



Promote via Publicity! What News Blogs and News Outlets Are REALLY Looking For

Ellen Rohr and [Anita Campbell](#)

Ellen: Greetings, it's Ellen Rohr, the Plumber's Wife turned Business Makeover Expert. Welcome back to Business Makeover 2014. This is your opportunity -- our opportunity -- to make this year our best year yet. You know how it goes, 21 days to get a new habit? That's what we're after, so 21 experts in 21 days and lots more. I've got too much to cram into 21 days, so keep in touch as we progress. Check your inbox every day, because you're going to be seeing lots of cool things coming your way.

Thanks for joining me today. This is our time to shine, to makeover our businesses, to create businesses that really serve our lives, to reinvent ourselves. It's a makeover year and this interview today I am super excited about -- 'How Do I Get Publicity'. We're going to straight to the source to one of the smartest chicks I know, Miss Anita Campbell. Hi, Anita, I'm so glad you're here.

Anita: I am absolutely delighted to be with you, Ellen.

Ellen: Well, if your search 'small business expert', you're going to find Anita Campbell at the top of the list. She's always right there. It is evidence to how smart she is when it comes to using technology, social media, understanding how marketing is changing and delivering real, relevant, spot-on business content. I want to brag on you a little bit.

You've been an entrepreneur your whole life. You're a lawyer by training. Wow! She's got a lot of different varied interests, which is also something I find common to a lot of entrepreneurs. She's the CEO of Small Business Trends, LLC, a media and information company. In that role, she closely follows trends in the small business market and trends in technology. Ergo, you're smart to follow her and pay attention to what she's paying attention to. Her expertise has been noted and her opinion quoted in the Wall Street Journal, New York Times, all over the place.

Welcome to the call, Anita. Let's talk about business today, your business. Michael Gerber says '*when you have that moment where you think 'I could start my own business'*', he calls that an entrepreneurial seizure. Did you ever have one of those?

Anita: Well, I had been dreaming of running my own business for a long time and I spent a period of time in the corporate world. I was an in-house attorney, first, at a bank for a long time and then in a technology company. Bell & Howell is where I spent quite a bit of time, but I grew up with an aunt who had run her own business. In fact, she had several businesses that she ran and I always had this idea of wanting to be in charge of my own destiny and running my own business. That's why I say I've been an entrepreneur at heart for my entire life because it was always in the back of my mind.

Ellen: Let me underline something. I think it's so cool that your aunt inspired you. One of the themes that I see weaving through a lot of the interviews I've done is this idea that there was a family member or a mentor, something who inspired them. When you are entrepreneurial, I don't think you realize the impact you might be having on the next wave of entrepreneurs. That's pretty cool that your aunt was an influence as you made the decision to become an entrepreneur.

Anita: And she was a real trailblazer for her generation. I mean imagine somebody in the 1940s, 1950s starting a series of businesses and so on. I think that's really amazing. I just always had this idea that I wanted to be an entrepreneur and finally had the opportunity to do that. Eleven years ago, 11 years last month actually, I started this online site.

Ellen: Congratulations! Happy birthday.

Anita: Thank you. It was a blog, actually, over at Blogger.com using the free blog software there. I had a really simple idea. At the time, I'd left the corporate world. I was just dabbling a little bit, doing some consulting, helping my entrepreneur friends do their business plans and so on. I thought one day well, you know, I'm actually operating as a consultant, so maybe I ought to set up a consulting website, which I did. Then I said I'm going to start an email newsletter, but I ran into an issue. I wanted to provide some thought leadership articles, but I didn't have a way to easily publish those online. That's how I got started with the blog in 2003.

Ellen: Did you just search 'how do you do a blog'? How did you find Blogger?

Anita: A friend of mine suggested it. I was bewailing how difficult it was to set up these articles using Dream Weaver software. I don't know if you've ever used Dream Weaver software.

Ellen: Oh, I did, but we don't anymore, thank goodness. I just had my heart stop when you said that.

Anita: It was very tricky. You hit the wrong backspace key one too many times and poof everything is quickly out of alignment. So it was taking me forever to do this and my friend said hey, there are a lot of people out there doing these blogs. Have you ever tried one? It's really easy. It's like publishing a document using Microsoft Word, except instead of saving the document or printing it you're actually just hitting a button that says 'publish'. I thought this couldn't possibly be that easy, but when I tried it it actually was sort of easy like that.

