

# SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS



*Mark Poepsel & Sarah VanSlette*  
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

# Social Media for Public Relations

This text is disseminated via the Open Education Resource (OER) LibreTexts Project (<https://LibreTexts.org>) and like the thousands of other texts available within this powerful platform, it is freely available for reading, printing, and "consuming."

The LibreTexts mission is to bring together students, faculty, and scholars in a collaborative effort to provide an accessible, and comprehensive platform that empowers our community to develop, curate, adapt, and adopt openly licensed resources and technologies; through these efforts we can reduce the financial burden born from traditional educational resource costs, ensuring education is more accessible for students and communities worldwide.

Most, but not all, pages in the library have licenses that may allow individuals to make changes, save, and print this book. Carefully consult the applicable license(s) before pursuing such effects. Instructors can adopt existing LibreTexts texts or Remix them to quickly build course-specific resources to meet the needs of their students. Unlike traditional textbooks, LibreTexts' web based origins allow powerful integration of advanced features and new technologies to support learning.



LibreTexts is the adaptable, user-friendly non-profit open education resource platform that educators trust for creating, customizing, and sharing accessible, interactive textbooks, adaptive homework, and ancillary materials. We collaborate with individuals and organizations to champion open education initiatives, support institutional publishing programs, drive curriculum development projects, and more.

The LibreTexts libraries are Powered by [NICE CXone Expert](#) and was supported by the Department of Education Open Textbook Pilot Project, the California Education Learning Lab, the UC Davis Office of the Provost, the UC Davis Library, the California State University Affordable Learning Solutions Program, and Merlot. This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. 1246120, 1525057, and 1413739.

Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation nor the US Department of Education.

Have questions or comments? For information about adoptions or adaptations contact [info@LibreTexts.org](mailto:info@LibreTexts.org) or visit our main website at <https://LibreTexts.org>.

This text was compiled on 04/16/2026

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Licensing

### 1: Origins of PR and PR Principles

- 1.1: Defining Public Relations
- 1.2: The Function of Public Relations
- 1.3: The History and Development of Modern PR
- 1.4: The SOEP Model for Media Strategy

### 2: Social Media Today

- 2.1: How Did We Get Here?
- 2.2: Where do we go from here?
- 2.3: Benefits and Challenges of Social Media

### 3: Using Social Media for PR

- 3.1: Understanding your target public
- 3.2: Engaging with Publics
- 3.3: Creating content for your campaign
- 3.4: Social media analytics and campaign measurement

### 4: Social Media for PR Case Studies

- 4.1: Case study, the rise of Gymshark
- 4.2: Case study, John Fetterman's successful use of social media in a U.S. Senate campaign
- 4.3: Case study, Wendy's social media success with the "Roast" campaign
- 4.4: Case Study, ALS Association's ice bucket challenge - a social media triumph

### 5: Final Project

- 5.1: Client Selection, Competitive Analysis, and SWOT Analysis
- 5.2: Social media campaign goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics
- 5.3: Social media campaign evaluation

## Index

## Glossary

## Detailed Licensing

## Detailed Licensing

## Licensing

---

*A detailed breakdown of this resource's licensing can be found in [Back Matter/Detailed Licensing](#).*

