

ENHANCE MARKETING EFFORTS WITH A STRONG PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY

*Design an Effective PR Strategy to Succeed in
an Ever-Changing Industry*

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Advancing Organizational Excellence





The public relations industry is changing rapidly.

New tools like artificial intelligence (AI), combined with the dominance social media has achieved in the PR landscape—not to mention shifting interests and demands from today’s consumer—mean designing an effective PR strategy is no longer optional for successful businesses.

Subject matter experts from organizations should team with experienced PR professionals who can design a PR strategy that will reach and engage the desired target audience. With the right combination of technology, media relations and impactful messaging, organizations can see a real return on their PR investment that will enhance their bottom lines.



Understand the Nuances of Public Relations Today

Not long ago, the press release was king and an organization’s target outlets—print, tv and radio—typically received pitches over the phone and press releases by fax. A lot has changed, and the industry is better for it.

As media newsrooms shrink and reporters’ workloads expand, effective PR teams establish themselves as valuable resources—the “go-to” sources for journalists. In addition to helping a reporter, it increases the odds that their news will get covered.

Becoming a valuable resource requires PR teams to be responsive and accurate, and to provide well-written communications. Possessing high-quality writing skills has always been important for PR pros; these days, it’s a true differentiator for whether a pitch gets coverage. With poor writing so common on social media and in blog posts, internal communications and even news articles, it’s more important than ever that PR teams set the bar for great content.

Best Practices for Media Relations

[Cision’s 2023 Global State of the Media Report](#) shows media—and how marketing and PR pros can best communicate with media—is changing. By understanding the challenges journalists face, communications professionals can consistently deliver the resources needed to increase clients’ media engagement.

In today’s world of misinformation and tightening budgets, it’s challenging to be a journalist. According to the report, journalists state the top challenge for news organizations is maintaining credibility as a trusted news source/combating accusations of “fake news” (27%), followed closely by lack of staffing and resources (20%),

and declining advertising and circulation revenues (20%). The top challenges for individual journalists are keeping up amid downsizing and reduced resources (38%) and balancing reporting on important topics against pressure to drive business (22%).

As a result, the most successful communications professionals are the ones who make journalists’ jobs easier.

Top 3 Challenges for News Organizations



27% Maintaining credibility or combating accusations of “fake news”

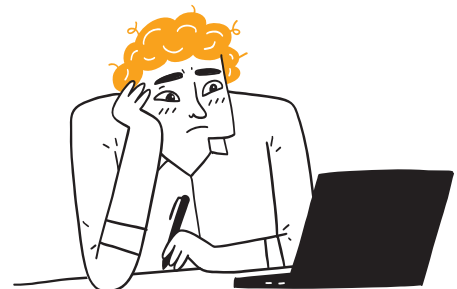
20% Lack of staffing and resources

20% Declining advertising and circulation revenues

Top 3 Challenges for Individual Journalists

38% Keeping up amid downsizing and reduced resources

22% Balancing reporting on important topics vs. pressure to drive business



PROVIDE THE RESOURCES JOURNALISTS NEED

The top type of content journalists need from communications professionals is data (68%), including original research on trends and market data. More than 65% of journalists state communications pros should provide data and expert sources to make their lives easier. However, providing data is not enough. PR teams must take the time to become experts in the subject matter so they can respond to any follow-up questions from journalists.

Press releases are the top way journalists generate content or ideas, followed closely by industry experts and major wires. To boost the ROI of press releases, Cision found those with multimedia elements get up to six times more engagement than press releases without multimedia. In the last year, 77% of journalists used images, 44% used videos and 43% used data visualization/graphics.

When sending a press release or other communication to a journalist, understand how your organization and message fits into the broader picture. Make sure the message is relevant to the publication and the timing is appropriate, taking current events into account.

MAINTAIN GREAT RELATIONSHIPS WITH JOURNALISTS

Cision found the following ways communications professionals can create new relationships—or improve current relationships—with journalists. Great PR teams can provide them all.

