

How Marketing and PR Work Together to Build Brands

PR and marketing each have their own approach, but they are similar at their core. Both help build brands and communicate with target audiences. They both have the objective of developing and maintaining a positive relationship with the public (consumers) through communication to meet a company's goal.

Integrating marketing and PR strategy and tactics into an overall plan to increase your brand's visibility and reputation can yield impressive results.

STRATEGIES, FOCUS, AND SUCCESS

While both activities keep your company top of mind, their strategies, focus, and success metrics are very different. Here is a quick summary of those differences.

Target Audience

Marketing: Primarily concerned about getting new business leads. The typical audience is current or potential clients or customers.

PR: Primarily focused on getting the attention of the general public. The audience includes all stakeholders, the media, and the public at large.

Primary Focus

Marketing: Executing advertising and marketing campaigns to increase quality sales leads that result in sales.

PR: Managing messaging to maintain positive brand awareness and image while building key relationships.

Measuring Success

Marketing: Success is generally measured by sales leads or revenue increases or other shorter-term successes.

PR: Success is typically measured over a long period. Positive media exposure in the short term indicates success and can lead to influencing a long-lasting positive perception change.

TACTICS

So practically speaking, what does marketing look like? When you're marketing, what are you doing? Likewise, if you're getting PR for your business, how are you making that happen?

Sometimes, marketing and PR activities do overlap. For example, social media posts are a form of news content that you'd see as part of a PR strategy. But social media ads are often part of a company's digital marketing plan. Both activities happen on social media platforms, but the execution and intent are different.

There are tactics that differentiate marketing and PR. An effective marketing plan will incorporate tactics from both, but knowing where each fit can be helpful when determining which are the best fit for a company's goals.

Marketing Tactics

- Advertising campaigns
- Email marketing (e-newsletters)
- Search Engine Optimization
- Search Engine Marketing
- Sales Collateral
- Social Media Marketing

Public Relations Tactics

- Managing Company Messaging
- Speaking Opportunities
- Press Releases
- Story Pitches
- Developing Media Relationships (Media Relations)
- Community Events/Involvement

APPEAL, CONTROL, AND CREDIBILITY

When considering the differences between marketing and PR, it's also necessary to highlight such things as control (of the message), appeal (audience), and credibility (message believability).

Appeal

PR publicity has a news angle. It should appeal to both the media so they'll want to publish it and their readers/viewers with whom they will share it. Marketing ads will appeal to specific audiences that are typically sales prospects but not so much to a broader audience.

Control

When companies advertise (or market), they have almost total control over the message's content, format, timing, and scope. They can specify how big the ad is and when it runs. There is less control over these things with PR as it appears in the media. Just because you sent a 500-word news release for publication doesn't mean all of it (or any of it) will be used. That's why it's crucial for it to be newsworthy (to the media, not just you).

Credibility

Some consumers are skeptical of advertising. They are sometimes hesitant to believe big claims companies make about their product. PR news stories or third-party input is more genuine, partially because the company isn't paying for the exposure like they are, an ad. But also, because they are providing real-world and measurable results.

When attempting to increase your brand's visibility, reach, and reputation, marketing, and public relations should be part of your broad strategy. They're each effective in their own ways to help you accomplish your business goals.