



NAVIGATING THE INTERSECTION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PUBLIC POLICY

Dr. P. Yarram Reddy

Faculty, Department of Business Management
Royal School of Information and Management Sciences
Chandragiri, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh, India

Abstract: Whereas advertising is the paid use of media space to sell something, Public Relations (PR) is the attempt to establish and maintain good relations between an organization and its constituents. Practically, Public Relations campaigns strive to use the free press to encourage favorable coverage. Because of this, PR efforts that get products and brands into the press are far more valuable than a simple advertisement. Regardless of the fate of advertising, Public Relations has clearly come to have an increasing role in marketing and ad campaigns. Wicked problems require holistic and systemic thinking that accommodates interdisciplinary solutions and cross-sectoral collaborations between private and public sectors. This paper explores how Public Relations as a boundary-spanning function at the nexus of corporate and political discourse can support societies to tackle wicked problems.

Keywords : Public Relations, Organisations, Advertising, Campaigns, Social Media.

INTRODUCTION

The world of Public Relations (PR) has witnessed a profound transformation in the recent years. This transformation, while posing its own set of challenges, has also ushered in emerging trends that demand the attention of professionals in the field. PR has proven its resilience, remaining an integral component of marketing amidst these dynamic changes. According to reports, PR services have seen a significant uptick in their share of marketing budgets, growing from 10% in 2019 to 17% in 2022, signifying a renewed emphasis on integrated communications. Clients are increasingly turning to PR to effectively communicate with a variety of stakeholders, with services like crisis handling, public affairs and advocacy, and internal communications making the most sought-after services. In today's political climate, you need a forward-thinking

advocate to represent your legislative, regulatory, and business interests at the state and federal level. The bipartisan team of government relations professionals at ML Strategies combines deep industry knowledge with political savvy and strategic brand positioning to advance your business goals.

OBJECTIVES

- ❖ Describe the models of public relations and the stages of public relations campaign.
- ❖ Analyse the role of public relations in media and culture.
- ❖ Analyse the ways public relations is taking the place of traditional advertising.

METHODOLOGY

The paper is solely based on secondary data. The different sources of data are journal articles, websites, e-books, reports of various organization



and commission, articles published in international, national and local papers etc. This paper will give a brief description of the Navigating the Intersection of Public Relations and Public Policy.

What is Public Relations?

Public Relations (PR) is a broader field that involves managing an organization's relationships with the public, including customers, investors, and the media. PR professionals build and maintain a favorable public image for their organization through media relations, social media, events, and other tactics. Public relations is about building a positive image for your organization, while public affairs is about managing your organization's relationship with the government and other stakeholders. Think of public relations to connect with customers, and public affairs to communicate with policymakers and regulators. If you're looking to improve your organization's reputation or need help communicating with the public, outsourcing a public relations firm can be a great option. In a nutshell, here are the key differences between Public Affairs vs. Public Relations:

Government Relations and Public Affairs

The offer clients a formidable combination of political and legal intelligence. Many of lawyers and policy advocates have extensive backgrounds in public service. The provide fully integrated team of lobbyists, regulatory specialists and communicators operating under one budget. Government policy and regulation define your business environment. Understanding the political landscape in which they are made, and knowing how to navigate it, can be

critical. Having the right person in your corner to advocate on your behalf can be crucial factor in your organization's success. When selecting your advisors, you need a team with the right relationships, the political intelligence, the legal knowledge and are reputation for delivering results. Working at the intersection of business and government, the offer a unique approach to identifying emerging policy risks and opportunities. And to shaping legislation, policy, and government decisions to your advantage. To take the time to learn the nuances of your business and build these into our strategic approach and understand the political and policy-making environment in which you are engaged to make sure that the respected and trusted by legislators and policy makers.

Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs

- ❖ Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs
- ❖ Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
- ❖ Bureau of International Information Programs
- ❖ Bureau of Public Affairs
- ❖ Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy
- ❖ Global Engagement Center
- ❖ Office of Policy, Planning and Resources

Government Policy and Regulations

- ❖ When selecting your advisors, you need a team with the right relationships, the political intelligence, the legal knowledge and a reputation for delivering results.
- ❖ Working at the intersection of business and government, we offer a unique approach to identifying emerging policy risks and opportunities. And to shaping



legislation, policy, and government decisions to your advantage.

- ❖ To take the time to learn the nuances of your business, and build these into our strategic approach. We also understand the political and policy-making environment in which you are engaged to make sure that we are respected and trusted by legislators and policy makers.
- ❖ We have an unparalleled combination of industry, regulatory, and legal knowledge. This, along with our understanding of the way governments and legislators operate, means that we can deploy the full range of arguments and approaches in a way that is sensitive to your needs and to the pressures on policymakers.
- ❖ Across the major policy-making centers of the world, including Washington, Brussels, London, and Beijing, our global team brings together deep regulatory knowledge and policy advocacy experience with local insight. We deliver results on a local or international level.