- Keep providing value and seeking more ways to do so.
- Deliver content they find useful (and relevant to their audience, outlet and platform).
- Provide multimedia whenever and wherever possible and appropriate.
- Do everything possible to make their lives easier.
- Invest in deeper understanding to create customized messages and deliver relevant content that will actually get the media's attention.
- Take every opportunity to connect with media in person.
- Review communications before sending to ensure the material is clear, and the journalist's name and the publication's title are spelled correctly.



The top ways communications professionals can damage a relationship with a journalist include the following.

- Overdoing it with outreach and follow ups.
- Adding to their already busy schedules and frustrations with irrelevant pitches.
- Spamming them with irrelevant pitches.
- Using clickbait, jargon and other “red flag” words and phrases.

Working with the wrong PR team that uses these techniques can result in serious damage to a company’s reputation.

It’s most effective for communications professionals to take the time to understand journalists, their audiences and the types of content they would like to receive. By taking a professional and helpful approach, communications professionals can develop better relationships with journalists and improve the chance of coverage.

Traditional Versus Digital PR

Even as it has evolved to keep pace with changing technologies, [traditional PR continues to play an important role](#) in business strategies. From media outreach to reputation management and crisis communications, the responsibilities of the PR professional are as important today—if not more—as they were years past.



In today’s expansive media landscape, where having an online presence is a necessity, businesses and organizations are looking beyond traditional PR to get their messaging to the masses. Connecting online with journalists, influencers and bloggers; helping drive high-quality backlinks and social media mentions; and improving organizations’ search engine optimization (SEO) have become integral to overall PR strategy. This approach is known as digital PR.

At first glance, it appears that traditional and digital PR have very different priorities. Digital PR is viewed by many who practice traditional PR as more concerned about links than about content or the relevancy of media coverage. Traditional PR is conversely seen by some digital practitioners as hard to measure, old-fashioned, not essential and “fluff.” **Yet, traditional and digital PR provide value and a truly successful PR strategy should include both.**

For example, leaders know that building a good reputation and transforming perception directly impact their organization’s success. Once a reputation is damaged, it is very difficult to repair. By working together, traditional and digital PR can more effectively protect an organization’s reputation and take steps to shift and improve public perception if it has been damaged. By combining efforts, companies can maximize their results.

Traditional and digital PR are capable of co-existing and can complement one another. For example, once the traditional PR professional creates a press release, a digital PR professional can step in to help position the announcement above others through SEO and drive viewers to the website.

When communications teams recognize the symbiotic relationship between the two approaches and leverage it by aspiring for links as well as positive and quality coverage, they will increase brand awareness and help solidify the organization’s reputation.



Case Study: Do Press Releases Still Work?

The basic function of a press release is to communicate information about an organization like a change in leadership, a new product or service offering, or the results of an award program. Most industry publications still value receiving these updates and will post them on their website, getting the announcement in front of the reading public.

This alone makes a press release a good return on a business's investment. However, a release occasionally will earn coverage beyond expectations, alerting editors to in-house expertise and helping fill slots in their publishing schedule.

Here's an example: The American Concrete Pavement Association (ACPA) announced the names of its 2023 board members, including Chairman of the Board of Directors Steve Friess of Milestone Contractors, LP. After sending a press release about Friess' new role—and mentioning his deep experience in the industry, including building out the concrete arm of a paving company—Friess was invited to be a guest on Roads & Bridges' webinar series, Infrastructure Insider. ([Watch the episode here.](#)) Not only that, but Friess and the ACPA communications team—working with AOE—were able to line up other concrete paving experts from the organization to be interviewed in upcoming Roads & Bridges webinars.

Packaging news stories in a professional format and distributing them via appropriate media channels ensures they are seen and considered by decision-makers in the industry—proving press releases are still a great way for organizations to stay in front of their audience.

Company-Wide Collaboration Enhances PR

Digital and traditional PR increasingly is integrating with other communications functions. Organizations are tearing down the silos in which the different communications teams exist. The lines between public relations and marketing have blurred, leading to greater integration of strategies and tactics. PR and marketing

professionals now collaborate more closely to create cohesive and consistent messaging across various channels, ensuring communications align with overall business goals.

