

# The Publicity Hound

*Tips, tricks and tools for free publicity*



## The Best of "The Publicity Hound's Tips of the Week" of 2005

24 publicity tips to help you  
get the publicity you deserve  
for any product, service, cause or issue

By Joan Stewart, The Publicity Hound®

## About the Author

Joan Stewart's free publicity campaign started at age 10 when her hometown newspaper wrote a story about a blue ribbon she won for a 4-H sewing project at the Ohio State Fair. She was hooked on newspapers from that point on and knew she wanted to be a newspaper editor. She eventually worked as a reporter, then editor for 22 years at three daily newspapers in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin and at the weekly Business Journal in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She left the newspaper industry in 1996 to start her own business. Today, she works as a media relations consultant, speaker and trainer and publishes the popular online newsletter "The Publicity Hound's Tips of the Week" at <http://www.PublicityHound.com>, read by more than 16,000 subscribers worldwide. The newsletter, read by publicists and self-promoters everywhere, shows you how to build and maintain strong relations with the print, broadcast and online media. Stewart is a past president of the Wisconsin Chapter of the National Speakers Association. She shows you how to use the media to establish your credibility, enhance your reputation, sell more products and services, promote a favorite cause or issue, and position yourself as an employer of choice. She has created



more than 100 educational tools, from special reports and ebooks to audio tapes and CDs, to help publicists and self-promoters manage a strong media relations campaign. You can read more about them at

<http://www.PublicityHound.com>

**Note: This ebook is a compilation of the very best tips from my weekly ezine, "The Publicity Hound's Tips of the Week." You may reprint any item from this ebook in your own print newsletter, ezine, blog or at your website as long as you reproduce the item in its entirety. You are also free to pass along this ebook to your own customers. To subscribe to my ezine, visit <http://www.PublicityHound.com>**

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## **Attend The Business Journal's "Book of Lists" Party**

January 25, 2005

It was a night of swashbuckling fun, complete with a pirate treasure game, foods of the Mediterranean and Caribbean seas, and even a special "Pirate's Pleasure" drink made with Goldschlager, triple sec and rum.

It was The Business Journal's annual Book of Lists bash at a downtown Milwaukee hotel last Thursday night, in honor of the several hundred people whose companies and organizations made it into the giant Book of Lists. The book, published every January, includes dozens of lists, from the biggest banks and hospitals to the largest non-profits and the top residential real estate teams. Rankings are determined by criteria such as revenues, profitability and the number of employees.

I was a guest because I'm a member of [The Summit Group](#), a consulting firm that has been in the Book of Lists for the last several years.

The newspaper goes all-out for this invitation-only event. Captain Hook and his band of pirates, all in costume, greeted guests and posed for photos. Grazing stations throughout the ballroom featured whole tuna loin in banana leaf, jerk chicken skewers, assorted dim sum, and Malay lamb chops. A jumbo

shrimp display sat under a giant ice carving of--of course--a pirate ship.

It was the ultimate schmooze-fest, a chance to mingle with the editors and reporters. And it reminded me that similar Book of Lists parties are being held right now in more than 40 other cities throughout the U.S. where business journals are published. If you're attending one of the parties, a few reminders:

- If you plan on talking to any of the newspaper's staff, go easy on the booze. Smart sources never imbibe if they're going to be talking to reporters because loose lips sink ships. And tipsy Publicity Hounds just might fall overboard.
- This is not the time to pitch stories. The reporters have drinks in their hands, not notebooks. So don't prattle on about your company's fourth-quarter earnings and expect them to remember it tomorrow morning. Introduce yourself, make small talk, then ask if you can call them later in the week to suggest a few story ideas they might be interested in.
- Be respectful of their time. If you find yourself talking to an editor who acts like he needs to move on after just a few minutes with you, don't block his escape route. He simply needs to mingle. So don't take it personally.

- If your organization isn't included in the Book of Lists, find out why by contacting your advertising representative. When I worked at The Business Journal, I was told that some companies never make it onto the list simply because they fail to complete and return the The Book of Lists form that the newspaper sends to them each year so it can compile information for the list rankings.

If you can't attend the party, you can still get your story into a business journal. Paul Furiga, former editor of the Pittsburgh Business Times, teamed up with me for an hour-long teleseminar called "[How to Use Business Journals to Tell Your Story.](#)" Learn why placing a story in these newspapers is often more valuable than getting into the business section of your local metro newspaper.

# How to Get Publicity from High Gasoline Prices

March 29, 2005

Grumble all you want about high gasoline prices.

Smart Publicity Hounds are figuring out how to piggyback onto what will be one of the biggest stories of the summer and create some fabulous publicity for their businesses. Here are some ideas:

- If you rely on gasoline to operate your business, what are you doing differently to save on fuel costs? Making changes in your delivery routes? Adding bicycles to the fleet? Buying more fuel-efficient cars?
- If you're a local tourist attraction like a bed and breakfast or museum, are you using this angle to attract more local business by encouraging vacationers to stay closer to home?
- If your employees travel for business, are you urging them to make their reservations as early as possible and avoid the inevitable increases in airfares?
- In several counties here in Wisconsin, we're forced to buy that crummy ethanol gasoline that's more expensive and ruins car engines. Yet environmentalists and others say ethanol cuts down on air pollution. Where do you stand on

reconstituted gasoline? Weigh in with a letter to the editor or an opinion column.

- Have higher gasoline prices changed your own travel plans?

You can probably come up with many more story ideas. If your idea has a good visual, don't forget TV. If you don't know how to pitch a story idea to your local TV station, now's the time to learn how. TV reporter Shawne Duperon walks you step-by-step through the process of hooking TV reporters. She teaches you how to identify the "Queen Bee," the person in every TV newsroom who decides what news stories will be covered, and she shows you how to stay on their radar screens without being a pest. ["How to Get on the Local TV News Tomorrow"](#) is available as a cassette tape, CD or an electronic transcript that you can download and be reading in a few minutes.



## **Target Affluent Audiences with Inflight Magazines**

April 18, 2005

If you're targeting an educated, more affluent audience with your message, and your topic is a good fit, in-flight magazines can be one of your best publicity tools.

A quick look at the statistics should convince you:

- Many of these magazines have high circulations.
- Many readers are Frequent Flyers, among the most educated and affluent consumers
- 60 percent are men; 40 percent women
- 74 percent are in the 25-54 age bracket
- 86 percent are college-educated
- 56 percent hold management positions
- 57 percent have incomes of more than \$75,000 a year

Here's what I learned while researching information for "Special Report #29: Fly High with Publicity in In-Flight Magazines" at <http://tinyurl.com/6uz9g>:

- Contact information for most of the 22 magazines in my report has changed in the last year and a half.
- In general, circulation at most in-flight magazines has dropped the last two years.
- Several of the magazines have changed editors.
- One magazine has been renamed and reformatted.
- The editors' biggest pet peeve is that too many P.R. people pitch without knowing anything about the publication. Tom Chapman, editor of "Spirit of Aloha" magazine published by Aloha Air, says he's overwhelmed with PR requests and materials, "99 percent of which is misdirected and I can't possibly use."
- I found six magazines, most of which serve airlines in the United Kingdom and Europe, and I've added them to the report. Several of them aren't even in the major media resource directories.
- Editors are still hungry for business news, food trends, interesting events, tourist attractions and celebrities in cities the airlines serve. So make sure your special event is listed in the events calendar if it's in a city served by one of these airlines.