## 1: Origins of PR and PR Principles

---

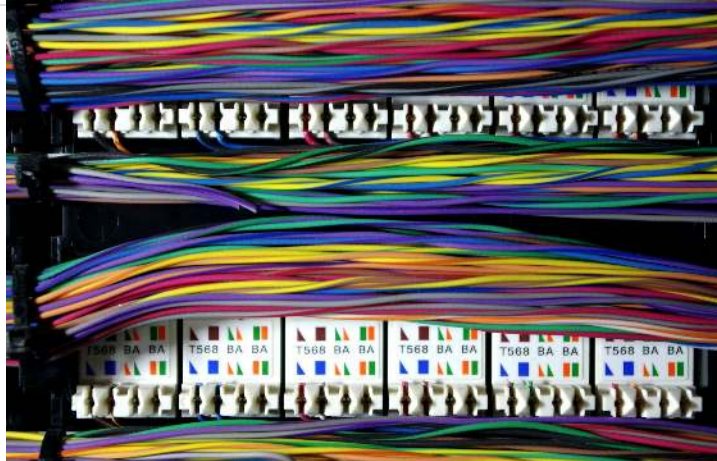


Figure 1.1: Close up of back of network patch panel. (Unsplash free-to-use license; [Lee Lawson](#))

A public relations professional is a conduit, a facilitator, and a manager of communication. The primary work consists of conducting research, defining problems, and creating meaning by fostering communication among groups in society.

To do public relations work is to have strategic conversations with audiences, some large and some more narrowly targeted as more and more of the work centers on engaging with audiences using social media, which are, of course, two-way communication platforms. As you might imagine, public relations is an ephemeral and wide-ranging field, often misperceived. Because of the lack of message control inherent in public relations, it is difficult to master. Public relations is even difficult to define. Is it spin or focused, optimistic truth telling? Either way, the public relations function of communication is prevalent and growing.

The fragmentation of mass media and growth of multiple message platforms in networked communications spaces has poised public relations for continued ascent while traditional forms of mass communication (such as newspapers) are on the decline.

You can find public relations professionals working in virtually every industry, in government, and in nonprofit organizations. Its broad scope makes it impossible to understand without some attention to the taxonomy of this diverse and dynamic profession. Learning the lexicon of public relations in this text will help you begin to master the discipline and help your understanding progress more quickly in subsequent reading related to this field.

Corporate and agency public relations differ. These concepts are discussed in detail in a later chapter, along with nonprofit public relations and government-public relations, also known as public affairs.

---

1: Origins of PR and PR Principles is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 1.1: Defining Public Relations



Figure 1.1.1: Dictionary. (Unsplash free-to-use license; Felicia Montenegro)

(The following Chapter section was remixed from [2.1: Defining Public Relations](#), which is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by [Anonymous](#).)

Public relations is more than writing press releases or promoting an organization, it is the strategic management of relationships between an organization and the many groups connected to it. To understand what public relations professionals do, we must start with the foundations: what PR looks like in different sectors, how the field is professionally defined, and how practitioners identify the groups they communicate with.

Public relations operates across a wide range of settings. Corporate PR involves in-house teams that manage day-to-day communication with employees, investors, and customers. Agencies provide specialized consulting, often working on campaigns, crisis support, or major organizational initiatives. Nonprofit PR focuses on advocacy, mission storytelling, and donor engagement. Government and public affairs concentrate on policy communication, community engagement, and constituent relationships. Even though each setting has distinct goals, all share the same central purpose: creating effective, ethical communication between an organization and the people who influence its success.

The most widely cited academic definition of public relations comes from Grunig and Hunt (1984): "Public relations is "the management of communication between an organization and its publics."

This definition matters because it frames PR as a management discipline, not simply a communication tactic. It distinguishes PR from journalism (which informs) and marketing (which sells). PR practitioners use communication to help organizations understand their environment, build meaningful relationships, and make informed decisions.

### The Component Parts of Grunig and Hunt's Model

#### Management

Management includes researching issues, advising leadership, planning strategies, and evaluating outcomes. PR practitioners analyze publics, anticipate problems, and help shape decisions before communication ever goes out.

#### Communication

Communication in PR is two-way. It requires listening, relationship-building, and understanding how different groups interpret messages. Effective PR occurs when communication creates shared understanding—not just visibility.

#### Organization

An organization may be a corporation, nonprofit, school, agency, or government entity. The PR role is to help that organization maintain relationships with the groups who can affect its goals, reputation, or ability to operate.

## Publics

Publics are groups connected by a shared issue or concern. Publics often form independently, without any input from an organization. A public becomes active when people mobilize around an issue they care about.

