

Leveraging social media for public relations

Social media has impacted public relations in a profound way. It has made PR more real-time than ever before. Whether out of necessity or compulsion, PR needs to be managed in real-time in the world enabled by social media. A few hours of delay in managing the communication can lead a small otherwise ignorable thing to go viral on the web with the help of social media. At the same time, a real-time update containing an apology for bad customer service or a new product feature release can convert consumers into lifelong fans.

PR is now direct. Companies don't have to go through press authorities to release a PR statement. They can now put it on their blog and spread the word through Twitter and Facebook.

Social media has made PR more interactive and engaging. It's no longer a one-way street where companies can make announcements to the consumers. It's interactive where consumers can react to the release and share their opinion with the company. In the world of social media, every individual has a "press pass" to ask questions and share opinions, whether you asked for it or not.

Social media is a channel of communication which has provided public relation professionals will the capability to learn and understand what's on consumers' mind, what questions are they looking for the company to answer, what's the perception of the consumers on different issues and how the public relation communications are impacting those perception.

It's true that social media has made PR more real-time and interactive as far as communicating with customer is concerned, but biggest asset social media has provided PR professionals is the power to learn about their consumers and what they think about the company. PR professionals can use this knowledge and insights from the consumers' world to better communicate with them, measure the impact and build a strong relationship with them, in turn enhancing the R in PR.

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