- Many editors are still inundated with boring travelogues along the lines of “how I spent my summer vacation.” Don’t even bother sending this boring stuff.

If you have a message for business audiences, or for people who travel, and you aren’t targeting inflight magazines, you’re missing a valuable PR opportunity. You can find “Special Report #29: Fly High with Publicity in Inflight Magazines” at <http://tinyurl.com/6uz9g>

## Find Out What Bloggers are Saying About You

May 31, 2005

If your boss expects a thick pile of press clippings at the end of each month, and you fear for your life because you don't have them, it's time to bring the boss into the 21st Century. Find out, instead, what bloggers are saying about your company.

I just spent the last hour surfing from blog to blog, trying to find out what people are saying about The Publicity Hound. I was amazed at what I found.

Here's what they're saying:

- Book marketing guru John Kremer, one of my heroes, posted an item in his blog last week, saying he thinks my dog joke ebook is a smart marketing idea. "This book gives her easy access to dog-loving sites...Trust me, if she does a viral marketing campaign to these people about her dog joke book, she'll reach many people who also need to learn more about publicity. Once at her site, they'll discover that she has a lot more to offer them."
- At the New Jersey Christian Writers Group blog, Louise Bergmann gushed about my recent teleseminar on how to write eye-opening promo pieces that sell books. "It was one of the best investments I've made in my book," she wrote.

If you missed it, you can order the CD at <http://tinyurl.com/7zza3>

- My ezine item last month about the four 4 PR trends (including blogging) that people were buzzing about at a recent PR convention were reprinted by the Stark County Law Library Blawg in Ohio and Real Lawyers Have Blogs, among others.
- The Flight Tickets to Costa Rica blog reprinted an item from my own blog about how to get your story into inflight magazines. It left intact a reference and a link to my "Special Report #29" on the same topic at <http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity-products/reports.html>
- In her face2face blog, Susan Pelletier, executive editor of Medical Meetings magazine, mentioned an item I printed last year urging Publicity Hounds who hold press conferences and meetings to display their logo prominently on the podium at the front of the room. "And I love the way I heard about this item: Someone who reads both her e-newsletter (which I just signed up for) and this blog suggested she get in touch with me to share the wealth. And in true publicity hound fashion, she did." Susan included a link on how to sign up for this ezine.

And on and on and on it goes. Of course, if I screw up, the bloggers will send me to the dog house. But

the point is, this kind of advertising is better than anything I could ever afford. And because bloggers read each others' blogs, the free publicity will multiply.

If you want to see what the bloggers are saying about your company, or your boss, go to <http://www.technorati.com/> and do a search. If nothing comes up, you need to start creating a presence on the Internet. Your own blog is a great place to start. One of the very best blog books is Don Crowther's "Blogging for Business" ebook at <http://tinyurl.com/7fjrk>

By the time you're finished reading just a few chapters, he will have convinced you that if you're not blogging, you aren't taking advantage of the best kind of free publicity out there.

## **What You Can Learn from Honey the Money Dog**

June 7, 2005

Filling up your gas tank doesn't get more fun than this.

When Don Rogers picked up a cocker spaniel named Honey six years ago at the dog pound, he could never have guessed the fame she would bring to his gas station--Crazy D's All American Fireworks at the El Cheapo Gas Station just off I-95 in South Carolina.

It's a family business. So Honey comes to work each day with Don and his wife, Joyce, and their daughter and granddaughter.

One slow day, Don decided to teach the dog to take money (bills only) from customers and bring it to his wife at the cash register.

"Honey, go get the money!" he would command.

Soon everyone in town wanted to gas up at Don's pumps so they could watch Honey grab their money between her teeth and run back to Joyce at the cash register. Honey can even tell real money from fake Monopoly money or even foreign currency. If it's not real, she'll just drop it on the floor.

She gets a treat each time she comes back to the cash register. And because she's been so successful, she's now on diet treats.

The story is in the spiral-bound book *Drive I-95*, a collection of maps, history, trivia and fun facts about the heavily traveled interstate from Boston to the Florida border. Authors Stan Posner and Sandra Phillips-Posner, who are also Publicity Hounds, have had lots of media attention for the book. Now they've thought of yet another way to get reporters interested.

They piggyback onto the high gasoline prices. While everybody else is grumbling about the cost of fuel, they're telling the media about Honey and her antics and how much fun motorists are having filling up their tanks at the El Cheapo Gas Station. You can see a photo of Honey exchanging her cash for a treat at the bottom of the page at [http://www.drivei95.com/photo\\_gallery\\_sc.htm](http://www.drivei95.com/photo_gallery_sc.htm)

I met the Posners at the Book ExpoAmerica convention over the weekend in New York City. They walked the convention floor dressed in their giant I-95 signs that they wore like sandwich boards.

Other Publicity Hounds can learn a valuable lesson from the Posners. If you can offer a humorous story or tidbit for an otherwise serious story, publicity is almost yours for the asking.



"Special Report #47: How to Use Humor to Grab Media Attention" shows you how to make a reporter smile, then pick up the phone and call you. I give you examples of humorous tips sheets, clever headlines for news releases about serious topics, and a humorous freebie that an author sends to editors along with her news releases...it's no surprise she has gotten more than 1,000 media hits. You can order the report at <http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity-products/reports.html>

## **Get Your Product, Service into Holiday Gift Guides**

June 14, 2005

If your product or service would make the perfect Christmas gift, now is the time to pitch many of the major magazines that have special holiday gift sections and work several months ahead.

But how do you know which publications are doing gift guides? Or which are doing feature stories on products that make great gifts? Or which publications actually want news about what you're selling and promise not to throw the news releases in the wastebasket just because you haven't bought an ad?

Help is on the way with The Gift List, a fee-based service that provides lists of media contacts for national and regional magazines, the top 250 newspapers, major wire and news services, and top radio and TV stations. Researchers contact media in all consumer categories that cover topics such as fashion, beauty, home decor, food and beverage, consumer electronics, books, entertainment, toys, travel and fitness.

The list includes names and contact information for reporters and editors, the kinds of products and services they want to feature, specifications for photos they want, when to pitch them, and deadlines. You can sort the information by category

and even create your own customized media list. Your own list and marked records and notes are stored on their secure server. Last year's list featured 24 categories of magazines. The list is updated weekly through September. Not surprisingly, some of the big PR agencies subscribe to this list, then use it to pitch their clients' products and services.

For more details, a list of pitching tips and a demo, visit <http://tinyurl.com/9rdvk>

# Stop Holding News Conferences —They're Boring!

June 21, 2005

A reader wrote this week and asked:

"We are looking for some advice on when to send a media notice to our contacts announcing a press conference. A week prior to the press conference? Two days? Or is it best to hit them a couple of times?"