Ellen: It's just blowing my mind, though, that this was not that long ago. Did you say 11 years ago is your anniversary?

Anita: Yes.

Ellen: It's so funny to hear you talk like that when now it's just become so common place. Everybody knows what a blog is, but you were one of the early adopters.

Anita: Early in the sense of business blogging, you see, because the first couple of years people were blogging they were using them as personal journals and there were a lot of political blogs, as well. But using them for business purposes, that was highly unusual. Believe it or not, at the time when I started there probably weren't more than 100 business bloggers in the English language that identified themselves as blogging specifically on business topics. We all knew one another. We all networked with one another. Well, of course, you couldn't do that today because there are millions of businesses that have blogs, but at the time it was a very tiny close-knit community.

Ellen: Do you think that the opportunity has come and gone or is there a way to find your voice as a niche blogger?

Anita: I think there are always opportunities out there and I think you hit the nail right on the head, Ellen. You have to think about niche because if you're trying to do very general broad topics today, I think it's very hard to do that unless you're well bankrolled. You're going to need millions to start sort of a general topic type of site and get anywhere with it. But if you're on entrepreneur on a limited budget, find a niche that's not covered well today and focus on that niche. Understand your audience. Understand who your audience is. Who is it that you're trying to talk to and be very, very specific. When I say 'be specific', I mean—

- Identify what are their interests.
- What does this typical member look like, is it a male or female?
- What's the general age range?
- What are they interested in?
- What motivates this person?
- What's their technological level of expertise?
- Are they into social media beyond blogs, such as Twitter and Facebook, or are they mostly about reading articles?

You really have to understand that very well. If you understand your target audience, your ideal audience member and you've done a really good job of identifying them and targeting toward them, you're going to have a much better chance today to come out of nowhere and develop a really solid site.

Ellen: I call this 'going down a bunny trail'. It's fun that we've got a little bit of time together instead of two minutes to explore a couple of topics. Our overarching topic is about publicity and publicity is generally considered attention that's garnered for free. How would you define publicity and then we're going to go into some more specifics about how you did it, how others can do it, etc., but let's get to the topic of it. **How would you define publicity?**

Anita: I define publicity as anything that helps publicize or spread the word about your business or your personal brand if you're a solo entrepreneur. It's really about spreading the word about what your business is and who you are as a personal/professional brand. You have to think of it broadly because today it's not about any one technique being 'the' answer. You really have to have a multifaceted program for publicity. So even if you started a blog, for example, that can't be the only thing you do. That has to be just one element of what you do.

Ellen: You really seem to get publicity that gets publicity. In other words, it seems to me you are a master at getting picked up. So when you write something, somebody else is going to go wow, look at this, and it's going to end up in the New York Times or the Wall Street Journal. You don't just put it out there and hope, you put it out there and it gets going. This is where it really takes off. Let's address this. I want to underline this niche thing again.

When you were saying if you could find out who your customers were, it made me think of a client of mine who's a chimney sweep. If you were to search 'chimney sweeps', there is not a brand, an identifiable iconic character that owns that space online yet. I work with a lot of plumbing, heating, cooling, electrical, home service contractors. Those are my people. I'm The Plumber's Wife. There are a lot of people listening to this call who are in all walks of life, but I'm always sensitive to that community and it is dazzling me as to the opportunity there is for someone to be 'the' electrician or to be 'the' drain cleaning guy, to have that voice out there. What do you think?

Anita: Yeah, I absolutely think that is the case and you really have to identify what it is that you do. So you mentioned drain cleaning. There is general plumbing, well, you know, here I am talking to The Plumber's Wife and telling you, but you know this.

Ellen: That's right. Let's hear what you've got. But you're right, there's general plumbing and drain cleaning is not general plumbing so you get an A+ for that.

Anita: Thank you. You have to understand what really am I offering? Am I going to be a generalist or am I going to specialize in one type of service that's very, very specific. You may find that you can actually systematize and be very profitable by providing just one type of service, such as drain cleaning. That's all you do. You don't try to be the general plumber who's fixing leaks, replacing faucets and all of those good things.

