

Public Relations & Advertising

In this module, you will learn to how to use public relations and advertising to attract your customers' attention and gain their approval.

Contents

1	Why do I need public relations? How is public relations and advertising different?	3
2	How can I build my public image ...through media relations? 1> Know the media 2> Develop a media plan 3> Craft a news release 4> Prepare a company media kit 5> Get your story to the media 6> Hold a media conference 7> Handle the media in a crisis	6
3	...through special events? Plan a successful event Speak at other people's events	22
4	...through trade shows? Plan a trade show Provide a great trade show experience	25
5	How can I sustain my public relations efforts? Be your own public relations agency Media monitoring and evaluation	33
6	How do I use advertising? Develop an advertising campaign Prepare your advertisement Work with a creative agency Measure and evaluate advertising effectiveness	37

1>

Why do I
need
public
relations?



Act on It

Better public relations

Who are the groups of people with whom you need to build goodwill and credibility? Identify who they are and how you can communicate better with them.

Use the editable template provided: Develop a Public Relations Plan

Public Relations is the sustained effort of communicating with publics, or groups of people that matter to the company, in order to gain awareness and favour in their eyes.

Public relations helps to create goodwill and credibility. It involves building the image of the company through developing better relationships with its publics. Publics include employees, customers, partners, shareholders, potential investors, media, special interest or lobby groups, government agencies and also the general public.

It is important to understand the difference between advertising and public relations. The table on the next page summarises the differences between these two marketing tools.

1> What do I want to accomplish?

Define your goals.

2> Who needs to know about your organization?

Identify the stakeholders who have an impact on your business.

3> What is the message they need to hear?

Determine what you need to convey to your stakeholders.

The difference between PR & Advertising

Public Relations

- ✓ A two-way conversation – you listen and respond to all the groups of people who matter to your company
- ✓ PR is ‘earned’ media coverage that the media publishes about your company because they consider it newsworthy. You do not pay for the coverage.
- ✓ You can pitch your story but you do not have control over how the media uses it or even whether they use it at all.
- ✓ The media will publish a news story only once.
- ✓ PR is used to build relationship, goodwill and credibility with the public through what someone else, i.e. the media, says about you.

Advertisements

- ✓ A one-way communication to a target audience
- ✓ Ads are messages your company pays to place in the media.
- ✓ You have full control over what goes into the ad, when it is published and even which section it appears in.
- ✓ You can repeat the ad as many times as you are willing to pay for.
- ✓ Ads are used to inform, persuade or remind target customers about a product with the purpose of making sales.

2>

How can I
build my
public
image
through
media
relations?


Media relations is about building a relationship with the media in an honest and interactive way so that they will convey your company's message or point of view.

One way of building public relations is through media relations.

When people read about you in the media, they are more likely to accept the viewpoint as more credible or believable because the message is from an independent source.

The media plays a huge role in affecting people's attitudes, values and actions. When the media comments favorably on your company, it is seen as an endorsement by a credible third party.

Media exposure helps to create awareness of your organisation, products and brand values. It can position you to enter new markets and put you in a credible light in front of decision makers. To achieve these, you need to build relations with the media that can reach your target audience.



Step by Step
Guide to using
Media Relations

1> Understand public relations



2> Know the media



3> Craft a news release



4> Prepare a company media kit



5> Get your story to the media



6> Hold a media conference



7> Handle the media in a Crisis



STEP 1



Act on It

Get in the news

Knowing what types of stories journalists are interested in can determine whether or not your story gets covered. Identify the possible ways in which your company can be in the news, and keep a constant look out for such opportunities.

Use the editable template provided: Identify Your Media Angles

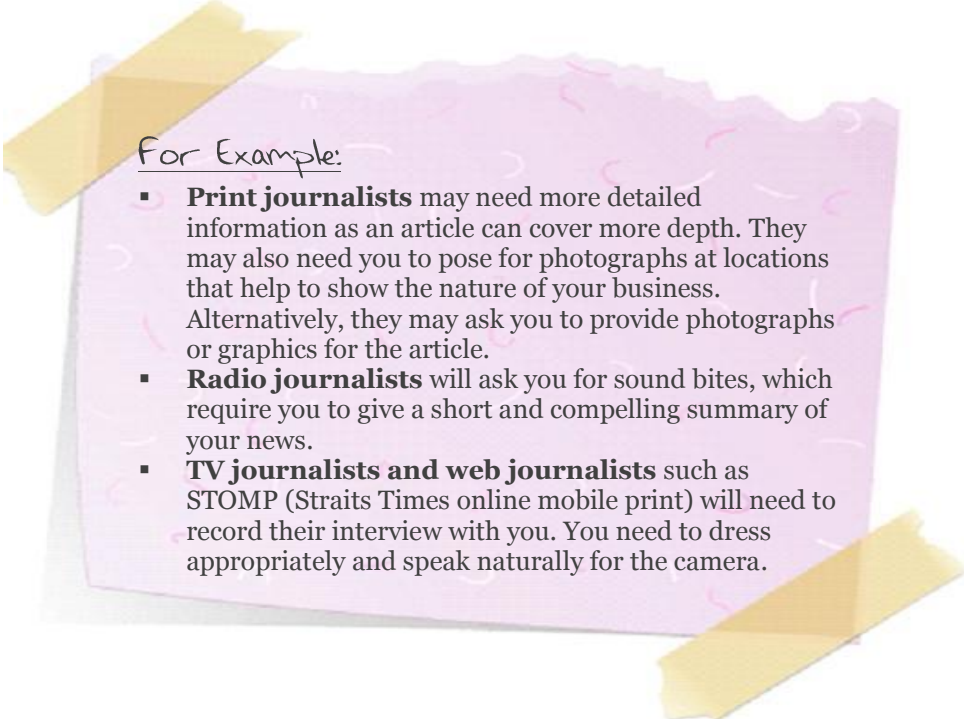
Know the media. You can communicate with your target customers through the voice of the journalist.

A journalist writing a story will only be interested to feature a story that will be of interest to his audience - readers of his newspaper, viewers of his TV programme, or listeners of his radio station.

It is therefore important to ascertain whether the subject of your news release is something that would interest the target audience of that media. Otherwise the journalist would not be interested, no matter how good your story is.

However, you can consider this good news because you can now choose which journalist to work with, and when he is interested in your story, you can be quite confident that it will be read, seen or heard by people who are also interested in it.

The mass media includes print media such newspapers and magazines, broadcast media such as television and radio, electronic or digital media, such as the Internet. The different media may require you to work differently with them.



For Example:

- **Print journalists** may need more detailed information as an article can cover more depth. They may also need you to pose for photographs at locations that help to show the nature of your business. Alternatively, they may ask you to provide photographs or graphics for the article.
- **Radio journalists** will ask you for sound bites, which require you to give a short and compelling summary of your news.
- **TV journalists and web journalists** such as STOMP (Straits Times online mobile print) will need to record their interview with you. You need to dress appropriately and speak naturally for the camera.

What is **NEWS**-worthy?

Knowing what types of stories journalists are interested in can determine whether or not your story gets covered. Listed below are some topics in which they will have an interest:

Announcement of new locations and product launches. This is when you open a new factory, launch a new brand or introduce a new product into the market.

Announcement about a change in the organization. This is when there are important changes in the organization, for example, changes in senior management or innovation in your business model.

Partnerships. This is especially appealing to the media if it affects different industries or if you are partnering an international company.

