

What is the Role of PR in Communicating Social Corporate Responsibility?



Ronn Torossian, CEO, [5WPR](#)

Corporate social responsibility, or CSR, is a tool through which businesses can benefit society while boosting their own brands. CSR can take many forms from philanthropy to volunteering to building relationships with charity organizations. [CSR](#) helps keep businesses socially accountable to its employees, shareholders, customers, community, supply chain and the environment.

A few issues may prevail when combining public relations and CSR. Some people may consider CSR efforts as a tool for self-promotion rather than an authentic endeavor. However, done right, public relations can be the tool that shares and elaborates to the public how CSR is making an impact and what progress is made by companies who have integrated CSR into their business.

It makes sense why a capable public relations team would be the go-to for CSR communications. They are adept at handling the complex communication of CSR and they are best positioned to understand the different mediums of communications.

- Public relations professionals are strategic communicators. PR as an industry has gone far beyond

just publicity and press releases. Now, PR professionals serve as a people who are able to employ communications to advance the mission of the organization. When a PR team has access to CSR decision making and communications, they will be able to provide strategies and insights about how to best create and communicate a CSR program that will appeal and resonate with both stakeholders and the public.

- Because of their scope of work, PR professionals are granted a unique position where they have knowledge of the stakeholders involved in a CSR program. PR professionals have research skills that could provide essential information about how and what to communicate to the marketplace, investors, employees and stakeholders.
- Being a PR professionals requires a rich knowledge of technology and social media and how it can be used optimally. This knowledge would be crucial when it comes to providing insight on how a company can inform stakeholders and the public.
- There are certain codes of conduct PR professionals work within—this not only includes internal corporate codes but also professional ethics standards prescribed by professional organisations such as the Public Relations Society of America. A company can avoid faux pas in conducted their communications on CSR by adhering to ethical standards that PR professionals are usually well aware of.
- When CSR is a part of a corporate communication strategy, public relations professionals can provide a platform for frequent and consistent communication about the program. There needs to be transparency and consistent reporting when it comes to CSR programs,

especially if you want consumer and stakeholder trust in your program.

Taking these factors into account, a company's PR team is best positioned to take on the role of responsibly and effectively being in charge of CSR communications. They should be at the decision making table when it comes to finding the right approaches to implementing and communicating a company's CSR program.

About the Author: [Ronn Torossian](#) is CEO of [PR Agency 5WPR](#).