
~THE PORRO PASSAROUND - TIPS FOR COMMUNICATORS~

Spring 2006

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REAWAKENING YOUR WRITING

At least here in the East, spring has been a long time coming. But finally we see the tell-tale signs - buds popping, weather warming, people smiling and shedding those long coats. In that spirit, we offer some thoughts on how to bring that re-awakening feeling to your promotional writing, too.

- [1] Speeches: Seize the Day
- [2] Reports: Great Advice on How to Get 'em Noticed
- [3] Brochures: Benefits, Benefits, Benefits

1. Speeches: Seize the Day

When you're writing a speech, there is no easier way to get stuck than trying to find a great way to begin. Different audiences demand different approaches, of course, but you may have to look no further than the calendar. A little research can lead you to something that happened on the day of the speech and that will resonate with your audience. It may be the birth or death of a famous person, an historical milestone, or even an invention.

You can kind of information in a lot of places on the Web, but one of the best sites we've used is AnyDay in History <http://www.scopesys.com/anyday/>. It's not the coolest looking site, but you pick the day and month you want and you'll find a lot of information.

Try looking up your own birthday. Turns out I share mine with Mel Gibson, Bobby Hull, and Zazu Pitts. How often do you see those three names in a sentence?

Porro Associates LLC helps corporations and nonprofits improve the written and spoken materials they use to reach key audiences.
<http://www.porrolc.com/results.html>

2. Reports: Great Advice on How to Get 'em Noticed

We've talked a lot in these pages about how to get reporters to pay attention when your organization turns out those Important Reports. Well, now we're happy to spread the news that a very successful PR practitioner, Fenton Communications, has just put out a great resource, that especially useful for nonprofit groups. It's "In a Study Released Today..." 10 Tips to Get More Ink on Your Next Report."

Some of their hot tips:

- o Be at the right place at the right time: Choosing a compelling calendar hook can help amplify your report's main messages.
- o Go local! If you want to make the local news, make sure your report offers local level data. In other words, to play in Peoria, it's got to have news for Peoria.
- o Put a face on your numbers: Bring your data to life with human interest stories.

You'll find lots more at

http://www.fenton.com/pages/5_resources/pdf/whitepaper_final.pdf

3. Brochures: Benefits, Benefits, Benefits

When you're writing a marketing brochure, it's all too easy to get so caught up in the details of what you're selling that you forget the most important thing: telling your customers how the product or service benefits THEM. Sounds obvious, right? But you'd be surprised how many marketing writers make that mistake.

And it's understandable. You know you have something wonderful to sell, so you want to describe that thing in all its glory. But keep in mind that the first thing on your would-be clients' minds is that they have a problem. That's why they're thinking of making a purchase. And remember that these people with a problem are very busy.

So the message that has to leap out of your brochure fast is, "I understand your problem, and my product (or service) can solve it."

Take a look at this copy from the IT firm Oracle. It's from their website devoted to selling stuff to government buyers. It's very clear Oracle knows what government agencies are worried about.

"Funding reductions. Increased oversight and accountability. Rising customer service expectations. To meet all your business challenges, Oracle for Public Sector delivers a powerful combination of technology and comprehensive, preintegrated business applications, including key functionality built specifically for the public sector."