The Publicity Hound says:

Why do you think it's so difficult to lure the media to news conferences? Here are five reasons:

- They're almost always boring. Sometimes, they don't even result in news.
- If there's a nugget of news to be found, all media walk away with the same story. They hate that. Each media outlet wants its own story, or a different angle on the same story.
- Reporters and photographers often have to battle rush-hour traffic getting there.
- Photographers would much rather photograph events with people, color and motion instead of a bunch of talking heads behind microphones.

- Much of the same information the media can get at a news conference can be emailed to them just as easily.

The short answer: Skip the news conference and instead think of several different angles to pitch to different media outlets.

Or, instead of a news conference, sponsor a clever event. Or think of a way to get the media involved in your event. Several weeks ago, I was part of a teleseminar panel sponsored by Bulldog Reporter. One participant wanted ideas on how to pitch a news conference announcing workshops in which students would learn about nature and the environment. I suggested that instead, they invite reporters to join in one of the activities--building bat houses.

"Creative Alternatives to Boring News Conferences" gives you dozens of ideas on how to steer clear of these cliché events and, instead, create an exciting event that will pull the media like a magnet. You'll also learn the one time you SHOULD call a news conference...it will save your butt and it might even save your job. Read more about what you'll learn at <http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity-products/marketing-tapes/alternativestoconferences.htm>

## **Piggyback Publicity onto Summer Movies**

July 5, 2005

Keep your eyes open for summer movies that might help you create publicity for your product, service, cause or issue.

It's Just Lunch, an international dating service that gives clients a chance to meet over lunch, uses this strategy to get phenomenal publicity.

It recently surveyed 2,774 East Coast singles on whether they found romance at weddings. The survey coincided with the release this month of the movie *Wedding Crashers*, starring Vince Vaughn and Owen Wilson. It's about two committed womanizers who slip into weddings to hit on women.

The survey found, however, that the odds of sparking anything beyond an introduction are not in most people's favor. Only 27 percent of East Coast men have met a future date at another's nuptials, the survey found. Within the last week, the story appeared in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, the *Orlando Tribune*, the *Orange County Register* and a smattering of smaller newspapers.

Back in February, It's Just Lunch found that in a separate survey of 3,810 singles, *The Aviator* was the best date movie and *Sideways* was a close second.

Check out the company's mile-long list of media hits at <http://www.itsjustlunch.com/PressCenter.php> and see if you don't recognize something I've been preaching about for years. They generate much of their publicity by writing news releases that tie into movies, upcoming holidays and dating trends in specific cities. They take polls and surveys at their website. And their franchisees become the recognized experts that reporters seek out when writing stories about romance and dating.

I also noticed that they post their press releases online at places such as PRweb at <http://www.PRweb.com> and 24-7PressRelease.com at <http://www.24-7pressrelease.com/> Because I travel a lot, I know they draw traffic to their website with two-page ads in some of the inflight magazines.

Learn how to use many of the same strategies they use with "Briefs, Fillers and Quizzes: How to Create Them and Why Editors Love Them." It's available as a CD or electronic transcript that you can download and read within minutes. Use briefs to find your way into national magazines. Editors love them because they fill odd-size holes on a page and need very little editing. Read more about what you'll learn at [http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity-products/marketing-tapes/briefs\\_fillers\\_quizes.htm](http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity-products/marketing-tapes/briefs_fillers_quizes.htm)

Learn how to get news and feature stories about your product or service into the inflight magazines. "Special Report #29: Fly High with Publicity in

Inflight Magazines" will tell you how. Order at <http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity-products/reports.html>



## Create a Hall of Fame for Publicity

July 26, 2005

If you're dying to get into a national magazine, a big trade journal, on your local TV news or into your local newspaper, here's one of the easiest ways to do it. Create your own Hall of Fame.

One of my favorites is the Pet Hall of Fame, created by the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association. Each year, it gets fabulous publicity when its newest inductees are announced. Winners include:

- Hoss, a black Labrador that saved the lives of two young children who had fallen through the ice.
- Dixie, a German Shepherd/Golden Retriever mix that helps his owners sense and cope with seizures before they occur.
- Milo, a pup that moved into a new home to give a lonely person constant companionship.

See all the inductees at their website at

<http://www.wvma.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=7>

The annual awards have resulted in dozens of stories over the years in local newspapers and magazines and on Wisconsin radio and TV stations. But the big coup came more than a decade ago, shortly after the first Hall of Fame inductees were announced.

A producer working for "Oprah" called Leslie Grendahl, executive director of the veterinary association, and asked about Elvis, a Harlequin Great Dane that saved the lives of his owners during a house fire. "Oprah" was planning a program on unusual animals, hence the phone call. Elvis was whisked by limo from his home in Chetek, Wisconsin to Oprah's studios in Chicago and, overnight, became a star. And, of course, the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association and the Pet Hall of Fame were mentioned.

"Our Hall of Fame stories are touchy-feely, and the press just loves them," Leslie said.

Creating a Hall of Fame is just one of several ideas that publicity expert Bill Stoller suggests you consider. He mentions more of them in the article he wrote for the July/August 2005 of The Publicity Hound subscription newsletter. The issue also includes tips on how to pitch college newspapers, how an adventure coach got into TIME magazine without even pitching, a wildly successful corporate open house, a new lifestyle magazine, a place where you can offer yourself as a guest expert for podcasters, how to be a productive blogger, the one word you should never use when talking to TV people, how to use hooks to customize your pitches, a place where copywriters can find other copywriters willing to critique their work, where to find a free tutorial that will help you create a clever name and tagline for your business, how to pitch Jim

Blasingame of "The Small Business Advocate Show,"  
and July and August story ideas. All for \$9.

Order the July/August issue at  
<http://tinyurl.com/m3g54>

# **Please Stop Announcing Things**

August 9, 2005

As the debate rages on about whether news releases are less relevant than ever, the fact remains that most Publicity Hounds still write them.

That's why you must do everything possible to make your releases so compelling that they capture a reporter's interest within five seconds.

Here's something you can do to make that happen. Try to banish the following words from your news releases:

Announce

Announced

Announcing

Announcement

Why? Because announcements are not news. The gist of the announcement is news. Besides, an "announcement" sounds so contrived and overused.

Let's say you want to publicize a fund-raiser that your group will sponsor two months from now. Many people would write the release saying "The 5-mile run for multiple sclerosis was announced yesterday..."

That sentence immediately dates your release. It makes it sound as though the news occurred yesterday when, in fact, it won't happen for another two months. The best news releases are those with present tense or future tense leads. Like this:

"The Bay View Kiwanis Club will try to raise \$20,000 for multiple sclerosis with a 5-mile run on October 17."

You can't always eliminate those four words from your releases. But I want you to pause every time you are tempted to write them. Then ask yourself, "Is there another word I can substitute?" or "If the announcement isn't the news, what is?"

