

# B2B PR

# Campaign Planning

Your complete guide to executing  
your communication strategy



# **This guide provides you with a solid, strategic plan to help you execute your communication strategy through successful B2B PR campaigns.**

The campaign planning phase is most effective if your communication strategy has been formally documented in the context of the sales objectives.

It will include your value proposition, sector prioritisation, personas, positioning statements and messaging for each stage of the buying cycle.

While your communication strategy captures your overall approach, your campaign plan should determine exactly how it is delivered, where and when it is communicated and who is responsible for delivering it.

Starting at the very beginning, we walk you through each of the essential components and associated steps, equipping you with everything required to ensure you achieve optimum results with your B2B PR campaigns.

These components include:

- The customer journey
- The audit
- The map
- The plan
- Your content

# 1. The Customer Journey

It's important to invest time in considering and charting the ideal customer journey for each of your target personas.

This will help you to understand what marketing assets exist and which ones need to be created.

For example, your ideal customer journey may look something like the following examples - note how many brand touchpoints are involved:

## Ideal Customer Journey

A chance meeting at an event and the exchange of **business cards** followed by a connection on **LinkedIn**, an **email** to confirm your shared interest might result in a look at your **website** – document the **pages** you think they would they visit. An **email** following a phone call inviting them to attend a **webinar**, read an **article**, discuss a **white paper** or take part in a research project might be sent. You see that they look at your **LinkedIn profile** and check out **recent activity** on both your personal **LinkedIn profile** and your **company's profile**. They like **one or two posts** from both. They even click on a **link to a piece of content** and download an **insight** having subscribed to your **newsletter updates**. They are now on your **CRM system** and have accepted **GDPR Ts&Cs**.

To engage the person further you might invite them to discuss your **concept** on a conference call, for which you would send an **email**, **agenda** and **subject-specific presentation** outlining the **concept**. On the call you present some further **insight**, refer to an **editorial endorsement** or **thought leadership** and include a **case study**. Subsequently, after a number of development collaborations, you are invited to tender and submit a **proposal** which includes **customer testimonials** and **case studies**.

## 2. The Audit:

### Understanding your marketing assets

Once you have charted your persona's buying journey and touchpoints, you should look to identify the gaps and areas that need refinement/improvement.

Using your ideal customer journey, capture all the touchpoints they will encounter with your brand in the Marketing Asset Audit below.

Once you have a long list in the left-hand column, ask everyone in your taskforce the following questions:

1. Do you think your company is presenting the best version of itself for each brand asset?
2. Are you presenting yourself as a professional and cohesive organisation with a consistent value proposition, mission, vision and values?
3. Do you appear active and dynamic with expertise to share?
4. Do you look like a business that you would want to work/partner with?

Fill in the table below and identify whether each item is fit for purpose, in need of an update or in need of creation.

Then, prioritise the asset in order of importance.

### Four Measures to Consider:



**Best version**



**Consistent**



**Dynamic**



**Attractive**



## MARKETING ASSET AUDIT

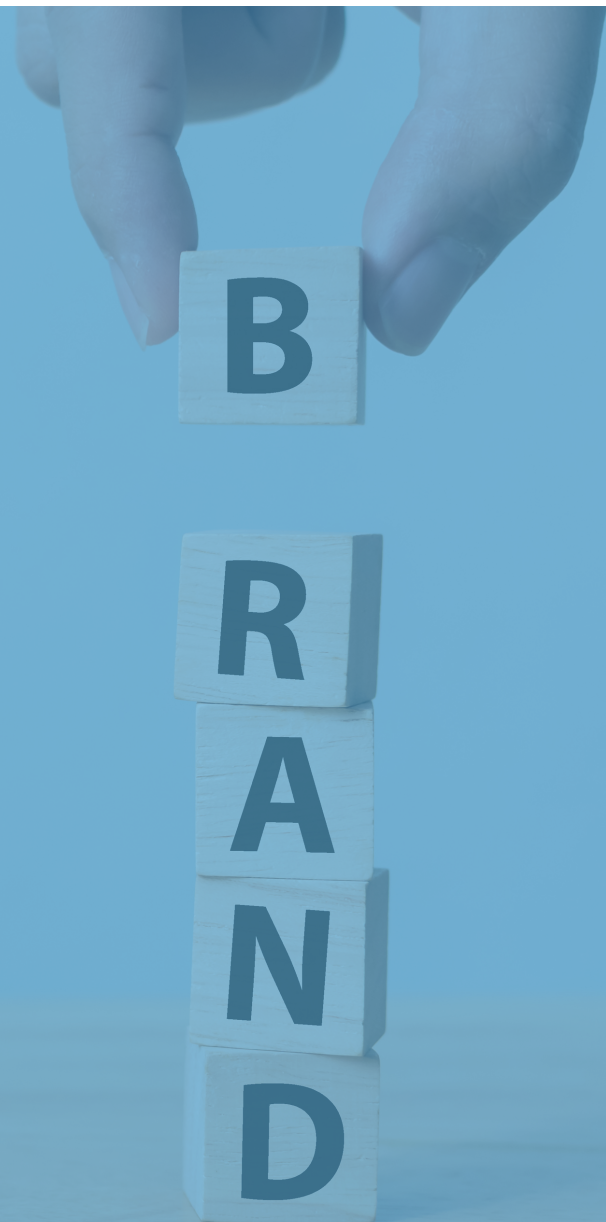
Asset/Touchpoint	Accuracy			Urgency		
	True reflection of our best self	In need of update	Need to (re)create	Essential	Nice to have	Impressive to have
BUSINESS CARDS						
PERSONAL LINKEDIN PROFILE						
LINKEDIN CO PROFILE						
EMAIL SIGNATURE						
WEB HOME PAGE						
WEB BLOG PAGE						
LINKEDIN POSTS/ ENGAGEMENT						
INSIGHT/WHITE PAPER 1						
CASE STUDY 1						
WEB NEWS						
ARTICLE/ THOUGHT LEADERSHIP 1						
WEB CASE STUDY PAGE						
NEWS ITEM						
CASE STUDY 2						
EXPLAINER VIDEO						
ARTICLE/ THOUGHT LEADERSHIP 2						
WEBINAR VIDEO						

