

# The Value of Consistent Corporate Communications



*By Dian Griesel, President of [Dian Griesel International](#)*

Whether the economy is booming or approaching a downturn, a company's [public relations](#) budget is often the first to take a hit. When things are going well, some management teams consider public relations to be unnecessary, and when they're not, shortsighted companies make hasty decisions in an attempt to cut expenses. However, more media-savvy companies understand that investing in PR is a wise way to continuously accentuate the positive—and an ongoing media campaign delivers multiple returns on each dollar spent.

One of the last corporate investments that should ever be cut is good PR strategy. A well-planned [corporate communications](#) program provides reliable third-party endorsement, helps craft your company's message and ensures consistency of messaging. Not only do these angles keep your company in the news; they also attract editors and segment producers who cannot easily ignore a media-worthy pitch. These campaigns tailor your story to reach selectively targeted media, from mass marketing to the general consumer to “me” marketing that reaches niche and trade publications.

A successful PR strategy will also position your company's CEO and key executives as experts in their field, minimize damage by announcing bad news intelligently, build credibility for your company's products and services, and keep your company in

the minds and portfolios of investors.

A PR guru once suggested that public relations is a lot like fishing: One can arrive at the water early on a beautiful clear day with the right bait and still not get any bites. But that attitude is no longer valid in our 24-hour news culture. A proactive PR strategy will root out inventive ways to get your company in the news and keep it there, whether that means yoking your story to trends and current events, positioning your CEO and executive leadership as expert spokespersons or using holidays and seasonal occasions as news pegs.

In other words, a good PR campaign appreciates that your company's story is inherently newsworthy. How does your lead product work? What noteworthy figure was just signed to the board of directors? What upcoming conference will the chairman be attending? What hobbies does the CEO enjoy that might make him or her attractive to specialized niche publications? Even stories about your competitors can be leveraged into excellent opportunities for bylined pieces or letters to the editor. There is always an opportunity to pitch a story from an opposing view or new angle.

All of these reinforce a golden rule of PR: Media coverage begets media coverage (a fancy way of saying "news makes news"). For example, when you secure a major placement for your company, it is good PR practice to issue a press release drawing attention to the company's appearance in that publication or media outlet (on the assumption that not every investor subscribes to, say, National Geographic or an industry specific trade, for example). You might be surprised by the very tangible effects these types of news announcements can have on trading volume and relationship building with your various constituents.

Simultaneously, you also want to make sure you spread the news about any stories about your company on your preferred social media outlets. Be sure to add a line and a link to your

article on your twitter, facebook, linkedin or other social media pages, while “stumbling” the story or adding it to pinterest, for example, if there’s a good accompanying photo. This strategy is not only a good way to leverage the internet’s reach, it’s a great way to do a “turn in kind” for the hard working reporter that wrote your story in the first place. Everyone benefits from the greater dissemination and recognition.

Despite these benefits, PR traditionally gets a bad rap. Disgruntled companies might complain about shelling out high fees and seeing few results. And, as in any business, there are sharks in these waters. However, rather than a disreputable dark art, PR has become an integral, quantifiable part of any winning media-age business strategy.

Implementing a clear, bold, rigorous and transparent PR campaign means you will likely enjoy the thrill of seeing your company in print and on the air. And that exposure translates into all the tangibles (higher stock price, better customers) and intangibles (a better general perception of your company and its management) that consistent media coverage ultimately provides.

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