If you're among those who hate news releases, you can still catch the attention of busy journalists with a well-written pitch letter. BL Ochman, who hasn't written a news release in years, explains how to craft a pitch letter that demands attention, is free of jargon, and practically forces a reporter to reach for the telephone. "How to Write a Pitch Letter More Powerful Than a News Release" is available as a CD or electronic transcript you can download and be reading in minutes. And it includes two sample pitch letters that BL rewrote. Read more about what you'll learn at <http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity-products/marketing-tapes/morepowerfulpitchletter.htm>

## Read USA Today to Stay Atop Trends

August 23, 2005

If you want to stay on top of current trends, pick up a copy of USA Today, a veritable bible of what's hot and what's not.

In Friday's issue, I counted more than a dozen stories on trends, most of which are perfect for piggybacking. They include:

- Living in the front yard. After cramming hot tubs and gazebos into their backyards for years, homeowners are discovering that the front yard is the only place left to renovate. And it has now become living space. Horticulturists, landscapers and retailers who sell lawn furniture and other accessories should pitch this story to newspaper and magazine lifestyle home and garden editors.
- Pain at the pump. Motorists can fight back, sort of, by doing things such as checking tire pressure and using lower-octane gasoline. If you're an expert on car maintenance, remember that this is a GREAT story for TV because of all the visuals.
- Many corporate employees itching for a change are scrapping plans to start their own businesses because of skyrocketing health insurance costs. If you're an insurance expert, offer tips on how

business owners can save on health insurance by doing things like buying it through a trade association or chamber of commerce, or having a health savings account.

- Popcorn, once the star snack in movie theaters, is playing a supporting role in upscale restaurants. Some chefs are pureeing it and using it as a batter for fried dishes. Others are using it as a garnish, such as in soups. If you're a chef or restaurant owner and you're using popcorn in unique ways, suggest this story to your local food columnist. See the CD or electronic transcript titled "Publicity Tips for Restaurants, Chefs & Foodies" at <http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity-products/marketing-tapes/restaurants.htm>
- Black is back in cookware. LeCreuset, famed for its colorful cookware, is embracing black as its "new color." So are other cookware manufacturers. Local retailers who sell cookware can piggyback off this story.
- Humor at Gate A3. Some airlines are letting employees experiment with using humor in flight, or in the airport. Dave George, Independence Air's stand-up comedian at Washington Dulles airport, "works the gates" by doing fun things such as giving away a free ticket to the winner of an "Ugliest Carry-on Contest." One winner was caught toting a shopping bag from the Dollar Store, complete

with a hole. If you travel a lot, offer commentary on humor in the air. If you're a humor author or speaker, throw in a few of your own one-liners.

- Hollywood's celebrity baby boom, which includes Britney Spears, Tina Fey and Heidi Klum, and stories about what they're buying for their babies, affects how the average moms are buying for their newborns. Retailers who sell everything from baby strollers to clothing should let the media know about what's hot for tots.

My ebook "How to be a Kick-butt Publicity Hound," recently updated with a new chapter on blogging, stresses trends as one of the very best ways to get publicity. Learn hundreds of other ways, including how to make big money on radio talk shows by selling books and other products that tie into trends. Read more about the book at

<http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity/publicityhound.htm>



## **Pitch Jay Leno with Your Funny Product or Service**

August 30, 2005

Promise me that after you read this item, you won't pester Jay Leno's staff with a boring idea that could put his late-night audience to sleep.

If you watch Leno, like I do, you know his "correspondents" travel far and wide to fun events where they can film whacky segments, from John Melendez going belly-to-belly with bikers at the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally to "Sopranos" man Steve Schirripa floor-hopping to see what's being sold at Las Vegas conventions. You can watch these segments and more at [http://www.nbc.com/nbc/The\\_Tonight\\_Show\\_with\\_Jay\\_Leno/correspondents/](http://www.nbc.com/nbc/The_Tonight_Show_with_Jay_Leno/correspondents/)

On Sept. 9-11, when the Toy & Game Inventors Forum meets in Orlando, Florida, Leno's crew will be there, filming inventors with their most outlandish creations. When I first heard about the taping, I contacted Bob Keegan, director of the Toy & Game Industry Foundation, to find out how they pulled off the publicity coup.

The whole thing started last year when someone from Keegan's staff called "The Tonight Show" on a whim, asked for a segment producer and was put through to a guy named Justin.

A crew visited the toy and game show for two days, interviewed several inventors, wrote the entire comedy sketch themselves, then packed up their equipment and headed back to Burbank, California, and aired the segment.

"As a result," Bob said, "one of the guys got a 30,000-piece order for his toy within a couple of days."

But the segment attracted more than just buyers. This year, someone from "The Late Show" with David Letterman called, asking if they, too, could send someone to the event.

"We had to turn them down," Bob said.

If you're sponsoring a special event that seems like it's custom-made for Leno or Letterman, keep these two late-night TV shows in mind. "The Tonight Show" also wants to hear about teens who can do weird stunts for its "Teenage Wasteland" segments. Read more about it at

[http://www.nbc.com/nbc/The Tonight Show with Jay Leno/teenage wasteland/](http://www.nbc.com/nbc/The_Tonight_Show_with_Jay_Leno/teenage_wasteland/)

Letterman, of course, is always on the lookout for four-legged Hounds and other pets for its "Stupid Pet and Human Trick" segments. They're holding regional auditions during the next few months in Austin, Texas; Memphis, Tennessee; and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Read more about how to participate at

[http://www.cbs.com/latenight/lateshow/show\\_info/index.shtml#pets](http://www.cbs.com/latenight/lateshow/show_info/index.shtml#pets)

If you can't make it onto one of these late shows, you can get lots of local, regional and national publicity for your special events by doing your homework, and working with the media BEFORE the event occurs so you aren't scurrying around at the last minute writing news releases and contacting TV stations. In fact, former event planner Deb Schmidt and I show you how to plan events that draw hundreds of participants and lots of media. "How to Plan & Promote Sizzling Special Events," a series of 6 audio CDs, includes a seventh CD with 15 valuable checklists for event planners. It comes in a handsome Publicity Hound CD case. Read more about what you'll learn at <http://publicityhound.com/publicity/promote.html>

## **How to Generate Publicity at Trade Shows**

September 5, 2005

Most people who exhibit at trade shows overlook a powerful publicity tool that's just waiting for their news.

It's the trade show daily, the newspaper that offers a bird's-eye view of what's happening that day at the show.

When I first attended the BookExpo America convention last year, I was kicking myself for not paying closer attention to the dailies. I missed meeting Gene Hackman, one of my favorite actors, who was stationed in a section of the exhibit hall, autographing copies of his new book. I'll never make that mistake again.

