

Companies' Expectations of PR Agencies

In the field of travel, tourism and leisure in the United
Kingdom

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Bachelor's thesis
May 2015

Degree Programme in Music and Media Management
School of Business





Author(s) Haikara, Katariina	Type of publication Bachelor's thesis	Date 11.05.2015
		Language of publication: English
	Number of pages 67	Permission for web publication: x
Title of publication Companies' Expectations of PR Agencies In the field of travel, tourism and leisure in the United Kingdom		
Degree programme Degree Programme in Music and Media Management		
Tutor(s) Luck, Heidi		
Assigned by Seriously PR		
Abstract <p>Public relations is part of marketing communications, and it aims to influence the knowledge, opinions and behaviour of target audiences, for example, by means of media relations. Companies can hire external PR agencies or use in-house teams. PR agencies are urged to compete against other PR agencies and the in-house teams of companies when acquiring new clients. Therefore, it is important for PR agencies to understand the expectations of potential clients in order to become more competitive by being able to produce better services, hence increasing the number of their clients.</p> <p>The assignor of the thesis was Seriously PR which is a PR agency in Oxfordshire, England. The focus of the study was on the expectations of companies operating in travel and leisure with regard to PR, PR agencies' operations and the services offered by them. The theoretical framework of the thesis was based on literature dealing with public relations and marketing.</p> <p>The research problem, questions, objectives and methods were examined prior to commencing the research process, and the research was conducted with quantitative and qualitative methods. The study was implemented by using a survey. The results of the survey were analyzed by using quantitative and qualitative methods. A summary was made based on the results and, in addition, recommendations given to the assignor on how to utilize the information produced by the study.</p> <p>The results corresponded to some extent with the literature. However, clear conclusions on the companies' expectations of PR agencies could not be drawn. The study succeeded in finding out certain details, which are useful for the assignor. These details can also give rise to wider research in the future.</p>		
Keywords/tags (subjects) Public Relations, Marketing, Communication, PR Agencies, United Kingdom		
Miscellaneous		



Tekijä(t) Haikara, Katariina	Julkaisun laji Opinnäytetyö	Päivämäärä 11.05.2015
	Sivumäärä 67	Julkaisun kieli Englanti
		Verkojulkaisulupa myönnetty: x
Työn nimi Yritysten odotukset tiedotus- ja suhdetoimintatoimistoille Matkailu- ja vapaa-ajan alalla Iso-Britanniassa		
Koulutusohjelma Degree Programme in Music and Media Management		
Työn ohjaaja(t) Heidi Luck		
Toimeksiantaja(t) Seriously PR		
<p>Tiivistelmä</p> <p>Tiedotus- ja suhdetoiminta (PR) on osa markkinointiviestintää, ja pyrkii vaikuttamaan yritysten kohderyhmän tietämykseen, mielipiteisiin ja käyttäytymiseen esimerkiksi mediasuhteiden kautta. Yritykset voivat työllistää ulkoisia tiedotus- ja suhdetoimintatoimistoja tai käyttää sisäisiä tiimejä. Hankkiessaan uusia asiakkaita, tiedotus- ja suhdetoimintatoimistot joutuvat kilpailemaan muita kyseisiä palveluja tarjoavia tahoja vastaan. Näin ollen on tärkeää, että tiedotus- ja suhdetoimintatoimistot ymmärtävät potentiaalisten asiakasyritysten odotukset tullakseen kilpailukykyisemmäksi pystymällä tuottamaan parempia palveluja ja täten lisäämään asiakasyritysten määrää.</p> <p>Opinnäytetyön toimeksiantaja oli Englannin Oxfordshiressa sijaitseva Seriously PR -niminen tiedotus- ja suhdetoimintatoimisto. Opinnäytetyö tutki eräiden Iso-Britanniassa toimivien matkailu- ja vapaa-ajan yritysten odotuksia tiedotus- ja suhdetoiminnasta yleisesti sekä toimistojen toiminnasta ja palveluista. Työn teoria pohjautui tiedotus- ja suhdetoimintaan ja markkinointiin liittyvään kirjallisuuteen.</p> <p>Ennen tutkimuksen aloitusta selvitettiin tutkimusongelmat, tutkimuskysymykset, tutkimuksen kohteet ja tutkimusmenetelmät. Tutkimus tehtiin käyttämällä kyselymenetelmää. Kyselyn tulokset selvitettiin käyttämällä määrällistä ja laadullista menetelmää. Tulosten pohjalta tehtiin tiivistelmä tuloksista ja suositukset toimeksiantajalle siitä, miten tutkimuksesta saatua tietoa voidaan käytännössä hyödyntää.</p> <p>Tulokset vastasivat pääasiallisesti teoriapohjaan liittyvää kirjallisuutta, kuitenkin selkeää johtopäätöstä yritysten odotuksista PR-toimistojen palveluita kohtaan ei voitu vetää. Tutkimuksessa onnistuttiin kuitenkin selvittämään toimeksiantajalle hyödyllisiä yksityiskohtia, jotka voivat antaa myös aihetta laajemmalle tutkimukselle.</p>		
Avainsanat (asiasanat) PR, Tiedotus- ja suhdetoiminta, Markkinointi, Viestintä, PR toimistot, Iso-Britannia		
Muut tiedot		

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1 INTRODUCTION

Public relations is an important business sector in the United Kingdom. There are 62 000 people employed in the public relations sector, and the turnover is £9.62 billion (Wyatt, 2013). Companies are hiring either external PR agencies or they have in-house teams/persons.

There is a great deal of competition amongst PR agencies, and it is essential for a PR agency to understand their potential client better in order to be able to offer better service for the sake of becoming more competitive. PR agencies are not competing solely against each other in terms of winning new clients but also against in-house teams.

The thesis aimed to gain information in order to provide a clear picture of companies' expectations of services provided by a PR agency. Hence, it is very valuable to any PR agency working in the travel and tourism sector.

The assignor is Seriously PR, which is a PR agency specialized in travel and leisure. The agency is based in Oxfordshire, England but operates also in London.

Prior to deciding the method of implementation of the thesis, the company's areas of interest were discussed with the assignor who expressed an interest in the expectations of potential clients in order to use the knowledge to attract more potential clients. Therefore, it was of interest to find out what the expectations of businesses were and how they met with the expectations of a PR agency and how this knowledge could be used.

The study was divided in two sections including the theoretical framework and the research section for which the data was collected by using a questionnaire. As stated, the data for the thesis was collected by using a questionnaire, and the results were analyzed by using quantitative and qualitative methods. The thesis also includes a literature review section, which explains the theoretical framework of the subject. Recommendations on the use of the information gained by the questionnaire can be found in the discussion section. The questionnaire included questions about the companies' attitudes towards PR agencies, their expectations of services offered by a

PR agency, assessment of the results, reasons and processes behind hiring a PR agency and, in addition, questions for building a profile of the companies.

The assignor desired the responses to be acquired from potential clients. Therefore responses from companies who were not or never had been looking for a PR agency's services were not of interest. However, the companies' reasons for choosing not to have a PR agency were of some interest.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Public Relations Industry

The following chapter explains the PR industry in general in order to give a better view of it. The Chartered Institute of Public Relations describes Public Relations as follows:

“Public Relations is about reputation – the result of what you do, what you say and what others say about you. Public relations is the discipline which looks after reputation, with the aim of earning understanding and support and influencing opinion and behaviour. It is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics.” (Morris and Goldsworthy, 2012, 4.).

Morris and Goldsworthy (2012, 5) are not fully satisfied with this definition as there are factors influencing reputation that are not related to PR practitioners, such as product performance and service delivery. Therefore Morris and Goldsworthy (2012) define public relations more specifically as follows:

“Public relations is the planned persuasion of people to behave in ways which further its sponsor’s objectives. It works primarily through the use of media relations and other forms of third-party endorsement.” (Morris and Goldsworthy, 2012, 6.)

The key aspect of this argument is that PR is not about one saying they are good, but it is obtaining someone else to say that one is good and this occurs independently (Morris and Goldsworthy, 2012, 7).

According to Theaker (2012, 7) and CEBR (2005), in 2005 the public relations sector employed 48 000 people, and PR had a turnover of approximately £6.5 billion, which makes it clear that it has an effect on the national economy. The PR sector’s turnover increased from £7.5 billion in 2011 to £9.62 billion in 2013, and the employment rate in the public relations sector increased from 61 600 people in 2011 to 62 000 in 2013 (Wyatt, 2013). Therefore, based on the above figures, it is clear that there is a growing demand for PR services.

However, the PR industry is changing. PR creates and maintains dialogue and conversation, but this does not occur just by creating media relations and generating coverage. Instead, it includes more social media, digital assets and content marketing. It is expected that the PR industry will adapt to new changes in technology and markets, and that agencies which can adapt to these changes are the ones becoming the most successful (Parker, 2015).

PR practitioners can be working in-house in organizations, in consultancies or they can work as freelance PR practitioners (Theaker, 2012, 7). It appears that consultancies are growing in terms of the range of the services that they are providing. For example, full-service agencies can offer research, advertising and marketing consultation in addition to PR services. Additionally, there are specialist agencies focusing on particular sectors or particular aspects of public relations (Theaker, 2012, 8.).

2.2 Marketing in Relation to PR

The following chapter focuses on explaining PR in relation to marketing in order to understand where PR stands in the business.

According to Kotler (2013, 4) marketing aims to appeal to new customers by making them believe that the value of the product is excellent. Moreover, marketing aims at maintaining and keeping already existing customer relationships by retaining customer satisfaction. The American Marketing Association defines marketing as follows:

“Marketing is the activity, set of institutions and processes for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners and society at large.” (Sheldrake, 2011, 32).

Marketing is used by both for-profit organizations and non-profit organizations, and it can be seen everywhere. Marketing used to be understood as telling and selling, but nowadays it is more about satisfying customer needs. It is essential to understand consumer needs, which will lead to developing a product that is of

excellent customer value. Finally, it has to be priced, distributed and promoted so that it will sell well (Kotler, 2013, 4-5.).

The marketing process can be divided into five steps. Firstly, the marketplace and customer needs, wants and demands have to be understood. These needs include physical, social and individual needs. Secondly, a customer-driven marketing strategy needs to be designed. Thirdly, an integrated marketing programme which delivers value have to be constructed. Fourthly, profitable relationships and customer delights need to be built. Finally, to be able to create profits and customer equity, the value needs to be captured (Kotler, 2013, 5.).

In order to transform a company's marketing strategy into value for customers, an integrated marketing programme has to be built. This includes the four marketing mix elements (Kotler, 2013, 29). According to Kotler (2013, 12), marketing mix is a set of marketing tools to utilize the marketing strategy of an organization. The abovementioned tools are product, price, place and promotion.

According to Kotler (2013, 418), the promotion mix includes advertising, public relations, personal selling, sales promotion and direct-marketing tools. These tools are used to build customer relationships and communicate customer value (Kotler, 2014, 418).

Marketing Communications

The process of marketers aiming to ensure that their messages reach their target audiences is called marketing communications (Blythe, 2006, 2). Communication can take place by conversation, by the written word and by pictures.

The most cost-effective component of marketing communications is public relations (Kotler, 1989 in Gregory, 2004, 17). Public relations has lower costs compared to other forms of marketing communications, and there is no evidence of sales promotions and incentives helping to drive sales without utilizing other communication tools and techniques (Gregory, 2004, 17-18).

