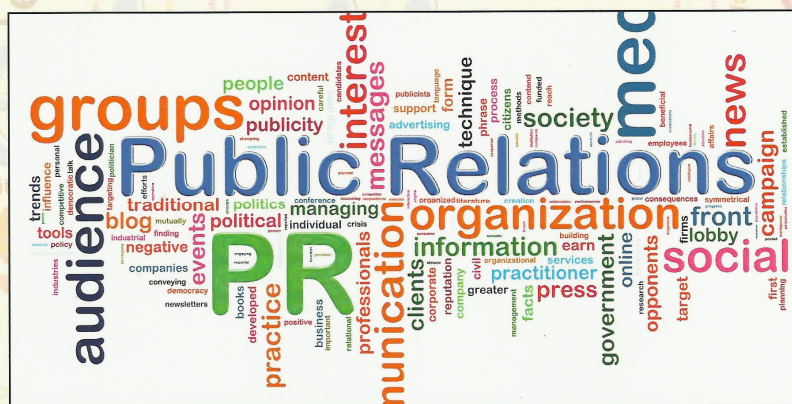


# THE LITTLE BOOK OF PR FOR TRANSLATORS

*Publicity for your business  
on a shoestring budget*



Nicole Y. Adams

**THE LITTLE BOOK OF PR  
FOR TRANSLATORS**

Publicity for your business on a shoestring budget

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*'So the writer who breeds more words than he needs is making a chore for the reader who reads.'* Dr Seuss

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## Publicity for your business on a shoestring budget

Thank you for picking up *The Little Book of PR for Translators*. If you're like most freelance translators, you may think that PR is something reserved for large companies and celebrities. Wrong! Freelancers are business owners, and publicity is for all businesses, no matter how small or large they are.

This book will introduce you to a few simple strategies to help you build your brand and boost your business through public relations without spending a lot of money. But first, let's take a look at what PR is and what you can do to prepare yourself to maximise every publicity opportunity.

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## CHAPTER 1: What is PR?

### Defining PR

Every business, no matter how large or small, ultimately depends on its reputation in order to survive in the market and be successful. Customers, suppliers, and journalists can all have a powerful impact with their opinions about the businesses they come into contact with. These perceptions will drive their decisions about whether they want to work with and/or support these businesses. In today's competitive market and uncertain economic climate, reputation can be a company's biggest asset. It is the one factor that can make you stand out and give you a competitive edge.

Effective PR can help a business manage its reputation by communicating and building good relationships with all of its stakeholders. Thus, PR is about reputation: it is the result of what you do, what you say and what others say about you. Media coverage can be an extremely rewarding tool for your business, as successful PR is the biggest exposure you can get for the smallest possible outlay. The downside is that there are no guarantees with public relations; you can't know if you'll get the desired publicity from your story when it competes with other news stories on the day it is featured.

PR should not be confused with marketing. Marketing is all about the brand, but PR is about the story behind the brand. It is important to be aware that your brand is *not* the story (no matter how much you might like it to be).

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## **Does a translator need PR?**

Yes, yes and yes! As a freelance translator, excellent language and translation skills are necessary but not sufficient for success. Freelancers are CEOs - or solopreneurs - who must wear many hats at the same time. You need to cover all aspects of running a company, including accounting, marketing, business development, administration and, last but by no means least, PR.

## **What PR will do for your business:**

- Bring traffic to your website
- Get people talking about you
- Position you as an expert
- Boost awareness of your brand
- Establish credibility
- Make potential clients aware of your existence
- And much more...

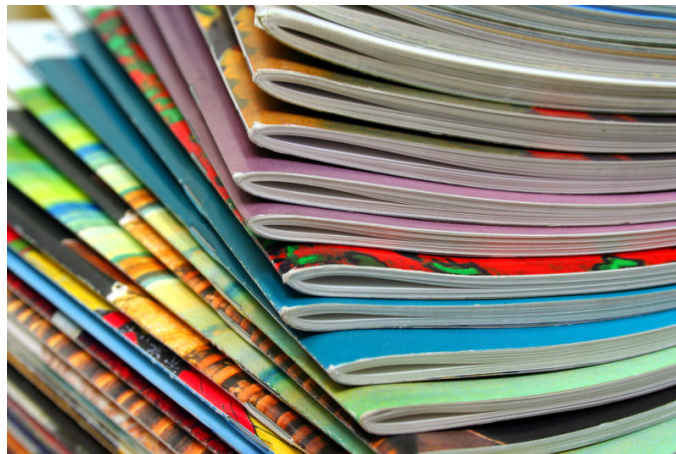
## **Types of publicity include:**

- Interviews
- Press releases



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- Reviews (of books or translated works)
  - Quotes
  - Features

Think of PR as a means of indirect advertising. Although you're not marketing your services directly, attention is drawn to you and your business, and potential clients become aware of your existence and begin to consider you an expert in your field. As a result, they may contact you the next time their company requires a translation in your area of specialisation.