You shouldn't either. If you're exhibiting, contact trade show organizers a few months before the show for the name of the person to whom you should send news releases and pitches so you can be included in the dailies. These newspapers are looking for news such as:

- Interesting booth exhibits
- Interactive games, polls, surveys and other attractions at your booth
- Enticing give-aways

- The most unusual products being introduced
- Celebrities who will be at the booth or stationed elsewhere in the convention center to talk with attendees, sign autographs or give a speech
- Interesting profiles of company execs, celebrities, or those giving the keynote speeches
- Stories about emerging trends that will be evident at the show

All those tips will help drive traffic to your booth. Joan Vander Valk, account supervisor at Stern + Associates, has six other great tips on how to generate publicity at trade shows. She discusses them in an article in the September/October issue of The Publicity Hound® subscription newsletter.

The newsletter also includes advice on how to approach newspapers and magazines if you want a column, a fun contest you can sponsor in your PR department that will result in more creative pitches that get results, a website where self-published authors can get advice on any aspect of book marketing, a website where bloggers can get advice on topics dealing with libel, more than a dozen ways to get a magazine editor's attention, a website where you can find vendors that specialize in everything from accounting to techie services and are willing to bid on a project you need done, where to publicize author events, a free clipping service, how to get

onto the Life, Love and Health® radio show, and September and October story ideas. All for only \$10.

Order at

<http://www.marketerschoice.com/app/javanof.asp?MerchantID=20214&ProductID=2508353>

## **Don't Write One-Size-Fits-All Press Releases**

September 20, 2005

When you write a news release, do you write different versions of the same release--emphasizing different things in the first paragraph--depending on what media outlet you're sending it to?

Smart Publicity Hounds do. They want every magazine editor to read their releases and say, "Aha! This is perfect for our audience!" Yet too few people bother with different versions. They send the same old one-size-fits-all vanilla release to everyone on their media list, even though those media may be very different.

What a mistake.

I was reminded of this last week when my friend Don Crowther, who sells corporate gift baskets online, told me he was subscribing to The Gift List, a service that provides names and contact information for more than 250 publications and broadcast outlets that are planning special holiday gift sections or features. Don thinks his gift baskets would be a perfect fit in these sections. I agree.

But he was in quandary about how to write the news release. His baskets include top-quality gourmet chocolate, candy and coffees packed in a variety of containers.

Shoppers who visit his website at <http://tinyurl.com/7z25m> will find a Whitewashed Birdhouse for gardeners. Or the red Radio Flyer Wagon for a favorite kid, or a kid at heart. The antique lover on your gift list might love the antique-looking sea trunk made of solid wood with leather trimmed straps that snap closed. There's even The Hidden Clock, an accent piece that serves a practical purpose: as a clock and as an attractive storage container. The embossed metal container sits on curved legs. When you lift the lid, the clock appears to hold the lid open.

I told Don he can take the easy way out with one news release for everyone. "But don't expect much response from the media," I said. "Editors don't want to wade through a long list of gifts to see if there's one that will fit the needs of their audience, then rewrite the release."

If he really wants to impress editors, he should send a release about the Whitewashed Birdhouse gift basket, along with a photo, to gardening and bird magazines. Send a news release highlighting the Radio Flyer wagon, and a photo, to kids' publications and parenting magazines. A release describing the antique looking sea trunk can be sent to magazines devoted to boats, travel, the outdoors, and so on.

The next time you're tempted to write one news release for everyone, ask yourself if there are certain elements of your product, service, cause, issue or event that should be highlighted for certain



publications. The extra time it takes to write one more release, or several more, will be well worth it.

I'm starting to see lots of queries online from editors and reporters who are writing articles for holiday gift guides, so this is the ideal time to pitch. Getting your product mentioned in these guides is often far easier than convincing an editor to feature it in any other story or section. The Gift List, a subscription-based service, has done more than 600 hours of research to find the national magazines, regional magazines, top 250 newspapers, top radio stations, major wire and news services and even national TV shows that feature products and services especially for the holidays.

Check out their pitching tips and demo at <http://tinyurl.com/9es8y>

## **Why Your Photo is So Important to Your Publicity Campaign**

September 27, 2005

Whenever I send a news release about something I've done to my local newspapers or trade journals, I hardly ever hear feedback from my neighbors or peers, even when I know it's been printed.

But when I send my photo with the release and it's printed, I hear a chorus that sounds like this:

"I saw your picture in the paper!"

"Did you know you're in the most recent issue of PR Tactics?"

"Hey, I was Googling last week and your photo showed up on a website for writers. I thought your article was terrific."

That's music to The Publicity Hound's ears. That's because in the majority of cases, a photo attracts readers' attention and draws them to the news item.

Yet journalists remain continually frustrated by the inability of publicists and others who pitch to understand the incredible power of photos. Freelance writer Pat Luebke, who writes for the restaurant and aviation industries, says a lack of photos is one of her top pet peeves.

"People keep trying to get into more and more newspapers and magazines," she says. "If they'd only understand that especially with the digital cameras that are available today, making photos available to editors automatically DOUBLES the space you receive."

Gina Spadofori, who writes a syndicated pet page for Universal Press Syndicate, says she has a continual problem finding good images to fill a small hole on a page.

"The availability of high-quality, high-resolution art can tip a 'maybe' item into the 'yes' category," she says.

In fact, one good-quality photo that accompanies your story pitch can automatically move a story from Page 21 to Pages 1, 2 or 3 in a newspaper or magazine. Craig Saunders, editor of Prism, Canada's magazine for eye care, echoes what many other magazine editors say:

"In the front section of our magazine, nothing gets in without good photos--nothing!"

I have my own pet peeves regarding photos. A man in a photo looks as though he has a plant growing out of the top of his head. One woman gave me a photo of her in a sleeveless blouse, with her bra strap showing. One person gave me a snapshot of him and his dog. The dog had the dreaded "red eye"

problem that we see so frequently, leading us to wonder if all dogs and even people have red eyes.

I became so frustrated with these problems that I wrote "How to Use Photos & Graphics in Your Publicity Campaign," a 138-page ebook that walks you step by step through the entire process of how to take your own photos and create your own graphics. The ebook includes everything from a thorough explanation of camera equipment and the elements of great photos to things such as the pros and cons of prints versus digital photos, how to optimize photos for your website so it loads quickly, how to take photos at your own special event if the media refuses to cover it, and how to use creative photos for routine announcements like births, weddings and anniversaries.

Those of you who need to hire a professional photographer will find an entire chapter devoted to saving you time and money finding the best professional for the job. It also lists the important questions to ask photographers so you don't find yourself in a legal battle over the use of photos years later.

You'll find tips for pitching "stand-alone" photos, ideas on how to get an entire page of pre-event coverage, and 18 ways to stay on a photographer's good side. Learn about dozens of bonehead mistakes you shouldn't be making. You can download the ebook and be reading it in just a few minutes. Read

more about what you'll learn at

<http://www.PublicityHound.com/publicityphotos.htm>

## Vote for the POOP Award

October 4, 2005

I'll bet many of you work for companies that regularly have "POOP" in their newsletters, annual reports and even at their websites.

"POOP" stands for Photos that Ought to be Outlawed Permanently. The acronym is the brainchild of Jean Clough, who teaches photography. Her friend, Steve Crescenzo, thought it was so clever when he first heard it that he wrote about it in his blog called "Corporate Hallucinations."

