



PR WIRE

E-zine designed and published by PR students as part of the experiential learning process at SCMC

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Editorial Desk

The PR Wire is an initiative by the students of SCMC specialising in the field of Public Relations. The PR Wire is a platform for students to discuss various aspects of the industry, both local and global, backed by research along with opinion pieces and industry news. Public Relations is an ever-growing and dynamic industry, and with this first edition of the PR Wire we give you a glimpse into how PR education is shaping up at our institute



By Muskaan Chawla

If you are reading this article, there is a good chance you have toyed with the idea of getting a Master's degree in communication or public relations for some time now. Let's face it, the job market out there is a cutthroat competition, so getting that extra edge on the resume is a great thing, right?

But then why exactly a Master's degree for that extra edge? Before you settle down for an average of two years of school (and tuitions), it's good to evaluate the reason for such a move. Here is a selection of advice and suggestions from industry and education experts online.

Reasons for a Master's degree

Getting a higher degree is always a nice way to stand out among your peers. Maybe there is a promotion that you want to go for, but don't meet all the requirements. Having a higher degree can get you those skills.

A Master's degree does help you enhance your researching skills. Every PG or Master's degree, requires you to do some form of original work, work with people, collect data etc. These skills are essentially necessary when you work in a high paced industry like communications or PR or marketing, where every word needs to be well researched and backed with findings.

But at the same time, you need to understand that not all skills require a higher degree. Sometimes, a mentor, taking projects outside your expertise zone or even volunteering around town can help you gain those skills.

Also, if you feel like you are stuck at your job and see school as a way out, you might want to rethink. School is much like the same work, just done in a library or cubicle. Taking a higher degree, might not get you happiness, which takes its root in some other reason.

Money should not be a motivating factor, cause with the increased burden of tuition there is also a burden of loss of pay. So essentially, a Master's degree is a good option if done for the right reasons. Otherwise, nothing beats a good old-fashioned experience in any industry.

Prospects for higher education

If you're reached till this point, this means you probably have a couple of good reasons to pick up a Master's. So, the next logical step is to decide the field. Obviously, it's something that you work with currently and want to up your skills or something that excites you and can help you take your career to the next level. Either way, choosing the right course, requires you to carefully go through the curriculum

of the institution and see how that fits in your plan. You could be looking for a position at a managerial level in the field or you could be looking to work at the ground level, either way choosing the course which suits your choices is really important.

CONTINUING EDUCATION IN PR

As with any field, there are an enormous number of choices available, but for the sake of this article, let's look into some major fields, where a Master's degree can help you pave your career.

• Law and Ethics in Public Relations

This course provides an overview of industry standards to help students practice public relations legally and ethically. Participants also learn how to identify and mitigate possible ethics violations.

• Social Media Analytics and Engagements

Students learn best practices for using social media analytics in journalism and communications. This course focuses on analysing data to measure audience experiences to adjust or create new media content.

- **Public Relations theory**

This class breaks down popular public relations and communications theories and how they shape current professional practice. Additional topics may include essential public relations models, organizational culture, diversity, and ethics.

- **Public Relations Writing**

Students taking this course develop strong professional writing skills. Coursework also provides an overview of several different forms of writing, including press releases, statements, public service announcements, fact sheets, and media correspondence.

- **Consumer Insights**

This course examines how cultural, sociological, and psychological factors impact consumer behaviour.

Students learn to use key concepts and knowledge of consumer behaviour to shape effective branding strategies.

Apart from the fields mentioned above, there are course around the world that offer specific specializations in fields such as advertising, corporate communications, digital media etc. Like mentioned earlier, the sky is the limit and its only limited by your imagination. Of course, at the same time if you already have a Master's degree and are planning to pursue a PhD, the fields mentioned above and many more do offer doctoral options as well.

But what about colleges?

Of course, if you plan to take up a Master's degree, you'll have to go through the grueling process of choosing the right course and college. There are multitudes of options both in India and outside India. But the first step, is taking up the idea of doing a Master's degree for the right reasons.

Prospects of Industry Working

Great, so you have a higher degree now, what do you do next. Now you look into the prospect of jobs. People with Master's program tend to look for jobs where the job description matches, with one or the other field mentioned below. (Caution: This is not an exhaustive list).