It's clear that when PR teams collaborate with marketing and other functions, less overlap and greater success occurs.

To help ensure collaboration, team leaders should approach each project by asking themselves, "Why are we doing this? Who needs to be involved?" PR impacts nearly every aspect of the organization, so companies can't behave as an island and expect to effectively measure and show results without thinking about how they play into the bigger picture. If a brand wants to move forward, all parts must move in the same direction.

With advanced targeting capabilities, PR teams can tailor messages to specific audience segments. Personalization allows for more relevant and engaging communication, enhancing the overall effectiveness of PR campaigns. By leveraging data and analytics, PR professionals can understand audience preferences and behaviors, crafting tailored content that resonates with their target groups.

The availability of vast amounts of data has empowered PR practitioners to make informed decisions and measure the impact of their efforts. Analytics tools provide insights into audience behavior, sentiment analysis and campaign performance, allowing for targeted messaging, personalized communication, and better measurement of ROI.



Build Trust with Authenticity

Targeted messaging alone is not enough in today's world. With the rise of social media, consumers now demand authenticity and transparency from brands. PR professionals need to communicate genuine and honest narratives, engage in meaningful dialogue and address issues openly. Building trust through transparent communication has become essential in managing public perception and maintaining brand reputation.

We are entering the “authenticity era” with social media driving engagement and brand growth. Audiences are looking for six key content value propositions: entertainment, inspiration, education, information, help and reward.

During a recent webinar hosted by [Meltwater](#) on trends in marketing and communication in 2023, presenter Davitha Tiller of Red Havas US revealed **people wouldn't care if 75% of brands disappeared.** A concerning statistic for brands and marketers. The question is why?

Today's consumers expect immediate fulfillment, a personalized experience and VIP treatment, according to Philippa Dods of Meltwater. In essence, they are looking to be engaged in a meaningful way — **something that consumers believe 48% of brands are not delivering.**

We're living in an age where consumer power is the new norm. Brands are slowly losing control of the narrative. Rather than interactions being private and direct to the consumer, they are now very public and open for all to see—on a permanent and searchable forum where people can meet over shared experiences, whether good or bad. Organizations that look the other way are missing the opportunity to leverage these shared experiences to drive meaningful engagement with their customers.

Consumers purchase products from companies they trust. And people are increasingly likely to openly complain on public forums if they don't receive instant gratification. Today, consumers are putting their power into action.

PR teams must connect with consumers consistently to ensure the trust built over time isn't destroyed in a matter of minutes.

MEDIA DISTRUST IMPACTS PR

Media distrust is a fundamental problem, with people more skeptical than ever before. This is the media's problem though, so why should PR pros care?



PR is impacted by media distrust as more journalists, working hard to fight against misinformation and fake news, are avoiding sources who want to speak anonymously or “off the record,” which is seen as a way to deflect accountability. Sharing misinformation (or disinformation) from an anonymous source can undermine the credibility of a media outlet. It may be appropriate to go on background and off the record for a legitimate reason, but anonymity is now all too common and makes it harder for journalists to do their jobs.

Just as trust in the media didn't disappear overnight, it's not going to return overnight. However, an organization's experts and members of its PR team can help by making sure leaders or spokespersons

are ready to answer questions—even the tough ones—and be transparent. Going off the record or speaking anonymously shouldn't be the default.



MAINTAIN TRUST IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Trust has always been at the heart of what PR teams do and is something they strive for every day. Today, people are much less trusting than before—particularly of the media, according to a [webinar on PR trends](#) hosted by Agility PR Solutions in 2022. In addition, trust in political organizations has gone down. At the same time, trust in corporations and employers appears to be rising.

A lot of work remains for organizations to build, maintain, and protect that trust. It boils down to walking the walk, showing up consistently, and remaining visible online and on social media. Organizations suffer by going quiet or disappearing from their audience. The onus to rebuild and protect trust falls squarely on PR.