Ellen: I hope you know this, but if you didn't you're going to be delighted to know that I am just starting up a drain cleaning and sewer franchise company. We're kicking it off in February, how about that?

Anita: Wow!

Ellen: All we do is drain cleaning, so we're going to be the specialist. I am listening with different aspects of my personality, one of which is thinking there's a lot of opportunity to go out there and lay claim to one of these niches and the sewer and drain one, watch out baby, we're coming after that one.

Anita: Good for you.

Ellen: As we talk about publicity, what just struck me is that a lot of people are scared of publicity because they think in terms of the sting or negativity publicity. Matt Lower not long ago on 'The Today Show' did a sting operation. In fact, the President of ACCA (Air Conditioning Contractors of America) was in on it. They set up service people in these goofy situations and then busted them for trying to sell a customer something that wasn't needed and wanted.

The way it was edited was upsetting to me, but what happens when you see something like that is you're thinking I'm not going to pursue publicity. I'm going to stay under the radar. What do you think of that? **How do you overcome that and what could you do in spite of the fact that yeah, that is a possibility?**

Anita: Well, it's always possible to get negative PR, but you go back to the way you run your business, first of all. If you're being upfront with your customers, if you're being truthful in your advertising and the claims that you're making, if you're paying attention to customer service, you're going to be doing a good job and that's positive PR. That's what spreads. I mean, most small businesses get the vast majority of their business through referrals, if they've been around for a while. We've done surveys on small business trends that show that.

The numbers in the surveys we've done, in one of them it was over 85% saying they get the majority of their business from referrals from satisfied customers or friends of customers, that sort of thing. So think about that as publicity. That's positive publicity.

Yes, you could get negative publicity, but you want to think in terms of hey, what are the positive things that can be discussed about our business and how do we spread the word about that or how do we help spread the word about the positive things happening in our business and today there are so many tools. It's wonderful. We talked about blogs, but think about social media online. You've got sites like Twitter and Facebook and these can be very powerful for small

businesses. Even YouTube, having a YouTube channel with subscribers can be very positive for a business that lends itself to a lot of visuals, a lot of visual videos.

Ellen: Like look what I found in the drain today. Wouldn't that be interesting?

Anita: Yeah, exactly. Actually, it would.

Ellen: It would be, yes. I'd like to see that.

Anita: Not only that, but just explaining to the public things they have to watch out for and how to prevent this from happening with your drain or that and how to choose a good drain cleaning company. There are all sorts of things, just endless numbers of things you can do.

- If you're in a business that lends itself to showing people, to demonstrating things.
- If you have some visuals it's great, because a lot of technology businesses.
- Even consulting businesses are more about ideas and concepts.

It's sometimes hard to come up with visuals to show in videos. So I think some businesses, especially consumer services, often have a real leg up when it comes to doing video. Video can be really powerful. It's not just about getting subscribers on your video channel, but video results tend to show up in Google. They tend to show up frequently and they tend to show up high on the first page. So if you have good videos and you can get some views on that, you have one more chance to get shown on a Google search result. You have to think of it that way. A video gives you another chance to have your business appear on a Google search page and that's what you want, as many chances as possible to appear.

Ellen: I'm going to jump back and forth because I love these tactical tips that you're giving. Okay, write them down, get them going, that's absolutely going to help you change your way of thinking and your behavior to get different results. That's what we're all about with this Business Makeover.

Let me turn back to you and your own business because I think your story is so interesting. You started with blogging. **Did your business evolve according to plan? Are you a planner? Was it organic? Was there a mixture of both? How did your business take off? You starting blogging and then what happened next?**

Anita: So what happened next is that the blog ate the business. Literally, that's what happened. As it turns out, the blog became much more popular than the email newsletter. Inside of six months, we had many more readers coming to the site to read as opposed to subscribing to the email newsletters to read. From there what happened is my business actually evolved so that the majority of what we do today is online and it's more in the nature of a magazine type of site where we sometimes do special events. We might have Twitter chats where we convey tips and advice or we might do Google Hangouts. Some are like this one that we're on with you, Ellen.

Ellen: Yea!

