

PR HOT SPOT November 2009

Hosting Media at Your Business Part 2: Tips Before, During and After Agreeing to Host Media

By Kimberly Miles, Public Relations Manager

Hosting media at your business is an opportunity to get free media exposure. Quality travel articles published in magazines, newspapers, and online carry more credibility with consumers than paid advertisements. In last month's PR Hot Spot, I explained the do's and don'ts of screening the media to make sure you have a legitimate journalist to host. Once a business accepts a media hosting, here are a few tips to create positive experiences the media will want to publish.

- When hosting any journalists at your business, make sure all staff is notified of their visit in advance. Often times, only senior management will know and additional staff will not. A front desk person or hostess may be the first person to greet the media and you want to make sure you are giving them the best possible welcome.
- If you have a press kit of your business or other materials that will help the media know about your business, put them together in advance and make sure to have it ready to give them when they arrive.
- For lodging properties, a member of upper management should inspect the hotel room. This includes looking behind doors and dressers, under beds and making sure everything in the room is in working order.
- A welcome gift to the journalist is certainly acceptable to give, but keep in mind some news media are unable to accept gifts due to company ethics rules.
- You don't need to go overboard to promote your business to the journalist once they arrive. Media like to experience your business just the way other guests do. Certainly offer to answer any questions they may have, but also let them experience things for themselves.
- Immediately after the journalists visit, follow up if asked to supply additional information otherwise touch base within a week to make sure they have everything they need. Thank them for their visit and add them to your media distribution list for sending press releases.
- It is not advised to hound the journalist continuously to ask when their story is to be published. As much as we would like them to, don't expect them to send you a copy of the article either after it is written. Instead, do your own research and monitoring for the story. If you are unable to find anything on your own, after a month or two,

just send a quick e-mail to touch base on the story and offer any additional assistance.

- **Tip:** The Myrtle Beach Area Chamber/CVB uses a media monitoring service to find print and online stories on travel and tourism in the Myrtle Beach area. You can always check with the CVB for assistance with your search.

Print and Online Publicity Values

September 2009

Newspaper Articles 34

Nondaily Newspaper Articles 4

Consumer Magazine Articles 6

Trade Magazines 10

Web Articles 105

Total Circulation 83,406,204

Publicity Value \$1,104,996

Year to Date Ad Value for Myrtle Beach Travel News: \$19,963,550

What would you like to learn or see in a future PR Hot Spot? Want to be involved in this areas PR efforts? Have a PR related question? You can reach Kimberly Miles at 843-916-7218 or Kimberly.Miles@VisitMyrtleBeach.com.