

Christian Publicist Reveals Secrets to Spreading Your Message

As a journalist, I've learned that the secular media in our country is anything but pro-Christian. So how should a Christian with a message or a product to share get the publicity they need? To answer this question, I interviewed my friend Gary McCullough—owner of ChristianNewswire—who has extensive insight into public relations. (Listen to my full interview with McCullough by clicking [here](#) or scrolling down.) The secret, he says, starts with keeping your eye on the news.

McCullough says most Christians who have something they think the media should pay attention to—for example, an event—go to public relations firms and blast out a press release to reporters. The press release often explains why the event is so great and why the reporters should talk about it. But McCullough says this is the wrong approach.

“I think [it's] an underknown secret or different way of dealing with the press,” he tells me. “What is missed by almost everybody is that reporters—99.9% of them—don't care what you have to say. And even if they do care, most of them don't even get to decide what they're looking to write about or whom to book as a guest. It's all decided upon by the media cycle.”

That media cycle—which McCullough calls “the beast”—is looking for its next metaphorical meal. Reporters are searching for hot news that lasts one or two days, then they search for their next popping story trend. This is what Christians looking for media coverage need to appeal to.

McCullough offers an example of a seminary professor who has written a book on a godly perspective of romance. That

professor may appeal to radio stations around Valentine's Day and get a few Christian listeners, but McCullough says a different approach would be even better.

"I'm not sure how many of four listeners will remember this, but there was an astronaut in Texas who drove across the country wearing diapers to confront another astronaut in Florida over a love triangle," he says. "Now this was a huge story at the time. ... Everybody wants to know how a person with security clearance and all of the psychological profiling of an astronaut can act like such a crazy person. Here comes our author, who—instead of saying, 'I've got a book. Don't you want to talk to me about romance?'—says at the exact same time to reporters how a love triangle can cause bizarre behavior, even in the sanest of us. All of a sudden, he's on 200 newspapers, he's on radio shows, he's a secular media darling for a few hours."

As owner of a Christian media company, I completely agree with McCullough. While I am much more sympathetic to covering what the secular media won't, I still see the value in felt need. By that, I mean our audience has to be interested in the story. And more times than not, it should apply to something relevant they're seeing on the news or a problem they're experiencing on a day-to-day basis.

McCullough offers his website, www.christiannewswire.com, as an example of using that fresh, hot take on a Christian promotion. Instead of paying media for an ad, ChristianNewswire lets you earn a spot on the press because you have something worthwhile to say by crafting memos that apply to daily news.

"We wanted to allow small ministries to have the same reach that big Fifth Avenue advertising corporations had," McCullough says. "So we have one rate fee. You could send out a press release across the country to top news agencies. If it's under 400 words, it's as little as \$80, you can include a photo for an additional \$50."

McCullough says ChristianNewswire makes sure to get the memos out while the news is still hot, making reporters much more likely to use the content. To learn more secrets to Christian marketing and publicity, listen to my whole conversation with McCullough below!