

The 4 Biggest PR Myths That Can Blow your Marketing Campaign

Make smart decisions to maximize your PR



- Journalists want to tell your story.
 - Journalists want to tell the story that gets them attention. Attention means more followers, increased reputation, better assignments, more viewers, more revenue. If you want a journalist to tell your story, they need to believe it can deliver the attention they seek.
 - You need to understand the type of story your target journalists like to tell and construct your pitch accordingly. Sometimes this means framing it up as part of a bigger story-line, providing an exclusive, or giving them some currency they can't normally get.
 - Whichever strategy you choose, make sure you contextualize how this story will help them!
 - Sometimes it means researching other stories and being overt in how yours compliments theirs.
 - Do your due diligence!
- A press release is a necessity.
 - Press releases serve a specific role of announcing important business happenings. It is a controlled way of getting the message into the public domain where it is discoverable. However, many brands and businesses have the wrong expectations when it comes to press releases, which makes it easier for a PR agency to cop-out and do what is easier for them (which is writing a press release and putting it on the wire) versus do the pitching.
 - What are the wrong expectations:
 - Other pubs will see it and insert it in their pub. It is true that many pubs have sections that are basically "latest news" and will comb the wires for something to plug in. What are the chances do you think of it being yours? What are the chances of it getting into a section where YOUR target consumer or customer is looking? Very low.
 - A press release generates interest. In fact, it discourages interest. Because once it is out there, journalists feel like it is "old" news. The chances of them telling a story which has already been told is low unless the story is super compelling. Which means your PR agency should be to get traction from pitching it.
 - Journalists will use the press-release to write their own story. There is rarely enough info for them to do that. They may add an opinion, but your press release will likely be lifted and placed.
 - If you are adamant about doing a press release, do it at the end to fill in the gaps.
- You can pitch on your own.
 - Publications are consolidating, moving from print to on-line only, folding all together which means journalists that formerly covered just one category now cover many. 1) What this means is they are very busy and 2) They get A LOT of pitches.
 - If you were a journalist, whose pitches would you prioritize? Someone they don't know or someone they get regular pitches from that have turned into good stories? When you pay for a PR agency or freelancer, you are paying for their relationships. It takes a long time and a lot of diligence to build relationships with journalists. You are better off deferring this to people whose jobs it is to do this and who do it everyday. You don't have time or the bandwidth.
 - This doesn't mean it is a sure thing. As mentioned before, you need to have a story the journalists wants to tell. But you have a much better shot with someone who has the relationships and who knows the art of pitching stories.
- The more impressions I get, the more successful the PR campaign.
 - NOPE! You should be holding your agencies accountable for quality impressions. It is another reason why I discourage press releases in most cases. An agency can pull together impression numbers based on placement which may or may not be of value to you.
 - The entire point of a PR campaign is to get coverage in places your customer/consumer is looking. These may not be big pubs. In fact, I have seen a positive piece in a smaller, highly influential pub for a client's consumer base have more impact than a Wall Street Journal article that was more neutral in nature.
 - So how do you define success? We suggest to have a CTA to help you track traffic to a certain destination point to help you gauge what is a quality placement or not. Other ways you can gauge success:
 - Does the placement generate more conversation conducive to building your brand or business?
 - Does it translate well into good social content that has an impact there? Share your PR on social!
 - Does it drive engagement with other important stakeholders or partners?
 - Does it boost my credibility and reputation making it easier to sell?
 - Keep in mind that PR is part of social proof. It generally takes a consumer to see something 5-7 times before they actually take action. PR is about trying to make you look popular. This may not have a direct cause/effect unless you have a time-bound, irresistible offer.