5 STEPS TO
Smarter PR Campaigns

A DILEMMA SOLVED

PR professionals know that quality industry research is the foundation of good public relations. But in today’s fast-paced business environment, your PR team may feel forced to make sacrifices when developing PR campaigns, particularly on time-consuming research. Looming deadlines, tight budgets, urgent demands, and multiple clients all conspire to steal away research time. The difference between the ideal research-based PR campaign and the reality can be frustrating, because your hard work fails to deliver the best returns.

*With a better understanding of your PR environment, you can elevate your campaign from hard reality to ideal results.*

You’d spend more time on research if you had it. You just don’t have it.

Fortunately, there are technology solutions that automate the most time-consuming aspects of the research process. They can help you locate important industry-specific media trends quickly and efficiently.

With a better understanding of your PR environment you can elevate your campaign from hard reality to ideal result.
A PR campaign is most successful when it’s well informed. It’s tuned to the audience and tailored to the marketplace. Smart, data driven PR campaigns earn more relevant coverage, get broader media reach, and help you build a differentiated brand.

PR TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

This guide is designed to introduce PR technology solutions that create more successful, research-based PR campaigns in five key areas:

1. **Monitor Intelligently**
2. **Craft a Thoughtful PR Strategy**
3. **Plan Media Relations Tactics**
4. **Engage Meaningfully**
5. **Measure What Matters**

A good PR technology solution automates the time-consuming activities that underscore these five steps to smarter PR campaigns.
Monitor Intelligently

Understand Your Industry’s Media Environment

A BETTER FOUNDATION FOR DECISION-MAKING

Whatever the focus of your PR campaign, media monitoring should be its foundation. Whether you are launching a new product, educating your market, or establishing thought leadership, your PR campaign will be most successful when you understand your company’s position in your industry’s media environment.

Business environments are rapidly evolving, so continuous press and social media monitoring in the context of your industry is essential to PR campaign success. Your media monitoring should reveal meaningful insights about your company, customers, competitors and industry, addressing the following important questions:

- How do journalists, analysts, customers and other industry influencers perceive your company or brand?
- How are your competitors positioning themselves in the market, and how does that relate to your PR campaign goals?

Media monitoring provides a deeper understanding of the internal and external factors that can impact your PR campaign and helps you hit your PR campaign targets more accurately.

EXAMPLE: Understand Your Position to Maximise Coverage

An enterprise software company is about to make an acquisition that will greatly expand its security software portfolio and strengthen its position in the security market. As the
PR manager, you need to understand how the company currently fits into the security software industry before launching a PR campaign.

- **How much coverage are you currently getting on a daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly basis?**

- **How much of that coverage is related to security? How much recognition do you have in the security market?**

- **What are the hottest security-related topics? How do your current coverage and future products relate to those topics?**

- **In which publications is your security coverage appearing? Where should it be appearing?**

- **As a global company, which countries have the most security coverage and how does that map to your market strategy?**

A thorough understanding of your current position will lead to a stronger PR campaign strategy. However, the process of getting these answers may seem daunting. While the experience of your PR team will provide you with some insights, a more effective PR campaign strategy will be based on real-time data – using a PR technology solution to arrive at exact answers quickly and efficiently.

---

**ROBUST MEDIA MONITORING SOLUTIONS**

A robust media monitoring solution allows you to understand your position within minutes. You can find out instantly how much and what type of coverage you are getting over any time period, on any topic, in any geographic location, in any publication, in news or social media. It should allow you to find articles by conducting an ad hoc search or by setting up an ongoing search that sends periodic email alerts. Daily alerts can be a huge time-saver for the busy PR professional.

The very best tools also have advanced capabilities, such as the ability to search within your own results. This means that you can find out how much overall coverage you have, and then search within that coverage to see how much is related to a specific topic, such as security.

**Media monitoring provides a deeper understanding of the internal and external factors that can impact your PR campaign and helps you hit your PR campaign targets more accurately.**
Craft a Thoughtful PR Strategy

Deliver the Right Message to the Right Audience

STEER THE CONVERSATION IN YOUR DIRECTION

Now that you know how your company, competitors and industry are perceived in the media, you have a foundation for your PR strategy. It’s time to decide how you want to join and change the conversation.