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## CHAPTER 2: Be prepared

Before you jump right in and launch your PR campaign, take a few moments to prepare the following.

### **Twitter account**

Before you start your campaign, you should create a Twitter account if you don't already have one. All you have to do is go to the Twitter signup page and enter your name, email address, and your desired username and password. Once you agree to the terms of service by clicking on 'Create my account', you'll be all set to explore great PR opportunities on Twitter. The advantages of using Twitter will be addressed in more detail in chapter 3.

### **Media kit**

Journalists and website owners love experts who are very publicity friendly, and having your own online media kit will certainly put you in that category.

An online media kit is a page or file that contains the following information:

- A short bio about you and your business, including information on your background, education, awards and achievements, etc.
- High-resolution images of yourself and your company logo or any other relevant products (e.g. books you have published)

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- Your contact details, including your email address
  - A selection of your company's press releases, if available
  - Links to your published articles and/or online mentions (e.g. interviews, guest posts, etc.)

### **Online press page**

An online press page should go hand in hand with your media kit. Create a separate page on your company website (a must-have for any small business owner today) where you will include all of your previous press coverage - anything from mentions in association newsletters, published articles and guest posts, to interviews and books or e-books you may have published. Your media kit should be available for download on this page. If you prefer, you can simply provide journalists with the link to this page as needed rather than making it a public page accessible from your main website. Having a press page with your downloadable media kit will make working with you so much easier for journalists and will increase your chances of getting featured, because media representatives will have access to all the information they require at the press of a button rather than having to search for it.

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## **Ready-to-use pitch**

As soon as you have finished this book, you should sit down and write your very own pitch template. Whenever you spot a potential PR opportunity, you need to have a pitch ready so that you can make contact right away. It is advisable to keep an easily accessible basic draft of your pitch on your computer desktop or in your email outbox and adapt it as needed to suit new PR opportunities.

If you're not feeling creative, check out a pitch-generating website like Buzzuka.com. When you enter a few details such as your target audience, your unique selling point and the services you provide, Buzzuka will churn out a tailor-made pitch that you can tweak to your liking. You can also hire a professional copywriter or PR consultant to write your basic pitch, if your budget allows.

## **Tracking sheet**

Prepare a tracking sheet on which you can record the name of each journalist and publication you contact, including which pitch you submitted and when, any other important details, and when you followed up with the recipient. Having this sheet at the ready will help you keep track of your activities and stay on top of your PR efforts at all times.

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## CHAPTER 3: PR opportunities

### Twitter

After setting up your account on Twitter, start looking for media outlets in which you would like to be featured. Use the search function and relevant hashtags to find and follow 10-15 journalists from the media outlets in which you'd like to be featured. When you engage with those influencers, make sure you post only relevant content that is not just about your own business.

MuckRack.com is a very useful tool for freelancers looking for publicity. The Pro version provides you with lists of journalists covering a wide range of topics, as well as tools for engaging with them. This puts you one step ahead of the competition, who are most likely competing for their targets' attention with millions of other users. Also, Listorious, the popular directory of Twitter lists, is about to be merged with MuckRack.



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## **Be a source**

When media professionals publish a story, they usually look for sources to feature. They may ask their expert sources in various fields to provide quotes or expert advice (for example, an Australian translator and agency owner was recently featured on Sky News Business giving tips on cultural differences Australians face when doing business in Europe) or full interviews. You should look for opportunities to be a source both in your capacity as a language expert and as an expert in your areas of specialisation (e.g. marketing, law, technical, etc.). This will boost your credibility and your status as an expert in your field in the eyes of both peers and potential clients who will see your feature, which ultimately can lead to paid work.

How do journalists and experts like you find one another? A number of websites specialise in putting media outlets and potential sources in touch with each other. The most notable ones are SourceBottle (free) for the US, Canadian, Australian, UK and New Zealand markets, and HARO (Help A Reporter Out - monthly fee). On these sites, media representatives post PR opportunities, and experts (sources) can reply and pitch their ideas and responses. If you deliver a good, relevant pitch, you stand a good chance of being featured in the journalist's publication.

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Opportunities for small business owners, including freelancers, are published on a daily basis, so you are sure to find a suitable feature that will let you showcase your expertise and consolidate your expert position, either in your specific field or as a highly proficient language specialist. Be sure to check the sites daily, or have notifications of new PR opportunities delivered to your inbox, so you never miss out on an exciting opportunity!

