

P R E M I E R E I S S U E

# ADPRO



Associated Professionals Resource Organization, LLC

April/May 2008

**INSIDE:**

PR Strategy Secrets

Preparing for the Sale of Your Business

Meet the Face of Site Mechanix & UMB Bank

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## Member News:

• Once again, APRO joined forces with the Toys for Tots Foundation to supply toys to the needy and under privileged children during the holiday season. Thank you to everyone who donated their time and efforts in helping us reach our goal of collecting over 1,000 toys!

• Business growth program, Make Mine A Million \$ Business, selected Kandi Haupt of One-Eleven Companies as one of 5 business women awardees to win the Micro to Millions awards package on March 4, 2008 at the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts. The exciting event featured female entrepreneurs from Arizona and other regions of the country who competed for business development packages. Awardees received financing, coaching, and membership in a nation-wide community of women business owners, and other resources to help their businesses grow to million-dollar enterprises.

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# Welcome

**A**s many of you know, APRO recently celebrated its' three year anniversary. Along the way we've made many lifetime friendships with our members, and it has truly been our honor to get to know, and to do business with each of you.

Since its inception, APRO has strived to bring you the best in business networking, executive training, discount programs, and other resources to help you attain a greater market share. We were the first in networking circles to introduce referral programs, member rewards points system, branded identities for our events, a monthly e-newsletter written by our members, and the concept of "always free" to our members to name just a few of our programs.

Our commitment to excellence for our members will never waiver as we continually strive to improve APRO. Competition breeds improvement, and in that same vein of thinking we are very proud to introduce our newest member resource, the "APRO Magazine". The APRO Magazine is mailed out to all of our members and is also available in a number of high-traffic areas throughout the Northeast Valley.

Our editor, Alexandra Duemer, is the driving force behind our new magazine. This dynamic young lady has taken our magazine "concepts and ideas" and given them life. She has created a new resource that will help business owners find plenty of information in our full-color magazine on topics like marketing, franchising, sales, business networking, coaching, online business development, outsourcing, customer service, and time management.

I think you will find the information helpful and interesting, especially if you are a small business owner or operator. As always, we value your input and suggestions for improving our organization and our new magazine.

We vow to continue to bring you even more quality programs in the future, and we thank you for your efforts and support. Best wishes to you all for health, wealth and prosperity.

Mark Lynch  
Co-Founder

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# PR

# Strategy Secrets

*by Linda Gorman*



**A**sk ten people to define public relations, and you'll likely walk away with ten different answers—not all of them positive. Enron. iPhone. Sago Mine Disaster. Each of these examples has one thing in common: PR Gone Horribly Wrong. But, the fact of the matter is whether you're Microsoft or Molly's Pizzeria, every business needs good, solid public relations practices to survive and thrive. But knowing just what goes into "good" PR can mean the difference between mis-step and success.

The definition of public relations is as follows: "the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its publics." The important thing to

glean through this cumbersome definition is that PR is a mutual, two-sided relationship between a business and its customers. PR works because the tactics are frequently newsworthy and informative, offering the kind of information many people find useful and reliable.

With PR you can:

- Build credibility
- Increase awareness of your business or a related issue
- Spur sales or product inquiries
- Improve or restore your reputation
- Keep the organization abreast of issues important to its consumers

Sound exciting? It is! Before you hit the ground running, you need to first understand where you want to go—and how to get there. Below are the steps you can follow to maximize your PR success.

## DEVELOP A PLAN

Before you do anything, you should create a sound public relations plan to guide your efforts and help you measure your success. Your plan should include a strategic and realistic goals, followed with well-defined objectives, strategies and specific tactics. Also, don't neglect the measurement portion of your plan—otherwise, you won't have a clear understanding of what worked and what didn't.

## CREATE YOUR MATERIALS

Before you hold that press conference, send that news release or announce a new and improved product, you'll need to ensure you have the appropriate background and supporting material ready. You don't have to spend a fortune creating these items; most important is that they are well-written, informative and easy-to-read.

- The following are examples of what you should prepare:
- A brief background sheet of your company, including its history and founders.
- Fact sheet on your product or service offerings
- Technical information on the product, if applicable
- Brief executive biographies and professionally taken headshot photos
- Contact info for your spokesperson
- Sample(s) of the product you are promoting
- If you have a Website, make sure the above information is also posted in a "news" section.

## GET TO KNOW THE MEDIA

One of the biggest mistakes that organizations unfamiliar with PR practices make is to approach any and all media with the same message. These "blind pitches" are not only ill-received by the media you approach; they are also a waste of your valuable time. By investing the time to research the media who will be interested in your story, you're likely to have greater success, and cultivate relationships with the media you most need to reach.

To do this, you'll first need to read, listen to or watch your potential media targets. Who is the audience? What is the format? Who are the advertisers? What kinds of stories do they run? The answers to these questions will tell you what media most closely matches your customer base.

