

## **The Strategic Approach to Building Your Business Through Public Relations**

By Gina F. Rubel  
President of Furia Rubel Communications, Inc.

There are many public relations tactics you can use to develop new business and create awareness about your product or service. Great public relations can substantially accelerate business development cycles, increase audience awareness and help promote rapid growth – and it doesn't have to cost a fortune; it just has to be strategic!

### **Understand your goals and objectives**

Understanding your goals and objectives is the first step in the strategic approach to business communications. Common objectives include increasing awareness, increasing profits, retaining existing clients, acquiring prospective clients and gaining media attention. Once you know what you want to accomplish, it is important to determine how you want to be perceived. What do you want people to think, say or do when they hear your name and/or the name of your company? Make sure you address how you want to be perceived when defining your goals and objectives.

### **Focus on a segment of your ideal target audience**

It is also imperative to understand your target audiences. Your target audiences should be the thought-leaders and decision-makers who will ultimately purchase your product or service and thus affect your company's bottom line. Consider the wants and needs of many different industries and demographics. Then focus your communications outreach on a segment of your ideal target audience. Don't try to reach every industry or every possible buyer in the United States. Focus in a particular geographic location. Then find out what television programs they watch, what publications they read, what radio stations they listen to and where they network. Drill down until you know that more than 50% of your focused audience can be reached via certain venues – then focus your public relations efforts on those outlets.

### **Know who or what you are**

In order to determine how you are going to get your audiences to respond, you must first understand your business' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Be honest with yourself and note that almost every strength, weakness and threat is also an opportunity. Create a strategy that will capitalize on your opportunities and take some well-calculated risks.

### **Create a key message**

Now that you know who you want to talk to, you need to know what you want to say. Key messages pin point what exactly you want to convey to your audience. Determine what you can do for them, who cares and why it matters. Focus on what distinguishes you or your

products from the perceived competition. And remember that the bottom line will always answer the question, "what's in it for me, the purchaser?"

### **Reach out and touch someone**

When devising a set of tactics to implement, determine what types of tactics will generate the response you desire. Will an appearance on the local evening news reach your intended target audiences with the messages you want them to hear, or will a seminar do the trick? When properly targeted, effective communications vehicles include: media outreach through direct pitching and press releases, speakers' bureaus and seminars, article placements, community and volunteer participation, networking, sponsoring special events, newsletters, web sites, blogs, e-zines, podcasts and more.

However, don't forget that there are simple ways you communicate with your audiences regularly. Assuming your company has a brand, be sure to carry your business cards every where you go. If you don't have a brand, engage a strategic branding firm to ensure that your message is communicated in everything you do. Create a 30-second commercial for yourself and stick to it. Make sure your voicemail message is compelling and states who you are and what you do. Use an e-mail signature and change it regularly to include links to your web site, articles you've written, venues where you will be speaking, articles that support the need for your product or service, etc.

Remember, you communicate to your public every day. Make every outreach effective and memorable.

### **About the author**

GINA F. RUBEL, Esq., owns and operates Furia Rubel Communications Inc. ([www.furiarubel.com](http://www.furiarubel.com)), a women-owned certified strategic planning and public relations firm located in Doylestown, Pa. Furia Rubel represents a wide range of clients including law firms, professional service providers, educational institutions, non-profit associations, and healthcare organizations nationwide. Ms. Rubel can be reached at [gina@furiarubel.com](mailto:gina@furiarubel.com) or 215-340-0480.