Advertising has been defined as non-personal communication of ideas, goods and services, and this happens by an identified sponsor and it is in paid form (Chunawalla,

2008, 12-13). It tries to have an impact on the behaviour of the target audience in terms of persuading the potential customer to favour the idea, goods or service in order to improve sales or make the audience aware of the product (Chunawalla, 2008, 13).

According to Skinner et al. (2004, 4), people often have the impression that public relations is similar to advertising. However, an organization can operate without advertising, but involvement in public relations is inevitable due to advertising being limited to special selling and buying tasks, whereas public relations takes into account everything and everyone. According to Kotler (2013, 462), public awareness can be impacted by public relations at a lower cost than advertising can. Therefore, it can be said this can affect companies' willingness to invest in public relations rather than advertising.

2.3 Public Relations Consultancies

This chapter aims to describe PR consultancies, their advantages, disadvantages, PR consultancies' activities and skills, and the services offered by them. In addition, PR and its relationship with the media is explained.

According to Skinner et al. (2004, 28), PR consultancies are characterized by the following. The number of clients the practice has determines the size of the private practice. People who have several clients are called account executives, and they provide advice and shape the clients' public relations plans and implement them. The working relationship with the client is usually based on a contact report. The services can vary, there can be full-house services or a smaller range of specialist services, such as promotions and media relations. Costs and fees are based on a project, hours spent on the project or retainer. Secondary costs are most likely charged as extras (Skinner et al. 2004, 28.).

According to Wragg (1993, 31), it is commonly known that people disagree whether it is best to handle PR in-house or by a consultancy. Wragg (1993, 32) explains that sometimes it is uneconomic, in terms of the cost of an under-occupied position, to have a permanent full-time PR person. He describes that the solution to this can be

having a person who is employed to do something else and to do PR in addition, but it can raise concerns on whether the person has the right competence and time and whether PR involves having tight deadlines on certain aspects of it (Wragg, 1993, 32).

According to Skinner et al. (2004, 28-29), the greatest advantage of PR consultants is that they have a variety of talents and skills in comparison to an internal corporate practitioner. The second advantage is their objectivity and the range of their experience is ranked as the third. The fourth is the geographical scope of their operations and the fifth is their ability to strengthen and upgrade the client's internal staff.

It has also been emphasized that the staff of the consultancies and their operations are flexible. In addition, consultancies have a great number of contacts and specialized knowledge to be used in implementing the needs of the clients'.

It has also been said that at times the reputation of the consultant is an advantage, and having someone from outside can become advantageous in terms of introducing new ideas. The consultancy having many projects can increase knowledge, and there are many living case histories which can be advantageous (Skinner et al. 2004, 28-29.).

According to Wragg (1993, 32), having a consultancy has the advantage of adding the manpower of a certain client if they are exceptionally busy. If the consultancy has been well run, and the internal communication has been handled well, the other members of the consultancy should have the knowledge of other clients as well. In order to have efficient and effective PR, there is a routine attached to it including keeping press lists up-to-date, and the releases need to be tailored to each publication, which can take time but is effective in terms of results (Wragg, 1993, 32.).

In addition to the abovementioned advantages, there are several situations when having a PR consultancy will bring advantages (Wragg 1993, 32). Firstly, this might be that case when the expenses of a full-time in-house PR person cannot be justified due to too little PR effort. Secondly, having peaks in the business can have an effect as well when considering having a consultancy if, for example, major product

launches, events or exhibitions happen seldom and if the workload is not expected to last for the whole year. This is echoed by Singleton (2013, 161) who says that one of the main advantages of having a PR consultancy is the flexibility that they can offer in terms of commitment, as it is easier to hire and fire a third party than staff.

Moreover, the size of the services offered is also an advantage as it is faster to increase and decrease the amount of PR support as mentioned earlier regarding peaks in the business. Therefore coping with a seasonal increase in media interest can be well obtained by using a consultancy.

Thirdly, as Wrigg (1993, 32) explains, if a company has an in-house PR person, the workload of the in-house PR person might need relieving due to absence or at certain peak periods. Fourthly, a consultancy can provide additional professional advice in other areas that might not be covered by the in-house PR person's experience.

Singleton (2013, 161) also agrees that PR consultancies enable companies to receive specialist skills solely when these skills are required, for example, for crisis communication.

Fifthly, as Wrigg (1993, 32) continues, if an organization is moving into a new activity or expanding the business into a new geographical area, which can lead to an immediate need of good media contacts, this can be provided by a consultancy.

Lastly, the objectivity of a consultancy can become helpful when the organization is highly political, and the in-house advice becomes compromised due to disagreeing factions (Wragg, 1993, 32-33.).

Singleton (2013, 161-162) continues the list of advantages and includes the consultancies' ability to bring in new ideas due to their previous experience with other clients and therefore, due to having a wide range of perspectives. This is the most common reason for hiring a consultancy.

The disadvantages of PR consultancies are explained next. Skinner et al. (2004, 29) describes the disadvantages of consultancies as follows. Consultants' greatest hindrance is opposition, meaning resistance to outsiders. Consultants themselves do not rank this as a major issue. Questions of cost seem to be ranked as the greatest

obstacle, secondly being set in their ways, and resistance to outside advice, as mentioned before, is ranked as the third.

Fourth is personality or conviction related to unforeseen conflicts. Other issues involve the lack of understanding in terms of clients' understanding of public relations and not being able to reach the clients when decisions need to be made by the consultant. Corporate practitioners have been criticizing consultants for their lack of real understanding of the organization and operating systems and having only a superficial grasp of the organization's culture and a lack of real commitment (Skinner et al. 2004, 29.).

To be able to understand the difference between a consultancy and using an in-house person/team, the advantages of the latter are explained next. According to Wragg (1993, 35), there are advantages of using an in-house person/team, too. He argues that in-house people can be less expensive, and having a frequent daily contact with the management team can lead to in-house people to discover potential PR opportunities.

In addition, having a growing familiarity with the organization and the activities involved within, can lead to briefing being less formal than with a consultancy. Furthermore, the credibility of in-house people can be higher with people outside the organization, for example, with the customers and the media, due to them being identified with it and the management team.

Furthermore, building an even better relationship with the media can be achieved by media considering the in-house people as being able to offer background to industry problems. Finally, Wragg explains that in relation to the best managed organizations, PR is viewed as part of the senior management decision-making, and that can be done easily if the team is part of the senior management team (Wragg, 1993, 35.).

Activities and Skills of Public Relations Practitioners

This chapter explains the activities of a public relations practitioner and in addition, the skills required from those working in PR.

There is a variety of main activities in PR. The activities can be divided into defensive (reactive) PR and proactive PR. Reactive PR means responding to the negative reactions from outside the organization and counteracting them whereas proactive PR is influencing opinions without waiting for negative reactions from outside (Blythe, 2006, 138). Furthermore, these activities can be divided into internal and external PR (Blythe, 2006, 134). The activities are explained below.

According to Theaker (2012, 10), part of the activities is internal communications, which means communicating with the employees and it can involve in-house newsletter and suggestion boxes. Corporate PR means communicating on behalf of whole organization and this can be done by annual reports, conferences, ethical statements, visual identity and images.

Media relations means communicating with journalists; specialists; and editors from local, national, international and trade media and it can be done by press releases, photocalls, video news releases, off-the-record briefings and press events. Business-to-business means communicating with other organizations such as suppliers and retailers and can be done by exhibitions, trade events and newsletters (Theaker, 2012, 10.).

Public affairs involve communicating with opinion formers and monitoring environment and this can be done by presentations, briefings, private meetings and public speeches. Community relations/corporate social responsibility (CSR) means communicating with local community, elected representatives etc. and this may be done by exhibitions, presentations, letters, meetings, sports activities and other sponsorship. Investor relations mean communicating with financial organizations and individuals and can be done by newsletters, briefings and events (Theaker, 2012, 10.).

Strategic communication means identification and analysis of situation, problem and solutions to further organizational goals and this can be done by researching,

planning and implementing a campaign in order to make the ethical reputation of organization better (Theaker, 2012, 10.).

According to a study by PRWeek/PRCA (2013), the main ten tasks that were likely to increase in importance in the next two years are digital, online communications, reputation management, Search Engine Optimization, communications strategy development, research and evaluation, crisis management, corporate social responsibility, issues management and providing information to the public or share/stakeholders (Wyatt, 2013). PR agencies should take the abovementioned information into account as these are matters that clients will be expecting from their PR service providers.

One of the key areas, that requires agencies to pay their attention to and develop, is content creation. Agencies, which have content and storytelling as their core values, are more likely to attract clients (Parker, 2015).

In addition to the abovementioned activities, according to Gregory (2004, 23), public relations activities may include news releases, speeches, events, press kits, seminars, news conferences, annual reports, trade shows, exhibitions, demonstrations, lobbying, internal communication activities, in-house magazines and newsletters.

Department of Trade and Industry and Chartered Institute of Public Relations (2003) recommends PR practitioners to have several key skills including written and verbal communication, creativity, media relations, crisis management, issues management, interpersonal skills, credibility and integrity and flexibility (Theaker, 2012, 11). In addition to this, UK employers have ranked teamwork and problem-solving highly (Theaker, 2012, 9).

According to Singleton (2013, 176-177), there is a good learning culture within the best PR teams. Therefore, it is essential for PR consultancies to learn new skills in order to get information that can be helpful in PR activities.

The main work of PR practitioners includes several tasks which are explained as follows (Zerfass et al., 2010 in Theaker, 2012, 9). Firstly, building immaterial assets such as reputation, brands and organizational culture. Secondly, facilitating business processes such as influencing customer preferences, generating public attention and

motivating employees. Thirdly, adjusting organizational strategies such as identifying opportunities and integrating public concerns. Finally, securing room for manoeuvre such as managing relationships and managing crises (Theaker, 2012, 9.).

According to a study by PRWeek/PRCA (2013), the duties included in a PR person's role include general media relations, media relations strategy planning, online communications, communications strategy planning, writing articles and newsletters, reputation management, PR programme planning, event planning and organization, crisis management, digital, media analysis, corporate PR, research and evaluation, issues management, line management of PR staff, internal communications, branding and marketing, providing information to public or share/stakeholders, consumer or public campaigning, corporate social responsibility, publishing/editing, public affairs/lobbying, Search Engine Optimization, graphic design/animation, sales promotion and investor relations or financial/city PR (Wyatt, 2013).

According to CIPR State of the Profession (2015) research, PR professionals are now more involved with other departments in the organization, such as marketing and sales, than they were two years ago. This indicates that inter-departmental convergence is an emerging trend. This is echoed by Brown et al. (2013, 7-9) who say the PR knowledge, skills and practice are changing. He puts emphasis on PR professionals' ability to read and interpret web analytics. Other opportunities mentioned by him include for example increasing amount of video content provided by PR professionals and PR-led SEO.

In addition, new responsibilities of PR professionals are branding, and other traditional marketing activities such as copywriting, sponsorship and print and design and new technical tasks such as web development. Furthermore, technical and digital skills including SEO, HTML and coding are amongst the new skills required from PR professionals. However, these are the weakest skills for many PR professionals, who in addition feel that the changing nature of public relations is the biggest challenge for the future, and this is mainly because of changes in technology (CIPR State of the Profession, Commentary Analysis, 2015).

