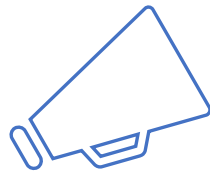


Pitched: A Simple DIY Guide to Public Relations for Small Business

Insider Information, Secrets and Tools
for Attracting Media Attention



By Jennifer Fortney

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Introduction

Why I wrote this book and why I am so open to sharing my knowledge

Over the last 20 years, I've had the opportunity to work with a large variety of clients – big and small. I've seen small and growing businesses achieve the same success with media stories as large corporations. The difference between the two is that small businesses and startups tend to have new, fresh stories to tell, and they can pivot much more quickly. As a journalist, this makes them fun to work with because I want to be the one to tell their newsworthy story. I actually get excited about when I've sniffed out a fantastic story that needs to be told.

That's the journalist in me, and I can get you excited as well.

However, I realize that a lot of businesses out there can't afford to hire "a me". So, in my commitment of being of service, I want you to have the tools and information to DIY PR, successfully! Moreover, by educating you on PR and how it works, I hope to help you better hire a PR pro one day, when you're ready.

Successful, growing companies know how to tell their story well.

And when they need help, they call me.

My job is to help clients find their story. Craft it. Embrace it. Breathe it. Live it. I've seen clients have big "aha" moments and feel rejuvenated in their business. Once they begin to see the difference their story will make for their business – through media, social media, their website, advertising, email, mailers and more - they get fired up, and realize that this was the hurdle that has kept them from moving their business forward.

So, why do businesses tell their story so poorly? When you're in the thick of the fog, it can be difficult to have a 360 view. A lot of entrepreneurs get so wrapped up in what they're creating, that they simply fail to put in the time to ensure they are communicating it well. Other times, the story of a company isn't what you think it is, but I will cover this later.

I am here to tell you that every business has a great story waiting to be told, you just have to step out of yourself, or your business, to see it. When you're in the weeds every day, it can be difficult to do, but trust me, when you do, when you

find your story, you will get so excited about the marketing opportunities it opens up that it will take very little work to attract the media attention and customers you desire.

To change your perspective, you must choose to change the position from which you see your business

Trust me, when you find your story, it will open up doors. Beyond just attracting media attention, it will transform all of your marketing and kick start the engine on your business. It will motivate employees and drive your business culture. It will attract sales and investors. This is why it's so

important for you, now, – whether you're already launched in the market or planning to launch – to make the time to discover your story.

What makes you truly different? What new and surprising thing are you bringing to the market? How are you being of service to help transform people's lives? Okay, the idea of "transforming lives" might seem like a bit much for most businesses, but, if you think in this way, your story will become that much more compelling.

The more successful your business becomes, the more media you will attract!

I will say it now, and many times in the pages ahead – PR is, has, and always will be the #1 way to build credibility for your business.

Since the beginning, media have followed media. If one media outlet with perceived credibility writes a story on your business, others will be impressed and may think it is something they, too, should get on the band wagon.

For example, I helped create a martini revolution when I introduced a few key media to the Appletini in 2000. The Chicago Sun-Times Food Section cover story turned into local TV news anchors actually drinking it that morning on the set, to morning radio duos talking about it, to the New York Times and Bon Appetit magazine, only to name a few. Soon it went viral, old school viral! And, everyone was ordering it in every restaurant and bar, and more media shared the hot trend. It can be said that it helped start the wave of flavored mixed cocktails.

Another example: A few years ago, I was working with a pet product. I made some media introductions that turned into stories, which led to 70 consumer and industry media stories in one year, including the "Today" show. Guess what? Most of those media contacted ME to do a story because they learned about it through other media.

Find your awesome, compelling story

In this book, I share all of my secrets as a journalist and PR professional to help you successfully garner positive new stories that will help grow your business. Moreover, you will learn to tell that story over every platform in a way that matters to people. Based on all of my experience, I'm giving you the fast track to go from 0 to 100. Four years of journalism school and 20 years in the field.

I've seen it firsthand. A t-shirt company went from working out of their basement to a corporate office and shipping space and into \$1MM company in just a few months thanks to a compelling story I created, and media LOVED. A small wine store began meeting their annual sales goal for the year by the end of Q2, all because I made one introduction to one influential journalist with a great story.

The media industry is changing and will continue to shift until it settles in the digital world, but it's not something that should scare you off. There are plenty more opportunities for you to achieve positive PR for your business.

The difference today, is that the message you send to media should be consistently the same over every platform – website -> advertising -> social media profile and posts -> digital ads -> sales materials -> investor pitch decks -> EVERYTHING!

While my focus, here, is on generating PR by helping you determine what your AWESOME story is and how to share it with media, it's important to remember that media and consumers will make judgements on who you are no matter how they first interact with your business.

Media will actually look at your website before sending a response of interest. Is it up to snuff? Is the messaging consistent? They care about the credibility of the information they share with their readers just as much as you should care about communicating in a way that drives sales! This is why **consistency** matters!

