



# Using Your FEATURED ARTICLE To Promote YOUR BUSINESS



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# ACHIEVING YOUR GOAL

For any business owner, leveraging good press can be a key driver for sales performance. Whether your business has made major contributions to the local economy or has engaged in high-profile charity work, taking full advantage of whatever outlets for getting your company noticed by the public can be vital for keeping your business thriving. With increased awareness of your business comes increased customer traffic and profitability.

## SO, WHAT IS THE GOAL?

Basically, your goal is to promote your company or organization in any way that you can in order to drive business. If nobody knows that your business exists in the first place, then potential customers will have no way of being able to locate and use your products and services.

While having positive press in a local newspaper is one way to promote your business in the public eye, there are numerous other ways in which businesses have traditionally tried to boost the awareness of their achievement:



.....  
Newspaper ads

.....  
Television commercials

.....  
Radio ads

.....  
Billboard and roadside signs

.....  
Mail leaflets

.....  
Door to door sales

While each of these methods can attract attention to your achievement, many are not cost-effective (such as TV commercials), fail to reach a wide array of customers, or are just



plain construed as intrusive by customers (door to door sales). Unfortunately, in the case of many of these distribution methods, customers have become inured to the assertions of organizations that provide seals of approval to companies if they have no means of quickly verifying the story themselves.

More effective methods for reaching out to customers and promoting your business' achievement includes:

.....The distribution of press releases.

.....Social media promotion.

.....Creating and promoting blog posts of the achievement.

.....Using website links to lead traffic to your webpage or to the article of the achievement.

.....Using email to promote your accomplishments.

.....Publicly displaying your accomplishments where people can see them.

Many of these techniques for promoting your recent achievement can produce results for far less than the cost of the average prime-time TV spot (somewhere between \$50k and \$200k, according to [mediabistro.com](http://mediabistro.com)), while often reaching potential customers around the world.

## **WHEN SHOULD I START PROMOTING MY BUSINESS' GOOD PRESS?**

As soon as you are able to. Allowing a piece of good press to stagnate reduces its impact over time. The less time there is between the generation of media-worthy positive attention by your company and your promotion of that positive press, the greater the impact it can have on sales because the event is still fresh in the minds of consumers.





# HOW TO DISPLAY YOUR ARTICLE

With a little luck and a lot of hard work, your company will make headlines. Whether it is in the pages of a specific trade magazine, a local newspaper, or even the front page of a national news source, companies can benefit from the attention.

By displaying the article featuring the company, your business can generate strong PR among customers and employees. One way you can do this is to have the article framed.

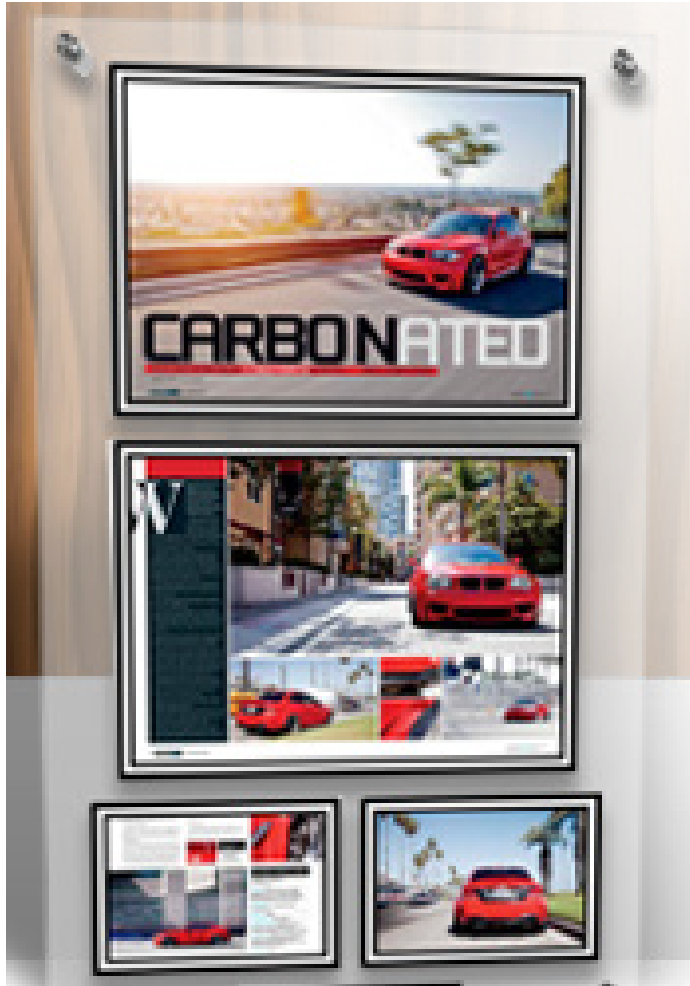
## WHY FRAME THE ARTICLE?

There are several reasons to have a business article professionally framed and mounted:

To preserve the article. When an article is put on display without a protective casing, it will decay over time. Pages will yellow, pictures will begin to crack and peel. In just a few short months, that beautiful article showcasing the company's proud achievement can become an illegible eyesore. When encased in a protective plaque, the article will be able to last for decades instead of months.