Public Relations Manager

Help develop brand strategies for organizations and other clients. Involves writing press releases and identifying audiences for campaigns.

Advertising, Promotions or Marketing Manager

Work with department heads and staffs to run campaigns. Mostly involved in creating budgets, evaluating websites, market research, negotiating contracts etc.

Marketing Director

Oversee marketing objectives of an organization. Primary tasks include making project, handling marketing professionals, connect with clients. They also analyze market data to develop effective strategies.

Executive Level positions in public relations

Usually comes with experience in the industry, but mostly involve working with department heads and spear heading crisis management.

Meeting, Convention or Event Planner

Connect with clients, to gather requirements and make everything is in place, like food, entertainment, venue etc.

**'CORP COMM
TEAMS
NEED TO WORK IN
TANDEM WITH
SENIOR
MANAGEMENT'**

Interview | By Arsha Dewan

This can mean anything from announcing a new policy or informing people of an upcoming event, to conducting an organization wide engagement or culture review. Internal communications is usually the responsibility of HR, marketing, or PR departments, but can be done by any and all departments across an organisation.

In this brief interview with Ronita Mitra, Business Consultant and Founder of Brand Eagle Consulting, Arsha Dewan finds out the key factors impacting internal communications. Ms. Mitra's a strategic marketing consultancy offers a spectrum of marketing strategy solutions from segmentation and its sizing, opportunity mapping, marketing mix and brand identity development.

Internal communications is all about promoting effective communications among people within an organization. It involves producing and delivering messages and campaigns on behalf of the management, as well as facilitating a dialogue with the people who make up the organization.

More about Ms. Ronita Mitra: She is a Business & Industry leader with a track record of transforming businesses and managing crises, having been in the industry for more than 20 years. She has managed & led multiple businesses/ brands from FMCG to banking & telecom impacting brands such as J&J, Knorr Soups, Marico, Castrol/BP, ICICI Bank, and Vodafone. She is Among the top 50 influential women in marketing, advertising & media since inception', 'Campaign India's A List of Top 50 Marketing, Advertising & Media professionals in India' and is a 'Member of Board of Governors of MRUC & vice chairperson of Indian Outdoor Committee'.



Image source: LinkedIn

**INTERVIEW
QUESTIONS**

Q: HOW CLOSELY DOES THE CORPORATE COMMUNICATION TEAM WORK WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS OF THE COMPANY, FOR EXAMPLE HR, WHEN A MESSAGE HAS TO BE COMMUNICATED TO THE EMPLOYEES OF THE COMPANY?

"Within any organisation, Corporate Communications team plays an important role in ensuring that shared culture and new initiatives / updates are understood by all employees. To do that, the Corporate Communications team needs to work with HR as well as the entire senior management to communicate new initiatives, important updates such as financial results or important programs/ initiatives by every department. belongingness towards the organisation."

Often the Corporate Communications team creates and circulates regular newsletters which contains information on important initiatives and programs by different departments. This enables all employees to be informed about goings-on in different parts of the organisation. This in turn creates a sense of bonding among employees and belongingness towards the organisation."

Q: COULD YOU SHARE, FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE, SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOU FACE WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH EMPLOYEES OF THE COMPANY?

"Employees tend to de-prioritise any initiative or communication from Corporate Communication and is treated as soft

initiative rather than something that impacts their business needs. Therefore, often employees tend to ignore and not open mails from Corporate Communication or not participate in training programs organised by Corporate Communications. There is also a perception that Corporate Communications lacks business understanding and therefore many of its communication is not given due attention."

Q: WHAT ARE SOME EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH THE INTERNAL PUBLIC?

"Keeping communication short and to the point. Designing newsletters in

a creative and engaging format and language. Inviting articles and content from different individuals in the organisation to increase the level of involvement. Using multiple forms of communication to ensure a surprise and engaging element. Writing catchy headlines and email subject lines to ensure higher open rates."

Q. FROM YOUR ORGANIZATION'S POINT OF VIEW, COULD YOU SHARE SOME MAJOR CHANGES IN INTERNAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES BROUGHT ABOUT BY THIS GLOBAL PANDEMIC?