Any brand asset not enabling or enhancing the customer journey should be regarded as redundant and therefore archived, including web pages.

This is because they may be off brand, confusing or just surplus to requirements.

Archiving them will remove the accidental use of any 'off strategy' communication tools – keeping you internally focused and aligned.

If there's disagreement on an asset's Accuracy or Urgency - go with the most votes!



# 3. The Map:

## Target persona messaging

Phase 3 of your Campaign Planning is concerned with ensuring that the specific persona messaging you created within the communication strategy development phase is served in an appropriate format and at the right stage of their journey.

Every stage of each journey needs its own appropriate type of message (see Glossary for message definition). It is imperative that you plan for each stage with relevant messages.

Consider the specific challenges faced by each of your personas, to create content and messages that have maximum impact.

Your available resources, both human and financial, will determine the number of activities you can undertake, but to succeed, whatever tools you select, you must be relevant, visible and compelling.

Always keep your ideal customer journey in mind.



We've developed an example template for you overleaf which you can complete, to identify the assets you need to be able to communicate your messaging at each stage of the customer journey.

Highlight the ones that currently exist in green and anything that you need to additionally create in red. There may be some overlap with your findings from the ideal customer journey exercise, but this is fine 😊.

In our experience, we've discovered that most companies usually have the Reinforcement and Value messages well documented.

The ticks included in the example are simply for illustration, they are not meant as a recommendation.

Complete a Persona Messaging Map for each of your Target Personas.





# EXAMPLE PERSONA MESSAGING MAP

PERSONA MESSAGING MAP				
Persona name: <i>Committed Coleen</i>				
	ENGAGEMENT	SOLUTION	REINFORCEMENT	VALUE
WHITE PAPER, INSIGHT OR GUIDE	✓			
ORIGINAL RESEARCH	✓	✓		
LEADERSHIP PRESENTATION	✓	✓	✓	
EXPLAINER VIDEO	✓			
BLOGS	✓	✓	✓	
THOUGHT LEADERSHIP (EDITORIAL)	✓	✓	✓	
INTERVIEWS (EDITORIAL)		✓	✓	
NEWS (EDITORIAL)			✓	✓
CASE STUDIES (SALES)			✓	✓
CASE STUDIES (EDITORIAL)			✓	✓
Q&A/FAQs		✓	✓	✓
SPECIFICATION SHEETS			✓	✓
PRODUCT SHEETS			✓	

Once complete you can give this list together with your comms strategy to your digital marketing/branding agency and ask them to develop or refine the necessary marketing assets.

Your prioritised list will be a valuable way of working within budget and you can adopt a phased approach.

## PERSONA MESSAGING MAP

Persona name:

	ENGAGEMENT	SOLUTION	REINFORCEMENT	VALUE
WHITE PAPER, INSIGHT OR GUIDE				
ORIGINAL RESEARCH				
LEADERSHIP PRESENTATION				
EXPLAINER VIDEO				
BLOGS				
THOUGHT LEADERSHIP (EDITORIAL)				
INTERVIEWS (EDITORIAL)				
NEWS (EDITORIAL)				
CASE STUDIES (SALES)				
CASE STUDIES (EDITORIAL)				
Q&A/FAQs				
SPECIFICATION SHEETS				
PRODUCT SHEETS				

## 4. The Plan:

### Choosing your media channels and considerations

At this point, the single most important reference point in your communication strategy is your target persona's Information Sources.