Anita: As far as doing individual consulting, I actually don't do that anymore and that was what I initially set out to do. I was using the blog, literally, just to promote the consulting services and develop some loyalty among people and help spread referrals. It turned out that the publication became more popular and so we evolved our business and that often happens with small businesses. No matter what business you're in, you start out doing one thing, but you see how customers are receiving it. You see how your target market is receiving it and they signal to you which direction you should go in.

Ellen: Did you reflect on okay, this isn't working? Some people find that moment to be devastating, like I want to be a consultant. They feel this grief or sorrow. Maybe it's just fear of change. But that moment where you were being led to a different direction in your business, it seems like you embraced it.

Anita: I did, but I didn't view it as anything negative like well, this isn't working out. Oh gee, now I've got to go do this. I saw it as wow, here's an opportunity. I better jump on this opportunity. I'm a big believer in being a glass half full person, but not in a naive way. Just having a positive attitude is not going to make you successful in business. When it comes down to it, you've got to make money and you need more than a positive attitude.

One thing I have learned is that if you don't manage your sense of optimism and your attitude and try to be positive, you beat yourself before you start. You've defeated yourself. So while you need a lot more than positive thinking to be successful, I know that most of us are not going to be successful unless we start with a positive attitude and at least try to keep that positive attitude up and try to spot things like opportunities.

Ellen: When you made this move into the blog and really became an online resource at SmallBizTrends.com, did you ever have a moment over the last 10 years where you felt stale, like you thought I've got to reboot this, I'm not interested, I want to make a change or has it continued to engage you the entire time?

Anita: Most of the time I would say it's continued to engage me. I've gone through a couple of periods where I just needed to get my mojo back a little bit. I went through a period where it was hard to write, for me, personally, hard to write. Luckily, I have many other writers on the site so it wasn't that I needed to write a lot, personally. Right now I'm on a role. I'm writing lots and lots and lots, but there have been actually more than one occasion where I just sort of went through a dry spell when I got in front of my computer keyboard.

Anyone who's ever done any writing, had a blog or anything, is going to encounter this, where one day you sit there, you look at a blank screen and you just don't know what to write about. Nothing seems interesting and you don't know where to start. You can quickly get discouraged. That's why there are so many abandoned blogs out there. Some people start blogging and they never come back.

On the other hand, if you stick with it, especially if you can share the load, if you have more than one writer on a site. That way if one person goes through a dry patch it doesn't mean the end for the company blog. If you have a couple employees or maybe even an outside writer assisting you, then the fact that you, personally, can't write isn't the end of things.

Ellen: I think that really is a metaphor. You're using writing, but it could be just walking into the office. Again, I really don't want to do this. I don't want to hump it together one more day. I don't want to get the guys lined up to go out the door. There are these moments where we get stale. **What ended the dry spell for you? Was it just a matter of plodding through long enough 'til the sun started shining?**

Anita: I worked on other things. If I couldn't write, I did something else in my business. I've also been big on kind of measuring things and I find that I can sort of pump myself up a little bit. If I measure something and I see a little bit of improvement in something, it sort of gives me like a little shot in the arm and I think here's something that's gone really well. Look, we've improved 10% on this thing, whatever it is. That will get me going and then before I know it I'm able to get

back into things. I would say just keep trying to push yourself a little bit to do something else, stay involved in it and try to see the positives and then you just work your way out of it.

Ellen: Now, are you a family business? Do you have family members in your business?

Anita: Well, my husband is now our Chief Financial Officer, but it's part-time for him.

Ellen: Are you speaking to each other? Is that working out for you? I always get a family of business owners, especially when they're husband and wife teams, because I don't work with my husband, the plumber, anymore. I'm still married and I believe that's why. It can be really stressful, so I'm sensitive to some of those issues. **How do you guys make it work?**

Anita: I think because it's not a full-time thing for him. He has other business interests and others that he deals with, so I think it works reasonably well. But I have two nieces who work for me and that works well and then I have other people who are unrelated who work with us, as well.

Ellen: Well, I talked to Jeffrey Gitomer in another one of our interviews and he said you have to be nice to people, even your kids. That was his tip and I thought that was lovely. Sometimes we're just mean to the people we're related to. It sounds like you're a really nice person and that probably helps.

