

The importance of maintaining PR in a recession

I am sure that everyone has probably heard enough about the current recession so I will try not to add to that too much. The danger in a PR context for businesses in a recession is that we turn inwards. We stop talking to the outside world and when we do that the outside world stops talking about us. Dialogue is lost with markets and communities in which the business operates and the company's brand is weakened. It's a natural response. We all have more on our plates. *Where is that next order coming from? Do I need to cut costs? How do I go through this redundancy process?*

The benefits though for the businesses who keep that dialogue going are significant. These are the businesses that when things do start to pick up people will come to first. Also in these difficult times bad news is (unfortunately) easy to find, and though one would be forgiven for thinking sometimes that this is all people want to hear or report, this isn't the case. If you have positive stories to tell you might just find that the relevant publications and commentators, as well as the audiences themselves, are more interested in hearing them.

But there is still that cost issue to deal with. Most businesses will be trying to operate on tighter budgets so where do you find the cash from to do this I hear you say? Well this is where the online world can help. The potential return on investment from interacting with the online world can be significantly higher than traditional media. This is because your story is findable, shareable and durable. If it is of sufficient interest that enough relevant publications and people talk about you then your story will very often get relayed to many many more through the power of search and social media.

For example RealWire's [online media animation](#) has now been live for six weeks. It was initially talked about on a handful of blogs in the first week or so. Since then it has been talked about to such an extent that it is now on over 100 blogs and has even appeared on [Advertising Age's](#) website.

The other element of the online media that helps with the cost issue is that almost all the [online media tools are free](#) or at a substantially lower cost than the equivalent in the offline world. Want to start an industry publication? No need for expensive printing presses and distribution, just register for a Wordpress account and you can talk to the world. Want to know what the people who deal with your business think about you? No need for expensive market research exercises, just search in Google, Delicious, Technorati and Twitter for your company or product names. Want to send your news releases to hundreds of relevant publications around the world and publish them so they can be found by anyone with an internet connection? Then send them through a distribution service like RealWire. OK that one's not free, but it is still very cost effective!