

## **What to look for in a Publicist/Public Relations Rep**

The job of a publicist is to increase public interest in the client. The type of work a publicist does is dependent upon the needs of the client. For example, a publicist who represents an author may be responsible for arranging book tours, sending out review copies, or placing advertising in relevant publications in an attempt to boost reader interest in the book. If the publicist represents a trendy restaurant, the publicist may promote the recent hiring of a famous chef and work to get celebrity guests to be photographed dining at the establishment.

Essentially, a publicist's main role is to be a liaison between their client and the media. Typically, publicists create public relations campaigns for the client, focused on promoting their brand and increasing their visibility within their market.

Regional, national, and international publications, television, and bloggers are all crucial outlets that a publicist utilizes in order to get the word out about a client. A publicist must generate positive media attention for their client while also addressing any negative attention. Publicists are essentially brand managers who help increase their client's value.

The best publicists are those who are invisible. Their role is to generate buzz for the client behind the scenes. When interviewing publicists, these are some key qualities you may wish to keep in mind.

### **Publicists should:**

- Be personally involved with their client. This means maintaining a close relationship with the client in order to maintain constant communication and flow of ideas.
- Use unconventional methods of generating press.
- Not practice a cookie-cutter approach when handling a client's pr campaign. All *PR* campaigns must be specifically tailored to the client in order to ensure that the client is being promoted to target audiences.
- Constantly cultivating new relationships with the media while maintaining already established relationships.

### **Rates:**

Rates are dependent upon the scope of the work required. You can expect to pay as little as a few hundred dollars in consulting fees in return for a strategic communications plan from a publicist. Most publicists work on a monthly retainer, with rates dependent upon the number of hours each month they will devote to the client. Fees may also include travel fees, and/or reimbursement for travel expenses.

While publicity campaigns generally ramp up, meaning they begin with research, contacts, meetings and strategizing, they sometimes appear to start off slow, but actually many hours are spent putting plans into motion. The majority of hours that go into a publicity campaign are often spent in the first few months, and as the client's visibility increases, and more opportunities are presented, the hours spent on public relations will generally stabilize and might be 5 – 10 hours a week, depending on the client's needs. Rates can vary greatly from publicist to publicist.