To present the whole story for all to see. For companies that have a story featured in multiple publications or have an especially long article, using a frame allows the display to show the entire story all at once, not just a single page at a time. Plus, readers will not have to turn the page and risk tearing up the article just to read the whole thing.

To have a truly professional look. Nailing a magazine or newspaper to the wall is not exactly the most professional presentation of a newsworthy story. With an appropriately attractive frame, arrangement, and engraving, however, the display of an article can be made impressive.



## WHERE DO I PUT IT?


When you have preserved your article, the next step is to decide where to put it. Much of this will depend on what the article itself contains, but here are a few ideas for display:



In your office lobby/entryway/waiting room. This display method puts your positive press right where anyone coming into your office can see it. New arrivals and waiting customers alike can occupy themselves with reading the display and learning what makes your company special. This is an especially great way to display the plaque inside of doctor's offices or similar businesses.



In the break/conference room. If your positive press is centered around your business' culture, such as your business being one of the top ten best companies to work for, then this display method will keep the information where it can best drive morale. Even the most wonderful company in the world can benefit from giving employees the occasional reminder of what makes their workplace so special.





In an employee's office, cubicle, or desk area. If a specific employee has earned distinction and positive press for the company, reinforce the behavior of excellence by rewarding that employee with his or her own achievement award. Not only does this demonstrate that your company cares when employees go above and beyond the effort required of them for their job, but will recognize and reward effort. Plus, a little healthy competitive spirit among employees trying to earn recognition can drive productivity through the proverbial roof.

In the CEO's office or the boardroom. For those high-powered, corporate business meetings, having records of your company's excellent performance and media recognition can be a powerful psychological tool for impressing visitors.



Make multiple copies. Why only have one chance to get people to interact with your story when you can have two or three chances? This is not to say that your wall should be practically plastered with plaque-shaped wallpaper. However, having extra plaques on display in different areas of the office increases the visibility of the company's achievements to visitors and employees alike. You can also take extra displays of your article on the road for tradeshow and similar events, but that is a discussion for another chapter.

Having a copy of your positive press on hand for interactions with prospective customers can lend a sense of integrity and reliability to your company. Being able to present proof that your company is reputable and can deliver on its promises can mean the difference between closing deals and struggling to get buyers to trust you.

While this is great for face-to-face meetings, how else can you maximize the impact of positive media attention from consumers?



# USING ONLINE PR SERVICES

Why stop with one mention in one print newspaper or magazine when you can capitalize on this positive press by using online PR services? The benefit of such services is that they are relatively inexpensive while reaching a large audience, and you can even mention and possibly link to the featured print article that originally wrote about your achievement. With the advent of the internet, there are now numerous online resources available to help you distribute press releases.

PRWEB.COM

This press release distribution site allows clients (such as yourself) to create, distribute, and track their news as part of a three-step process.

While in the creation phase, customers are given a template to fill out. This template will provide the content creator with suggestions for the content of the title, the length of the body text, and even provides a tutorial for linking video content to the press release.

During the distribution phase, the press release is distributed to news outlets, industry prospects, social media sites, and target regions that best match the goals of the business.

Once the distribution phase is over, customers are able to track the vital statistics of their press release, including the total number of reads, number of times the headline was displayed on the PRWeb websites as well as Java and RSS feeds, traffic sources, and even keyword and search engine referral data.



[Need Visibility?](#)
[Why PRWeb](#)
[How It Works](#)

## Need Awareness? Publicity? Visibility in Search?

PRWeb is the Answer

**Create It:** Write an announcement about your business. It could be a product or promotion, a sale or a new location, a customer survey or any other newsworthy story.

**Optimize It:** Turn your news release into a search marketing asset with PRWeb. Add keywords to target your ideal customers on search engines. Include a video and photos to attract more attention.

**Distribute It:** PRWeb will deliver your story to every major search engine, national news sites, and 30,000 journalists and bloggers – generating visibility and buzz for your business.



Similar to PRWeb.com, Onlineprnews.com is a press release distribution site. Onlineprnews.com, however, has a “free” trial offering that is live for 90 days. At the upper tier of product offerings, this company also provides professional editing services and guaranteed syndications.



Ireach.prnewswire.com is a subsidiary of Onlineprnews.com that facilitates the distribution of content to online, print, and broadcast media as well as trade journals.



#### Choose a Base Plan to Get Started

- 1 **Choose**  
Choose the plan that best fits your needs
- ➔ 2 **Create**  
We'll walk you through creating your release
- ➔ 3 **Preview**  
You'll be able to preview and make edits
- ➔ 4 **Log In & Pay**  
You will be able to enter your payment info.
- ➔ 5 **Release!**  
Watch as your news spreads like wildfire!

Not only does this site provide online digital press release distribution, they also help companies build and present their company profiles to potential clients and employees.

Unlike the previous two sites, PR.com offers an annual membership for business job postings.

