

# Got Leads? Get Media!

By Vicki LaBrosse

Public relations is a powerful tool for influencing and changing behavior, but most companies don't think of PR as a means to generate leads. After all, it's hard to measure the effect an editorial placement or a graphic has on leads. Organizations often don't want something that can't be correlated to sales. How do you use PR to get leads? Strike a P.O.S.E. – through paid, owned, shared and earned media!

## **Paid Media**

Paid media is simple to understand: It's PR that you pay for and refers to external marketing efforts that involve a fee-based placement. This includes branded content, display ads, Google Ads, social media ads and other advertising. It boosts the performance of your "free" media. Paid media is one of the quickest ways to drive traffic and a good way of opening doors – even if just a crack – that would otherwise stay closed. Paying to promote content can help get the ball rolling and create more exposure. Be sure to test your paid media. For example, LinkedIn and Twitter often perform well for B2B media. Start with a small budget and see how you do.

## **Owned Media**

Owned media is content you create that is unique to your brand. It exists to educate, inform and even entertain your prospects. This includes your website, blog posts, white papers, case studies, videos, e-books and social media channels. The more owned media you have, the more chances you have to extend your brand presence. This is perhaps your prime opportunity for utilizing calls to action and landing pages. Your content should compel viewers to want more, to take action. Having these calls to action will encourage them to sign up for a demo of your product, speak with a sales person and hopefully convert to a lead.

## **Shared Media**

No matter what you're selling, the bottom line is that people, not businesses, are buying your products or services. And people are on social media. It's where we research, get product assistance and socialize. It's our culture. Shared media is content which is specifically designed for user-generated circulation. It primarily encompasses social media – Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and other social platforms to distribute content. Being active on social media is not enough. Simply sharing content for the sake of visibility will not in itself generate leads. Sharing should connect your audience with a call to action.

## Earned Media

Earned media is the equivalent of online word-of-mouth and the vehicle that drives traffic and engagement around a brand. It is usually seen in the form of viral tendencies: mentions, shares, reposts, reviews, recommendations or content picked up by various media outlets. Earned media provides critical, third-party endorsements for your company, product, service or management team. As opposed to advertising or direct marketing, communicating through a journalist provides valuable and sought-after credibility that other forms of communications cannot match. While there are different ways a brand can garner earned media, good SEO, content strategies and established media relationships are the most controlled and effective. This is perhaps the most desired type of media since others are essentially doing your PR for you.

Influencing audiences to take action is what public relations is all about. This makes PR a great tool to improve lead generation. It may be tempting to only try one media channel at a time if you have a limited time and budget. You might think that pouring all of your resource into say, paid media, is the best way to go. The reality is that in order to get leads, paid, owned, shared and earned media need to work in together.



### About the Author

Vicki LaBrosse has been with Edge Legal Marketing since 2007 and currently serves as director of global public relations. She provides strategic communications counsel and training to C-suite executives and marketing decision-makers in the legal industry. Vicki has directed product launches, brand PR, event marketing, internal communications and media relations. She writes and speaks about PR and marketing and has been published in various trade publications including Legaltech News and Business News Daily. Vicki serves as national director of marketing and public relations for Women in eDiscovery.

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