In fact, Crescenzo is asking his blog visitors to vote on his top five nominees for the POOP Award. Here's how he describes them:

- The Execution at Dawn photo. This is where you line up a bunch of team members against the wall and "shoot them." The only tension in this photo is, how does each person position his hands? Do you do the "fig leaf," and hold them in front of your crotch? Do you put them behind your back? At your sides? In your pockets? The drama!!!"
- The "Hey, we're having a meeting!" photo, where you show two or more people, preferably middle-aged white guys in suits, at a long table, with at least one person leaning into a microphone.

- The "grammar-school class picture" photo, where the "photographer" lines up way too many team members for a group shot, resulting in a picture where each person's head is roughly the size of a Cheerio and you can't tell who anybody is.
- The "employee at work" photo where an obviously posed worker is doing his best not to look at the camera.

You can read the entire item at [http://blog.ragan.com/archives/stevesblog/2005/08/are\\_there\\_poops.html](http://blog.ragan.com/archives/stevesblog/2005/08/are_there_poops.html)

I posted a comment at the blog saying my personal favorites were none of the above. I'd give the POOP award to....the envelope please...

Those awful check-passing, ground-breaking and ribbon-cutting photos which I lump into a category called grip-and-grin. Two people are gripping the ends of an oversized check and grinning for the camera. Or both are gripping a plaque or trophy, shaking hands with each other, and looking straight into the camera with a dumb grin on their faces.

If you're guilty of using these photos, shame on you. Don't try to get off the hook with the lame excuse "the boss made me do it."

In my new ebook "How to Use Photos & Graphics in Your Publicity Campaign," I devote an entire chapter

to the ubiquitous grip-and-grin photos. And I tell you about a little online exercise you can show the boss to drive home your point that these photos are nothing but POOP. If I were you, I'd also show the boss Steve's blog item. Then start thinking about creative alternatives to the examples listed above.

Anyone who takes publicity photos, hires professional photographers or needs ideas for graphics to add pizzazz to their pitches will find dozens of great examples in the ebook. If you're not taking, pitching or using photos, you're missing out on many opportunities for even more publicity. Read what you'll learn in the book at

<http://www.PublicityHound.com/publicityphotos.htm>



## **What to do When Reporters are Jerks**

October 11, 2005

Here's a common problem Publicity Hounds run into when they're so eager for publicity that they'll do almost anything for a journalist.

Last week, a reader asked, "I spent a lot of time talking to a reporter and we really hit it off. But when she wrote the article, I was surprised to see she used my information, but she didn't use my name. What should I do?"

I hear similar complaints from people who actually do research for a journalist, turn over their information, but are never even mentioned in the article.

Here's what I'd do if one of those two things happened to me. If it was a short interview, I'd ignore the urge to complain. If the reporter called again, I'd ask specifically if the reporter planned to mention me by name in the article. If the answer is "no" or "I don't know," I'd give the reporter what she needs but wouldn't spend extra time on it.

But if I had spent an inordinate amount of time gathering information for the initial interview, and she never mentioned my name, I'd call the reporter and say that I was really glad I could help. "But I was disappointed that you never mentioned my name. I'm curious. Why did that happen?"

It could be that a copy editor had to cut the story and deleted the attribution.

Then I'd ask the reporter to please keep me in mind if she's working on another story in which I would be a good fit--but to contact me only if she's willing to attribute the information to me. That drives home the point that I'm still willing to help her, but only if she's willing to make it up to me.

If she gets mad and never calls me again, so what? You can't lose a good media contact that was never a good media contact to begin with.

How would you handle this dilemma and others like it? If you're a publicist, have you devised a way to deal with reporters who are jerks? Has a reporter ever asked for special favors, then not given you or your client credit? If you've followed the advice above, has it worked? If you're a media person, what suggestions can you share about how to increase the chances that a source will be named in an article?

Post your comments to my blog at <http://publicityhound.net/prblog/?p=384> and I'll share the best ones here next week.

Not naming sources who provide a lot of information is only one of many quirks you'll find among journalists. Former reporter Al Guyant says it's important that you know what else to expect and how to react to it when dealing with reporters.

"The Dangerous Hidden Secrets of Print and Broadcast Reporters" explains the key differences between print and broadcast journalists, explodes the myth that newspaper reporters are objective, and shows you the handling tactics you can use to deal with all types of reporters, whether they're from the wire services or your local radio station. When you order the CD or cassette tape, you can download a chapter from AI's book with in-depth step-by-step tactics to ensure your story is reported fairly and accurately. Read more about what you'll learn at <http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity-products/marketing-tapes/printandbroadcastsecrets.htm>

## **Help Journalists Find You in the Yearbook of Experts**

October 18, 2005

When journalists need to find sources to interview, they can't waste time Googling under certain words or phrases, then wading through a long list of websites and articles in search of the perfect source.

Many of them go directly to Yearbook.com, a website where they can search among the thousands of among the thousands of sources and find exactly what they need within seconds with just a few clicks of the mouse. The experts, arranged by category, include authors, speakers, academics, celebrities, government officials, and nonprofit executives.

This is the book that journalists turn to on a slow news day. It's also the book they turn to when there's news that breaks at the national level, and they're looking for specific types of experts.

Because I am a publicity expert, journalists call me frequently to comment on things like the Michael Jackson trial and Martha Stewart's prison sentence.

If you're not in the Yearbook, consider an annual membership which includes not only an ad, but lots of other goodies:

- Your profile is included in the free downloadable and printable Yearbook of Experts online editions, and in the printed editions (twice annually) of the Yearbook of Experts.
- You can send 52 news releases a year, without any per-release charges, to tens of thousands of journalists via NewsReleaseWire.com. Your releases are linked directly to your Yearbook.com profile. You can also send Talking News Releases that invite broadcast journalists to hear how good you really sound.
- You can post your special events or speaking engagements at <http://www.Daybook.com>
- Your profile and news release are catalogued at the LexisNexis database, the leading professional search engine.
- At the Online Media Database, you can download databases or print your own mailing labels to have direct contact with America's leading print and broadcast journalists, including syndicated columnists, freelancers, newspapers and magazines, and trade journals.

New members and those who renew by November 1 also receive the Power Media Blue Book, a directory featuring America's leading print and broadcast journalists. PR Week called this "an Internet dating service of PR." The book comes with a CD that includes databases and an "@Cloaked Email.com"

address system to prevent spam. You send an email for a journalist and the Yearbook forwards it to them.

Read more about the Yearbook of Experts at <http://tinyurl.com/f5evn>

## **Write 'Briefs' for Your New Products, Services**

November 1, 2005

If your product or service makes a great holiday gift, send the media a photo of it, along with a brief.

A brief can take several forms. It can be:

- A one-page news release.
- A short list of questions and answers about a problem your product or service solves.
- A quiz.
- Tips on how to use the product.
- A resource box of places where the product or service can be bought.
- A list of definitions that pertain to a particular product or service.
- Statistics related to the problem the product solves.

