

Stepping Out

Beach Books: 'Simple Publicity,' by Melanie Rembrandt

by Annie Lubinsky

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After 20 years working in public relations, Melanie Rembrandt learned that getting good publicity for a new business isn't difficult, but a lot of entrepreneurs don't know that.

"Some entrepreneurs sign up with a big PR agency and get very excited about it," the Redondo Beach resident said. "What they don't know is that a small business might be the agency's lowest priority. So they pay for the big name but don't get results."

Rembrandt aims to change that.

"In a nutshell, 'Simple Publicity' provides easy-to-follow guidelines for generating publicity using the power of the press to promote a company without spending a lot of money," she said.

Rembrandt's book begins by identifying four myths that entrepreneurs often believe about publicity: It costs a lot of money, they must hire a publicist, they can't get press because their business is too small and all they need is a press release.

"Getting publicity comes down to relationships and talking to media professionals," she said. "Entrepreneurs might not be aware that they have the power to do their own PR. I want them to understand they can."

Rembrandt knows that starting a new business can feel overwhelming, and that's even before business owners start marketing their products and services. Many don't have the money to hire a PR expert right away, but they do have time and determination, which is all they need to get started.

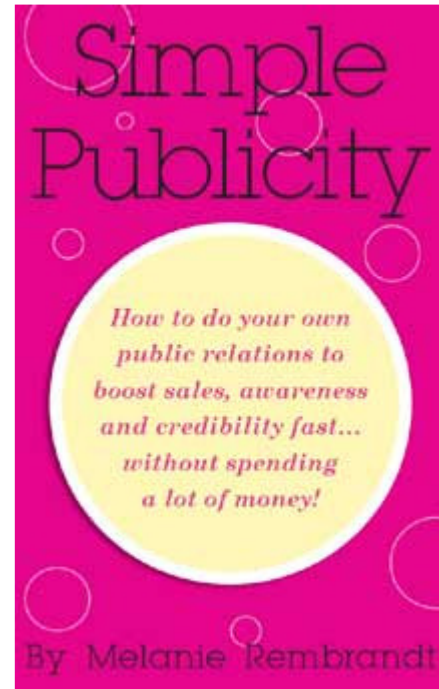
Once entrepreneurs create a plan for themselves, she said, "they can concentrate on their core business and also feel confident that they know what needs to be done about PR."

In the book, Rembrandt emphasizes the need to practice certain skills: making a pitch, stating important points during an interview, getting comfortable in front of a camera. She encourages entrepreneurs to review and polish their work until they feel confident about the message they're sending.

Once the articles and video clips begin to accumulate, entrepreneurs can add them to their marketing materials.

"There are so many things you can do with a media clipping," she said. "You can place it in your media kit and on your Web site, and you can use it to attract business partners, sponsors and customers. An article or video clip offers third-party credibility that you can't purchase."

Rembrandt's goal is to give entrepreneurs enough knowledge of the process that they can



'Simple Publicity,' by Melanie Rembrandt

promote their own businesses and, if they hire a PR firm, they can actively participate in their own publicity.

As with any other skill, Rembrandt wrote, learning to do your own public relations is simply a matter of research, practice and persistence.

Find the book

"Simple Publicity" is available at online bookstores and at Melanie Rembrandt's Web site, www.rembrandtwrites.com.

Local authors can send information about their books to Annie Lubinsky at annie.beachreporter@gmail.com.

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