

## **The versatile world of PR**

Mastering the craft of public relations is all about versatility. From writing a press release, attending a meeting on fundraising initiatives for a charity event, implementing a crisis communications workshop or pitching a creative angle to the media, the practice of public relations varies but the focus and drive behind the industry remains consistent.

*What exactly is PR?* It's a question I am asked almost daily and the simplest way to explain it is that it is used as a management tool that builds and creates an understanding between an organization and the general public. It does this through a variety of strategic tactics that aim to influence opinions.

And different opinions definitely come into play. Some may even go as far to say that influencing opinions is a loaded statement due to the many misconceptions about the practice of PR. Before I explain how the concept of public relations is beneficial to your business, let's clear the air and diminish those nasty rumours about public relations practitioners.

Unfortunately, the term spin doctor is a common phrase associated with public relations. Granted there are some in the industry who religiously spin their stories into a livelier tale to put a more positive slant on an event or issue, public relations is part of a trend that continues to do wonders for businesses. Simply by knowing how to properly implement tactics designed to meet businesses goals and objectives and being resourceful and creative in your communication planning, can put you farther ahead than your competition.

We talk about differences but the industry is broad enough that many don't realize how versatile the world of public relations really is. Media relations, publicity, event planning, community relations, government and public affairs are all components of PR that demonstrate how public relations can be an integrated approach to business planning, increasing sales and generating awareness.

All businesses, however small or large can use PR; it's a strategy reserved not just for corporations. PR can be used to create awareness about a new product, menu offering, how to increase clientele or profile personal achievements and knowledge. It can generate ticket sales, launch openings and help solve world problems.

Simply put, public relations is all about engaging the public, building understanding and spreading the word using tactics that will build your business and generate the awareness you are looking for.

*Amelia Kennedy is the owner of Crosspoint Communication, a boutique PR company based in the Fraser Valley. For more information, visit [www.crosspointcommunications.ca](http://www.crosspointcommunications.ca).*