

## Small-business advice: Get free publicity by sharing expertise

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**Dear Karen:** I have a small family business that sells earthquake-preparedness devices. We want newspaper and television exposure. Suggestions?

**Answer:** Position yourself as a disaster preparedness expert, said Michael Olguin, president of Formula, a public relations firm in San Diego. "Pitch yourself as a third-party expert that electronic and print media can call on during annual drills and preparedness events and after there's a quake anywhere in the world," Olguin said.

Create a blog, conduct surveys and write about preparedness efforts — as long as you know your stuff. "Do not go out and pitch your product by itself," Olguin said. Your product will get publicity by virtue of interviews that you do on larger topics.