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Have you ever wondered - what actually is PR?

The interpretation of what public relations' core purpose and process is often gets confused. Is it advertising, journalism, both? Events and product launches? Something else? You're not alone if you don't know, and the misconception comes from the fact that PR works so intrinsically alongside other arms of communication such as advertising and journalism.

PR is a strategic communication discipline that aims to build mutually beneficial relationships with stakeholders through the use of multiple forms of media.

The connection to those multiple forms of media is what makes PR special. To be a PR professional, you have to be an expert in social media, have great relationships with many journalists, and know how to communicate carefully and effectively.

What PR does for you

The main goal of PR is to influence peoples' opinion of an organisation. That can include proactively promoting the organisation through channels such as media releases, brand launches, social media campaigns, and collaborations with marketing efforts.

It can also be reactive - managing issues, events, and crises that can negatively impact the organisation's reputation.

Examples of PR

Ever flick on the news and see an awesome new brand or product being reported on? Good chance that was the work of a hardworking PR professional, who has used their abilities to get coverage for their client.

The same goes for promotions in magazines, newspapers, and a plethora of other media channels. Last year, we got our clients in coverage in channels such as Sunrise, Women's Weekly, SMH, ABC News, The Australian, and Kidspot.

Who needs PR?

PR can be beneficial for a wide range of entities including businesses, individuals, non-profits, and government agencies, tailored to align with their goals. Businesses can use PR for brand awareness and credibility. Governments and non-profit may use PR to communicate with and engage the public, build support for their initiatives and policies, and manage their reputation. Individuals such as politicians and celebrities might use PR to enhance their public image and communicate with the media.

Tip: Be proactive

One of the biggest issues with brand reputation highlighted by a 2007 [HBR](#) article is that most companies do an inadequate job of managing their reputations and the risks to their

reputations. They tend to focus their energies on handling the threats to their reputations that have already surfaced.

POPCOM Founder and Director Amanda Lacey said that this is still the case today, where entities are only adopting risk management strategies when it is “too late”.

“When it comes to reactive PR, it is so important to have all the correct safeguards in place to be able to manage risks. Many individuals and organisations that I have acted for simply did not have the frameworks required to manage risks to their reputation, let alone full crises”, Lacey said.

“What organisations often don’t consider is that reputation risk often comes from within. I highly recommend utilising a PR practitioner in order to develop the foundations to mitigate risk. The earlier you can respond and take control of a situation, the better. If you don’t prepare and leave it too late, I guarantee you’ll regret it.”

Additionally, being proactive in PR means boldly creating opportunities to showcase what you can offer. Incorporating PR into your planning process is the best way to maximise your reputation and control your narrative.

PR is crucial in the modern day

In an age where information is transmitted faster than we could ever hope to control, PR is a key tactic to handle any good and bad circumstance that can (and will) arise. It gives you the capability to be the director of your story and image, and create and maintain important relationships with stakeholders.