

# The Challenge of Public Relations

It is 9 A.M. and Anne-Marie, an account executive in a San Francisco public relations firm, is at her computer working on a news release about a client's new software product. She finishes it, gives it a once-over, and e-mails it to the client for approval. She also attaches a note that an electronic news service can deliver it to newspapers across the country later in the day.

Her next activity is a brainstorming session with other staff members to generate creative ideas about a campaign to raise funds for the local AIDS foundation. When she gets back to her office, she finds a number of telephone messages. A reporter for a trade publication needs background information on a story he is writing; a graphic designer has finished a rough draft of a client's brochure; a catering manager has called about making final arrangements for a reception at an art gallery; and a video producer asks if she can attend the taping of a video news release next week.

Lunch is with a client who wants her counsel on how to announce the closing of a plant in another state. After lunch, Anne-Marie heads back to the office. She asks her assistant to check arrangements for a news conference next week in New York. She telephones a key editor to "pitch" a story about a client's new product. Anne-Marie also touches base with other members of her team, who are working on a 12-city media tour by an Olympic champion representing an athletic shoe manufacturer.

At 4 P.M., Anne-Marie checks several computer databases to gather information about the industry of a new client. She also checks online news updates to determine if anything is occurring that involves or affects her firm's clients. At 5 P.M., as she winds down from the day's hectic activities, she reviews news stories from a clipping service about her client, an association of strawberry producers. She is pleased to find that her feature story, which included recipes and color photos, appeared in 150 dailies.

## A DAY IN THE LIFE



### Brandee Brooks

**Position**  
PR director  
**Company**  
TNT and TBS  
**Location**  
Atlanta

**How long have you been working there?**  
Since 1995.

**What time do you start your day?**  
It varies, depending on where the projects are filming, and if the talent's representatives are based on the East or West Coast.

**What are your responsibilities?**  
I work on original programming from pre-production through domestic premiere. Most of my time is spent securing a variety of advertising, marketing, and PR needs for the life of the project, everything from setting up the unit/gallery photo shoots to coordinating all press interviews with the cast and crew.

**What projects have you most recently worked on?**  
I just finished a project-managing assignment for our new limited series *The Grid*. In addition, I spent a lot of time on-set for the original film *The Wool Cap* and preparing for our original movie *Evel Knievel*, which premiered on July 30.

**What makes you good at your job?**  
I thrive off of change. Production schedules change, talent wraps early, locations move, weather conditions are in constant flux, all of which contribute to having to think on your feet and not let any windows of opportunity pass.

**Where did you go to school? What did you study?**  
I graduated from Pepperdine University with a double major in PR and advertising, with a minor in business.

**What is your greatest professional achievement?**  
Going to lunch with my academic advisor and greatest, toughest teacher, Dr. Robert Woodruff, prior to his passing away. I told him all about my career accomplishments and mistakes. He just beamed with pride and respect.

**Name one thing about your past that would surprise people**  
I used to raise and train guide dogs for the blind.

A career in public relations has variety and interesting projects. This "Day in the Life" feature published in *PR Week* gives insight to the types of jobs and activities that a public relations professional does on a daily basis.

As this scenario illustrates, the challenge of public relations is