

Public relations is part of every activity involving people; this includes production, servicing, merchandising, entertaining, teaching, government, religion, and, of course, creating and operating an organization. This pervasiveness of PR is demonstrated by "The Trib," NYC's fledgling daily, whose development and introduction are of special interest to members of the PR profession and related fields. And, in this case, it is particularly difficult to draw lines between the purely PR and such other functions as financing, promoting, recruitment, and selling.

The Trib is a 48- to 52-page tabloid-sized, Monday-through-Friday newspaper designed to fill what its Founder, Publisher, and Editor-in-Chief, Leonard Saffir, considers "a real need." It is organized like a weekly news magazine. Contents objective is 60% editorial and 40% advertising. It has, in Saffir's words, "everything any daily newspaper has -- and then some.... complete news of the city, state, nation, and the world." Issued in the morning, it is in head-on competition with two long-established NYC papers, The News and The Times, the nation's leaders in, respectively, the tabloid and standard-sized categories. But The Trib is intended to be an "all-day paper" which commuters will also read at night. Management believes it can better than break even on its guaranteed average daily circulation of 200,000 and that 250,000 is not an unreasonable near-term expectation in relation to The News' almost 2,000,000 and The Times' 865,000 (weekdays only in both cases).

The first visible steps in launching The Trib were taken in the fall of 1976. With Saffir was John Denson, former Editor Newsweek, and now The Trib's Editor. Feasibility studies were made and financial backers, enlisted. Saffir, who had spent eight years in the 1960s as a PR Counsel, realized that his multitude of problems all involved PR, some to a major extent. He therefore retained, in late August 1977, Grey & Davis (G&D) and Donley Communications, both of NYC. G&D's President is Hal Davis. Working

with him on the effort have been its: Senior Vice President Bruce Fabricant; Candace Leeds, Vice President-Media; and Account Executive Bambi Levine. At Donley, the team has been President James Donley and Vice President Newton Lamson. . . . When the services of an advertising agency were required, Tinker Campbell-Ewald, NYC, was used.

The problems were in four major categories. . . (1) Such publics as backers, the NYC business community, and potential employees had to be convinced that The Trib would really be published and survive. Skepticism was widespread because no major newspaper had been successfully introduced in NYC since the 1940s. . . (2) Advance-of-publication understanding of The Trib's nature and editorial approach would have to be developed. . . (3) Top-quality professionals essential for fulfillment of the product specifications given backers and advertisers had to be enlisted. . . (4) Advance interest on the part of both distributors and the public would have to be built. . . All the problems were obviously interrelated and, in many cases, efforts to solve them overlapped.

The following are the most important PR-involved activities to date.

Constructive advance publicity was essential to some and helpful to all aspects of the job. That at the local level would help win readers and advertisers; national and international would influence advertisers and backers and contribute to editorial prestige; and that at all levels would help recruitment. . . In the initial stages, stories were released as they developed. After the publication date of January 9, 1978 was set, a calendar of scheduled events guided both publicity-generating activities and publicity efforts with respect to other developments. . . Most advance publicity was in trade publications, major dailies outside NYC, national weeklies, and on radio/TV. . . Will-it-or-won't-it-succeed stories attracted wide editorial interest. There were, for example, reports of difficulties with three prominent backers. And legal

steps, which have so far proved unsuccessful, were taken on behalf of the Paris-based International Herald Tribune (of which The New York Times is indirectly a partial owner) to block use of "The Trib" as the new publication's name. More publicity came with filing of a Trib counter suit against The Times (and others involved) for damages of \$7,500,000. . . Post-publication publicity has also been (and continues to be) assiduously developed.

To help overcome the lack of publicity in the existing NYC dailies, advertisements were run in them during December and early January. The featured theme was, "The Trib: It Should Have Happened Sooner." NYC-area radio/TV, transit car cards, five trade publications, and other newspapers were also used. Five print ads, conceived by TCE and run in the trade publications and dailies, even drew a kudo for their cleverness from Phil Dougherty's column in The New York Times. Their copy attributed to The Trib the same virtues as those of such celebrities as Arthur Ashe, Liv Ullman, and Beverly Sills. (E.g., "If Neil Armstrong were a newspaper, he'd explore like The Trib. . . Penetrating . . . Objective. . . Adventurous. . . Inquisitive....")

Saffir and other executives of The Trib addressed important groups (and their comments were publicized in appropriate media) during the four months before publication. Saffir himself made five such presentations. (One before the Overseas Press Club in September is credited with having helped recruitment of top editorial personnel). . . From September 21 through January 9, Trib editors were guests on ten different radio or TV stations (Saffir on six) which gave the paper special, in addition to news, coverage.

Breakfasts, cocktail parties, and luncheons have been used to introduce the editors of different Trib departments to persons with related interests. One served a second important purpose when some of the guests, who were upper-level media people, were inspired to take key positions at The Trib.

A score of attention-getting activities were arranged in connection with the in-

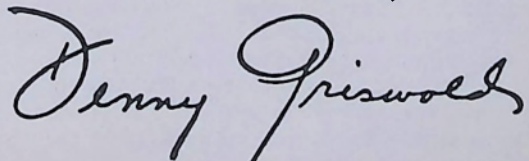
troduction. . . Some 1,000 people (including a large number of opinion leaders) assembled at The Trib offices in NYC at 11 p.m. on Sunday, January 8, to await arrival from the printing plant (50 miles away in New Jersey) of copies of the first issue. . . Aprons, banners, posters, and big yellow slogan-bearing buttons were given to 28 wholesalers and 7,000 retailers. . . Copies were delivered to key TV/radio executives and personalities, Members of Congress, and New York State, New York City, and all White House officials. . . The chorus of a Broadway show serenaded the new publication in the presence of reporters and TV cameras. . . G&D, with the help of the overseas partners of its parent company, Grey Advertising, NYC, arranged for VIPs to be photographed reading copies of the first edition (e.g., West Germany's President Walter Scheel and Israel's Prime Minister Menachem Begin).

Bringing the publication to its present editorial quality and levels of circulation and advertising support has been an heroic accomplishment. No doubt, a big factor in this has been Saffir's recognition that PR is a top-level management function. And he credits the efforts of the PR team with having made a "truly outstanding contribution."

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For Your PR NEWS Idea Library, write to: Samuel B. Casey Jr., Pres. & CEO, Pullman Incorporated, 200 So. Michigan Av., Chicago, IL 60604, for "1977 Annual Report"; it has a colorful description of the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Pullman's listing on the New York Stock Exchange. . . Andrew M. Stern, PR & Adv. Mgr., Wylain, 17250 Dallas Pkwy., Dallas, TX 75248, for "The Products of Wylain," handsomely illustrated brochure designed to establish the company's new name and its development as a diversified manufacturing company "making products with a major impact on the quality of life throughout the world."

Proud to Serve PR,



Editor