Don't overlook smaller, niche media outlets. Local, community papers are often in need of news content, so they are more likely to cover your event, run your news release or run a story on your business. Plus, their readers are right in your backyard!

Also, targeting the right media person is just as important as targeting the right media outlet. Perhaps your story idea isn't a good fit for "Good Morning Arizona", but it may be perfect for "3 on Your Side."

## SPREAD THE NEWS

You've completed your plan and compiled your targeted media list—now what? Your tactics will vary depending on your objective and the news you have to announce, but below are a few avenues to secure media coverage:

If you have legitimate news to announce, send a news

release. Legitimate reasons to send out a news release include a store opening or new business venture, new products or service offerings; new executive hires or strategic partnerships; volunteer projects; projects successfully completed with results. The key to writing a press release that will get noticed is to include a news angle that will be of interest to the publication or station you are pitching. Or, perhaps you can conduct a poll of your customers on a newsy issue that has something to do with your company or products/services, and then release the poll results to the media. The idea is to think consumer benefits, not features.

For a story idea that doesn't warrant a press release, a targeted pitch letter or query may be your best bet. A great way to get attention for your company is to tie something you're doing to current events or trends. The letter should briefly explain the tie-in, highlighting what is new, different, unknown about your story idea.

If you're holding a major event or announcing something newsworthy, a brief press conference might be a good idea. Keep in mind that in order to draw the press, your event must be visual and must indeed be newsworthy. When pitching the event to the press, persuade them with specifics as to what they will learn, see or understand during the event.

As time goes on, and you gain more confidence in your PR abilities, you may also consider the following PR activities:

**Speaking engagements:** Rotary clubs, Chamber of Commerce, and other community groups are always seeking outside guest speakers at their meetings. The topic of the presentation should be educational or informative. Find out what groups in your community meet regularly and contact the program chair for

speaking opportunities.

**Publications:** Distribute newsletters or other printed material directed to your customers, or stakeholders.

**Other events:** Workshops, seminars, open houses, recognition ceremonies, receptions and other events are a good way to reach customers and attract media attention.

**Sponsorships/charitable giving:** Sponsoring a school program or a not-for-profit group that ties in closely with your mission is also a good way to increase your credibility and exposure.

By implementing the above tactics, you will be well on your way to increasing exposure for your business and establishing good communication with your customers.

*Linda Gorman is an award-winning public relations professional with over 10 years experience creating results for companies and organizations in the Valley. She can be reached at [l.gorman@cox.net](mailto:l.gorman@cox.net).* ✉

**“whether you're Microsoft or Molly's Pizzeria, every business needs good, solid public relations practices to survive and thrive”**

# UMB Bank

**S**usie Timm may be the youngest bank President in Arizona, but she's certainly not new to banking or the need for every business to have a trusted relationship with their bank. As the face of UMB's second branch in Arizona, this energetic Scottsdale native brings over 5 years of branch management experience with Chase.

At Chase bank, Susie had over 600 clients, but she couldn't take care of them the way she wanted. In 2005, she decided to become specialized in smaller banking and says, "The best career decision I made was to get out in the community. I love helping small businesses figure out solutions to make business easier."

With the authority to make decisions, Susie feels like a valued employee of UMB rather than just a number.



## Susie's Business Success Advice:

- Lean on your sale successes from 2006/2007 to get a loan in 2008 that will carry you through the current economy.
- Don't cut your advertising and networking budgets. This is really the time your business needs it most!
- Your business plan should be a living, breathing document that you refer to quarterly.

### Is Your House Paid For?

I found a service that took my 30 Year Interest Only Mortgage and reduced the payment time down to 12.5 years, saving me hundreds of thousands of dollars in interest.

Here are 3 important things to remember:

- You don't have to refinance your primary mortgage
- Your mortgage payment will stay the same
- There will be little to no change to your household budget

Do you want to see if you qualify for this service?

Great, call to determine if you qualify.

Rose Kocherer, District Manager for  
United First Financial

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email: [rkocherer1@cox.net](mailto:rkocherer1@cox.net)

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A recent success was getting all ATM fees waived for business account holders. She says, "Your banking relationship should be a partnership akin to your CPA or attorney... I like to think of myself as a financial physician. Here I'm incited to keep clients which allows for referrals. If you're not getting that type of response, it's time to revisit your choice."

Susie enjoys the satisfaction of helping people and it's not uncommon for her to sit down and review tax returns with clients or help them come up with an executable financial plan. "Most banks push to online, but the proactive relationship is crucial to a small business owner. You're never too small to deserve that type of attention." She goes on to explain that loyalty does pay off because smaller banks rely on the authority of a relationship to authorize a loan rather than a computer generated score that larger banks rely on.

Located just off Raintree and the 101, UMB Financial Corporation (NASDAQ: UMBF) is a multi-bank holding company headquartered in Kansas City, Mo., offering complete banking, asset management, health spending solutions, and related financial services to both individual and business customers nationwide. Its banking subsidiaries own and operate 135 banking centers throughout Missouri, Illinois, Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska and Arizona.

