

Publish or Perish



'Publish or perish', coined by the academic community, describes the pressure they have to rapidly and continuously publish academic work. Their careers depend on it. If professors and scientists don't publish their findings and research, no one will know it exists. It's that simple.

In the maritime world, it's the same. Shipyards and suppliers spend years perfecting their craft, but if it receives no media attention, the rest of the maritime industry will not know it exists. Builders, architects, designers and all employees in between work too hard for their achievements to go unnoticed. Publicity can paint an accurate picture of your company's hard work. So the question is no longer, 'should I seek publicity?' but, 'how do I reach my target audience with publicity?' In an over-advertised and saturated market, the key is to broadcast a strong brand and single message in varied media outlets. Diversify your public relations and advertising.

Even if publicity cannot always be measured in percentages, it's a mistake to underestimate the value it brings to a maritime business. Publicity is a process and the way you handle it distinguishes you from the competition. As with any successful company, it begins with a quality product or service. Since the maritime world isn't a mall with store fronts and window displays, marketing plays a vital role to reach buyers. Paid advertising, for one, propels your business and image into the spotlight. A creative advertising campaign, with stopping power, propels it even further. Then, a company reaches a turning point or coming-of-age moment, when it not only appears in ads between the news, but actually becomes the news.

When your business is mentioned or featured in an article in ShipBuilding Industry, for instance, your hard work gets noticed and you're categorised as a leader within the industry. Paid advertising is then reinforced by free publicity. This level of visibility attracts a better class of naval architects, marine engineering offices and, not to mention, potential clients. It can also lead to industry awards and recognition, which communicate your company's prestige and trustworthiness to clients.

The ultimate evolution of public relations efforts culminates when name recognition sells products and services nationally and internationally. It's clear maritime businesses should take a page from the academic community's handbook and live by the mantra, 'publish or perish.' Clever public relations should be an integral part of your business. With focused objectives and a reputation built on talent, expertise and consistent client satisfaction, savvy public relations will produce a name recognition that equals business success.

Dennis Vinkoert

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i n d u s t r y

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Front cover: Built by Shipyard Gebr. Kooiman bv, Zwerver III is a unique multipurpose DP-1 offshore support vessel designed for offshore support activities in wind farm, renewable energy, offshore installation and dredging projects. The new build is owned by HvS Dredging Support BV and is the start of a new era of offshore support vessels. Photo courtesy of Nautic-VR/Fulco Tuijnman (the 3D-picture is from a virtual tour made on board by Nautic-VR). More on page 34.

Background picture contents page: Multipurpose and project cargo vessel the Motion Scan joined the Canada Feeder Lines fleet in September 2011 following her launch from builder Peters Shipyards near the Dutch city of Kampen. She is the third in a series of six Sole 10,000 DWT ships, notable for their energy efficiency and ecological sustainability. Photo courtesy of Canada Feeder Lines. More on page 48.