



# SunStar FUNDFACTOR

Story Development   Media Training   Positive News Coverage   Reprint Distribution

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## Leveraging the power of the press / “Tricks of the Trade”

There are often too few opportunities for smaller funds to learn and share experiences with each other. The Small Funds Network (<http://www.smallfundsnetwork.com>), which launched in January 2010, is creating invaluable opportunities for firms with under \$1 billion in assets under management to network and learn from each other.



Last month, I was invited to be part of the expert webinar series offered by the Small Funds Network to share some “tricks of the trade” SunStar Strategic uses to put the power of the press to work for smaller, overlooked firms. My thoughts are summarized in this issue of FundFactor. Send me an email at [dsondhelm@isunstar.com](mailto:dsondhelm@isunstar.com) for a copy of the slides. A strong news generation strategy can help your fund attract investors, strengthen distribution, build your brand and help you get discovered.

### Power of the Press

**Dan Sondhelm**

There is no doubt that the press, in its traditional print version or its online counterparts, still is a credible, far-reaching way to get your story in the hands of investors and advisors. There are two ways to be in the press.

#### Ads vs. News Stories

Paid advertisements allow you to deliver your message exactly as you want it (within the constraints of compliance of course.) But, they also have some inherent drawbacks. One-third of your ad may end up being legal language, which means you don't have very much space left for your message. You can expect to pay \$20,000 - \$30,000 for one national print advertisement in the Wall Street Journal and in the neighborhood of \$6,000 for a 30-second daytime commercial on CNBC.

News stories, on the other hand:

- Are perceived as third party endorsements
- Are backed by the credibility of the publication.
- Can attract leads directly – (good record keeping at your back office firm can help you learn exactly where new investors found out about you)
- Can be used to support your other sales and marketing efforts when reused as reprints or links on your Web site
- Tell a story with details and color. Investors know why they are getting in a fund because they read and understand the process, not just reacted to good performance.
- Can help separate advisors in customer's minds and clarify differences between multiple strategies.

Positive press coverage on a regular basis is a great way to stimulate growth. So how much do stories like this cost to get published in the news media? Nothing. Reporters are writing about mutual funds all the time. They also select top performing and interesting funds from Morningstar and Lipper to write about. They're going to tell someone's story, so here are a few strategies to convince them it should be yours.

## Tricks of the Trade

### Differentiation.

Develop your story so that it differentiates you from the competition. Show off your attributes as a boutique or smaller fund family to attract the attention of reporters and maximize your potential for visibility.

Stress the following points about your boutique:

- Overlooked firm
- Focused on managing money, not marketing
- Not just a fund manager – also an owner

Focus on your strategy:

- Your investment process
- Themes in your portfolio
- Top sectors or stocks

Then pick up the phone and call your favorite reporter. You won't have a lot of time, so be specific and respect his time. Attempt to set up an interview over the phone or in person the next time your portfolio manager is in New York.

### Media savvy.

Once you landed the interview, it's important that your spokesperson is fully prepped for every interview. Here are a few tips:

- Know the reporter
- Take a look at his/her history of articles and biases
- Be well versed on the topic
- Stay focused on your firm's message
- Keep answers appropriate in length
- Be compliant
- Understand the process, rights and responsibilities

### Bridging techniques.

I know many fund managers who have conducted interviews or been on TV, and at the end of the day, felt it wasn't a good use of time because reporters hadn't asked specifically about their fund.

There's a technique called "bridging" that portfolio managers can use to take control of an interview and shift focus to your own message, whatever the question.

Typically, reporters don't ask "easy" questions such as "tell me about your fund." Instead they ask, "What do you think the Fed will do next?" or "Amazon just announced earnings, what do you think?" The challenge for the interviewee is to address the question from the perspective of your portfolio.

With practice and forethought, you can segue way into a message about your fund. For example, following your prediction of the Fed raising or lowering rates, you can add "so, in our fund, we're tilting the portfolio to take advantage of this by...." In the Amazon example, the answer might move in the direction of "Amazon does meet our model, but we like EBay instead because..."

Answer questions like this, and your investors and advisors will understand how you manage money, not just what you believe.

### **Leverage reprints**

Don't let your "30 minutes of fame" be forgotten. After your fund has been in the press, there are a number of strategies for keeping that publicity in front of investors.

- Develop E-mail marketing programs to advisors that regularly highlight upcoming or recently published articles and appearances that feature your manager, strategy or product.
- Display recent news on the home page of your Web site and, where possible, link to your news coverage. Don't hide your news on some hard-to-find press room page like many companies do.
- Bring your reprints and videos to your exhibit booth at advisor conferences.

Also, let your call center know when you will expect to have ink or air so they can be prepared with additional reps. And, be sure to have them ask how the investor heard of your fund.

Using these strategies will ensure higher quality coverage, and more of it, that you can use in your other sales and marketing efforts.

Learn more about specific strategies by visiting SunStarStrategic. We've recently redesigned our site (<http://www.sunstarstrategic.com>) to provide more resources and ideas. We can help craft marketing strategies specifically tailored to your company or your funds, implementing all of the latest cutting-edge trends in interactive and multimedia marketing, including video.

SunStar can help you grow in this competitive environment. Call us at 703.894.1046 or visit [www.isunstar.com](http://www.isunstar.com)



SunStar: One of Inc. Magazine's 5,000 fastest growing private companies in America in 2007, 2008 and 2009.

SunStar works with retail and institutional investment managers and mutual fund firms to attract investors, strengthen distribution and build brands through structured news generation programs and smart marketing. We know the industry and the reporters who cover it. We also understand the often challenging legal, regulatory and compliance issues facing clients.

**Find more about smart marketing and successful public relations campaigns in our blog: [FundFactor.net](http://FundFactor.net)**