All three sites have different service offerings at varying price ranges, but, ultimately, each one helps to increase a company's visibility.





## WHAT IS THE ADVANTAGE OF ONLINE PR RESOURCES?

With access to statistical data from your press release, you can identify who is interested in your product, what drew the most attention to your press release, and how successful the press release was at drawing attention overall. This is one major advantage that using an online PR distribution site has over traditional print distribution. By having instant access to tracking data, you have the ability to know just how effective your press release is.

## WHAT SHOULD YOUR PRESS RELEASE SAY?

As mentioned before, your press release should be “newsworthy.” It should be able to quickly grab reader attention and then hold it. For example, when designing a title for your press release, research has demonstrated that a total title length of somewhere between 30 to 130 characters tends to produce the best number of total views. This keeps titles short enough to be read quickly, but long enough to convey the information needed to generate interest.

Next, the content of your release needs to use clear, concise language that avoids the appearance of being a simple advertisement, even if the release discusses a new product or service. For example, say “Tire Lords announces new line of long-lasting tires” instead of “you can save money on tire replacements with Tire Lords’ new tires, guaranteed to last up to 120,000 miles!” The first example, while mentioning the new product and thus raising awareness, is authoritative and professional, while the second example is too personal and sales-oriented.

Remember, news editors and other reputable press release distributors will reject a press release that sounds too much like an advertisement.

When your company makes headlines or garners other recognition, this is an excellent time to take advantage of press releases to further circulate the news of your success and increase awareness about your company.



Here is a sample of what a press release template might look like:

Headline:	Your headline should include keywords and must grab the Media's attention. Your headline should succinctly describe the advisory – some media members search only by headlines.
Subhead:	Not all releases need one, but if you're going to use one, make sure it's descriptive and builds on the headline.
Dateline:	Includes the city of origin, and the date of the release. When you issue the release over a newswire, the newswire's 'bug' will appear in the dateline to alert readers of its origin.
Lead Paragraph:	This is the single most important paragraph in the whole release. If you don't draw your reader in here, you've lost them forever. This is your chance to set up your story in a single sentence or two.
Second Paragraph:	This is where you dive into more detail and set up story for the reader, giving some more background or context.
Body:	This is where you give all the relevant information for your reader, facts, stats, customer testimonials and other third-party information. Write with your audience in mind.
Boilerplate:	This is the platform to tell your audience about your organization. Keep it brief; just who you are and what you do.
Contact Information:	Make sure to include contact name, phone number, and email address for your readers to use if they require more information. This can go either at the top or the bottom of the press release. If you distribute the release over the wire, the contact information will appear at the end per standard formatting requirements.
Source:	The source is required. Who is responsible for the content of this announcement? Or, who is issuing this release?  [THINGS TO INCORPORATE INTO YOUR RELEASE]
Key Words:	Using strategically placed keywords throughout the release makes it easier for your audience to find the release when searching the web for information.
Quotes:	Having quotable quotes is a highly effective way of getting key messages out; keep them easy for readers to understand.
Company Logo:	Include your company logo in order to Create brand awareness.



# UTILIZING SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTIONS

## WHY SHOULD I USE SOCIAL MEDIA?

In the last decade, social media websites such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and Google+ have exploded in popularity and attention. Facebook alone has over 195 million active users in the United States. Even if only .5% of active Facebook users respond to your company's Facebook promotion, that would still be 975,000 potential customers responding to your promotion. That is almost one million chances to get an extra customer. By sharing posts highlighting your company's achievement, you can generate positive attention and draw more visitors to your social network page and start converting these curious visitors into followers who help you promote your business for you.

## SO, HOW DOES SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING WORK?

Social media marketing is the deceptively easy to learn, but sometimes difficult to master, practice of posting company activity and information on social media content sites. Any time that your company updates its Facebook timeline, LinkedIn profile, or "pins" something to Pinterest, it is engaging in social media marketing.

