

Leveraging PR to Drive Demand, Revenue and Profit Growth

People typically don't think of PR activity in discussions about demand generation or revenue. If you are looking for ways to build awareness of your brand—but also drive web traffic, fill your sales pipeline and boost revenue—it's important to be sure you are using public relations to its fullest extent.

Fortunately, PR today has expanded beyond its traditional role of building buzz and raising awareness. In the new, web-driven world of PR, there are new opportunities to attract customers, drive demand for your company's products or services, and grow your sales and profits—and also to tie your PR efforts to actual revenue and pipeline results.

Connect Content Strategy to the Bottom Line

Generate Leads with Content

Are your content consumers filling out forms and signaling interest in your products/services?

Connect Content Leads to Revenue

Are those content consumers who turned into leads also turning into actual customers?

Why PR Matters More Than Ever

Why does PR need to be more vocal about the role it plays in driving demand, sales and profits?

- **Customers and prospects are reading press releases.** Journalists are no longer the only ones who receive and read press releases. Wire services post press releases online, where they are often read directly by customers and prospects. In addition, publications, blogs and industry websites often pick up and post press releases verbatim, creating even more channels for potential customers to discover your press release, visit your website or share your release with others. The Internet has exponentially multiplied opportunities to attract website traffic, drive leads and enhance revenue.
- **Earned media directly drives revenue.** Earned media drives traffic, traffic drives leads, leads drive the pipeline and the pipeline drives revenue. Changes to Google's search parameters give "implied links" more value. A mention in an article or blog directly affects your company's search engine optimization (SEO), even if it does not link directly to your company website. With more to do and fewer resources, busy journalists are hungrier than ever for content they can share. Using PR to transform your company into a trusted source of content will result in more earned media—and more revenue. Finally, while publications are employing fewer journalists, each journalist is engaging with more readers more frequently using social media and blog posts. Being tweeted by a journalist with 20,000 Twitter followers could benefit your business more than a mention in a print magazine with a circulation of 20,000.
- **Analytics make it simple to measure the direct effect PR has on lead generation, conversion and sales.** By implementing trackable URLs and a reputable analytics solution, your marketing team can gauge how many people visited your website, filled out a contact form or downloaded content as a result of PR. Ultimately, you can directly track which PR efforts generate traffic, leads and revenue.

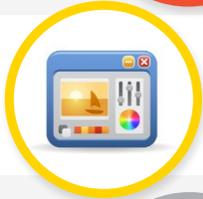
Making PR Work for Your Company

How can you leverage PR to drive demand, revenue and profit growth? Follow these best practices:



Intelligently mine, develop and share interesting information

from your brand. This can include statistically valid data, expert insights and case studies. Establish yourself as a trusted thought leader to the audience you want to sell to.



Use multimedia, incorporating infographics, photos or videos into your press releases to attract journalists' and consumers' attention and make them more likely to be shared.



During slow news times, **find news hooks within existing content and use press releases to promote related blog posts and expert commentary** in order to drive discovery of the underlying content, such as white papers, E-books and webinars, and to drive traffic to landing pages that capture leads.



Don't underestimate the value of social media. It can drive more measurable results than mentions in print publications.



Inspire action and increase conversion with direct calls to action within your news releases and other content. Encourage readers to visit your website, share the content, request more information or otherwise take the next step in the sales funnel.



Put your money behind your messages. It's crucial to invest in disseminating the content your company has spent time and money developing. Work with a press release service to develop an appropriate cadence of press releases that keeps your company in the public eye.



Use analytics to measure results and adjust your PR campaign accordingly.

For example, Google Analytics can measure website traffic before and after a PR campaign, track what actions users take on your website as a result of your content and measure how many leads attracted via PR are converting.

As the world of journalism is changing, it is opening up new opportunities for PR to expand its reach and deliver more tangible results. Intelligently mining, developing and distributing content will have a direct impact on demand, lead generation and revenues, transforming PR from a cost center into a revenue center.



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