

“Your Marketing Message and Getting Exposure in the Media”

1. Discover what sets you apart from your competitors.
2. Create Your :60 Commercial
3. Learn how to develop a marketing plan that gets you and your business noticed.
4. Learn how to write a press release to showcase your uniqueness, including how to use the media to get the message out about your business.
5. Benefits of smart business networking

Step 1: YOUR USP

In developing your marketing message, it's very helpful to develop a Unique Selling Proposition, or USP. Your USP very clearly answers the question, "Why should I do business with you instead of your competitors?"

The USP may be used repetitively in your marketing literature to build the customer's or client's identification of your company with your product or service.

There are two major benefits in developing the USP. First, it clearly differentiates your business in the eyes of your current and potential customers or clients. Second, it focuses your team on delivering the promise of the USP, helping to improve your internal performance.

Step 2: PREPARE YOUR “60-Second Commercial”

Your “60-Second Commercial” is an audio business card, sometimes referred to as an “elevator speech”. This is an opportunity for you to describe your organization’s purpose in a short period of time, usually in 60 seconds or less. The goal of your “60-Second Commercial” is to sell an idea, promote your business or market you as an individual. You need to be able to say who you are, what you do, what you are interested in doing and how you can be a resource to your listeners. Without a “60-Second Commercial”, people won’t know what you really do. Develop, practice, refine, and practice some more, and you will be able to effectively communicate who you are and what you do whether in elevators, networking meetings, conferences, trade shows, community events, on an airplane. Your confidently-delivered “60-Second Commercial” can be a vital tool in immediately creating interest in your listener, in establishing you as a professional, and in describing the benefit of the service or product you deliver.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE –

Before writing any part of your commercial, research your audience. You will be much more likely to succeed if your elevator speech is clearly targeted at the individuals you are speaking to. Having a “generic” “60-Second Commercial” is almost certain to fail.

KNOW YOURSELF –

1. What are your key strengths, and what adjectives come to mind to describe you?

2. What is it you are trying to “sell” or let others know about you?

OUTLINE YOUR TALK –

Start an outline of your material using bullet points. You don’t need to add any detail at this stage; simply write a few notes to help remind you of what you really want to say. They don’t need to be complete sentences. You can use the following questions to start your outline:

1. Who am I?

2. What do I offer (products or services)?

3. What problem is solved?

4. What are the main contributions I can make (benefits)?

5. What should the listener do as a result of hearing this? Your “call to action”.

FINALIZE YOUR COMMERCIAL –

Now that you have your outline of your material, you can finalize your commercial. The key to doing this is to expand on the notes you made by writing out each section in full.

To help you do this, follow these guidelines:

1. Begin with a hook that piques the listener's interest, or a quick tag line to encapsulates what you are about to say.
2. Take each note you made and write a sentence about it.
3. Take each of the sentences and connect them together with additional phrases to make them flow.
4. Go through what you have written and change any long words or jargon into everyday language.
5. Go back through the re-written material and cut out unnecessary words.
6. Finalize your speech by making sure it is no more than 200 words long.
7. Perhaps the most important part of your commercial is to practice it and deliver it with gusto, enthusiasm and commitment to the work it expresses. Don't be afraid to demonstrate the passion and drive you feel for the work.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE –

Use your “60-Second Commercial” every time the opportunity presents itself. When someone asks you, “What do you do?”, give them your “60-Second Commercial”! Each time you deliver this commercial, you have the potential to get new business and gain new clients. The more often you deliver it, the more your confidence will grow in your words and in your delivery, and the more your business will grow as a result

DAVE BLOCK'S “60-Second Commercial”

We are the “Personal Sprint Connection” for small- and medium-sized businesses. When it comes to cellphones, most companies don't have the time to wait in line at a store or wait on hold with customer service to take care of a problem with their cellphone. We put time back in your day, by providing Sprint phone service, and by being “Your Personal Sprint Connection”. Our clients make one call to us, and whether it's a billing issue, a new line of service, a replacement phone – whatever – we take down their issue and get right back to them with the resolution. We have put the “personal service” back into mobile communications. We are always glad to help those businesses who could benefit from having a “Personal Sprint Connection”.

YOUR “60-Second Commercial”

- your business objectives
- key strategies
- steps to achieving your objectives
- proposed financial budget
- timing

Remember that your marketing plan is organic. It should remain an ongoing process throughout the life of your business, with adjustments made along the way as market conditions warrant.

Step 4: WRITING AN EFFECTIVE PRESS RELEASE

A press release is one of the best techniques for publicizing an event or calling attention to an issue. A well-written, well-distributed and well-timed press release is not difficult or expensive to produce, yet can be effective and useful for waging peace. The key to writing an effective press release is getting it read and the information published. With these objectives in mind, the most important elements of the press-release are a clear and engaging text, careful selection of recipients, and good timing of release. See the guidelines below before writing your press release.

1. Format

Correct formatting is important because it conveys the necessary information in a readable, accessible and professional manner. Basic formatting should include a simple and easily recognizable format, and a clear presentation. The following is a checklist for standard press release format.

- **Standard title:** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.
- **Contact Information:** for example: Kirk of the Hills Church, 4102 E. 61st Street, Tulsa, OK 74136. Contact: Dave Block, elder, (918) 640-3843, dblock@thekirk.com
- **Subject title** should be succinct and informative, conveying the topic matter while intriguing the reader.
- **Body** should present the most important information, including who, what, where, when and why, in the first sentences of the releases body, emphasizing why the event is newsworthy. Follow with supporting background information and details. Some suggest a quote from an involved activist to add credibility and depth to the release.
- **Conclusion** should offer who is representing this message. For example what does your foundation or company stand for? The last part of the Press Release should include your contact information, for example: For more information about the Kirk's recent actions, visit the website at www.thekirk.com or call (918) 640-3843.

