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Public Relations: Capitalizing on special opportunities for public relations in December - by Harry Zlokower

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December is typically a busy time in commercial real estate. Investors and brokers rush to close year-end deals. Tenants make plans on renewal, expansion and new leases. It is the time when firms analyze year-end research and forecasts and when real estate companies hold holiday parties beginning early in the month and culminating with the annual REBNY banquet, this year on January 18th.

Any veteran real estate publicist will tell you December is rich in material and possibilities with little time to effectively capitalize. The question is how should you be thinking in the hectic 30-day period that begins in mid-December. Let's start with sales and leasing deals you are rushing to close. Consider how, where and when you plan to publicize. Ideally you should cooperate with the other brokers, owners, sellers, buyers or tenants to prepare one good press release with photo to strategically offer to media. If a large deal, better to act fast so media can digest details. Smaller deals might wait until the beginning of year to release.

Research reports and forecasts should be ready by early to mid-January. Year-ends are especially competitive so make sure you get the opportunity for an interview with a big New York or national publication and that your report does not get lost when sent to real estate trade media.

And, finally we are now in the middle of real estate party time which is no small matter. Giving and attending holiday parties is a major opportunity to build your brand among clients, peers and prospects. If you are hosting one, be organized on venue, food and entertainment. Consider a party planner. Do not hesitate to make a toast or speech of your own. If a guest, enjoy the festivities and bring ample business cards to network. And, oh yes, bon appetit.

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