



*Public Relations  
Council*  
*of Greater Atlantic City*

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

February 2004

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

## **Making ‘Community Involvement & Giving’ A Successful Part of Your Marketing Plan**

Community involvement is an integral part of a company’s marketing plan and Cape Savings Bank is a stellar example. Join us on Tuesday, February 24, as Jeff Ropiecki, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Cape Savings Bank, shares some tips and tactics for making community involvement, and giving, an integral part of marketing communications.

We will meet at Angelo’s Fairmont Tavern in Atlantic City for a wonderful Italian buffet! Cost is \$20 for members and \$30 for guests.

**RSVPs are required by Thursday, February 19th**

**2 Easy Ways to RSVP to Maria Terpolilli:**

**[maria\\_terpolilli@comcast.com](mailto:maria_terpolilli@comcast.com) or (609) 677-1010, ext. 15**

## **About Jeff Ropiecki**

As the Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Cape Savings Bank, Jeff Ropiecki stays busy. His duties include overseeing the retail banking operations, and the marketing and community donations programs at the bank, which is a \$500 million institution with 13 locations in Atlantic and Cape May Counties.

Ropiecki has been with the bank for 8½ years, during which time he helped to write and implement the community donations program. Since the program’s inception in 1996, over \$1.7 million has been used to support community organizations. The program also allows Cape’s employees to donate volunteer time. During 2003, they donated over 1,000 hours.

In addition to his role at the bank, Ropiecki is the Treasurer and a member of the Board of Directors of the Atlantic County Chamber of Commerce and the Atlantic County Community Development Corporation (CDC).

Ropiecki is a graduate of the Richard Stockton College and holds an MBA in finance from Monmouth University. He lives in Port Republic with his wife and two children.

## **Survey Says Americans Do Want To Give**

A United Way survey released in October 2002 revealed that “almost all Americans have a genuine desire to become more active in their communities, but find it is difficult to take part, given the demands of their work.” Of 97% who would volunteer, only 34% did so in the year prior to the survey. Obstacles included: lack of knowledge on how to begin, transportation, health/age-related issue, safety concerns and family obligations. However nearly four out of five said they would volunteer during their work day if their employer helped to arrange it and it did not conflict with work.

---

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

---

## Set Aside Time to Brainstorm

No matter what your business, or your role within it, it can always be improved and updated. One way is to set aside time to brainstorm. Brainstorming is collecting ideas about a concept or topic through the free association of members of a group. It is a great way to keep your business fresh, and get input from a cross-section of your employees.

Following is the result of one such fictional brainstorm session. Use these ideas, and the tips that follow, as a starting point to regular brainstorm sessions.

- Start an auction on your website to draw attention and attract repeat customers.
- Find a strategic partner who also has a stake in your target audience, but one who is not directly competitive. This could be the perfect company with which to offer a package deal, trade marketing information, share advertising, or do a joint marketing promotion.
- Change your “on hold” message to something so intriguing that people will call in just to hear it.

## Tips for Brainstorming

1. Have a specific goal in mind for the session. State the problem/issue clearly and have it posted somewhere where all participants can refer to it easily.
2. Accept all ideas. No idea will be evaluated until after the brainstorm session.
3. Encourage wild ideas. Out-of-the-box thinking often leads to the most creative suggestions that can later be refined for practicality.
4. Set a time limit. Brainstorms use creative energy and should be short sessions, such as a half an hour.
5. Include people at all levels. Ideas are not refined to management. But limit the group to no more than 8 to 10 people to encourage participants.
6. Appoint one person as “gatekeeper” to keep track of time, to stop criticisms and to appoint someone to record the ideas.
7. Include props and/or refreshments, or shut off the lights, for added inspiration.
8. Try to get at least 20 ideas. The initial ideas tend to be ordinary. As people struggle to come up with new ideas, their creativity emerges.
9. End the session promptly. Report back to the group with the final results at the time they are decided.

## Free Copywriting Resources

The American Copy Editors Society offers a free training booklet on copy editing. ([www.copydesk.org/guidelines.htm](http://www.copydesk.org/guidelines.htm))

The Society also features tips on editing and headline writing, comments on cliches and bad writing, and many other articles by editors and journalism professors from throughout North America. ([www.copydesk.org/words/](http://www.copydesk.org/words/))