

What is Public Relations? Types and Importance of Public Relations

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Introduction: Public Relation is the practice of managing and disseminating information from an individual or an organization to the public in order to influence their perception.

Public Relation and Publicity differ in that PR is controlled internally, whereas Publicity is not controlled and contributed by external parties.

Public Relations specialists build and maintain a positive public image for a company or organization. They create media, from press releases to social media messages, that shape public opinion of the company or organization and increase awareness of its brand.

3 main roles of PR: (a) to create, maintain, and protect the company's reputation; (b) enhance its prestige, (c) present a favorable image.

Key takeaways: (a) PR refers to managing how others see and feel about a person, brand or company. (b) PR for corporations, notably publicly traded companies, focuses on maintaining a positive corporate image while handling media requests and shareholders inquiries. (c) PR is especially important to defray public or investor outcry following negative news announcements. (d) PR is different from advertising or marketing as it's often meant to look organic and may not necessarily try to promote a product or service. (e) PR can be used to mitigate negative events, though history has shown PR may cause problems to become worse. #####

Types of Public Relations: 8 different types of Public

Relations: (a) Online and Social Media Communications, (b) Media Relations, (c) Crisis Management, (d) Public Affairs, (e) Strategic Communications, (f) Corporate Social Investment, (g) Internal Communications, (h) Community Relations.

Online and Social Media Communications: In today's instant world of communications, it is essential that businesses possess a strong online presence to stand out from their competitors. Customers are increasingly turning to the web to do their own research before making a purchase decision. So online PR has become hugely important in generating leads, building brand relationships with blogs and social medias and attracting new talents. Both organizations and PR pros today must be adept in choosing the best social media platforms and other digital channels to achieve their communication objects. As a profession public relations offers an incredible array of opportunities and can be broken down into endless types and categories. However, there are underlying PR skills which are required across the spectrum for PR professionals. For businesses considering how PR can work for them, public relations can help to achieve business success in a wide variety of areas. Whether it is technology or international PR, working with a talented team is key to success.

Media Relations: A good working relationship with the media is needed in order to spread key messages to the target audience. Press coverage is a critically important public relations output. Public relations specialists use publicity efforts to try to get coverage in the print and broadcast media. They also respond to requests for information or comment from, journalists working on stories that concern their company or company's products and services. Media relations activities might also include arranging press tours of manufacturing facilities, press conferences to announce new product introductions, and coverage of the corporation's annual stockholders meeting.

Crisis Management: When something happens that threatens to

damage the company's identity. It's time for crisis management. This could be due to a product recall, allegations of employee, or customer mistreatment. CEO or employee wrongdoing, or any other kind of scandal, whatever the cause, damage control can be essential to the organization's future success.

Crisis management is typically only needed after a major issue comes up, especially if it's been publicized. While some situation will blow over with time, others might not, which can lead to indefinite or permanent damage to the company's brand. PR can help spin the issue and change the narrative of the threat; which can help mitigate the crisis. A delay or misstep can lead to even more harm to the organization, so responding quickly and correctly is the key in crisis management.

Public Affairs: Also called lobbying, this form of PR requires developing a relationship between one's organization and the government. He must form and build connections with government officials who care about and may even promote the cause. Whether a change in laws could allow see more products or one wants to persuade the public to care about his services, the government can be a powerful PR tool.

Having a congressional representative or politician on PR personnel side is almost always beneficial. It can be even more helpful if his works for a large corporation and/or in a heavily regulated industry. Government officials wield of power and can have a huge impact on his organization's reputation and success.

Strategic Communications: In the industry/organization this is referred to as a 'strategic communication' plan and it requires PR managers to make sure all media coverage and publicity promote their organizations' overall strategic missions. To do this, public relations managers should be involved in all communication channels within their

organizations. Traditionally businesses might write and distribute a press release to local media about a new business objective, product, or event and email to the newspapers or media outlets to review.