Industry recognition. This is when your organization or management wins a recognized local or overseas award.

Human interest story. You can pitch a newsworthy story based on how your CEO built your company or brought it to new heights. Interest could be built on how his or her management strengths, character or personal challenges impacted or inspired the organization.



STEP 2



Tip

The 5Ws & 1H

When you craft your news release, make your story interesting and relevant to the publication and its audience. Use 5Ws 1H, the vital ingredients of all news releases.

What? Usually the hook or attention grabber in your release such as a product launch, new management appointment or an interesting event.

Who? Mention the names of all the people or partners involved.

Where? Name the location that the newsworthy event has taken place or will take place.

When? State the date and time of what has taken place or will take place. The timing of a news release is important. It needs to be just before or after the event in order for it to be considered news.

Why & How? Give a reason or explain the impact of the event to help your audience relate to it and remember it.

See how the 5Ws & 1H is used on the following page.

Craft a news release. Your news release communicates key information that you want the media to profile.

A news release, sometimes referred to as a press or media release, is a printed or electronic document issued by organisations that want to communicate something newsworthy to editors, journalists, industry writers or other media groups. Journalists will write a story for publication if they consider it newsworthy, while editors control whether the story appears in a newspaper, magazine, website, or broadcast.

A news release can be one of the most important tools in your public relations efforts. It contains important facts, messages, quotes from key people and contact information for additional information. A news release has to be concise and usually runs no longer than two pages.

Using the Singapore Airlines press release, let's look at the SW's that are in this article.

Singapore Airlines the Official Airline For Giant Panda Collaborative Programme

SIA Cargo to transport pandas to Singapore

22 September 2010

WHO?

Singapore Airlines has been named the Official Airline for the Giant Panda collaborative programme between Wildlife Reserves Singapore (WRS) and the China Wildlife Conservation Association. WRS and Singapore Airlines have signed a sponsorship agreement under which the Airline will transport the pandas to Singapore and provide air tickets for training and exchange programmes.

WHAT?

Under the agreement, Singapore Airlines Cargo will operate a special freighter flight to transport the pair of pandas from Chengdu to Singapore in the second half of 2011. Air tickets will also be provided on Singapore Airlines and SilkAir flights, primarily for the training and familiarisation needs of the teams of zookeepers, veterinarians and researchers from both Singapore and China.

HOW?

WHERE?

"As the Official Airline for the Giant Panda programme, Singapore Airlines is honoured to play our part in promoting the conservation of these endangered gentle giants, which will enhance awareness and understanding of wildlife conservation. This underscores our strong belief in participating in programmes that have a tangible and sustainable impact on the well-being of our planet and its inhabitants," said Mr Bey Soo Kiang, Singapore Airlines' Senior Executive Vice President Marketing and Corporate Services.

WHEN?

WHY?

"We are also proud to contribute to the further development of the strong bilateral ties between Singapore and China."

A team from WRS recently visited the Ya'an and Chengdu panda bases in China in preparation for the pandas' arrival. On the training trip, the team that will be looking after the Giant Pandas learnt from their Chinese counterparts the husbandry and nutrition needs as well as veterinary care of pandas. They also observed the management of panda births and were trained in the care requirements of young pandas. These two facilities account for most of the panda births worldwide.

"The arrival of the Giant Pandas to Singapore is a momentous event. We are pleased that Singapore Airlines has come on board as the Official Airline to provide the support needed to bring them here from China. The sponsorship also serves to bring conservationists from China and Singapore together in a bid to improve wildlife conservation management and promote eco-tourism development. Ten wildlife experts from China will spend two weeks training at WRS once every two years while our zoologists and veterinarians will conduct in-situ conservation and research in China," said Ms Fanny Lai, WRS' Group CEO.

Preparing a news release

Start with the most important information. Think of it as an Inverted Pyramid.

Remember that each media could receive hundreds of news releases a day, so the header and first paragraph may be the only things that are read before a decision on whether your story is taken is made. A weak header and introduction will result in your news release being bypassed.

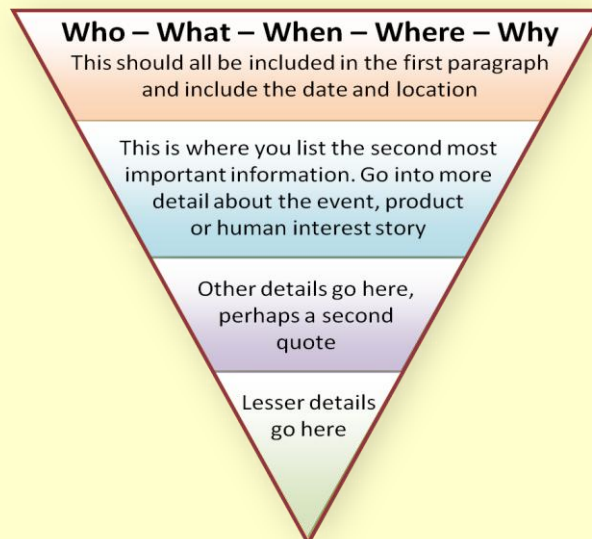
1> **The Header**

Impactful headers are those that skillfully sum up the most significant benefit the reader will derive from this piece of news, ideally within seven words. Remember that it must be important to the reader, not to you. Use eye-catching words such as 'announces' and 'new' only if it is really true, or you could lose your credibility with that media. Use the header in your email title.

2> **The Sub-header**

Include a sub-header if it is useful to flesh out your main header, or include a second related news point.

Refer to the following diagram on the structure of your news release.



3> The First Paragraph

The first paragraph gives the editor all the information he needs to know to conclude what the whole story is about. Use the 5Ws 1H to capture the vital points about your announcement. You must include all key facts and figures within the first paragraph if possible; use the second if necessary. The information needs to be aligned with what you have put as the header.

4> The Other Paragraphs

The rest of the paragraphs are used to elaborate on the story. You could include insightful quotes from your management, your partners, experts or users, or back up your story with other facts and figures.

Prioritise! Due to limited space in publications and limited time in broadcasting, the bulk of the news release may not be included in the story. Also, the editor may scan through the release quickly and not finish reading everything. Consider what is the most important and put those in first – the sequence tells editors their relative importance.

5> Ending Off

Mark the end of your news release so that the editor is aware that there is no further news. Put “~ The end ~” or “###” at the bottom centre after the last paragraph.

6> Contact Details

Make it convenient for the editor to contact you for more information or for interviews. Provide multiple ways in which you can be contacted, and make sure you respond quickly as the media work within tight deadlines.

7> Company Boilerplate

Include a succinct paragraph about your company and what you do. If there are partners involved in the announcement, include their boilerplates as well.

8> Release Date

Include the words “For Immediate Release” at the top of your news release if you want your story to run as soon as possible. If it is for prior information and you would like the media to hold the story till a later date, you can specify the release date. As a rule of thumb, hold sensitive information till the time is right for sending out, as the media may or may not hold the news till your preferred release date.