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## **Specialist blogs and online business communities**

Other opportunities include specialist blogs by experts in different fields. You can either leave comments on their posts with relevant content to draw their attention to you or seek out opportunities to post guest posts on renowned blogs. Guest posts are an excellent way to raise your profile and boost traffic to your website, which in most cases will be linked to your blog post.

Freelance translators can also join online communities for small business owners. There are dozens, if not hundreds, to choose from, so take some time to research and identify those most relevant for your purposes. Business communities usually offer their members the opportunity to be featured, either in an interview or as part of a members' promotion. Your business may, for example, be promoted in social media for a day, or you may be featured in newsletters that are sent out to hundreds of members via email. Such promotions offer a great opportunity for exposure among professionals in other industries, who may either require translation services themselves or recommend you to their business network!

Last but not least, take a good look around the LinkedIn Group section, and join PR groups such as PR News to get in touch with media professionals and to be notified of new opportunities.





## Public speaking

Another useful PR tool is public speaking. Are you good at using CAT tools? Contact your local translators' association and offer to host a workshop and publicise it in local media. Is social media marketing your thing? Submit an article for publication in an industry journal and follow it up with a seminar or conference presentation. Write down three topics on which you consider yourself an expert and that you could explain to a layperson in your sleep. Next, approach local business associations or translator institutes and actively seek out opportunities to present on these subjects. With the availability of modern technology, it is also very easy to present webinars, which instantly gives you access to dozens of listeners - a sure-fire way to boost your brand and professional standing with minimal financial expenditure.

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## Press releases

Press releases are another low-cost tool to get your translation business featured in the media. Although they have been criticised as ineffective by some, press releases will generate traffic to your website. They are also Google-indexed, making them good for SEO purposes. A useful list of free press release sites can be found at [Schoolforstartups.co.uk](http://Schoolforstartups.co.uk). My personal recommendation is PRLog, which seems to rank very quickly and generate many hits.

After registering with a press release site, you can begin publishing your own press releases free of charge. However, it is important to be careful to choose a reputable site to avoid damaging your image and wasting your precious time.

When you have found the right site, it will be worth publishing a press release every time something significant changes in your business - for example, if you offer a new service (e.g. a new source language or localisation for a different target market) or area of specialisation, or if you have relocated to another country, completed a relevant degree or won an award.



## **Editorial calendars**

The best-kept secret when it comes to drumming up publicity for your business is the editorial calendar, so you need to get your hands on them to get ahead of the game. Most writers, editors, organisations and major publications use editorial calendars to manage their content. Editorial calendars are schedules of what topics are to be covered and when.

Translator publications also generally publish a preview of topics to be covered in upcoming issues in each magazine. For example, if you know that the summer issue of the ATA Chronicle will focus on CAT tools, and you are a MemoQ expert and want to discuss a particular feature of the program, you can contact the editor in due time and discuss the possible publication of your article or interview in the relevant issue. The same goes for industry publications in those sectors relevant to your line of work.

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Working with editorial calendars will increase your chances of getting featured with relevant content. To obtain editorial calendars, you can simply call the publications of your choice and ask to speak to the editor of the relevant section to request a copy, or you can check the contact or advertising section on your chosen publications' websites, which will often contain editorial calendars, along with other information such as closing dates and editorial specifications and guidelines. Sticking to these requirements will also increase your chances of getting your pitch accepted.

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## CHAPTER 4: How to pitch

You're almost ready to start pitching your heart out! There is just one more important step.

### **Create a list of contacts**

Before you start designing your PR campaign, create a list of contacts at your preferred media outlets. This list should form the foundation of your PR activities, to which any ad hoc opportunities that may arise through online communities or 'source websites' may be added. You can research the publications of your choice and manually compile a list of contacts (i.e. editors, bloggers, etc.), including their contact details, and then engage with them in social media before pitching to them.

Alternatively, it's also possible to buy complete lists of media contacts. Companies such as Handle Your Own PR sell lists of media contacts around the world and especially for the US, UK, Australia and New Zealand markets. These lists have the advantage of being pre-qualified and sorted by region, country, sector and medium, and typically include small business media, national radio, national business press, etc. Although a fee is involved, purchasing a pre-qualified list may ultimately save you money as it will save you the time and effort of searching and compiling your own list of contacts. You will simply need to decide which solution is more economical and useful for your purposes.