Bureau of Public Affairs: Office of Press Relations

The Office of Press Relations supports the President and Secretary of State by explaining the foreign policy of the United States and the positions of the Department of State to domestic and foreign journalists. The office also provides logistical support and expertise to the Secretary of State and other Department officials for events involving media coverage/participation. Specifically, the Press Office responds to press queries, conducts media interviews, monitors media for breaking international events, and coordinates special press briefings and conference

calls. They also support the Secretary of State's public events in addition to those of the Deputy Secretary and other senior Department officials. In addition, the Press Office coordinates interview requests from the national media for senior State Department officials other than the Secretary of State. The staff proactively pitches interviews on a wide variety of issues to national media outlets and places editorials in major newspapers.

Public Relations:

- ❖ Focuses on managing an organization's relationships with the public.
- ❖ Aims to build and maintain a positive public image for the organization through media relations and other tactics.
- ❖ Generally deals with a wider range of stakeholders
- ❖ May not be directly involved in public policy decisions and government relations.

Public Affairs: -

- Focuses specifically on the intersection between an organization and the public policy environment in which it operates.
- Aims to influence public policy decisions that impact the organization, engage with stakeholders such as elected officials and community leaders, and monitor and respond to public opinion and media coverage.
- Deals more specifically with government relations and public policy decisions.
- Works to manage relationships with stakeholders involved in the public policy decision-making process.



PR Functions

Either private PR companies or in-house communications staffers carry out PR functions. A PR group generally handles all aspects of an organization's or individual's media presence, including company publications and press releases. Such a group can range from just one person to dozens of employees depending on the size and scope of the organization. PR functions include the following:

1. **Media relations:** takes place with media outlets.
2. **Internal communications:** occurs within a company between management and employees, and among subsidiaries of the same company.
3. **Business-to-business:** happens between businesses that are in partnership
4. **Public affairs:** takes place with community leaders, opinion formers, and those involved in public issues.
5. **Investor relations:** occurs with investors and shareholders
6. **Strategic communication:** intended to accomplish a specific goal
7. **Issues management:** keeping tabs on public issues important to the organization

Earn an Executive Certificate in Public Policy

The Public Policy concentration is for experienced policymakers seeking to become more powerful catalysts for meaningful policy change. In these executive leadership programs are

- Discover how to become more efficient and effective in policy development and delivery.
- Learn innovative leadership skills essential for public policy experts.
- Hone your expertise on an urgent public policy topic.

Alumni with Executive Certificates in Public Policy include elected officials at the federal/national and local-levels, policy experts, and leaders of advocacy organizations.

Executive Certificate Requirements

To earn your Executive Certificate in Public Policy, you must finish three programs within six years, at least two of which must be from the list of core programs below. Programs may be a mix of online or on-campus. You will need to apply for each program separately and complete them at your own pace within six years. Create your own learning experience by completing a minimum of 2 programs from the Public Policy concentration core programs below. Your third program may be completed from the list below or any HKS Executive Education program (except for Investment Decisions and Behavioral Finance):

- ❖ Behavioral Insights and Public Policy
- ❖ Climate Change and Energy: Policymaking for the Long Term
- ❖ Climate Change Policy
- ❖ Comparative Tax Policy and Administration
- ❖ Cybersecurity: The Intersection of Policy and Technology
- ❖ Evidence for Equity
- ❖ Implementing Public Policy
- ❖ Infrastructure in a Market Economy
- ❖ Leadership and Character in Uncertain Times
- ❖ Leadership Decision Making
- ❖ Leading Economic Growth
- ❖ Leading in Artificial Intelligence: Exploring Technology and Policy
- ❖ Leading Smart Policy Design
- ❖ Leading Successful Programs: Using Evidence to Assess Effectiveness



- ❖ Senior Executives in National and International Security
- ❖ Senior Executive Fellows
- ❖ Senior Executives in State and Local Government
- ❖ Senior Managers in Government
- ❖ Transforming Service Delivery for the 21st Century (formerly Delivering Public Services: Efficiency, Equity, and Quality)

What is Public Affairs?

Imagine you're the CEO of a famous brand. You've just learned that new regulation could impact your ability to sell one of your flagship products. Public affairs refer to strategically managing an organization's relationships with various stakeholders, including the media, policymakers, communities, and other relevant groups. It involves monitoring and influencing public policy decisions, engaging with the public, and building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders.

Here are some critical aspects of public affairs: -

- **Relationship management:** Public affairs professionals work to build and maintain positive relationships with stakeholders, including elected officials, community leaders, and industry groups. They also monitor and respond to their organization's public opinion and media coverage.
- **Government relations:** Public affairs firms engage with policymakers and government officials to influence public policy decisions that affect their organization. This may involve advocating for legislative changes or regulatory reform.
- **Issue management:** Public affairs consultants monitor issues impacting

their organization and develop strategies to address them. This may involve developing messaging and communication plans to address negative media coverage or public opinion.

