



What Stories Are People Telling About You? by Margie Zable Fisher

We tell stories every day (especially those of us who have young children).

But did you also realize that we tell stories that affect other people's businesses -- and we might not even realize we're doing it?

Here's an example:

After my Saturday morning Pilates class, my instructor mentioned that she and her husband had taken an out-of-town friend to a local restaurant that was under new management. I asked how the food was now, because in my previous experience it had only been so-so, and expensive as well. Now, with a new owner, the food was "fabulous" my instructor said, and then described a dream dessert -- creme brulee cake. That's all it took for me to suggest to my husband and another couple that we eat there that very night. In truth, that restaurant wasn't even on my "radar screen," until the instructor told me her story.

Another example:

During a speech I gave last year to a group of interior designers at the Best Practices Network in Las Vegas, I happened to mention something about David Shepherd, the President of Designing Profits, Inc., <http://www.designingprofits.com> who puts these conferences together. I told the group, "The first audio newsletter that David sent me gave me an idea that led to a \$36,000 sale. You are all fortunate that David has decided to focus his efforts on helping the interior design industry."

In fact, I got the idea for this article from a recent audio newsletter

that David sent out in which he asks, "What stories are people telling about you?"

Think about it. Are they talking about all the great work you do for underprivileged kids (like my friend, top photographer Patty Daniels)? Or, are they saying how badly you treat others?

If you're not sure what stories people are telling about you, ask them. But don't just ask your friends and satisfied clients. Ask people with whom you might have -- or had -- a rocky relationship. It's not easy, but remember, word of mouth P.R. is the most powerful form of P.R. And if you hear something negative, you have the opportunity to change the story.

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