You really have your finger on the pulse of what's happening in business because people who are cutting edge would love to be involved in your website. People are going to reach out to you to present information. **What is exciting you right now about business and small business trends?** Why don't you share a couple that you think are particularly compelling and might be interesting to folks who want to make 2014 their big breakout year.

Anita: A lot of it has to do with technology moving to the clouds. You hear that here and you probably sit there and wonder what are people talking about with the cloud? Really, that just means that you're able to use software by using a browser, going online and accessing it. You don't actually get it in a CD in a box like you used to and load it on your computer. You pay a monthly fee or maybe it's free, but you sign up for an account and you're able to access whatever the software is online.

What that does is more than just not having to mess with installing software on your computer. The real advantages to that are often that data then that you use in one program can integrate with or connect with another program and so you have to do less duplicate data entry. You have to do less messing around with oh, I've got to get data from here and I've got to put it in a spreadsheet and then I've got to upload it over here.

A lot of these software programs online now are talking with one another and so they move your data automatically or they let you manipulate and work with your business data online without you having to do much of anything and that is very efficient for your business. Not only is it efficient, but what it does is it gives you insights, the ability to use your data to run your business with reports and to understand what's going on at a much deeper level than you may have been able to in the past.

That makes us as business owners just able to run our businesses better, so that excites me a lot. I see a lot of that happening and we're going to see a lot more of that happening.

Ellen: I heard someone say the day of the desktop computer is pretty limited because really all we're going to need is a tablet and think how liberating that is. **Would you agree that that's the direction we're going?**

Anita: Yes, in tablets and smartphones. That is also very powerful for those who have field service techs or salespeople who are going out to meet with clients out in the field, even for business owners who don't want to be tied down to their office all the time. You can be in connection with your employees, customers, suppliers, the world, by having a small device that you can carry with you very easily.

On top of that, you are also able to communicate a lot better among people on your team. Everybody then has access to data and you don't have to go through say one gatekeeper and it makes it hard for you to do your job because you don't know the information out there. Now down to the simplest level of employee is able to actually get access to information and able to do things independently. That empowers us as businesspeople.

Ellen: Isn't this exciting. What wonderful times, when 11 years ago you were going so blogger, really? And here you are. **What's another trend that has your attention or you're excited about?**

Anita: The whole trend toward just having more of an online presence I think is a very powerful thing. So what we're seeing today is that more and more people, even if they're looking for a local provider, local service, let's say a drain cleaner, a pizza parlor, whatever, they're actually going on line. Maybe they're not actually going to a desktop computer, but maybe they're going to their smartphone and using a maps program or they're tablet. Even those maps and their smartphone search are really all one thing now with Internet search.

So to net it all out, what it means is a customer locally, where they might have picked up the yellow pages before, they might have asked someone they knew, they might have gotten a flyer that you stuck in their door or under the flag of the mailbox or whatever, now they're actually going to a search engine or to a map or maybe even to Facebook or a place like that and they're looking for a provider there. What that means is you now have access to a broader potential customer base just by being online, if you can figure out how to master that a little bit.

That's where we get into the online publicity. If you learn how to do more about online publicity, you're going to be able to reach out to a broader potential customer base and you can keep your costs low because it tends to be a lot cheaper than some other methods. You don't have to say spend thousands of dollars printing up direct mailers. Yes, maybe you still want to do that and send out postcards, but you don't have to rely exclusively on that. You can do mailers and have an online presence that costs a lot less.

Ellen: Let's go deeper into some particular online tactics you can do to generate good publicity, maybe even combat a little bad publicity. **If you were a betting man, which social media outlets would you bet on?** MySpace, I wouldn't bet on MySpace at this point. Which are the ones that you think have some legs and some promise for the future?

Anita: I'd say the big three, maybe I'll include the big four, are Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and then the fourth tends to be YouTube. Those aren't the only ones and they don't apply equally across the board, it depends on your business. If you serve consumers, you're much more likely to get good results from Facebook. Facebook is going to be very good. You may get good results from YouTube.

If you're in say a fashion business or something like that, or maybe you're just an eCommerce or a retail seller, in those cases you may get good results from a site like Pinterest because you're very visible. But if you're into a B-to-B kind of business where let's say you're a consultant who serves other businesses, you're a marketing agency and you serve businesses but not

consumers, then LinkedIn is going to be very big. LinkedIn is probably not going to be nearly as good for a plumber.