To steer the conversation in your direction, you need to decide the following:

- With whom do you wish to speak? — *Your Target Audience*
- What do you want to say? — *Your Message*

Your target audience and message should derive from your business strategy.

For example, if you want to drive demand for your product, then your target audience is comprised of your potential buyers and your message should be a story about how they benefit from your product.

However, zeroing in on the precise target audience and the precise story to deliver your message is more difficult. Again, a PR technology solution can help.

The media monitoring searches about your company, competitors and market can provide incredible detail for crafting a more compelling message and targeting a more specific audience. Start by taking a closer look at what is being said and where those conversations are taking place. Where are your competitors being covered? What industry trends are being discussed? What’s drawing a response on social media? A PR technology solution can provide real insights into the deeper interests and reading habits of your target audience.

EXAMPLE: *Refining Your Message*

A property management company wants to promote a new high-rise apartment complex. The real estate market is very competitive and the company is aiming to attract tenants quickly to reach full occupancy and operating profitability.
Which aspects of this new property will appeal most to new tenants? Which aspects will appeal most to real estate journalists? What is the social media buzz in the building’s neighbourhood? What do people already know about the new property? What are the newsworthy real estate trends in the area and is there an angle that ties the property’s most unique features to one of those trends?

Using a list of keywords, you can filter out the news and social media conversations that are most relevant to the project including:

- The name of the building, the local neighbourhood and the city it’s in
- Key building features such as view, fitness facility, doorman, daycare, etc.
- Competitors’ building names
- Local attractions
- Real estate concerns in the area, such as rising rent, crime, etc.
- Names of relevant real-estate media outlets and blogs in the area

How is the property currently perceived by the public? Which of these topics is getting the most coverage and where is it appearing? What is the intersection between hot trends and the unique aspects of the property?

**TARGETED MESSAGING**

The answers will help you focus your message, so you can capitalise on trending public interest. A good media-monitoring tool makes this kind of research fast and efficient, allowing you to create targeted messaging that engages both journalists and your audience.
Plan Media Relations Tactics

Focus for Efficient and Effective Outreach

FINDING THE RIGHT MEDIA OUTLETS

Once you know what you want to say, you need a plan to get your message in front of your target audience. Your tactics may vary based on your PR campaign, and may include any of the following:

- Media releases
- Story pitches
- Press tours
- Interviews
- Rapid response to breaking news
- Editorial calendars
- Blogs and Podcasts
- Contributed articles
- Speaking engagements
- Events

One thing all these tactics require is a detailed media list, complete with journalist or other media influencer contact information. Through effective monitoring and experience, you will already know some of the media outlets that you will want to target. A good PR technology solution will include a comprehensive media contacts database that allows you to supplement that list with additional names. Most tools allow you to create a list of journalists through basic filters, such as the industry sector, publication type, and geographic location of the journalist.

More advanced PR tools fully integrate media monitoring with the media contacts database, allowing you to target journalists based on what they have actually written in the past. These tools also provide detailed analysis of a journalist’s articles based on topic and sentiment. Generally, past behaviour is a better predictor of future action than demographics, so knowing what a journalist has actually written allows for more accurate targeting and pitching. The more targeted the media list, the higher quality the coverage.

KNOW YOUR JOURNALISTS

Once you have compiled a target list of journalists, you need to gather background information, such as the following:

- Phone, email, and social profiles
- Professional background
- Recently-written articles
- Pitching preferences
Compiling all of this information could involve hours of work for each target journalist. However, a good media database will include it all. As you create your media list, you will have instant access to full journalist, editor, and blogger profiles, including their contact information and links to their most recent articles, LinkedIn profiles, and Twitter pages.

A helpful feature of some media databases are pitch clouds that give a graphical representation of common themes in a journalist’s articles. In today’s evolving media world, journalists change beats and publications frequently. Keeping your media lists current can absorb a lot of time. Online media databases are usually updated automatically, saving you time to focus on your PR campaign.

