

Public Relations Campaign in the Internet Era

Bianca Teodorescu

PhD Candidate, University of Craiova, Faculty of Letters, Doctoral School, Romania

Abstract

The study is based on the development of the public relations' campaign from 2000 to 2016 and how they influenced the public. For this research it was used the meta-analytical method. In 2000 the era of Internet has been started, but wasn't at the same level how it is today. People from the field of Communication and Public Relation together with the company and its clients begun to learn how to use the Internet in order to improve the strategy of the public relations' campaign. A major influence given by the power of the Internet causes the launches of the social media: Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, Google+, Twitter and more. In Romania, Public Relations are representing a new field on the market; they have started to grow since the fall of the communism in 1989. In our days, more and more companies know the importance of the public relations and they try to discover new strategies to develop their image through public relations campaign. Time is passing and our society is changing and so are the public relations. If in the past year, the consumers were simply impressed by what they saw, nowadays people want more from public relations. They have access to the information through the Internet and are very suspicious about every product, so the people who are working in the public relations must be flexible and open minded to what is new. It's a continuous learning.

Keywords: public relations, social media, communication, strategy, present

JEL: Z10, Y80

1. Introduction

In the beginning of the new millennium, in 2000, the Internet will slowly become a part of every society of the world. However, because the Internet wasn't an important mean of communication how is in our days, the people from the public relations managed their campaign based on promoting their image on television, radio and billboards. According to that year, the media was responsible to improve the idea of public relations through different channels.

From 2000 to 2016, it occurred many changes in the performance and achieving success in a public relations campaign. The most important factor that sustained the power to create a series of diversity in the field of communication and public relations is the appearance of the social media in our society. But for the social media to become a main reason for campaigns, the society must have a modern technology. It is known that in 2000, the Internet wasn't such a base mean of communication how it is in our days, but it advanced quickly and became the society's sustained point. In our days, in 2016, a public relations campaign can be easily accessed on the Internet or better said-on social media as Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, Google+, Twitter and more. A public relations campaign must have a good strategy based on the existence of social media. With the help of them, people from the PR can find what the reputation of the company is and how is it reached by people and the most important thing: to see who are the people that are in the public target. In order to support and create a good public relations campaign, the company must have a content that attracts people. The strategy must rely on how much the company has an influence on the public target. People from the public relations are the one responsible to maintain a good dialogue with people on social media and encourage them to comment and like the various posts from Facebook, Twitter or others. Based on social media, a good strategy of public relations can increase the credibility of the company and build the reputation of it. Social media has to power to promote a company. Another interesting way in promoting a company is regarding using the blog or blogging. Here, the specialists from the public relations are not anymore depending on reporters to write the company's story. Instead, they are presenting it how they want on blog. In 2000 they were supporting only be the media. Now, they can be the media. A blog for a corporate company is now a necessity. Organizational blogging allows the customers or potential customers to involve with the organization's brand in an effectively way than the traditional way. In using a blog, member of the organization can see who is

entering the site to reach the necessary information through a tool named Google Analytics. It is used to track the traffic, the referrals and which posts are seen well. People from the public relations are the entire responsibility in promoting the image of their company (Coman, 2004; Badea, 2008; Brown, 2014).

2. Public Relations in Our Days

In our days, a public relations campaign had become more affordable than in the year 2000 because the services of public relations can create a budget according your necessity. Even in our society, there are many people who don't know what is the role of the public relations' specialists in a company. Specialists of public relations are the ones responsible in creating the public image of an institution, corporate company, commercial society, political or non-government organization (Cutlip, 1962; Black, 1989; Cutlip, 2013). Their role is to avoid conflicts and to negotiate, also to manage the relations with the media; people from the public relations are elaborating written and audio-visual messages and are organizing media events as press conference, launches of diverse services. Another important thing about the specialist in public relations is that he has the role to evolve a series of activities in order to develop the public image: planning a program specialized, create recommendation, planning activities and be in contact always with the result of the activities that are elaborated in the program. It's important to know that the specialist in public relations is maintaining always a relation with the organization's manager or with his client.

This result that the specialist in public relations must act professional in all his work that is consisting in: growing and maintaining a good relation of collaboration with the media, activity of writing and editing materials for different category of public, creating the company's identity, an efficient oral communication with the groups from the company, elaborating presentation or diverse types of collective events, brochure products, rapports, movies or other multimedia programs as important means of communication, organizing special events as competition, press conference, programs to reward the special activities. All these actions are achieving by the specialist in public relations in order to win the attention of public. For the person who works in the public relations filed, there are two very important activities: to research- this means to collect the necessary information in order to realize the strategy of company's campaign of public relations and to evaluate the program- to observe precise what is the activity that can be in the future strategy in the program.