"The pandemic has created an environment of work from home and online schooling which has placed a big challenge on how employees are able to manage their work - life

situation. The frequency of communication to employees has increased considerably. There is a much higher need to manage employees' motivation and morale and therefore lot of communication to ensure high levels of motivation and morale.

CNTD NEXT PAGE

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

There is a need to ensure comfortable working arrangements for employees at home and a smooth work - life balance.

Employees are given a lot of tips to ensure work life balance. There is employee education on how to manage video meetings back to back all day and manage scheduling of meetings with everyone working online.

There is a higher need to show empathy and compassion towards employees and organise team building initiatives. There is a higher frequency of communication of new initiatives since a lot of changes have taken place in the ways of doing business."



BY SHREYOSHEE HALDER

A young American woman is hired by Savoir, a prestigious marketing firm in Paris, to provide an “American PoV”. Emily in Paris, a popular TV series airing on Netflix, is all about the marketer’s life. This review will talk about the things this series got right and the misconceptions surrounding social media marketing for today’s industry.

EMILY IN PARIS: A TAKE FROM PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING PERSPECTIVE

Played by Lily Collins, Emily is shown as the quirky American with radical ideas ready to bring change in the French perspective. However, the first thing that is blatantly obvious is that Emily has very little knowledge about French culture and that is a big faux pas if you were hired to come up with marketing ideas.

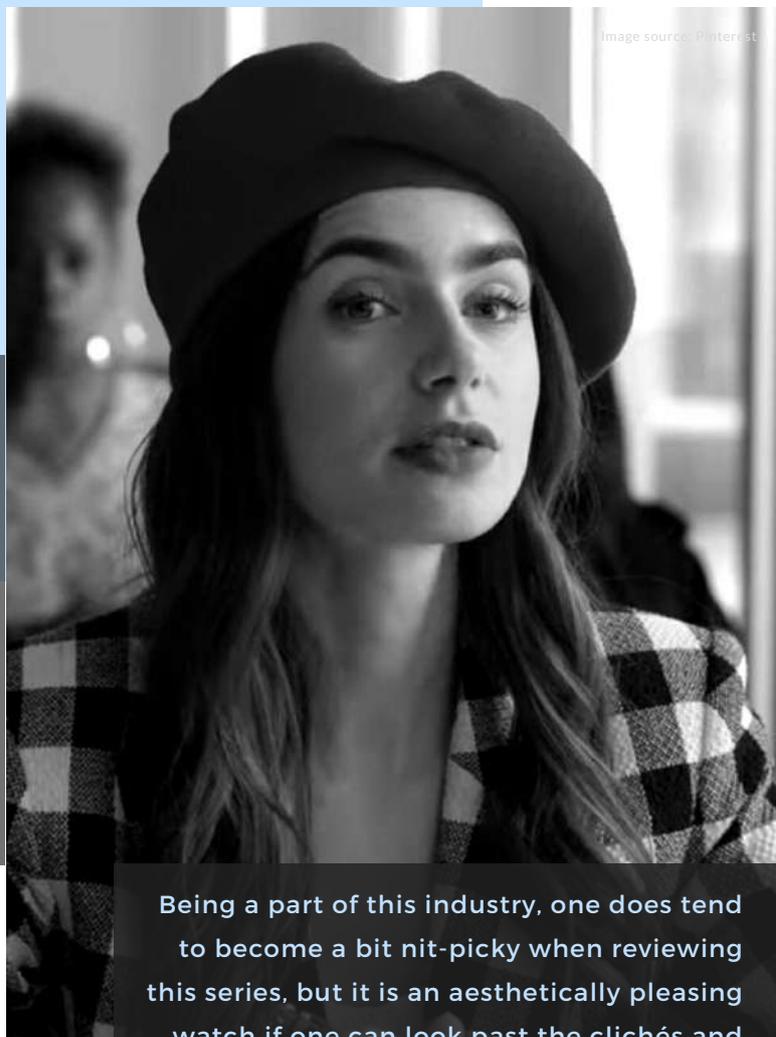
Cultural context of the audience is imperative for the same along with concrete analytical skills, both of which have been Hollywood-washed in this series. By the time we reach Episode 5, Emily has gained as much as 20k followers just by taking some risqué pictures with catchy captions.

