

# How public relations can help your small business grow

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23 Apr 2018

As a small business, you may not think you need to pay much attention to public relations (PR). However, when it comes to branding, marketing and promoting your company, PR is one of the most important tools to help get you the right type of attention for your business. Public relations can provide legitimacy for a business, and that's especially important for a small business that may not have a lot of brand awareness.



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A new or small business needs to get the word out that they not only exist, but offer services and products consumers need. Even established businesses need to continually market and attract new customers and clients. Some companies have marketing departments or outsource to public relations agencies to accomplish this which is essential to drive your business to new heights.

Running a small business is no easy feat, especially when your team members can be counted on one hand. When resources are limited, it's important to have a targeted and effective marketing plan to ensure you're making the best use of your limited time and budget. PR is one of the most consistent ways to build credibility for your business and spread the word in a cost-efficient way. By getting your company consistently mentioned in the news, you can generate leads for your business in an impactful way.

## Building brand awareness takes time

If a media influencer or third party validates a company, product, or service, it demonstrates credibility, which is great for brand building. A positive article, review, blog post or social media endorsement is a great asset to promote across a company's own social channels so that business is searchable and findable. It's also important to remember that PR is a slow and steady approach. Don't expect to see results overnight.

Building brand awareness and name recognition takes time, but it provides a solid base for your business to build upon the future as you have a larger budget for marketing, advertising, etc. Setting aside 10 percent of your annual budget for public relations is essential for any business big or small.

A consistent public relations programme will help build general awareness of your product, service or brand and will supplement any direct marketing and advertising efforts. This visibility also tends to make your business appear larger and more established than it may be, which may help secure partnerships, customers and funding.

## **PR is good for the bottom line**

Chances are the last time you made a purchase you used a search engine to do some online research. Public relations can help you capitalise on this process. An article at an online news outlet, a broadcast clip posted online, or a press release distributed to online publications – all of these provide valuable inbound links to your website that increase your rank in Google.

PR is also good for your bottom line. PR is much less expensive than advertising and the benefits of PR can be much more substantial than the benefits of advertising. One good media placement can lead to a substantial increase in sales and tremendous growth, and because many small businesses have a unique story to tell, they are interesting to the media.

The bottom line is that you should do your homework when deciding to hire an agency to promote your business. It's an important decision that's vital to your company's success; making the wrong choice from lack of research can lead to disappointment and devastation but choosing the right fit for your company can take your brand to new heights you never dreamed of!

## **ABOUT MAMAHLATSE MAROKANE**

I'm a creative and hardworking young woman, focused on growing professionally. I have proven success with implementation of marketing strategies and the creation and execution of event activations, marketing and PR campaigns.

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