You have documented and validated where they go for information – so this should guide you regarding where your message needs to appear.

There are four types of media: paid, earned, shared, and owned - often referred to as the PESO model.

This mnemonic is a useful reminder of the four different types of media, but they should not necessarily be considered in that order!

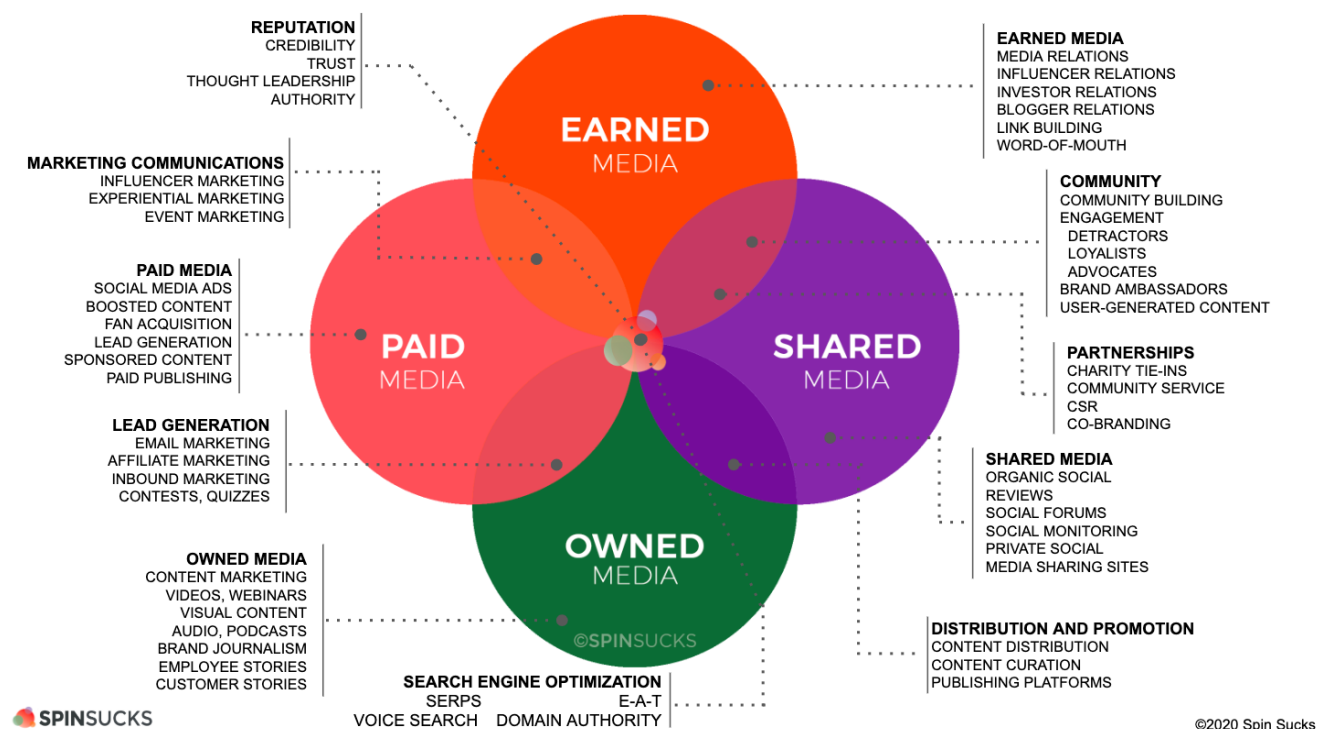


Image credit: <https://spinsucks.com/communication/pr-pros-must-embrace-the-peso-model/>

# Owned Media

We recommend your campaign design starts with consideration of the most important channels within your owned media.

Owned media are channels that belong to your brand including all your marketing assets, website content, social posts and blogs.

Owned media is something which you have complete control over and so, these owned marketing assets need to be on-brand and on-message, each with their own specific purpose.

This is what you have already done in steps 1 to 3.



# Earned Media

Earned media is the second most important priority. Earned media provides you with the opportunity to form a powerful reputation enhancing attributes, such as third-party endorsements.

When the editor of an influential publication carries your achievement, opinion or thought leadership, the editor is indicating that they think you are an industry authority who their readers will find interesting and engaging.