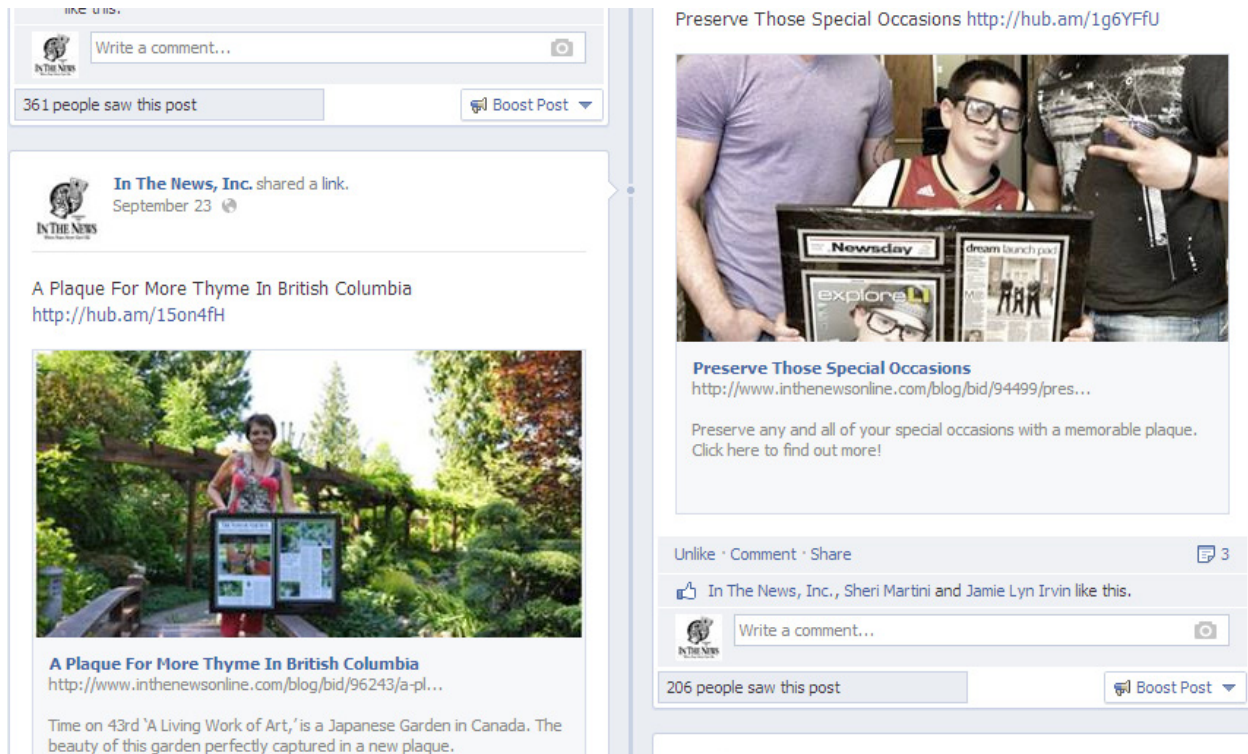
First, your company needs to identify its ideal customer base and decide how to use the different social networks to reach them. What if the company is a wholesaler who provides supplies to other businesses? In this case, LinkedIn is going to be your optimum network to increase visibility. What if you are a party goods supplier in the Sacramento area? A consumer-focused company such as this is likely to be more successful in generating interest on a socially-oriented site such as Facebook.





## WHAT SHOULD MY SOCIAL MARKETING SAY WHEN IT IS ON:

### FACEBOOK



Content for a mass-appeal social site such as Facebook needs to be attention-grabbing and varied. Not only should content be informative, it should be entertaining and engaging. Encourage your followers to comment on your posts, to ask and answer questions. Every time one of your followers posts a comment on your content, that post gets shared on their timeline, then their friends are also notified of the activity, expanding the reach of your content even further. If you post information about a piece of positive news your company has received, be sure to place a link to the information source so that your viewers can see the source material for themselves (more on that later).

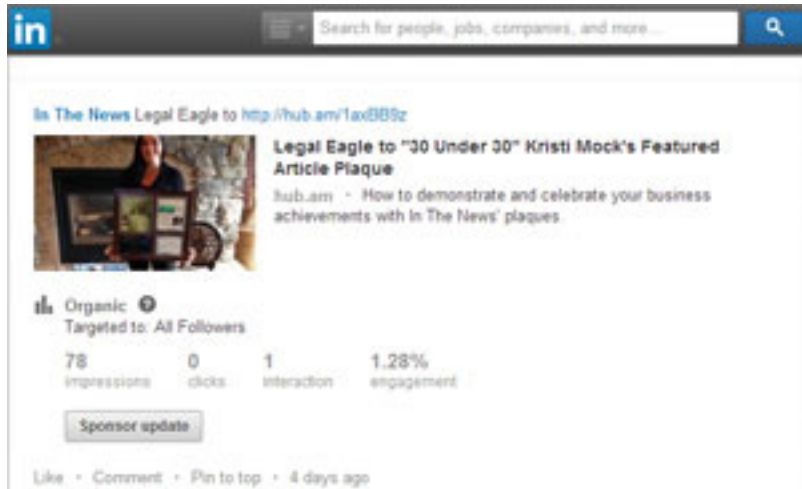
Another thing to avoid on Facebook is turning your company's timeline into an endless stream of advertisements. Yes, highlighting products and services from time to time can help increase brand awareness, but Facebook visitors will be discouraged from visiting corporate timelines that only ever try to push products and never have posts that are informative, entertaining, or engaging. When posting a press release to your Facebook wall, remember to make it engaging and relevant to your customers.

If your company has one, linking the company's YouTube account to the Facebook account can help increase visibility across both sites.