Editors love briefs because they fill odd-size holes on a page and need little editing. The media aren't likely to devote an entire story to your product unless it's very unusual. But between now and Christmas, they'll be collecting short items that can be included in their annual round-ups of the most popular,

practical, expensive or inexpensive holiday gifts. Briefs are also one of the very best ways to get into big magazines.

I explain the 9 types of briefs and show you how to write them on "Briefs, Fillers & Quizzes: How to Write Them and Why Editors Love Them." It's available as a CD or electronic transcript that you can download and be reading in minutes. Read more about what you'll learn at

[http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity-products/marketing-tapes/briefs\\_fillers\\_quizes.htm](http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity-products/marketing-tapes/briefs_fillers_quizes.htm)



## Your Desk Can Make You Sick

November 8, 2005

The average desk harbors 400 times more bacteria than the average toilet seat.

A study, funded by a grant from The Clorox Company, found that surfaces in personal work areas such as offices and cubes had higher bacteria levels than surfaces in common areas. Telephones came in as the Number One home for office germs, followed by desks, water fountain handles, microwave door handles and computer keyboards.

Thanks to Publicity Hound Gary Knowles of Madison, Wisconsin for pointing out this fun news release about the study:

[http://www.marketwire.com/mw/release\\_html\\_b1?release\\_id=40596](http://www.marketwire.com/mw/release_html_b1?release_id=40596)

It was written three years ago by the folks at PR firm Ketchum.

You know how I feel about multi-page news releases. But I love so many things about this one:

- A fun lead. "Working late again? You're not alone, according to a new study by University of Arizona germ guru Dr. Charles Gerba. You have plenty of bacteria keeping you company." I cringe when I envision the incredibly dull release that might have been written by someone

hoping to make the study sound important instead of fun.

- The great head and sub-head.
- I love the description of the researcher as a "germ guru." The writer could have used the long title he's known by in academia: professor of environmental microbiology in the Departments of Microbiology and Immunology and Soil, Water and Environmental Science at the University of Arizona. But that would have made readers' eyes glaze over. Germ guru says it all.
- Notice how Clorox worked in a section mentioning that its product is the solution to the problem.
- The release includes a photo of the germ guru with a contraption known simply as "the germ meter." I love it!

Ann Wylie has 6 ideas on how to write world-class news releases, and she explains them all in the article she wrote for the November/December issue of The Publicity Hound subscription newsletter. The issue also includes tips on how to publicize a speaking engagement, how to get your book or product on the QVC channel, 9 New Year's resolutions for Publicity Hounds, the correct way to follow up with book reviewers, where to find cheap sample copies of magazines, the protocol of posting

blog comments, a search engine trick to position yourself as an expert, a book that features contact information for more than 2,000 journalists, creative publicity tips for authors, November/December story ideas, and tips from the editorial director of OverTime magazine on how to pitch his magazine that's read by professional athletes.

Order the November/December issue for \$10 at <http://www.marketerschoice.com/app/javanof.asp?MerchantID=20214&ProductID=2571719>

## How to Get Your Product on QVC

November 16, 2005

Ask yourself these five questions about the product you sell. Does it:

- Demonstrate well?
- Solve a common problem or make life easier?
- Appeal to a broad audience?
- Have unique features and benefits?
- Is it topical or timely?

If you answered yes to every question, there's a good chance your product is an ideal candidate for QVC, the home shopping network.

QVC, which stands for quality, value and convenience, has been at the top of the home shopping channel food chain for more than 10 years and counting.

Getting onto QVC is difficult, but if you're among the 4 percent of the products that land on the show, you can rack up phenomenal sales within a matter of a few hours.

Those products include books.

Book marketing expert Penny Sansevieri says that selected books have been known to sell as much as \$40,000 in product in only three and a half minutes of airtime. But the title has to be of general interest and not appeal only to a narrow niche.

For more tips on how to get your product onto QVC, read Penny's article in the November/December issue of The Publicity Hound subscription newsletter.

The issue also includes 6 ideas on how to write world-class news releases, tips on how to publicize a speaking engagement, 9 New Year's resolutions for Publicity Hounds, the correct way to follow up with book reviewers, where to find cheap sample copies of magazines, the protocol of posting blog comments, a search engine trick to position yourself as an expert, a book that features contact information for more than 2,000 journalists, creative publicity tips for authors, November/December story ideas, and tips from the editorial director of OverTime magazine on how to pitch his magazine that's read by professional athletes.

Order the November/December issue for \$10 at <http://www.marketerschoice.com/app/javanof.asp?MerchantID=20214&ProductID=2571719>

## **Generate Publicity on 'Black Friday'**

November 22, 2005

Brick-and-mortar retailers refer to the day after Thanksgiving as Black Friday, the official start of the Christmas shopping season. Whatever you call it, you've got opportunities galore to tie your product or service to it. Think trends.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Credit counselors should remind us about how credit card companies have us in their grip this time of year. Pass along tips on how to be a smart shopper this holiday season and stay within our means.
- According to findings of a survey conducted by Circuit City, 37 percent of respondents said they will do more holiday shopping online this year versus last year. If you're an expert in Internet marketing, offer tips on how Internet marketers or anyone who buys online can avoid rip-offs this holiday season. For example, any order I get from Nigeria raises a red flag, and the buyer must pass a serious of security checks before I'll ship the product.
- Retailers are tightening their policies on returns. If you're one of them, let business and consumer reporters know why.

- I love getting and receiving gift certificates, but not the ones that expire just a few months after Christmas. Consumer experts can offer tips about things to watch out for, like short expiration dates, if we're buying certificates to give as gifts.
- If your business involves children, do your own mini-review of age-appropriate toys and share your findings with the local media. They love stories like this.
- Get into holiday gift guides. From now until Christmas, newspapers will be flooded with Holiday Gift Guides. Even though the deadline for most magazine gift guides has passed, more than 100 newspapers, wire services and TV and radio stations are actively seeking products and services for holiday gift features. Check The Gift List, a handy resource guide chock full of contact information for media planning holiday gift features. Test-drive this service with a 24-hour pass. Send an email to Amy at <mailto:amy@giftlistmedia.com?subject=ThePublicityHoundsentme>

If you're submitting shopping tips, a great way to do it is with a tip sheet like "10 tips on how to..." A tip sheet is one of nine briefs that journalists love because they're so short, and they help fill odd-size holes on a page. Learn how to use briefs in your publicity campaign with "Briefs, Fillers & Quizzes: How to Write Them and Why Editors Love Them,"

available as a CD or electronic transcript. Read more about what it includes at

[http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity-products/marketing-tapes/briefs\\_fillers\\_quizes.htm](http://www.publicityhound.com/publicity-products/marketing-tapes/briefs_fillers_quizes.htm)



## **Do Your Research Before Pitching Journalists**

December 20, 2005

You've heard me grumble about media mutts who deliver pitches that have nothing to do whatsoever with the media outlet they're pitching it to.

