

## White Papers: Not Just for 'Techies' Anymore

Quick: what's a white paper?

Stumped? You're not alone. The fact is, many marketers have never had occasion to read, write, or even define the term white paper. That's because until recently, a white paper was more likely to be found making the rounds at a tech company than at an ad agency or your company's marketing department.

But times have changed, and these days more and more marketers are recognizing the value of the white paper as an effective vehicle to provide customers and prospects with authoritative, solution-based information about their products or services.

So, back to the question: what is a white paper? First used in the early 20th century to describe lengthy government policy statements, the term 'white paper' has been co-opted by the technology industry to describe a brief (usually 8-12 pages) report that: a) describes a particular challenge or problem the reader may be facing; b) explains why a solution is needed; c) objectively describes possible solutions, and d) proposes a specific solution, typically involving that company's product or service.

Though still largely the province of the technology industry, white papers are being used with increasing frequency in other areas, including financial services, biotechnology, mobile communications — even air freight services. The fact is, any

business whose product needs a bit of explaining can benefit from a white paper.

Unlike an ad, a press release, or even a sell sheet or brochure, white papers give marketers an opportunity to 'strut their stuff' and demonstrate a strong grasp of their company's area of expertise. A successful white paper should be brief enough to get read, long enough to fully describe its subject, and persuasive enough to make a good case for a product or service without coming across as a sales pitch.

### Turning white into green

Thinking of adding a white paper or two to your marketing toolbox? Here are some key points to consider:

**It should empathize with the reader.** You've already made sure that your white paper is in the right hands; now you want the reader to know that you are fully cognizant of the challenges he or she faces.

**It should inform.** Information is the 'free bonus' appeal of a white paper. Ideally, you should be telling the reader something he or she may not know, or helping them to see the subject through a different lens.

**Visuals help.** Many white papers include graphics as a way to help simplify complex topics. Let's face it: few readers want to be confronted with block after block of uninterrupted text.

Not a writer? Hire a pro. More than other types of marketing communications, a white paper requires an aptitude for the form — someone who has written them before and knows how to lay out a compelling case for your company's product without making it seem like a hard sell.

*(cont'd on p. 3)*

## PR Exposure 101 Aim for the Low-Hanging Fruit

Why aim low when it comes to your PR expectations? It worked for the ubiquitous Rachael Ray, says Publicity Hound Joan Stewart.

Ray was teaching classes in Schenectady, NY on her '30 minute meals' concept. It caught on, and the classes moved to a small chain of grocery stores, then onto a local TV station.

*(cont'd on p. 3)*

### in this issue...

#### Page 2

*Three Questions About...  
Green Marketing*

#### Page 3

*Radio Daze  
Off the Bookshelf*



## Movin' On Up

*Creative Compost* publisher Fahoury Ink has relocated its offices to 47 Park Avenue, West Orange, NJ, in the heart of the city's downtown business district.

The company's new offices are on the second floor of a 100-year-old Queen Anne Victorian that was converted to commercial space in 1990. Adjacent to historic Llewellyn Park, the building is steps from the venerable Edison National Historic Site and home of inventor Thomas Edison.

Says Chief Creative Officer Lisa Fahoury, "It's exciting and humbling to work so close to the site of some of history's

most creative innovations — from the phonograph to the world's first movies. We look forward to welcoming our clients to our new offices and applying the same kind of creative thinking to their marketing challenges."

Next time you're visiting northern New Jersey, be sure to stop by and say hello!



## Trendwatch: Leapin' Lizards

**Happy Leap Year 2008!** Leap years are needed so that the calendar is in alignment with the earth's motion around the sun.

LEAP DAY occurs every four years, except in years ending with "00" that are not evenly divisible by 400.

ACCORDING TO the noted Worldwide Leap Year Birthday Club, less than 1% of the U.S. population is born on February 29. Globally, only about four million of the world's six billion inhabitants were born on February 29. That's about one in 1,461.

