

How to create a digital PR strategy

An effective digital public relations strategy can benefit your business in multiple ways, be it by creating exposure, building brand reputation, or ultimately creating more sales and lead generation.

Here are some steps to follow when planning the strategy:

Goal setting

The overall marketing and communications objectives will always be the golden thread to follow, yet you need to be specific with what goals you want to achieve through PR content creation. When every element has a clear purpose, execution and measuring are much easier.

Goals can and will vary depending on the company. For example, increasing your email marketing list, strengthening trust in your brand, driving traffic to the homepage, etc. So don't forget to set a goal, know what you want to impact with your PR work, and compare the differences.

Review your target audience

Be clear about who you are trying to reach and understand the audience you're communicating with.

By outlining the pains and gains of the target audience, you can more easily identify what content would be relevant to them. For example, a newsletter sent to monthly subscribers or an industry report for B2B communications. Understanding the market is greatly valuable as it helps to put yourself in their shoes and understand their perspective.

Who your target audience is depends on what they're looking for. Ultimately, your goal should be to connect with the target audience and supply what they demand. If you are clear on your goal, it'll be much easier to be clear on your target audience. And the way to better understand that is to do research.

Research

You need to understand what you're talking about. The more information you collect, the easier it is to develop pitching angles and key messages for your content.

Once you've done your desk research, think of a few catchy stories and see if the industry data supports the success of your chosen topics. You can easily use a media monitoring tool to gather information.

Brainstorm some specific ideas that you want to dive deeper into. That way, you will have a clear aim for research. Don't go in blindly as you'll get lost in the avalanche of information. Go in with certainty and a purpose. That way, you will

discover clear information on what is important, and you'll be able to filter out the most important information.

Identify key publications

Next, once you have your content, think of which news outlets or journalists share common ground with your news stories. It's also important to consider if your content is fresh and exciting for journalists or bloggers to write about.

Having a short list of journalists ready to pitch is also handy when building relationships.

Networking is essential. The target audience is hiding somewhere in the readership of those media outlets most suitable for your sphere of work. Identify them and have a steady focus. This will cement their willingness for further cooperation.

Design the strategy

Now, the actual digital PR strategy can follow a few different routes:

- Publishing original articles online to gain high-quality backlinks
- Networking with journalists to gain backlinks
- Publishing press releases to earn press features
- Publishing a content piece as a guest blog

- Blogger outreach to gain backlinks and mentions on relevant blogs
- Influencer marketing via Social Media
- Sharing infographics
- Reclaiming links by asking for a link to be added if your brand/business is mentioned on another website without a link

It is recommended to map out the steps you will take. This will structure your process, set you on a clear path for your digital PR strategy, and help you stay focused on the most important fragments of your process. One step at a time, it'll all come together to form a well-delivered digital PR strategy, hitting a bullseye as long as you stay on target.

Content creation

Once you are confident with your pitch and PR plan, it's time to refine the content piece - fill in the blanks and give it a unique character. Be sure to flesh out the details and get the tone of voice perfect. If your content piece is an online article or blog post, be sure to have clear headings.

In PR, content can be used for thought leadership and data presentation. Thought leadership involves interviews, providing commentary, and getting a face (CEO, Founder) out there.

Data presentation is the translation of a data set. The most intriguing or relevant parts of the data are given a creative makeover and a compelling story is born.

Media Outreach

Now that your content is ready to share, contact the journalists and bloggers on your shortlist. The right content and a good pitch will lead to success. It can take a few tries before a journalist is interested or you get noticed. Just keep pitching and working towards your goal.

Persistence will work in the end. Additionally, it is wise to use a brand-mentioning tool to know when your business name is mentioned and you have started establishing a presence.

Media monitoring

Media monitoring tools are your friend. You can easily set up a media monitoring tool like SEMrush to get notified every time your name or product is mentioned in the media. By keeping tabs on this, you'll know if a link to your website was included and if there's a possibility to get in touch with the editor to undergo a PR partnership in the future.