

## **Using the Trade Press to Generate Results**

The power of the written word remains immense, even in our world of instant electronic communication. The dozens, or hundreds, of trade journals, newspapers and newsletters that your prospects and customers read can be a great way to reach them with your messages. These publications already have the audience you want to reach. The two ways to use those publications to reach your audience are advertising or as part of the publication's editorial content.

Advertising can work, but it is expensive and its effectiveness is dependent on the appearance and creative design aspects of the ad. There can also be a sense of conflict between the ad and the reader. An ad tries to sell at the same time a reader puts up defenses against being "pitched" another product. If your message is part of the editorial content, the reader is less likely to put up the usual defense against being sold. If your story solves a problem faced by others, you become a solution.

### **Getting your message heard and published**

There are six essential parts of an effective effort to get your article published in a trade publication:

1. Choose the topic. The topic must be interesting to the reader and it should lend itself to highlighting your strengths or products without being a "pitch".
2. Select the publication. Willie Sutton, of bank robbing fame, said he robbed banks because that was where the money was. Selecting a target publication should follow the same concept. Select a publication your customers and prospects read and respect.
3. Work with the editor. Even before drafting the article, understand the publication's needs and get a commitment to publish the article.
4. Drafting the article. Content is king. Not only must the article be relevant to the publication's readers, it should adhere to the publication style of articles while presenting your message.
5. Follow up, follow up, and follow up. Working with the editor on revisions, suggestions and enhancements within the publication's deadlines is critical.
6. Use the article. Once your article is printed, make sure to use it with customers and prospects. You may even want to do a special mailing to make sure the word gets out.

Trade publications exist to provide relevant information for their readers. When your messages become part of their content, they are fulfilling their mission, readers are getting information they need and you are reaching the customers and prospects you want. Everyone wins.