



“I’d been doing PR in the old-fashioned way – producing press releases and emailing, snail mailing, faxing them and it was very labor intensive with poor results.”

– Robert James

Challenge

Robert James, owner of Armacost Antique Shows, only knew about the “old way” of getting publicity and coveted press mentions – creating press releases and then emailing, snail mailing, faxing them to media outlets – often with poor results. James needed to learn the new way of doing public relations: interacting directly with potential customers through content-rich interactive press releases as well as using other forms of new media. Instead of just targeting the media and journalists, James would have to embrace the fact that he could speak directly with consumers!

Solution

James decided to use PRWeb to communicate directly with his target audience and still attract the attention of the media. James’ old strategy targeted mainly media outlets and journalists. When he used SBE software, he not only reached out to journalists and bloggers, but it also gave him the ability to connect directly to people who might be looking for antique shows in their area. He was also able to impact his search engine rankings by choosing keywords that his clients might use when searching for antique shows online.

Results

James was able to find the keywords that would help Armacost Antiques customers find his business online, greatly improving his Web site ranking in organic search engine returns. Because of the success of press releases distributed through the Vocus SBE software, James has stopped doing all paid Internet advertising.

Also, after an initial press release, Armacost Antiques caught the attention of a New England reporter, who wrote a story about the D.C.-based company. The same release was even picked up by a number of Web sites and bloggers who covered the antiques industry.

Armacost Antiques uses Vocus Small Business Edition software to reach customers and drive website traffic

Customer Profile

Robert James knows a little something about marketing, advertising and public relations. After all, he’s spent a good deal of his professional life in the industry. So when he purchased Armacost Antiques Shows, James knew that he wanted to make public relations a healthy part of his marketing strategy. He planned to use press (or news) releases to get the attention of journalists, who would write about his business and attract antique enthusiasts, thus bringing them to James’ shows.

Challenge

But according to James he only knew about the “old way” of getting publicity and coveted press mentions. “I’d been doing PR in the old-fashioned way – producing press releases and emailing, snail mailing, faxing them and it was very labor intensive with poor results.”

James said that he had to learn the new way of doing public relations: interacting directly with his customers through his news releases and other forms of new media.

“The voice of all my releases involves me speaking directly to the attendees of my shows,” James said. “A major goal is to directly reach the public through the internet, that’s a younger group.”

James practice of writing to and for the media has been replaced by his ability to interact directly with their customers through content rich websites, social media and online news releases like the ones they can send through the SBE email platform. It is a practice that marketers and other small business owners have come to embrace as well.

Solution

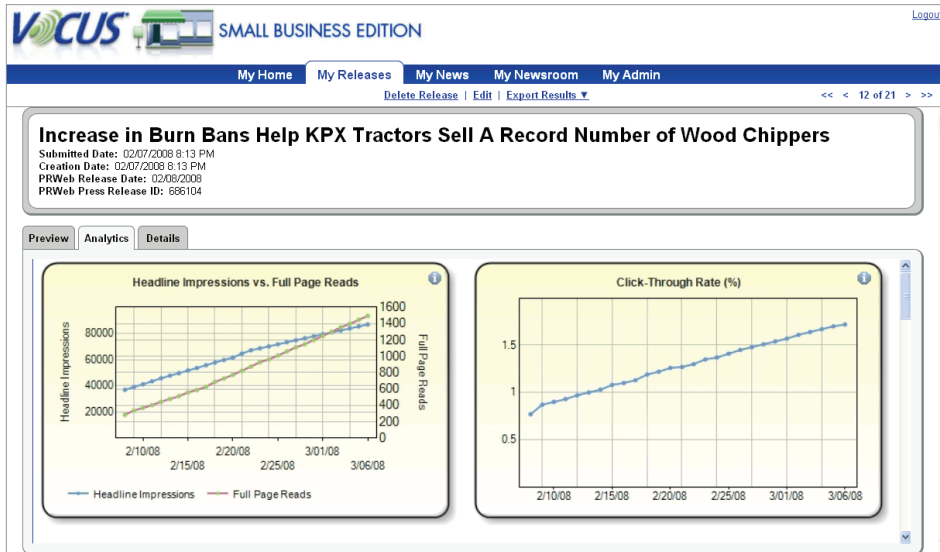
James said he knew about PRWeb from his previous experiences with publicity and decided to send a press release to test the waters. His news release success caught the attention of an account representative that introduced James to the SBE software program.

“At the same time I was interested in using the web for PR and improving my visibility on the web for the general public. I decided that I would try to use the basic service to see what would happen,” James explains. “I was very impressed with the results. I had a story written based on the release, by a reporter in New England within a few days. And it was picked up by a number of websites – by bloggers and by some websites in the Antiques trade.”

In addition to the press that James received, he also said that when he met with people who came to his antique shows, they would either mention a publication where they had seen

an article about Armacost Antiques Shows or mention having found him on the Internet by searching for him using keywords and phrases for antiques.

"Through trial and error with online searches, online advertising and studying what key words were working for me, I concluded I wanted to own 'antique shows,'" James concluded, adding that he linked those words to his news releases and managed to boost his website ranking in organic search engine returns. He added, "As a consequence, I've stopped doing all paid Internet advertising."



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After a news release about free admission into an Armacost Antiques Show was released on 9/20/09, positive full page reads and strong click-thru rates for the news release soon followed.

About Armacost Antique Shows

We provide distinctive and profitable venues for dealers, plus opportunities for antiques lovers to buy with an assurance of quality and authenticity.

All our shows also benefit nonprofits. Our nonprofit sponsors help generate enthusiasm for antiques, while delivering much-needed financial support for their communities.

About Vocus, Inc.

Founded in 1991 by two entrepreneurs and best friends, Vocus (NASDAQ: VOCS) has grown into one of the world's largest and fastest growing public software companies. More than 30,000 organizations around the world, ranging from Fortune 500 companies to one-person start-ups, use Vocus products and services to generate publicity and grow their businesses. Vocus software was awarded the prestigious SIIA's "Best Business Productivity Award" and has been featured in The Wall Street Journal and Fortune. We deliver our solutions over the Internet using a secure and scalable platform that allows our customers to eliminate expensive up-front hardware and software.