Communication, transparency, consistency and timeliness are key—especially during times of change—to build (or rebuild) trust. Communicating with the audience frequently in short, relevant and targeted messages can be much more meaningful and impactful than long stretches of silence followed by a mountain of information unloaded in one communication.

Consumers of the brand and the content it produces want personalized experiences. The smarter we get about the way we relate to customers, the more positive business outcomes will be—but only if it's done right. Measuring and managing customer engagement leads to better customer relationships, resulting in greater profitability. **There is a huge possibility for growth and success when businesses listen to consumers across social media platforms.**

A notable example of the power of community involves an ice cream company that had two nearly back-to-back listeria incidences. It had such a strong base of loyal customers that its community immediately came to the company's defense. As a result, the business was minimally impacted and its reputation virtually unscathed. However, the community did not develop on its own. The company built and nurtured it.

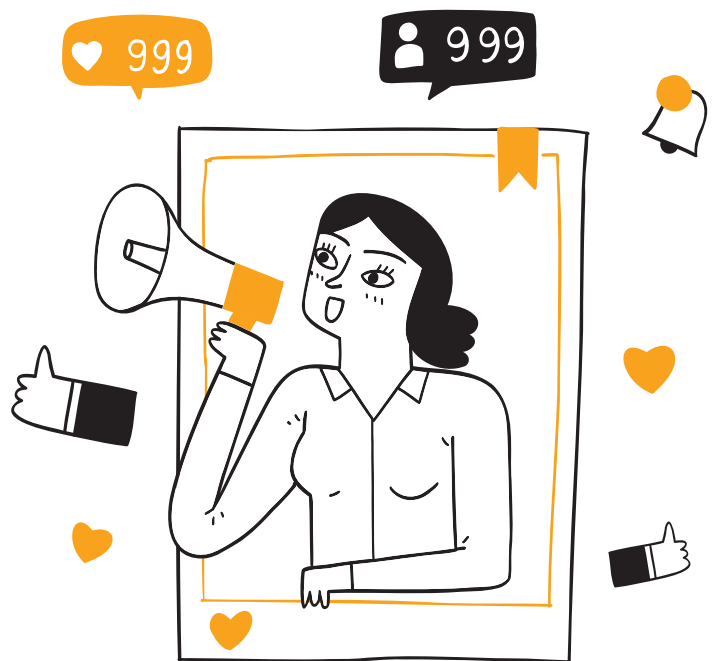
Brands that are not paying attention to community

need to start and can do so simply by figuring out where their audience spends time. Interact with current and potential fans on social media platforms. Find influencers who are passionate about the brand's products or services. Building a strong community of loyal customers is powerful.

Brands looking to succeed in delivering an authentic customer experience are those that create integrated personalized experiences. And they can do that by making intelligent data-driven decisions.

BUILD TRUST INTERNALLY

One of the biggest challenges communicators face today is ensuring empathy and compassion in leadership messaging. Too often, leaders display a serious lack of empathy for employees in internal communications. These internal communications can be leaked to the public, making headlines that lead to public outrage. Unfortunately, once that occurs, it falls on the PR professional to clean up the mess. The best way to handle these situations is to avoid them altogether by creating a culture of empathy.





Create a Strong Social Media Strategy

Social media platforms have transformed the way organizations and individuals engage with their audiences. PR professionals now leverage social media to disseminate messages, engage in real-time conversations and manage brand reputation. Social media also allows for direct interaction with interested parties, enabling PR practitioners to build relationships and address concerns promptly.

Currently, more than half of the world's population uses social media, and they're spending an average of almost 2.5 hours a day on various social media platforms. The average social media user now has more than eight accounts and 91% access their channels via cell phones and tablets. And the average attention span of social media users on mobile devices is just 1.7 seconds. We're navigating different social media channels and formats faster and more frequently than ever before.

With that in mind, how can organizations ensure content stands out from the crowd? Using the right format and techniques, which will vary based on the social platform (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram or TikTok), will help pique consumers' interest—and retain it.