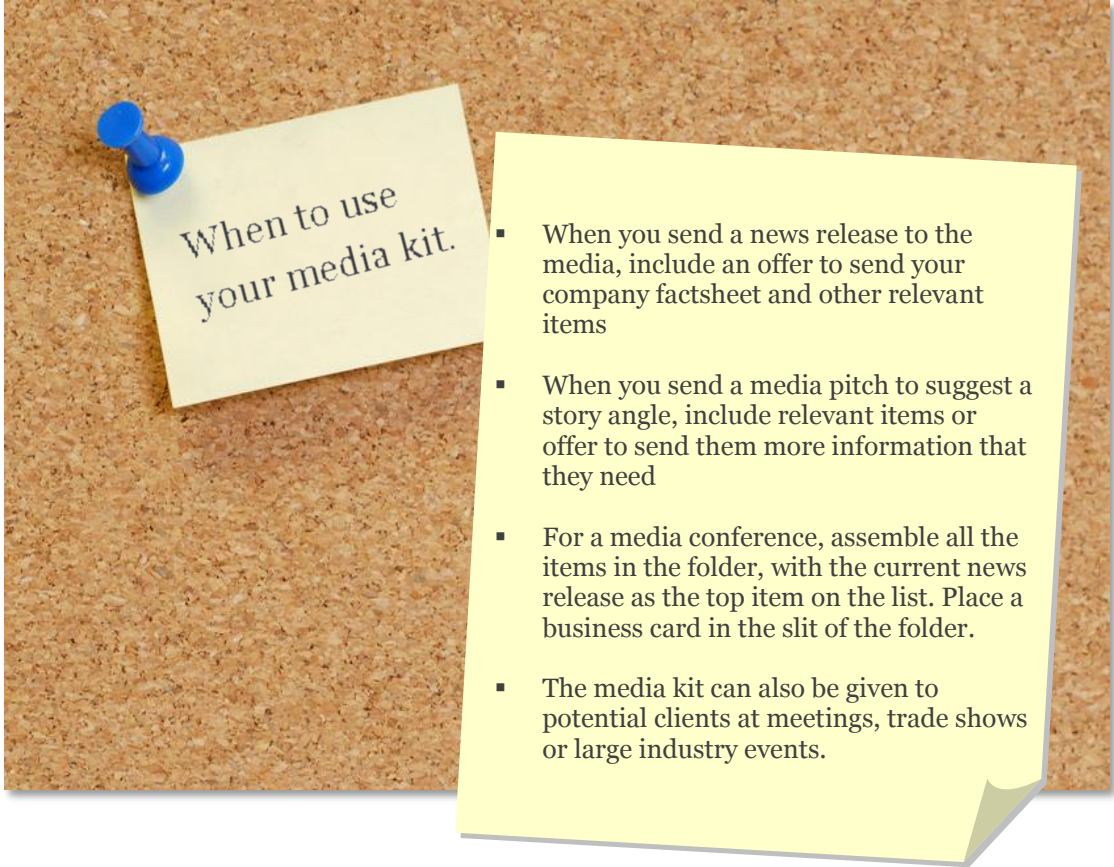
Use the editable templates: Write a News Release for Your Product Launch, and Write a News Release for Your Event.



STEP 3

Prepare a company media kit.
A company media kit is a set of promotional materials to be given to the media to convince them to write about your new product or business.

Regardless of the size of your business, you should develop a media kit as this contains everything that a journalist would need to write a story on your company. A media kit can be viewed as your company's calling card and serves as a compact file of your company's achievements and activities, ready to be used when you need.



When to use
your media kit.

- When you send a news release to the media, include an offer to send your company factsheet and other relevant items
- When you send a media pitch to suggest a story angle, include relevant items or offer to send them more information that they need
- For a media conference, assemble all the items in the folder, with the current news release as the top item on the list. Place a business card in the slit of the folder.
- The media kit can also be given to potential clients at meetings, trade shows or large industry events.

What to prepare for your media kit.

- **Media pitch letter or email.** This is a personalized message to the reporter that offers a teaser to interest him in reading your news release, or suggests an interesting story angle about your company or product that he can write about. Remember, this angle must be relevant to the reporter and his readers.
- **A list of the items in the media kit;** not all items are needed for every announcement.
- **News release, media statement or speech** on your current announcement.
- **Company and product factsheets,** preferably on company letterhead. Describe your company's achievements and activities and key products and competencies.
- **Key personnel fact sheets,** preferably on company letterhead. Prepare one-page biographies of key company personnel, describing their professional experience and achievements with the company. Include photographs if possible.
- **Past news releases or news clippings** of positive media coverage
- **Company newsletter or articles** written by your company
- **Visuals.** Interesting visuals attract attention to your news. Photographs that show an interesting aspect of your business or graphics that explain a difficult concept add to the story and would be appreciated. Provide high resolution photos, images and videos in a CD-rom or DVD, or offer to email upon request.
- **Translations** make it convenient for the ethnic media to write your story. Provide translations of your company name, names and designations of the spokespersons, and industry or technical terms that may need to be used in the writing of the article.
- **Business card** of media contact person
- **Good quality folders,** preferably with your company logo

Use the editable template provided: Prepare a Media Kit



STEP 4

Get your story to the media. Send your news release or media pitch to the right media.



Tip

Separate email address for distribution

Create separate email addresses for each free or paid distribution site that you use. You can then track which site has been more effective in distributing your news release.



Tip

Media Contacts

Visit [The Institute of Public Relations of Singapore \(IPRS\)](#) for a listing of local News Desks.

For a complete listing of the media organisations in Singapore, you can refer to the [Media Guide on SGPressCentre](#), the Singapore Government's media website.

1. Send it out

Decide which local editors, journalists or freelancers should receive your news release based on your type of news or story. Send only informative and well thought out messages, otherwise you will tarnish your own credibility with the media.

>Paid Distribution

If you would like to distribute to a large range of news media, you may consider using a news release distribution service. The most established distribution services charge for their services and can be quite expensive. For example, PR Newswire (www.prnewswire.com) and Business Wire (www.businesswire.com)

>Free Distribution

Today, businesses need not pay for distribution as there are sites on the Internet that will distribute on your behalf for free. When looking for such a service, simply type "free press release distribution" into your Internet browser. Once you register with these companies, you can upload your news release almost immediately. Many of these services require you to have both header and subheader, so prepare ahead of time.

>Local Media Desks

You can also send your news release directly to the relevant desk of the media you would like to be featured in. Each media may have several desk editors, such as News Desk for stories of general interest, Money Desk for stories relating to business and finance, and there is often also an editor in charge of SME news. It may be worth your while to find out which day or time is dedicated to SME news so that you can time your news releases, as you may have a better chance of being featured there.

2. Follow up

Once you have sent a news release or media pitch to the media, it is useful to follow up with a phone call. However, you must first prepare yourself.



Tip

Lunches & Gifts

While it is important to establish a good relationship with the media, lunches and gifts are not exactly sought for, unless you are giving them the chance to try a new product or service, which they can then write about. The best way by far is to keep providing them with good story angles and meaty information with which they can write interesting stories.

- You must be able to describe in a few short sentences why your news would be of interest to the reporter's audience. Practice talking through the story angles before getting on the phone. Get all information, facts and figures ready.
- Call at a good time. For newspaper reporters, try calling during mid-morning till noon. Remember that it is good practice to always ask whether it is a good time to talk now, and if it not, when would be a good time to call back.
- Be prepared to re-send your news by email or fax to the reporter who has been assigned to write the article.
- If the media has accepted your news, keep a look out for your story in that media. The article clippings can be added to your media kit to show third party endorsement for your business.

STEP 5

Hold a media conference. Invite journalists to tell them about your upcoming event, provide them with new information or clarify burning issues.

