

# ALLOTT & ASSOCIATES LTD

Public Relations and Marketing Consultants

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## HOW TO GET THE BEST FROM YOUR PR AGENCY

**Famous carmaker Henry Ford is credited with the saying “Half our marketing budget is wasted; the problem is I don’t know which half”. In today’s global economy, cost effective marketing is crucial.**

Choosing the right agency can be tricky so you need to take a long term view. Agencies come in all shapes and sizes, but it is the tools, experience and contacts they have in your industry sector which are important.

But don’t just appoint a PR partner and sit back! At Allott & Associates Ltd I like to compare the coming together of client and agency to a partnership. If both parties work hard at the relationship it can thrive and prosper, however, if one half fails to show total commitment or trust, the relationship can sometimes quickly break down.

From the first planning meeting it’s very important that there is a clear brief and understanding of the company’s objectives. Clients need to bare their soul and this requires a high level of trust between the client and agency from day one. Make sure you are clear about your company’s messages and target audience and if not invest time with the agency to brainstorm to get it right.

To help build a good relationship and ensure effective communication, appoint a key person to be the main point of contact. A monthly review meeting with your PR team is also recommended to plan new activities and to tweak current strategy.

### **Here are the do’s and don’ts to help you get the most from PR:**

- Make sure you provide all your sales/marketing and promotional materials from the start of the relationship
- Keep the agency in the loop concerning your marketing activities
- Keep them informed about company news – they will see far more opportunities for PR than you
- Provide good and clear briefs for press releases – a vague brief will often result in a vague press release
- To avoid misunderstandings always insist on signing work off **before** it is circulated to the press.

- Speak to the agency about other services it can offer – like a full service which includes design work, website build and exhibition support
- Be clear what level of service you will receive
- Don't disappear! – Very frustrating for the agency if you don't return calls/e-mails etc. If you're very busy – tell them and give a timeframe when you will be back in touch
- Be realistic in terms of results – many paper magazines are monthly or quarterly, with long copy deadlines
- Be honest. Some companies also want to use PR as a vehicle for promoting a future company sale, takeover, individual directors, or percolate a third party message.

From personal experience clients have their own PR preferences for promoting products, but its best if a broad approach can be adopted by using editorial features, press releases, case studies, newsletters, editor visits - and the world is your oyster with internet coverage.

Professional photography is also a wise investment. Magazines like good quality, creative images to accompany press releases, and the pay back in increased coverage should justify the extra costs. You can also use the photos for other marketing tools like websites, newsletters and mailers.

When Isopak Ltd won a contract to exclusively distribute a range of machines to the pharmaceutical market in the UK, managing director Robin Davies chose Allott & Associates Ltd to publicise the new products.

He said: "We found PR a great way for promoting our new range of MG2 equipment. We had a fantastic product and PR was the best tool for communicating that news to the industry sectors we are targeting."

Packaging Automation Ltd has been using Allott & Associates to publicise its range of equipment for many years. Samantha Ashton, PA's commercial manager, said: "PR is an integral tool in our marketing strategy and Allott & Associates is regarded as an invaluable extension of our marketing team."

PR is the only cost effective way of appearing in a cross section of the numerous packaging related publications read by target customers, at a fraction of what it would cost to advertise – and choosing the right company to provide it can pave the way for a marketing partnership made in heaven.

**ENDS**

***For further information or photography, please contact:***

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