



*Public Relations
Council*
of Greater Atlantic City

P.O. Box 1871 • Atlantic City, NJ 08404

November 2003

V1.0

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 25

“Atlantic City...Always Turned On!”

Atlantic City has a new logo and tagline, recently launched in spectacular fashion by the Atlantic City Convention & Visitors Authority. On Tuesday, November 25, Susan Ricciardi, Director of Media Relations, ACCVA, will present a behind-the-scenes look at the launch.

We will meet at Angelo's Fairmont Tavern and enjoy a delicious Italian buffet. Networking starts at 12 noon. The meeting and luncheon officially begin at 12:30 p.m. Cost is \$20 for members, \$30 for non-members.

2 Easy Ways to RSVP (by Thursday, November 20)!

RSVP to Maria Terpolilli at (609) 677-1010 or maria_terpolilli@cablenet.com.

About Our Speaker: Susan Ricciardi

Susan Ricciardi believes in what she promotes. “Not only do you have to believe in it, you have to wear it on your sleeve,” she says. After 20 years in the PR business, she’s a pro at it. She returns every phone call within 24-48 hours. She serves as official spokesperson for the Atlantic City Convention & Visitors Authority (ACCVA). She does what it takes to make sure that people in the region, and beyond, know about Atlantic City.

It’s a role she’s been interested in since she first wrote for her high school yearbook—and later when she attended Temple University School of Communications. A PR practitioner now for 20 years, Susan’s list of previous employers reads like an area’s “Who’s Who”: the Bacharach Institute for Rehabilitation, the Renault Winery, the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts, and the Atlantic City Convention Center/SMG. For SMG, Susan planned and executed the three-day series of events that opened the “new” Atlantic City Convention Center.

Elected by colleagues to serve as a delegate to the White House Conference on Travel and Tourism in October 1995, Susan has made an impact in the PR industry. She’s been active not only in the PR Council, but on various tourism councils, the NCCJ Board, the Travel Industry Association of NJ, and the Atlantic County Advisory Committee on Tourism.

She joined the ACCVA in January 2000, and has since served as the Authority’s liaison with community leaders, casino public relations directors, and regional legislators. In her role of directing PR firms that work for the Authority, she was a lead figure in the launch of the new ACCVA “brand.”

Susan lives in Smithville, NJ, with her husband Joe, and son, Jacob.

Public Relations Council, P.O. Box 1871, Atlantic City, NJ 08401

Acing the Interview

The PR professional is often the spokesperson for the company. Here are some tips to guide you through that all-important interview.

General Tips

- Be familiar with the media outlet, and if possible, with the reporter.
- Don't say anything you don't want in print or on the air.
- Don't feel pressured to answer immediately. You can even offer to get back to the reporter with an answer. This enhances your credibility as a dependable source.
- Help reporters meet deadlines. Follow through as quickly as possible.
- If you discover later that you gave incorrect information, follow up with the reporter to correct it.
- Use analogies to help readers, listeners and viewers grasp what you are trying to say.
- Avoid industry jargon that may not be understood by everyone.
- When on TV, do not look at the camera. Focus on the interviewer.
- Don't avoid answering a question. If a topic is sensitive, see if you can give a brief answer and then move on.
- Do not repeat inflammatory words that a reporter might feed to you, or else you could see a headline like "PR Professional Says He Did Not Abuse Wife."

Types of Difficult Questions

(False alternative) "Was your decision based on capitalism or ignorance?"

Solution: Remember you don't have to choose either.

(The Hypothetical) "What will you do if X happens?"

Solution: Avoid speculation. Let them know you don't have a crystal ball, and focus on the positive.

(The Loaded Question) "Labor unions are calling your company inept. What are you doing about the layoffs?"

Solution: Correct the misconception and then answer the question.

(The Absent Party) "So-and-so has stated that your company is irresponsible."

Solution: Don't argue with someone who is not present. Responding with "I'm not familiar with that remark, but..." allows you to address the accusation.

(The Inconsistency) "In the 1980s, you said this and now you're doing this. Why?"

Solution: Take the historical perspective. "The environment was different in the 1980s."

Evaluating Your Effectiveness

Did you connect with the interviewer? Were you in control of the interview? Did you deliver your key messages? Did you generate headlines? Then, it was likely an interview well done!