



# ProfitMeister

MAXIMIZING YOUR MARKETING MONEY

SPECIAL REPORT

## Replace scared with prepared!

### 15 ways to check your communication systems

"I need a media kit by 2:00 pm if you want to be included." Melissa hung up the phone, unconsciously biting her nail. How in the world could she make that deadline and still get her morning shipments out the door? This was an unprecedented, unexpected opportunity for publicity.

If you're lucky the media gives you some notice. If you're not lucky, they need it now, today. Your business is best served by being prepared for all kinds of media inquiries. ("Can you be ready next Tuesday for an interview?") In many cases, urgency dictates response. ("I need a media kit when we shoot the picture today.")

Prepare for all kinds of media calls. Rather than costing you time, preparation saves it. Had Melissa completed preparing her media kit, she could have hung up, quickly emailed the kit, or dropped off the printed version and then turned her attention to the regular list of 'to dos'.

Connecting Point Communications has developed a list of 15 different ways to check your communication structures. While you may not finalize every structure at the same time, most of these elements will be needed at some time in your business communication. Now you can be prepared, not scared, for any eventuality.

|    | Structure                    | Descriptor   |
|----|------------------------------|--|
| 1  | <b>Seven word identifier</b> | One line business explanation                        |
| 2  | <b>Email signature</b>       | Electronic billboard for your firm                   |
| 3  | <b>Recall paragraph</b>      | Three to five sentences that summarize your firm     |
| 4  | <b>Success stories</b>       | Testimonial letters                                  |
| 5  | <b>One sheets</b>            | One page product/service explanations                |
| 6  | <b>Case studies</b>          | An overview of one customer's problem, resolution    |
| 7  | <b>Media kit</b>             | Collection of information for publicity purposes     |
| 8  | <b>Tip sheets</b>            | Advice or education about your product/service       |
| 9  | <b>News file</b>             | Internal compilation of publicity and news contacts  |
| 10 | <b>Owner bio</b>             | Business owner/officers biographies                  |
| 11 | <b>Fact sheet</b>            | Pertinent information for events                     |
| 12 | <b>FAQ</b>                   | Short answers to frequently asked questions          |
| 13 | <b>Return policy</b>         | Terms/procedures for return                          |
| 14 | <b>Guarantee policy</b>      | Satisfaction quotient                                |
| 15 | <b>Digital File</b>          | Logo, letter templates (the look), & key information |

The 6 P Solution:

“Proper  
prior  
planning  
prevents  
poor  
performance.”

**Brian Tracy**

## 1. Identifier

---

A seven word sentence that describes your business in terms of your largest customer segment. This is a statement that you can easily use for introductions at a networking meeting or explanations of your business to acquaintances.

## 2. Email signature

---

Include your name, your business name, and contact information in an automatic signature file, making it convenient for correspondents to find your contact information. You’ve then added selling value every time you send an email. Most programs can be configured to add this signature automatically. Enhance this feature with a one-liner that changes on a regular basis. This one-liner, which could be your seven word identifier, is a sentence above the signature block that highlights a specific aspect of your business.

## 3. Recall paragraph

---

This is a short emphatic paragraph that adds credibility and summarizes your business. It can offer information on clientele, your specialty or your website. It provides a description that can be easily added to other information.

NOTE: In a recent issue of ProfitMeister, these three elements were covered in more detail. To review that newsletter go to [ProfitMeister.com/frameworks](http://ProfitMeister.com/frameworks).

## 4. Success stories

---

Success stories can be as simple as a testimonial letter from a satisfied client. For maximum effectiveness, a success story must offer specific details such as percent-

age of increase or volume of sales generated as a result of using the product.

Success stories are of interest to other businesses because owners may recognize a name or a like business. In some instances, one or two sentences may provide enough information; in other cases, copies of complete letters can be included in a brag book. For credibility, give full names, businesses and a web address.

## 5. One sheets

---

Typically, a one sheet is short, to the point and limited to one page. One sheets refer to product or service explanations that can be left with a client. Because a one sheet must be able to stand on its own, contact information must be displayed.

Professional service providers, for instance, might have a one sheet with information about a particular seminar. A company with numerous products might produce a one sheet for each product. Each prospect could be given the appropriate sheet for his interests.

## 6. Case studies

---

Case studies can be an effective selling tool for your company. A case study discusses a problem or an opportunity that a customer faced, and how your company or product helped solve the problem. It differs from a success story in that a case study provides more specific information on the uses of your product or service and gives the client an illustration of ways your product or service can be used.

Highly technical products or those requiring significant information are good choices for case studies because the case study then becomes persuasive material in the sales process. Many consultants use case studies as an opportunity to provide

clients with in-depth information on their company's service and thinking process. This system has the unique advantage of allowing customers to see how you apply your media expertise.

