

PR builds trust and remains a powerful tool in your marketing arsenal

In a recent online marketing survey one of the questions asked was which sources of information respondents trust the most when they're in the market for a new technology solution. The multiple choice options included online articles; information on the company website; social media posts, recommendations from peers, friends and family as well as videos.

By [Judith Middleton](#), issued by [DUO Marketing + Communications](#) 14 Jan 2020

Online articles is an interesting choice. How can B2B technology companies secure online articles and why would readers trust the articles they read? To answer the first question, the company will most likely use a PR agency to secure online editorial coverage or earned media. If not, it will pay for the article to be published by a credible news site, also known as native or paid content.

To answer the second question we need to take a closer look at the content people trust. The most recent [Nielsen Global Trust in Advertising Survey](#) found that 66% of respondents trust earned editorial content, such as online and print articles. This percentage is even higher (71%) for respondents from Africa and the Middle East. In our region, respondents only have more trust in brand sponsorship, brand websites and recommendations from people they know than editorial content.

Trust is earned

It goes without saying that trust and action go hand-in-hand, but trust isn't always a prerequisite for purchasing a product or a solution. Some advertising, particularly online and mobile formats, make it easy for people to take action and make a purchase. They click on a link, are directed to a landing page or website, find the information they're after and make a purchasing decision. However, when it comes to a technology solution or service, the 'why' isn't always that clear from the first engagement with a brand - why is this solution better than another, why must I do business with this particular company and why must I trust this company with my cloud migration, digital transformation implementation or modernisation project?

The Nielsen survey found that trust exceeds action in only one format of advertising and that is with earned editorial content such as online and print articles. 66% of respondents trust editorial as an advertising format, with 63% who take action based on that trust.

Increase PR's ROI

This is where PR comes in and why it is such a powerful tool in your marketing arsenal. When PR forms part of a holistic marketing strategy the trust, credibility and brand awareness it builds can be extended quickly, widely and effectively across earned, owned and shared media.

This proven tool is especially valuable when competing for audiences' attention across screens and platforms in an increasingly cluttered content landscape. Here are some tactics to increase PR's ROI:

- Share the editorial content generated through an amplification strategy across the company's social media platforms linking back to the original stories on third-party media sites.
- For added credibility, ensure that created editorial content is published to the respective company spokesperson's individual LinkedIn profile.
- Share suggested social media posts internally with employees and encourage them to make it their own as part of an employee advocacy programme.
- Add synopses of the news articles to your website's news page with a link to the original story and a logo of the media platform.
- Repurpose the PR content into short articles of no more than 300 words for the company's blog to support SEO.

Use the time with the spokesperson to create a podcast or a short vox pop video off the back of a content briefing to share on the website and across social media channels

Extend the trust

The aim is to make the most of the PR content generated. This is where a [niche B2B agency that specialises in PR, marketing and digital amplification](#) can deliver all of the above and more. Such a partner understands the industry and how to translate a business's value simply and effectively. It has the ability to be more nimble in an evolving PR market, and offers clients scalable, focused and flexible models of service that deliver impactful PR, with a high return on investment. Technology brands should expect nothing less from their PR and marketing partner.

For those planning their marketing tactics with the next generation in mind, both Generation Y (millennials) and Z trust editorial content (68% of respondents in both cases) and view earned content as their fourth and third most trusted advertising format respectively. This means PR has earned its rightful place in a well-thought-out marketing strategy and has an important role to fulfill when it comes to building trust, now and in the future.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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