IN 1988, the Chamber of Commerce of border town Anthony, New Mexico/Texas voted to create the Worldwide Leap Year Festival, proclaiming Anthony the "Leap Year Capital Of The World." Leap Year celebrants of all ages have come from every state in the union and as far as Germany and Switzerland to attend.

RAENELL DAWN ([www.leapyear.com](http://www.leapyear.com)), creator of the Honor Society of Leap Year Day Babies, actively lobbies calendar manufacturers to add the words 'Leap Day' to their products on February 29. Says Dawn, "You'll see days noted in February like Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day, Presidents' Day, etc. In Leap Years, the box for February 29 usually lacks the words 'Leap Day,' when that is what February 29 is."

Happy birthday to all you fellow Leap Year babies out there! Use the extra day to spend some creative thinking time on your second quarter marketing plans.

Happy marketing,

Lisa Fahoury, Editor

## 3 Questions About...Going Green



Marketer Jane Tabachnick of *Jane Tabachnick::Marketing* ([janetabachnick.com](http://janetabachnick.com)) works with creative entrepreneurs and socially responsible companies who are frustrated by their marketing results. Her firm provides one-on-one and group marketing training. Tabachnick is also the creator of *Stand for Green* ([standforgreen.com](http://standforgreen.com)), a marketing tool for green businesses.

**Why has "green" suddenly exploded as a competitive differentiator?** For a few reasons. Initially, climate change got people's attention. Hurricane Katrina was a real wake-up call. The film *An Inconvenient Truth*, along with scientific substantiation, helped advance the importance of green. And, as the economy tightens, companies look for new ways to cut costs and be efficient. Becoming green is a great way to accomplish this by reducing waste. As being green becomes more popular, companies are responding to consumer pressures and demand for more environmentally friendly products and corporate transparency.

**What one single thing can companies do that will have the biggest impact?** Reducing your carbon footprint is the most important thing anyone can do to make a positive impact on the environment. Second is education — understanding what we're doing that is not environmentally friendly and how we can change it, even in small increments.

**What's the most common mistake companies make when going green?** Not taking a 360-degree view and understanding what it really means to be green and all the considerations involved. Granted, it's a very complex topic. For example, a company recently reached out to me to promote their green accessories sold here in the U.S. — organic cottons, dyed with organic colors, produced by fair trade labor in India. Sounds green, right? But what about the carbon footprint created by transporting the goods from India to the U.S. market? Producing locally is an important consideration.

From a marketing standpoint, companies typically make two mistakes when it comes to green. The first is to jump on the bandwagon when they aren't really green yet (this is called greenwashing), or those that truly are green fly under the radar and forget to communicate their value. They're missing out on a great marketing opportunity.

Want to be next month's Subject Matter Expert? Send an email to [compost@fahouryink.com](mailto:compost@fahouryink.com) with "Compost SME" in your subject line.

## White Papers... (from p. 1)

### Dangling the bait

Once you've put in the time and effort to create a white paper, it can prove to be a remarkably versatile way to increase your company's profile:

- Use as a downloadable 'bait piece' to reward website visitors for providing their contact information.
- Email to prospects early in the selling cycle.
- Distribute printed copies at trade events, or use as a post-show email follow-up.
- Include a copy in your media kit.

Like other marketing materials, white papers are a calling card for your company — one that, if done right, leaves the reader feeling that you really know your stuff.

You'd be surprised how many people are starved for good, reliable, innovative information about how to make their businesses work better. The fact that your white paper might help them choose your company to help them do that is just plain smart marketing.



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## Radio: Turning a Medium into a Large



Radio is one of the toughest media formats to master — especially when it comes to developing good creative. From painting an audio picture to developing a

snappy, memorable call to action, few companies consistently do it well. Here are some recent examples from both sides of the equation:

### Mega Millions

The set-up: Famous announcers, from the deep-voiced 24 guy to Ed McMahon's "Hey-o!" are put to shame when the geeky Mega Millions announcer grabs all the glory. A stellar leveraging of a purely audio medium.