The reality of a marketer’s life is not that simple. Influencers don’t just accidentally stumble into the saturated market and become successful in their endeavours. Collaborations, paid advertising, editing content are the building blocks for a new micro-influencer, none of which is portrayed in the show.

Social Media is not simply comprised of taking clever pictures - data analysis, cross channel campaigns etc are crucial because at the end of the day your client needs the business to boom which happens when ideas translate to conversions, conversions translate to business

and ultimately business translates to revenue. A spontaneous Emily spouting ideas in front of the client without consulting the rest of the internal team, would have landed herself in a disaster in a real agency. The “overpromising and underdelivering” issue is resolved in a fictional world with a turn of ink in the script but in the real world throwing in ideas involving historical sites of attractions without having a clue about permit deadlines and site usage rules - as shown in Emily’s Hasten’s Bed campaign - would leave you with a disgruntled boss and a very unhappy client with a tarnished reputation in the industry.

Emily did get a few things right- Using the audience’s voice to engage in a conversation by “Let(ing) the world decide and make(ing) it a part of your campaign”. The show highlights some important aspects of the industry involving “quality over quantity”, finding inspiration from around us etc.



Being a part of this industry, one does tend to become a bit nit-picky when reviewing this series, but it is an aesthetically pleasing watch if one can look past the clichés and inaccurate industry portrayal.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND EVENT MANAGEMENT

By Arsha Dewan

For a student, this section might help you decide whether you'd like to take up event management as a career. Don't belong to a PR/events background? It is fine; the background and education that you already possess will not hamper you from building on a successful career in PR. If you possess qualities such as good communication, good judgement, and the ability to multi-task and motivate others, are management savvy and have leadership qualities, then PR and Event Management can be a good career option for you. People who work in these domains come from a variety of backgrounds, including journalism, sociology, health, and the non-profit sector.

The public often use the term Public Relations synonymously with Event Management, it's kind of a preconceived notion that PR is limited to arranging events, and planning functions. It is not. Public relations works as an effective communication tool which also consists of strategies that help in developing and maintaining the relationship between organizations and their various publics. Whereas Event Management is a sub constituent of Public Relations, which takes other forms, such as managing and communicating in times of crisis, community relations, media relations etc. Although the functions vary, they are all interconnected.

A career in public relations and event planning is never boring! You may be pitching a story, holding a press conference, planning a wedding, setting up an exhibition, or handling disaster communications on any given day. Graduates find vibrant and ample opportunities to work with governments, hospitals, schools, corporations, activist groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and startups, among other places. There are a variety of job profiles! Working as a public relations consultant, project planner, fundraiser, social relations specialist, public policy expert, publicist, or campaign manager are all possibilities. Many jobs provide a lot of travel incentives.



Creating multimedia media sets, media monitoring, arranging interviews and press conferences, making video exhibits, creating visual presentations and preparing special activities are all examples of entry-level work.

How do Public Relations and Event Management work together? Event planning follows the same process as any PR campaign planning; determining an event's priorities and aims, and also the approaches and tools that'll be used to meet them, and finally the target audiences you'd like to reach.

Some of the things to consider in doing PR around an event:

- Begin your public outreach for an event as soon as details like date and venue are finalized. Get in touch with local print reporters and photographers so they can slot your event in their calendars. Contact local radio and television stations for coverage opportunities. Media visibility can help drive ticket purchases, attract sponsors and advertisers, as well as generate hype and brand awareness.

- Have a job schedule for the events team that spells out everyone's duties and tasks for the PR campaign. Post-event, status reports and debrief summary will help better prepare for the next event in queue
- Cover the event at your end; hire professional photographers and videographers to submit content to journalists who were unable to cover the event.

- Be prepared for unforeseen occurrences: It's critical to have a robust crisis communications strategy in case any unexpected situations occur at an event. The ability to communicate efficiently during a crisis will mark the difference between success and failure.