In the early phases of the customer journey, this type of editorial advocacy has equal currency to a customer testimonial in the latter stages.





## **Paid Media**

Paid media content is created and controlled by you but is paid for and appears on channels your brand doesn't own or control.

If you are new to this, you will need to test options to find out what works for you.

All businesses are different as is your appetite for risk – but by trying different combinations, you will soon have an objective view as to whether paid media is right for your brand, right now.



## **Shared Media**

Shared media simply covers all facets of social media. The whole world is now online, so you need to be in it to win it.

However, it's important not to put all your eggs into one basket – you should spread your opportunity, and your risk, by engaging with multiple, complementary channels to find the winning combination.

Which brings us neatly on to...



# An Integrated Approach

At EC-PR, we are strong advocates of an integrated approach, sometimes referred to as 'converged media';

PR is in fact media neutral - it embraces all media which further a brand's reputation.

With that in mind, it is important to understand the difference between owned and earned media.

- Owned media is what you say about yourself, this is brand.
- Earned media is what others say about you, this is reputation.

This is where you build your brand by using all four media types to optimise your efforts and ensure that the right content appears, at the right touchpoints, along the entire customer journey.

- Positioning your brand as the authority (earned and owned media).
- Developing strong brand presence (owned and paid media).
- Reaching out to customers directly (paid and shared media).

Ensuring your brand is regularly in front of your target audience, with a relevant and compelling message, will ensure that your brand becomes visible, valued, and understood for all the right reasons.