Public Relations and Media

Wragg (1993, 40) claims that media relations is one of the most important elements of public relations. He makes the point of media existing purely to fulfil the interest of their own audiences. This is echoed by Wynne (2012, 156) who says media wants value and good content for their readers instead of solely promoting a business. As Wragg (1993, 40) describes, the media and people working in them are in a role of an opinion-former. It can be said that the relationship between the media and public relations is important, as public relations want to have an effect on the opinions.

According to Gregory (2004, 7-8), media industry has changed radically. Nowadays the industry is working 24 hours a day and this rises the expectations of journalists as they are under increasing pressure and expecting public relations sources to provide copy (Gregory, 2004, 8). Gregory (2004, 8) explains this is due to journalists' lack of time, and in some areas they are dependent on public relations practitioners who can have an effect on the information the journalist can receive.

It is important for a PR professional to target the right media in order to achieve the desired coverage (Wynne, 2012, 157). Press coverage can be achieved in national or regional papers, which are explained below.

As Wragg (1993, 43) explains, the term "national press" is related to the London daily morning newspapers and the Sunday newspapers, which are published in London. Daily and Sunday newspapers which are published in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Cardiff are also considered as national press (Wragg, 1993, 43).

Regional press is used when describing morning newspapers which are published in many English cities, additionally in Dundee and Aberdeen (Wragg, 1993, 43).

Regional Sunday newspapers include papers such as the Sunday Independent and the Sunday Sun (Wragg, 1993, 43).

2.4 Public Relations Evaluation

Singleton (2013, 13) describes that measuring PR is not simple, but it is important. This chapter aims to explain why and how PR can be evaluated.

According to Skinner et al. (2004, 5-6), public relations require evaluation and the performance is measured by achievement of goals.

Objective-based evaluation model states that

“Goals and objectives must be defined and specified as a prerequisite to evaluation” (Tyler, 1942 in Theaker, 2012, 196).

This means that it is essential for the practitioner to be able to tell exactly what they desire to achieve with their public relations activities.

Weiss (1971) defines evaluation as

“Measuring the effects of a programme against its goals” (Theaker, 2012, 195).

Theaker (2012, 195) argues that this definition has been broadened to the understanding that evaluation does not solely happen at the end of a programme, but also before and during. This occurs in PR for example while measuring the coverage, which there can be even before a PR campaign is over.

The professional benefits of PR evaluation have been recognized (Chapman, 1982 in Theaker, 2012, 203). However, according to Walker (1997), it is challenging to measure (Theaker, 2012, 203). According to Theaker (2012, 203), the measurement techniques used are media coverage and experience and informal judgment.

A research found out that 82.3% of respondents monitored media response and cuttings (Zerfass, 2010 in Theaker, 2012, 203). 65% of a survey respondents regarded clip reports and press cuttings books as an effective evaluation method (Baskin et al., 2010 in Theaker, 2010, 203). However, according to Singleton (2013, 13), it is challenging to prove that business goals are genuinely achieved by looking at the amount of coverage.

Advertising Value Equivalency (AVE) calculates how much it would have cost to buy as advertising if compared to the column inches of the coverage achieved. This method of evaluation has become controversial recently, mainly because of having

abundant control over editorial coverage, whereas an advert and its' content are controlled (Singleton, 2013, 14-15).

According to Singleton (2013, 14), coverage is not as much wanted as easily measurable results, such as raising awareness and delivering key messages to the target audience, are. This can be done by opinion polls of awareness and favorability towards the brand before and after the campaign and by asking "How did you hear of us" when people are buying the product or service. Singleton (2013, 16) continues by explaining that it is important to compare the media coverage with the results from previous year and also with the coverage of competitors.

Methods of measurement also include evaluating the output, uptake and outcome. Output is the material produced by a PR professional for example press releases and emails. When audience has been exposed to a content about an organization, this is called uptake. Outcome means something has changed as a result of the campaign, for example measurable change in knowledge or opinion (Brown et al., 2013, 271-272). Brown et al. (2013, 273) argues that measuring the outputs should be changed to measuring the effects on the target audiences via uptakes and outcomes. This is echoed by Thorson et al. (2015, 8), who say increased attention of PR practitioners should be put to measuring the outcomes rather than solely outputs. Measuring outcome focuses on end results of campaigns instead of measuring for example the number of press releases written. These outcomes may include awareness, audience knowledge and engagement.

A global standard for PR measurement has been set out in 'Barcelona Declaration of Measurement Principles' (Theaker, 2012, 206).

First principle is importance of goal setting and measurement. Second principle is measuring the effect on outcomes rather than measuring outputs. Third principle is the importance of the effect on business results, which should be measured where possible. Fourth principle is that quantity and quality play an important part in media measurement. Fifth principle is that the value of public relations cannot be measured by AVE. Sixth principle shows the importance of social media measurement. Finally,

the seventh principle emphasizes the transparency and replicability being essential to measurement (Magee and O'Reilly, 2010 in Theaker, 2012, 207).

3 METHOD

3.1 Scope, Objectives and Research Questions

Research Problem

This study aimed to find out companies' expectations of a PR agency in tourism, travel and leisure industry in the United Kingdom. Furthermore, the aim of this study was to find out companies' opinion about PR agencies and public relations in general. In order to help a PR agency to grow in business, the information gained through this study could be vital.

Research Questions

As Saunders et al (2009, 32) claim, it is vital to define the research questions. The research questions of this study are as follows.

1. What are companies' expectations of PR agency in terms of services, skills, experience?
2. What are companies' opinions on public relations in general?

Research Objectives

According to Saunders et al (2009, 34), research objectives need to be defined in order to give purpose and direction to the study. The research objectives of this study were to identify the expectations of potential client companies of a PR agency and, in addition, to identify their opinions on public relations in general in order to gain information for future use in attracting potential new clients. This was achieved by conducting a literature review and a survey.

3.2 Research Method

There was no precise analytical data of the clients' expectations of the assignor's company. Therefore, it was in the interest to find out how far the respondents of the questionnaire agreed with the literature findings.

The thesis was conducted by using a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Quantitative data means data that can be measured, and in order for the data to be useful, it needs to be processed, analyzed and interpreted (Saunders et al. 2009, 414). The quantitative data was collected by using a questionnaire. Qualitative data means data that is not numeric, and the data needs to be analyzed and its meanings understood (Saunders et al., 2009, 480). The qualitative data was collected by using a few open-ended questions in the questionnaire.

Saunders et al. (2009, 362) recommend assessing different ways of collecting data before determining the use of a questionnaire. However, after carefully estimating the options, it was decided to use a questionnaire in order to receive as many responses as possible.

Furthermore, collecting the responses with a questionnaire was easier for the respondents as they were able to answer the questions on their own time. Due to the field of business, it would have been challenging to organize one time to suit the respondents, for example, if they had been interviewed. With an internet-mediated, self-administered questionnaire the respondents could return to the questionnaire in case they needed to stop answering it due to other commitments.

As Saunders et al. (2009, 362) claim that if the data collection requires a large number of open ended questions, a questionnaire is not a preferable option. As this data collection did only require a few open ended questions, it was another reason to use a questionnaire.

A questionnaire can collect three types of data variables: opinions, behaviour and attributes (Dillman, 2007 in Saunders et al, 2009, 368). This questionnaire collected all of the abovementioned variables. The opinion questions regarded the companies' expectations and attitudes towards PR agencies, the behavior questions regarded their experiences with PR agencies and the attribute question regarded their background (Saunders et al. 2009, 368).

Implementing the survey

As Saunders et al (2009, 367) recommends, planning the questionnaire commenced when studying the literature review materials. The questions were chosen based on the literature and also some due to the interests of the assignor. The main purpose of the questionnaire was to find out what companies expected from a PR agency, therefore all the questions were built around that research question.

According to Saunders et al (2009, 374), it is essential to design the questions carefully prior to the collection. Therefore, after the literature was reviewed, the questions were developed.

After the questionnaire had been accepted by all parties, the questions were uploaded into SurveyMonkey, which is an online survey portal. In the SurveyMonkey one can choose between open and closed questions and both of the questions types were decided to be used.

Companies that would be in the target group of the respondents were searched on several different websites. The companies were handpicked, and a list was generated with circa 300 companies ultimately. Some companies were added subsequently during the process. The target group of companies was expected to be operating in the travel and tourism industry.

The companies were contacted by email, which were all sent manually. Due to lack of responses, the companies were contacted again by a follow-up email. The process also involved a pilot round in order to test the questionnaire. Regrettably, the number of responses was very low, which was why it was decided to amend the survey. The amends included, for example, combining some of the questions and informing the companies of an opportunity to enter a prize draw of a £50 John Lewis voucher as an encouragement to respond to the questionnaire. After the pilot round, more responses were received, and it became clear that implementing the pilot round had been valuable.

The companies did not have an exact deadline stating when the responses were expected to be returned.

3.3 Data Analysis

SurveyMonkey was used for collecting the responses. All of the figures were downloaded directly from SurveyMonkey, and the open-ended questions were converted into tables manually after receiving the required number of responses. To show the frequency of occurrence, bar charts were used to present the responses to the closed questions (Saunders et al., 2009, 431).

4 RESULTS

The questionnaire used for getting the results from the companies can be found in Appendix 1. The questionnaire includes open-ended questions, which were analyzed by using qualitative methods and the conclusions were drawn on the basis of them. The closed questions were analyzed by using quantitative methods and the results were presented as percentages.

4.1 Profiling

The questions 1-5, 10 and 18 were used for profiling the respondent and included questions regarding the respondents' background and interests.

Does your company trade in Britain?

96.43% of the respondents answered yes whereas 3.57% answered no, which can be seen in Appendix 2. To be able to continue responding to the questionnaire, the answer to this question had to be yes, therefore the respondents who answered no the question 1 and question 2, were not able to answer to rest of the questions.

Is your company in the travel, leisure or tourism industry?

96.43% of the respondents said yes and 3.57% said no, which can be seen in Appendix 3. As said before, question number 2 as well as question 1 required the answer to be yes in order to be able to continue completing the questionnaire.

What part of the travel, leisure or tourism industry are you in?

As can be seen in Appendix 4, 51.79% of the respondents were from days out and destinations industry, 19.64% from other travel services such as travel sites and hotel & travel services, 14.29% from holiday sector and 14.29% from hospitality sector.

What is your job title?

The answers can be seen in more detail in Appendix 5. Most common job title was Director as it was mentioned 5 times, second common was Communications Officer, which was mentioned 3 times and thirdly common was marketing assistant which was mentioned twice. Other job titles mentioned once include titles such as

Manager, Marketing Officer, Media and Communications Executive etc. Most of these job titles were the ones the responses were desired to have from in order to have most reliable information to the thesis from the right person.

Please mention a few work related websites, blogs, newspapers/magazines, radio channels, TV channels & programs you consume if you do.

As can be seen in Appendix 6, most commonly the respondents seem to consume national media such as BBC (including radio and newspaper), Guardian, other national newspapers and travel sites such as Tripadvisor.

Are you or have you ever been looking for a PR agency?

