

Public Relations Is Good For Customer Relations



By Christine Shock

If you're involved in customer relations, you're involved in public relations on the most basic level – one to one. As you interact with customers, they come to view you as the “face” of the organization. If the face you present is positive, customers will tend to feel that way about the organization. But you can't always put your best face forward, and dealing with customers one on one is time consuming.

That's why it makes sense to create a positive “face” for your organization on a larger scale — to establish a way to initiate and maintain good relations with more than one person, and customer, at a time. A good public relations program can do that very effectively.

Public relations can paint a positive picture of your organization so customers will be predisposed to think well of it – even before you begin working with them. After customers start doing business with your organization, you can maintain that good picture in their eyes.

But what if something happens which may have a negative impact on your organization? This too can be addressed through PR. By taking a proactive approach, reaching out to the media and their audiences and telling your own story, you can minimize the damage to your organization and maintain your positive relations with customers.

Engaging in a strategic public relations program provides you with a proven means of communicating with customers, both current and potential. It gives you a way to be an effective agent for your company in the public arena, and the tools to create the desired image or perception of it.

How PR is Good for Customer Relations

Conveys Third-Party/Editorial Credibility

Editorial coverage conveys a high degree of credibility. People believe what they read, see and hear in the media as being true and honest, unlike advertising, which appears self-serving.

Builds and Maintains Good Relationships

PR provides the means to establish and nurture all of a company's important ongoing relationships, including the most important one — with its customers.

Helps Your Company Stand Out from the Crowd

In today's crowded marketplace, PR will help you rise above the noise others are making.

Increases Advertising Effectiveness

PR increases a company's visibility in key markets and reaches secondary markets that advertising and budgets do not allow.

Generates Sales Leads

Articles and public discussions of your services result in potential customers asking for more information. These inquiries often result in direct sales.

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Helps to Close Sales

Customers are more impressed with messages found in the media. These media “endorsements” assist sales representatives in their efforts to close orders.

Measures Market Attitudes and Interest

When an article or news item appears in the media, a positive reaction from potential customers indicates that you are on the right track. If there is no response or if the response is negative, the company's marketing strategy or messages may need to be reviewed.

Corrects Negative Impressions

PR can be used to correct a negative impression in the market.

It's Cost Effective

Press coverage is not paid for directly. When an editor uses PR material, the company appears in a wide range of publications and media outlets, not just those in which the company can afford to buy advertising. PR is one of the most cost-effective marketing tools a company has in its marketing arsenal – and one of the best investments in good customer relations.

Public relations is good for customer relations – which makes it good for business.

Christine Shock is president of Shock PR (www.shockpr.com). She can be reached at 508-893-9933 or cshock@shockpr.com.

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