Every social post should have a purpose, yet almost half of all content is not meaningful to consumers of that content. **Creating content that has a clear driver behind it and a strategic purpose is critical.** People want to know what a brand stands for and expect to receive something from the engagement, whether it's learning something of value, being inspired or getting something in return. Audiences will forget what brands said—but they'll remember how the message served them. Make it memorable.



The community also should be afforded safety around projects and ease of access for everyone. Accommodations should be made so everyone can be equally safe at work and out in the community.

Remember that, unfortunately, construction projects are often perceived as having negative impacts on communities. This is where the importance of sustainable development can be stressed. The “not in my backyard” mentality can be addressed through active engagement with the community and the proper alignment of projects with community needs and goals. Through strong leadership, a community’s concerns are confronted, and conflicts can be avoided.

Create Valuable Content

Two-thirds of Americans binge-watch television with nearly 104 million hours of Netflix streamed every day. This may not be new, but it is bigger than ever and a good reason to approach social content in the same way. Marketers should create series with content that people would expect from the brand and will keep them coming back for more.

Acquiring insight into what interests the brand’s target audience is the starting point. This insight will also allow for strategic planning and auditing of content. Additionally, include a branded hashtag across all content in the series to link the content and allow the audience to easily find the company’s posts.

Several principles to consider when creating a social content series include brevity, clear purpose (inspire, educate, reward, etc.), the ability to customize the message to fit the different platforms, clearly defined segments of the series (i.e., part one, part two, etc.) and the ability to measure the series’ performance based on the company’s key performance indicators.

ESG (environmental, social and governance) is an evaluation of an organization’s collective social and environmental conscientiousness. Consumers want to see more of this from brands these days, which means less talk and more action. DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) is a good example of this shift from people

satisfied simply talking about it to a greater demand for actual change. More brands are investing in these initiatives than ever before and, at the same time, trying to figure out how to get them right.

When we try new things, they sometimes fail. But, if we don’t try, we don’t learn what works. AOE constantly tries new approaches, whether it’s video, serial or interactive content. And AOE tests the different formats, asking: what performs better for this project? Is it a story, [a carousel of images](#), a fireside chat video or an infographic? Social media algorithms prioritize content based on the likelihood the audience will want to see it. These algorithms prefer brands that build on their latest innovations. Therefore, testing and learning the latest format or feature to be launched is paramount to ensuring the brand reaches its audience in a relevant and impactful way in 2023.



Now's the time to create interactive content experiences, especially with the arrival of the metaverse. More than 80% of marketers agree that interactive content is much more effective at grabbing people's attention than static content. And 66% have reported greater audience engagement. An interactive content experience requires the audience to click or tap to reveal something more. Interactive content invites audiences to answer a question or participate in a quiz or a poll. It's also a great way to interact with an audience on a more engaging level.

Short- or long-form [video can be an engaging form of interactive content](#). It could be a video that includes numerous call-to-action buttons, allowing the audience to take a different turn or choose a different story of their own (i.e., personalizing their experience with their brand). This type of video is about connecting with the customer on an entirely different level and reported results indicate a significant increase in conversions compared to generic video.

Social media presents brands with a vast range of opportunities to engage with their target audiences. However, if a brand's presence on these platforms is not authentic, consistent, engaging and trustworthy,



it can come back to haunt them. Once again, it is the responsibility of the PR teams to build a social media strategy that ensures a strong and meaningful connection for the brand with its audience.

Choose the Right Platforms

Over the past few years, the number of social media platforms and their influence has grown. Many brands and businesses struggle to decide which platforms to use. The simple answer is that companies don't have to be everywhere. In fact, it's simply not possible. Three things to consider when determining the social platforms on which a company should be active include the following.

- 1. Determine the target audience.** Where are customers, clients, prospects and competitors? For example, if they are primarily on LinkedIn, the company should be there too.
- 2. Understand the differences among platforms.** For example, Facebook targets audiences based on interests, which makes it a great choice for reaching consumers. LinkedIn, on the other hand, is more focused on professional targeting, making it a better fit for business-to-business activity.
- 3. Decide how much time and effort the company can commit.** It can be time consuming to create separate images, videos and text tailored for each platform. And it's extremely important to actively engage with followers, which could be considerable across multiple platforms.

