

5 Ways Media Analysis Is a Game Changer for Strategic Investor Relations Teams

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With the rise of activist and ESG investing, corporate brand reputation is more important than ever to strategic investor relations teams. Your team needs to understand the media narrative around your company – and try to guide it. To do this, IR teams must now proactively monitor and engage the media landscape to manage brand reputation and investor perception.

You need access to accurate media analysis around brand reputation that will allow you to identify looming issues early, engage your shareholder base, guide the narrative on the Street, and optimize strategies.

Here are 5 ways media analysis can be a game changer for strategic investor relations teams:



1. Proactively Manage Issues

Indications that activist investors are targeting a stock can now come from a variety of sources including unregulated activities. Red flags might come in the form of a question from a junior analyst at a fund, a private meeting request, or increasingly – social media rumors. It's important that your team proactively manages these conversations and is aware of

the impact of unregulated social activity and all online conversations to stay ahead of the narrative. In an era when leading the news cycle often commandeers the perception of truth, proactive issue management is vital.

2. Engage Your Shareholder Base

The growth of passive shareholders has given companies a more stable shareholder base, but made them accountable for delivering results, hence the need for proactive marketing and messaging. The need is exasperated as Activists are savvy and using sophisticated PR strategies to sway your shareholder base.

To proactively engage your shareholders, a richer partnership is required between IR and PR.

Different investors have their own priorities and will react to news uniquely, weighing various aspects of your brand reputation more heavily. It's important to understand how your messages resonate with key audiences.

Measuring the pull-through of your messages in the media, the tone towards them, and their social media pick up will show you which messages are resonating and where you need to focus your efforts to better influence the conversation.

3. Glean Deep Reputational Insights that Guide Strategic Investor Relations Decisions

Media sentiment has been proven to be correlated with stock price. But you must move beyond keyword tracking to get actionable data and understand *what* people are saying about your stock.

Don't rely on simply tracking your company name, executives, and focusing on financial sites. Keyword tracking only will

likely leave you blindsided. You need to understand the “reputational conversation.”

Reputational data will help you break down public perception and understand what is driving it. If analysts and the media raise a concern that your company is not innovating for the future, build a plan to change that perception. Benchmarking your reputational data can pinpoint areas for targeted, effective message improvement.

4. Identify Influencers that Drive Investor Perceptions

It’s critical to understand your “influencers” – those that drive the perception of your stock as a place to invest. But not all influencers are created equal. Wall Street Analysts aren’t the only ones with authority anymore. You need to know who the right influencers are, whether it’s a government regulator, money manager, journalist, or simply an influential blogger, and engage those that matter most.

Media analysis breaks down influencers by topics they’ve written about or been quoted on in the past, their social media pick up, and audience reach to prioritize your outreach. When trying to highlight your ESG initiatives or correcting a misguided perception put out there by an Activist, [reach out to your top influencers](#) to create the most impact.

5. Play on the Same Field as the Rest of the Company with Data-Driven Decisions

When making decisions, a simple opinion doesn’t cut it. Other departments are using data to defend their decisions – from finance and legal to HR and marketing. Your C-suite has come to expect this kind of data-driven decision making and you can bet activists investors and other critics will leverage data in their arguments. Hedge funds have powerful data

capabilities, but IR often does not. Ask yourself: do you have the technology and data analytics to give you an advantage over the critics?

Ensure you have the right systems in place to generate quality data to back up your decisions. And if an issue arises, use data to move smartly, agilely, and proactively instead of trailing the issue.

About the Author: Having worked on both the agency and industry sides of marketing and communications, Leslie brings extensive corporate communications, branding and demand generation practice and understanding to the team at PublicRelay. Formerly the VP of Digital Marketing for Optimize, Leslie holds a Bachelor's of Business Administration in Marketing from Youngstown State University.