

**THE ESSENCE AND ROLE OF PR ACTIVITIES OF THE ORGANIZATION**

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**Abstract:** The article provides a brief history of the emergence of the term PR. Various interpretations of the definition of the essence of this term from the point of view of different authors are given. The functions, goals and objectives of PR activities in modern commercial organizations are defined. Classifications of this type of marketing activity are shown. Irrefutable evidence of the positive impact of PR activities on the evolution of commercial structures is provided. It is concluded that effective PR activities of an organization can increase the sustainability of this organization and its competitiveness.

**Keywords:** PR, PR technologies, PR activities, goals, objectives, functions, public relations, PR strategies, PR programs, PR plan, marketing, marketing communications, promotion, advertising, social networks, image, reputation.

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The first recorded use of the term Public Relations was found in 1897 in the annual summary of railway industry news, "Yearbook of Railway Literature" by Sir Harry Perry Robinson [1]. The announcement of the publication stated that the task of the publishers of the "Yearbook of Railway Literature" is to bring into permanent form all articles and appeals of the railways, for the purpose of public relations, appearing or delivered during the year, which, apparently, have lasting value.

The article "Decision in the trans-Missouri case" from the first edition provides an example of corporate collusion between two companies and indicates the alleged harm that such behavior causes to the public interest. This article aims to show the differences between private and public companies, and to define a public company that operates for the sake of compensation and is still connected with the interests of the public, which reveals the public nature of its activities.

**Modern interpretations of the concept of PR.**

The authors present various interpretations of the concept of PR (public relations), which are united by the idea of using this tool to build harmonious and trusting relations between a company and the public. Both theorists and practitioners are of the opinion that PR is the science and art of shaping public opinion in the desired direction, as well as establishing mutual understanding and goodwill between people, organizations and the public [2].

**Goals, functions and tasks of PR in commercial activities.**

In the commercial sphere, activities in the field of Public Relations are aimed at solving certain problems that correspond to the general goals of the company's communication strategy. The main objective of communication activities is for the organization to establish favorable, harmonious and effective relations with the public, aimed at forming a positive image and impeccable reputation, which will contribute to the influence and formation of public opinion [4]. It is important for organizations in competitive markets to popularize their products or services, highlight their competitive advantages and communicate them to potential clients, partners, company employees, the media and the public.

The main goal of PR, as a communication activity of an organization with the public, is to create a positive image of the company, which provides a competitive advantage over other organizations. This is due to the fact that consumers prefer to purchase goods or services from well-known companies that have formed a good reputation and support it with truly effective PR activities.

PR activities include planning, organizing and holding events to attract attention to the company, presenting information about its activities, maintaining its image and, as a result, strengthening it in the market.

In addition, the PR activities of an organization allow you to:

- create a positive attitude towards the goods produced and the services provided;
- optimize the organization's foreign policy, i.e. ensure effective interaction with consumers, partners, and government agencies;
- attract and retain highly qualified and valuable employees;
- increase brand awareness of the organization and thereby contribute to the growth of sales of goods and services.

Thus, effective PR activities of an organization allow increasing the sustainability of this organization and competitiveness.

In the development of the modern form of PR activity, three main stages of evolution are distinguished.

1. At the first stage (early-mid-twentieth century), PR activity was mainly political. The first PR Company was created in 1900, which carried out communications with the press. Ivy Ledbetter Lee, who worked as a reporter for the World newspaper in New York, is considered the father of turnkey PR campaigns as an independent branch of business. In 1905, together with George Parker, with whom he worked during election campaigns, Ivy Ledbetter Lee created his own PR agency, Parker & Lee. Its task was to provide the public and the press with valuable information on behalf of public institutions and business circles. In 1923, the first course on the practice and ethics of PR was read at New York University. By the early 1930s, an independent PR function had developed in the United States, which allowed large companies to draw attention to their activities and achievements, thereby strengthening their image among the public.