As can be seen in Appendix 7, 51.72% of the respondents said no and 48.28% of the respondents said yes. It was decided to focus receiving responses from companies that have been or are looking for a PR agency in order to get more reliable responses as those would be more potential clients rather than companies that have never considered hiring a PR agency.

Do you have an existing PR agency?

As can be seen in Appendix 8, 66.7% of the respondents said yes and 33.3% of the respondents said no.

When looking for a PR agency, how are/were you searching for it?

As can be seen in Appendix 9, the main way of searching for a PR agency was through recommendations with 91.67%. Secondly, 58.33% through networking. Thirdly, 33.33% via Google and 8.33% through PR agency directories. None of the respondents used social media including LinkedIn or other ways.

If you are approached by a PR agency, how would you like to be approached?

As can be seen in Appendix 10, the most commonly, 50% of the respondents said by email, on a shared second place was phone call and direct mail with 25%. 16.67% of the respondents answered not at all. No one of the respondents answered by social media or other ways.

4.2 Expectations of the services

Questions 6, 12-13, 22-23 and 17 were done in order to get information about the expectations of the services provided by a PR agency.

Which one of these would you consider to be the most valuable form of press coverage for your company to achieve?

As can be seen in Appendix 11, the respondents' most common form of press coverage would be in a national press (national newspapers and magazines) with 69.57% mentioning it. Shared second most common were regional press and national television coverage with 43.48%. Third most common was website coverage with 26.09%. Fourth most common was regional television coverage with 21.74%. Finally, blog coverage and national radio coverage with 17.39%.

Which functions/services would you expect to receive from a PR agency?

As can be seen in Appendix 12, firstly, 100% of the respondents said press releases. Secondly, 69.23% chose press events. Thirdly, 53.85% chose social media management. Fourthly, video news releases with 46.15%. On a shared fifth place were events, newsletters and web pages with 30.77%. On a shared sixth place were presentations and crisis management with 23.08%. On a shared seventh place were exhibitions, trade shows and other services with 15.38%. Lastly, the respondents expected the functions to include sponsorship activities with only 7.69%.

Which skills and experience would you expect from your PR agency?

As can be seen in Appendix 13, most significant skill was creativity with 100%. On a shared second place were good written and verbal skills and media relations with 92.31%. Therefore it can be said that these three skills and experience are valued the most. On a third place was interpersonal skills with 76.92%. On a fourth place was flexibility with 69.23%. On a fifth place was credibility and integrity with 61.54%. Finally, crisis management with 30.77%.

If you were to hire a PR agency, for how long do you feel would be a suitable amount of time to have the contract?

As can be seen in Appendix 14, 50% of the respondents said more than 12 months. 4-6 months and 7-11 months both had 25%. No one the respondents felt the suitable amount of time to have the contract for would be 0-3 months, so it can be seen that the companies are expecting long lasting relationship with their PR agency. It would have been interesting to find out why the respondents responded to this question the way they did in order to have more information to be used in the future.

If you were working with a PR agency, how often would you expect them to report back to you?

As can be seen in Appendix 15, most significantly, 33.33% of the respondents said once a week and on a second place with 25% of the respondents saying 3-4 times a week. On a shared third place is once every two weeks and other. Only 8.33% of the respondent said once a month would be enough. None of the respondents are expecting a PR agency to report back to them once a day.

By what measures would you expect your PR agency's efforts to be assessed?

As can be seen in Appendix 16, number of cuttings in key publications became first with 83.33%. Secondly important was increase in enquiries with 66.67%. Thirdly was Advertising Value Equivalent with 50%. Fourthly was number of followers and likes in social media with 41.67%. Fifthly, number of mentions of established key publications with 33.33%. Lastly, number of cuttings with 25%. These results were interesting, as lately there has been discussion in the field of PR on the importance of AVE. It used to be the main measure for the efforts, but according to these results, it is not the most important assessment method.

4.3 Attitudes towards PR

Questions 7-8, 11, 14-16 and 19 were about finding out the attitudes towards PR in general.

Please explain if you would rather invest in PR than advertising or do you feel they are both as valuable? Why?

Looking at the answers which can be seen in Appendix 17, it seems that most of the respondents find PR and advertising both as equal and most of the respondents seem to understand the difference between advertising and PR and understand that they bring different results, depending on what it is that is wanted to achieve.

Have you had any positive or negative experiences in terms of PR? Please include experiences of agencies, who have approached you, you have engaged with or hired.

Judging by the respondents' answers which can be seen in Appendix 18, it seems that most of the respondents have had positive experiences in terms of PR. A couple of respondents mentioned PR agencies bringing up new ideas and achieving good coverage but some respondents' say there has been issues with writing and also lack of understanding each other has been an issue.

If not, please explain why. (In relation to if they are/have been looking for a PR agency)

This question is aiming to find out the reason for not looking for a PR agency. As can be seen in Appendix 19, 88.89 of the respondents, who answered to this question, said the reason is they handle it internally. 11.11% of the respondents said they don't feel there is a need for PR.

Why would your company need PR?

As can be seen in Appendix 20, most important reason seems to be to facilitate business processes such as influencing customer preferences, generating public attention and motivating employees with 61.54%. Secondly, to build immaterial

assets such as reputation, brands and organizational culture with 46.15%. On a shared third place is to manage relationships and other reasons with 23.08%. On a shared fourth place is the high cost of advertisement and to manage crisis with 7.69%.

Why would you hire a PR agency instead of doing your own PR?

As can be seen in Appendix 21, the main reason seems to be lack of time with 69.23%. Secondly, lack of access to journalists with 46.15%. Thirdly, lack of knowledge with 38.46% and finally other reasons with 23.08%.

In your opinion, what are the advantages and disadvantages of having a PR agency to do your PR?

The results can be seen in Appendix 22. In summary, it could be said that the most common advantage the respondents mentioned would be PR agencies having the contacts to the press. The most commonly mentioned disadvantage was large cost of having a PR agency and the PR agency not having the right understanding of the organization or the industry.

If you were to replace your existing PR agency, what would be the reason for it?

The results can be seen in Appendix 23. Amount of coverage seems to be main reason with 62.50%. On a shared second place is budget, communication and creativity with 37.50%. Finally, expectations with 25 %.

Which brands do you see as being successful in terms of PR exposure?

As can be seen in Appendix 24, most of the respondents mentioned well-known brands, such as British Airways.

5 DISCUSSION

This chapter includes a summary of the questionnaire results and it also discusses the recommendations for the assignor based on the results.

<p>Most valuable form of press coverage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National press (newspapers and magazines) most valuable • Blog coverage and national radio coverage least valuable
<p>Functions/services expected to receive from a PR agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press releases most common • Sponsorship activities least common
<p>PR agency's personnels' skills and experience expected to have</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity most common • Crisis management least common
<p>Expected length of a contract between a company and PR agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 12 months most common • 0-3 months not at all
<p>Expected time of reporting back to the company</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once a week most common • Once a day not at all
<p>Assessing PR agency's efforts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measuring number of cuttings in key publications most common • Number of cuttings least

	common
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Investing in PR versus advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both equally valuable • Understanding the difference • Understanding they bring different results
Positive and negative experiences (in terms of working with PR agency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily positive experiences • Positive: PR agencies bringing up new ideas • Positive: Achieving good coverage • Negative: Writing issues • Negative: Lack of understanding each other
Reasons for not looking for a PR agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main common reason companies handling it internally
Reasons for needing PR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating business processes most common reason • High cost of advertisement and managing crisis least common reasons
Reasons for hiring a PR agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of time most common

instead of in-house team	reason
Advantages and disadvantages of having a PR agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantage: Press contacts most common • Disadvantage: Large cost of PR agency • Disadvantage: PR agency not having the right understanding of the organisation/industry
Reasons for replacing the PR agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of coverage most common reason • Expectations least common reason
Most successful brands in terms of PR exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big brands such as British Airways

5.1 Recommendations

The aim of this chapter is to provide recommendations based on the questionnaire results.

The data gathered suggests that it is important for a PR agency to become recommended by other companies in order to attract more potential clients.

Therefore it may be helpful for a PR agency to contact already existing clients and encourage them to recommend their PR agency to other companies.

Recommendations and networking are usually related to each other as networking events can encourage companies to recommend the PR agency. The assignor of this research is greatly involved in networking including a networking event organized by the assignor and attending other networking events, so there is no need to change

that action. The assignor may find it useful to encourage the clients to attend networking events themselves as well, as then the recommendations can occur more.

A closer look at the data indicates that a PR agency may find it useful to contact the potential client companies by email. The results of the questionnaire seem to indicate that the respondents feel more positive about receiving emails, therefore it may indicate that they are able to decide when to reply rather than when receiving a cold call from an agency.

According to the data gathered in the questionnaire, the assignor can continue and put emphasis on saying to a potential client that there will be national press coverage and in addition, showcase already gained coverage in national press.

The assignor offers press releases, social media management and other services already. The data gathered in the questionnaire indicates that it may be helpful for a PR agency to mention press events more often as they were secondly most wanted and video news releases as they were fourth.

The data generated in the questionnaire may indicate that it may be useful to showcase creativity of a PR agency. Good media relations were mentioned as well, however it may be challenging to prove having good media relations due to ethical reasons. Good written and verbal skills can be showcased by showing examples to potential clients of the written work done previously and using even videos to showcase verbal skills.

The data also suggests that a PR agency may want to showcase that it is of their interest to have a long lasting client relationship. The agency may find it useful to provide information on how long a relationship with a previous client has lasted.

The data yielded by the questionnaire provides evidence that it may be useful for a PR agency to affirm to be reporting back once a week.

On the basis of the evidence provided by the questionnaire, a PR agency may find it useful to assure the potential client that the agency aims to provide coverage in key

publications and this will potentially lead to increase in enquiries. This can also be showcased to the potential client using examples from previous campaigns.

The data gathered in the questionnaire suggests that it is not necessary to explain to a potential client what PR can achieve in comparison to advertisement as they seem to have that knowledge already.

A closer look at the data indicates that it would be useful for a PR agency to showcase those previous great, new ideas that already have been used in campaigns with good results. The assignor claims on their webpage that they aim to ask their clients a great amount of questions, which in itself proves the assigner's real interest in the client's affairs. Therefore, there might not be interest to carry any action apart from encouraging an existing client to provide a testimonial including the client's satisfaction in relation to the PR agency and the co-understanding between them. It is also the assignor's advantage that they are specialized in primarily one area, which can indicate to a potential client that they have the understanding of the industry due to previous experience.

The data gathered in the questionnaire suggests that it is important to make sure all the companies understand there is always a need for PR and they understand the benefits of an external PR agency. It may be useful for a PR agency to emphasize the fact that they have more time than someone internally.

The data suggests that a PR agency should spend more time on building relationships with journalists. This is due to the fact that then they are able to say they have the relationships in order to attract more clients. A PR agency should also put emphasis on the service not being too costly but still having value.

As mentioned before, it may be useful for a PR agency to emphasize the previous coverage of clients. Crisis management has been in many other occasions too on a low place, so no need to emphasize crisis management.

5.2 Further Research

Future research may put emphasis on finding out how far companies select their PR service providers based on them being focused on particular aspect of PR. Public relations amongst other areas of business has been changing radically over last decades, therefore there are more services that companies may expect from PR agencies. This will be changing in the future as the technology develops even more, therefore these changes and how they are affecting a PR agency services may be useful areas for research. To gain even better information of companies' expectations, there may be use for a research which is based on finding out how companies choose their PR agencies and the facts affecting the choosing process.

