

# B2B PR CAMPAIGN PLANNING

**Your complete guide to creating**  
compelling PR campaigns & content

**Just as your communication strategy defines your overall approach and messaging, your PR campaign plan determines how you will deliver your messaging, where and when it is communicated, and who will be responsible for delivering it.**



This guide provides you with a step-by-step plan to activate your communication strategy, with powerfully aligned, strategic campaigns and content.

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# Step One

**Turning your  
messaging into  
brilliant ideas**



## Step One

### Turning your messaging into brilliant ideas

You know what you want to say at each stage of the buying cycle but how do you turn this messaging into creative ideas for compelling content? The EC-PR approach is to create a 'Brilliant Ideas Bank' (BIB) to hold all your initial 'seed' ideas for development.

#### Create a BIB in 4 easy steps:

- 1 Create a table for each persona.
- 2 In the first column you are going to jot down your seed idea. In columns #2 to #5 you will indicate which message the seed ideas most closely support.
- 3 Each seed idea should be no more than a headline to begin with. It is often helpful to frame it as a question.
- 4 For each message, consider the key phrases and write down as many questions about that phrase that a buyer might ask. Don't assume your buyer has any in-depth level of knowledge and expertise.



For each message, consider the “what, why, where, when and how” of each key phrase – these should inspire a whole plethora of ideas. The most valuable material will always be the ones that start with “How to” and provide practical advice.



***“From every seed grows a beautiful flower.”***

The beauty of the BIB is that each seed idea has the potential to become a fully formed asset such as a blog, roundtable, webinar, report, speech, research project, media article, or LinkedIn post and all of them are strategically aligned.

BIBs help senior leadership teams position themselves as thought leaders within their chosen industries.



## BIB example

If your seed example is, 'the importance of driving marketing efficiency for tech scaleups,' angles might include:

- Idea 1** What role can B2B PR play in driving efficiency for tech scale-ups?
- Idea 2** Why is B2B PR more efficient than other marketing disciplines for tech scale-ups?
- Idea 3** Where will you find examples of B2B PR best practice for ambitious tech companies?
- Idea 4** When is the right time for a tech scale-up to consider recruiting a B2B PR agency?
- Idea 5** How does a rapid-growth company get the most impact when partnering with a B2B PR agency?

Idea / Angle	Engagement	Solution Criteria	Reinforcement	Value
Idea 1				x
Idea 2				x
Idea 3				x
Idea 4				x
	Paste in your engagement message here	Paste in your solution criteria message here	Paste in your reinforcement message here	Paste in your value message here

## **Step Two**

# **Choosing your media channels**



## Step Two

### Choosing your media channels

There are four stages to the buying cycle:



**Your target buyers will move through these stages at different speeds.**

You need to give them the opportunity to become familiar with your brand and then consider your messaging - all at a speed that is right for them.

This means your messaging needs to be ever-present.



## There are 2 types of media channels.

These are High Trust and Low Trust. Engaging across a mix of both high and low trust channels will give brands more credibility.



**Media over which you** have complete control are called 'low trust' channels. This is because you have complete control over the content and claims you make can provoke the reaction, 'you would say that, wouldn't you!' This type of media includes, for example, your social posts and website content.

**Media over which you** have low control, is called 'high trust,' because a third party has expressed an opinion based on their own experience or investigation of your company. Examples of this, include testimonials and press coverage.

## Get the perfect blend.

In B2B, the key marketing communication channels, which you should be harnessing include (in no particular order):

- 1 Events
- 2 LinkedIn
- 3 Professional membership organisations
- 4 Professional trade media/national media

There is a great deal of overlap between them. For example, a membership organisation may have an event promoted, reported on, and discussed, on both LinkedIn and trade media.

The key is to be involved and engaged in all four channels because they represent a mix of high and low trust media, which will make your comms more credible.

Within the high trust and low trust channels, you have four main types of media: Paid, Earned, Shared and Owned.



