

Four myths about PR that every company should know

Here are four perceptions about public relations from inexperienced business owners and under-qualified decision-makers. The first is.....

I don't need PR

Well arguably, you don't need capital, good employees, a smart idea or international working practices - but it's easier to be successful with them !

Most businesses will say their success is based on positive word-of-mouth and customer goodwill. But what is word-of-mouth if it isn't publicity? And if you have customer goodwill, how are you going to capitalise on that?

A professional PR team isn't just about the 'big-product' launch. It will successfully identify and implement publicity opportunities that business owners and decision-makers are too busy to see or understand.

And the second...

My company is the bee's knees - it can generate the publicity all on its own...

If you're a 50-year experienced business guru, have turned a garage into a multi-billion pound enterprise in three years - then maybe. You'll certainly have press interest - whether that is going to result in positive press coverage is another thing.

To the rest of us mortals, building a positive press image takes the same enormous determination, passion and persistence as creating a new company, product or service. And if you're not even on the media's radar you'll need professional advice to get there.

Third,

I'm connected...do you know who I am? I can get the media to cover what I want, when I want.

While your aim is to generate revenue by increasing sales, the media's aim is to generate sales and advertising by gaining attention.

If you haven't been media-trained, you don't know how to play the media game - and the media will beat you.

Your media interaction may not come across as you intended and no-one 'controls' the media except for the media. The public may get a very negative image of you...

And finally,

How hard can it be to write a press release?

Writing is not only a lot harder than you may think – but it will also take you a whole lot longer than someone who does it for a living. And the writing is only the tip of the iceberg. Can you identify which media people to contact? Do you know their deadlines? Do you have their phone numbers? Do you know which format they prefer? Do you even know their names? If you answered yes to all of the above, you are probably a PR professional. If you didn't, you need a PR agency. Companies and ad agencies spend weeks getting their 10 second ad to look and sound just right – but how many organisations take the time to prepare for an interview on tv or radio that could last for several minutes?

Gwynneth Cockcroft is Managing Director of DCP Strategic Communications. DCP is a public relations, public affairs and corporate reputation specialist. Gwynneth can be contacted by phone on 028 9040 2296, online at <http://www.dcp-pr.co.uk/> or by [email](#).

The content of this article is provided for information purposes only and does not constitute professional or other advice.