5.3 Limitations

Saunders et al. (2009, 363) emphasizes the fact that it is difficult to ensure that the right person answers the questionnaire. Therefore more emphasis should have been put on reaching the right person primarily. In the cover letter of the questionnaire, it was requested that the person receiving the email to forward it to the appropriate person and prosperously most of the respondents were from the target group (see more details in job titles).

In addition, it is easier to improve the reliability of the data, for example if done by interviewer-administered questionnaire (Saunders et al. 2009, 365). Therefore there was a risk of the results of this particular questionnaire being unreliable. Moreover, interviewer-administered questionnaire can be more sufficient as Saunders et al. (2009, 365) claims, the response rate is higher with interviewer-administered questionnaire.

Saunders et al. (2009, 367) argues that language differences can affect the questionnaire responses. Therefore the writer, as a non-native English speaker, did become concerned of respondents misunderstanding some of the questions. As mentioned before, the questionnaire was assessed by other parties prior to collecting the responses, therefore the writer of this thesis was confident that there would not be misunderstandings due to language differences.

In addition, Saunders et al (2009, 367) claims that it is important to understand the organization which is undertaking the research. The writer of this thesis was confident of having adequate knowledge of the organization due to implementing their internship at the assignor company prior the research and in addition being employed by the organization during the questionnaire designing process.

6 CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SUGGESTIONS

In the competitive market of public relations, where the PR agencies are not competing solely against each other but having to compete against in-house teams as well, it may be challenging for a PR agency to attract more potential clients.

Therefore it is essential that the PR agencies have the information of the potential clients' wants including expectations and opinions, in order to add more clients in the portfolio.

Therefore the research objectives of this study were to identify the expectations of potential client companies of a PR agency and in addition to identify their opinions on public relations in general in order to gain the information usable for future use of attracting potential new clients. This was conducted by a literature review and a questionnaire.

The first research question aimed to find out the companies' expectations of PR agency in terms of services, skills and experience. The second research question attempted to gain the knowledge of companies' opinions on public relations in general.

A clear conclusion of the companies' expectations cannot be drawn, but the research has revealed important information that can be useful for the assignor.

The results of the questionnaire reveal that companies' attitudes towards a PR agency are positive and the companies seem to understand the value of PR. The specific expectations described in the summary section can be used in order to attract more potential clients. This study was successful in terms of succeeding to gain useful data that was required, however there could have been more responses from the respondents in order to have a bigger sample.

It is clear that there will be demand for PR services in the future; however the form of the services provided may change as the technology changes. These technology changes can have an effect on the methods of creating content, distributing press releases, building relationships, services provided, usage of social media, evaluation and other factors.

In general, if there will be increasing amount of services and activities expected from a PR agency, it is vital for those working in PR to find ways of reduce the amount of time spent on each task and in addition, finding new ways to better their services; this will hopefully lead into new inventions which will be then beneficial to PR agencies. It is important for any PR agency to pay attention and adhere to the changes occurring in the industry.

It can be said that all of these changes, if done in the correct way, will affect the attractability of a PR agency and consequently the amount of new and retained clients.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – Questionnaire

Companies' expectations of a PR agency	
Welcome to My Survey	
Thank you for taking the time to help me with my thesis.	
The survey is completely anonymous. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at katarinahaikara@gmail.com	
At the end of the survey you can leave your email address to enter an optional £50 John Lewis voucher prize draw!	
*1. Does your company trade in Britain?	
<input type="text"/>	
*2. Is your company in the travel, leisure or tourism industry?	
<input type="text"/>	
*3. What part of the travel, leisure or tourism industry are you in?	
<input type="text"/>	
<input type="text"/>	
*4. What is your job title?	
<input type="text"/>	
5. Please mention a few work related websites, blogs, newspapers/magazines, radio channels, TV channels & programs you consume if you do.	
<input type="text"/>	

Companies' expectations of a PR agency

***6. Which one of these would you consider to be the most valuable form of press coverage for your company to achieve?**

- National press (newspapers and magazines)
- Regional press
- Blog coverage
- Website coverage
- National radio coverage
- National television coverage
- Regional radio coverage
- Regional television coverage

Please explain briefly why

***7. Please explain if you would rather invest in PR than advertising or do you feel they are both as valuable? Why?**

***8. Have you had any positive or negative experiences in terms of PR? Please include experiences of agencies who have approached to you, you have engaged with or hired.**

9. Which brands do you see as being successful in terms of PR exposure?

***10. Are you or have you ever been looking for a PR agency?**

***11. If not, please explain why.**

- We handle it internally
- We don't feel there is a need for PR
- Other (please specify)

Companies' expectations of a PR agency***12. Which functions/services would you expect to receive from a PR agency?**

- Press releases
- Video news releases
- Press events
- Sponsorship
- Presentations
- Exhibitions
- Events
- Crisis management
- Newsletters
- Web pages
- Trade shows
- Social media management
- Other (please specify)

***13. Which skills and experience would you expect from your PR agency?**

- Good written and verbal communication
- Creativity
- Media relations
- Crisis management
- Interpersonal skills
- Credibility and integrity
- Flexibility
- Other (please specify)

Companies' expectations of a PR agency

*14. Why would your company need PR?

- The high cost of advertisement
- To build immaterial assets such as reputation and brand
- To facilitate business processes such as influencing customer preferences and generating public attention
- To manage relationships
- To manage crises
- Other (please specify)

*15. Why would you hire a PR agency instead of doing your own PR?

- Lack of time
- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of access to journalists
- Other (please specify)

*16. In your opinion, what are the advantages and disadvantages of having a PR agency to do your PR?

*17. By what measures would you expect your PR agency's efforts to be assessed?

- Advertising Value Equivalent (=Cost of buying the space of an article, if the space had been an advertisement)
- Number of cuttings
- Number of followers and likes in social media
- Number of cuttings in key publications
- Number of mentions of established key messages
- Increase in enquiries

*18. Do you have an existing PR agency?

Companies' expectations of a PR agency

***19. If you were to replace your existing PR agency, what would be the reason for it?**

- Budget
- Communication
- Amount of coverage
- Creativity
- Expectations
- Other (please specify)

***20. When looking for a PR agency, how are/were you searching for it?**

- Google
- Social media (including LinkedIn)
- Recommendations
- PR agency directories
- Networking
- Other (please specify)

***21. If you are approached by a PR agency, how would you like to be approached?**

- Phone call
- Email
- Social media
- Direct mail
- Not at all
- Other (please specify)

***22. If you were to hire a PR agency, for how long do you feel would be a suitable amount of time to have the contract?**

Companies' expectations of a PR agency

23. If you were working with a PR agency, how often would you expect them to report back to you?

- Once a day
- 3-4 times a week
- Once a week
- Once every two weeks
- Once a month
- Other (please specify)

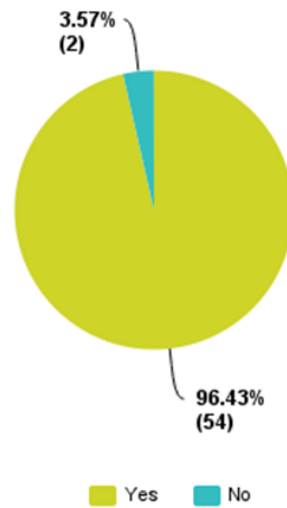
Thanks very much for your time!

24. Your email address (optional for the prize draw)

APPENDIX 2 – Respondents' operating trading area

Q1 Does your company trade in Britain?

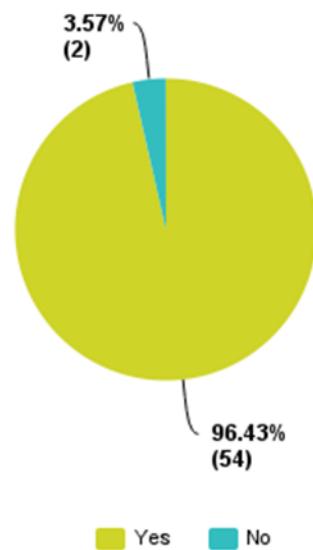
Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



APPENDIX 3 – Respondents' industry

Q2 Is your company in the travel, leisure or tourism industry?

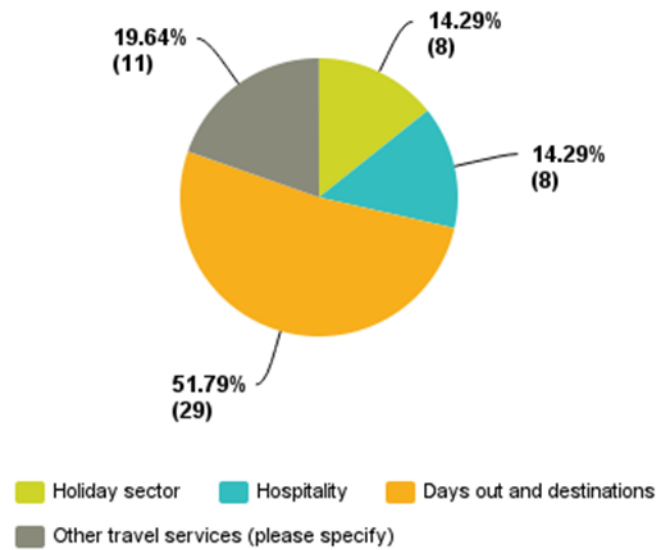
Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



APPENDIX 4 – Respondents' industry area

Q3 What part of the travel, leisure or tourism industry are you in?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



APPENDIX 5 – Respondents’ job titles

Partnership Project Manager	General Manager	Manager	Marketing Officer	Customer Liaison Coordinator	Marketing and Communication Manager
Administration	Media and Communications Executive	Marketing & PR Officer	Marketing Manager	PR Manager	Owner
Digital Marketing Executive	Marketing Administrator	Communications officer (3)	MD	Marketing Manager	Project assistant
PR and Marketing Manager	Executive Coordinator	Managing Director	PR Manager	Human Resources Officer	Communications Manager
Head of Marketing	secretary	Marketing Coordinator	Marketing Assistant (2)	Company Secretary	Director (5)

APPENDIX 6 – Respondents’ media consumption

Please mention a few work related websites, blogs, newspapers/magazines, radio channels, TV channels & programs you consume if you do.