## Publics, Stakeholders, and Audiences: Understanding the Differences

Understanding who an organization communicates with is fundamental to PR strategy.

### Publics

Publics share a common issue and may self-organize. They can influence an organization even if the organization does not choose them.

Examples:

- Neighbors opposing a development project
- Students demanding policy changes
- Fans lobbying for a new team mascot

### Stakeholders

Stakeholders have a formal or vested interest in the organization—financial, legal, professional, or operational.

Examples:

- Employees, investors, suppliers
- University faculty, alumni, donors
- Nonprofit board members or funders

Stakeholders can become publics if they mobilize around an issue.

### Audiences

Audiences are groups an organization intentionally chooses to reach with communication.

Examples:

- Teens targeted in a Nike ad
- Prospective students receiving recruitment materials
- TikTok users who see a Coca-Cola ad

Audiences are defined by *communication*, not by issues or stakes.

## How They Overlap

- **A public becomes an audience** when an organization targets them with messages.
- **A stakeholder becomes a public** when they mobilize around an issue.
- **An audience is not always a public**, since advertising often reaches people with no shared concerns.

Knowing whether a group is a public, stakeholder, or audience shapes how PR professionals approach research, messaging, timing, and evaluation.

## Connecting These Concepts to Practice

Public relations differs from journalism and marketing because PR practitioners must think about relationship management, long-term reputation, and how stakeholders and publics may respond to organizational decisions. This is why PR varies across sectors:

- **Corporate PR** protects reputation and aligns internal and external communication.
- **Agency PR** develops campaigns, manages crises, and supports multiple clients.
- **Nonprofit PR** motivates action, engages donors, and builds community support.
- **Government/public affairs** supports transparency, emergency communication, and policy understanding.

Understanding publics/stakeholders/audiences is the foundation for all of this work.

### Discussion

In examining the text on public relations, it's clear that the field encompasses a broad range of activities and responsibilities, from managing communication and conducting research to strategizing interactions between organizations and their diverse publics. Reflecting on J. Grunig and Hunt's definition of public relations as "the management of communication between an organization and its publics," consider the following questions:

1. **PR as Management vs. Journalism/Marketing:** Grunig and Hunt emphasize that public relations is distinct from journalism and marketing because it is fundamentally a management discipline. How does this distinction influence the strategies and goals of public relations compared to those of journalism and marketing? In what ways does the role of a public relations professional differ in practice from that of a journalist or a marketer?
2. **Evolution and Perception:** The text mentions the challenge of defining public relations due to its evolving nature and the frequent misconceptions about its purpose. How has the fragmentation of media and the rise of multiple message sources impacted the practice and perception of public relations? What are some common misconceptions about public relations that you have encountered, and how do they contrast with the professional reality?
3. **Corporate vs. Agency vs. Nonprofit vs. Government PR:** Given the different contexts in which public relations operates (corporate, agency, nonprofit, and government), how do the goals and practices of public relations differ across these sectors? Use specific examples to illustrate how public relations strategies might vary depending on whether one is working within a corporation, a consulting agency, a nonprofit organization, or a government entity.
4. **Publics vs. Audiences vs. Stakeholders:** According to the text, publics differ from audiences and stakeholders in significant ways. How can understanding these differences enhance the effectiveness of a public relations strategy? Provide examples of how a public relations professional might tailor their approach based on whether they are addressing a public, an audience, or stakeholders.

Discuss these questions with reference to real-world examples, and consider how the concepts presented in the text can be applied to contemporary public relations challenges.

1. James Grunig and Todd Hunt, *Managing Public Relations* (New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1984), 4.

1.1: Defining Public Relations is shared under a [CC BY](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 1.2: The Function of Public Relations



Figure 1.2.1: Live media presentation. (Unsplash free-to-use license; [Flipsnack](#))

(The following Chapter section was remixed from [2.2: The Function of Public Relations](#), which is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by [Anonymous](#).)