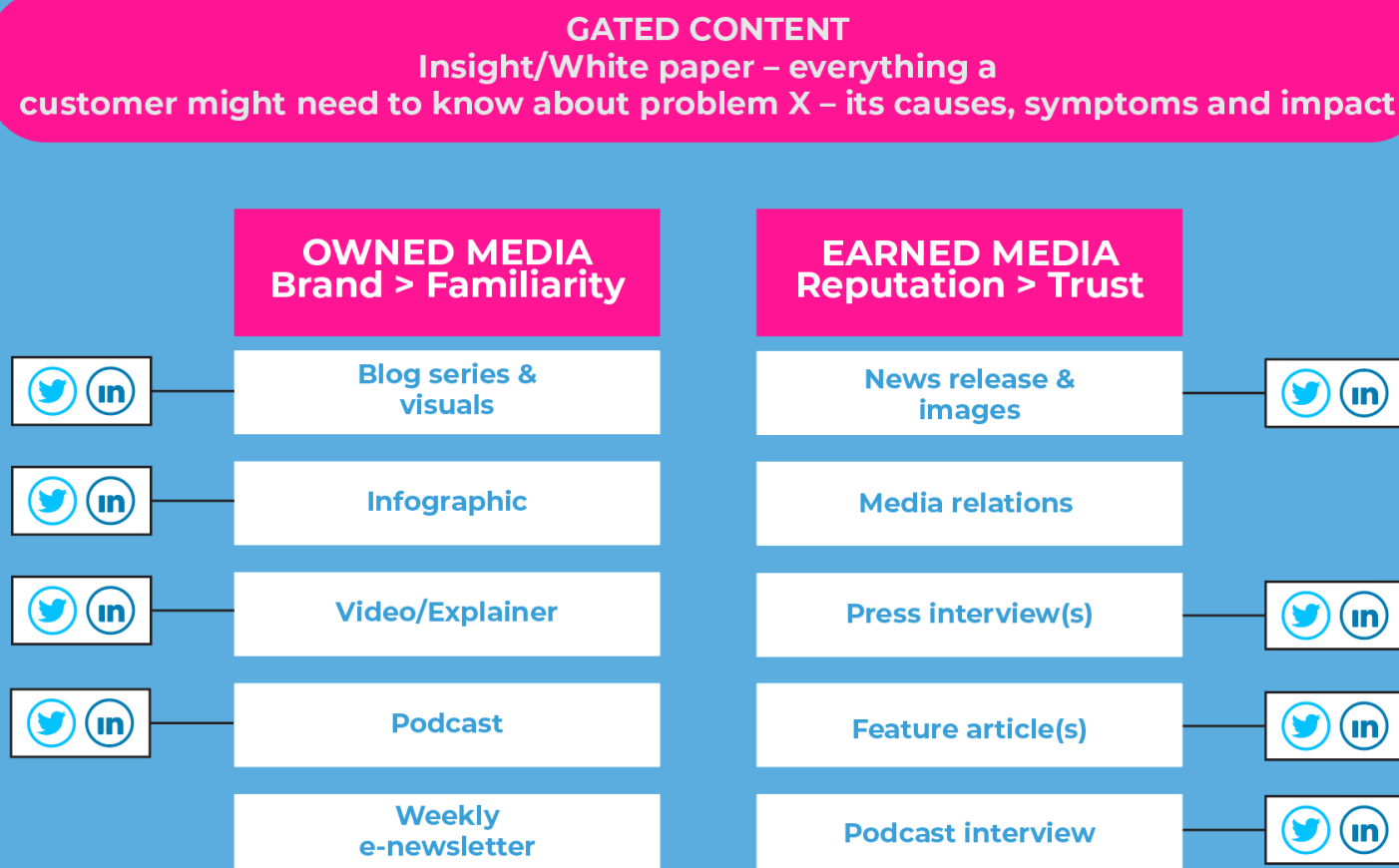
# Campaign Example #1

## Objective: To fill your funnel/improve lead generation

This is concerned with delivering the engagement message at the very start of the customer journey. To achieve this, you need to demonstrate you are the expert on every aspect of their problem – you know things about their problem they've not even considered yet.

This campaign must be high value and high trust. The value will come from gated insight you develop, and the trust comes from the objectivity you will apply to your content, tone and style.

With a focus on positioning your brand as the authority, you should be looking to structure your campaign like this:



# Campaign Example #2

## Objective: To build authority and trust

This type of campaign is to deliver the solution message. This is about providing the target persona with all the information they need to select the optimum solution to their problem, irrespective of vendor.

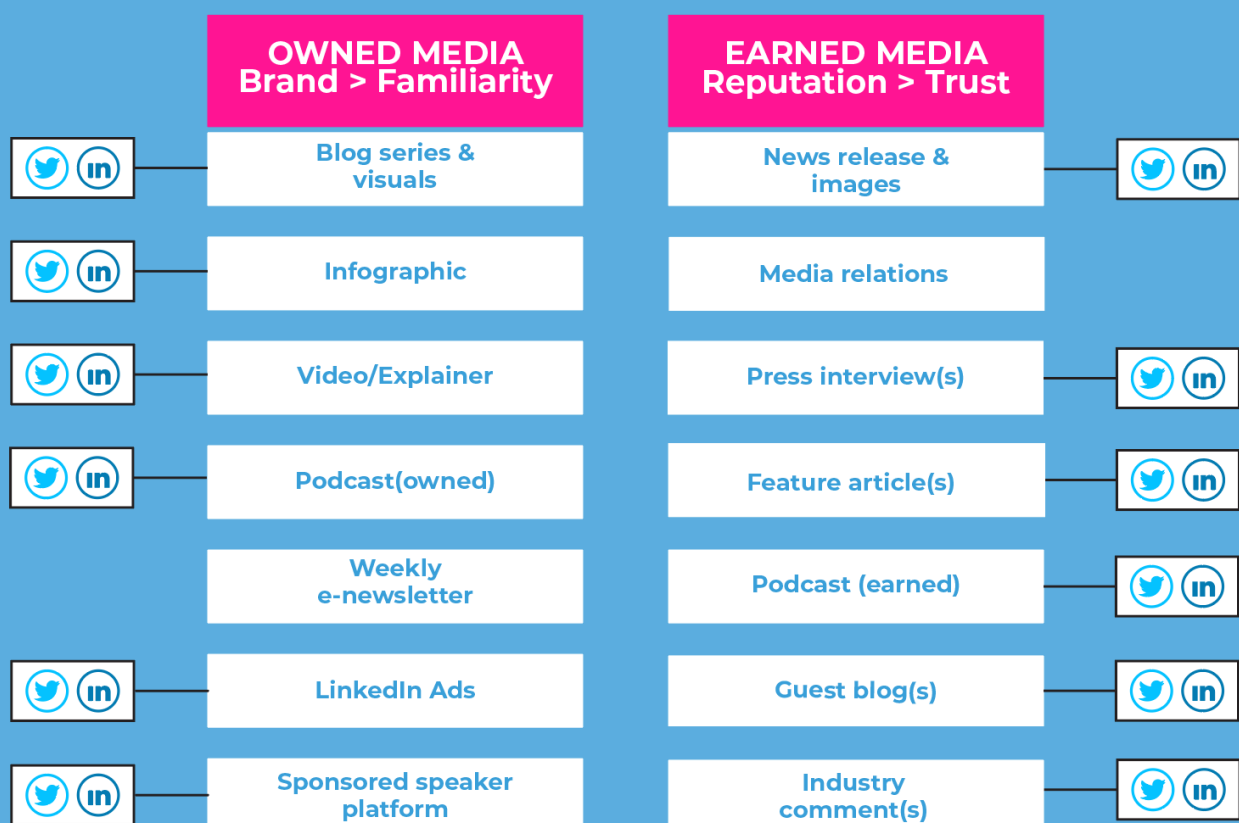
The beauty of this type of messaging is that unsuitable prospects will self-qualify out of the process.