If a business spreads itself too thin, the quality of the brand is likely to suffer. While caution is recommended, don't be afraid to experiment on emerging platforms and expanded features on existing platforms.

For example, live audio conversations like those offered with Twitter Spaces allow businesses to speak in real time with journalists. This can jumpstart relationship-building, which can be leveraged to secure the desired media coverage for the brand. For those considering entering the podcast domain, Twitter Spaces is a terrific way to test the waters without making a major commitment.





Twitter is a great tool for building relationships with journalists as well to find out what they're looking for and what stories they're working on. Journalists are eager to interact with PR teams on Twitter, both when pitching a story or simply engaging when the team doesn't need or want anything. The latter is an important step in building those relationships. Connect with journalists through tweets, direct messages and participating in a community.

Other platforms like **TikTok** and Instagram are increasingly popular with brands incorporating video into media strategies. Because nearly 70% of people prefer learning something new via short-form videos, more journalists are using these platforms to share short stories and connect with their audiences.

YouTube Shorts, a platform of 60-second videos similar to TikTok, is an effective way to create video content that is shareable. Journalists also often are seeking interviews for this type of content, and PR teams can help by offering leaders' expertise.

Collaborating with influencers on these platforms has become an integral part of many PR strategies. Influencers, with their large online followings, can help organizations reach specific target audiences and establish credibility. PR practitioners now work closely with influencers to develop authentic partnerships that align with the brand's values and goals.

More brands than ever are engaging their employees on social media as well. Yet, more than 80% do not have a formal employee advocacy program in place. Such programs present a great opportunity for a brand to differentiate itself from the competition. By encouraging employees across the organization's various channels to become brand ambassadors, the company's reach can grow exponentially. If 100 employee advocates with a social network of about 500 people (the average) share the brand's content just once a month, it's reaching a potential audience of 500,000 people each month.

There are many benefits to activating employees on social and many ways it can be done. Benefits include increased visibility, brand recognition, traffic to the website and improved search engine rankings. In addition to amplifying the brand's content, employee-generated content can be powerful, whether they create original content or use templates provided by the company.



Leverage New Technology Tools

Now's the time to pay more attention to new technology like AI and how it can benefit PR. There are so many tools popping up, and they're getting smarter when it comes to media research, writing, media monitoring and even sentiment analysis.

While many have heard about the metaverse, few know what it really means. The metaverse represents a simulated digital environment that uses augmented reality, virtual reality and blockchain (along with other concepts from social media) to create a rich user experience that mimics the real world. Historically, the metaverse primarily was leveraged by the gaming industry. Today, we're seeing it beginning to seep into public relations and marketing.



Through machine learning, AI analyzes data to uncover insights, find new patterns and discover relationships in data. There are tools available that can be integrated with pitching, for example, to provide insights into what's resonating with journalists and what's not. PR teams can use that information and apply it to future pitching to improve their success rates.

AI Becomes Mainstream

One of the first technologies on the scene was ChatGPT, the chatbot powered by AI. Using short prompts and questions, users can ask it to provide information on nearly any topic as well as write essays, mimic famous authors and more.

Created by OpenAI, ChatGPT is an advanced AI language model that burst onto the scene November 2022. Microsoft quickly invested \$10 billion into the company in January 2023. ChatGPT's ability to create meaningful, coherent, human-like copy was unmatched by previous chatbot technology.

AI-generated content isn't new, but it certainly seems to be taking off in a big way. ChatGPT is inspiring competitors from key players like Google, who introduced its AI service "[Bard](#)" and Bing's AI "[Chat Mode](#)," as well as an increase in different AI art filters on TikTok and AI avatars via a software called [Lensa](#). Users upload a few pictures of themselves to the program and it creates dozens of "self-portraits" in different art styles inspired by the images.