For a perfect example of what I'm talking about, check out this poorly written pitch I received this week from Travel Features Inc., complete with errors:

"Kindly find a 900 word travel article on visit to Gir National Park and Sanctuary along with high resolution photographs in jpg format clicked with Olympus 5 mega-pixels digital camera, about trekking on foot through Gir, with close-up photographs of the shy spotted deer, one lion with lioness and cubs for publishing in your travel magazine."

Why did they send this to me? Probably because I publish a newsletter and my name is one of several thousand listed in a media directory they used.

I don't care about shy spotted deer or lion families. The only animal I care about is a Hound--the two-legged kind.

If you pitch a story idea and you haven't held the magazine in your hands, or visited the media outlet's website, or watched the TV show, or listened to the

radio show, you're setting yourself up to fail. Your pitch will scream, "I have no idea who you are, but I'm bothering you anyway."

Smart Hounds research media outlets before they pitch so the journalist on the receiving end thinks "They know who I am, what I cover and what I need. I'll read this one."

That's one of hundreds of tips I share on "Get Free Publicity in Print," a recording of an interview I did with George McKenzie. He picked my brain and got me to share dozens of ways to build strong relationships with the media. It's my very favorite interview and it's also available as an electronic transcript you download and be reading in a few minutes. Read more about what you'll learn at <http://tinyurl.com/axqdc>

## Wild and Wacky Year-end Lists

December 27, 2005

Thanks to Publicity Hound Scott Hansen of Carnation, Washington, for alerting us to the "2005 Most Unbelievable Workplace Events" issued by outplacement firm Challenger, Gray and Christmas, Inc. They're designed to make you ask, "What in the world was that company thinking?" The list includes:

- A German company that initiated a strict whine-free policy. Whiners and other boat rockers are under a "two whines and you're out" rule. At least two people already have been fired because of it.
- A Michigan woman was fired from her part-time receptionist job for failing to show up for work the day after seeing her husband off to war as a National Guardsman.
- Two Spanish-speaking hair stylists in Chicago claim in a federal lawsuit that the company they worked for strictly banned the use of Spanish, even when employees were on their breaks. A sign at the company read, "Speaking a language other than English is not only disrespectful, it's prohibited."

You can read the entire list at

<http://tinyurl.com/awndf> I love the list, but it would have been stronger if the outplacement firm had identified the companies.

What lists can you pitch to the media this week? Think wild and wacky, the "most" or "least," the funniest, the most unusual, the scariest, etc.

Editors love lists because they're short and fill odd-size holes on a page. They can also be trimmed easily. If you submit a "Top 10" list and the editor only has room for six items, he can trim the list and call it the "Top 6." Learn about the nine types of briefs in "Briefs, Fillers & Quizzes: How to Write them and Why Editors Love Them," available as a CD or an electronic transcript that you can download and be reading within a few minutes after your order is approved. Read more about what you'll learn at <http://tinyurl.com/d74h7>

## Other Resources I Highly Recommend

Just click on the titles below to visit these websites that will offer more help, depending on what you're trying to do.

### [AudioAcrobat](#)

Audio Acrobat is a top-of-the-line but very affordable audio program you can use to record teleseminars or lectures, place audio clips at your website and do all other kinds of cool stuff. Their customer support is superb, and the cost is cheaper than Audio Generator. Sign up for a 30-day free trial. This program also offers unlimited bandwidth.

### [The Blog Squad](#)

If you're blogging, or thinking of blogging, and you want to learn how to do it right, subscribe to the "How to Build a Better Blog" ezine.

### [College Speaking Success](#)

The college speaking circuit is one of the most overlooked markets for speakers. Colleges and universities have mega-bucks to pay speakers, and they're searching for speakers who specialize in 21 different topics. Let James Malinchak show you how he makes a bundle on the college speaking circuit—and gets tons of free publicity in the process—and how you can too.

### [ExpertClick](#)

If you're an expert, this is the resource guide you must be in because print, broadcast and Internet reporters use this to find expert sources on a wide variety of topics.

### [Ezines](#)

Get a free special report on how turn your ezine into a cash machine and use it to get free publicity.

### [Gebbie Press](#)

If you can't afford expensive media resource directories, the All-In-One Directory is the next best thing. Includes lists of daily and weekly newspapers, radio and TV stations, magazines, trade press, ethnic media, and more.

### [Internet Association of Information Marketers](#)

If you like my business model of a great website, an opt-in email list and kick-butt products, and you want to enter the world of Internet marketing, or sell more online than you already are, join the Internet Association of Information Marketers. You'll have monthly access to Tom Antion, my Internet marketing mentor, and you'll be able to post questions to a discussion board and participate in helpful monthly teleseminars, for as little as \$15 a month.

### [Internet Marketing](#)

"Click," written by my mentor, Tom Antion, is the very best ebook to study if you're entering the world of Internet marketing. Tom will show you how to build a great website, create info products and create an opt-in list of customers. I refer to this book at least 6 times a week.

### [Oprah—How to Get on America's #1 Talk Show](#)

PR expert Susan Harrow shares her 10-step formula on how to get onto "Oprah."

### [PR Leads](#)

Get leads from journalists who are looking for specific kinds of news sources. This subscription service makes it easy for journalists to find people with your expertise.

### [PressKits247.com](#)

Press Kit 24/7 allows you to upload and distribute your press kits or your clients' press kits online, making them accessible to the media 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

### [RadioPublicity.com](#)

Alex Carroll has the most thorough and up-to-date list of radio stations in the top markets that book guests for interviews, commentary, etc. He will also

show you how to sell a ton of book or other products simply by appearing as a guest—for free—on radio talk shows.

### [Radio/TV Interview Report](#)

This is the world's largest database of authors and experts who are available for live and telephone interviews on a wide range of subjects. If you want broadcast publicity and you're an expert on a particular topic, you must be in this book.

### [Raleigh Pinskey](#)

Learn how to elevate your visibility, pitch succinctly to the media, talk your way onto TV talk shows, write great news releases, and more.

### [ShoppingCart](#)

If you're looking for a powerful good shopping cart that will manage your ezine list, stop wasting time comparing the features and prices of the dozens of carts on the market. This free ebook will show you exactly what to look for when buying a cart.

### [SpeakerMatch.com](#)

How do you currently find speaking engagements? Word of mouth? The problem is that not enough people know who you are. With SpeakerMatch, you only get leads from organizations actively seeking speakers. Sign up for a free 60-day trial.



### [SpeakerNet News](#)

If you're a speaker who wants weekly tips on how to improve your speaking and get publicity in the process, subscribe to this free ezine.

### [TipsBooklets.com](#)

Publishing a tips booklet is a fabulous way to promote your expertise, sell more products and services, and generate valuable publicity. Paulette Ensign, The Tips Booklet Queen, will show you how.

### [White Papers](#)

Perry Marshall, one of my coaches, has an excellent 5-day email course on how to publish and publicize White Papers. It's free, and it explains how you can write a short White Paper in just a day or two.

## Free Stuff from The Publicity Hound

The Publicity Hound website at <http://www.PublicityHound.com> is chock full of free information to help you generate free publicity for your product, service, cause or issue

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