

The time is now to toot your horn

"Get someone else to blow your horn and the sound will carry twice as far."
—Will Rogers

that has barely taken off the ground. It is far better to get the positive kind of publicity that will attract a horde of customers beating down your doorstep.

Small businesses are somewhat intimidated by the process of generating attention and awareness of their product or service through the media. Some camera-shy ones of the shrinking violet variety would rather die than call attention to themselves and the business. However, if you want the business to succeed, you must be the unabashed, even shameless and brazen, number one promoter of your product or service. Yours may be the best product or service around but if no one knows about it, then your endeavor is unlikely to even take off the ground.

To generate publicity, you need something slightly different to say about your product or service. You must know which of the various media reach your intended target market and you must package the message and visuals in the acceptable format and send it to the right person within the media organization and then you have to persistently follow up to make sure that your message is heard loud and clear. You can do this periodically while finetuning the message that you want from time to time as your business evolves and as you build contacts that can help you build awareness that gets people to buy your product or service. The editorial and the marketing departments of media companies are separate in the big mainstream media companies. However, you should know that in some free publications that depend solely on advertising for their revenue, you may be asked to advertise first before you can get any advertorial or publicity for free or as part of the advertising package. See if this is something that can

work for you in the long run.

Publicity may come out as the desired result if you submit something in writing in the format and the language that media companies are schooled in or what is commonly referred to as a press release. You can hire a professional to do this for you on a regular basis, and if sustained over a period of time, can establish your niche in the market place as the source for a particular product or the number one provider of a specific service.

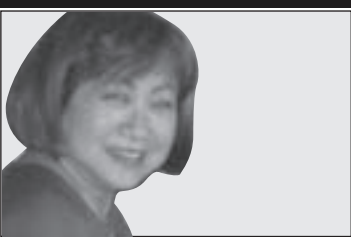
Maintaining good public relations is not only for big companies that can afford to hire professionals in the field. It is also for small businesses who can generate the publicity that they need by issuing periodic press releases, a press kit or by sponsoring an event that will call people's attention to your product or service.

The internet has a resource that you can tap into at www.free-publicity.com which can give you further information on publicity and promotional tips.

Remember that this is one aspect of the business that you can, of course, pay someone to do but no one can be as eloquent or as passionate as you in tooting your own horn. If you have a bit of show business in your blood, this can be right along your alley. However, if you are petrified to do this as a lot of people are, then remove your personality from the business image, get a professional spokesperson or a mascot but the important thing is to get the business name and its products or service out there.

Nota Bene: To ask questions, send feedback and requests as well as to inquire about advertising in any or all of the 6 print editions of Asian Journal in California, Nevada and New York/New Jersey and/or advertising in the Print Edition Online of Asian Journal, e-mail monette.maglaya@asianjournalinc.com.

IMMIGRANT LIVING: 101 AND BEYOND



MONETTE ADEVA MAGLAYA

WHEN no one else will blow your horn for you, however, you have to do it yourself. When you're in business just trying to survive during these challenging times, now seems to be a good time as any to take the initiative yourself. Particularly when you are an entrepreneurial immigrant growing a business which is dependent on its visibility to generate sales and revenue for its survival, it is a good idea to toot your horn to attract the attention of potential customers or, at the very least, hold your current client base. This is, perhaps, one exception to the beatitude that the meek shall inherit the earth.

Climb atop a hill, step on a dais, rise above the crowd, toot your horn, bang your drums and grab their attention. The upside of thinking outside of the box when everyone else seems to be pulling back, is that there is fewer message competition and you are more than likely to succeed in calling attention to your product or service. You will get that all important "mind share" that many big advertisers pay millions of dollars just to grab.

Publicity and advertising go hand in hand. Some claim that the best advertising is publicity because it is perceived to be objective and without vested interest on the part of a third party endorser. Often, publicity costs you nearly nothing. Experts believe that if your name is in the news, then it builds awareness among your intended targets about your business. Some even claim that publicity, whether good or bad, is still publicity and gets your name on top of the heap. However, bad publicity can wreck a small immigrant enterprise. The big companies can hire public relations outfits that can do damage control but not a fledgling, two-bit business



THE UNSTOPPABLE POP PRINCESS SHINES ON CITIZEN PINOY THIS SUNDAY! One of the biggest names in Philippine entertainment - "Pop Princess" Sarah Geronimo (2nd from right) joins "attorney-to-the-stars" Michael J. Gurfinkel (right) for an entertaining and informative encore episode. Sarah's parents, Delfin (left) and Divina (2nd from left) also take part in the lively discussion as they talk about how they got their US visas. The most popular immigration program on television - Citizen Pinoy - airs this Sunday, at 5:40 pm (PST) with a replay on Tuesday, at 11:35 pm (PST) on TFC. Citizen Pinoy also airs on ANC-US every Sunday at 12 midnight with replays on Sunday at 8 am and Thursday at 7 pm, all PST; and on ANC-Philippines every Sunday at 4 pm with a replay at 12 midnight on Monday (Manila time).

IMMIGRATION CORNER



ATTY. MICHAEL GURFINKEL

(Part 3)

IN previous articles, I discussed some items or suggestions that could possibly increase your chances of obtaining a visa, avoiding a refusal, or overcoming a refusal. Here are some more pointers: Retain copies of the refusal and any affidavits you've signed.

I have had many people come to me, crying that their visa was refused. When I asked them for a copy of the refusal or sworn statement, they say that, "I was so upset, that I tore up all the paperwork and threw it into the Pasig River." Therefore they do not have a copy of any documentation relating to the refusal. Obviously, it is difficult to evaluate whether a person could possibly overcome the refusal, if they threw out or destroyed all the paper work.

Under the FAM, consuls do provide people with written notice of the grounds or reasons for the visa refusal. In addition, an applicants' sworn statement

What to do if your visa is refused/denied

is "deemed releasable to an applicant as they constitute the applicant's original source documents." In other words, if you sign a confession or sworn statement, you should be given a copy of that sworn statement, which you must keep.

It is up to you to establish your eligibility for the visa.

As a visa applicant, it is your burden to establish eligibility for the immigration benefit you are applying for. If you are not able to properly present, package, or document your eligibility, you run the risk of having the visa refused. However, in my experience, consuls are fair, reasonable, and open minded and would normally grant the visa, if you are able to properly prove, document, and establish that you have met all legal requirements. And even after a refusal, you still have the chance to prove eligibility. As the FAM states, "If a visa is refused, and the applicant within one year from the date of the refusal adduces [presents] further evidence tending to overcome the ground of ineligibility on which the refusal was based, the case shall be reconsidered." Therefore, not only

are the consuls willing to take a "second look" at a refusal, but the FAM also states that the case "shall be reconsidered," so long as you present proper evidence and documentation establishing eligibility.

That is why it is so important that if your visa is refused, you seek the advice of a reputable attorney, who can evaluate your case, and advise if there is "hope" in overcoming the refusal, and assisting you in presenting your case to the consuls for reconsideration.

Michael J. Gurfinkel is licensed, and an active member of the State Bar of California and New York. All immigration services are provided by, or under the supervision of, an active member of the State Bar of California. Each case is different.

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