BONUS TIP: Setting up Alerts for Rapid Response

A mobile device manufacturer wants to be positioned as an expert on the latest trends in mobile technology to build brand recognition. The PR strategy includes rapid response to breaking news on high-profile mobile topics to secure expert interviews and follow-on articles.

As the PR manager, you want to capture these PR opportunities quickly and efficiently. Automated alerts offered by the better media intelligence platforms can help. Simply set up ongoing media monitoring searches based on keywords for target mobile topics such as the following:

- M-Commerce (mobile commerce)
- Tablet computers
- Mobile TV

AUTOMATED SEARCHES KEEP YOU INFORMED

Alerts containing the latest articles on these trends are then emailed to you. If a big news story breaks, you will see the story immediately and can quickly contact journalists to see if they are interested in expert commentary or a related story.

Similarly, you can set up email alert services that send links to the latest articles from your target journalists. If you know that an influential journalist is regularly covering mobile devices, you will want to keep a close eye on their latest articles. This allows you to respond to a developing story quickly and in context, ensuring a better response than when calling a journalist at random.
DIVERSIFY YOUR APPROACH

When it’s time to execute your PR campaign, you will probably use a combination of selling-in and promoting your story to the media. This will include:

- Personal emails tailored to specific journalists to drive relevance
- Wire distribution of your media release to achieve broad reach

A properly diversified approach ensures that your media relations go both deep and wide.

GOING DEEP

Not sure how to tailor your pitch for your target journalists? Searching for a way to make a pitch personal when you don’t know the journalist? Personalising your emails to improve relevance is easy when you use a media database to build your list. Your media database gives you up-to-the-minute access to current articles written by the journalists on your media list, so you don’t have to spend time hunting for them. This allows you to look for angles that are relevant to your PR campaign and use them to personalise your pitch. Referencing a journalist’s recent stories enables you to demonstrate clearly how your story fits into a developing narrative.

The more relevant your pitch is to the journalist, the higher response rate and the better the coverage. Plus, you will develop a more personal relationship with the journalist over time.

GOING WIDE

Although a deeper, personalised approach to media relations increases relevance, it can have limited reach. It is also good to go wide by distributing a general media release through wire services to broaden your PR campaign. You never know what kind of unexpected results this might produce, such as a call from a journalist you weren’t aware of or a run of pick up in newspapers and websites.

A good PR technology solution will integrate going deep with going wide. You should be able to send your media release to a wire service from within the platform as well as include it in your email pitches to journalists.
Measure What Matters

Understand and Present Your PR Campaign Results

PROVE YOUR RESULTS WITH HARD DATA

For many PR professionals, measurement can be a major challenge. How can you prove to your client or your management that your PR campaign was successful without measuring the results? Rather than relying on a simple clip-count or examples of significant coverage, proving PR return on investment requires measurement based on hard data that meets the goals of the campaign.

- Did the PR campaign help increase share of voice over competitors?
- Did the PR campaign increase coverage within target publications?
- Did the PR campaign increase coverage related to core topics?
- Were key messages conveyed? Which ones were most successful?
- Was the coverage positive, negative, or neutral?
- How many people did the PR campaign reach?

Answering these PR measurement questions is your greatest opportunity to prove the value of your current PR campaigns and secure funding for future projects. However, they can’t be answered by clippings. Proving PR ROI requires tools that automatically aggregate your coverage, calculate important reach and relevance metrics, such as sentiment, and present the results in easy to understand charts.

EXAMPLE:

Measuring Performance Against Goals

A furniture manufacturer plans to introduce a new, specialty reclining chair and has three PR campaign goals:

1. Increase share of voice over competitors
2. Engage high-end design magazines to reach more affluent consumers
3. Cultivate favourable new product reviews to help boost sales

www.meltwater.com
As the PR manager, you want to measure PR campaign success against these specific goals. With a strong PR technology solution, it is possible. Starting with media monitoring, you need to create searches that establish a pre-campaign baseline and perform ongoing monitoring to track the success of the PR campaign.

