



SOCIAL MEDIA

PR OR MARKETING: HOW IS YOUR BRAND USING IT?

Despite being around for almost a decade, social media floats between public relations and marketing, and has yet to be assigned a particular role. It's able to carry out a lot of the tasks that used to take companies time and money, and it's opened up a two-sided conversation between brands and their consumers. Social media is one of the most powerful tools at the disposal of marketing and PR specialists, but which strategy works better?

Marketing and PR are still trying to solve the battle of who should have control over the new viral world. Unfortunately, this results in strategies that don't align with one another, and can cause more problems for a company than they solve. The real answer is that there is no one way that social media is supposed to be used. It is made up of platforms that each have different benefits and abilities, and that can be maneuvered in many different ways. There are certainly strategies that are unanimously turned down, but there are countless strategies that are successful in their own ways. It all depends on what your company is hoping to accomplish.

Most people would think that social media is a tool to be used by PR, because these platforms allow brands to have public conversations with customers. This is just a new world of media relations, and it's all about getting the right story, the right message, or the right image for you brand. The experience of working with other media channels relates well to social media; even though you no longer require the press release to have your content reach your customers, you're still creating news.

However, social media is moving forward, and some platforms have become less about conversations and more about sharing. People want to see your photos, and your videos, and they want to read what people they look up to are following or posting. This creates the ideal space for marketing – it's free advertising space! Using social media to promote events, deals, or new products and services is one of the easiest ways of getting your information out to the public.





The most successful companies are the ones that have bridged the gap between PR and marketing, and have established mutually beneficial strategies where both are able to reach their goals through the same platforms or campaigns. An example of a company like this is Proctor & Gamble; they successfully combined the big-idea strategy from marketing and the branding from PR in their latest campaigns. Learning how to create campaigns and strategies that work for both portfolios will be one of the ways that certain companies start to see more social media success than their competitors.

When a company is creating a social media strategy, having both PR and marketing involved in the implementation is important. The company is then able to decide what direction they're hoping to take on their various channels. Companies will then be free to move on to questions like: what platforms will we focus on? What is our tone of voice? Are we trying to be thought leaders, or are we trying to show company culture? Or both? Are we promoting products or a campaign? All of these questions will help shape the social media strategy that every company hopes to develop.

SO WHAT IS YOUR BRAND TRYING TO DO?

IF THEY'RE WORKING ON DEVELOPING AN IMAGE FOR THEMSELVES, THEY'RE FOCUSING ON THE PR SIDE OF THINGS. IF THEY'RE HOPING TO HAVE CONSUMERS LEARN MORE ABOUT PRODUCTS AND PROMOTIONS THAN IT IS BEING USED AS A MARKETING TOOL. HOWEVER, THERE IS NO CORRECT WAY; IT IS ENTIRELY BASED ON WHAT THE COMPANY FEELS IS THE BEST FIT FOR THEIR OVERALL GOALS. ONCE COMPANIES RECOGNIZE THE NEED FOR COLLABORATION BETWEEN PR AND MARKETING, THE MORE REVENUE THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA EFFORTS WILL BRING IN, AND THE MOST FOLLOWERS THEY WILL BE ABLE TO AMASS.

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