So, you really have to look at your business, you have to look at the type of site, but if I net it all out it's really going to be those big sites. Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Pinterest is potentially another one, so you just have to understand the type of business. I would say step back and look at where do my customers hang out online, which social services. That's really going to tell you a lot because that's really where you want to be.

Ellen: One of our experts, Monaica Ledell, she's adorable, really underlined the importance of copy. So it's not so much where you're going to be, but what are you going to say and how do you say that in authentic, compelling, relevant ways. **What tips would you have for us as far as creating something worth reading, whichever venue you decide to engage?**

Anita: Well again, you look at gee, what do my customers want to get? One of the things we know from many studies is that many of them want discounts or they want to know about specials that you have on. So you might want to factor that in and create a plan.

Ellen: That makes me crazy, but that's the reality of it though, right?

Anita: Exactly. For social media publicity, you don't need to start with a 50-page plan. You start with a one-page plan and you just write some things down.

Ellen: No, I meant the discount part. I hate offering discounts. I suppose they're popular, but I always want my plumbers to raise their prices. It just kind of hit me between the eyes. What's interesting is that's what you found. **Would you consider yourself a left-brain kind of person, you like to get the statistics?**

Anita: Absolutely, I definitely do. You have to think about discount as not always a bad thing. I actually agree with what you're saying, you shouldn't be cutting your prices. You should not be cutting your prices, but there are ways to use a good discount for a limited period of time, maybe something that leads to follow-on business or maybe it's a discount related to getting referrals.

Ellen: Yes. Okay, I can get my arms around that. The other thing I was just thinking of is suppose gosh, we have nothing on the board for Wednesday, could we have a slow Wednesday discount to fill the board.

Anita: Perfect.

Ellen: All right, I'm getting my underwear out of a bunch right now.

Anita: So there you go, Ellen.

Ellen: Okay.

Anita: That's one thing and you can use that on Facebook. That gives people a reason to sign up for your Facebook page. If you say we exclusively distribute our discounts, coupons and flash specials that we do on our Facebook page, but you have to be a subscriber. That's a good way to build your social media following. Now, why do you want to build your social media following? Not just so you can say I have 2,000 fans on my Facebook page. That's fine. That may stroke your ego a little bit, but the real reason you want people to follow on social media is that now you have a connection with them.

You can market to them and you can stay top of mind with them. That's why you want to build a social media following. You're able to get publicity naturally without having to go out and whip up news stories or issue press releases every other week. Now you're getting natural publicity in the form of people following you on your social sites. So you have to give them what they're looking for, give them a reason.

You mentioned copy and I think that's really important. Remember not to be selling all the time. People don't want to read sales pitches. Yeah, they want discounts now and then, but they don't want a steady stream of 'buy my stuff.' 'Buy this.' 'Buy that.' Nobody is going to pay attention to you in that case, so what you want to do is provide information that they can use. Give them educational material. Give them something that helps them learn a little bit that maybe they can share with family and friends. That's the type of thing you want to be doing. That should make up the bulk of what you do in these messages on social sites and on your blog.

Ellen: Well, I know a lot of your advice is how to get other people to pick up your story. It's one thing for me to put stuff out there and some of it is going to be relevant information that my consumer would want, sometimes it's going to be funny and personal and sometimes it is going to be an offer that maybe has a coupon or something that's going to be exciting to get someone to buy now, but what if you also want to leverage what you're doing and have someone else brag on you. Can you pitch another big blog, maybe the Huff Post or the New York Times? **How do you get someone else to pay attention to what you've got? Is that an option?**

Anita: Absolutely, and there are a couple of ways to do that. One way to do that is you can actually reach out to them and share your news. You just have to think of a really interesting angle. People love stories, so you're going to have to give them a story. You can't really give them a sales pitch. If you want to reach out to the editor of Huffington Post or whatever it is, don't go to them with a sales pitch. Don't go to them with we just announced our 25th anniversary. That's very exciting for you, but it's not really exciting to read. Instead, try to build your story.