Strategic Communication involves purposeful messaging, whether internally directed to employees or targeted to the outside clients, customers, and suppliers. A strong, deliberate communications strategy is essential to the success of nearly every enterprise in the modern marketplace. Without clear, effective communication, institutions cannot reach the target audiences they must persuade, nor can they optimally inspire and empower their workforce.

Corporate Social Investment: Corporate Social Involvement is a facet of PR that works to improve public image as an ethical organization. This can take many forms, such as paying workers and employees fairly, only using ethically sourced labor or materials for products, or working to promote diversity ads for the organization.

This form of PR can benefit anyone, but may be especially helpful if customer base is young and knowledgeable about current social issues. Corporate Social Involvement can demonstrate that one understand their pain points and care addressing them. Another situation in which this kind of PR is particularly useful is if a director competitor is being shamed or criticized in the media. For example, in 2017, the ridesharing company Uber came under fire for a Litany of problems, including claims of sexual harassment, systematic sexism and racism. Competitor Lyft seized upon this opportunity to brand itself as an ethical alternative to Uber. Whether or not these claims are true, Lyft was able to change the narrative and impact its sales as a result. If a similar opportunity presents itself to a person, capitalizing on it can be a way to influence public perception of a brand.

Internal Communication: Internal communication in PR is the sharing of information between departments, teams, and team

members within the company. It can take the form of meetings, task delegations, newsletters, and check-in. Internal communication is important because it keeps teams organized, ensures consistency across the company, and reduces the stress that confusion or miscommunication may cause employees. In fact internal communications methods can reduce employees stress and turnover, and increase motivation for the simple reason that employees feel valued and informed. Communication impacts workplace operations, and employees' experiences and increases work place reputation. Effective information transmission within a company is essential to maintain a positive workplace culture and reputation.

Community Relations: Community Relations is the function that evaluates public attitudes, identifies the mission of an organization with the public interest and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance.

Community relation is an excellent means of attracting new customers and growing business. For a company to be successful, it must develop a relationship with the community in which it operates. To see results, the relationship must be beneficial for all parties involved. In today's world, customer relation is an essential part of marketing, so choosing a cause that's appropriate for customer's needs is crucial. A company can identify an essential need of the community and find a way to fix it –through donating money to the specific cause or even sending a representative from the company to a function for the cause.

Community relation is considered a two-way benefit to its society. It positions businesses as civically and ethically responsible in their local communities, fosters goodwill among the locals–potential customers, and helps the community thrive as a whole.####

Importance of Public Relations: Krystal Covington, a public relations expert says that running a small business isn't easy, especially when anyone can count his team on the one

hand. With scarce resources, having a targeted and effective PR plan is critical. According to her, it helps to make the best use of limited time and budget. Public Relations is the gateway to increase public perception and sentiment. A trusted public relation agency can build a regular rhythm of PR activities that will elevate a brand and return on investment.

There are 5 reasons for what public relations is a must.

Increases Brand Sentiment: Without public relations help journalists, reporters, or editors might never know about a brand. PR helps to tell its story, distinguish it from the competition, and provide a stream of ideas for the media who are always on the hunt for content that speaks to their audience. From a press release or pitch, they will then produce various types of content that can help to promote a brand. PR helps in times of good or bad too. With the realities of online reviews, comment, and discussion websites, a business can face disgruntled consumers whether it is true or not. This is where a PR campaign can help to get sentiment back in the right direction and shed light on as well as reinforce brand values.

Generates Leads, Sales, and Profits: Public Relations builds relations with a multitude of audiences depending on a business' focus. From building relationships with the media, investors, government, community, customers, and/or internally (employees and their morale), PR gets a targeted message to a preferred audiences in impactful ways. Since third party content about a business carries more credibility with consumers, PR gets people closer to buying decisions and quicker. For transforming a business and profitability, PR is an ally one's need by his/her side.

Builds Credibility: Customers feel more comfortable with established brands. Online, this equates to showing a robust history of media coverage high up in the search rankings. TV segments, articles, interviews, social media posts, and more

show credibility in the industry. Added to that, one can get more mileage out of these media mentions and have sales reps and business developers use this content in their follow-ups, as well as boost employees' morale and future job candidates with the goodwill created by being action in PR.