Also known as a press conference or media briefing, this is useful when the news you are announcing is complex, involves many parties, offers photo opportunities or involves a sensitive issue, and as such is better announced in person, so that there is opportunity for questions and answers.

How to prepare for your media conference...

Send the media an invitation. Like the media pitch letter or email, this could include a teaser to interest the media in your news, then briefly outline what the news is about. Remember to make it relevant to the reporter and his readers. Include the programme outline, keeping to about 1 - 1.5 hours.

Check with the media desk whether they have decided to cover your story.

Hold the media conference at a good time. Most press conferences are held in the morning so that journalists have time to file their stories. Avoid competing for attention with other major events involving the news section you are targeting.

Hold the media conference in a place that is quiet enough for discussion and can hold the expected number of people. There should be sufficient space so that the camera crew and photographers have room to move around for good shots. Ideally this can be on or near your business premises where good photographs or videos can be taken.

Welcome the media and present them with your media kit. Make sure you know their names and which media they represent so that you can introduce them. Use tent cards with the name of each media as this would help your spokespersons identify them.

Determine ahead of time who the spokesperson or spokespersons will be. Keep the number of panel members to a minimum. Help them to focus on the key messages by preparing speaking points, with care given to how they should be phrased. Use tent cards with names and designations to help the media identify them.

Depending on formality, the chairperson or emcee would start the session and manage the programme timing. A 5 - 10 min presentation could be given if it is relevant to the announcement. The spokespersons deliver their media statements, then the reporters are invited to ask questions.

After the news conference, the reporters may request for interviews with specific individuals. Broadcast reporters would require quieter surroundings so that they can get good recordings. Photography or filming may be required at alternative locations.

Immediately after the news conference, send the media kit to reporters who were unable to attend but are still interested to cover your story. Offer to provide them with a summary of the key points from the discussion. As usual, keep a look out for your story in the various media.

Remember to inform your own employees and other key stakeholders about the announcement as well.

**STEP 6**

Handle the media in a crisis with sincerity, integrity and promptness. It will win you their respect.

If you know bad news is about to break, it is important that you bring it to the media first. When your company breaks the story, you are in control of the message. The goal is to stay ahead of the game. Be aware of any issues that could turn into bad publicity for the company.

How to handle the media in a crisis

- 1> Hold an internal meeting to decide on the issues and the key messages. The company must show unity and commitment to a common purpose.
- 2> Choose a single spokesperson to handle the crisis on behalf of the organization. A familiar face with consistent communication and responses gives assurance that the company is in control of the situation.
- 3> In certain circumstances, for example, an industrial accident, you may need to identify a single communication center to co-ordinate your internal information gathering and decision-making, with a separate media briefing area where media can receive updates or attend news conferences.
- 4> Distribute an initial press release. If there are unknowns, issue holding statements to buy time till you are able to provide information. Let the media know when to expect regular future updates and keep to your word, or the media and the public will start making guesses. Update relevant items in your media kit to support the current situation if necessary.
- 5> Respond to individual calls by the media by sharing the time of your next media briefing, and inviting them to attend. If need be, consult with the company's attorney before any public comments are made.
- 6> Monitor the media throughout the crisis. If you discover information has been reported incorrectly, take immediate corrective action. Keep a log throughout the crisis of all media reports and contacts, and use these notes to hone future media plans.

3>

How can I
build my
public
image
through
special
events?

A successful event can help you to gain publicity, build brand image and attract customers.

Special events such as a launch ceremony, company celebration, competition, convention or seminar can help the company gain mileage in both image and profits. Planning a schedule and using an event planning checklist will help you plan a smooth running event that meets your objectives.

Use the editable template: Develop an Event or Trade Show Plan

Planning a successful event

1. **Have a clear understanding of the purpose of your event.** Know why there will be an event and the anticipated outcome.
2. **Establish the goals for your event.** Determine what you wish your attendees to gain from the event.
3. **Determine your event budget.** Establish how much you can or how much are you willing to spend, and whether you will recover some cost from registration fees.
4. **Choose your date and location.** Select a date that does not clash with other large events. Select a venue. You may even involve a visit to another city.
5. **Set up a project timeline.** Work backwards from your selected date and plan a schedule with specific tasks that must be accomplished by specific dates.
6. **Determine which vendors you will need to work with.** These could include caterers, entertainers, florists, photographers, printers and audio-visual suppliers.
7. **Determine if you need any special licenses or permits.** This could be anything from arranging fees and permission for using recorded music to arranging to have sections of a major street blocked off for traffic control.
8. **Promotion and public relations.** Plan how you will promote your event so that it is well attended, and how you intend to get media publicity through it.



Other than organising your own event, you can accept invitations to speak at forums run by well-respected organisations

Public relations is about building good will public and creating favourable awareness with customers, businesses and stakeholders. One way of instilling company goodwill and brand awareness is through offering speaking engagements, as you would be building a reputation as an expert in your industry.

Make sure that you have something valuable to share about a specific topic. Prepare your talking points well, otherwise you would not be a credit to your company. Based on the nature of your business, identify a list of organisations or events you can offer speaking engagements to, and build relationships with them.

4>

How can I
build my
public
image
through
trade
shows?

Trade Show

Plan a trade show. Trade shows are a great way to meet a large number of people who are already interested in your type of product.

Trade shows give you a unique marketing opportunity. People visit a trade show that interests them. That means that there are sure to be a certain level of qualified prospects.

The way you present yourself at a trade show is a powerful yet direct way to convey your company image and portray the level of product quality and customer service your prospects can expect.

Here are some advantages for exhibiting at trade shows:

- ✓ Opportunity to sell your products to attendees and other exhibitors of the show
- ✓ Show products to distributors, sales representatives, catalog houses etc
- ✓ Test promotional materials
- ✓ Test future ideas
- ✓ Collect leads
- ✓ Meet and greet your current customers
- ✓ Hold meeting with people who might otherwise be unavailable
- ✓ Get media attention

The next few pages provide tips on how to make the most out of your trade show.

Before the show

During the show

After the show

Before the Show

- 1. Evaluate and select which trade shows are most appropriate for you.** Be diligent in determining a show's worthiness. Are the participants likely to be your target customers? Does it enhance your brand image? Booth space is limited and must be reserved and paid for in advance. The fee will vary according to the show, the square footage and the location within the exhibition. Start planning at least 3 - 4 months in advance. Participate with a key partner to share costs.
- 2. Read the show manual.** Ensure that you obtain a copy of the show manual as this contains vital information such as registration information and forms, final schedule, floor plans, information about speakers and other important details. Some shows offer business matching and other services that you could tap on to maximise effectiveness.
- 3. Establish your goals.** Be specific as to what you want to accomplish as a result of your show participation. Is your objective to increase brand awareness, to gain exposure to a large number of prospects who might be interested in your product or to check out the competition? Defined goals are important in determining the value of the trade show to your business.
- 4. Define measurements of success.** Once you have determined your goals, you need to find a way to measure success. Set measurable and specific goals. For example, you may wish to distribute a certain number of brochures, collect a specific number of leads or make a lunch appointment with a key editor. These benchmarks help you to determine if the show was worth the expense.
- 5. Put your show plan in writing.** Prepare a schedule and make a full list of all preparation activities and assign an individual to each task. Do not leave things to chance.