You have to think about your story. There has to be human interest in it. What do people want to know about your business? What are some interesting things that people may not know about drains that they should be aware of? Whatever that is, you have to put yourself in the shoes of the editor and say I'm trying to come up with interesting stuff people will read. I need something interesting to publish. Let me tell you, these sites, even newspapers and your local TV stations, they're looking for news. They want news.

So, if you've got an interesting photo, for example, a lot of times your local evening news will have a place where you can submit interesting photographs. Maybe if there's a storm in the area, you can use that as a way. But sometimes they just want a story, so give them a story.

Ellen: Are you a headline expert? Because I've got to tell you, SmallBizTrends.com has rockin' great headlines on it. Here's a tip. Go to the site and look at the headlines of the blogs, things like '20 Mistakes to Avoid when Building Your Team' or 'How One Man Successfully Entered this Particular Platform Ecosystem. If that's what you're looking for, how this guy did it would be very compelling.' Headlines are really powerful. **Are you a good headline writer, Anita, or do you just recognize one?**

Anita: A couple of things. One, I'm fond of saying that the headline is 50% of the battle in getting people to read, so we spend an inordinate amount of time. We actually have a team of people and we'll redo a headline three, four or five times and we don't always hit the mark. Sometimes no matter what you do it's going to be a boring headline or we're just dry. When we're all looking at it and we just can't come up with anything, we finally throw up our hands and say all right, this

is it. But you know what? We also spend a lot of time just is this better or is that better. Oh, that's too wordy. It sounds really boring. Well, let's talk about this.

I think it's like anything in life or business, you have to work at it and I would say that definitely holds true when it comes to headlines and developing your story. Don't expect it to just sort of come to you and take five minutes to do. It will get better if you work at it. Work at it with your team, too. Maybe you have a marketing person or an outside marketing agency you use now and then, put together a brainstorming session. Go out to lunch or just get together with some of your team members and kick things around. So that's one way. I don't know how much time we have left, but I want to mention another way.

Ellen: We're getting close. The time goes so fast. Thank you for spending time with me, but go for it. We've got a few more minutes.

Anita: Okay. Well, real quickly, another way to get attention on these sites is to offer to do guest blog posts. It's a very popular technique. So if you can do guest blog posts, go to some of these sites that do accept guest blog posts. You can often find information right on their sites. You can even search in Google for sites that say 'submit a guest blog post', something like that.

Create a guest blog post and pitch it. Send a relatively short, don't make it long, short email to the editor and say I've got this great idea for an article and I would love to submit a guest point. Let me point you to a couple of articles on my blog so you can see some of my writing samples. There's a chance then that you can get published as a thought leader on some other sites. That's another way to get publicity.

Ellen: I love that. Then maybe a snappy headline, this is a topic, enough to tease their attention and then start the communication. Boy, that can be a great way to get publicity because then you're getting to a much bigger list. If you've got your mom and your dog as your only subscribers...I think that's what Ali Brown said once upon a time. She had nine subscribers, one was her mom and one was her dog when she first started out her stuff online.

Before we run out of time, you were sweet. You put together a really great do-it-yourself program for getting publicity. The rule was it had to be \$97 because hey, if you're listening you know that's the only price point that I could remember. So all of our guest experts had to pile on the value for \$97 bucks and you put together a really neat program. Do you mind sharing a little bit of it with us?

Anita: Oh, I am delighted. Yes, it's a package. We just kept plopping things on it.

Ellen: I know. It's awesome!

Anita: The first thing is we've got an eBook hot off the presses *The Ultimate Guide to Online Press Releases Today*. You can do online press releases and publish them online. We tell you the ins and outs, what to do, what not to do. That includes tons of checklists. We've got things like—

- Top Mistakes to Avoid When Pitching Bloggers and Journalists
- Best Practices to Get Your Infographic Covered as Part of Your Publicity
- Do's and Don'ts When You're Dealing with Blog Editors, if you want to do guest blog posts
- Tips on Promoting Your News through Social Media Like a Pro
- How to Uncover and Find Publicity Hooks and Opportunities from Current Events so you can get covered and it sounds very timely

Ellen: Yes, timely is good. Excellent.