Image source: Unsplash

- Promote events through a variety of digital and social media platforms, using teaser posts, hashtags or paid ads. Utilise personalised e-mail blasts for updates, major announcements, or individual subscriber-based perks/contests. Media advisories and releases can also serve to increase public coverage and enrolment.
- Come up with a unique angle and try selling your event: To make the event stand apart from the rest, emphasise the exposure it provides to encourage both the media and the general public to participate. SMART goals are a must-have for any event or public relations initiative in order to achieve a positive impact.

Serving a Niche: Sports and Entertainment PR

By Diksha Bhat

Public figures live under the limelight and under constant scrutiny of the media, their fans, and the online community. Because of this, maintaining a spotless image for them is necessary in order to thrive in their respective careers, and to that end, Public Relations becomes paramount.

Sports and Celebrity PR basically works to build as well as maintain positive reputations of sports personalities and celebrities.

Sports and Entertainment PR creates an amicable image, as well as increases curiosity for, and reach of the public figure by targeting producers, reporters, editors and related media outlets to manipulate the flow of information in their favour. Sports teams, athletes, and celebrity entertainment professionals majorly depend upon public support for their success.

Thus for both these groups of people, PR is of utmost importance to maintain their popularity, appeal, and positive reputation while navigating the social, cultural and political changes taking place around them. It does so by press releases, and earned media outlets, etc.

Sports PR not only extends to the individual athletes and teams, but to events and competitions as well. From creating buzz about an upcoming game or new player to launching campaigns for maintaining that excitement, PR has a role to play in it all.

Not only that, Sports PR is also especially crucial for damage control, after all, accidents do happen like the Tokyo Olympics chief's sexist comments which gained the heavy criticism of people all over the world, and ended with the Chief resigning from his position. Such situations are not the only ones of urgency that demand an immediate PR response, in fact, there are plenty of transgressions taking place in this industry to require crisis management, like doping allegations, match fixing, misuse of inside information, etc.

However, more than the negative instances, one's attention is drawn to the positive ones, with successful PR campaigns that paint a jolly image of the industry

In 2008, the movie "The Dark Knight" started out about a year before its release, with games like a scavenger hunt and fake political campaign for a character of the movie. Along with the poster, they even made a fake newspaper, "The Gotham Times" are circulated that to build anticipation for the movie's release. And when it did release, the film saw massive box office success. With people flocking to the theatre to watch it. Of course, in recent times because of the pandemic, some of the PR strategies have changed.

An example of a largely successful sports PR campaign is the Seahawks of the NFL partnering with a local Starbucks. With the players themselves coming to the store to sign autographs, serve as baristas and converse with fans, as well as merchandise that made use of Snapcodes to give fans exclusive content of Snapchat. Both the Seahawks and the local Starbucks had the same target demographic and the campaign was a massive success through its brilliant ideas, use of technology, and good understanding of the target audience's mindset.

Entertainment is another industry that constantly relies on PR in order to thrive. Right from individual artists, to companies, to production teams and movies, everyone in the entertainment industry needs PR. This is because they heavily rely on the buzz that PR creates for the success of their projects. As most of their revenues are generated based on public interest, generating and maintaining that interest is extremely important.

Not all of the PR activities related to the entertainment industry are done for the ultimate goal of profit, or reputation though. Many celebrities recognize their platform as a means of social and political change and have used it to that end, especially in the last five years. A recent example is of singer Elton John and actor Michael Caine's advertisement assuring people of the safety of COVID vaccines and urging them to get vaccinated. Thus, PR is a basic and extremely crucial part of these two multifaceted industries and has been helping them thrive in their endeavours, whatsoever they may be.

'TAKING CRISIS HEAD ON IS THE BEST WAY TO MANAGE IT'

Interview | By Sahinya Sundaresan

Sahinya Sundaresan talks to him about the intricacies and challenges of handling crisis management at the corporate level.

1. Could you please share your views on crisis management as a critical organizational function? Crisis management is extremely critical in any organization, of any size or focus sector - while it is extremely critical function in some sectors [say airlines or a B2C business], organizations ignoring the crisis communications modules are doing at their own peril. Failure to devise a robust crisis communications plan can result in serious harm to stakeholders, losses for an organization, or end its very existence.

