

Building Online Brand Awareness

with Digital PR



A public relations specialist's guide to transforming their practice into the digital era

The future of traditional public relations has never seemed bleaker.

Today's customers ignore most brand-promotional content. And unless an event takes place online, they most likely won't notice it either.

It's no surprise that [87% of PR professionals](#) believe the term "public relations" will no longer be relevant to their work soon.

At the same time, so many brands regularly launch successful (and highly-profitable) PR campaigns.

Their efforts attract relevant customers, connect them with the brand, and drive sales.

What's different about what they do?

For one, their PR teams meet audiences where these people are — in the digital world. They position their brands in search engines. Place brand content in online publications. Finally, they embrace any other channel that's accessible on a person's computer or smartphone.

In this guide, we'll show you how you could do the same. You'll discover how to evolve your public relations practice into the digital era.

You'll learn:

- How the new buying behavior has shaped the public relations practice
- What is Digital PR and how it works
- How your practice must evolve and what new skills you must develop
- Examples of digital PR campaigns and tools that help you deliver them
- How to measure and prove the success of your efforts

So, let's begin.

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Table of contents

Your Target Audience Has Moved On (And Why You Must Follow)

Discover How Shifts in Buying Behavior Have Shaped Modern Public Relations

The evolution of the buying cycle

New expectations for PR

What is Digital PR?

Digital PR – Key Processes and Channels

Channel #1 – Content Marketing

Channel #2 – SEO

Channel #3 – Social Media Marketing

Channel #4 – Online Media Relations

Who is the digital-era PR specialist then?

Digital PR Tools

Task #1 – Analyzing Competitor Strategies

Task #2 – Connecting with Media Sources

Task #3 – Identify the Most Viable Strategies or Campaign Ideas

Task #4 – Pitching

Measuring Results

Conclusion

Make Your PR Data-Driven

About SEMrush

Your Target Audience Has Moved On

(And Why You Must Follow)



Discover How Shifts in Buying Behavior Have Shaped Modern Public Relations

I'm sure you've heard about the negative changes impacting the customer behavior already. Drop in attention span, over-reliance on technology or skepticism towards marketing messages, for example.

But there is something that continues to remain constant. It's the fact that customers still seek new products or services.

Perhaps even more so than before.

It's just that buyers no longer discover and buy them by the means to which you might be so accustomed.

Your first step towards digital PR, then, is to understand the contemporary buying cycle. And next, realize what place public relations play in it today.



The evolution of the buying cycle

The buying process used to be so simple. A person with a problem would inquire about it, be it with a salesperson or a store clerk. They, in turn, would recommend some solutions. And if a person felt these options satisfy their need, they'd buy one.

Customers' awareness of brands was limited by what they've heard about or read in the traditional media — publications, magazines, radio or TV.

The PR's job was to position information about a brand in such media to make more people aware of it.

The same process looks completely different today.

Modern customers begin their buying journey in search engines. And they do so before they're even ready to consider getting any particular solution.

In fact, [72% of customers](#) turn to Google to find more information about their prob-

lem and discover products or solutions that could help solve it.

Many scout review platforms and other online sources to assess their options further.

Customers also turn to social media. They visit Twitter or Facebook to find out what others say online about the brands they consider, scout Reddit for reviews, and openly ask about them on Quora or Slack. And often, what they find, provides the ultimate argument whether to engage with a brand.

For PR, meeting this new process requires positioning a brand in all those touchpoints — in search engines, social media or relevant online publications. And then, manage its reputation anywhere where customers could use to voice their opinion.



AS A RESULT, brands now have an entirely new set of expectations for public relations.

New expectations for PR

Modern PR must deliver far greater and more specific results than ever before. And do so much quicker, at that.

PR work must affect the company's bottom line now.

Traditional public relations delivered hardly any insight into the success of its efforts.

In the past, brands couldn't tell if a press release reached the target audience. Not to mention, whether it has made any difference to its sales figures at all.

But as you'll discover later in this guide, the situation is different with digital PR. With extensive access to data, professionals can now measure their impact on the bottom line. As a result, they have to show how their initiatives deliver a positive and measurable ROI.

Modern PR must create a dialogue with the target audience.

Traditional PR focused on one-way communication.

But today's audiences seek more. They want to engage in a dialogue with their favorite brands. Customers want them not only to listen but respond, and act on their comments.

And it's the PR's job to manage those conversations.

Finally, today's PR specialists have to manage brand reputation across many channels.

You already know that today's buyers rarely engage with a brand without prior research. Some of which includes visiting review sites and other channels customers use to share their opinion about a brand.

As a result, brands must pay close attention to what others say about them online. Digital PR specialists, in turn, manage those mentions, comments, and reviews across the Internet.

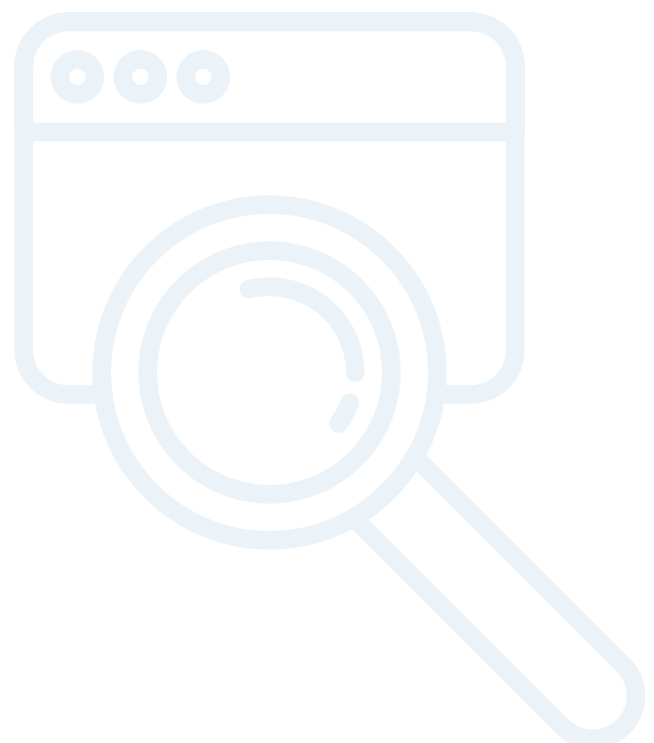


BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER, it becomes clear that digital PR does not focus on media relations anymore.

It aims to increase a brand's online visibility instead.

We've used the term, digital PR, a lot in this publication already. But we haven't actually explained it. So, let's define the discipline and show you what it involves.

(Later in the guide, we'll also show you what you need to do to transform your practice into the digital era.)



What is Digital PR?



This is just an introductory excerpt

You can download the full version here:

<https://www.semrush.com/ebooks/digitalpr/>