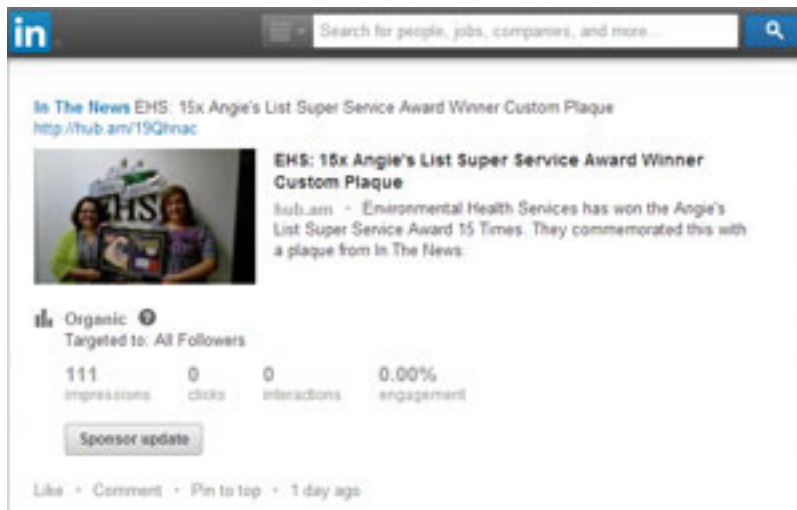
## LINKEDIN

This social site is targeted at business professionals, unlike Facebook's more casual user focus. LinkedIn gives your company the opportunity to not only create a publically-available "overview" page, but also pages dedicated to recruiting new talent, providing product and service information, follower insights, page insights, and employee insights.



For the overview page, you should consider what information would be of interest to someone who looking to verify that company's integrity and reliability. Information that can be independently verified, such as the date of the company's founding, founding members, and certifications held by the company should all adorn the page. If the company has any recent accomplishments of note, these feats should be highlighted.

The careers page is a way for companies to attract the talent that they need to continue to be successful. Here, companies can post job openings, create career path maps, showcase star employees, and even display awards. With the career path maps, companies can show potential employees how to advance within the company and draw talent that wants to be productive and upwardly mobile. LinkedIn even offers an automated job matching tool that suggests job candidates based on their skills, work history, and training.



If your company has received media attention, it can promote such achievements through the LinkedIn awards page so that prospective B2B customers can review them. This can be an effective means of allowing clients to verify for themselves your company's performance history through positive press that you are making available to them.



The products page is critical to any business with something to sell. On this page, a company can not only showcase what they have to sell, but they can also receive recommendations from employees, customers, and their friends to help promote products. Better yet, when an employee makes a recommendation of a product, anyone who follows that user's activity will see the recommendation.

## TWITTER

Using “tweets” on Twitter allows a company to provide real-time information and feedback to individuals and groups quickly and easily. Any time a company updates its Twitter feed, anyone who is “following” that company will receive an instant message apprising them of the new post. Although a Twitter post is limited to 140 characters, each and every one needs to be carefully monitored for content.

In creating a corporate Twitter account, your company needs to be aware that this is an opportunity to increase brand awareness.

One example of just how far Tweets can reach is the Adam Orth Xbox One disaster. In this fiasco, Orth, who was then a creative director for Microsoft working on their upcoming console, made several derogatory and abusive comments about the living situations of customers in rural areas that would have connectivity problems that could interfere with their ability to access and utilize the upcoming console. Orth was having a discussion



**In The News, Inc** @InTheNewsINC

5 Oct

The Preventive Vet And His First Plaque [hub.am/1881k4j](http://hub.am/1881k4j)

Expand



**In The News, Inc** @InTheNewsINC

25 Sep

To Honor Thy Father With A Plaque: Tim Collett And His Camaro  
[hub.am/1auRHRI](http://hub.am/1auRHRI)

Expand



**In The News, Inc** @InTheNewsINC

27 Sep

Rock-N-Wash, Custom Wall Plaque For A Custom Business  
[hub.am/1eITmW4](http://hub.am/1eITmW4)

Expand



with a friend on Twitter, but forgot to make it private. When customers heard about the manner in which they had been regarded by a high-level company exec, fan backlash was both loud and immediate. The content of Orth's discussion went viral around the web and was featured in news stories by numerous conventional reporters, business pundits, and gaming advocacy groups.

Within a day, Microsoft terminated Orth, and had to engage in a desperate damage-control campaign to soothe customer relations.