For more advice, call Susie at 602 553-3500. ✦

# Site Mechanix

**Y**ou may know Karl Knelson as the friendly cofounder of APRO, but he is also an accomplished artist by trade and the owner of Site Mechanix. If you have a web site, which is synonymous with a business card these days, then you'll appreciate the knowledge and support his company provides. With over 10 years of web experience, Karl has clients all over the country and stays consistently busy. "There's plenty of work out there, so I don't worry about my competition," he says with a chuckle.

After graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Wisconsin, Karl spent 5 years working for American Film Technologies in San Diego. His illustration and 3D animation skills came into play as he colorized black and white films for Turner Classics. Maybe you've even enjoyed his work on screen with "Attack of the Killer Tomatoes"? If not, you've certainly experienced his work through the APRO website.

Karl explains, "The web is innocuous. It's hard for people to understand the difference between a \$500 website and a \$5000 one. So I educate the client about what they're paying for and why. I brainstorm with people so they find the best solution for them." He adds, "A lot of people are technophobes... the best thrill I get is giving my client empowerment."

The use of a content management system is one such example. Karl stresses the importance of updating web content consistently. "It's no longer sufficient just to have a web page. You have to have a living website and get connected whether through a blog, Facebook or Myspace," he says.

Site Mechanix is different in that when you need a web page updated, you're charged only for the changes made at that time. Most web companies carry a monthly maintenance fee whether or not they did any work for you. He can also provide trusted resources for writing, photography and marketing, if needed.

In addition, Karl has created the Webowners Club eNewsletter which is delivered free to subscribers each week.



It offers tips and solutions for the small business user. "I can relate to the problems with technology because I've been bitten before. If you want someone to show you the ropes, that's me."

For more information, visit [sitemechanix.com](http://sitemechanix.com) or call 480 460-1754. ✖

## Karl's Free Web Tips:

- Google adwords are the most efficient way to get traffic to your website.
- When you register a domain, make sure you have a login. Beware of bulk resellers because they're not giving you true access. GoDaddy, Network Solutions and register.com are all trustworthy.

A vertical advertisement for ServiceMaster 24 Hour Emergency Service. At the top, it says "24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE" in large blue letters on a yellow background. Below that is the ServiceMaster logo with "24 HR" in a large yellow font. The text "The cleaner you expect. The service you deserve." is written in smaller font. A list of services is provided: Fire &amp; Smoke Restoration, Emergency Pre-Cleaning, Smoke &amp; Soot Removal, Pack Out, Moving Storage, Water Mitigation, Emergency Water Removal, Complete Structural Drying, and Mold Remediation, Mold Contamination Assessment, Deodorization &amp; Ozone Treatment. It also mentions "Recommended By Insurance Agents &amp; Adjusters". The website "www.servicemaster24hr.com" is listed. At the bottom, it says "Located At Scottsdale Airpark" and "480.368.0006". On the right side of the ad, there is a photograph of a yellow ServiceMaster van parked in front of a house.

# Preparing for the Sale of Your Business

by Loyd Rhyne

**T**he first question almost every seller asks is: “What is my business worth?” But the more pertinent question is are you ready to sell for what the market is willing to pay? It doesn’t make any difference what you or your accountant, banker, attorney, or best friend thinks your business is worth. Only the marketplace can decide the true value of your business.

Let’s assume that you have decided to take the first few steps in actually selling your business. The first thing you need to do is gather information about the business. Here’s a checklist of the items you’ll need:

- Three years’ profit and loss statements
- Federal Income Tax returns for the business
- List of fixtures and equipment
- Any lease and lease-related documents
- A list of the loans against the business (amounts and payment schedule)
- Copies of any equipment leases
- A copy of the franchise agreement, if applicable
- An approximate amount of the inventory on hand, if applicable
- The names of any outside advisors

If you’re like many small business owners, you’ll have to search for some of these items. Everything starts with this information so make sure it’s in a neat, orderly format that you can present to a prospective purchaser. Spend time updating the information and filling in any blanks.

If you’re half way through the current year, make sure you have last year’s figures and tax returns, and also year-to-date figures. You want to present the business well on paper. The pricing of a small business is usually based on cash flow. This includes the profit of the business, as well as the owner’s salary and benefits, depreciation, and other non-cash items. By the time all of the appropriate figures are added to the bottom line, the cash flow may look pretty good.

Prospective buyers eventually want to review your financial figures. A Balance Sheet is not normally necessary unless the sale price of your business is well over the \$1 million figure. Buyers want to see income and expenses. Bottom line, buyers want to know if they can make the payments on the business and still earn a living.

So if you have reasonable expectations, good documentation and are willing to take what the market is willing to pay, then your business will sell. ✈

Find out what the value of your business is with a Complimentary Analysis!

(\$1000 value)

Prepare, Protect and Increase the Value of Your Business

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