End the release with a ### sign to indicate the end of the document

Always remember to:

- Use black ink.
- Use white paper.
- Proofread for grammar and spelling.
- Keep the press release to under one page.

2. Style

Press release writing should be easy to read and engaging. It should also remain reportorial, and not opinionated. In order to make the release readable for the recipient and even publishable, a journalistic style of clear, direct and concise statements is most effective. An engaging style makes the news clear in the beginning, followed by some supporting details, and leaves the reader's interest piqued to learn more about the event, the organization, or the topic. Finally, a good release focuses on the human interest of the story without passing judgments or making opinions.

3. Distribution

Distributing the press release to the right reporters, editors and broadcasters is the next important step. The target audience and the appropriateness of the media are the most important considerations in determining the target media. Radio stations, television, weeklies, and dailies all carry local news. The internet is another resource, for posting on a website, a discussion board, or an internet publishing company. After the selection of media outlets has been narrowed to those your audience might be exposed to, research who at those outlets is likely to read and cover your story. Some guidelines:

- Send releases to the reporter(s) most likely to use the information.
- Ask for recipients' preferred method of delivery, but when in doubt, use mail by post.
- Refrain from sending mass emails, instead directly addressing them to the recipient.

4. Timing

Timing the press release for optimal effectiveness is the final step. Timing should consider both the media reporters and the target audience. Find out from the media source or preferably your chosen recipient what their cutoff time is, but some general timing considerations follow:

- Radio cutoff is generally up to an hour before "drive time."
- Television cutoff is generally up to 2 hours before newscasts.
- Weeklies' cutoff is generally up to 2 days prior to printing.

Dailies' cutoff is generally up to three hours prior to printing, but stories are generated between 48 and 24 hours to publication. Monthlies generally plan two or more months in advance.

For feature length attention, considerably more time is needed for a story to be developed.

Publications usually cater to people's desire to hear good news in the morning and the beginning of the week, placing bad news at the end of the day or week. If the timing does not work the first time, resend the release as a "re-release."

Step 5: SMART BUSINESS NETWORKING

A Cost-Effective Form of Advertising

Word of mouth is a form of advertising and, like media advertising, requires careful planning to achieve a worthwhile return for your time and energy. As you begin to use and benefit by word-of-mouth advertising, you'll see that it's a very cost-effective medium. If you haven't developed a structured word-of-mouth marketing program to generate referrals, then you can't enjoy its benefits.

While many entrepreneurs recognize the value of referrals to their respective organizations, they're not clear on how to consistently generate a large number of referrals. Worse, they don't realize there's a segment of the population looking for their product or service right now.

People Want Referrals

People don't want to go to the telephone book to pick a lawyer. People don't want to pick a real-estate agent from the Yellow Pages--or an accountant, or a chiropractor, or an insurance agent, or a dentist, or a mechanic. People want referrals! Historically, the only problem has been linking the people who need services or products with the people who provide them. A structured word-of-mouth campaign begins by acknowledging that there's a segment of the public that wants you and your service as badly as you want their business.

People from all walks of life want referrals--not just the business community, but the general public as well. Few people want to choose a dentist, for example, from a printed advertisement. People want to have more personal information before making such selections because whenever you choose a professional exclusively from an advertisement and have no other source of information, you may be taking a big risk as to the quality of service you will receive. With referrals, the risk is greatly reduced. Someone else has done business with that person and is recommending that professional to you with confidence.

Referrals Are Good Business

Compare a lead that you receive from an advertisement with a similar lead (that is, referral) that you get from someone you know. The referred lead is easier to close and costs less to obtain. Often, the referral provides a higher-quality client or customer with less chance of misunderstanding or disappointment. When I ask audiences why referral business is better than the business they get from ads, they say the referred business:

- is easier to close,
- has far fewer objections,
- has a stronger sense of loyalty,
- remains a client longer, and most important of all,
- has a higher sense of trust.

Relying on the advice of a mutual friend or acquaintance, the referral starts with a higher level of trust for you and your product or service. Getting dozens of people to send such referrals your way every day is what building successful word-of-mouth business is all about.

Ivan Misner is Entrepreneur.com's "["Networking" columnist](#) and the founder and CEO of [BNI](#), the world's largest referral organization with thousands of chapters in dozens of countries around the world. Ivan's also a New York Times bestselling author--his latest book is [Masters of Success: Proven Techniques for Achieving Success in Business and Life](#).

BONUS: Additional Resources

Here are some websites I have found helpful. They all have e-zines that come out weekly with some pretty good information in them. I think you're always good to see what the best in the business are doing and recommend to do to help through some of the trouble spots that we run into. Great reminders and some new ideas for things to try in developing your business. Check them out and sign up for their newsletters on their sites:

<https://www.gitomer.com/> (Jeff Gitomer, sales mentor)

<http://www.meisenheimer.com/> (Jim Meisenheimer, sales mentor)

<http://www.businessbyphone.com/> (Art Sobczak, phone sales mentor)

<http://www.mrinsidesales.com/> (Mike Brooks, sales training)

<http://www.objectivemanagement.com/baselineselling/monthlytips.htm>
(Dave Kurlan, sales & management mentor)

<http://www.thesalesboard.com/> (Duane Sparks, sales coach)

<http://www.bniok.com/> (BNI Oklahoma networking website)

Another booklet you'll find helpful is "Red Hot Introductions" by Randy Schwantz. Check out his website at www.thewedge.net.

Thanks for coming; now how can I help you?