no one wants to think the worst. Last spring, for example, a major retailer experienced a fire at one location; media kits offered background information that would not otherwise have been available. As a result, the retailer got a behind-the-scenes story before the public.

The what of media kits

How do you decide what information to include? The answer is simple. Relevance rules. Begin with your most recent news re-

“...when people want to know what’s current about an organization, they go to an online media room.”

David Meerman Scott
www.WebInkNow.com



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lease. Your release includes the five “w’s” and an “h”: who, what, when, where, why and how, woven into the story. ProfitMeister will tackle the “how” of news releases in another issue. Email me for my special tipsheet on preparing your news release.

While few hard, fast rules exist, most public relations experts agree that your media kit must also include basics like a company brochure, product sheets, brief biographies and credentials of key personnel.

In addition, Fact Sheets (or FAQ’s) present “at a glance” information and are especially effective in a complex organization or multi-tiered event. One author published Fast Facts, a one sheet with talking points about her, her company and her book. A nonprofit organization posted Fact Sheets internally at phone stations to ensure that volunteers had access to details.

Another practical component of a media kit is a customer list or testimonial sheet that includes several quotes about your product or service. Case studies from satisfied customers showcase how your company solves problems. While most journalists will uncover their own information, these quotes provide background and add a third party to your credibility. Reporters may call these sources for additional information or sidebar stories.

The who of media kits

Media kits can take on the personality of the business; a pizzeria, for example, might opt for a pizza box info holder, something that would be inappropriate for a medical concern. High resolution pictures (300 dpi is essential for print media) of key executives are appropriate; include a CD with several high resolution photos of an event.

Many professional service providers publish a newsletter such as ProfitMeister; copies of past issues could be included in the media kit. Professional speakers may find it helpful to include audio as well as video;

we suggest that demos be under the magic seven minute time limit.

The where of media kits

Your collection of materials needs to be grouped together to be complete. Its appearance must be clean, attractive and consistent with your company image. Have fun with the many choices in packaging.

Most businesses elect to place all items in a two-pocket folder with their company label on the outside. Include a business card in the slot in the folder. As part of your checklist, be sure that each item in the kit includes current contact information; check all phone and fax numbers for accuracy and include website and email addresses. While this may seem redundant, it is critical that the professional be able to access your information quickly and easily.

The how of media kits

Hammering out written materials could require the services of a professional writer, graphic designer or photographer. However, it can also be effectively done in your own office using a program like Publisher or In-Design.

Once you have developed your media kit, you may decide to add a press room to your website. The temptation to “pdf” all materials and have an immediate online duplication of your printed materials will be great. Consider your audience and remember that on the web, less is more.

Conclusion

If you’ve completed the process, relax. Enjoy the secure feeling that comes from being prepared and mark your calendar to update materials on a quarterly basis.

Thanks again to Karen Van Cleve for suggesting this month’s ProfitMeister topic. We welcome your suggestions and input.