

O'DWYER'S P R S E R V I C E S REPORT

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Profiles of High-Tech PR Firms



More 'hits' per buck

Although many tech PR firms are broadening their offerings to gain new business, others are sticking to the basics.

"Before the tech crash, everyone boohooed us because we put an emphasis on publicity and media relations," said Lloyd Trufelman, President of Trylon Communications.

"During the high-tech boom, a lot of PR firms saw themselves as strategic partners and consultants, selling expertise to clients with no deliverables other than elaborate PowerPoint presentations with lots of mumbo jumbo," he said.

According to Trufelman, many of the pre-crash marketing people and branding experts didn't know about PR, and are no longer in the tech area.

"Many large firms became a strategy as a means to itself, rather than the means to an end. We've always been a publicity shop, we get clients a lot of coverage.

"But when they say, 'What we need is good strategic thinking,' we always tell them 'good strategic thinking is about ways to get your company written about,'" said Trufelman.

Shrinking tech media

It's no secret that the number of tech placement opportunities continue to shrink. *Interactive Week* is no more; *Crain's Chicago Business* has discontinued its tech watch column, and the *Industry* and *Forbes ASAP* are now defunct.

Fewer tech journalists mean it's important for tech PR people to be savvy about approaching the remaining editors.

"During the boom, people wrote about concepts and promises; now they have to write about what's real," said Trufelman. "When people ask, 'What are we getting for our PR dollars? Will it help us sell stuff?' our answer is 'Yes,' publicity is good. If your goods and services are written about or seen on TV, it will sell goods," said Trufelman.