- A search of recent company and competitor coverage provides a baseline
- A search of a prior PR campaign serves as a benchmark for the new campaign
- An ongoing query dedicated to the new product, the Dream Recliner, tracks brand awareness and sentiment
- An ongoing query based on campaign messaging picks up all the PR campaign media hits
- An ongoing query focused on high-end design magazines tracks how well the campaign is reaching the core target audience

Now, you can move on to other important PR campaign tasks, and allow data to collect throughout the campaign. After the PR campaign ends, you can assess performance using media analytics and send a report to your client that visually illustrates the success of your project with compelling charts.

- **Share of voice pie charts** compare company coverage to competitor coverage before and after the campaign
- **Sentiment charts** show how many positive, negative, and neutral mentions the Dream Recliner has received
- **Volume trend charts filtered by high-end design publications** show the change in the number of mentions the Dream Recliner received during and after the PR campaign.

**THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR THE JOB**

Sophisticated media analysis tools can examine results by country, region, language, and publication circulation. They also provide common presentation formats such as JPEG images and PDF files that can be included in a final management report.

A successful PR campaign deserves a presentation that not only ensures a happy client, but one who is satisfied with the PR campaign ROI, and is willing to continue to invest in the future.
Conclusion

Work Smarter, Not Harder

LEVERAGE PR TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

A smart PR campaign uses data at every stage to increase the quality and quantity of media coverage. PR professionals who sacrifice research often work just as hard for a lower PR return on investment. Good PR technology solutions enable data-driven PR campaigns by automating the time-consuming tasks that are the foundation of the five steps to smarter PR campaigns:

1. **Monitor Intelligently**
   to understand your industry’s media environment

2. **Craft a Thoughtful PR Strategy**
   to deliver the right message to the right audience

3. **Plan Media Relations Tactics**
   to focus for efficient and effective outreach

4. **Engage Meaningfully**
   to drive relevance and reach

5. **Measure What Matters**
   to understand and present your PR campaign results

Work smarter, not harder. Leverage PR technology solutions to maximise the quantity and quality of earned media coverage, while developing stronger media relations.

Use the checklist on the following page as a guide to maximize the ROI of all your PR campaigns.
### The 5 Steps to Smarter PR Campaigns Checklist

**USE THIS CHECKLIST TO CREATE YOUR OWN SMARTER PR CAMPAIGNS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>Monitor Intelligently</strong> to understand your industry’s media environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|     | Company:  
|     | - How do reporters, bloggers, analysts, and customers perceive you?  
|     | - How much coverage are you getting now?  
|     | - What type of coverage are you getting? (e.g., sectors, issues, product lines, etc.)  
|     | - Where are you getting coverage? (e.g., countries, publications, etc.)  
|     | Competition:  
|     | - How are they positioning themselves in the market?  
|     | Market:  
|     | - What are the industry media trends you might leverage?  |
| 2. | **Craft a Thoughtful PR Strategy** to deliver the right message to the right audience |
|     | Hone your message:  
|     | - What topics are trending that can help refine your message?  
|     | Identify target publications:  
|     | - Which publications are writing about your company, competition, and market?  |
| 3. | **Plan Media Relations Tactics** to focus for efficient and effective outreach |
|     | Identify target journalists/bloggers:  
|     | - Who has been writing about your issues?  
|     | - What do you know about them?  |
4. **Engage Meaningfully**
   to drive relevance and reach

Make a thoughtful connection with individual journalists and bloggers
- What have they written lately that might help inform the angle you take in your pitch?

Prepare your release for broad distribution
- When do you want your media releases to arrive?
- Have you optimised your releases to be found by search engines?

5. **Measure What Matters**
   to understand and present your PR campaign results

Describe media coverage quality and quantity objectively
- Have you measured your share of voice?
- Do you understand the sentiment of your coverage?
- Have you quantified mentions by publication and publication type?
- Can you describe how the coverage varied by country, region, language, circulation, etc.?