

IMPORTANCE OF MEDIA RELATIONS

Media Relations involves working with media for the purpose of informing the public of an organization's mission, policies and practices in a positive, consistent and credible manner. Typically, this means coordinating directly with the people responsible for producing the news and features in the mass media. The goal of media relations is to maximize positive coverage in the mass media without paying for it directly through advertising.

Many people use the terms public relations and media relations interchangeably; however, doing so is incorrect. Media relations refer to the relationship that a company or organization develops with journalists, while public relations extend that relationship beyond the media to the general public.

It is possible for communication between the media and the organization to be initiated by either side. However, dealing with the media presents unique challenges in that the news media cannot be controlled they have ultimate control over whether stories pitched to them are of interest to their audiences. Because of this fact, ongoing relationships between an organization and the news media are vital. One way to ensure a positive working relationship with media personnel is to become deeply familiar with their "beats" and areas of interests. Media relations and public relations practitioners should read as many magazines, journals, newspapers, and blogs as possible, as they relate to one's practice.

Organizations often compile what is known as a media list, or a list of possible media outlets who may be interested in an organization's information. The media can consist of thousands of magazine publications, newspapers, and TV and radio stations. Therefore, when a "newsworthy" event occurs in an organization, a media list can assist in determining which media outlet may be the most interested in a particular story.

Working with the media on behalf of an organization allows for awareness of the entity to be raised as well as the ability to create an impact with a chosen audience. It allows access to both large and small target audiences and helps in building public support and mobilizing public opinion for an organization. This

is all done through a wide range of media and can be used to encourage two-way communication.

Possible reasons an organization may reach out to the media are:

- Launch of a new product/service
- Initiation of new factories/offices
- Financial results
- Organization sponsored events or awards
- • Launch of organization promotional campaigns
- Recent disasters, strikes or organizational closures
- Awards/accolades for the company
- Visits from company dignitaries/celebrities
- Involvement in local/community activities
- Community engagement

Media is the bread and butter of a PR agency therefore it is of utmost importance to PR professionals to maintain good and healthy relations with their media contacts. To get their clients' coverage done, be it in print, online or electronic media, it is the journalists in various media houses that PR executives deal with.

There are various things related to an organisation that need to be informed to the public or sometimes to be curbed down if it has a negative angle attached to it, it is then that a PR firm comes into action. It may be any activity, announcement, inauguration, honour, or any other event that PR persons need to convey to their client's target audience through media. The sole objective of media relations is to get good and positive coverage for your client without paying anything. It can either be through advertising as well.

It is not that easy for PR professionals to deal with media people as it involves lots of challenges. One of the ways to ensure a positive relationship is to become familiar with the beats they cover and drop in to introduce yourself and your clients with them.

A PR agency maintains a compiled media list consisting up of various newspapers, magazine, electronic, radio and online media. Therefore, upon

occurrence of any event specific media people can be contacted and press release can be shared with them to get the coverage done.

Media acts as an intermediary between an organisation and its target public that creates awareness for the organisation with an ability to create a positive impact for the chosen audience. In this way organisations build public support as they are able to reach out to their audience.

PR experts contact media for various occasions related to their client:

- Launch of a new product/service
- Initiation of new outlets
- Organization sponsored events

- Launch of organization's promotional campaigns/activities
- Recent disasters, strikes or organizational closures
- Awards/accolades for the company
- Company dignitaries/celebrities' visits
- Involvement in social activities
- Community Engagement

Importance of media relations to business

The main goal of media relations is to maximize positive coverage of organizations, providing a clear voice in public discussions and giving visibility about the field or the organizations Obrien, A (2014). Media relations is important to increase brand awareness, achieve company reputation and to know the customer's preference and choices.

- Increase brand awareness and achieve company reputation

The company product and services in the blog or in online social sites provide information to the customers. The good information, advertisement, news are preferred by the people and it makes a positive impact on people about the company which results to make company image better. Many people physically do not connect with the organizations that why they prefer to listen to

information and giving feedback through the media. Communication plays a vital role in effective media relations. The organization that creates good media relations they must ensure that they are receiving feedback and information correctly so this will help to give reviews and communicating back to the people. If the product or services is seen on online by viewer it is shared more and like by more people so, the information helps to increase purchasing power (Lake 2018). Media relation is an important tool for providing information to its audience. Nowadays, customer's problems are taken as an important part of corporate communication. The customers give feedback and their opinion in companies' blogs, and article which help the organization to improve in their services and product. Johnston, J (2012), believes that the power of the media is to provide information and create awareness about the companies' ideas, products, and services.

- To find the customers preference and choice

Mahoney (2013), says that interacting with the audience in media like receiving comment and opinions on the Facebook, blog, and articles help the company to find out the choice of their target customers and what type of product they want. For instance, most of the people use social site nowadays to communicating with the organization, for expressing their views in the comment box of facebook and mention which design, size, and color they want. Understanding the preference of customers helps to increase sales. The media relations allows the organization to reach the large audience choices for fairly low cost at a time by reading and analyzing the feedback online (Cherwick, Z 2018). The organizations should develop a strong relationship with media by communicating effectively so that the media would always support the company to post right and correct news to attract its target customers and meet their choices.