Go Lakes North West Evening Post
Heart Radio TV - Mainstream Groupon Various family websites
Daysoutwiththekids.co.uk Heart Radio Mumsnet.com
TripAdvisor and website
Daily Mail, Telegraph, Metro, Smithsonian, YouTube, The One Show, BBC Radio

BBC, Guardian
As I work in PR all national media outlets in Ireland. We advertise in trade magazine such as Bus and Coach Magazine and EuroTransport Magazine.
VisitEngland, VisitBritain, This is Durham, NGI, Museums Association websites.
Creative Review, campaignlive.co.uk, LinkedIn
All UK national titles (online and print), Sky News, BBC News, BBC radio four/five, documentaries and TV shows on BBC one, two , ITV and Sky channels.
Marketing Weekly, Mashable but mostly social media.
4OD, BBC I Player, The Londoner Blog, Spotify, Radio 1, Kiss
IOL ERCA
www.discoverymuseum.org.uk www.twmuseums.org.uk work features in The Journal, Chronicle, Living Magazine, The Crack, NE1 Magazine.
PR Week (CIPR member), AMA (arts marketing association) member, Guardian news, Huffington Post, BBC 4 (TV)

Sunday Times Travel, Huffington Post, Conde Nast Traveller, Trip Advisor,
BBC News Online, BBC One, ITV, Sky News, The Guardian, The Times, The Telegraph, The Independent, The Daily Mail (and corresponding websites).
Eden project, This is Cornwall, BBC, The Guardian, Youtube, Visit Cornwall, Radio St Austell, Western Morning News, Newquay Voice, Cornish Guardian, BBC1 and ITV
www.thompsonhotels.com Boutique Hotelier
The Times, Sunday Times, Travel Weekly, Travel Trade Gazette, Selling Long Haul.
MailOnline, Travolution, Incentivetravel etc.
Forbes Travel Guide
Ship Management, MotorShip, maritime journal (all monthly magazines) hip&healthy, get the gloss, women's health, blog's of competitors
Hampshire Top Days Out NetMum Hampshire Chronicle Visit Winchester Visit Hampshire
www.rubyspeaks.com http://www.waterparks.org/webinars.asp

We don't.
IOL Horizons Sword British Fencing
Time Out, Tripadvisor, Google Plus, Twitter, own web site

APPENDIX 7 – Respondents looking for a PR agency

Q10 Are you or have you ever been looking for a PR agency?

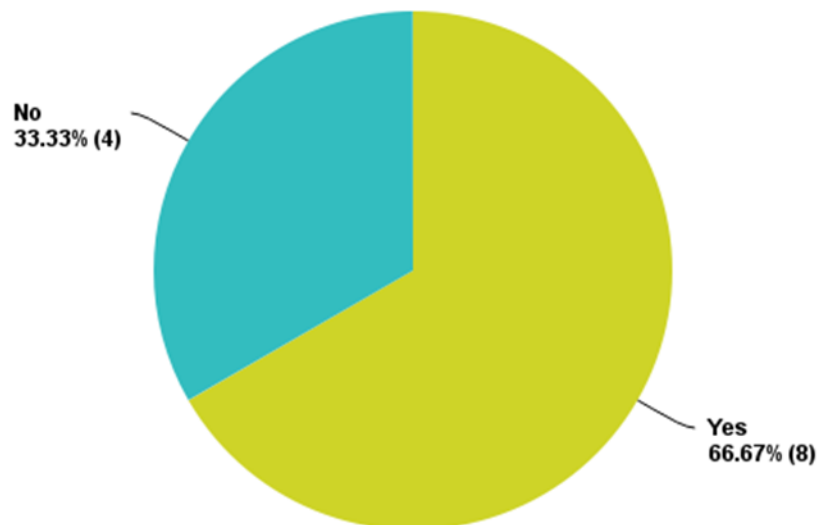
Answered: 29 Skipped: 27



APPENDIX 8 – Respondents' existing PR agency

Q18 Do you have an existing PR agency?

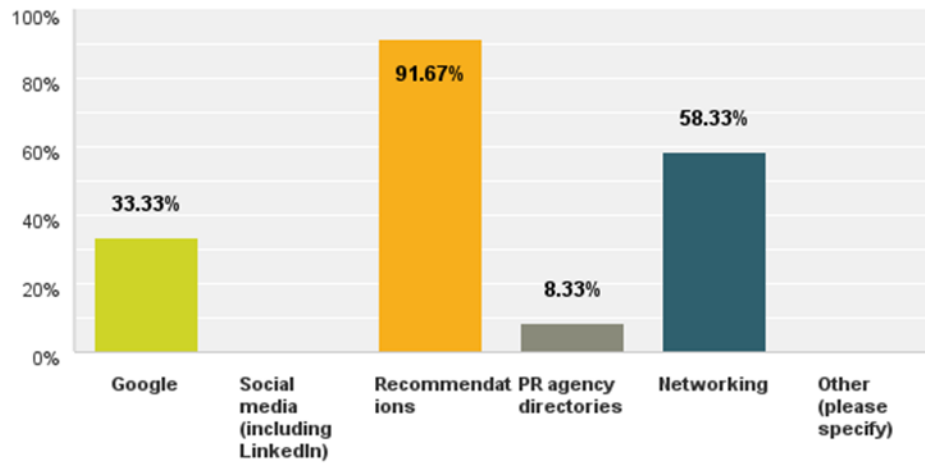
Answered: 12 Skipped: 44



APPENDIX 9 – Respondents’ ways of searching for a PR agency

Q20 When looking for a PR agency, how are/were you searching for it?

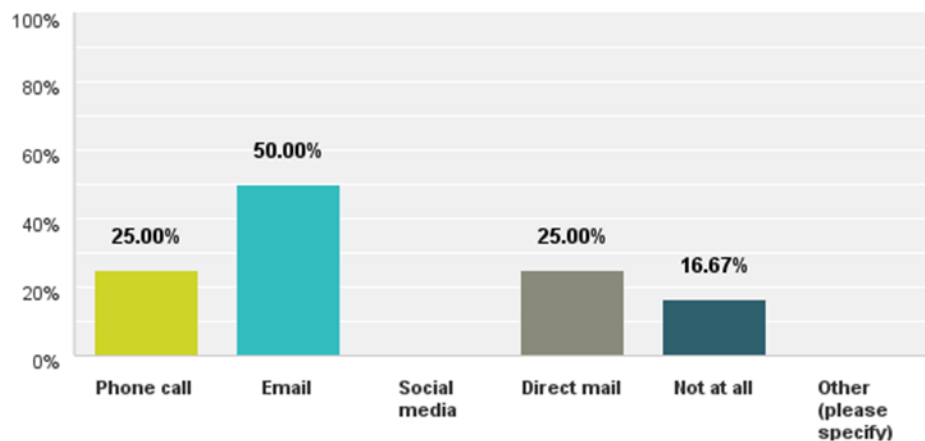
Answered: 12 Skipped: 44



APPENDIX 10 – Respondents’ preferred method of PR agency approaching them

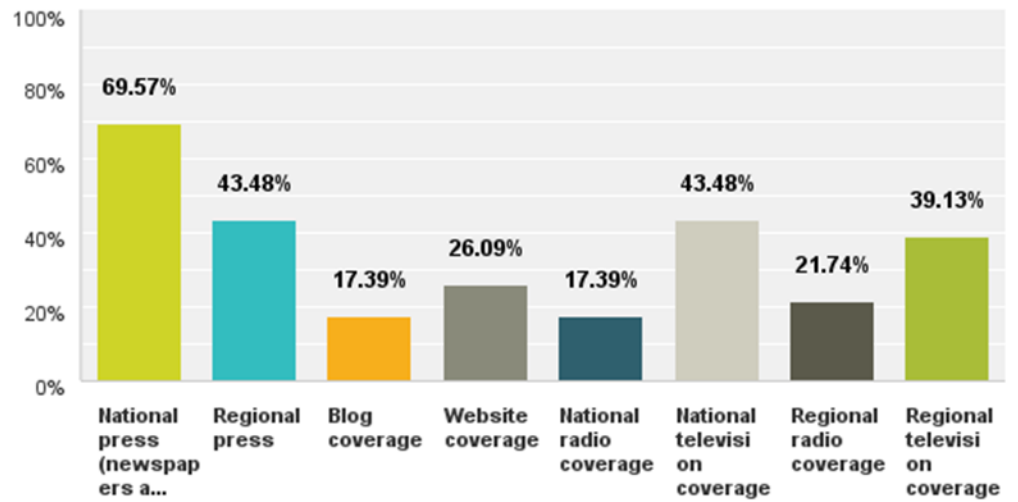
Q21 If you are approached by a PR agency, how would you like to be approached?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 44



APPENDIX 11 – Most valuable form of press coverage**Q6 Which one of these would you consider to be the most valuable form of press coverage for your company to achieve?**

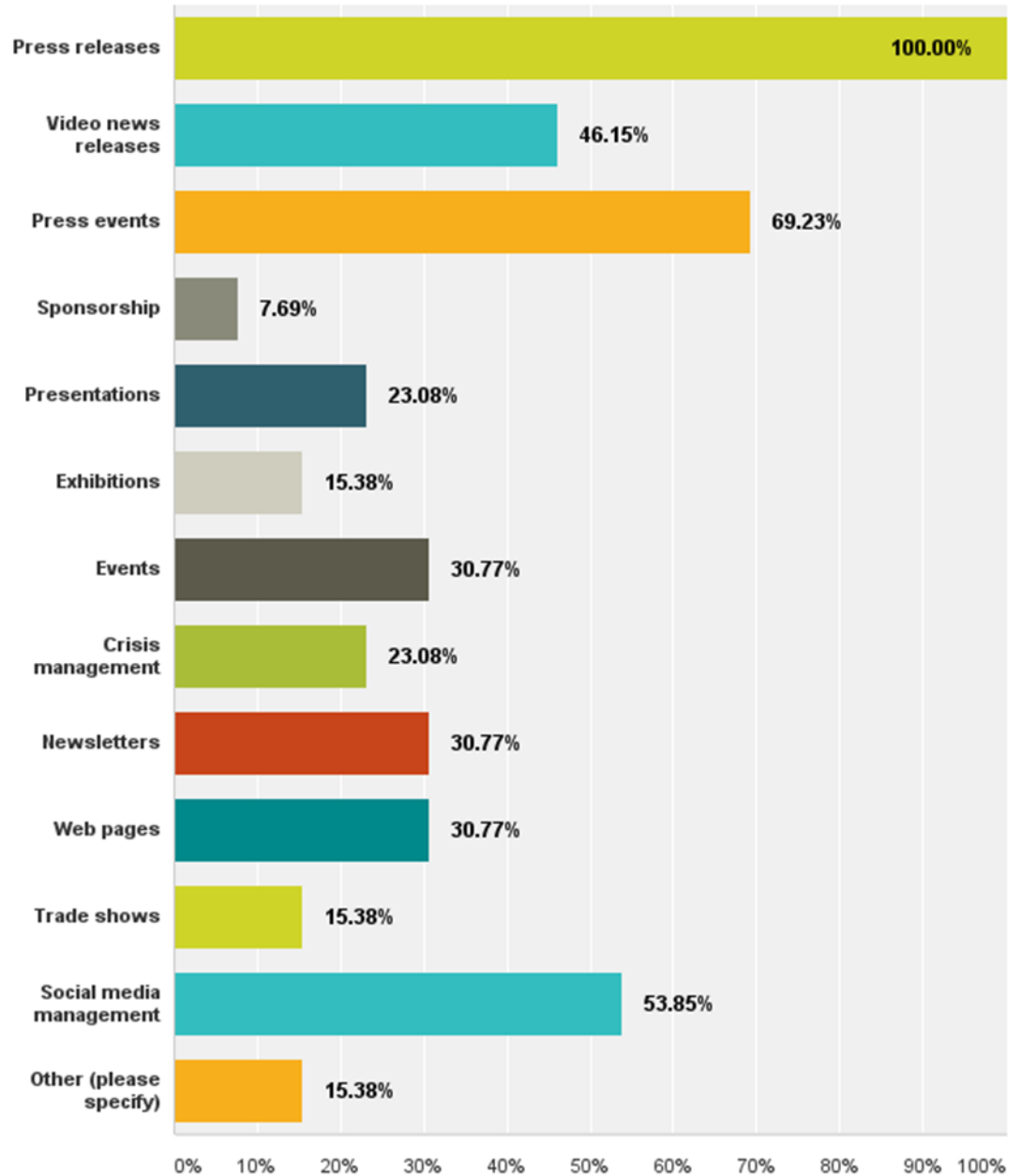
Answered: 23 Skipped: 33



APPENDIX 12 – Expected functions/services of a PR agency

Q12 Which functions/services would you expect to receive from a PR agency?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 43

