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TOOLBOX

Stretching your PR budget, pitching bloggers, and more

[Beth Krietsch](#) September 30, 2008

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Budgets

What are some tips for stretching my budget in 2009?

Review your contracts with all of your service providers, advises Eric Hill, president of MyMediaInfo. From wire services to media directories, there may be a lower-cost option that suits your needs.

Next, re-examine what is crucial versus what is nice to have, he adds. For example, if you tend to not even open envelopes of press clippings, consider switching to an electronic clipping service.

“Reducing a budget sometimes means stepping outside of your comfort zone,” Hill says.

It is also vital to look for new and innovative ways to accomplish your goals. “A budget reduction can be a catapult to think outside the box in the way you handle PR,” he explains. “From freelancers who can work on a per diem basis to outsourcing media analysis, everything is fair game when you are trying to do more with less.”

What are some tips for pitching bloggers?

“Bloggers can turn against you when they are provided material not relevant to their blog,” warns Chris Cavello, VP of Internet and specialized media at West Glen Communications.

To avoid this, research carefully and distribute only to those blogs and online communities that relate to the content of your program and have an interest in your material, he adds. Once you have your target list, listen and learn about what is being posted on the blog.

“Get to know each blog and the types of subjects and comments being posted,” Cavello says. “You’ll learn [if] they will be open to your various campaign pitches.”

Being totally transparent to the blogger by identifying who you are and what organization you represent must be a part of your outreach, he points out. Be honest and the blogger will be receptive to your information.

Media relations

What are some simple, cost-effective ways to track the quality of our media relations performance?

One cost-effective measure of media performance involves qualifying coverage by media demographic, says Gary Warrick of PRIME Research.

“Consider tabulating ‘target media mentions’ along with ‘total media mentions,’ and work to improve the ratio over time,” he adds.

Generating dozens of stories in media that don’t reach the specified audience is equivalent to dead air on the radio, Warrick stresses. Knowing which media reach the target audience allows PR pros to efficiently pursue outlets with the highest potential impact.

“The introduction of a new ultra-luxury sedan makes sense in publications like *The Wall Street Journal* or *Fortune*, where many readers can afford such a car, but may be less appropriate in college papers,” he explains.

Over time, prioritizing and managing to improve your ratio of target media placements will drive your PR and efficiency to higher performance levels, Warrick says.

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