## 7. Media kit

---

A media kit contains a collection of information that can be handed out to the media. Media kits can be digital or printed, and can be geared toward online, broadcast or print. Frequently, media kits include some if not all of the 15 items listed here.

We recommend that your basic media kit include a company brochure, a testimonial sheet or success letter summary and your most current news release at a minimum. A guest appearance on a news show, for example, might require additional information such as a bio or a fact sheet which are discussed shortly.

## 8. Tip sheets

---

Tip sheets are compilations of advice for using your product or service; they usually provide a value-added service to the customer. For example, a public relations consultant might provide a tip sheet on working with the media; a graphic designer might provide a tip sheet on working with color or pictures.

## 9. News files

---

News files are maintained internally and are a collection of publicity about your company. To legitimately use reprints from a publication, you need to request permission from the publisher.

Because such publicity is important to your firm, it is essential that you follow up on

permissions shortly after publication; place all acknowledgements in one file for easy access and referral.

In addition, any news release from your company can be added to a news file, thus keeping up-to-date information in one place for easy access.

## 10. Owner bios

---

Owner bios are often forgotten until some need arises. Time spent preparing a bio ensures that significant details are not overlooked in a hurry. In this case, a bio is not a resume; it is a compilation of interesting and informative information presented in three to five paragraphs. Effective bios flow and are written in a simple conversational style. One test is to read your bio aloud. It will quickly be apparent if it flows.

## 11. Fact Sheets

---

Fact sheets, or talking points as they are sometimes called, are typically completed for internal use and focused around an event or significant happening in the organization. This tool is particularly important in a large organization or one that has numerous employees because it helps with positioning and communication; in a diverse organization, everyone knows the same information.

Documents like this can be kept by the phone for easy access; in the case of a non-profit, they can be given to volunteers who may need to know more about an event.

## 12. FAQ – frequently asked questions

---

The answers to frequently asked questions can be called sound bytes, a media term

“ Now I'm motivated to get organized again.”

**Marjie Bassler**  
**Critter Wit Designs**

“I read your newsletter and learned something.”

**Gayle McCormick**  
**Doncaster**

“This is great. I love it & I want to come up with a 7-word sentence that describes what I do!”

Rachelle Disbennett-Lee,  
PhD

www.365daysofcoaching.com  
Because life happens  
everyday



©Mary Ellen Merrigan

Connecting Point  
Communications  
P.O. Box 3523  
Albuquerque, NM  
87190-3523

505-280-9772

www.ProfitMeister.com

that’s an apt descriptor for a short, pat answer. The phrase sound byte was derived from electronic media, and refers to a 30-second period of time.

FAQ’s may include talking points; they are also oft-repeated answers like “Where are you located?” If you provide this to your employees, you prepare them for the unexpected.

Your business can develop its FAQ simply by tracking questions from prospects and customers. Once complete, the FAQ document can be posted on a website for easy access.

### 13. Return policy

Put your return policy in writing, put it in your FAQ’s, and post it for both employees and customers. In a retail establishment, this policy may be printed on the cash register receipt. Make sure employees and customers are aware of the standard so that misunderstandings do not occur.

Inevitably, there are issues, such as returns one day out of deadline and so on. It is helpful to role play extenuating circumstances or examples with employees so that exceptions can be addressed in a positive manner.

### 14. Guarantee policy

One of the strongest factors in establishing credibility is a guarantee. Put your guarantee in writing and practice saying it aloud so it sounds believable. Research shows that guarantees can help with the sales process.

## 15. Digital file

In a world of many commitments, many computers, and sometimes many employees, plan for ease of access. Make a file or a CD that includes information such as your logo, your PMS colors, your font style and letter template, high resolution digital photos, client list and other pertinent information.

We suggest that every one of the 15 elements of your communication system also be included in this file. Be sure that key employees and stakeholders know how and when to access this information and store a backup copy in a safe place.

### Conclusion:

Small business owners on the grow spend the bulk of their time working *in* the business. There’s an almost overwhelming demand for owner time: sales calls, paperwork, operations, human resource issues, prospecting, follow up, training, education and so on. It’s no surprise to most entrepreneurs that working *on* the business is the last priority.

The 15 communication elements outlined here can be compiled with minimum expenditures of time and energy and will add structure and focus to your business.

### To learn more

If you have additional questions or would like more information on any of these topics, please contact Mary Ellen Merrigan by email: [me@myconnectingpoint.com](mailto:me@myconnectingpoint.com). A speaker, author and consultant, she works with small businesses to enhance their visibility and loyalty. She publishes ProfitMeister, a monthly newsletter aimed at maximizing your marketing money. Visit [www.ProfitMeister.com](http://www.ProfitMeister.com) or [www.MyConnectingPoint.com](http://www.MyConnectingPoint.com).