2. The second stage (in the period 1950-1980) the development of PR activities is due to the fierce competition between enterprises after the end of World War II. Large companies began to pay special attention to public relations, as they realized the need to create a friendly attitude in society, form a positive image and openly show the results of their organization. In the 1970s, the discipline of PR became mandatory in universities and colleges in the United States, Europe and Asia. PR activities developing in Europe were heavily influenced by American approaches.

3. Since 1990 and up to the present, the development of PR has entered a new stage. This was due to the influence of globalization and informatization processes on the economy. Knowledge in the field of PR was aimed at studying public opinion, forecasting trends based on socio-psychological research, creating a corporate identity, establishing social responsibility of organizations, creating a worthy image and increasing the popularity of companies.

Currently, PR activities are an integral part of marketing strategies and help to increase brand awareness, create a positive reputation and promote goods and services on the market.

Depending on the focus and goals of the organization, various types of PR activities are used:

- media communications. This type of PR activity includes interaction with the cultural industry (production agencies in the field of cinema, show business, television production, companies creating audiovisual content), conducting various interviews, publishing articles, reports in the media (newspapers, magazines, television, radio broadcasting, news agencies, online media and others);
- social networks. Currently, a large number of companies actively maintain social networks, collaborate with popular bloggers (influencers) in order to convey information about their activities to the target audience;
- events. Companies organize various public events and meetings with their target audience, which helps promote their organization;

- public relations. Organizations support social projects, participate in charity;
- crisis PR. During it, companies maintain contact during reputational crises and other negative events;

There is also another classification of PR activities of organizations:

- white PR is based on information openness, dissemination of reliable information about the organization and subsequently the creation of a truthful image in the eyes of the public;
- black PR is the dissemination of negative and unreliable information about competitors in order to reduce their reputation and image;
- yellow PR is based on sensations, scandals, the work of photojournalists specializing in photographing show business stars and celebrities in an informal setting (paparazzi);
- viral PR is based on the fact that people share information with acquaintances, friends, family. Thus, information about the organization is distributed among a large number of people, thereby creating information noise around it and attracting attention;
- hidden PR. Its purpose is not direct advertising of a product or any service, but promotion, when information about a product or service is conveyed to the target consumer in an unobtrusive form so that consumers do not even suspect that they have become the object of advertising. Thus, hidden marketing is a set of measures aimed at managing the perception of the promoted product by the target audience [6].

Thus, organizations can carry out various types of PR activities depending on specific goals, objectives and current circumstances.

If you think about the question of what principles should guide all actions in the field of PR, then experts, both theorists and practitioners, agree: these are truth (answering the question: "what should be said"), dialogue (answering the question: "how should it be said") and public interest (answering the question: "about what should it be said") [7].

There are several key principles of PR activities of an organization:

1. Honesty and transparency. In order to ensure trust and respect for the organization on the part of clients and partners, companies must provide honest, open and transparent information;
2. Truthfulness and relevance. Providing truthful and up-to-date information by the organization allows the public to be informed about the functioning of the company;
3. Ensuring mutual benefit of the organization and the public. The PR activities of the organization should be beneficial not only for the company itself, but also for both current and potential clients. Consumers should receive genuine information that realistically describes the activities of the company, its products and services provided;
4. Respect for individuality, customer focus. When carrying out PR activities, the organization must understand that first of all it communicates with people; therefore it is important to focus on their needs.

The functions of the PR activities of the organization include:

- achieving mutually beneficial relations between the organization and public groups [2];
- monitoring the opinion and behavior of the public about the organization by analyzing feedback and reactions of the audience to the company's activities;
- building a strategy for promoting the organization's brand by developing and conducting various advertising campaigns;
- establishing internal communications in the organization by creating a sense of responsibility and interest in the results among employees;
- establishing relationships with the public through the media, social networks, and various promotions;
- creating an image of the organization and maintaining its reputation;
- rapid response of the organization to public events, including undesirable and crisis situations.

The concept of PR is the manifestation of a developed culture of entrepreneurship, style, and image of the company, built on the relationships of the organization's management with both employees and society.

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