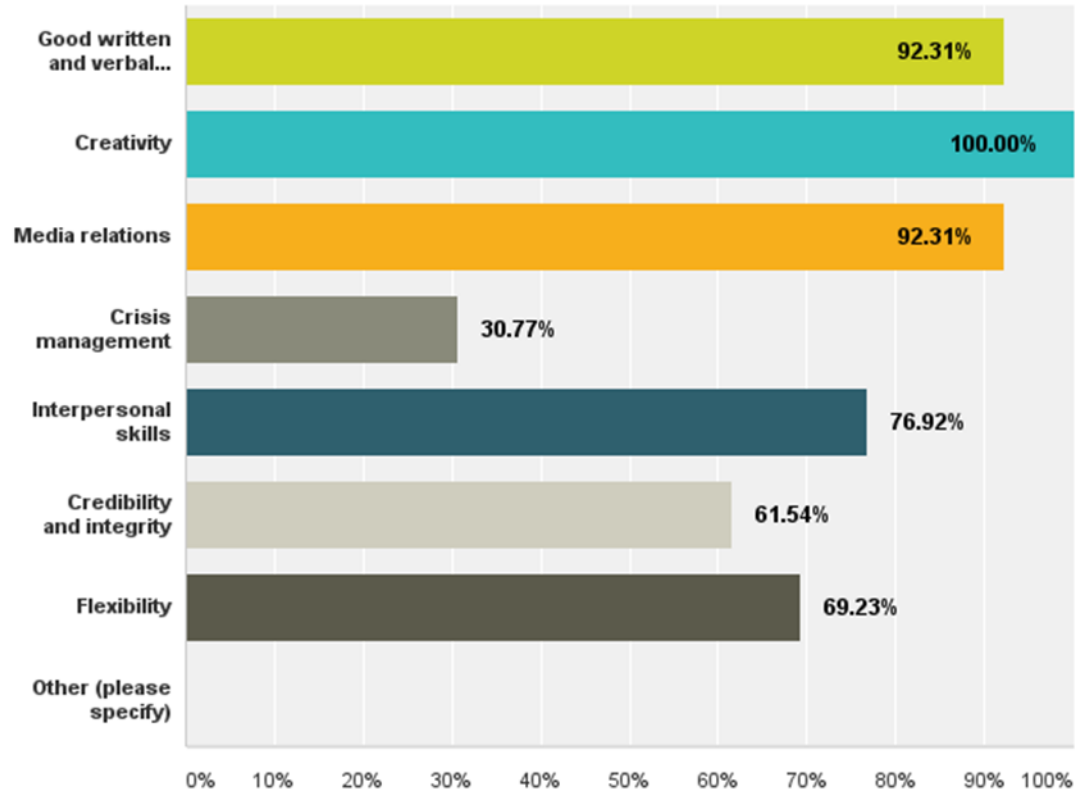


Campaign ideas, advice, media contacts
Our in-house marketing department takes care of the other items on the list.

APPENDIX 13 – Expected skills and experience of a PR agency

Q13 Which skills and experience would you expect from your PR agency?

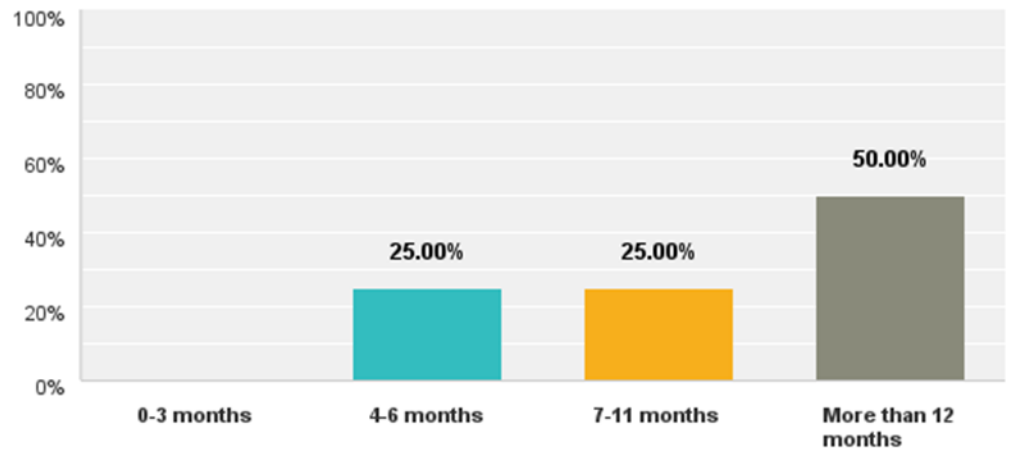
Answered: 13 Skipped: 43



APPENDIX 14 – Respondents’ expected length of a contract

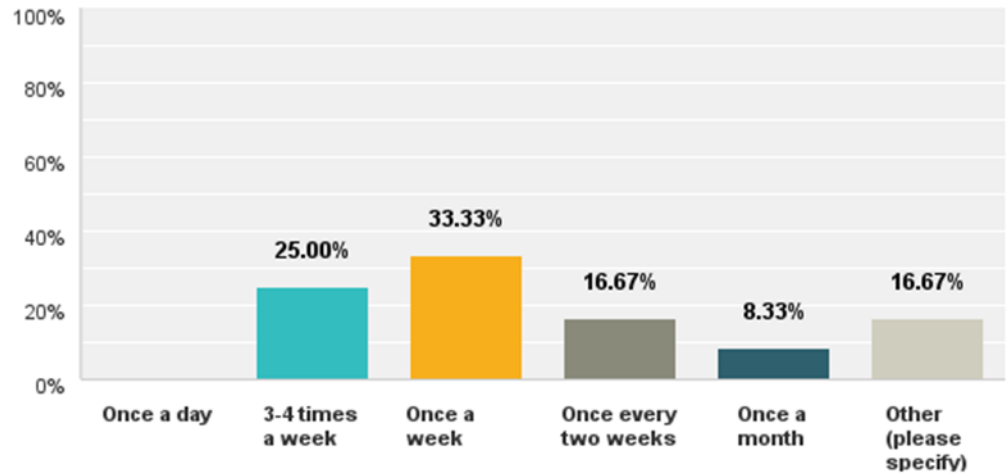
Q22 If you were to hire a PR agency, for how long do you feel would be a suitable amount of time to have the contract?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 44



APPENDIX 15 – Respondents’ expected frequency of reporting back**Q23 If you were working with a PR agency, how often would you expect them to report back to you?**

Answered: 12 Skipped: 44



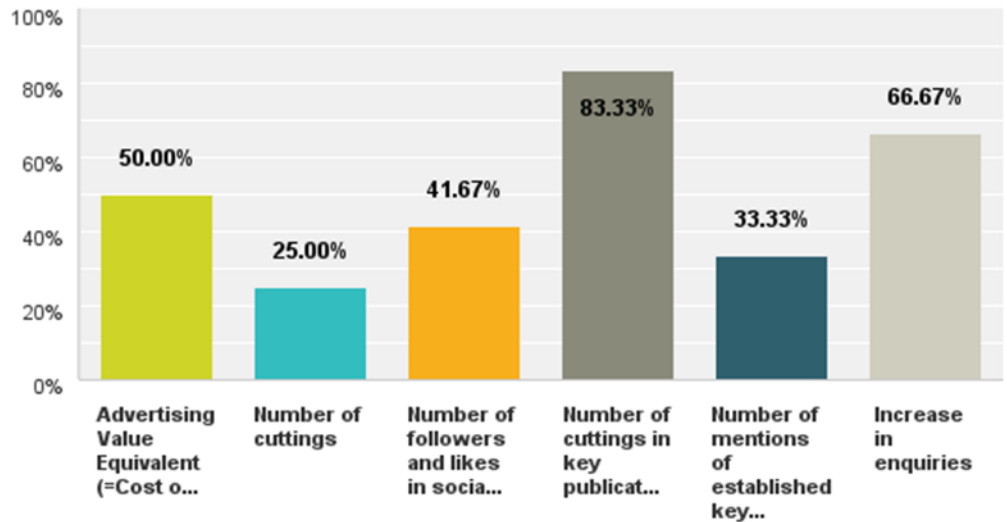
Whenever any activity has been picked up and published

As agreed / appropriate to any projects or campaigns that need updates

APPENDIX 16 – Respondent’s expectations of assessing efforts

Q17 By what measures would you expect your PR agency’s efforts to be assessed?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 44



APPENDIX 17 – Respondent’s opinions on investing in PR or advertising

Please explain if you would rather invest in PR than advertising or do you feel they are both as valuable? Why?

N/A
They are both as valuable as one another. We have a larger than normal marketing budget which incorporates our PR. Stories and events are great at making noise and getting heard.
Both valuable but PR more important. It is easier to see that PR is working, advertising is hard to quantify the results.
I wouldn't. I would rather invest in advertising as I can do PR in house. However, PR coverage is more valuable than advertising as audiences regard PR as information of interest or relevant to them.
Advertising would be more valuable due to the nature of our packages.

<p>The company invests more in Marketing and Advertising than PR. Believe it can achieve more for the business plan and reach the most people among our target market.</p>
<p>Both are valuable and reinforce one another, but PR is probably more beneficial.</p>
<p>I feel that both are valuable, but we are planning to spend more on PR in the coming year than we have previously.</p>
<p>Both equally valuable. Marketing delivers a targeted sales message, PR enhances your brand and adds depth to your organisation.</p>
<p>Pr tailors to my business, advertising is less targeted</p>
<p>Both Valuable- many of our sites benefit more from traditional advertising especially when they are in tourist locations such as the Lakes.</p>
<p>PR - advertising is such a gamble</p>
<p>Both as valuable. A mix of both is most important - if don't want to look 'needy' but good news stories are vital.</p>
<p>Owned and earned media both have their place. However, people are increasingly savvy as to bought media.</p>
<p>PR is more preferable as it has a much longer shelf life.</p>
<p>They are both valuable. Advertorials allow us to communicate our message exactly as we want</p>
<p>I can't give an unbiased answer, as I work solely in Media Relations, but I feel that a combination of both is important.</p>
<p>Both equally valuable in their own way as long as you track the ROI</p>
<p>They both have a role in our business. PR works well to inform the public about special interest, out of the ordinary and late availability opportunities whereas advertising (mainly Google AdWords) keeps our entire sales proposition in front of</p>

the public 24/7.
We work with a PR agency and they do our advertising for us
We find that PR is better for many of the events we do.
Depending on the campaign, most likely PR would benefit us more than advertising.
PR as the credibility is higher.

APPENDIX 18 – Respondents’ positive/negative experiences in terms of PR

Have you had any positive or negative experiences in terms of PR? Please include experiences of agencies who have approached to you, you have engaged with or hired.

