

тивны, основное воздействие оказывает внешняя среда, складывающаяся в коллективе. Поэтому, в первую очередь, нужно создать хорошую атмосферу в коллективе, чтобы избежать лишних конфликтов. Следование этике позволит создать идейный фундамент, обеспечивающий благоприятное взаимодействие в коллективе.

PECULIARITIES OF APPLYING PR IN IT-SPHERE

O. S. Chertkova, A. S. Artsiomchyk

*School of Business and Management of Technology of BSU, Minsk;
olga57141457@gmail.com, alesya.art98@gmail.com;
research supervision – S. I. Ostapuk*

This article covers information about ways and peculiarities of applying PR in sphere of Information Technology. The purpose of our work was to research trends in the use of PR in IT-sphere. The subject of the work was the PR activities in IT sphere. This topic is relevant due to both the growing influence of the IT industry on modern world and the complexity of developing a PR strategy and selecting the most effective PR tools. In addition, factors, which influence the use of PR in this field, were given. And as conclusion a model of a universal PR strategy in IT-sphere was created.

Key words: public relations; Information Technology; social media marketing; press release.

It is not a secret that the formation of a company's image in the public's mind plays a significant role in its successful activity in modern economic conditions of the intensive growth of competition. Richard Branson once said: «Publicity is absolutely critical. A good PR story is infinitely more effective than a front page ad».

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According to the business dictionary PR is the profession or practice of creating and maintaining goodwill of an organization's various publics usually through publicity and other nonpaid forms of communication [1].

Unquestionably, PR and IT spheres are inseparable from each other. American scientists created the formula for the success of IT companies:

$$PR+GR+IR=IT.$$

According to it, successful activity in the sphere of information technologies consists of public, government and investment relations.

There are two types of collaboration of PR and IT. The first is one-time cooperation, which means provision of individual services. The second one is regular outsourcing of PR services.

It is important to note that there exist some factors, which influence the use of PR in IT-sphere:

1. Tough competition. There is a huge amount of IT-companies both in a specific region and in the whole world.

2. An extensive structure of IT services. Because of a wide variety of specializations in IT the objective of a company's PR department can be complicated by determining its target audience, and target mass media.

3. A professional barter between technical workers and PR workers, which means misunderstanding caused by differences in a type of thinking.

4. Confidentiality. Frequently the result of the work performed by an IT specialist is confidential. For instance, if it concerns the development of systems that are critical for a business.

What concerns major PR tools used in IT we should mention:

- social media marketing. This tool is perfectly suited for an easy search of your target audience. As users are closely connected with each other, viral marketing affect appears;

- press release. This document is the most powerful element in communication with mass media. The main function of a press release is attracting the attention of the audience by informing about the most important for the organization events;

- newsletters. The task of a newsletter is to inform customers and potential partners about current and forthcoming events, which indirectly contribute to the creation and strengthening of the company's positive image;

- attendance at public events. It is not only an opportunity to meet directly with a prospective client, but also an excellent information occasion. As a result, you can write articles about events and offer them for publication;

- sponsorship. It contributes to the creation of an attractive image by assisting in the implementation of socially significant projects, which lead to the enhancement of the social importance of the company;

- community Relations and Philanthropy. This tool is designed to harmonize relations between the organization and society. Also it is a perfect way of creating a reliable reputation and a testament to company's stability development for investors.

In order to do more detailed research we conducted SWOT-analysis of PR in IT-sphere, which means a strategic planning technique used to help a person or organization identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats related to business competition or project planning (table) [2].

SWOT-analysis of PR in IT-sphere

Internalorigin	
Strengths the necessity of development of a high-quality PR strategy that provides a positive reputation for PR managers or company. In many cases, promotion can be very costly	Weaknesses a professional barter between technical workers and PR-managers; not all business media cover news in the field of IT; if the company is not widely known it is necessary to turn to outsourcing PR functions, which entails additional costs
Opportunities interest of investors in IT-sphere; the constant invention of new technology and tools which can be used in public relations activities	Threats supersaturation of the technological market; regional barriers to international activities
Externalorigin	

To get more reliable information about the peculiarities of applying PR in IT-sphere, we have conducted a survey. We made a decision to explore PR in IT-sphere on the example of 4 countries, including Belarus, Germany, the USA and Singapore. The total number of respondents is 85 people. All respondents have deep knowledge about this sphere in their countries. There were 24 respondents from Belarus, 22 from Germany, 20 from the USA and 19 from Singapore.

As for outsourcing PR services, in Belarus 89 % of respondents do not outsource PR services and only 3 % use outsourcing, in Germany the majority of respondents use it constantly or on a temporary basis, in the USA the situation is the same, and finally in Singapore 68 % outsource PR services and 9 % don't.

In addition, we have chosen the most popular PR tools such as SMM, press releases, sponsorship, newsletters, attendance at public events, community relations and philanthropy and decided to identify the percentage of applying them in every country.

In Singapore the most used are SMM and attendance at public events, the least are community relations and philanthropy. In Belarus the most popular are press releases and SMM. As you can see sponsorship takes the last place. As for Germany, the most used are SMM and attendance at public events, whereas the least are community relations and philanthropy. Eventually let us

have a look at PR tools in the USA. The most used tools are SMM and attendance at public events, while community relations and philanthropy take the last place.

On the whole, the most effective PR tools are SMM, attendance at public event and press releases.

And finally, let us consider the effectiveness of PR strategy in selected countries. As for a PR strategy in Singapore 51 % of respondents approve of the selected PR strategy of their company, 36 % partly and 13 % don't. In Germany 55 % of respondents are satisfied with the selected PR strategy, 38 % partly and only 7 % don't. It is necessary to mention that in the USA 77 % of respondents approve of the selected PR strategy of their company, 15 % partly and 8 % don't. To crown it all, we want to mention Belarus, 86 % of respondents are not satisfied with the selected PR strategy, 10 % are partly satisfied, and only 4 % are satisfied with the selected PR strategy. Keeping in mind these facts, one may conclude that the PR strategies of Singapore, Germany and the USA are more successful than the Belarusian strategy.

In order to make a practical conclusion we have created a model of a universal PR strategy in IT-sphere according to the collected information and results of the survey. To our mind, in accordance with it PR-managers should:

1. Outsource PR-functions if it is necessary. This point concerns small companies with the lack of resources and reputation.
2. Stay connected. For instance, they should use host collaboration applications for better productivity.
3. Improve outreach for target audience by the active use of mass and social media.
4. Pay special attention to specialized forums and events, as they are the most effective tools.
5. Stick to your budget, as PR should be profitable and help optimize resources.
6. Focus on the specifics of your product and target audience, as the IT market is very diverse and heterogeneous.
7. If it is allowed, acquaint consumers with the process of creating and prototyping your product.
8. Use new technologies. It is vital for a company's reputation in IT-market.

References

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