

Finding The Right Pr Firm

How can you find a public relations firm that's right for you? Do your homework. Ask friends or business associates. If there is a particular business or person who is receiving the type of press you're looking for, make some calls. Find out how they are getting that media attention. If you are unable to find any leads, try this: open the phone book to "media relations" or "public relations," close your eyes, and randomly place your index finger on the page. Now open your eyes. You see where your finger is pointing? That's the company you start your fact-finding with. Set up a meeting. Listen to their ideas and suggestions. Have them show you samples of other campaigns they've worked on. Ask for a proposal. Review fees, length of the contract, and expenses. Ask what media they have placed in the last few months. If the firm you are interviewing has only placed stories in the local media, you need to review your objectives. Can this firm help you meet them? Local media is important, but why limit yourself? Why not go national? Keep looking.

Talk to the company's principals. Are you comfortable with them? Do they share your vision? Be wary of an over-zealous sales pitch. If you feel that you are being told only what the representative thinks you want to hear, or if he or she is only mouthing your words back to you, you could be in the wrong place. Ask specific questions regarding how they intend to place you in the media. How do they view you? How would they pitch you? What media outlets would they approach? Ask for a general overview of how their process works.

We have placed clients on Oprah, CNN, Time, People, The Wall Street Journal and countless other media outlets, but that is no guarantee that we will place any client in those venues. I guarantee our work, effort, previous media placements and expertise, that's all any public relations firm can comfortably guarantee. Because there are no guarantees, it is important that you see samples of media they have placed for other clients. If the representatives of the firm you are interviewing guarantee you top media coverage, tell them you have some swampland you'd be interested in selling them.