No
We have had positive and negative.
We have worked with a local PR agency and a larger agency called Agility Marketing, both good experiences. It was good to use them for a year and learn from them.
Positive = good coverage. Access to journalists. Negative = PR agencies often do not understand their client or the offering and the client ends up rewriting their work.
Local media does this to all establishments.
We are constantly engaged with media outlets. Our company was involved in an industrial dispute last year which brought negative coverage for the company. Our PR strategy since then is to achieve positive publicity for the company and create awareness of the improvements and achievements of the company e.g. employees, CSR policy, technological advancements
Our PR is handled internally. We know that PR is effective from our visitor surveys and audience segmentation.

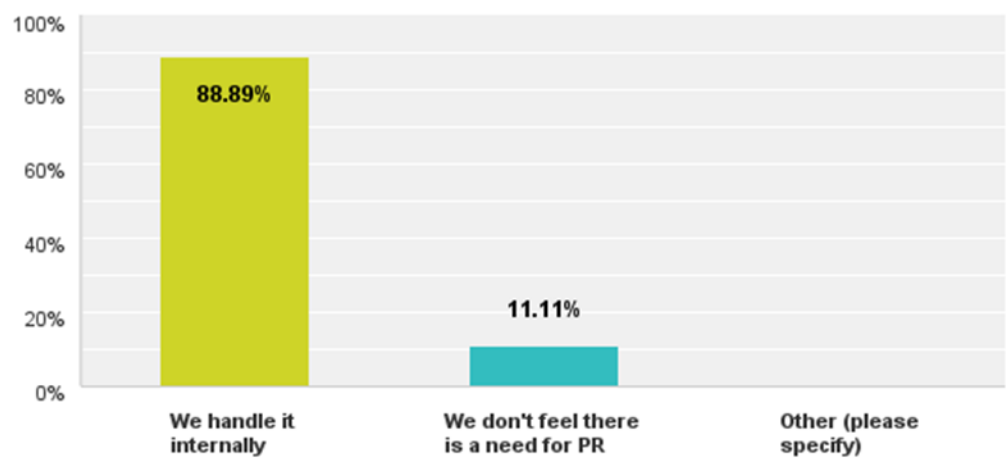
<p>We have used an integrated agency for PR work (along with creative, media buying, etc.), but we were not particularly impressed with the coverage we received.</p>
<p>Too vague.</p>
<p>Lakes Prexceptionally positive</p>
<p>Positive. especially locally. We have had lots of positive press for our Charity of the Year Event- The Big Banana Relay</p>
<p>All positive</p>
<p>Once when a PR agency was used for some press across a number of venues, organised by an external partner. Didn't understand how best to write a history story & who were the best outlets to get the highest amount of coverage.</p>
<p>As an in-house comms person I find it hard to judge this; my experience of agency PR is that they lack the full understanding the complex organisation they may represent to be an effective 'boundary spanner'.</p>
<p>Hired Beth Cooper PR and also Galivant PR</p>
<p>Mostly positive</p>
<p>In my experience, external PR agencies work very hard to provide coverage and can sometimes bring new ideas and approaches to a campaign</p>
<p>We have a very positive relationship with our PR company as they always bring us new ideas and offer help when most needed</p>
<p>Nothing really negative. We have worked with the same PR agency who specialise in the long haul sector for almost 20 years so we know each other pretty well. They understand the opportunities we are likely to be interested in pursuing.</p>
<p>We have had major success with the two PR agencies that we work with for day one.</p>
<p>Our experience has been good and we currently employ a PR company to look after</p>

all of our marketing.
N/A
very positive we worked with a smaller more specialized PR agency (very expensive but very effective). For our launch support to create a consumer brand we were supported by a bigger agency who achieved 300.000 AEV for us

APPENDIX 19 – Respondents’ reasons for not looking for a PR agency

Q11 If not, please explain why.

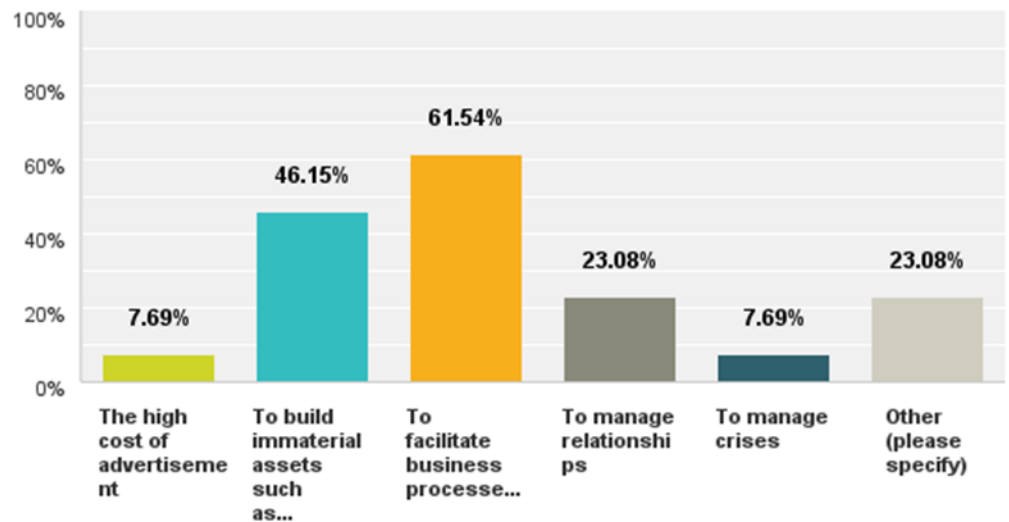
Answered: 9 Skipped: 47



APPENDIX 20 – Respondents’ reasons for PR

Q14 Why would your company need PR?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 43

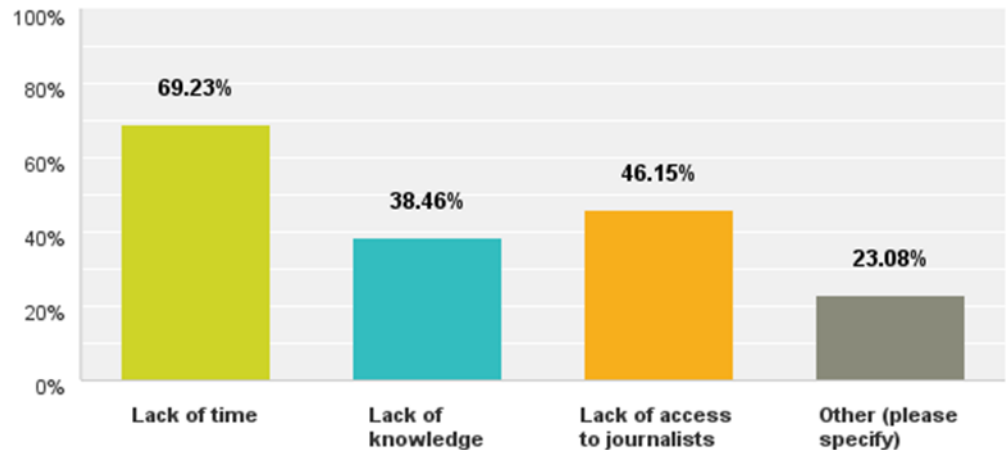


To provide the additional resource required when undertaking major consumer campaigns
As an important part of the marketing mix, one which we might be unlikely to reach with our other efforts.
Lighten the workload :)

APPENDIX 21 – Respondents’ reasons for hiring a PR agency

Q15 Why would you hire a PR agency instead of doing your own PR?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 43



Additional resource required for major campaigns, in house PR team continues to deliver business as usual PR

It's more cost effective to use the PR's time, contacts and expertise

Work together with a PR agency..

APPENDIX 22 – Respondents’ opinion on advantages/disadvantages of a PR agency

In your opinion, what are the advantages and disadvantages of having a PR agency to do your PR?

Advantages - contacts with Media, creativity skills. Disadvantages- Large costs.

They don't really understand the brand and they cost a lot.

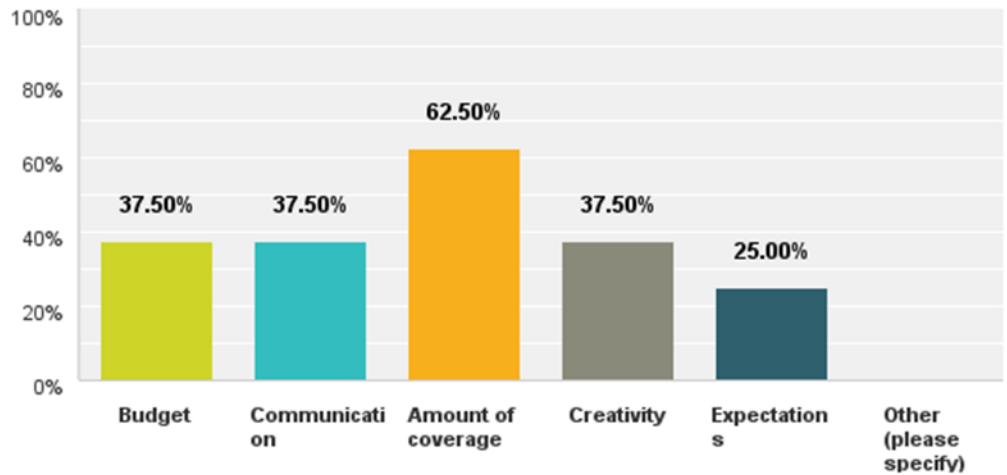
Advantages: Another resource to ensure positive publicity for the company,ensure

we are targetting the right media for the organisation and build relationships with these media outlets
The advantage is gaining access to journalists/other press contacts, the disadvantage is cost and potentially time used managing the agency.
It works best when conducted in tandem with an in house PR team
No
Advantages- The little black book of journalists. We simply do not have the time to focus on the area of PR so it is advantageous to have a company dedicated to doing so. Crisis Management due to the nature of our business. We focus on regional PR more so than national and with 28 locations this is time consuming! Negative: They hold control and you sometime cant determine if you have the best agents working on the brand - many put juniors on the brand who lack experience
PR agents have the time, dedication and know of the right people to contact, the little black book scenario!
What I mentioned above
Our PR agency knows our company, our position in the market place that they can screen us from time wasting approaches and present only opportunities they know we will respond to.
In my opinion there are no disadvantages, we have had no problems so far and everything has worked out just as planned.
They can focus specifically on the PR side of the business.
Possible lack of industry knowledge, access to information and people, potential different office times/ location and potential other clients.

APPENDIX 23 – Respondents’ reasons for replacing their existing PR agency

Q19 If you were to replace your existing PR agency, what would be the reason for it?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 48



APPENDIX 24 – Respondents’ opinions on successful brands in terms of PR

All	Can't think of any, but maybe that's the point	Magnum and Cornetto	easyJet Virgin M&S Paddy Power
Zip World- competitor- when they launched Titan they had LOTS of PR exposure. Vans Car brands	Apple, Virgin, O2, Manchester United, Arsenal. Too many to name - these are highlights at this present time.	Natural History Museum, British Museum	British Airways
In travel I would include British Airways, Virgin Atlantic, Trailfinders and lastminute.com.	Rolls Royce, Carnival cruise	only speaking in our direct industry: Clubbercise, Boomcycle, Psyche London	