

What is Public Relations...?

The Cambridge Dictionary definition of Public Relations defines PR as being "the activity of keeping good relationships between an organisation and the people outside it." Public Relations is a concept that has been around for decades. Often associated with politics, PR has been used to convey messages from companies and political parties to the public. First recorded in the 18th century, Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire sought to raise the profile of her friend Charles James Fox, through media relations, lobbying and celebrity campaigning. The First World War witnessed the first real onslaught of PR with early professionals using the print media to convey messages and propaganda supporting the War and spreading the word. Nowadays Public Relations can mean many things but the writing of Press Releases and features which convey a story to target audiences is still the foundation of Public Relations. However, PR also includes the following:

- * Building relationships with the media, creating a solid foundation with key journalists making them more receptive to potential stories
- * Organising and Implementing events to promote new products for the company and successfully publicising these events
- * Organising and writing award entries
- * Writing industry reports
- * Crisis management - preparing a strategy in case of a negative story
- * On-line Public Relations involves conveying your messages through blogs and social networking sights and the world wide web

Public Relations covers a variety of aspects which can be implemented together as part of a wider campaign, or can be used individually to promote certain aspects of a company. The value of Public Relations is in the subliminal way the message is conveyed. When we see an advertising campaign we know the company is behind it and this makes us cynical as to the authenticity of the claims being made. However Public Relations aims to communicate the same information but with words that seem as though they have been created by an impartial advisor. PR covers many aspects of marketing, which is a broad term in itself. As a guide, if as a company you have something you want to promote, whether this be new products or services, or if you want to raise awareness of your company - a successful Public Relations campaign will push these messages across a variety of media outlets reaching more people. Holding more weight than a direct advertising campaign and arguably more cost effective as it covers so many different areas of the marketing mix, PR is something that every company and organisation should consider!

About the Author

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