4 Reasons Your PR Campaign Isn’t Driving Sales — and How to Fix Them

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Many entrepreneurs who have tried PR and then stopped say something similar: “I paid a lot for PR, but it didn’t lead to sales.”

It’s certainly a frustrating situation to be in. Brand awareness is great, but it doesn’t mean anything if it doesn’t help you reach your goals. Your PR efforts need to be closely aligned with your overall marketing strategy. However, only one in five PR professionals is involved in developing a company’s overall marketing strategy, per Meltwater. This leads to missed opportunities for connecting media coverage to your KPIs.

Here’s the good news: Fixing this is usually a matter of fine-tuning certain parts of your PR campaign so you can convert brand awareness into meaningful sales.

Below are four reasons why your campaign may not drive sales — and how to adjust your efforts to start making more from media coverage.

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1. There’s no defined customer

journey

Your company just got featured in a digital publication with 15 million monthly visitors. Congrats! But, now what?

Your PR strategy should detail how a potential customer who just discovered you via the media moves from brand awareness to conversion. Keep in mind that most customers don't go directly from one to the other – even in the most simplified marketing funnel, they first must move through the interest/consideration phase.

Work closely with your PR and marketing teams to determine how you will nurture new audiences in the consideration phase until they're ready to convert.

That may involve these tactics on the website page your media coverage leads to:

- A newsletter sign-up box (offering high-value content)
- An offer for a free trial
- A downloadable white paper
- A 1-1 consultation

This is especially important if your media coverage sends audiences to non-eCommerce pages. For example, if one of your spokespeople is featured as an expert and the article leads to their bio page, there should be a clear "next step" for customers (like those outlined above) to move them closer to a purchasing decision.

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2. The landing page from the press

has a bad UX

If the press directs new visitors to your website, but the links are broken, images are sized poorly, it’s not optimized for mobile, or it’s difficult to navigate, they’ll quickly bounce off the page.

The website pages you provide to the press should be among the most inviting, intentional ones you create since they play a key role in moving potential customers through the funnel. Better UX can increase conversions by up to 400 percent, per research from Forrester.

Whenever you’re mentioned in the press, put your company’s best foot forward to make an unforgettable first impression.

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3. You’re targeting the wrong publications

While getting coverage in a giant publication feels amazing, it may not lead to the most sales. Some of the most lucrative placements we’ve seen for clients have been in regional outlets where their community comes together to support local businesses.

As an example of that, one of our firm’s clients has been featured in several national publications that are fantastic for credibility and visibility, but a local broadcast segment contributed to a 224 percent increase in their online sales in just one month (not to mention a spike in brick-and-mortar sales).

Even for nationwide or global companies, a niche publication can reach more high-intent audiences. If you’re a nutrition

app company, landing on Good Morning America is great for exposure, but you may actually reach more customers who are ready to convert with coverage in a small outlet focused on healthy eating or weight loss.

4. Your social media channels don’t reflect the customer journey

As mentioned before, potential customers typically aren’t ready to buy when they hear about your company. However, they often engage with companies on social media after their first exposure to them in the media.

For instance, if someone reads about you in an online article, they may follow you on Instagram as a next step to learn more about your company. Make sure your social media channels are nurturing new audiences through every stage of the marketing funnel.

Social media strategy should be a key part of your 360-degree marketing efforts and reflect your media coverage for cohesiveness. Repurpose your broadcast appearances for TikTok or Instagram Reels and showcase quotes from your interviews in static posts. Then, just as you would for your landing pages, make sure there’s a clear next step in the customer journey.

In fact, social media can be one way to shorten the customer journey from brand awareness to conversion. It has traditionally been thought of as a top-of-funnel brand awareness tool, but 93 percent of executives say that companies are increasingly moving eCommerce to social media, per a Sprout Social report.

Throughout all of these efforts, think about what steps will lead your customers from brand awareness to conversion — and be there to offer them high-value content every step of the way. Also, make sure your PR team is actively part of overall

marketing decisions. When you do so, you'll see more impactful results from your investment in PR.

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