Anita: We've got sample emails for you. So here's a sample email when sending your press release around or a sample email to an editor as to I'd love to write a guest blog post on your site and more. We have worksheets so that you can develop a publicity plan. We've even got templates for blog posts. So if you want to pitch a guest blog post with yourself as a thought leader, we've got a perfect template for that so that you write the perfect article that's really going to get that blog editor salivating and saying oh, I've got to have this person on my site right now.

Ellen: Excellent.

Anita: We've got some publicity plan templates and a guest blogging plan template so that you can create a real short one-page plan for how to get guest blogging gigs and how to get more publicity. Two other things, we've got a 30% off coupon for PR Newswire iReach Press Release Distribution Service. We have an arrangement with PR Newswire and we can give you 30% off. It is a great deal. One of the things that PR Newswire actually provides is that you can actually get your news in an image on Time Square and that is really exciting, if you pick one of the levels through PR Newswire.

Ellen: Cool! That sounds fun. Even if nobody called, I'd love the ego part of that.

Anita: It's fun. What they do is send you a picture of your image appearing with your news on Time Square. That alone, that picture is great for your website. It's great publicity.

Ellen: Sure.

Anita: What we did with one of our awards programs, we actually tweeted out that picture and a lot of people were really excited to see the picture of our news appearing on a wall in Time Square.

Ellen: Yea! I love that. And you're adding a video to the whole package.

Anita: I'll tell you, I'm not one to do a lot of videos. I'm kind of shy when it comes to those things, but I've also done a video where I give you some insider tips and just talk kind of the ins and outs of getting publicity. Since we get pitched all the time in our role at Small Business Trends, people are constantly writing to us wanting to guest post or they have the latest press release or news. We've seen it so many times we can tell you what to do, what will maximize your changes. Can't guarantee everything is going to work, sometimes luck and timing plays into it, as well, but we can help you avoid the most egregious areas and maximize your potential.

Ellen: Well, you just a multifaceted woman and your tips on how to get publicity and how to leverage the world via Internet and all these cool technology tools we have here, I appreciate all that. I'm telling you, Anita Campbell has her finger on the pulse. Small Biz Trends should be part of your daily check-in.

You're going to learn a lot. Not just from how other people have managed to get front page on this essential news source, but there are headlines. The folks who make it to this blog are ones who are making it through those critical moments where you say is this newsworthy. You have a lot to share and I am so thankful and a bit star struck that you said yes to visiting with us today. So thanks.

Anita: Thank you, Ellen. No need to be star struck, I'm absolutely delighted and thrilled that you invited me.

Ellen: Well, for parting thoughts today, is there anything that you thought okay, for this interview today I want to make sure I share...what? Is there anything we've left out or one last piece of wisdom you want to leave with us today?

Anita: Yes, I want you to remember an acronym and it called POEM, like poetry, a poem. Here's what that stands for. It stands for Paid, Owned and Earned Media. That sounds highfalutin, but really what this means is that you need to develop some of your own content. That's where a blog and posting on your Facebook page and so on comes in. You need to share that and get others to share it. That's where the 'earned' comes in. You're earning shares.

People are sharing that. So you not only have to create content, but you have to make it sharable and encourage others to share and maybe share some of their content so that they're more inclined to share yours. The third leg of the stool, though, is also the 'Paid Media'. This means sometimes you may need to pay to promote things. So you might want to think about making a really good Facebook update into a sponsored update.

You can do that for a fairly small amount of money, for \$40, \$60. There's like a little button on Facebook and you can turn it into a sponsored post. You can make that owned media, which you have created, spread farther by paying a little bit. So I want you to think just in terms of that triumvirate. Think in terms of create your own content and make it sharable. Then the third thing is sometimes you pay a little bit to help it spread even further.

Ellen: I love that POEM. It's also very literate, nicely done. Well, you are a peach. Thanks for participating, your package is awesome. You know what I liked most about our interview is that you don't make it sound like it will be hard. You have this really nice, casual, relaxed approach to this like I could do it. You have a great energy about this.

Anita: Yes, you can do it.

Ellen: Very nice.

Anita: I am delighted that everyone could join us today and just delighted to be with you, Ellen.

Ellen: You're a rock star. Thanks for joining us. Thanks for participating in Business Makeover 2014, lots more to come. Talk to you again soon. Bye-bye.