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## The Role of Public Relation in branding

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### Abstract

Public relations are progressively about cooperating credibly with key audiences who affect business results, such as media analysts, policymakers and policy influencers, customers and shareholders. It is an important part in supporting the power and value of an organization's brands to all stakeholders. All the elements of corporate brand, from tone and personality, functional and emotional benefits, core message and end goal, to its reputation – if fully leveraged with internal and external audiences – can help raise performance and credibility. Enhancing the awareness understanding and commitment to a brand through public relations is usually an essential part of any overall strategy aimed at sustaining and raising standards of performance and credibility.

Key word : PR public relation

### Introduction:

Public Relations Research, as the name implies, focuses on the entire public relations process and examines the communications relationships that exist among and between institutions and their key target viewer's groups.

Public relations are generally associated with communication activities designed to craft and preserve and organization's image and relationship with its public. Recently, the role of organizational public relations has expanded as evidenced in the blurring of once precise boundaries between public relations, advertising, and marketing communications activities. The convergence of these communication activities are in response to an evolving business environment characterized by a "loss of shareholder value and declining customer confidence and organizational support" which, in turn, had led many organizations to reexamine their core communication processes and ways of doing things.

## The Purpose of Public Relations

Like advertising, public relations seeks to promote organizations, products, services, and brands. But PR activities also play an important role in identifying and building relationships with influential individuals and groups responsible for shaping market perceptions in the industry or product category where an organization operates. Public relations efforts strive to do the following:

- Build and maintain a positive image
- Inform target audiences about positive associations with a product, service, brand, or organization
- Maintain good relationships with influencers—the people who strongly influence the opinions of target audiences
- Generate goodwill among consumers, the media, and other target audiences by raising the organization's profile
- Stimulate demand for a product, service, idea, or organization
- Head off critical or unfavorable media coverage

## When to Use Public Relations

Public relations offers an excellent toolset for generating attention whenever there is something newsworthy that marketers would like to share with customers, prospective customers, the local community, or other audiences. PR professionals maintain relationships with reporters and writers who routinely cover news about the company, product category, and industry, so they can alert media organizations when news happens. At times, PR actually creates activities that are newsworthy, such as establishing a scholarship program or hosting a science fair for local schools. PR is involved in publishing general information about an organization, such as an annual report, a newsletter, an article, a white paper providing deeper information about a topic of interest, or an informational press kit for the media. PR is also responsible for identifying and building relationships with influencers who help shape opinions in the marketplace about a company and its products. When an organization finds itself facing a public emergency or crisis of some sort, PR professionals play an important role strategizing and managing communications with various stakeholder groups, to help the organization respond in effective, appropriate ways and to minimize damage to its public image.

To illustrate, PR techniques can help marketers turn the following types of events into opportunities for media attention, community relationship building, and improving the organization's public image:

Your organization develops an innovative technology or approach that is different and better than anything else available.

One of your products wins a “best in category” prize awarded by a trade group.

You enter into a partnership with another organization to collaborate on providing broader and more complete services to a target market segment.

You sponsor and help organize a 10K race to benefit a local charity.

You merge with another company.

You conduct research to better understand attitudes and behaviors among a target segment, and it yields insights your customers would find interesting and beneficial.

A customer shares impressive and well-documented results about the cost savings they have realized from using your products or services.

Your organization is hiring a new CEO or other significant executive appointment.

A quality-assurance problem leads your company to issue a recall for one of your products.

## Benefits of Public Relation in branding

### 1. Rise your brand's credibility

Publicity through public relations gives credibility to your business as the content is more authentic and informative. Studies indicate that PR gives more visibility and credibility among the consumer market than advertising which is perceived as more promotional.

### 2. Invite your target market

PR allows a much easier approach to retaining and attracting a target market. A well-written article on your product/service offerings in the magazine can be much more attractive and impact compared to an advertisement in that same magazine. Further, by utilizing multiple media sources from a PR agency, you can effectively communicate your key messages and help you get a step closer to achieving your company goals.

### 3. Provide added value

PR can provide a unique touch point and add value to your product offering that can help differentiate you among your competitors and put you at the forefront of your particular industry. Further, PR can add value through increasing visibility of your products and services, personalize your brand, raise your profile, build strong relationships, manage your reputation, assist with your sales process and add value to your own clients through case studies. Overall, it is a win-win scenario.

### 4. Short and long-term lead generation

Media placements through PR are a form of long-term placement as initially you are likely to be exposed to large amount of leads.