Whether the idea of a content-creating "bot" excites you, terrifies you or confuses you, there is no denying that this technology is making its way into all industries, including public and media relations.

[What does this mean for marketers?](#) To find out, we went straight to the source and asked ChatGPT. Here's what it said.



How will AI chatbots impact the public relations industry?

Chatbots have the potential to significantly impact public relations (PR) by transforming the way organizations interact with the public, media and stakeholders. Here's how chatbots can influence the field of PR.

- 1. Instant and accessible information:** Chatbots can provide quick access to information about a company, its products or services, and its activities. By integrating chatbots into websites, social media platforms, or messaging apps, organizations can offer instant responses to inquiries and provide timely updates. This accessibility enhances transparency and helps build trust with the public.
- 2. Crisis communication:** During a crisis, chatbots can play a crucial role in disseminating accurate and consistent information to the public. They can be programmed to answer frequently asked questions, address concerns and provide updates in real time. By promptly and efficiently addressing crisis-related inquiries, chatbots help organizations maintain control of the narrative and manage public perception.
- 3. Media relations support:** Chatbots can assist PR professionals in media relations by providing journalists with relevant information, press releases and answers to common questions. Journalists can interact with chatbots to gather facts, quotes, or background information, saving time and resources for both parties. Chatbots can also help manage media inquiries and connect journalists with appropriate spokespeople.
- 4. Social media engagement:** Chatbots can be integrated with social media platforms, enabling organizations to engage with their audience in a conversational manner. They can respond to comments, answer questions and provide relevant information on social media channels. This active and personalized engagement strengthens brand-consumer relationships and fosters a positive perception of the organization.
- 5. Data gathering and analysis:** Chatbots can collect valuable data during interactions with the public, including feedback, inquiries and sentiment analysis. This data can provide insights into public opinion, customer preferences and emerging trends, which PR professionals can leverage to refine their communication strategies and tailor messages effectively.
- 6. Lead generation and nurturing:** Chatbots can be utilized to generate leads by interacting with potential customers, capturing contact information and guiding them through the initial stages of engagement. By qualifying leads and collecting relevant data, chatbots contribute to building a comprehensive PR database for targeted marketing campaigns.
- 7. Personalized communication:** With the help of natural language processing and machine learning, chatbots can provide personalized responses based on user preferences and previous interactions. This level of personalization enhances the user experience, improves customer satisfaction, and helps build a positive brand image.

It's worth noting that while chatbots can enhance PR efforts, they should not replace human PR professionals. Human expertise is still essential for strategic decision-making, crisis management and building meaningful relationships with stakeholders. Chatbots should be seen as tools that complement and support PR efforts, providing efficient and effective communication channels.



Even ChatGPT agrees AI will not replace humans but can be a useful tool in enhancing PR efforts. Overall, ChatGPT can help PR teams create effective and engaging copy by providing suggestions and recommendations for content, as well as helping to refine and optimize existing copy and headlines.

However, PR teams should be prepared to be asked by journalists whether they are a human or an AI-generated bot. With the ability to create such realistic communications, journalists need to be more cautious than ever to identify AI bots.

Be Aware of Challenges with AI-Generated Content

Though AI chatbots can create great content, many doubt there will ever come a time when that information can go unchecked by human eyes. At least, not anytime soon. AI may be able to provide a low-cost, fast option for churning out content, but it isn't a match for humanity. Elements like thought leadership, humor and style just aren't quite up to par.

AI tools can compile information from all the little corners of the internet that already exist and regurgitate that information in a new way, but they can't come up with new ideas. AI knows the materials it has been given, but does not consistently provide sources or attribution, which are critical for research documents. Information gathered by ChatGPT also may not necessarily be factual. For example, according to the site's [FAQ section](#), the tool has limited knowledge of world events after 2021 (as of publication of this ebook in 2023) and may occasionally produce harmful instructions or biased content. It also warns that the tool will occasionally "hallucinate" and provide answers unrelated to the question it was asked. This means fact-checking AI-generated content is always a must.

