

# 10 WAYS TO GO BIG WITH A TIGHT PR BUDGET

Successful PR programs take time and effort – and in the real world that often equates directly to budget. Which begs the question: if you're on a tight budget, or if your existing budget just got cut, how do you do more with less?

Here are ten tips for upping your PR efficiency and ROI when times are lean.

01



## Focus on the sale, not the vanity.

If you've got the time and money, go after the big fish in the business media for that awesome piece of vanity coverage. But if your budget is lean, it's better to focus on the outlets where your customers live – industry publications, verticals, etc. – to build awareness and drive traffic, and ultimately sales.

02



## Speak directly to customer challenges.

Thought leadership is most effective if it speaks authoritatively and insightfully on how customers can solve challenges. Think in terms of communicating best practices, tips and tricks, emerging trends, etc. Don't know what challenges customers are wrestling with? Sounds like it's time for a survey – with a plan to broadcast the insights!

03



## Recycle, reuse, repurpose.

Creating good content and assets is expensive, which is why you should never let them go to waste. Got a good eBook? Turn it into a series of blog posts that drive back to the primary asset. Got a bunch of blog posts? Get them off your website and into the media that your customers read every day.

04



## Get it right the first time.

Tight budgets don't allow for mistakes and do-overs. Have a plan, make it realistic, and execute flawlessly. Consider your content drafts, for example: if it takes more than one or two cycles to generate a perfect piece of content, you need to find a new resource. Try utilizing a content intake form that prods internal teams on positioning and ensure your PR team has a "plan B" in the event of delays.

05



## Be creative, but with purpose.

Creativity for its own sake is pointless. When brainstorming, make sure you and the team are focused on actionable creativity – generating ideas that are affordable, impactful, and realistic for your budget and audience.

06

**Promote news, eliminate filler.**

If you're trying to maximize the impact of your PR outreach, do away with the kind of "news" that media are less likely to care about. Press releases about small feature updates or partnership announcements without a customer component aren't likely to generate coverage in the current media environment. Still value the SEO? Then post the filler release to the wires but don't spend the extra budget to pitch to media.

07

**Be transparent.**

Do you know exactly what your team or agency is doing with your budget? Are they keeping you informed proactively, or do you have to hunt them down and ask? Conversely, are you keeping the team updated on various company initiatives and opportunities? Transparent, two-way communication makes life easier, and allows everyone to stay focused and efficient.

08

**Minimize overhead.**

Program management, including meetings, status updates, etc., are crucial to keeping the trains running and on schedule, but sometimes they turn into a runaway cost center. Work to consolidate updates and tighten meetings to keep them under 30 minutes when possible.

09

**Measure what matters.**

This may be counterintuitive, but are you over-measuring your PR? The tools and time it takes to gather metrics can be expensive. While we absolutely need to be assessing effectiveness, pick 2-3 metrics that matter and stick with them over time to assess trends. And don't be afraid to push back when you get that one-off request for a special measurement report.

10

**Demand results.**

Do you have a clear sense of the results you need? Are they realistic for your budget (and would your agency tell you if not)? Are you clear on the specific strategy and tactical execution that will achieve those results... and is your team willing to go the extra mile to deliver? In fact, does your agency even commit to metrics and KPIs, or are you left with a lot of arm waving? If you're not getting results that move the needle, maybe it's time to reconsider how and where you're spending those precious PR dollars.

Working with a tight PR budget is a tricky game that organizations must learn to navigate in today's market. By understanding how your organization can leverage its current resources, you'll get the most out of your PR dollars. Experiment with these tips, track your results and communicate with your agency. Still not sure where to start? [Let's chat.](#)