

In tough times Publicity ... Works

BY LANA MINI • STAFF WRITER • MARCH 15, 2009

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Editor's note: This is the first in a continuing series on businesses that are thriving in spite the economy.

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While the economy teeters around us, Lisa Maas is breaking through it.

While companies are laying off, she had added jobs and expanded her Royal Oak company.

And to give back to a community that has helped her become a success, Maas is creating a YouTube video series titled "Marketing Minute" to offer free advice for businesses and for people searching for jobs.

Publicity Works, in Royal Oak, is an ear-to-the-ground marketing company that uses tools like Twitter, LinkedIN and Facebook to help boost a company's visibility. She also evaluates Web sites to make sure they send the right message to consumers.

"Thirty-nine percent of all public relations activity is online," Maas said. "But many people really don't understand yet how to use it to their full advantage, or they just don't have the time."

Many companies still don't take advantage of blogging and the benefits it can achieve. Nokia has done it right, she said, by giving free phones to bloggers and then watching the results as writers in turn gave them free publicity.

Maas represents a variety of companies from architectural firms to attorneys. She's also successfully marketed artistic events such as the DEMF (Detroit Electronic Music Festival) and represents restaurants like the Bastone complex and trade unions such as the Michigan Regional Council of Millwrights and Carpenters.

What makes Maas successful, she said, is that she combines online marketing aspects with traditional P.R. methods like working with television, radio and newspapers.

"In this economy, a lot of businesses are reaching new heights because they aren't slacking in the marketing area," Maas said. "During this economy, the point for some is to cut back but don't cut out your marketing. If you are a smaller company, you need to step up your marketing while the bigger companies cut back."

Why?

Because consumer attention span is short, and if a company disappears from the public eye, it's hard to make a comeback.

"It takes a Herculean effort to (come back). Don't let other companies take advantage of your downtime, because they will."

What does it take for a business to be on top?

Maas said it's showing clients that you can solve a problem.



Lisa Maas of Publicity Works in Royal Oak said her public relations/marketing business has grown in the past year. To help others, she posts tips on online called "Marketing Minute."

PUBLICITY WORKS

Owner: Lisa Maas.

Service: Publicity and marketing company.

Location: 306 S. Washington, Royal Oak, MI 48067, (248) 691-4466, www.publicityworks.com.

Success tip: Make sure your business serves a need.

What makes the company cutting edge: The team is developing a series of Youtube clips called "The Marketing Minute" coming out in April that will offer businesses and individuals free marketing tips. Visit the company Web site for links.

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