Creates a Proactive Playing Field: When one collaborate with an experienced PR agency, he/she can established a regular daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly, and/or seasonal rhythm for his/her PR activities. By being in the driver's seat with PR instead of just doing it, when crises emerge he/she will generate lots of good press, which results in a more proactive playing field. This trail of credibility and goodwill humanizes his/her company and helps in times of distress to point to the good that his/her company has done. A proactive PR plan helps him/her to leverage opportunities, plan for emergencies, and calculate his/her steps in advance.

Connects to Coveted Audiences: With so many options for PR and already jam-packed schedules, marketers and business owners can easily feel overwhelmed. Expert PR agencies help to identify the best use of a business time and investment to get on the right platforms, publications, and channels, and with the right authorities and influences to boost their brand exponentially. Getting access to these coveted audiences is a crucial component to one's growth. From small business to larger organizations, PR companies have the connections to reach these audiences. From tailoring the message to the audiences to know which reporters cover which topics, savvy PR agencies can handle all these detail, so one can focus on other projects for the livelihood of his/her business stands to become a routine source for the media and others to call on, quote, and provide further insight on.

Takeaway: When public relations can be the quarterback to shine a light on one's business, it's goodwill and relevancy no matter what is happening in the marketplace, his/her business has the ability to flourish. As the public confidence

in one's brand stands the test of time, his/her business' PR efforts create a lasting story about his/her business, personnel, services, products, and customer base. From this angle, public relations should be a mainstay in his/her marketing, not just a luxury when more sales are needed or crises emerge.

With more than 30 years of experience in marketing strategy, public relations and project management, Playbook Public Relations takes a guesswork and stress out of PR for a wide variety of clients big and small. From leveraging media relationships to developing PR campaigns, Playbook is known for its high-quality standards, dedicated terms, and helping companies stand out from the competition.

Furthermore there are 7 reasons why anyone working for a small-medium-sized business should practice PR.

Public Relations is free: By doing PR, anybody can build trust and credibility in his/her brand without spending too much. When other people talk about him/her, it influences prospects more than advertising.

Public Relations is more effective than paid advertising: PR is almost 90% more effective than advertising in influencing consumers. Whether PR, advertising, or marketing is better is a contentions topic. Yet people trust earned sources more than advertising (Nielsen). Word of mouth, customer testimonials, and editorial media have a greater impact. In short, getting favorable mentions of brand PR more weight than a paid ad.

PR complements marketing activities: Many businesses are competing for attention. By providing and delivering value PR earns people's attention unlike intrusive and irritating advertising. A talented communicator shares useful, educational, inspiring, or compelling. And a smart communicator knows how to convey a brands higher purpose. Instead of PR competing, it can support initiatives in a way

advertising and marketing can't.

PR is crisis mitigations: For small businesses that depend on word-of-mouth, up customers can ruin their business. An unhappy person who badmouths a brand can cause a dint in future profits. With PR, through, one can handle employee-related scandals, defective products, and potential lawsuits. Effective PR is about keeping an eye on brands reputation and image.

Increase brand visibility: Online media doesn't have a shelf life. News articles remain visible on search engines for a long time. According to Hubbell Communications, articles continue to gain exposure. Other sources (a blog post, reviews, or elsewhere) will link to articles. Thus, share positive, timely, and relevant stories across earned, owned, and shared channels. That in turn, will bring more customers and drive more business growth.

PR is a long-term game: Getting PR on anybody's own is possible, but it takes time to build relationships with journalists. The essential thing is to have something newsworthy to say.

PR beats advertising: PR professional Robert Wynne says," With advertising, one fell how great he/she are. With publicity, others sing his/her praises.

Differences between Advertising/Marketing and Public Relations:

Advertising/marketing: (i) Paid, (ii) Builds exposure, (iii) Audience is skeptical, (iv) More expensive, (v) 'Buy this product'.

Public Relations: (i) Earned, (ii) Builds trust, (iii) Media gives third-party validation, (v) Less expensive, (v) 'This is important'.#####

The End