Failure to have a crisis management plan can pose significant threat to operations that can have negative consequences if not handled properly - ranging from threat to (1) public safety, (2) financial loss, and (3) reputation loss. Some crises, such as industrial accidents and product harm, can result in injuries and even loss of lives.

Crises can create financial loss by disrupting operations, creating a loss of market share/purchase intentions, or spawning lawsuits related to the crisis. A crisis reflects poorly on an organization and will damage its reputation. Effective crisis management handles the threats sequentially.

As a process, crisis management is not just one thing. Crisis management can be divided into three phases: (1) pre-crisis, (2) crisis response, and (3) post-crisis. Pre-crisis phase is concerned with prevention and preparation. The crisis response phase is when management must respond to a crisis. Post-crisis phase looks for ways to better prepare for the next crisis and fulfils commitments made during the crisis phase including follow-up information.

More about Venkatasubramanian Iyer - He is a seasoned communications professional with over 29 years' experience in journalism and public relations. Until recently, he led the Finance and Corporate Practice as a Senior Account Director at APCO Worldwide Dubai office, providing strategic direction across different clients spanning various sectors. His core area of expertise includes strategy development, brand building and reputation management and content generation.

Image source: LinkedIn

2. As an experienced professional in the field of Corporate Communication, could you please share the different ways in which companies work on to manage a crisis?

A crisis management plan is a reference tool, not a blueprint - providing an overview of key contact information, reminders of what typically should be done should there be a crisis, and forms to be used to document the response to a crisis. Remember, the cardinal rule in crisis communications is as soon as something happens, tell it all, tell it fast, and tell it honestly. Keeping quiet and letting the press, staff, or clients break the news will immediately cause you to lose control of the situation.

Resisting rapid communication empowers the rumour mill. As updated information and facts become available, disseminate these widely. Depending on your crisis, government requirements, you may have to let a spokesperson from law enforcement, or an industry regulatory officer communicate about the crisis.

It is advisable in most, but not all, situations to let your staff have access to the facts either before they are released to the outside world or at the same time. Obviously, in certain circumstances specific types of information must not be made available immediately; you must, however, tell the media and wider public why this information cannot be made available.

3. From a communication professional point of view, what are some critical activities/steps that a budding corporate communication professional must know in terms of crisis management of an organisation/company?

When a crisis hits, many company executives practice ostrich management, either burying their heads in the sand or trying to sidestep the issues at hand and hoping the crisis will go away. The best way to manage a crisis is to meet it head on and do whatever it takes to protect your brand and retain as much public trust as possible. Do the right thing and face the crisis square on. Be honest and tenacious, act with speed and clarity, and communicate.

4. How does the cultural background of the audience affect the stakeholders' reactions in a crisis, especially in multinational companies?

The cultural background matters a lot. Like in the case of Masafi, it was the cultural sensitivity of the target audience, a consumer who took on the might of the water company. In the event of an airline crash, all cultural sensitivities have to be taken care of. Culture affects communication and coordination among diverse stakeholders, leading to different results in crises management. As cultures are associated with values, norms, attitudes, and actions, people with matching cultures are more likely to trust and communicate with one another in a crisis, while people with different cultural backgrounds may experience difficulties in doing so.

5. Could you share an example from your own experience of an effective crisis communication you and your team handled?

Yes. As part of my clients, I was handling the communications of Masafi, a leading mineral water brand in the United Arab Emirates. The crisis was there was a batch of Masafi water bottles which has impurities because of a failure in one of their bottling lines, and which led to some batches to be recalled from the point of sales, malls and outlets in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, and Ras Al Khaimah.

That particular batch of Masafi water was deemed unfit for human consumption according to the Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority. Nearly half-million water bottles produced on October 12, 2009 with an expiration date of October 11, 2010 were contaminated, containing "impurities visible to the naked eye." Initially, Masafi refused to comment [against advice of the PR team], which further complicated the situation. Once the crisis became bigger, I worked closely with the senior management of Masafi to come out to the public and transparently communicate that there was a faulty line which forced the impurities into the batch of water bottles, and all the 500,000 water bottles that were packed on that particular date have been recalled and drained off.

