

PUBLICITY, PUBLIC RELATION & CORPORATE IMAGE

Publicity----Definition

Publicity is the means of using an external entity (celebrities, people from the media, etc) to increase the awareness levels of the product, company, goods etc amongst the public and/or buying segment.

“Publicity is the deliberate attempt to manage the public's perception of a subject”.

Publicists

“A publicist is a person whose job is to generate and manage publicity for a product, public figure, especially a celebrity, or for a work such as a book or movie. Publicists usually work at large companies handling multiple clients”.

The subject of publicity includes people (for example, politicians and performing artists), goods and services, organizations of all kinds, and works of art or entertainment.

From a Marketing perspective, publicity is one component of promotion.
The other elements of the promotional mix are

- Advertising,
- Sales promotion, and
- Personal selling.
- Promotion is one component of marketing.

Publicity is a tool of public relations. Whereas public relations are the management of all communication between the client and selected target audiences, publicity is the management of product- or brand-related communications between the firm and the general public. It is primarily an informative activity (as opposed to a persuasive one), but its ultimate goal is to promote the client's products, services, or brands.

A publicity plan is a planned program aimed at obtaining favorable media coverage for an organization's products - or for the organization itself, to enhance its reputation and relationships with stakeholders.

Basic TOOLS of the Publicist ARE the

- Press Release
- Telephone press conferences
- In-studio media tours
- Multi-component video news releases (VNR's)
- Newswire stories

But the publicist cannot wait around for the news to present opportunities. They must also try to create their own news. Examples of this include:

- Contests
- Art exhibitions
- Event sponsorship
- Arrange a speech or talk
- Make an analysis or prediction
- Conduct a poll or survey

- Issue a report
- Take a stand on a controversial subject
- Arrange for a testimonial
- Announce an appointment
- Celebrate an anniversary
- Invent then present an award
- Stage a debate
- Organize a tour of your business or projects
- Issue a commendation

The advantages of publicity are

- Low cost
- And credibility (particularly if the publicity is aired in between news stories like on evening TV news casts).

The disadvantages are lack of control over how releases will be used, and frustration over the low percentage of releases that are taken up by the media.

Publicity draws on several key themes including

- Birth
- Love
- And death.

These are of particular interest because they are themes in human lives which feature heavily throughout life. In television serials several couples have emerged during crucial ratings and important publicity times, as a way to make constant headlines. Also known as a publicity stunt, the pairings may or may not be truthful.

Effectiveness of Publicity

The theory any press is good press has been coined to describe situations where bad behaviour by people involved with an organization or brand has actually resulted in positive results, due to the fame and press coverage accrued by such events.

Public Relations

"Public Relations is the art and science of building relationships between an organization and its key publics. It is concerned with communications management".

Examples include:

- Corporations use marketing public relations (MPR) to convey information about the products they manufacture or services they provide to potential customers to support their direct sales efforts. Typically, they support sales in the short and long term, establishing and burnishing the corporation's branding for a strong, ongoing market.
- Corporations also use public-relations as a vehicle to reach legislators and other politicians, seeking favorable tax, regulatory, and other treatment, and they may use public relations to portray themselves as enlightened employers, in support of human-resources recruiting programs.

- Non-profit organizations, including schools and universities, hospitals, and human and social service agencies, use public relations in support of awareness programs, fund-raising programs, staff recruiting, and to increase patronage of their services.

- Politicians use public relations to attract votes and raise money, and, when successful at the ballot box, to promote and defend their service in office, with an eye to the next election or, at career's end, to their legacy.

Corporate Image and Product Positioning

A corporate image should be consistent with the POSITIONING OF THE COMPANY'S PRODUCT, PRODUCT LINE, and OR BRAND.

Any incongruence between the overall corporate image and the positions of individual product offerings will be confusing to potential customers and will tend to reduce sales revenue. For example, an oil company that has the image of being environmentally unfriendly will not be successful selling products that they try to position as "green". A company in such a situation should either: withdraw from the "green market", invest in promotional activities that will recast their corporate image in a greener hue, and/or follow a more environmentally friendly path. A good overall corporate image can be seen as the sum of all the images associated with the firm's individual product positions.

The corporate name and logo must also be consistent with the overall corporate image.

Likewise with advertising themes and distribution partners; they must also be consistent with your overall corporate image. If, for example, you wish to create a luxury/high-end corporate image, you should not distribute your products through Wal-Mart nor use slapstick advertising themes.

A successful corporate image must also be believable. That is, the image must be relatively close to your actual behaviors to be credible.