The persons that are working in the field of public relations have a series of attribution and responsibilities: to research, collect, processing and analyze the information, to elaborate, create and select the writer, video, photo and audio material for the organization or the client, spreading the information to journalists, maintaining a good collaboration with their team and their clients, organizing and participating in special events for the company. A negative thing about working in the public relations is represented by the irregular program and the stress that is accumulating in working overtime. But Public relations are representing a good environment for the people to work. This field has two environments: interior and exterior; the first is for working at office in normal condition and the second is to participate in events, to meet with clients and journalists, and more.

A person who is a specialist in public relations has to be flexible, sociable, to have a distributive attentive, to have the capacity to work with the people and to love what he is doing. To practice this job, it is necessary to be trained at a superior level in Communication and Public Relations; also it is necessary to know management, marketing, publicity, journalism, social psychology and research of public opinions (Wilcox, Cameron & Reber, 1992; Botan & Taylor, 2004).

Our modern society is defined by the large number of members and has a complex organization that it could not work without the existence of public relations. The diversity of the organizations in our society is composed of efficient programs of communications in order to create a bond between them and the public. Public relations are representing original instruments to solve the problems that an organization has: to develop a problem, to launch an idea and to avoid a catastrophe.

After the fall of communism in 1989 in Romania, the public relations had developed very well and in just a few years; our country has moved the public relations from ignorance to professional field- it can be comparable with the modern society in which the public relations were practiced over a century (Iorgulescu, 2009; Coman, 2011; Cmeciu, 2011; Ene, 2011; Stoica, 2012). However, it may have to pass some time for the public relations to develop as a culture. Every part of our society must try to understand the concept of public relations and its importance. Public relations are the necessary instruments to promote a brand because it addresses directly to its public. Public relations have a series of functions. The first function is represented by the notoriety that is the most efficient and safely activity of the public relations to make known a certain product, values or services to its public. Education is the second function and is representing the fact that the best consumer is the one who is

educated; public relations are educating the public. The credibility is the key in the relations public and it is known as a communication instrument in order to inform the public, not to make advertising (Kitchen, 1997; Voinea, 2015). To obtain a support from certain parts means to grow constantly the credibility in manner to send the message and to be legitimated as a neutral part. The encouragement of the behavior to buy is another function of the public relations where the consumers are increasingly informed. The target public must have a good relation based on trust with the organization that is producing a certain product. For this to happen, the organization must explain through a better communication which are the values of the company and must create special programs of public relations. Another function of the public relation is marked by the difference- where the public is already educated, the interest of a certain product and its notoriety is established and from here the message of the public relations must differentiate the brand from the competition (Stancu, 2004; Gregory, 2009; Negrea, 2015). The position is another function where the differentiate is realized through positioning that is marked by the way in which the product is seen by the consumer. The positioning is obtained through an efficient and credible communication. The last function is represented by the relations' management with the consumer where the public relations are oriented in the construction of the relations based on informal communication.

People who are getting in touch with the universe of public relations' field are introduced in confused state because the field of activity is new and has semantic difficulties.

In an organization, the public relations are very important because it create a stable loyalty with the employee. The public relations are researching and evaluating permanently the employee's attitude and how their implications are. Public relations can be referred as an internal activity too. From this it results that the internal public relations are concerned with the relations with the organization's employee and are used the following means of communications: information letters, brochures, discussions, reunions and more. The specialist in public relations has the role to teach the managers how to present their image in press conferences and interviews.

There are two essential elements of the program of public relations: personal contact and communication that is producing understanding, sympathy and mutual trust. A person who has the role to be the specialist in public relations in an organization has to develop and implement programs in order to send to the people the correctly information that they need. It is important to know that the clients of every organization are representing their self as means of internal communication in which they can communicate with the

organization's employee to make comments or appreciate the quality of the company's services (Hutton, 1999; Sriramesh & Vercic, 2003). The external part of the activity of public relations is the one responsible with the connection with the media. External public relations are maintaining the connection with the media through: personal contact- individual's interviews, press conference, discourses, unofficial meetings, special events, articles, and more.

Present consumers are different from the people from the past because they are not looking with trust and are not anymore loyal to the products. The modern consumers are shrewd and they receive the information from the publicity in a skeptical mode (Kent & Taylor, 2002; Petrovici, 2011; Ionescu, 2015). They are trying to understand and to find the individuality in the brand's sense in manner to mark their personality and the social statute. In our days, if a person wants to find some information about a product, he will not trust the advertising that he is seeing on television and he will find the necessary information on Internet; Google is representing the first instrument that people are using to find the information (Lendingham, 2003; Ranta, 2014; Basic, 2015; Hart, 2016). Another important thing about the present and modern consumers is that they appreciate more the independence and the authenticity. On the Internet they find the correctly information about the brands. The communication between the people from a certain organization and its public is realized faster on the Internet. The information is received immediately. A public relations campaign must create its strategy, according the needs of people.