### **Maximise PR opportunities**

Once you have identified a suitable PR opportunity, make sure you're quick off the block. Be ready to adapt your prepared pitch to the specific request at hand., and bear the following guidelines in mind:

- Don't pitch anything that's not directly related to what was requested, or your pitch is sure to end up in the bin.
- Read the requirements carefully, and provide exactly the information that was requested. The last thing you want to happen is for your fantastic pitch to be dismissed simply because you didn't follow instructions.
- Keep it succinct and to the point. No journalist wants to have to scroll down searching for the relevant information. Two or three paragraphs should suffice.

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- Always include your contact information. You don't want your perfect pitch to get lost in cyberspace simply because you forgot to add your contact details and the journalist has no means of getting in touch with you.

### **10 tips for writing the perfect pitch**

What should you bear in mind when crafting that perfect pitch? Here are 10 tips to get you started.

1. Find out the editor's name and include a personal note with your pitch. A personal touch may just give you the edge over other submissions.
2. Capture the recipient's attention by using a strong headline and including a newsworthy, compelling or particularly interesting piece of information about your topic in the first paragraph. Quote experts or refer to statistics to back up your claims. Make them want to know more.
3. Provide some entertaining or interesting examples of the point you are making. For example, list a couple of failure or success stories demonstrating how poor translations caused a company to suffer major damage to their image and subsequent financial losses, or how your translations have boosted a company's international reputation and turnover. (It's always useful to have client testimonials and figures ready to substantiate your claims.)

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4. Demonstrate your familiarity with this particular media outlet and show that you know what they would and wouldn't publish. Of course, this means doing some legwork to find out all the necessary details beforehand, but doing so will instantly set you apart from competitors, who may pitch blindly without first familiarising themselves with the journalist and the publication in question.
  5. Keep your pitch brief; don't exceed one page at the most. If the recipient wants more information, they will let you know. Use up to four short sentences per paragraph.
  6. If possible, offer a couple of different angles to your story to help the journalist envision how they may be able to use it. For example, you might demonstrate how multilingual communication makes the world go round and is indispensable in all other industries - after all, customers only buy what they understand. Or you could provide details of a brand name that caused a company embarrassment in other countries because it was not localised and sufficiently researched (the famous soft drink that claimed to bring Chinese consumers' ancestors back from the grave springs to mind!).
  7. When pitching as a language professional, always spell-check and proofread your work at least twice before submitting it. There's no second chance to make a first impression, and typos or sloppy grammar will instantly disqualify you as a credible language expert.



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8. To make it easy for the journalist to find your PR documents, include a link to your media kit or the press page on your website.
  9. Don't forget your complete contact details. (It's all happened before!)
  10. Wait at least one week before following up with the recipient. When you do follow up, a courteous, non-pushy call or email will score brownie points and give you an edge over the competition, who may simply submit a pitch and then sit idle while waiting for a response.



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## Chapter 5: Get started!

Now that you've reached the end of *The Little Book of PR for Translators*, I hope you are excited about generating some great publicity for your business. If you have any questions or other feedback, please email me at [info@nyacomcommunications.com](mailto:info@nyacomcommunications.com). Good luck with your PR efforts!

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## Links:

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/signup>

The world's largest micro-blogging platform. Signing up a must!

**Buzzuka:** <http://www.buzzuka.com>

Simple and free pitch creation tool.

**MuckRack:** <http://www.muckrack.com>

See topics of upcoming publications and liaise with journalists prior to publication. (High monthly fee)

**SourceBottle:** <http://www.sourcebottle.com>

Sign up as an expert source and make contact with journalists. (UK, Australia, New Zealand, North America)

**HARO** <http://www.helpareporter.com>

Sign up as an expert source and make contact with journalists. (North America)

**PR News LinkedIn Group:** <http://www.linkedin.com/groups/PR-News-Group-1767127/about>

LinkedIn Group run by PR News. Engage with editorial staff and look out for PR opportunities.

**List of free press release sites:** <http://www.schoolforstartups.co.uk/12-free-press-release-sites-great-for-seo-page-rank/>

12 websites that offer a free press release service for business. (List from 2010 but still relevant)

**PR Log (free and premium press releases):** <http://www.prlog.org/>

My preferred press release service for small businesses. Google-indexed and ranked very quickly.

**Handle Your Own PR:** <http://www.handleyourownpr.com.au/>

PR services including press release writing and media contact lists for purchase. For the UK, US, Australian and New Zealand markets.

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### **About the author:**

Nicole Y. Adams is a certified German<>English translator, editor and public relations consultant with a Masters Degree in Contemporary English Language and Linguistics. She has been self-employed since 2003 and specialises in PR, marketing and corporate communications. As a qualified business coach and mentor, Nicole also helps and inspires newly established freelancers to develop their businesses.

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