Thankfully, the subsequent batches were fine and laboratory results also cleared the company. The immediate recall of the bottles helped its reputation. Necessary precautions were taken at the factory level to make sure a recurrence of the contamination never happened again.

6. Could you briefly share some major differences of crisis communication efforts between print and digital media? Which one works best in times of crisis?

Digital of course is the in-thing. Communication among stakeholders has undergone paradigm change owing to fast paced development of communication media technologies. Citizen generated content is attaining prominence and it has been observed that traditional media tends to capture news from the citizen generated content. This high interactivity may cause positive or negative consequences for the organization and hence public relations managers have to worry about the implications of this wider, faster, and unmediated communication.

7. Is there any valuable advice you could give for a student like me who wants to pursue a career in corporate communication/PR?

While the need for sophisticated communication counsel has never been greater, the evolution of the corporate communications role is sometimes more difficult to fathom. The world has changed. First, there have been significant changes in the media landscape; where traditional print media was once king, social, and digital platforms are fast becoming consumers' top choice for media and information consumption. This has been facilitated by the advancement of technology. Whereas top-down communication pushed out by corporates meant that they were in control of pace and content, today's 24/7 news-cycle and the decentralisation of content creation means that corporate communication professionals are forced to monitor news constantly and to respond quickly to any potential crisis.

After the tale of woes at her last internship in the middle of a full blown riot in Shillong, cut off from the world and college authorities with no way to seek any help, Radha Bele chose to work someplace safer with more communication processes available this semester. The reality however was very different and quite difficult when in the middle of the pandemic her organisation chose to exploit the situation.

Working at an advertising agency, my batch-mate felt like she had finally found an agency that allowed her a good amount of creative freedom and opportunities to explore her talent.

She was given a place in the copy department and offered hands-on experience with some renowned brands. Her work description included generating content and copy in form of print, visual and audio media.

True crisis always brings the reality of any situation forward. When the pandemic forced my friend to take a short leave things started looking south. Radha had agreed to work from home so as to not cause any trouble with the ongoing projects at her internship, and the agency agreed to the proposition.

However, soon after her remote work period was over they informed her that the work she did from home would not be considered as it was the policy of the agency.

Testing Times of Internship

By *Shreyoshee Halder*

EXPERIENCE STORY OF A FELLOW
BATCHMATE

They were more than ready to use the work but neither give her credit for the same nor present her with the completion certificate. The internship ended with no proof of work, letter of completion or experience certificate and Radha had to resort to informing her college authorities about the same. Without the required documents, her five weeks internship period would have been considered null by the college but thankfully our internship coordinators understood her plight and completed the required process.

"Thank You For Not Riding With Us" – Uber

By *Shristi Mandal*

The outbreak of Corona virus made the world come to a standstill. This was the time when Uber launched its campaign "Thank you for not riding" to safeguard the lives of millions of people from the virus. It implores the riders to stay at home, while it pledges to support the health workers, local communities, and many more.

The company joined hands with Wieden + Kennedy and PRETTYBIRD to bring together all the filmmakers of the world to film their new reality. The video showed how people were celebrating birthdays at their homes, working whilst entertaining their children, and connecting with everyone through social media. Uber as a company that solely focuses on moving came out with a simple message "Stop Moving" for their campaign to help end the spread of COVID-19.

The company thanked their customers for not taking unnecessary rides during the pandemic with a simple message "Stay at home for everyone who can't". The company realized that it was important to do its part. So Uber, with the help of its drivers, couriers, and restaurant partners, provided 10 million free rides and food delivery to health workers who were risking their lives every day to help save the life of other people and also to people who are in need all around the world.