In its current state, AI-generated content is a good tool for first drafts and acquiring information, but it is in an organization's best interest to have a trusted PR team oversee content before it is distributed.



Work with the Right Public Relations Team

Public relations is an ever-evolving industry. AOE works hard to stay ahead of changes and to develop relationships with editors that lead to high quality content published in respected industry publications.

To establish great relationships with editors, PR teams should position themselves as a dependable resource. Editors typically have a relatively small pool of PR teams they give the most attention to, because they know those teams will contribute well-written content that is consistently submitted on time and matches the pitch and the publication's editorial guidelines. Good PR teams understand how to communicate clearly and concisely with editors and deliver dependable content.

There are a lot of publications looking for filler content, especially for online space. Likely, these publications have a low readership and little brand recognition. PR teams may be able to place many articles in these kinds of publications, but it's unlikely they will see a high ROI.

PR teams can place content in respected publications with a large readership and high brand recognition by sending editors timely and educational articles that are well written, researched and on topics that have not been written about many times already. Effective PR teams know the difference between filler content and informative articles that provide value to the publication and their clients.

Additionally, effective PR teams do not offer editors only an interview or quote about a certain topic. It's great to provide those resources, but the best PR teams offer a great article idea or two as well. Editors likely planned their interviews for feature articles far in advance; unless a client is a perfect fit for the article,

it's unlikely they will be interviewed. What editors need are great articles written by industry experts and delivered by reliable PR teams.

The best way to pitch an article idea is through sending editors article abstracts, which allows the editor to understand the proposed article topic and why the topic matters to their readers, as well as to get to know the company that will create the content. Then, the PR team can work with the editor to develop great articles tailored to the specific publication.

Unless PR teams are aiming for high placement in low ROI publications, pre-written articles typically are not effective. Reputable publications often require exclusivity, which PR teams will not be able to guarantee if they've submitted the same article to dozens of media outlets.

Coming up with ideas for those article abstracts is a challenge that requires a strong PR team. Editors work off an established editorial calendar. Often, many of these topics repeat yearly because they're important, like safety, training, diversity and labor-related issues. Editors know the kind of content they need for each issue, but they're looking for unique angles for each topic.



PR teams are challenged to find new angles for those topics, without being too niche, to get an editor's attention. The best PR teams create article ideas that will appeal to the publication's readership in addition to serving their clients' best interests.

When a disaster happens, or major legislation is announced, editors receive tons of the same pitches. The key is to find either the best company to write the article, or a pitch with a unique angle that will stand out among the many similar articles that are sure to run in all industry publications. Great PR teams are able to build relationships with editors to meet those needs.

Additionally, good PR teams don't exclusively aim for print publication. It's great to see an article in print, of course, but it's likely there are many more opportunities with fewer stringent requirements for digital placement—and the publication's brand is still associated with that coverage.

If PR teams are uncertain about the benefits of digital publication, they should ask for reader statistics to confirm whether it's worth the client's effort to contribute content. Even if there are relatively low reader stats, it may still be worth submitting content based on the publication's brand. Clients can position themselves as industry thought leaders with articles published in respected digital or print publications.

One of the most important factors to remember when pitching an article is to minimize client promotion. Publications offer editorial and advertising opportunities. Great PR teams don't send articles that are press releases in disguise. It's fine to sneak in a promotional paragraph or quote to see if they will be approved by the editor, but promotional content is not considered editorial.

Readers want informative content they can count on as resources. Promotional materials are for paid advertisements. The editor will know the difference, and submitting promotional material masked as editorial will not reflect well on the PR team. By developing good relationships with editors, PR teams can ask for clarification if they're unsure how much promotion is too much.

By building on the combined strengths of both client and PR professional, AOE has a long history of making this collaborative effort deliver an outstanding return on the client's PR investment. Experienced PR professionals at AOE understand how to work with media and position clients as thought leaders. From story development and sending the initial pitch to writing, formatting and submitting a great article, the AOE team's strong relationships with editors in various industries results in well-written and educational articles published in many industry-recognized publications.

