

MEDIA & YOU or Your Business

Winning any awards or credible write ups in newspapers and magazines are usually the indications that the business is committed to high standards.

By Fatih Oncu
7 July 2022
London

I've been in the media for over 20 years and have conducted many interviews with authors, entrepreneurs, artists, musicians, business people and many others. All of whom are masters in their fields. I figured out something common among them; a strong relationship with the media.

Emma, Heathcote-James, Founder/CEO of the Little Soap Company, Winner of Queen's Enterprise Award 2022, was one of them. I asked Emma what was the secret of her success? Her answer was remarkable; "I say 'Yes' to Press! It doesn't matter what you are talking about – people will just remember you and the product. I would always say yes to News items."

Last month, I had ample time visiting some of the restaurants in Leamington Spa, England. It was a Tuesday evening. Business in restaurants were pretty sluggish that day, as it was early day in the week, and and it would have been the same on Monday. These days are not good days for restaurants. Yet it was not the same for Giggling Squid, a Thai Restaurant in Royal Priors Shopping Center on Recent Street. It was full and no available table for seating. When I entered the restaurant, I didn't ask to see the Manager, instead he started walking towards me with a smile. He must have understood that I am a journalist as I took a number of photographs of the outside of his premises. When he approached me, "Welcome, please let's go outside, and talk" he pleasantly said.

I had visited many restaurants that evening and all were very quiet. I was wondering about the crowd at Giggling Squid and asked the manager What's going on at his restaurant today? His answer was remarkable as well. "It's a normal day for us and our restaurant is full every evening.

Of course our services, rich, tasty and diverse menu make us different, but beyond that, media relations has taken a part in our business. We have connections and communication with almost all media in Leamington Spa and surrounding towns."

Media has been a powerful tool to influence people positively and negatively. Today, we live under the power of media as a source of information, communication and entertainment that enhance the knowledge of us through the different types of news or events in our daily lives.

It is a communication theory that "if you watch television more than two hours a day, your mentality would be televised mentality. You act and behave as you get form the television." This theory goes back to the 50s. Today our mind is shaped by the tools of mass communication, which consist of television, radio, newspapers, magazines and internet such as: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Google and other social networking channels. It simply means that media has the power to give information and provide an easy means of communication among people. Media is a powerful and trusted tool among people living developed countries like the UK, US and EU.

Let's look at the facts before we talk what to do;

Facts ABOUT MEDIA

- 81% of consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced by their friends' social media posts. (Forbes)



Your business may be a source of News and Reviews for magazines and newspapers.

Conversions increase 133% when mobile shoppers see positive reviews before buying. (Bazaarvoice)



81% of consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced by their friends' social media posts. (Forbes)

- 66% of consumers have been inspired to purchase from a new brand after seeing media images from other consumers (Stackla)
- Consumers are 71% more likely to make a purchase based on media referrals. (Hubspot)
- Conversions increase 133% when mobile shoppers see positive reviews before buying. (Bazaarvoice)
- 78% of consumers say companies' media posts impact their purchases. (Forbes)
- 56% of consumers say they're more influenced by media images and videos when online shopping now than they were before the pandemic (Stackla)

What to do?

Depending on your business, there are many ways to make your product, service or items... News. Let's talk about a restaurant business for instance. You have a fancy restaurant, you're the only restaurant cooks and serves the steak, kebab and desserts. Yet many are not aware of it. Like many other businesses, restaurant business has parts; media relation is one of them. Here are some of the things you should do;

Web page. Having an attractive, professional website is the best way to stand out from the competition. A good effective website helps build a strong online presence and helps communicate quality information to not just your consumers but media.

Make your webpage media friendly. Your webpage should have a "Press Room" page which should cover press releases, high quality images and recipes of some dishes you serve. Historical information about some of the items, products and or services you have and news about people like political figures, artists, teams visited your space, office, restaurant.... Their reviews and images should be in press room page as well.

Press release. Write a press release whenever there is a reason to do so, like a grand opening, seasonal opening, new products, special items, services on special days, like Christmas, Father's Day, Mothers Days, Valentina's Day or any new dishes you just started serving. The press release should include the atmosphere of your space, lighting, location, ambiance and some of the reviews from customers.

Local Media. Search and collect the list of any local media and contact the editors. Invite them to your restaurant for some reasons like press conference, introducing your new dish, or something about your restaurant contributes such as an event, party or something like that.

National Media. Search and collect the list of national media, restaurant reviewers that specializes

in restaurants and food businesses. If you are in the USA, contact The New York Times Restaurant Review editor if you are assertive about your cuisine, your services and the ambiance of your restaurant.

Stay in touch with both local and national media editors and send them press releases occasionally. They will eventually write a review or talk about your restaurant either on their conventional media, digital or social media platforms.

Reviews. Be active on review sites, magazines and newspapers. As Bazaar Voice stated that conversions increase 133% when mobile shoppers see positive reviews before buying. Media reviews are most effective tools to bring customers to your restaurant. Most customers read reviews before dining at the restaurant. So, reviews must be answered and managed. They can make or break your brand. Being proactive on reviews, both good and negative, is an excellent way to promote your restaurant.

Grand opening. Organize a grand opening all the time. If you open a new restaurant or branch that is a good opportunity to invite media, local political figures, artists and some of your loyal customers. If not a new restaurant or branch, do a season's opening, celebration or find a reason to invite these figures.

Celebrate. Collect the list of local and national media that covers your interest or scoop of your area. Celebrating their birthday, Xmas day and so on, one might be a good reason to stay in touch with them.

Get Awards. Be award-winning, even be multi award-winning entrepreneur or company. "Winning any awards or credible write ups in newspapers and magazines are usually the indications that the business is committed to high standards." said Mehmet Yaprak, Partner and Managing Director of Adam Grooming Atelier, a London-based hairstyle salons chain.

Social Media. Social media is a part of mass media. Use and update them effectively. Social media has become the most influential and important virtual space where the platform is not only used for social networking but is also a great way of digitally advertising your brand and your products.

As a result, keep in touch with media is an essential part of your success not just in a restaurant business but many other businesses. Whenever a new show, a new movie or a book is released, they highlight what the media have said. So, it's extremely important what media says about your restaurant, cuisine, desserts and ambiance.

ABOUT AUTHOR



Fatih Oncu is Founder and

Director of Newyox, a London-based multi-sided media platform creates opportunities for publishers. He is also a publisher of a few magazines including The Reader's House, Entrepreneur Prime and London Taste.

He has over 20 years of experience in media, plus 10 years of education in Journalism at the College of Saint Rose (BA), Digital Publishing at NYU (MS) and Digital Transformation at MIT (EP)