

PR Guy Extraordinaire

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By Julie Kirst

Making a name for yourself isn't the easiest thing to do, but that's where a good public relations (PR) firm comes in. Carl Terzian, chairman of Carl Terzian Associates, knows how to give his clients "good press," but when he started his PR firm in 1969, he knew he wanted to combine a full-service PR company with community, civic, political, and charity involvement.



"Traditional PR wasn't interesting to me," Terzian says. "PR was a vehicle by which I, and others, could give back."

And give back they have. In the more than 35 years since he started his firm, this Bel-Air area resident has harnessed his clients' passions and connected them with non-profit organizations.

On February 8, the Computer Access Center in Westchester, California honored Terzian with its Heart of Technology Award, in recognition of his "leadership, mentorship, and life-long commitment to community service."

"I've tried to make our firm a leader in giving back," Terzian says. "I've put about 500 people on non-profit boards around the country, and when we handle PR for a non-profit we reduce our fees."

In addition, his firm has assisted more than 4,500 companies and individuals with corporate, crisis, executive, institutional, and product marketing.

Terzian's vision led to a unique approach in helping his clients—he facilitates about 800 networking events a year. Selecting guests from the business, non-profit, public, and professional sectors, non-profit leaders in attendance get exposure to people they wouldn't have normally connected with and in turn, his clients find fulfillment in giving back. In the end, all have gained business opportunities.

Terzian sees his work as a secular type of ministry.

"There are companies that want to give back and don't know how," Terzian says. "Do you look up 'fulfillment' in the yellow pages? Our way is to explore your background, look at a non-profit's needs and then bring you both together."

For those interested in PR, Terzian shares his company's focus saying, "The number one emphasis in our company is relationship building. We put a priority on networking. A big part of what we do is to get a client out into the community to meet people and show the client how to cultivate relationships. It usually gets down to whom you know."

People who know Terzian have benefited from his PR expertise and his dedication to helping others. And, he has no plans to stop.

"I want the firm to continue to grow and get more powerful clients, and I want to guide them to their goals. I want to help more good causes," he says. "Across the country there is no one who connects people this way. I've had others tell me this approach is singularly distinctive to us and that people's lives have been changed."

Photography: Dimitry Loiseau/dimitryl.com; Grooming: Valerie Noble/constellationsalon.com