This means you only engage with best fit prospects – and no-one's time is wasted.

In this instance, the campaign structure might look like this with owned and earned media supplemented by paid media aimed to drive traffic to a specific on-message event.

### GATED CONTENT

**Webinar/Insight: Provide an analysis of all the available solutions on the market to highlight the importance of the benefits and competitive differentiation detailed in your positioning statement**





# 5a. The Content:

## Develop your content calendar

Whichever media channels you've chosen for your different personas, a content calendar should be at the centre of your marketing communications plan.

This ensures you're providing information and messages that your customers want and are searching for.

A comprehensive content calendar provides a framework for clear, consistent communications; helping to define themes, key pillars and categories of content for your business, across the year.



Follow the simple steps below to help create a content calendar for your business, planning tactical and strategic messages via your different social media channels:

- 1.** Agree a time-period structure. Does your brand work in quarters, months, or seasons? The basic structure of a content calendar is monthly, split into weeks and days, but you can also segment this structure into quarters or seasons, to be relevant to your industry. See our example below.
- 2.** Research and plug in all the Key Awareness Days for your country/industry. These can be found by researching online. It's important to stay focused, on brand and on sector, to avoid sending out confusing, irrelevant messages to your target audience.

For example, a UK tech / science brand should stick to UK, tech and science-based awareness days.

I would avoid days such as National Cream Donut Day or Teddy Bear Day! These will dilute your message, confuse, and undermine your credibility.

- 3.** Identify and align on any brand offers and promotions that are planned throughout the year.

Ensure these are included within the plan from the outset, as these will require marketing promotions and may need to be a key focus of certain days, weeks, or months.

**4.** Establish some Key Content Pillars for regular themes of content. These key content pillars stem from the different categories of your business and should be top-line topics that provide rich, engaging ideas on a regular basis.

**5.** Include your SEO keyword selection in your content ideas.

At this stage, you should have an idea of what your keywords are, at both brand level and category level.

Ensure those keywords are included in your blogs, titles and images where appropriate.

**6.** Decide on any regular, recurring messages that you want to communicate on a weekly or monthly basis and include these in the calendar.

For example, you may want to do a weekly roundup or a monthly newsletter.

These should be scheduled / published at the same time each week or month.

There are certain times of the day, and days of the week which yield more engagement than others, so it's worth scheduling any regular communications on a day when you're most likely to get the highest engagement.

Each sector and industry will differ, but generally Sundays should be avoided for b2b comms.



**7.** Update, update, update! A content calendar is never 'finished and completed', so it's important to stay on top of your content calendar, to adapt, modify and refine it on a regular basis.

You should include tactical opportunities as they come along and make any strategic changes to help deliver against the business objectives.

To get you started with your content calendar planning, here's an image of one we use here at EC-PR.

