



# Build Your Salon Brand Through PR

## Ten Tips To Ensure That You Will Be Recognized As THE BEST Salon In Town!

By: Larry H. Oskin, President, Marketing Solutions

With the challenges of the current recession, now is the time to start a successful new marketing and PR strategy for your salon. Public relations and media exposure will help take your salon, wig atelier or full service day spa from being one of the best kept secrets to being known as THE BEST salon in town! PR builds credibility, respect, reputation, integrity, namebrand awareness and best of all, pride for your staff and clients.

The consumer and beauty trade media are always looking for expert information, news and educationally oriented feature articles. You need to make news to promote the specialties of your salon or day spa every season throughout the year. If you take a non-commercial education oriented approach, you and your salon team will achieve important ongoing local and national media exposure throughout the year with newspapers, magazines and TV shows as well as on the Internet. Just be careful to avoid articles that are self-promotional.

**1. Set Strategic PR Objectives:** Create a list of specific strategic business objectives, with at least half of them focused on development of a comprehensive marketing, advertising and PR Program. Create qualitative objectives with quantitative goals, so that you will be able to measure your results.

**2. Create Annual Marketing & PR Calendars:** Develop an annual marketing calendar strategy with advertising and promotional plans that are heavily supported by professional public relations programs. Create a calendar chart and grid that notes all of the seasons and holidays. While keeping a consistent marketing strategy and image, change your PR and promotions every two months as most salon and spa clients only come in every 6 to 8 weeks. Promote each salon, hair replacement, wig, hair restoration and spa service category at least once per year. Your salon and spa gift cards should be promoted all year, while taking into account your biggest gifting holidays of Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day and the year-end holidays.

**3. Media Kits:** The most important PR tool for any spa business is to have is a professional 'Salon Media Kit' to best represent your salon to editors, TV producers and the media. These Media Kits will tell the media all about you, your signature services and the specialties of your salon team. If needed, hire a professional writer to create these elements for you:

- **Salon Business Story:** Share what makes your salon services so special, unique and distinctively different. Tell about your services, staff specialties, state-of-the-art equipment, advanced education certifications, education, media honors, charitable programs and community achievements.
- **Biography:** A one-page brief about your salon owner and/or spokespersons.
- **Professional Photography:** Include photographs of your makeovers, the salon exterior, your owners and all of your special salon and spa services.
- **Fact & Tip Sheets:** Share bullet point information about your salon business and specialty products.

**5. Press Releases:** Consistently create a series of half to single page media announcements with your most important salon news, new services, therapies, special events and your charitable fundraisers. Tell what, when, how, why and where. Write press releases and pitch to their target audiences – whether beauty trade or consumer! Be sure that each release is not commercial in nature. Do not attempt to sell anything from a press release. Save that for your advertisements. Simply share education oriented news, information and facts while telling the readers what they can learn from you and your salon specialties.

**6. Research Target Media Lists:** Create a computerized database with each of the local editors, Internet web editors, radio and TV producers on it. Create a separate beauty trade Target Media List. Include names, titles, addresses, email addresses, websites and telephone numbers.

**7. PR & Editorial Calendars:** Research all of your targeted media's editorial needs. These Annual Editorial Calendars are often available by visiting their websites. Offer ideas, expertise and photography to meet the needs of your local and national media targets who pay attention to professional salon, spa and beautycare experts. Most local print publications will have special salon, health, wellness, medical and other related beautycare editorial sections with different themes throughout the year. Many of the

national trade magazines will have special issues each year where they will focus on special topics like wigs, hair replacement, hair extensions, massage, facial treatments and skincare. Create your PR programs at least 3 to 4 months in advance when attempting local, regional or national media coverage to promote your salon.

**8. PR Via Email, Mail & Telephone:** Today, you can pitch the media with email blasts or by traditional mail packages. We recommend that you use both. Learn what your targeted editors prefer. Plan to personally follow up each emailed or mailed presentation with a telephone call! Call to make sure they received your press kit, while offering exciting feature story ideas. Be gentle and not pushy. Become respected as a valuable expert salon and spa resource.

**9. Create PR Pitch Letters:** Cover letters should be personalized for each editor and TV producer. These can be emailed or mailed with your press releases, photographs and Media Kits. Share at least 2 to 3 proposed feature story ideas for use in the future. Offer to write a special column for their readers or to help create a weekly TV Makeover segment.

**9. Professional Resources:** Media representatives will respect you better, if you use a professional PR agency to represent you. You can create and facilitate a PR campaign all by yourself, although we do not recommend it. Explore local freelance writers, college journalism students, professional publicists, marketing and PR agencies. Often, beauty writers from local newspapers or magazines may be approachable for some freelance PR projects. You certainly can and should consider the use of a PR and marketing agencies that specialize in the professional beauty business.

**10. Create Ongoing PR Strategies!** PR will never go out of style. The media will always be interested in hair design, makeovers, wigs, haircolor, hair extensions, skincare, nailcare and most everything offered at your salons. Now is the time to create an annual PR campaign that will keep you in the news! Create colorful PR Reprints every time your salon is featured. Display these throughout the salon. Create a special Salon Media Portfolio for your reception area. This Media Portfolio can be used during consultations with your new guests, to help recruit new staff and for any major spa event, when you need to introduce yourself to anyone of importance.

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**Editorial Notes:** Larry H. Oskin is president of Marketing Solutions, Inc., a full-service marketing, advertising, graphic design, photography and PR agency specializing in the professional beauty industry. Clients include salons, spas, medical spas, medical clinics, associations, distributors and manufacturers. Marketing Solutions is located at 10875 Main Street, Suite 205 in Fairfax, VA 22030. For more information call 703-359-6000 EXT: 22, Email [LOskin@MktgSols.com](mailto:LOskin@MktgSols.com) or visit [www.MktgSols.com](http://www.MktgSols.com).