4 Guiding Principles for Building and Deploying a Great PR Strategy

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Often new companies think about public relations at the moment of the launch and not much after that. However, PR is an ongoing effort that should always be kept alive.

Public relations is not just about writing good press releases. It’s about building and maintaining durable networks and relationships, providing value for your audience and telling your brand story in the best way possible.

1. Have a strategy beyond the launch

The big launch is a big deal, and many new brands devote a lot of effort towards executing a great launch. However, not nearly enough effort is put towards sustaining the hype after the launch. A great PR agency is often more concerned with sustaining a groundswell of support and positively influencing consumer behavior through a steady stream of content and communication to the consumer and the media. This is why working with good PR agencies is essential to develop a solid PR strategy before the launch.

A winning PR strategy should be holistic. It should demonstrate the quality of the work your company does, highlight the milestones crossed (or projected), measure the results of actions, identify what tasks are yielding more

fruit and develop a pathway for growth sustained positive visibility.

Thinking strategically about PR entails thinking long-term, which is slightly different from thinking tactically. Tactical thinking involves developing a routine of profitable tasks, for instance, posting on social media four times a week, planning a series of blog posts and so on.

Strategic thinking, on the other hand, is informed by data. Strategies can be formed by understanding what success will look like for your company and then drawing a long-term data-backed plan to get the company from where it is to the desired goal. This is what great PR agencies are proficient at doing.

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2. Don’t just sell – absorb feedback

A winning PR campaign does more than sell. It focuses on developing a campaign and a message that customers can identify with and get behind. Selling is a consequence of using the right medium to tell the right story to the right audience. Selling is not the focus of PR campaigns, but it is a valuable tool to measure its success.

A winning public relations strategy welcomes feedback and input from critics, customers and neutrals alike and adapts accordingly to create better results. Most strategies would not be perfect from the start, but the finest PR agencies can adapt the strategy over time to achieve the stated goals. Creating a clear two-way channel of communication between yourself and your audience is an essential part of your PR strategy.

3. Leverage pre-existing relationships

For many newer brands, their PR strategy involves trying hard to cultivate important media relationships that would help them in the long term. However, this effort can come off as pushy and may jeopardize the effort to build a strong network.

One benefit of working with a top-notch PR agency is that they offer you access to their robust networks and relationships. Newer brands often have limited networks in the media or influencer space. This is where agencies can help.

Relationships are one of the most powerful tools for an effective PR campaign. When relationships have been built on trust and credibility over years of working together, they often introduce your brand to new audiences and spaces and endorse your services with a high level of conviction.

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4. Approach the right platforms with the right story

What is your brand story? What is it about? Is it appealing enough to convince your audience? More importantly, is it appealing enough to attract relevant media organizations? It is common for new brands to pursue features in the biggest publications, but getting on the right platforms is far more important than getting on the big platforms.

The job of a great PR agency is to identify where your audience stays and to tailor your brand story to reach them. Telling a bad story to the right audience or telling a great story to the wrong audience would yield minimal results.

When crafting your brand story, you have to start by defining

your brand mission and personality. The mission should be relevant to your audience and society at large. Your story must also be appealing, relatable and consistent across all your touchpoints. Your visuals, banners, colors, fonts and graphics are also great ways to add color to your brand story.

Brand stories that are not generic and have a unique flavor or direction always stand out. Newer brands require a forensic PR strategy if they are going to penetrate their industries effectively, this may entail hiring an in-house team of PR experts, but more often than not, it entails contracting a well-connected PR agency to help out.

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