'OUT-OF-THE BOX IDEAS ARE KEY TO PR SUCCESS'

Interview | By Shristi Mandal

Working round the clock is a routine thing for him. "You don't know when an idea will strike you. In this field, out-of-the-box ideas really help," he says. Pratik started his career in 2011 as an intern with 100% PR, where he worked with the IPL franchise Sahara Pune Warriors. In 2015, he became the Media Manager of ISL Club Pune City FC, which he managed for as many as five seasons. He has also worked on various other sporting accounts such as Tata Open Maharashtra and NBA India. He currently handles the accounts of JSW Sports, Mumbai City FC, Baseline Ventures, and various other clients. During his Pune City FC tenure, he travelled to all the host cities, where he got a chance to connect with a lot of journalists from different regions. A highlight of his career, he says, has been working with NBA India managing NBA Legends and player interviews, and profiling the talents from Indian grassroots programs. His major tasks as a Sports PR Professional include pre-event planning, announcements,

"If you are passionate about PR, you don't complain," says Pratik Gore. He is a Sports PR professional who has learned through his journey that this is a calling where you always have to be at the ready.



Image source: LinkedIn

"Relevancy is a huge factor that you need to keep in mind if you are in the media. You need to adapt to the situations as quickly as possible,"

event day responsibilities, interviews, making coverage reports, presenting the reviews that include feedback on the event, way forward, etc. He says everything is a process in itself and at some point, in time we have to be a part of that process.

Pratik reckons that investments in sports have become a talking point in the current time. "Back in those days, there were very few sponsors or investors in sports. Then after a certain point in time sports business turned out to be very well," he says. While discussing the ins and outs of the Sports PR industry, Pratik also mentions that profiling the athletes, highlighting their struggles and lifestyle has become one of the most important things because it interests the readers. Back then, this kind of story used to get limited media coverage, but today, with the help of social media, it reaches a large audience. "The digital reach has become a thing these days," he says.

COVID-19 has made people house-bound. Athletes who are waiting for their next tournament are also training at their homes. Pratik says that he has been helping them connect with the media not only for interviews but for brand collaborations, especially the ones trending during the pandemic. Brands prefer influencers who have good social media reach and also need to have a verified account and genuine followers. Pratik also highlights the fact that in this field you have to figure out the balance between competing and collaborating.

"It's one of the critical points where you have to maintain a relationship with other agencies. There are times when you will be needing help from your counterparts. Hence, instead of competing, we collaborate with other agencies and manage an event together."

He also stresses the fact that misspelling the name of brands, clubs, or events could be a challenge. The PR person needs to ensure that people do not misquote the spokespersons.

#ITS JUST A PERIOD

By Muskaan Chawla

The infamous COVID lockdown of 2020 did show us a lot of things. It showed how many workers worked out of their hometowns to earn their daily bread. It showed us that ZOOM calls is our new lifeline, when it comes to hosting meetings. It showed us that no matter what the situation, humanity never dies.



On that note a campaign was started by Stayfree on May 28, 2020 on the occasion of World Menstrual Hygiene Day. As per statistics, two million girls got their first period during the lockdown. Stayfree's motive behind this campaign was to invite families to change their approach to first period conversations.

Built on this premise specific to lockdown, Stayfree's [#ItsJustAPeriod](#) wanted families to adopt an open and positive approach towards menstruation, to keep the girl informed and make her feel confident and feel supported in this journey. And to make sure that this campaign was not just a campaign but also a guide, Stayfree tied up with Menstrupedia, a platform to help girls manage their periods better.

The campaign video showed stigmas and inhibitions that still surround periods -- mothers handing down period shame to their daughters, and the girls talking to friends or teachers about this. But during the lockdown, they would be facing a lonely first period and the campaign was aimed at encouraging a first period conversation that was welcoming and normal.

#PLAY FOR THE WORLD

By Diksha Bhat

Many companies took advantage of the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to expand their business by prioritising people over profit. They made sure to not compromise on their brand voice and style while doing so.

Wieden + Kennedy launched their Play for the World campaign for Nike in April 2020. The message they delivered through their campaign was to convince their fans and readers to stay at home which in turn would influence millions of other people.

IF YOU EVER DREAMED OF PLAYING FOR MILLIONS AROUND THE WORLD, NOW IS YOUR CHANCE.

Play inside, play for the world.



Many brand ambassadors such as LeBron James and Michael Jordan, backed up this simple and effective campaign. Nike demonstrated its commitment to behaving just like what it preaches its users to, with the indomitable spirit of an athlete. They did this by giving paid leaves to their employees who were unable to work during the pandemic and also donated \$15 million towards COVID-19 relief efforts.



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