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### Why connecting 1-to-1, 1-to-many can pay off

The businesses that earn winning headlines and broadcast air are those that offer the right hook or angle to invite interest and serve those who pay attention to the news. A big part of that is making a connection and telling a story that resonates with the editors and reporters who serve as the gatekeepers to much broader audiences.

Approach your story by making clear why it is timely, newsworthy, relevant, trendworthy and local. When the reason the readers and viewers should care is center stage, you are in an even better position to earn the coverage you seek. A good story is one that touches your heart, kicks you in the stomach, makes you think, hits you over the head or squarely between the eyes, or kicks you in the behind and into action in some way. To bring these ideas to life, consider how a few local companies earned publicity by sharing compelling and timely story hooks.



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Media-Savvy-To-Go

- Darwin's Natural Pet Products ([www.darwinspet.com](http://www.darwinspet.com)) is a Seattle-based manufacturer that offers convenient home delivery of its pet foods made from free-range meats and organic vegetables. When the national pet food recall became big news in April, Darwin's had a story to tell. This company jumped on the timely nature of the news to offer resources and information to help pet lovers make safe and nutritious choices during a troubling time. In doing so, it earned front-page and feature articles in Seattle news publications, a radio interview and a news broadcast feature. For Darwin's, the opportunity couldn't have been better to share its "adding life to pet's years and years to pet's lives" message. Best of all, new customer counts grew fourfold in the weeks following the national pet food recall, and the trend continues.
- Affirmagy ([www.affirmagy.com](http://www.affirmagy.com)) is a Seattle-based company that makes personal affirmation blankets that celebrate big ideas such as abundance, courage, strength and love. Given the popularity of "The Secret" and the media messages resonating nationally about the power of intentional living, Affirmagy's goal to change the world one Affirmawrap at a time is a big idea at the right time. This company has aligned itself with major nonprofit organizations such as the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life events to make it easy for everyone to give to this cause as they purchase the company's products. From a media relations standpoint, this company has a story to tell. When a regional business publication wrote about how start-up businesses are embracing cause-related marketing as a means of building brand ambassadors and inviting contributions to worthy causes, Affirmagy was at the center of that story.
- Olympic Hot Tub Co.'s ([www.olympichottub.com](http://www.olympichottub.com)) co-owner Alice Cunningham has grown her company over the past 30 years by making it easy for customers to take it easy. She also has adopted a customer service philosophy of making it easy for consumers to buy, own and refer her products. Many business publications seek out useful "how to" features from local experts to guide their readers to achieve more success. Cunningham's customer service philosophy has served as the foundation for article placements in several local newspapers and Internet article directories. As a result, she has earned local speaking engagements to inspire others to follow her lead. Her one-to-one messages about doing business and

serving others have carried forward to much wider audiences, reinforcing her reputation as a successful business veteran who offers credible advice.

Take a moment to consider how you share your story one-to-one at the local networking event or one-to-many through your own speaking and media relations efforts. Do you offer a statement of fact about what you sell or the service you provide? Or, do you offer a statement that actually invites more conversation by hitting a nerve, scratching an itch or relieving universal pain?

Here are a few examples that get to the heart of the matter with impact:

- I help you find the courage to take chances and make changes in your business and your life. — Amanda Murphy
- I am a retirement guru. I guide you to an abundant retirement with control, confidence and ease. — Steve Juetten
- I am a real estate developer and investor who makes the cosmopolitan lifestyle affordable for Seattle's first-time homebuyer. I am also a mentor and coach with intentions to inspire a billion people to live bold lives of contribution. — Thach Nguyen

What these powerful statements share in common is that they go beyond the self-centered notions of providing food, clothing and shelter for each business owner. Not one of them asks you to buy a widget or engage a service. In fact, they are bold, selfless declarations that intend greater good. Immediately you want to know more and find out how you can engage and benefit.

Consider this as you ponder how to tell your own story to whoever will listen as an elevator speech, a speaking topic or a story for the media. Be prepared to tell your story one-to-one or one-to-many in a way that invites conversations and new relationships to propel your business forward.

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