

Eye On PR



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MAYO kicks off Year 2001 with a new feature on its website "**Eye On PR**" Everything from tricks of the trade to getting on the radar of high-tech editors and industry analysts to making your company newsworthy. Nationally recognized and award-winning writer George S. McQuade III reports on the PR industry. We also featured guest writers.



With So Many "dotgones," What's Next For L.A.'s Technology Sector?

By George S. Mc Quade III

Feb. 1

LA FRANCO WANTS TO TALK TO CEOs

Rob La Franco, who writes for *Red Herring* magazine, said the CEO, rather than the publicist, should pitch stories about the company to a reporter.



"Don't pitch me," said La Franco. "One of the worst things you can do is have a publicist pitch your company to a reporter. We are automatically turned off by that."

L-R, Red Herring's Rob La Franco, Seth Geiger, VP sales, Bizrate.com, Riggs Eckelberry, managing director, Netcatalyst.

La Franco, spoke at a Jan. 30 meeting in Beverly Hills, Calif., that was attended by

some 200 sales,
marketing, PR executives and Internet representatives.

La Franco, who is Red Herring's Los Angeles bureau chief and top entertainment writer, said reporters are impressed when the CEO or VP calls and says, "I've been reading your stuff, and I founded this company, and this is what we do. I would be very interested in talking to you."

He said the CEO technique can't be used on every journalist.

"You have to pick and choose. Read their publications, know what the journalist reports on and then you can say, 'Oh that journalist gets it.' That is more successful than having some hot shot PR firm send out mass market PR pitches to everyone, and they end up getting deleted," said La Franco.

La Franco said he deletes 20 to 30 e-mail pitches a day that he gets from publicists after he reads subject lines like "innovative technology," and "fantastic company. Everyone has a fantastic company, but how?" he asked.



Red Herring

Jan. 30, 2001 issue
of *Red Herring*

The journalist said readers have begun to lose interest in failure stories about Internet companies.

"Back then [last year] failure stories were good, but today they're old hat," said La Franco. He said he is looking to do stories about companies that are providing solutions to the problems of the Internet.

"They could be bandwidth problems, routing problems, and alternative solutions to distribution of information and media," said La Franco.

While it is still possible to get interesting, entrepreneurial stories in Red Herring, these entrepreneurs must be "evolutionaries, not revolutionaries, who are fighting the tide of corporate America," he said.