This book is based off a class I taught for many years. The response by attendees was awesome. Five stars all around, and the one consistent comment I received was "You're the only one teaching a course here who isn't trying to sell anyone anything at the end." I took this as a real compliment, because my goal was not to sell anyone or make money off the class, it was to truly help small business owners, entrepreneurs and nonprofits learn about PR and how they could best use it to raise awareness of their organization. And just like that class, my goal for the book is the same. To arm you with knowledge that will grow your business and provide for you and your family long-term.

There is some repetition in this book, and that is for good reason. It's important! Repetition triggers memory and familiarity. In marketing terms, it's branding.

Just follow the advice I provide in this book, utilize the worksheets as you go along, and learn from the many lessons of what to do and not what to do. Once you learn and embrace this information, it will stick with you forever.

If you're unable to print the worksheets and supporting documents, visit <https://www.cascadecomms.com/pitched-book> to access downloadable versions you can print. **Use password: Pitchmystory.**

I highly recommend that you work the book as you go along. Each step is meant to lead you into the next and before you know it, you will have your story and a strategy!

I look forward to seeing you in the news!

Overview – What you will learn

A combination of learning and exercises to help get you on the right track



- What is PR, how and why it works
 - Differentiating from competition
 - Defining your audience
 - Why is PR so powerful?
 - The process of purchase
 - Why PR works for small biz
 - The changing media landscape
- Jennifer* • Your story – The power of “Why”
- Writing your story
 - Distribution and media relations
 - Handling interviews

- Creating strategy
- PR ideas
- Social media
- Crisis Communications
- Marketing communications – how it all fits together
- Preparing your business for success
- DIY or hire a pro?



The Author

"From the Longest Kiss Challenge and the largest roll of toilet paper in the world to red carpet celebrity events and startup launches...I've done it all, and generated thousands of media stories!"

Over her 20-year career, Jennifer has successfully created, implemented and managed PR and integrated marketing programs for some of America's top Fortune 500 companies, and a variety of small businesses and startups across the country, including celebrity red carpet events, special events and event media management, and more.

During her career, Jennifer has built a strong reputation with journalists for developing good, strong news stories, and her ability to cater to media's needs, amassing thousands of media stories and millions of impressions.

Jennifer is one of few individuals to receive a personal bonus from a Fortune 500 client for her successful work in single handedly managing a nearly \$1 million national campaign.

As a business mentor she consults clients on marketing, operations, production and distribution to staffing and vendor relations to ensure clients are truly ready for the growth strategic PR and marketing can offer.

Before starting her own boutique firm, Jennifer worked at one of the world's largest corporate PR agencies, and a boutique Chicago agency. A native of Kansas, she held the post of Director of Promotions and Marketing in radio, worked in professional sports and music, and wrote news for a news talk radio station.

Jennifer has a Bachelor of Science in Journalism, Business Communications from the award-winning William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of Kansas and holds a minor in Music - Vocal Performance. She has served, and continues to serve, on several nonprofit boards and conducts pro bono work for a variety of nonprofits.

She was the PR instructor at SCORE Chicago/Small Business Administration for five years, a guest blogger for NBCChicago.com's "Inc. Well", and quoted in a variety of media including the *Chicago Tribune's "Blue Sky Innovation"*.

You can learn more by visiting www.CascadeComms.com

Small Biz Marketing Challenges

I don't have to tell you this, but every entrepreneur has the same issues:

- **Time Management** – time constraints, just not enough time in the day, or poor prioritizing
- **Differentiation** – focus on discovering your unique brand story to stand out in the market, drive sales and grow a business
- **Understanding how to communicate** that unique story to the world to create an emotional need and drive action. *What you say is as important as where and when you say it.*

With little time, or lack of organizing and prioritizing, most entrepreneurs will rush their message and marketing instead of taking a thoughtful and methodical approach. Oftentimes, they really don't understand what makes them different from a competitor, or why it matters. **Differentiate or Die.** They say. There is always a way to put your own spin on your story.

**If you want to create and grow a successful business,
make the time to discover your “Why”.**

It is also shocking how many business owners do not really know their audience – either the one they desire, the low hanging fruit, or the one that is actual. Thanks to the internet and analytics, today, no company has any excuse for not being intimately connected with its audience. There is no excuse for not understanding their patterns, lifestyle, wishes, dreams, and most importantly where to connect with them, and how. This isn't the Field of Dreams “Build it and they will come”. You actually have to address your audience and find them to invite them into your world.

I am serious. This one action will transform your business and make room for your compelling story. So, take the time to thoughtfully understand your business, and look for opportunities to create something new to stand out in the market. Maybe there is a trend in the market or research that proves “why” your business matters. Otherwise, you're simply a “me too” business that will not be around long.

***Make the time. Your brand story is the most
important part of your business.***