



For Immediate Release:
March 17, 2009

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Top Five Marketing Tips in a Shaky Economy Wolcott Business Skye Communication, LLC Celebrates Five Years

Wolcott, CT – In an uncertain economy, many small businesses are wondering how they are going to survive. Small business owners and those who are self-employed often do not have the same support as their larger counterparts.

Wolcott, Connecticut firm Skye Communication, LLC is celebrating its five year anniversary, and offers five marketing tips for other small business owners during a shaky economy. SkyeComm specializes in e-marketing, public relations, and website design.

“It’s a scary time for small business owners,” says Skye MacBroom, director of public relations for SkyeComm. “We don’t get any paid vacation time to de-stress. If we lose all of our business, there are no unemployment benefits for us. We pay our own insurance out of pocket. There is no boss to calm our fears and soothe our worries about our 401k. We’re in charge of our own retirement account. We don’t even have any co-workers to join us for a happy hour to commiserate,” she laughs.

Jim DeMicco, co-founder and director of marketing, explains, “Skye started the business after 9/11. It was out of necessity. She was working as a fashion stylist for Martha Stewart at her Westport studios. She was there only a month or two when the news hit that Martha was going to be convicted, so Skye knew she’d be out of a job. PR firms were closing down left and right. She’d show up for a job interview and the office would be closed down, out of business. But Skye had a client she’d done freelance work for, and decided to just make a go of it and try it on her own. I left my sports marketing job in Norwalk because the commute was way too long. I was on the road at least 700 hours a year. That’s an entire month of my life, per year, that I was giving up just sitting in traffic on I-95. It was brutal. Skye was getting busier and busier, so I decided to help her until I found ‘my real job.’ And five years later, here we are!”

SkyeComm began as a traditional PR boutique representing corporate clients and high profile personalities in the media. “Within the first few months of opening our doors, we landed spreads in Fortune Small Business, Coastal Living and Bridal Guide. It was an exciting time,” explains MacBroom. “These national glossies led us to bigger and brighter opportunities.” Today, SkyeComm produces its very own eNewsletters and eZines for clients, providing the services of writing, editing, design, layout,

distribution, and promotions. SkyeComm still offers press releases, but has evolved into website design, print design, and freelance writing.

When the economy is struggling, one of the first programs that a company will cut is its PR and marketing budget because many consider these to be non-essential services. “But that is exactly when you need to promote yourself the most!” emphasizes DeMicco. “We just re-launched our website (www.skyeline.com) to offer more budget friendly marketing packages for business owners. Everyone is looking for a break these days.”

Skye Communication’s Top Five Marketing Tips for Small Businesses in a Shaky Economy

1. **Give your website an extreme make-over.** Freshen up tired old colors, font treatments and outdated styles. Remove clutter, clean up the layout and add more white space. Examine your text and focus on what differentiates you from the competition. Use less bulky long-winded paragraphs. Add more visual appeal such as graphics, pictures, and color blocks for text.
2. **Send out an eNewsletter.** Your first eNewsletter should announce the re-launch of your new website. Email your customers, clients, business associates, friends and family. This is the most cost conscious way to do your own grassroots marketing. Start making a habit of aggressively adding email addresses of your contacts into your eNewsletter list. Create a contest or a give-away to collect email addresses. Tell your readers when you have new services or offerings. Share your latest and greatest, but be sure to include value-added general interest information that everyone will appreciate. This will encourage your readers to forward your eNewsletter to others.
3. **Local media can support you.** Draft and send out your own press release. If you don’t know whom to send it to, try the managing editor. They will distribute it to the appropriate staff member for you. Advertise locally with the newspapers and radio stations that support your business or hometown. Ask what kind of advertorial packages the media has for local businesses. Create a program on your local access TV station. Do whatever it takes to get your business out there in this economy.
4. **Strength in numbers.** Join trade organizations, networking groups, chambers of commerce, and independent business owner groups. Try social networking groups like LinkedIn and Plaxo. You need to connect with other professionals in your industry. It doesn’t matter what you do, just get out there. This is not just for networking; it’s a morale boosting activity that will keep you positive when you realize that you’re not alone. Share your struggles, and ask what does or doesn’t work for others in your field. Hand out your business card, offer to help others, meet for coffee. Volunteer your time with a non-profit group. Offer your services for a good cause, gratis, and you will not only feel fulfilled as a person, but you’ll start thinking out of the box and meeting new and interesting people.
5. **What’s in it for them?** Top notch customer service counts right now. Offer deals, special rates for referrals, and tailored packages for special requests. Whether you have a customer who’s looking for a great meeting venue, caterer, or website designer, take the time to make

recommendations to other people in your network. Giving referrals to your business associates is just good business karma. Lending a helping hand to others has a boomerang effect. Besides, we all get by, with a little help from our friends.

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