

How To Choose The Right Public Relations Specialist For Your Brand

If you own a business and would like to benefit from utilizing PR services, you have two options. You can either create a PR department and employ PR staff or hire outside PR services. The first option is without a doubt a better idea because the entire PR department is working for you alone.

As a result, you can expect a better service than from a firm that is working for multiple clients.

Having your own PR department significantly increases the costs of operation because PR specialists are quite expensive. In fact, most small and medium-sized companies cannot afford to hire even a single full-time PR specialist. This is because you do not only need a PR specialist but you need a good PR specialist if you want to benefit from utilizing PR services.

If you cannot afford to employ a full-time PR specialist, the only option is to hire outside PR services which can boost your business as well.

Whom you hire to carry out PR for you, of course, matters a lot in the overall effect of the PR campaign. When you will be choosing between the many PR

firms and freelance PR specialists, you are therefore recommended to pay attention to the following factors:

Reputation

Obviously, you need someone who knows their job inside and out if you want to benefit from PR. So take some time to research particular firms and specialists to see who are their clients and what they say about the quality of their services.

Experience and expertise

The more experienced the PR personnel the better. However, established PR specialists are typically also considerably more expensive than those at the entry level who are not necessarily any less effective than their experienced colleagues. In order to prove themselves and create a good reputation, they often work twice as hard as their famous counterparts and as a result, they often bring excellent results.

Hiring non-established PR specialists, however, can be a gamble which is why you should ask yourself if you are willing to take the chance, or better yet if you can afford to take the chance.

Specialization

Many PR firms specialize in particular fields of PR. While some focus on financial PR and communication with potential investors, stockholders, etc., others specialize in consumer PR, which foccuses on presentation of new products/services to the target customer audience. You are therefore recommended to determine your PR needs before you start looking for PR services.

Cost

PR services do not come cheap and most businesses cannot afford to hire the best PR firms and specialists. Watching for the cost of the services is of course highly important but it is a good idea not to try to get too much for too little. PR firms and specialists in the most favorable price ranges are forced to work for multiple clients at a time which in turn may compromise the quality of their service.

Below are some of the characteristics that distinguish an accomplished PR pro from an average PR rep.

Flexibility

It's difficult to come up with a career that demands as much flexibility as public relations. Clients change their plans without notice, and situations arise out of the blue. In social media channels, for instance, one lousy post can bring down the entire ship.

A good PR pro must have the ability to handle whatever comes their way, in the most efficient way possible.

Meticulous learning

Becoming a well-rounded PR person is not a walk in the park. The climb to achieving a consistently reliable and savvy reputation largely depends on your ability and willingness to learn.

Sure, there's always the pressure for newbies to make an impact, but no entry-level professional gets a new job and immediately starts advising the world's biggest brands on high-profile issues. The best young PR pros understand that there's so much to learn from watching co-workers, noting their accomplishments and learning from their mistakes.

Collecting information

A PR pro's day job involves active interaction with the world and the people in it. They must, therefore, stay on top of everything that's happening, both in and out of their core sector. Successful PR professionals know how to harness information from the news and current affairs and use it to craft ideas that keep them and their clients fresh and updated.

Seeing the bigger picture

The end goal of public relations is to put a business or an organization on the right path to success. While getting lost in the social realm of PR is easy, it's essential not to overlook the role they play in the company's profitability. Before acting, a good PR pro will stop to think whether the desired result has any contribution to the bigger picture - advancing the business.

Building relationships

Relationships are everything in PR. One of the core purposes of the profession is to establish lasting connections with clients and the general public. Success in PR, therefore, inclines on a professional's ability to maintain rapport and bridge communication chasms by cultivating quality conversations and nurturing personal relationships.

A PR pro working for a brand must be responsive, helpful and friendly to every inquirer.

Knowledge

An average public relations specialist can survive by merely establishing strong relationships, but the pros are conversant with their products and services. If you're working for a tech company, for example, make an effort to learn about the latest gadgets on the market, the preferences of customers, and the moves that competitors are making.

A fruitful career in PR requires that a professional maintains a firm grasp of the product they're promoting because that is what makes them invaluable to clients, journalists, analysts, and everyone else seeking information.

Strong writing

Although content development has taken a broader meaning lately, the foundation of public relations is still heavily reliant on the creative articulation of information. Above-average writing skills are therefore imperative in PR. With colleagues and clients asking for anything from finely crafted press releases to compelling blog posts, PR specialists should be able to convey their stories and ideas in the most creative, flawless, succinct, and accurate way.

Attention to detail

The digital age has placed brands on the edge and under the lens. Today, every step that involves communication with the community and the media requires careful review and planning. When left unchecked, even the smallest error can morph into a full-blown PR disaster.

Desirable PR professionals are those who can pick out the tiny issues and deal with them before they become a problem. While it is not possible to guarantee perfection, especially when you're new to the job, an avoidable mistake can bring your career tumbling down.

Thick skin

Lastly, the PR profession is not for the light-hearted. They get knocked to the mat more times than they can count, and how quickly they can shake it off will determine how quickly they climb up the ranks.

Modern PR pros need to learn to withstand criticism and accept the decisions of their clients without taking offense. An excellent professional is never discouraged by critique and rejection. Instead, they embrace and learn from them.