### Audi of America

The set-up: Audi uses alternating stereo channels to reinforce various product attributes designed to appeal to drivers' left and right brains. Though disconcerting at first (are my speakers broken?) and downright annoying after half a dozen replays, it's a clever and highly effective use of the medium nonetheless.

### Saks Fifth Avenue Fur Salon

The set-up: A fur-obsessed Saks customer is ostensibly writing in her diary about the upcoming sale, with great bargains on fur coats to be had. Unfortunately, the sound effect of pen on paper brings to mind the scratching of desperate animals attempting to escape their fate as fur coat fodder.

## PR 101 ... (from p. 1)

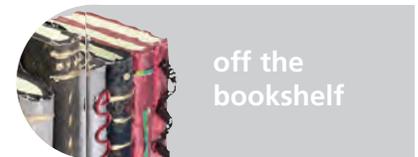
Ray parlayed this exposure into appearances on NPR, then the "Today" show to promote her first book. A Food Network executive spotted her, and signed her to a six-figure contract.

Today, Rachael Ray has numerous Food Network shows, a daytime talk show, her own magazine, a dozen books, and her own line of kitchenware. In 2006, she was named to the *TIME 100: People Who Shape Our World* list. Not bad for a glorified home ec teacher from Schenectady.

No major media outlet — print or broadcast — wants to take a risk on an unknown. That's why they often use small markets as an informal (and uncredited) farm system for locating fresh talent.

We've heard the rumors locally for years: because several *New York Times* editors happen to live in a certain north Jersey suburb, feature subjects from the local weekly often make the leap to the big time.

So, don't turn up your nose at small-market opportunities for press exposure. They might help you land the big fish in the long run.



off the  
bookshelf

## Tricks of the Podcasting Masters

by Rob Walch and Mur Lafferty  
©2006, Que Publishing



As 2004 dawned, the term podcasting didn't even exist. How far we've come in four short years, as the hottest technology on the Internet has become an integral component of many companies' marketing plans.

*Tricks of the Podcasting Masters* pulls together advice from some of the biggest names in podcasting into a de facto "best practices" manual. Though it touches on some technical issues, the book assumes a working knowledge of the medium and focuses mainly on content creation, promotion, and revenue generation.

### Planning pitfalls

Podcasting masters know that preparation is vital to success. Not many people are fast

(cont'd on back page)



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**Inside: What's a white paper and why might you need one?**



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## Podcasting ... (from p. 3)

enough on their feet to wing an intelligent dialogue for 30 minutes or more.

Creating an outline allows you to stay on topic, remember everything you wanted to discuss, and stay within your allotted time.

Some podcasters even script out their entire podcast and simply read it aloud, but this can sound stilted if you're not careful, say authors Rob Walch and Mur Lafferty.

Instead, they suggest jotting down a few bullet points for the best of both approaches — allowing for spontaneity while helping you organize your thoughts ahead of time. The authors also recommend keeping to a consistent length for each podcast so listeners know what to expect.

## Content is king

One of the easiest ways to create content is to interview a guest. Don't know any experts in a particular subject area? No problem! Podcasters turn to websites like [authorsandexperts.com](http://authorsandexperts.com) or [guestfinder.com](http://guestfinder.com) to locate subject matter experts, authors, and even celebrity guests depending on your subject matter.

So, how do top podcasters get the most out of an interview?

**Prepare, prepare, prepare.** Read the guest's book, do some homework on their background, or read their blog postings.

Have a handful of thoughtful questions at the ready. Though the interview might flow nicely all by itself, have some notes to guide you just in case it doesn't.

**Don't fear the pause.** If you'd like to prompt a more detailed answer from your guest, avoid jumping in when they are done speaking. It's human nature to fill the silence, so chances are they will offer additional information.

As Walch and Lafferty remind us, "The limits of podcasting really lie only with the limits of a marketing team's imagination."

**“I couldn't wait for success, so I went ahead without it.”**

*Jonathan Winters*