

HAVE A PLAN FOR GETTING YOUR SHARE OF MEDIA ATTENTION

Nearly every business owner I have spoken to over the past year has had a similar gripe: their competitor is getting all the media attention and coming across as *the* expert, even though they are not as qualified, and don't have as good a product or as much experience. The sad fact is that the media do not always make their decisions about who is a subject matter expert in a quantitative, logical way. They, like most humans, are influenced by many factors and a large number of them are subjective – things like who stands out in their mind, who *appears* to be unique and most definitely who would be able to provide good material for articles. The great news is that all of these things can be controlled and managed by a high quality marketing and PR strategy and a professional writing and publishing strategy.

Regarding your marketing strategy, I'm going to assume you have one. You must have a plan for how your products and services are promoted to the market and the main marketing messages you want your customers to understand. I'm willing to bet, however, that you don't have a parallel writing and publishing plan for books, ebooks, articles and blogs that you, the business owner, are going to place in the market. The reason why I can say this with confidence is that I have been polling business leaders for several years and they almost unanimously admit to never having thought of such a thing, much less executed one. But they are starting to take writing and publishing very seriously, since it is the business leaders that are penning their views and ideas that are making the headlines.

Consider Richard Branson, Theo Paphitis, Anita Roddick, James Caan, Simon Woodruffe, James Dyson...I could go on, but you get the idea. All serious business leaders have put books out and are undisputed experts or thought leaders in their fields. In fact, if they are not vocal and opinionated, regularly interviewed or quoted in the press, even those guys are at risk of being forgotten in this unforgiving and competitive market.

A lesser-known but up-and-coming business writer is my good friend and client Bruce King, author of *How to Double Your Sales in 6 Weeks*. Already a top speaker in the European market, Bruce is using his new book to consolidate his position and win even more key speaking engagements when there are arguably many people who speak on 'sales' topics.

When you write and publish your own articles, books and blogs, you put a stake in the ground, showing your market where you stand on important issues. You help them put a face to the name of your company and its services, and as we all know, *people buy people*. Most importantly, you show your customers that you have thought through key topics and can articulate your leadership on these topics in a way that can influence and guide people to a better level of understanding. It shows that *you* are the real thought leader in this space – and not the other guy.