

How To Create A Media Frenzy - The Mark Latham Way

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Australian politician Mark Latham has generated huge public awareness and boosted sales of his book through creating a media frenzy and essentially turning a potential crisis situation into a positive, and lucrative one. Read to find out how you and your business can learn from Latham.

Content:

If you're in Australia at the moment it is hard to miss the media frenzy created by the release of a new book described as "the biggest political news story of the year".

Former opposition leader, outspoken Mark Latham has caused a stir in both parliament and the press with his recent outbursts, name-calling and frank opinions regarding his

former party and colleagues.

These scandals, which have featured in newspapers and radio and TV programs throughout Australia, have brought attention to not only the disgruntled politician but also the launch of his new book *The Latham Diaries*.

And with all this drama and attention there is no doubt Mr Latham's publicity team are celebrating rather than panicking as sales of his book have soared.

So how does a nation-wide scandal become strong, good PR rather than a crisis?

And what makes the media tick when understanding why the release of the book created so much positive PR?

Here are my Ten Reasons why *The Latham Scandal* generated so much positive PR and what you can learn from it.

1. Conflict

Conflict makes the news. Mr Latham's conflict with the Labor Party, the press and direct attacks on politicians is interesting, it's scandalous and people want to read and hear his opinions and the replies from those he's talked about. Politics generally is about conflict and combat but Mr Latham's personal comments add another dimension.

Students of power, influence and persuasion will be encouraged to find out the reasons behind the conflict in his book.

2. Prominence.

Politicians are celebrities. Everyone knows them by name, face and role and Mark Latham has made headlines since he was appointed party leader. His character as an outgoing, outspoken politician has captured our attention. His book tells his side of the ongoing scandals in his own words. By generating a big bang with his book launch, Latham was able to bring attention to many other scandals and note they are all contained in his book, hence boosting sales.

3. Timeliness

Since quitting the Labor Party Latham has stayed out of the media until high-profile interviews with the ABC's Andrew Denton, name-calling and media attacking... all coinciding with the launch of his book. Coincidence, or good PR planning?

Mr Latham gained more publicity through the media for his book from comments in interviews than he ever could have through advertising. Attracting and capitalising on the media spotlight all in a condensed period of time, particularly when there's little else in the news has worked well to his advantage.

4. Context and Relationships

The name-calling, the back stabbing, and even personal nicknames ... it may seem petty that the man who once led the opposition would behave in such a way. But the larrikin, honesty and bluntness of Mark Latham is endearing to Australians. We like to see the raw, unguarded bloke and by relating to Australians, Mark's relationship has strengthened.

Had this happened between politicians in another country, the result may not have been as positive for book sales.

5. The Media

The interview between Latham and Andrew Denton on Enough Rope has become central in discussions and media coverage of the issue. The audience of Enough Rope are generally generation X and Y, well educated professionals with young families. This target audience echoes that of his book. By selecting his media source Latham was able to access a large portion of his target audience for his book.

6. Relevance

The context of the book is set as Labor's former leader turning his back on his party the year after a record election loss. The content in both the book and interviews is relevant, it's history being written as it's happening.

The conflict also makes it relevant to Labor or Liberal supporters. Those who empathise with Latham will read his book for his side of the story. Those who disagree with his statements or support Liberals will read it for the scandal, the inside information.

7. Personality

Mark Latham is a publicists dream. He's well rehearsed in dealing with the media and very effective in getting his message across. His interviews were clear, concise and effective at promoting his book.

8. Human Interest

Pancreatitis, testicular cancer, family problems, suicide... Latham even made references to sporting teams in his interviews. It's candid and real and endearing. Latham seemed to let his guard down completely and invite the Australian public into his mind. A connection that continues in his book.

9. Carefully Constructed Interview Subjects

In his interview with Andrew Denton, Latham touched on a number of subjects from his book, offering a preview but leaving the audience wanting more information. This interview would have been carefully planned and controlled by Latham, although not obvious to the viewer.

10. Novelty

It's something people can talk about around the water cooler at work or whilst on a bus. Little shock waves then ripple out and cover a wider area. Everyone has an opinion or view on the matter and this transfer of information between people, or viral marketing, will also help book sales.

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