Before the show

During the show

After the show

During the Show

- 1. Set up a rotating booth schedule for your staff.** Make sure that a sufficient number of staff is present at the booth. Ensure sufficient time for staff to take breaks for lunch and relax. This helps build morale while they attend to the booth. If you have limited staff to man the booth, purchase meals for them if they are unable to take longer lunch breaks.
- 2. Remind staff to record all prospect information.** You will talk to hundreds of people and it will be difficult to remember what one person said in exact detail. Have a form ready for staff to record everything they learn about a prospect's needs and staple their business card to it. Remind them of the importance of getting phone numbers and email addresses if a prospect has run out of business cards. Refer to the Promotions, Leads and Sales module to learn how to turn these prospects into customers.
- 3. Remind staff to greet people warmly and smile.** An inviting attitude can give a valuable first impression. Staff should avoid having their backs turned to the entrance or taking phone calls or sending sms's while on duty. A friendly greeting to passersby may encourage them to stop rather than simply walk by.

During the show

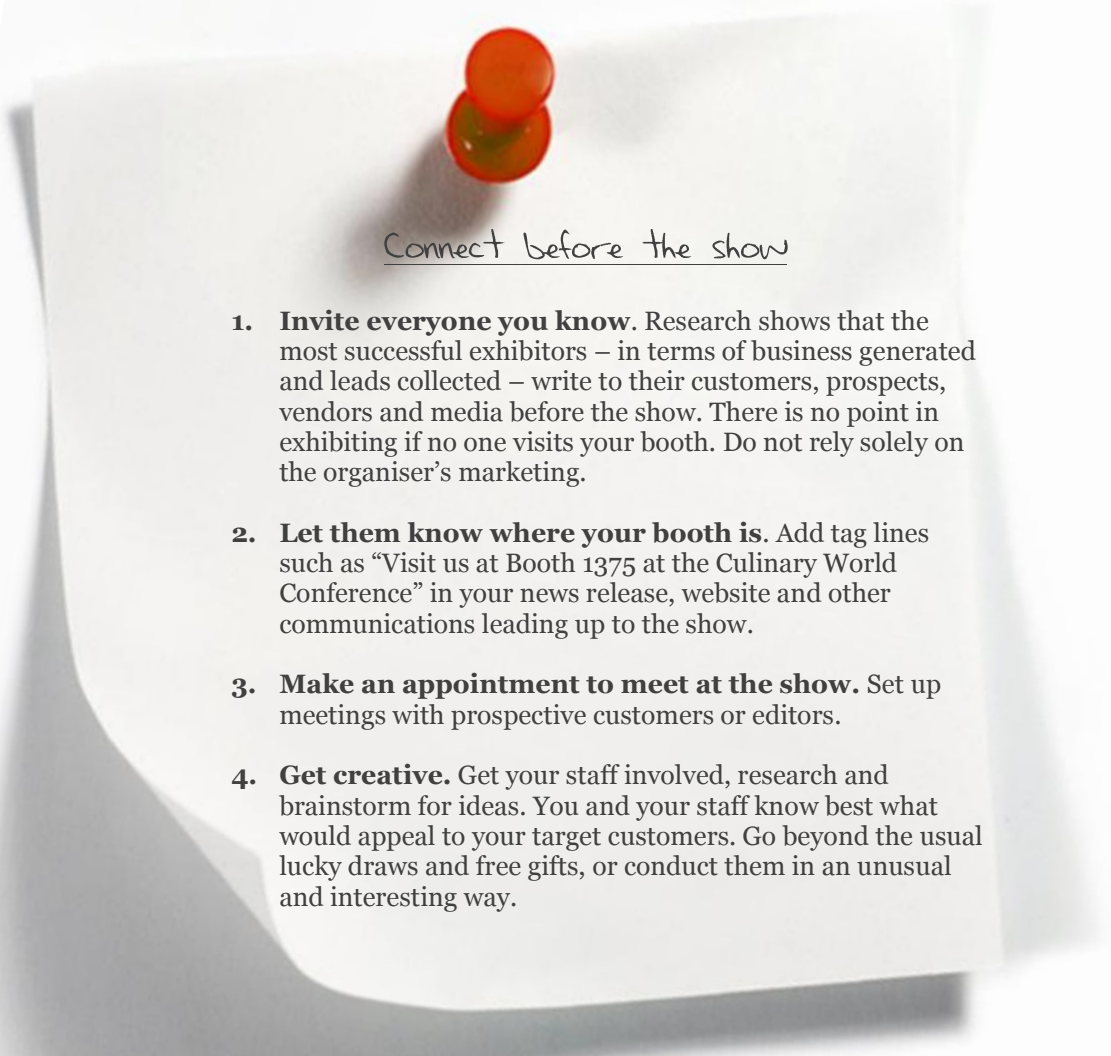
After the show

After the Show

- 1. Send requested materials immediately.** Respond to all requests as soon as you return to the office or within 24 hours. A quick response is your second opportunity to make a great impression.
- 2. Include a teaser on the envelope or in the email subject line.** Mention your organisation's name and the name of the conference on the outside of the envelope or in the email subject line so they know your letter or email is not junk mail.
- 3. Help your prospect take the next step.** Make an offer that is hard to refuse. Be creative in making it easy for prospects to respond.
- 4. Keep track of your prospects.** Keep records of the sales and number of potential customers you met through the trade show. Use these results to demonstrate the show's return on investment.
- 5. Analyse the lessons learnt.** After each show, evaluate what went well and what did not. Critique all aspects of the show and gather feedback from others as well. Learn from these and improve for the next show.

After the show

Provide a great trade show experience. Make a strong connection and leave a lasting impression.



Connect before the show

- 1. Invite everyone you know.** Research shows that the most successful exhibitors – in terms of business generated and leads collected – write to their customers, prospects, vendors and media before the show. There is no point in exhibiting if no one visits your booth. Do not rely solely on the organiser’s marketing.
- 2. Let them know where your booth is.** Add tag lines such as “Visit us at Booth 1375 at the Culinary World Conference” in your news release, website and other communications leading up to the show.
- 3. Make an appointment to meet at the show.** Set up meetings with prospective customers or editors.
- 4. Get creative.** Get your staff involved, research and brainstorm for ideas. You and your staff know best what would appeal to your target customers. Go beyond the usual lucky draws and free gifts, or conduct them in an unusual and interesting way.

Use sight and sound

- 1. Develop a key marketing message.** Like advertising, your booth should communicate one major message. A vibrant and visually enticing booth that communicates your message in a matter of seconds will maximise your sales opportunities.
- 2. Design an open and inviting booth.** Mount displays on the wall to maximise space. Make sure there are no obstructions to access. If space permits, provide comfortable chairs to encourage prospects to linger.
- 3. Lighting and visuals.** Use interesting graphics and good lighting to create the right mood and atmosphere. Engage all their senses and give them a reason to stay at your booth. Make your logo visible from a good distance.
- 4. Presentations and demos.** Be informative and interactive. Presentations allow you to communicate with many prospects at once. Install a wide screen TV to run an ongoing demo of your product or service. Do not depend on the Internet, your demos must operate without being online.

Provide the personal touch

- 1. Train your people to hold conversations.** Good conversationalists are genuinely interested in the other person. This will help them find out about their needs and how your product can help them.
- 2. Train on product knowledge.** This is a critical step. Your people need to know what is expected of them. Each of them should be briefed on all new products, initiatives or programmes. They must know how to run the demos and presentations and also some basic trouble shooting. Nothing looks more unprofessional than demos that do not work.
- 3. Create a unique identity for your booth staff.** Determine a dress code for your staff. Make it easy for prospects to know who is working the booth by wearing matching blazers, Polos or T-Shirts to make the representatives easily identifiable.