3. Conclusion

Public relations are more important than never in our society. They have the power to influence the public and change the perception of any product image. Society has changed so as the field of public relations. Past consumers are different from the present consumers. People are not anymore influenced just by what they see. In our times where the Internet is representing the major source of information, the consumers are becoming more and more suspicious of what they are receiving from every public relations' campaign. The public relations' area in every organization must improve their strategy in order to attract people to their organization. A simple way to do this is by using the social media. A good strategy of public relations must show the necessary information about what image they are promoting on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or other forms of social media. It's important to know that a good communication of the organization with its client or its public can be reached on the Internet: social media are representing the most important part in their

activity on the Internet. In Romania, after 1989, Public Relations had begun a part of every organization. However, the field of public relations is still a new domain in our country.

References

- Badea, S. (2008). The legal text–form of communication or obsessive discourse. *Annals of the University of Craiova, Series: Philology–English*, 21-30.
- Basic, G. (2015). Ethnic monitoring and social control: Descriptions from juveniles in juvenile care institutions. *Nordic Social Work Research*, 5(1), 20-34.
- Black, S. (1989). *Introduction to public relations*. Modino.
- Botan, C. H., & Taylor, M. (2004). Public relations: State of the field. *Journal of communication*, 54(4), 645-661.
- Brown, R. E. (2014). *The public relations of everything: The ancient, modern and postmodern dramatic history of an idea*. Routledge.
- Cmeci, C. M. (2010). *Relații publice sectoriale*. Editura Universitară Danubius.
- Coman, C. (2011). *Relatiile publice: principii si strategii*. MintRight Inc.
- Coman, M. (2004). *Introducere în sistemul mass-media*. Polirom.
- Cutlip, S. M. (1962). *Effective public relations*. Pearson Education India.
- Cutlip, S. M. (2013). *The unseen power: Public relations: A history*. Routledge.
- Ene, A. M. (2011). Modalități de comunicare în cadrul relațiilor publice. *EIRP Proceedings*, 3.
- Gregory, A. (2009). *Planificarea si managementul campaniilor de relatii publice*. Editura Polirom, Iasi.
- Hart, A. J. (2016). *Exploring the Influence of Management Communication Behaviors on Employee Engagement*.
- Hutton, J. G. (1999). The definition, dimensions, and domain of public relations. *Public Relations Review*, 25(2), 199-214.
- Iorgulescu, A. (2009). *Introducere în relații publice*. Universitaria.
- Kent, M. L., & Taylor, M. (2002). Toward a dialogic theory of public relations. *Public relations review*, 28(1), 21-37.
- Kitchen, P. J. (1997). *Public relations: Principles and practice*. Cengage Learning EMEA.
- Ledingham, J. A. (2003). Explicating relationship management as a general theory of public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 15(2), 181-198.
- Negrea, Xenia (2015). Public Interest, Procedural and Discursive Limitations. *Social Sciences and Education Research Review*, 2(1), 33-41.
- Petrovici, A. (2011). *Introducere în relații publice*. Alma Mater.
- Ranta, A. E. (2014). Accesul la informațiile de interes public–obligație legală în sarcina autorităților administrației publice. *Studiu de caz privind gradul de*

accesibilitate al informațiilor de interes public comunicate din oficiu. *Revista Transilvană de Științe Administrative*, 16(35), 98-113.

Ślusarczyk, B., Baryń, M., & Kot, S. (2016). Tire Industry Products as an Alternative Fuel. *Polish Journal of Environmental Studies*, 25(3), 1263-1270.

Sriramesh, K., & Vercic, D. (Eds.). (2003). *The global public relations handbook: Theory, research, and practice*. Routledge.

Stancu, V. (2004). *Campanii de relații publice*. București: Comunicare.ro.

Stoica, M. M. (2012). *Relații publice: ghid pentru seminarii și examene*. Pro Universitaria.

Voinea, Dan Valeriu (2015). The journalists' obligation of protecting the victims of sexual assault. *Social Sciences and Education Research Review*, 2(1), 101-106.

Wilcox, D. L., Cameron, G. T., & Reber, B. H. (1992). *Public relations: Strategies and tactics* (pp. 426-8). A. Dodge (Ed.). New York: Harper Collins.

Wyslocka, E. (2015). E-learning in the management of Polish companies. *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 11.