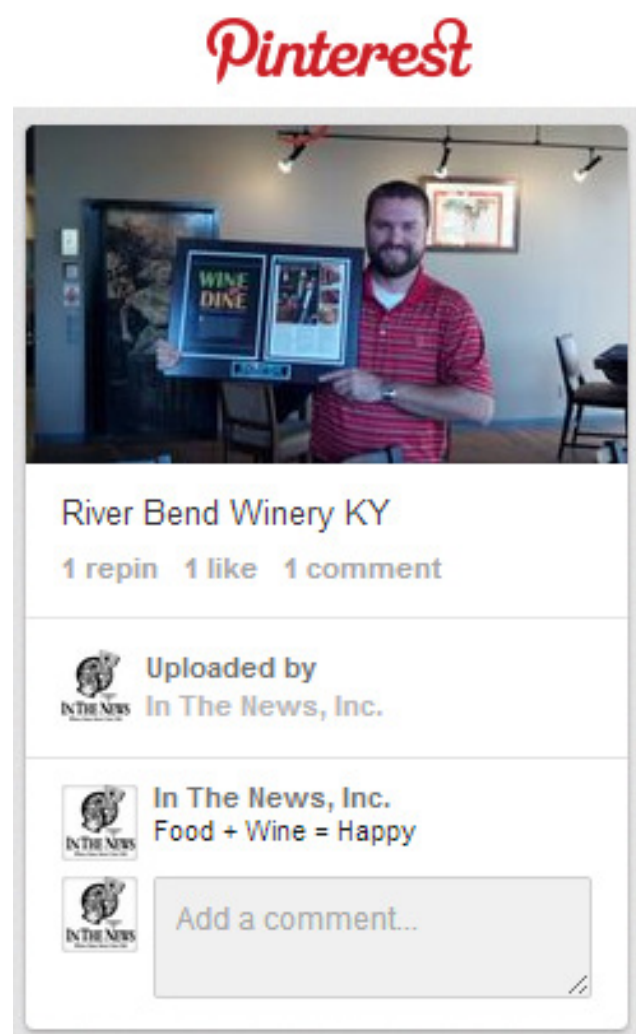
While this example may pose a very frightening scenario of how much damage can be done by a careless tweet, good content can generate just as much good buzz for a company. Using Twitter tweets to lead followers to news sites that are publishing positive news for your company can generate a lot of interest with a minimal investment of time, effort, and money.

## PINTEREST

While not as established as Facebook, Pinterest is a relatively new social site that is experiencing rapid growth. On this site, image and video posts are called "pins."

One thing that helps make Pinterest such a useful avenue for interacting with consumers is that users can sign into Pinterest through their Facebook accounts, and their activity on Pinterest is automatically uploaded to their Facebook timeline (except in the case of corporate Facebook users, so John Smith from Lafayette, Alabama can sync his activity from Pinterest to FB, but if he logged in as FirTechUSA, then the activity would not sync). This means that any activity a consumer posts on a company "pinboard" will trace back to that consumer's Facebook page where their friends can see it.

When posting content to Pinterest, or "pinning," as it is known on the site, it is important that you make sure any external site links are thoroughly documented.





In order to generate more interest from Pinterest, it is advisable for you to focus on a single topic, and create the best pinboard on that one topic possible. As a part of this process, you may have to engage with other Pinterest users and promote their channels so that your company channel can be improved by association.

If your company has other active social media sites, using them to promote your Pinterest page can give it a jump-start. One reason why it is a good idea to build up your Pinterest page is that sometimes your Facebook or LinkedIn followers may have their own followers on Pinterest that are not a part of their other social site accounts.

Above all else, your content on Pinterest should be visually engaging, as it is a visually-focused content site. If your positive press or media coverage is in the form of a video news clip, that would be ideal content for distribution through Pinterest.



One of the biggest advantages that having a Google+ account offers your business is the way in which it increases the visibility of your company in Google searches. With the business page profile, your company can control how it appears in internet searches simply by editing your profile information.

Another way in which your company can generate extra visits from Google+ is to use the +1 button on your content articles. Google uses the interactions from live humans who push the +1 to determine what topics and sites are most popular, and thereby most worthy of being placed higher in the list of search engine results. [HubSpot.com](http://HubSpot.com) estimates that websites that use the +1 button get 3.5 times as many visits from Google+ users.



## THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWING YOUR MARKET REGION

Another important consideration for your company's social media content, and one that many may accidentally overlook, is the language and dialect of the customer pool being contacted. If your company has a customer base in North America, then you will want to make sure that you post content in English, with an eye towards Americanized dialects of English. If your company has a larger customer base in the United Kingdom or Ireland, then you would be better understood by your customers if you used British dialects of English.



While the differences might be slight to non-English speakers, American readers would be constantly confused by the British spellings of common words and vice versa. Also, cultural references that would work in the United Kingdom can either go unnoticed or be misunderstood by American consumers. In a perfect world, every company would have the resources to create region-optimized content that could speak to customers in any region. Unfortunately, in the real world, your company will most likely have to pick and choose how to optimize content for one or two specific markets.



## BLOGGING

### WHY SHOULD ANY COMPANY PUT IN THE EFFORT?

Any company that wishes to attract more interest from online customers will want to use blogs. Statistics about blog usage shows that companies that use blogs get 55% more visitors to their website, which creates more opportunities to acquire new customers.



How does this happen? When your company creates and regularly maintains a blog, you will have more pages that can turn up during a web search by internet users. Plus, when specific keywords are used in a blog post, the blog page will be more prominently displayed in web searches.



Blogs make for an excellent opportunity to highlight your company's recent performance. This gives you the chance to discuss why your company was recognized for its achievements with consumers and introduce them to what makes you and your company unique and exciting. If you can, you should always have links that lead customers to the news article or other media site. This allows visitors to see the original article and verify that the positive press is real and not just taken out of context.

Another way in which having a blog with customer-relevant content can aid your company is that it can help establish your company's reputability with consumers by demonstrating your expertise. If your company has a blog that helps customers resolve their common issues that fall within your area of expertise, such as if you are a car care company with a blog that covers how to perform various types of car maintenance, customers will feel more inclined to trust your car care company's expertise.