Create a Lasting Impression

1. **Provide takeaway information.** Provide brochures, marketing collaterals, brochures and fact sheets.
2. **Give away a useful gift.** Make sure your gift is one that will be re-used time and again, so that it reminds your customers of you.
3. **Build your own happy hour party.** Rent a room at or near the conference site with drinks and basic food. Pass out invites at the show and on your pre-show mailers. It will be money well spent as you get to present your information in a relaxed atmosphere.

Build a booth that stands out

There are three basic types of display:

The custom designed unit is as simple or as elaborate as you want it to be and is the most expensive. This is shipped to the show for set up and returned when it is time to pack up. Not only do you have to pay for the custom design display, you have to pay for its storage while not in use.

The stock display gives you the benefits of a custom unit without the huge costs. A display house will customise one of their stock displays with your company name and logo, have it painted in your company colors, and add lights wherever you want them. Some stock units come in modular sections so you can add or subtract sections to fit your desired space.

The self-contained unit is the least expensive display. A small unit can be carried by one person and set up very quickly. Since it is prefabricated it will look like a lot of other displays at the show, although some customisation can be done to enhance it.

Whichever display type you choose, maximize your show experience by making your booth stand out.

5>

How can I
sustain my
public
relations
efforts?

Be your own PR Agency. You can learn how to do public relations for your own company. It just takes some time, effort and passion.

Getting good media coverage has been viewed as something only the 'big boys' can do. However, smaller businesses can be successful in getting media coverage as well.

The benefits of handling your own public relations well are:

- Credibility comes from the objective and independent viewpoint of the media.
- Cost effectiveness as your own efforts can add to your overall marketing campaign.
- Awareness of your company and products that could bring business.



Tip

Further points

Speak carefully. Anything you speak about to a journalist is a matter of public record and can be referenced as part of a story. Journalists are under no obligation to let you vet their story. It is their independent say on the subject. Also take note that your story may not get published at all if a more pressing story comes in. They are under no obligation to print your story.

Ask when the deadline is and make sure you send your information in with time to spare.

Tips to get your company covered in the media

1. **Know your target media.**
Make sure you are familiar and up-to-date with the types of media that you are targeting.
2. **Build relationships with the media.**
Build a personal media contact list through contacts at trade shows or approaching reporters and reviewers, introduce yourself as a prospective resource and ask nothing more than for them to keep your information handy and allow you to send them your news.
3. **Learn to identify what is really news.**
Make sure the story fits the publication.
4. **Monitor and respond to enquiries from the media.**
Be helpful and prompt when reporters ask you for information or expert commentary.
5. **Know how to write and send news releases.**
Write in a format that will get the journalist's attention and practise your skills for submitting news releases.
6. **Provide a picture whenever possible.**
A great photo could potentially make a difference in whether your story gets covered.
7. **Use a killer header in your news release.**
Your header should be catchy with a news hook. It has got to be able to stand out amongst the many press releases received by journalists everyday.

Monitor your media coverage to demonstrate tangible results and evaluate whether your messages are accurately conveyed. This will help you identify future opportunities.

Keep watch on the print, online and broadcast media coverage that you receive, even though it can be time consuming. Use tools like Google Alerts to monitor information about your company on the web, news, forums, blogs and videos.

Tracking your media coverage will

- help you to evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of your communications
- help build credibility for your product or service when you show customers positive media coverage
- help boost morale when you show employees positive media coverage

Audit of Current Approach

1. How do you currently use PR as part of your marketing communications?
2. What types of PR activities are you currently engaged in?
3. What were the results of your PR activities?
4. Have you sent out news releases or made media pitches in the past year?
5. How much media coverage did you receive as a result of your news release?
6. Are you keeping track of the media coverage you received?
7. How are you evaluating your media coverage to identify future opportunities?
8. How are you using events to build relationships with the community?
9. Have you built up internal capabilities to handle your own PR?
10. Have you built up capabilities to work effectively with an external PR firm?

6>

How can I use
advertising?



Tip

Be creative. Virtually any medium can be used for advertising.

Wall paintings, billboards, digital signage, interactive light images, street furniture, printed flyers, rack cards, radio, cinema and television adverts, web banners, electronic direct mailers, mobile telephone screens, shopping carts, web popup, skywriting, bus stop signboards, sides of buses, human billboards, magazines, newspapers, in-flight advertisements, taxicab doors, roof mounts and passenger screens, musical stage shows, MRT platforms and trains, T-shirts, giveaways, doors of bathroom stalls, stickers on products, shopping cart handles, the opening section of streaming audio and video, posters, the backs of event tickets and supermarket receipts, in-store advertisements, product placements in a movie or television series.

Develop an advertising campaign. Advertisements inform, educate, tease, remind, persuade and motivate customers to do something or to think in a certain way.

An advertising campaign is a carefully coordinated series of messages with a single idea and theme. It aims to increase awareness of the product or service in a specific target audience in order to create a desired action, such as getting them to buy something.

A good campaign helps remind customers of your brand, reach out to prospective customers, enter new markets and increase sales. When starting an advertising campaign, test out various forms of advertising to see whether they are effective before investing more money and effort.

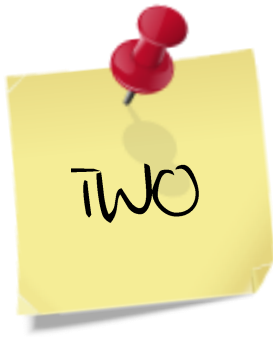
Advertising Must Meet Five Requirements

1. Convey a clear message
2. Promise a value to the buyer
3. Appeal to personal needs and preferences
4. Express the personality of the advertiser
5. Demand action

The next section provides a checklist on what you need to consider when planning an advertising campaign. Bear in mind that your campaign should be guided by your brand, and builds on the goodwill that you have already built through your brand. Else there is always the possibility that the public will view the message as an attempt to manipulate them.

Planning an advertising campaign

- ✓ **Determine Your Objectives**
Know the marketing objectives you want to achieve with your target market, and then begin to create a plan. What do you want the advertisement to achieve? Do you want to create awareness? Do you want more sign-ups or sales? Identify important objectives for each media buy so that you can measure whether they are being achieved.
- ✓ **Determine Your Advertising Budget**
How and where you advertise will be dependent on your advertising budget. Know exactly how much you can set aside as this will allow you to make strategic decisions to achieve the objectives you have identified.
- ✓ **Know Your Target Audience**
You cannot advertise effectively if you do not know who your target market is. A target market is a group of customers with a similar need. Know who they are before you start choosing the media and creating your ads. Create a profile of the consumers you are trying to reach. What are the demographics and psychographics of this audience?
- ✓ **Select the Right Media**
Advertise where the prospective customers are known to be and in the media that they tend to read, watch or listen to. Select the media your target audience looks to for information on your type of product. Use different advertising media if your budget allows, as they create a build up effect.
- ✓ **Keep Your Eyes Open for Opportunities**
Look for the best ad placements and the most affordable opportunities within your budget. If you are limited to a very small budget, you can find many ways to overcome expensive advertising routes. Keep track of the results and evaluate how your strategy is working. This will help you to adjust your plan for better results.
- ✓ **Show the Benefits**
Tell the prospect about benefits instead of product features. For example, talk about how your product may help them become smarter, healthier, richer or slimmer. Focus on the customers' needs.
- ✓ **Consistency is Key**
If you're running TV and radio commercials, print ads and direct mail, keep them consistent. Use the same tag line. Use the same announcer and music for your commercials. Use the design theme on print materials. Keep everything consistent so that your potential customers are able to identify everything that relates to your ad campaign.
- ✓ **Buy Enough Frequency**
The higher the number of times your customer hears or sees your ad, the greater your chances of getting a response from them. You need to advertise consistently over an extended period of time to achieve enough frequency to drive your message home to your target customers.