### 5. Build your brand image

People often accept that PR is all about promoting an item or a special offer. This is a misconception as PR drives your entire business towards growth and greater yield of success. When done right, PR can create a more positive brand image in the mind of your consumers that provides an alley way to better engagement for your company. A great brand image is a business investment that can't be bought and will provide value to your brand and your customer as it helps shape all aspects of your business as a whole.

## Limitation of public relation in branding

### PR is Not Advertising

That's an important thing to understand for any brand. Once the thought seeps- in, it'll be easy for both the consultant and the client in moving forward and relishing the outcome.

The stories or the mentions that appear and the way media portrays a brand or its leadership, it is all the prerogative of the journalist and the editor. PR can at the best try to get the best out of it by way of good media relations and right pitches. But limitations like size, prominence, frequency, date and tone of the story cannot be controlled. That's just beyond PR's limit of scope.

## **PR is not Selling**

Like PR is not advertising, likewise PR is not 'selling' either. Don't expect to try to draw parallels between PR and revenue. The two have no connection and relation. What PR does is to get your product or service a reputation. Put your brand in the conscious and sub-conscious mind of the users and customers. PR removes the negative connotation attached to the brand and products. All this leads to creating an ecosystem that promotes sales. But the bottom line is that PR is not there to bring sales

## **PR cannot Completely Clean the Unclean**

There could be brands, personalities, products or incidents that may be witnessing or are in themselves a nothing but a big blot. PR can try to clean the tarnished image and is probably the best tool to do so. But then there is a limitation to its cleaning power.

A tarnished image or a blot on the image cannot be cleaned overnight and also cannot be cleaned completely. There's a limit to it and much expertise, time and effort required to do the same.

## **No PR out of Nothing**

To show a positive image the organization needs to have one. To build reputation PR would require a base. If there is no image and reputation equally nothing can be promoted about it. Similarly, if there is no news to disseminate, PR can't get you in the news. You need give talk points. Yes, the expertise of PR can multiply it further but if they don't get the raw material don't expect any output too.

## **No Visibility without Appearance**

To get into limelight there has to be a person who walks up to it. Publics want a personal touch, a one-to-one connect. One way announcements, releases and stories don't work for ever. To influence people and to gain the seat of thought leadership the top brass or the spokesperson(s) will have to shed all inhibitions and come out in public. Interacting with media and making a personal connect takes you way far than you can imagine. But then if the leadership is silent and glare shy, even the best of the PR can't help beyond a limit.

## **Future of public relation in branding**

Public relations professionals play a huge part in a brand's online reputation. Good PR helps you promote the image you've built and protect it. And by employing the right PR strategies at the right time, you can maximize good PR while making bad PR matter a lot less.

Part of a PR professional's job is to stay up-to-date on the latest industry trends. Why does this matter, you ask? It's simple: our world is ever-changing, which means PR is changing, too.

What mattered to consumers three years ago might look incredibly different today. And since PR is all about shaping your image in the minds of consumers, you need to know how certain tactics and strategies may resonate with your audience at any given time.

## Standard Public Relations Techniques

Public relations encompasses a variety of marketing tactics that all share a common focus: managing public perceptions. The most common PR tools are listed in the following table and discussed below.

Public Relations Technique	Role and Description	Examples
Media Relations	Generate positive news coverage about the organization, its products, services, people, and activities	Press release, press kit, and interview leading to a news article about a new product launch; press conference
Influencers/Analyst Relations	Maintain strong, beneficial relationships with individuals who are thought leaders for a market or segment	Product review published by a renowned blogger; company profile by an industry analyst; celebrity endorsement
Publication and thought relations	Provide information about the organization, showcase its expertise and competitive advantages	Organization's annual report; newsletters; white papers focused on research and development; video case study about a successful customer
Events	Engage with a community to present information and an interactive "live" experience with a product, service, organization or brand	User conference; presentation of a keynote address; day-of-community-service event
Sponsorships	Raise the profile of an organization by affiliating it with specific causes or activities	Co-sponsoring an industry conference; sponsoring a sports team; sponsoring a race to benefit a charity
Award programs	Generate recognition for excellence within the organization and/or among customers	Winning an industry "product of the year" award; nominating customer for an outstanding achievement award
Crisis Management	Manage perceptions and contain concerns in the face of an emergency situation	Oversee customer communication during a service outage or a product recall; execute action plan associated with an environmental disaster

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