



How PR Can Be Your Monster Tool for Success

By Susan Saldibar

True story. I once submitted a piece to a national trade pub that I had worked my you-know-what off to write. Sent it off and forgot to include the photo. Sent the photo about 10 minutes later in a separate email. Kiss of death. Derailed the whole thing. I found out later that the editor had no time to open and retrieve the photo.

Taigen Thorne, Account Manager with [Sage Age Strategies](#) (a Senior Housing Forum Partner), was recently quoted in a SageAge article as saying, “Public relations might be seen in a negative light by some, but that’s mainly because so many are unclear about how good public relations practitioners work.” Any marketer knows how true that is.

But you can’t (and shouldn’t) escape doing PR. It is just as important now as it has always been. The bottom line is that all industries, including senior living, need to get press attention. It is one of the best ways of getting in front of prospects in a way that establishes your community as a subject matter expert, an innovative care provider, and/or a community full of happy residents. Few things accomplish that as well as a solid, well-written, well placed article in a newspaper or online publication.

Here is what the experts at SageAge know about kicking your PR up to a level that will get better exposure and positioning.

- **Know your audience.** SageAge has written about this before, but it bears mention since, without that knowledge you won't get very far. Make sure you talk to your customers which are, in this case, those people who found your community in the first place. Find out where they go to get their information. Key to this is learning what print and online publications they read.
- **Know your publications and editors.** This is really when you do a deep dive into the internet and research the various publications and who the editors are. It's all out there, but you have to do some digging. Find out the names of, not only the editors, but the writers and influencers as well. It will pay off later as you begin to approach them with your content.
- **Know what your audience will want to read about you.** That's where SageAge urges marketers to "put on your journalist hat" and go to work. Dig for interesting stories in your community. Think about your staff as well as your residents. Of course be sure that you are respectful of HIPAA regulations and that you have releases from everyone you will include in your news stories and/or articles.

As SageAge puts the final step, "Lastly, Make Connections, Make it Easy and Get Out of the Way". As a marketer, I know how important this step is. This is where you put it all together, so to speak. And it's important to not leave any loose ends. Of course much depends on the kind of PR you are working on. You might be asking for coverage of an event or submitting a release or story. In all cases, however, you need to make it drop-dead simple for the editor to include your media. Anything less and it will probably get ignored.

I won't get into all the details here, but you can read them in the original [article](#). There is much more packed into the article that you will find useful. At the end of the day, it's about establishing relationships with editors and making your community the one that is on point and easy to work with. If you can achieve those goals you will have built an important channel that will continue to put fresh, relevant content in front of your ideal audience.



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