Prepare your advertisement. Effective ads can educate and open minds to consider how new information, possibilities and innovations can bring valuable benefits to them.

Visual Advertisements

Visual advertisements are what you see. Some examples are ads in newspapers and magazines, web banners, flyers, rack cards and displays. A visual ad has the following components:

- ✓ The illustrations or photographs communicating the message, mood or attitude
- ✓ The copy that you read communicating the message through choice of words
- ✓ The layout and design communicating the personality of your company

Audio and Visual Advertisements

Audio and visual advertisements are what you see and hear. Some examples are ads you watch on television, motion boards, digital signage, interactive light images, and videos on the Internet. An audio and visual ad has the following components:

- ✓ The copy that you read or hear communicating the message through choice of words
- ✓ The moving images, music or sounds communicating the message, mood, attitude and personality of your company

Audio Advertisements

Audio advertisements are what you hear. Some examples are ads you hear on radio, jingles and audio ads on websites or mobile phones. An audio ad has the following components:

- ✓ The copy that you hear communicating the message through choice of words
- ✓ The music or sounds communicating the mood or attitude and the personality of your company

Communicate through the other senses

Advertisements need not be limited to audio and visual messages. You can appeal to your target customer through other senses such as touch, smell, taste and emotions. Think of how you can let customers experience the quality and attention that has gone into your product.

Designing better advertisements

The best advertisements are usually targeted at the reader, viewer or listener on a personal level. Let's see how advertisements can be made more appealing to your target customer:

1. A clear message.

Focus on one thing, person or event. Make sure your visuals, copy and headline convey a single clear message. The rule is that the fewer words, the better. Avoid trying to squeeze everything in.

2. Show your product or the benefit it offers.

Help customers imagine what it would be like to use your product. You can use pictures or words to educate, arouse curiosity or to make it memorable. Use photographs and illustrations. If you use royalty free images, check on the terms of use. Be careful not to infringe on copyright.

3. Make it personal.

Speak on a personal level and show how your product solves a real need or problem that your customer is facing. For example, the dramatic difference in color retention on a colorful shirt after 50 washings in Brand X versus its competitor can be highlighted. Infusing humor can be an effective tool.

4. Capture attention.

Think like the reader or viewer and guide his eye by keeping him flowing from one element to the next. For the listener, lead him from one idea to another. Don't lose his attention with clutter and distractions. If there are many words, break them up with subheadings, columns and photographs. Use fonts that are easy on the eye.

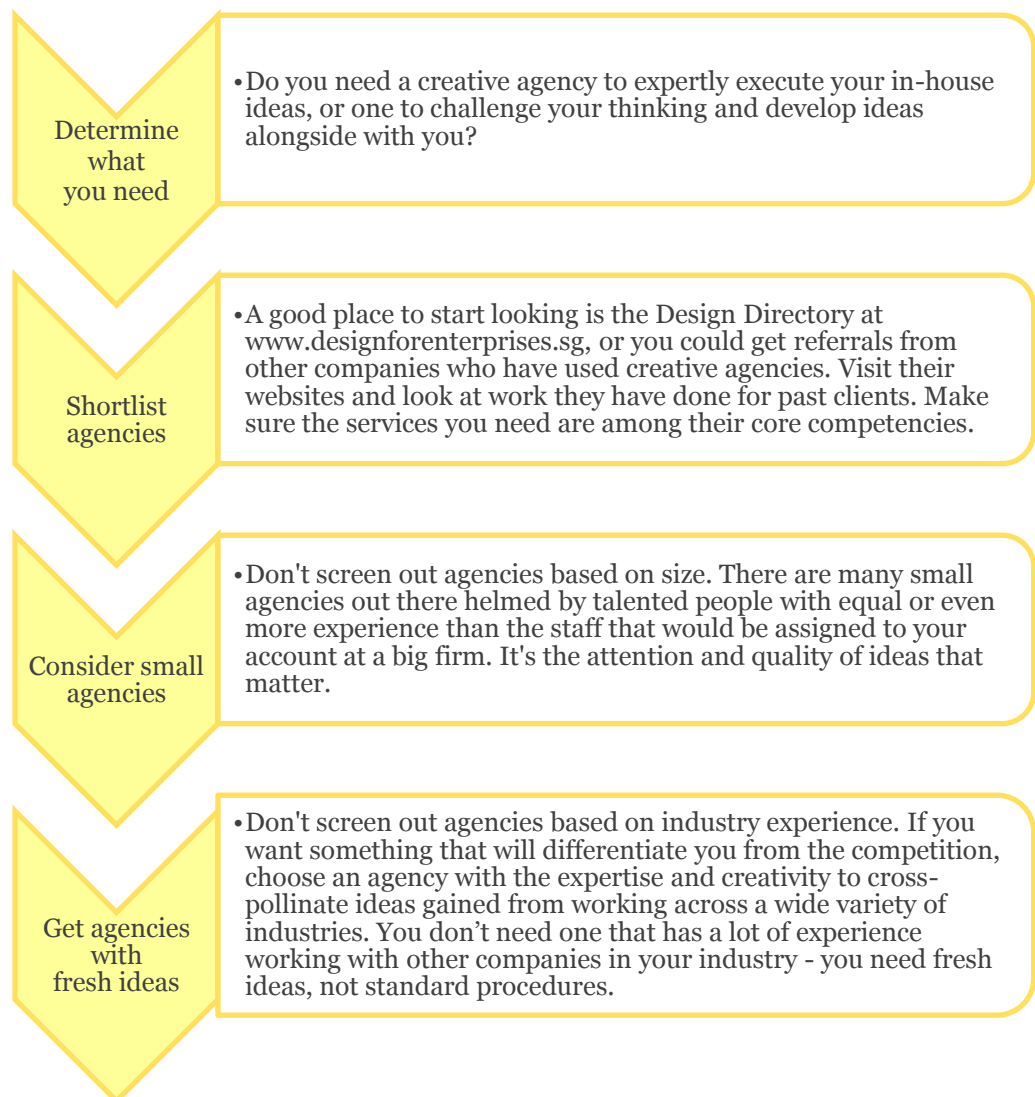
5. Get inspiration.