Finally, blogs are a great place in which a company can insert Call-To-Action buttons. These buttons, abbreviated as CTAs, are attention-grabbing clickable icons that lead customers to other pages on the website.

## **SO, WHAT SHOULD MY BLOG CONTAIN?**

A natural question for first-time corporate bloggers is "what should I write?" A good place to start is by finding out what your most common customer questions are. If your company has personnel who interface with customers on a daily basis, then you should have these employees record the questions that customers ask. By identifying common customer concerns, your company can create a strong list of blog ideas that answer customer needs.

As mentioned before, a blog post can be an excellent avenue for generating extra exposure for any positive press you have garnered. If you have recently achieved major success, sharing it on your blog can attract more attention and gives people who read your blog a chance to get excited about your company.

It can also be helpful to examine any existing internal corporate memos for blog ideas. If these communications have especially interesting information, they can often become excellent foundations for blog topics (after any and all sensitive and proprietary information has been removed).



When creating titles for a blog, it is important to keep a few guidelines in mind:

**KEEP IT SHORT AND SNAPPY.**

Long blog post titles can put off potential readers. Avoid over-complicated titles that require multiple sub-headings. Think fewer than ten words.

**BE SLIGHTLY CONTROVERSIAL.**

Emphasis on the slight. Controversial post titles spark interest quickly, but can also lead to negative impressions. The goal with this tactic is to generate interest and discussion, not to become the focus of reader animosity.

**STAY ON TARGET!**

When creating an informative post, the title should reflect this. Use appropriate keywords from the blog's content to help highlight it in online searches.

**USE SHOCKING STATISTICS.**

If the blog post contains a particularly impactful statistic, then it should be used in the title. Numerical data can be gripping for readers if it is dramatic enough in nature.

If blog ideas are running low, your company should audit ideas from employees or even consult industry experts or high-profile members of the industry to do a guest blog for them. For example, a car company with a guest blog written by Dale Earnhardt Jr. would see a lot of traffic from fans. That fans of this specific celebrity are also usually avid followers and consumers of car products helps ensure that the traffic that visitors to the car company's site have a higher rate of conversion from browsers to buyers.

And there is a good rule of thumb for your blog posts. While any activity helps increase a company's visibility, having content that attracts the right attention makes all the difference. If a blog attracts an extra 1,000 visits to the company website, that is okay. Some random visitors might become buyers. However, if a blog with appropriately targeted content brings 1,000 visitors who are interested in the kind of products your company provides, then you are much more likely to generate sales from these visits.



# USING LINKS

## WHAT'S A LINK AND WHY SHOULD I USE IT?

For the uninitiated, links are words or images that users can click on to be brought to other content such as new web pages or documents. Using links, your company's website can quickly and efficiently lead customers from content pages such as blog pages to sales pages. Think of links as being similar to forks on a road. If the forks that lead to where you want customers to go are easy to find and use, then those customers are more likely to travel all the way to the destination of the sales page.



## HOW DO I USE LINKS, THEN?

Using links is a relatively straightforward process. First and foremost, links on a page should be relevant to the page's content. If the page in question is dedicated to tips for the extermination of unwanted vermin in the home, then appropriate links would include:

..... Relevant data on the migration patterns of vermin.

..... CDC statistics of infections carried by vermin.

..... Sales pages for products to help remove vermin.



While the first two examples are external links that lead visitors to outside pages, such pages would provide vital information that can influence customer purchase decisions. The final example is an internal link, a link that leads back to another page on your company website.

With a well thought-out series of links on the page, your website can increase the credibility of the information it provides to customers by showing that the information is corroborated by an external or independent source. Then, your company can use links to lead customers to product pages that are targeted at resolving the concerns raised by the page's content.

If possible, you should also try to find ways of getting other websites to feature links to your company website. Negotiating for a spot on an external site can help lead visitors of that other site back to your company webpage. For maximum efficiency, it is important to single out websites that have some form of connection to your company's area of influence.

For example, if you were a computer manufacturer, you would probably have more success turning visitors from tech-related websites into customers than you would turning visitors from the Sharecropper's Association website into customers.



## EMAIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

### WHY USE EMAIL?

In many ways, using email announcements to reach consumers is like using traditional mail distribution to reach consumers. However, your company does not have to pay for postage, wait for several days as the snail mail goes out, and then receive only nebulous measurements of your return on investment. Using email communications to distribute news of your achievement to customers is instantaneous, and much more easily measurable.



### SO, I SHOULD JUST EMAIL-BLAST THE WORLD?

No. Whatever else your company does, it should not just begin spamming the inboxes of perfect strangers without invitation. And buying email lists from third-party sellers does not count as being invited to send the people on that list content.

If your company begins sending spam emails to consumers without having their permission, your company can quickly find all of its emails being automatically sorted as spam by customer email sorting systems and antivirus programs. Most consumers nowadays will refuse to open email that they perceive as spam, not only for fear of viruses, but also because it is unwanted and intrusive content.