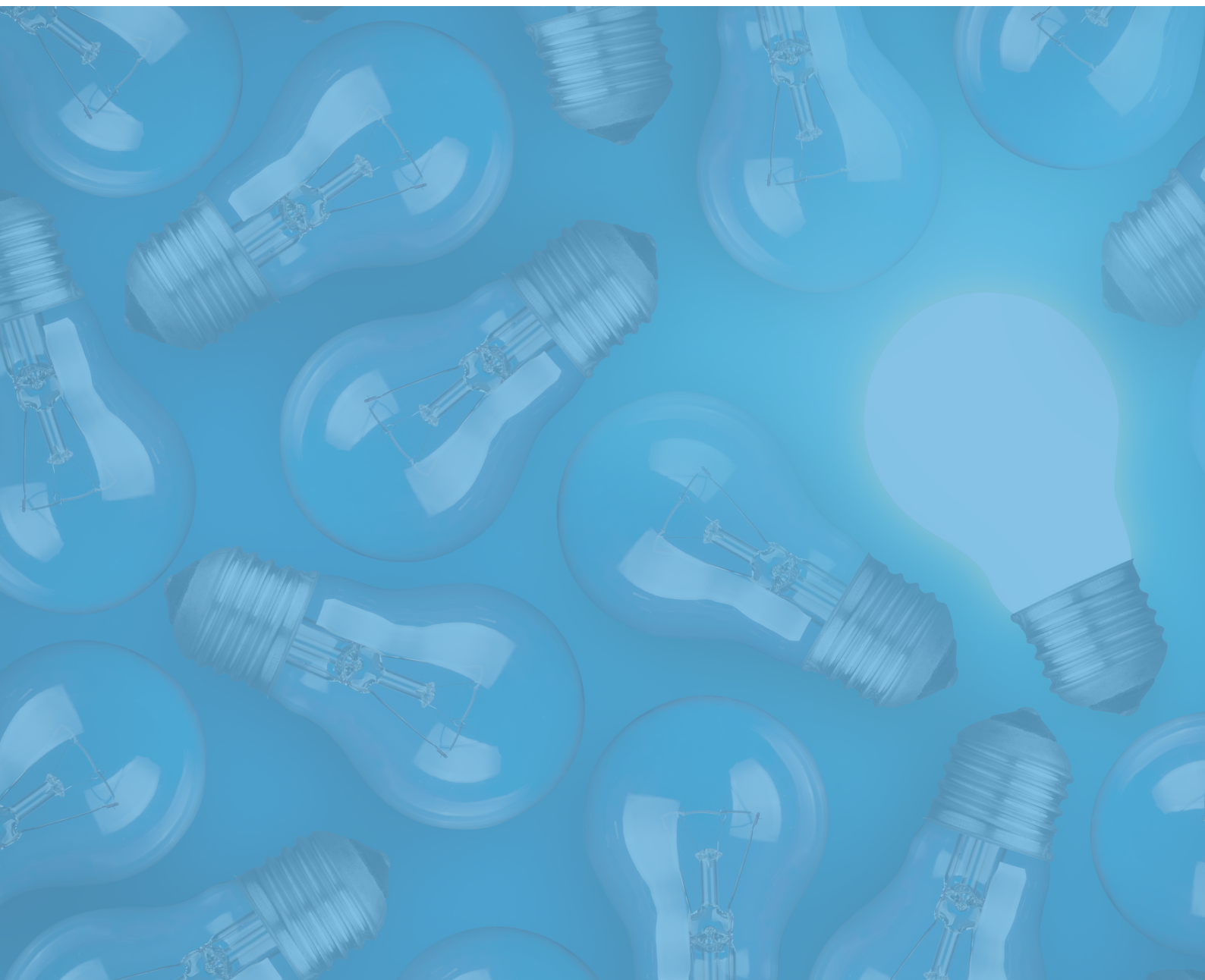
<b>Month : October 2020</b> <b>Pillar/Campaign/Theme : Campaign Planning</b>						<b>KEY</b> EMAIL SOCIAL POST BLOG LANDING PAGE
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				01	02	03
				PILLER CONTENT PIECE & DOWNLOAD	PILLER CONTENT PIECE email	
				How we guarantee your PR result - download	18 Benefits / Testimonial/ Advocacy	
				<a href="http://info.ec-pr.com/guarantee-pr-result">http://info.ec-pr.com/guarantee-pr-result</a>		
04	05	06	07	08	09	10
	Industry repost	CASE STUDY - A Communications Audit RAH Transport	CAMPAIGN PLANNING Evaluating your brand assets (brand audit V brand asset audit, what's the difference )	Evaluating your brand assets (brand audit V brand asset audit, what's the difference )	Evaluating your brand assets (brand audit V brand asset audit, what's the difference )	
	Testimonial / Advocacy	world space week	18 Benefits / advocacy social post	How we guarantee your PR result - download	18 Benefits / advocacy social post	
				<a href="http://info.ec-pr.com/guarantee-pr-result">http://info.ec-pr.com/guarantee-pr-result</a>		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	Industry repost	Download our 8-step guide to writing a communication strategy - FILM and GUIDE DOWNLOAD	setting PR campaign objectives	setting PR campaign objectives	setting PR campaign objectives	
	Testimonial / Advocacy	<a href="https://info.ec-pr.com/8-step-guide-communication-strategy-landing">https://info.ec-pr.com/8-step-guide-communication-strategy-landing</a>	18 Benefits / advocacy social post	How we guarantee your PR result - download	18 Benefits / advocacy social post	
				<a href="http://info.ec-pr.com/guarantee-pr-result">http://info.ec-pr.com/guarantee-pr-result</a>		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	Download our 8-step guide to writing a communication strategy - FILM and GUIDE DOWNLOAD	Industry repost	Selecting your marketing tools for an integrated PR campaign (PESO)	Selecting your marketing tools for an integrated PR campaign (PESO)	Selecting your marketing tools for an integrated PR campaign (PESO)	
	<a href="https://info.ec-pr.com/8-step-guide-communication-strategy-landing">https://info.ec-pr.com/8-step-guide-communication-strategy-landing</a>		how we guarantee your PR result - download	EuroNaval (23 - 23/10)	18 Benefits / advocacy social post	EuroNaval (23 - 23/10)
	Testimonial / Advocacy		18 Benefits / advocacy social post			
			<a href="http://info.ec-pr.com/guarantee-pr-result">http://info.ec-pr.com/guarantee-pr-result</a>			
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
EuroNaval (23 - 23/10)	Industry repost	CASE STUDY - Brand Awareness - and B2B PR Outreach for Concrinus	Campaigns to fill you funnel - brand awareness	Campaigns to fill you funnel - brand awareness	Campaigns to fill you funnel - brand awareness	
	The ultimate guide to writing a press release download		Download our 8-step guide to writing a communication strategy	PR week awards (27/10)	5 things that happened this month	
	<a href="https://info.ec-pr.com/ultimate-guide-writing-press-release">https://info.ec-pr.com/ultimate-guide-writing-press-release</a>		<a href="https://info.ec-pr.com/8-step-guide-communication-strategy-landing">https://info.ec-pr.com/8-step-guide-communication-strategy-landing</a>		18 Benefits / advocacy social post	
	Testimonial / Advocacy		18 Benefits / advocacy social post			