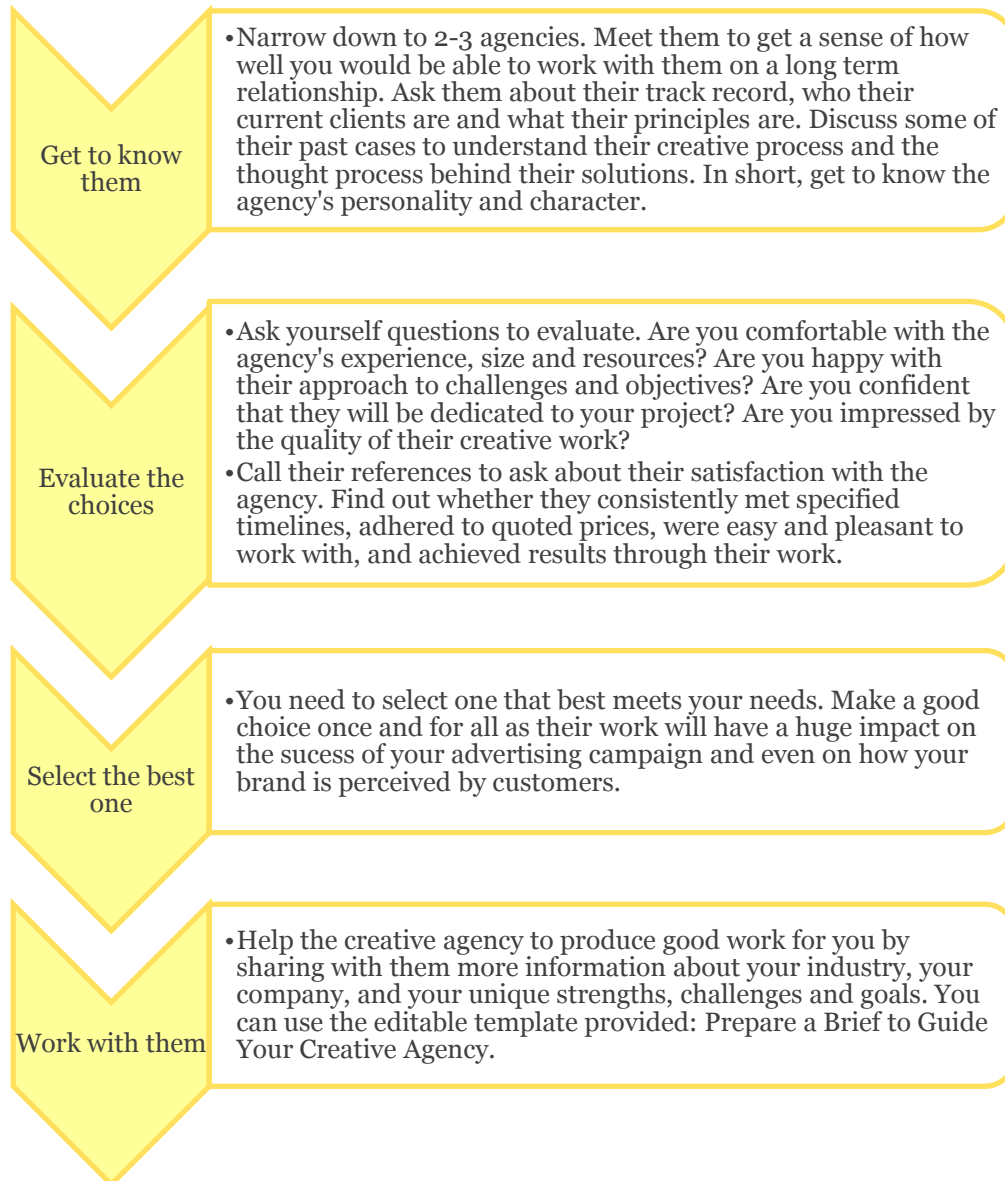
Watch out for ideas you can adapt. Start a collection of magazine or newspaper advertisement clippings with layouts that interest you.



Work with a creative agency. Tap on the creativity and experience of creative agencies so that you can focus on running your business.

How to select a creative agency







Monitor and evaluate advertising effectiveness. Determine the effect of each advertising campaign to decide what gives you the best value for money.



Tip

Using Eye Tracking & Brainwaves to Evaluate Ad Effectiveness

High-tech tools can help measure the effectiveness of ads and people's responses to them. For example, eye tracking tools observe precisely where a person's attention is focused in an advertisement. Through eye tracking, companies can test effectiveness of in-store applications, logo and package designs, concept testing and advertising development research. This is particularly useful when the product preferences are likely to differ across gender, ethnic groups and nationalities. The market research laboratory at Republic Polytechnic has already started some work with SMEs in this area.

If you are going to invest in advertising, then you definitely want to see results. If you do not track the results of your advertising campaigns, you could be spending your advertising budget on the wrong channels and missing out on better opportunities.

The objective is to compare the effect of the advertising campaign against what you have spent. You can then decide which channel gives you the best value for money. Following are some criteria you can measure as a gauge of effectiveness, depending on your objective for the campaign.

Objective: Increase sales

- ✓ Increase in sales of the promoted goods
- ✓ Increase in enquiries for the promoted goods
- ✓ Increase in overall sales as a carry-over effect
- ✓ More calls to your toll-free line
- ✓ Promotion codes used to receive offered discount
- ✓ Coupons or vouchers from the campaign redeemed
- ✓ Increased visits on your website
- ✓ Number of page views

Effectiveness Measure:
High level of intent to purchase
Cost per enquiry

Objective: Enhance brand awareness

- ✓ Do a brand audit to find out what customers learnt about you
- ✓ High level of brand/product recognition
- ✓ Greater product and brand awareness
- ✓ Level of brand recall
- ✓ Recall of brand tagline or message
- ✓ Level of association of your brand with the product category
- ✓ Search engine page rankings
- ✓ Source of enquiries are from target customer group

Effectiveness Measure:
Positive perception of brand



Audit of Current Approach

1. Does your company set an annual budget for advertising and promotion? Or do you allocate a budget as and when you decide to implement an advertising project?
2. Is your advertising efforts part of an integrated marketing communications plan?
3. What type of advertising and promotional activities are you currently engaged in?
4. Which activities have given you the best results? Which activities were the least effective? Why?
5. Are you tracking and evaluating the results of your advertising and promotion activities?
6. How have you adjusted your advertising and promotion plan based on your evaluation? How have you re-allocated your budget based on your evaluation?

Acknowledgements

Guide to Managing Media and Public Relations in the Linux Community -Chapter 7. Working the Trade Show

Naked Marketing. The Bare Essentials - by Robert Grede

Epromos.com – The Promos Know How People

Esortment.com – Event planning

How to Get Started Doing Your Own PR by Mr. Michael Hess

Buzzgain.com – Buzzgain – Profit from PR

www.mira-vlach.com/– Measuring Advertising Effectiveness

www.practical-entrepreneurship.com - What makes a good ad? By Kim T. Gordon

http://www.businessweek.com/smallbiz/content/aug2007/sb20070815_465286.htm by Steve McKee

www.eyetrackingupdate.com - Using Eye Tracking & Brainwaves to Evaluate Ad Effectiveness by dbrendant
<http://eyetrackingupdate.com/2010/07/30/eye-tracking-brainwaves-evaluate-ad-effectiveness/>

www.publicityinsider.com/pitch.asp - Bill Stoller's PublicityInsider.com

Websites mentioned in the guide

In order of appearance:

PR Newswire www.prnewswire.com

Business Wire www.businesswire.com

For a listing of local News Desks

The Institute of Public Relations of Singapore (IPRS) www.iprs.org.sg

For a complete listing of the media organisations in Singapore

Media Guide on SGPressCentre - the Singapore Government's media website
http://www.news.gov.sg/public/sgpc/en/journalist_room/media_guide.html

To refer to the Design Directory

Design for Enterprises www.designforenterprises.sg