- **Public engagement:** Public affairs agencies formulate strategies to engage with the public, including hosting events, building social media campaigns, and responding to general inquiries.

FOUR BENEFITS OF STRATEGIZING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

A well-crafted public affairs strategy can benefit organizations and individuals looking to advocate for their interests. Some of the key benefits include.

- **Managing Reputational Risks:** Public affairs consultants are trained to monitor and respond to public opinion and media coverage. They can develop messaging and communication plans to effectively manage reputational threats and mitigate potential damage to their organization's image.
- **Connecting with the Community:** By conducting public relations programs like community outreach programs and events, organizations can increase brand awareness, improve customer loyalty, and enhance their reputation.
- **Building Strong Relationships with Decision-Makers:** Public affairs professionals aim to build strong relationships with decision-makers, such as elected officials and bureaucrats. This allows them to gain access to key decision-makers and influence policy decisions.
- **Shaping Public Opinion:** Public affairs firms work to shape public opinion on issues that are important



to their organization or cause. They develop and deliver compelling messages that resonate with their target audience, influencing public opinion and creating a favorable environment for their organization.

PR AS A REPLACEMENT FOR ADVERTISING

In some cases, PR has begun overtaking advertising as the preferred way of promoting a particular company or product. For example, the tobacco industry offers a good case study of the migration from advertising to PR. Regulations prohibiting radio and TV cigarette advertisements had an enormous effect on sales. In response, the tobacco industry began using PR techniques to increase brand presence. Tobacco company Philip Morris started underwriting cultural institutions and causes as diverse as the Joffrey Ballet, the Smithsonian, environmental awareness, and health concerns. Marlboro sponsored events that brought a great deal of media attention to the brand. For example, during the 1980s, the Marlboro Country Music Tour took famous country stars to major coliseums throughout the country and featured talent contests that brought local bands up on stage, increasing the audience even further. Favorable reviews of the shows generated positive press for Marlboro. Later interviews with country artists and books on country music history have also mentioned this tour.

On the fifth anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in 1987, Marlboro's PR groups organized a celebration hosted by comedian Bob Hope. Country music legends the Judds and Alabama headlined the show, and Marlboro paid for new names inscribed

on the memorial. By attaching the Marlboro brand to such an important cultural event, the company gained an enormous amount of publicity. Just as importantly, these efforts at least partially restored the stature that the brand lost due to health concerns.

CONCLUSION

The nature of the content and communication generated by PR practitioners and organizations, including the localization and projection of a positive national image to the world in cross-border communication. The impact of gender on the use of social media in the PR professions where customary gender segregation is undergoing radical change through government policy, leading to more educational and career opportunities for women, and an increasingly globalized culture. Social media and government controls or censorship, these being factors that can bear upon two-way communication from both the organizational/practitioner and audience side. In the social media context, this is also an issue of global significance at a time when social media platforms are being strongly implicated in the dissemination of 'fake news' and as facilitators of libelous or defamatory 'cancel culture'.

The acceptance of social media itself as a phenomenon of technology, especially from the target audience side. The avoidance of communication with online communities among PR practitioners during the Covid-19 pandemic, when such engagement with the public could have afforded a form of crisis management, rather than merely generating new content in one-way communication



REFERENCES

1. Behn, R. D., "Why Measure Performance? Different Purposes Require Different Measures," *Public Administration Review* 63 (2003): 586–606.
2. Holsti, O. R., *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities* (Reading, MA: AddisonWesley, 1969).
3. Pascale, C. (2010) 'Cartographies of knowledge: Exploring qualitative epistemologies'. Sage Publications.
4. Grunig, J. E., and T. Hunt, *Managing Public Relations* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1984).
5. Statista. (2017) Number of Facebook users in Saudi Arabia from 2017 to 2021. Statista online. Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/553656/mobilemessaging-user-reach-saudi-arabia/> [Accessed: 10 September 2020].
6. Reddi, C. (2019) *Effective Public Relations and Media Strategy*. PHI Learning Pvt. Ltd.
7. Duhe, S. (2015) 'An overview of new media research in public relations journals from 1981 to 2014', *Public Relations Review*, 41, pp. 153-159.
8. <https://reputationtoday.in/navigating-the-evolving-landscape-of-public-relations-challenges-and-trends/>
9. <https://www.designrush.com/agency/public-relations/trends/public-affairs>
10. <https://open.lib.umn.edu/mediaandculture/chapter/12-2-public-relations/>
11. <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/educational-programs/executive-education/admissions-fees/executive-certificates/public-policy> .
12. <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/index.htm>
13. <https://www.hoganlovells.com/en/service/government-relations-and-public-affairs>