### **Paid:**

*this is what you say about yourself.*

- Social media ads
- Sponsorship
- Events
- Boosted content
- Paid publishing

➤ low trust/high control



### **Earned:**

*what others say about you.*

- Media relations
- Influencer relations
- Investor relations
- Analyst relations
- Link building
- Word of Mouth

➤ high trust/low control



### **Shared:**

*what others say about you.  
(behind your back 😊)*

- Customer reviews
- Private sharing
- Social forums
- Organic social
- Lead generation

➤ high trust/low control



### **Owned:**

*what you say about yourself.*

- Website
- Brochures
- Company social channels
- Content marketing
- Videos, Webinars & Podcasts
- Employee & Customer stories

➤ low trust/high control

# **Step Three**

**Understanding your  
place in the media  
landscape**



## Step Three

### Understanding your place in the media landscape

#### 4 ways B2B publications can positively impact PR

B2B publications, both print and online, represent a 'high trust' channel and the business case for media coverage is well documented:

- 1 It gives your organisation credibility.
- 2 It validates what you are saying so that your prospects trust you.
- 3 It raises awareness of your organisation amongst your target audience.
- 4 It also provides you with a reach that you could not achieve via any other marketing tool without significant investment.

**You are competing for journalists' attention all the time. They can send your emails to junk, or choose to ignore your content if you are not relevant or interesting. You get one opportunity to make the right impression. To secure press coverage you need to give journalists what they want:**

- ▼ News (opinion, announcements)
- ▼ Issues not products
- ▼ Evidence (whitepapers, case studies, reports, surveys)



**Shift the needle on your PR activities by creating a benchmark. This will keep your team on track.**



**To measure your progress, you need to create a benchmark and you do this by evaluating how you are performing on key messages against your main competitors, in your most influential publications.**

**3 questions you need to know:**

- 1** Which of your top 5-10 target publications have covered your key messages over the last six months?
- 2** Which of your key competitors were included in these reports or articles?
- 3** What angle or argument were your competitors promoting and does this overlap with your own key messaging?

By answering these 3 questions you will better understand how to go about creating a benchmark.

This analysis will give you a benchmark score of how you are performing on key messages against your competition.

Repeating this exercise at intervals will help you to determine how you are shifting the needle.

# Step Four

**Choose your  
spokespeople**



## Step Four

### Choose your spokespeople

**You need your subject matter experts to deliver a good interview. This means answering the question, delivering interesting insight and weaving in key messages while also being engaging.**

To evaluate whether your subject matter experts could be a suitable spokesperson, you can conduct this 'quick and dirty' exercise.

Invite the nominated expert to an internal meeting to talk about a given area of their expertise for 12 minutes. You want to know the: what, why, where, when and how of a particular issue as well as what your company or brand can do to resolve or improve the situation. This is a total of six questions.

#### When they arrive at the meeting tell them:

- you are going to record it, so you have a quick reference.
- you would like them to answer the questions as if they were an average 14-year-old to keep any complex subject matter accessible. This is a good way of seeing whether they can adapt their storytelling to a defined audience on request. Many years ago, this was how BBC journalists determined whether an interviewee was able to make their material accessible and so could appear on their programme.

**Keep the interview to 12 minutes.**



**After the interview, assess the subject matter expert using the five questions on this page.**



**The assesment is done by awarding 1 point for a 'yes' answer and 0 for a 'no' against each of the six questions asked of them. A total of 30 points are available:**

- 1** Was the answer to the question clear?
- 2** Was the answer to the question appropriately concise?
- 3** Was the answer interesting?
- 4** Was the delivery engaging?
- 5** Was the company solution proposed with conviction and clarity?

If the potential spokesperson scored below 18, they probably won't make a good spokesperson. Anything below 25 and they need media training, anything above 25 and you have yourself a winner – but we would still recommend some top-up training. You may want to check out our FLARE media training guide.



**If your subject matter expert is not going to be conducting any kind of media interviews, and we include webinars in this as well as press interviews, you do not need to pursue any media training for them.**

A pure editorial thought leadership programme can be conceived and executed without your subject matter experts having to be publicly insightful and engaging!

# **Step Five**

# **Time to launch**

## Step Five



# Time to launch

**Once you have followed steps 1-4 you will have set your benchmark, selected your media channels, developed a bank of seed ideas for future content and settled on a process for selecting your nominated spokesperson.**

Only once these steps are complete will you be ready to move on to the campaign delivery phase - the phase that shifts from strategy to tactics as you look to research, build and distribute compelling content that your clients and prospects will love.

Be realistic. As a tech B2B business with ambitious intentions, you are probably bootstrapped or have restricted budgets. In order for communication to have an impact, you need to be consistent, current and ever-present.

Select only the number of channels that you are confident you can fully embrace with passion and commitment.



If you have questions or would like us to facilitate this process you can contact us at  
**[info@ec-pr.com](mailto:info@ec-pr.com)**