### HOW DO I USE EMAIL, THEN?

Email is a great way to keep customers who are already interested in your company or its products informed of new offers and changes. First, you need to get consumers to opt-in to the mailing list. If your company has a blog that is successfully attracting attention, then you should place a subscribe box in that blog to allow customers to opt-in.



Another common practice is to add a subscribe option to the purchase screen of the sales page or sales confirmation email. Your customer is already making a purchase, so why not foster a chance to improve relations and keep the buyer informed and interested?

Once your company has established a mailing list and started tracking data for website usage, it is important to get feedback from consumers about the emails that they are receiving. What do these customers like about the emails? Are the emails too frequent, or are they not frequent enough? Is the content meaningful to the consumer? You should experiment with your email lists using the most popular customer responses and examine how it affects the popularity of your emails.

If you need help setting up email distribution, there are email optimization tools available for your company to use that can make optimizing email content easier. For example, Mailchimp allows users to sort email recipients by segments, geographic location, recent activity, and even member rating. By leveraging available technology, you can greatly simplify the process of making your email content optimized for different customer groups.

## **WHAT ABOUT WHEN PEOPLE UNSUBSCRIBE?**

Make the opt-out process easy, but also try to offer alternatives. Most of the time, when someone is unsubscribing from a mailing list, it is because their inbox is being clogged with unnecessary content that simply is not relevant to them anymore. If possible, you should offer alternatives to totally unsubscribing, such as reducing the frequency of emails or restricting email content to a specific subject that the customer is interested in. Another good idea is to encourage the unsubscribing customer to follow your company's Facebook or other social media page instead.



# TRADESHOWS

If you are a B2B-oriented company, then the dreaded tradeshow can be a make-or-break sales opportunity as you place your company, including its people and products, on display for a gathering of potential customers and business rivals. Here, taking full advantage of any positive press can be the difference between obtaining a string of lucrative deals and wasting a huge chunk of your company budget with no return on your investment.

## SO, I KNOW TRADESHOWS ARE IMPORTANT, HOW DO I USE MY PRESS?

The first step in maximizing the potential impact of your positive press begins well before you ever set foot on the tradeshow floor. First, you should only go to the expense of a tradeshow if it aligns with your company's sphere of influence. If you have a big, important piece of positive press shortly before a tradeshow, be ready to flaunt it. Using Twitter to announce the news just prior to the tradeshow can create buzz for your company and ensure that potential clients head for your booth.

If you have the time, obtain a framed copy of the article and bring it to your showroom booth where potential clients can see it. There are several advantages to having a framed article for display at your tradeshow booth, such as:



### DURABILITY

Having a framed article for your tradeshow prevents yellowing or discoloration from exposure to the elements. In a plaque, pages cannot become torn and are protected from casual damage caused by careless handling and other common showroom mishaps.

### ATTRACTIVENESS

Getting a professionally-arranged plaque article frame creates a much more professional appearance to a tradeshow display than nailing a scrap from a magazine or newspaper to the booth. At a tradeshow, you need prospects to accept your organization as being both credible and professional. Having a featured article can give you the former, getting it professionally framed and prepared for display gives you the latter.



## CREDIBILITY

Detailed engravings allow prospects to easily read and identify your business' name and the name of the publication, as well as the date of publication so that they know your news is fresh and relevant.

Create a banner for the headline and, if you have room, an excerpt from the story that is exciting and attention-grabbing. In fact, you can add a QR code to your banner that will allow visitors to your booth to read the whole story quickly, without having to make you waste time explaining what the banner means to every single individual in the crowd. Additionally, you can add QR codes to product displays to give visitors a chance to be led to your website and even potentially make orders from the tradeshow floor.

If you have a framed article on display, try to find appropriate ways to make it stand out and draw attention so that visitors can read it. If your company leverages itself as being spontaneous and creative, try hanging a brightly colored ribbon on the frame, and place a bowl of bite-sized candies to draw people, and their attention, to the display area (one word of caution, if you use chocolates here, avoid placing them directly under a strong spotlight, as melted sweets do not earn much appreciation). For a more professional atmosphere, a solitary stand with strong lighting and somber colors can be an attractive draw.

Having framed articles showcasing a company's positive press in the office allows employees to see that they are part of an organization that is making news. But driving employee morale is not the only benefit of having an article plaque. Customers who visit the office or are part of a tradeshow can also see the plaque, learn about how a company is driving success, and know that the company in question is a reputable one with a strong focus on delivering results.

Emphasizing your company's credibility and reputation through verifiable secondary sources does more to make prospective clients accept your business than remote or impersonal awards from faceless organizations. Having a plaque with real articles from trusted news sources can earn you and your company a boost in credibility in the eyes of your prospective clients.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MARKETING

Ultimately, no company should ignore any avenue for self-promotion. However, not every company has the time and resources to utilize every method of self-promotion to the fullest. By researching the available means of interacting with customer markets and learning how to best use each resource, companies can be more successful and profitable.





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