## 5b. The Content:

### **Brainstorm your brilliant ideas bank to create compelling editorial**

A Brilliant Ideas Bank is a repository of strategically aligned ideas that form the basis of editorial articles; ideas which allow you to showcase and share your company's knowledge and insight regarding a specific customer need or challenge.

A subject, or subjects, on which you wish to position yourself as the industry authority.





Independent editorial is an effective medium for delivering your engagement and solution messages.

Editors want objective and informed contributions, not sales pitches.

The engagement and solution messages of your message map created within the communication strategy development phase are concerned with building trust with your target personas.

Objective expertise delivered through a third party, i.e. an industry publication, is an ideal way of achieving this.

### There are generally four types of editorial:

- **Explain or interpret** an emerging issue, trend, or challenge.
- **Criticize or challenge** prevailing assumptions and methodologies with robust evidence.
- **Solution or persuasion** systematically assessing available solutions to #1 above.
- **Endorsement or alignment** with authorities and experts which complement your proposition, this may include case studies from your customer's perspective.



Unlike the content calendar, you have less control of when editors will want to run with your ideas so you will need to manage expectations accordingly.

However, while it's far harder to manage and schedule, the value of earned media cannot be over-estimated.

Ultimately, this activity will play an integral role in increasing your brand reputation.

Plot possible feature topics against each persona and specify which message it is delivering. You will end up with something like this for each persona.

IDEA	ENGAGEMENT	SOLUTION	REINFORCEMENT	VALUE
How to write an engaging and insightful thought leadership				
How to structure your PR activity				
PR ractic v.s. strategy				
Deliverables v.s retainer				
How to secure b2b news coverage				
How to use PESO effectively				
How to pitch an idea to b2b press				
How to measure the success of a b2b PR campaign				
Why is news coverage important?				
Common whitepaper mishapes/misdemeanours				
Thought leadership - what is it & why is matters				
Why do LinkedIn articles				
The best business automation tools for PR				
Setting realistic PR objectives - making them smart				
How to write a teach press release				
How we use PESO to deliver amazing results				
Client case study #1				
Client case study #2				
Client case study #3				

Plan in your news as part of your earned media activity.

# Now Deliver It!

You now have a plan that is rooted in achieving the business objectives as specified in your communication strategy, and have equipped yourself with the appropriate assets.

All of which are rooted in messaging that will engage and inspire your target audience.

Disciplined and methodical delivery of your plan will ensure you make strides to achieving your goals.

And, if you need any help...you know where to find us.





# Glossary:

## Types of messages

Messaging develops through four phases corresponding to where the customer is in the buying cycle. These are:

### Engagement:

You are building trust and authority. You need to demonstrate that you understand everything there is to know about each target persona's primary problem.

This includes where it originates, how it manifests itself and the impact it has on their business. This is how you attract prospects into your funnel.

### Solution:

You are building rapport and credibility. You are educating the target persona about the different types of possible solutions they can and should consider.

You will highlight the pros and cons of each guiding them towards a solution which features the specific competitive differentiator and benefits delivered only by your brand.

### Reinforcement:

You are securing interest in your brand's unique ability to solve your target persona's specific problem. Detailing your unique differentiator comes to the fore in all your communication.

### Value:

You are demonstrating to the target persona how their life will be better once they have acquired your solution. This will be underpinned by relevant statistics and metrics.

# Contact Us



**Call: 0203 740 6080**

At EC-PR we are passionate about B2B communication. We believe your work is amazing and we want to help you tell the world how extraordinary it is.



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