In 1982, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) adopted a definition that focuses on the *purpose* of PR: “*Public relations helps an organization and its publics adapt mutually to each other.*”

This definition emphasizes that PR is not just an internal management function, it plays a social role. Public relations helps organizations and communities understand one another, resolve disagreements, and function more effectively in a complex society. PR becomes a mechanism for facilitating communication among institutions ranging from corporations and unions to schools, hospitals, government agencies, and religious organizations.

### Public Relations Across Institutions

PR is not limited to corporations. Organizations throughout society depend on PR to build trust, explain decisions, and address concerns. Examples include:

- **Local governments** communicating during natural disasters
- **Nonprofits** mobilizing volunteers or advocating for legislation
- **Schools and universities** addressing student, parent, and community expectations
- **Health institutions** sharing guidance on safety and public health
- **Religious and community organizations** engaging members and responding to social issues

Each institution faces its own pressures, publics, and communication challenges. As a result, PR strategies vary widely. Corporate PR may focus on shareholder confidence and brand reputation. Government PR often prioritizes transparency and public safety. Nonprofit PR may focus on advocacy and mission alignment. Schools and hospitals must often emphasize crisis communication and trust-building.

These differences show that PR is not a single set of tactics, it is a flexible social function that adapts to the needs of different institutions.

## The Defining Elements of Public Relations

### 1. Public Relations as a Management Function

PR professionals advise management by analyzing public expectations, anticipating potential issues, guiding policy decisions, and identifying communication risks. Their responsibilities include:

- helping leaders understand how decisions will be interpreted,
- ensuring communication reflects public values,
- providing ethical perspectives,
- preparing organizations for emerging issues,
- and evaluating communication outcomes.

PR is most effective when it is involved early in the decision-making process—not only after an organization has something to announce.

### 2. Public Relations as a Mediating Function

PR professionals act as mediators between organizations and their publics. They interpret organizational decisions for the public and bring the public's concerns back to decision-makers. This mediating role becomes especially vital when interests conflict.

PR practitioners help:

- translate organizational goals into publicly understandable messages,
- encourage compromise,
- address misinformation or confusion,
- and maintain communication even when full agreement isn't possible.

## Limitations of the PRSA Definition

The PRSA definition assumes that harmony and mutual adaptation are always achievable, but this is not the case. Many PR situations involve conflict rather than alignment. PR professionals may manage relationships during:

- class-action lawsuits,
- community protests,
- product boycotts,
- political or legislative battles,
- or environmental and social activism.

In these cases, PR is not about “bringing policies into harmony” but about **managing disagreement**, ensuring transparency, protecting trust, and navigating ethical dilemmas.

Understanding this reality prepares students for the complexities of the profession.

## The Broader Responsibilities of PR

Publicity is often the most visible part of PR, but it is only one tool. PR also includes:

- internal communication

- community engagement
- public affairs and government relations
- investor communication
- crisis and risk communication
- advocacy and coalition building
- stakeholder engagement
- issues management

Focusing only on publicity limits PR to promotion and ignores its essential role in organizational decision-making and societal communication.

### Discussion

PRSA's 1982 definition of public relations highlights the field's role in fostering mutual understanding and aligning private and public policies. However, the definition also presents challenges, such as the assumption that public relations should always bring policies into harmony and act in the best interest of both organizations and their publics, which might not always be feasible.

Consider the following questions for discussion:

1. **Harmony vs. Realistic Relationships:** The PRSA definition suggests that public relations should harmonize private and public policies. Reflecting on real-world scenarios, such as class action lawsuits, boycotts, or lobbying efforts, how can public relations professionals manage situations where organizational interests are in direct conflict with those of their publics? What strategies can be employed to address such conflicts while still maintaining effective communication and relationships?
2. **Broader Functions Beyond Publicity:** The text emphasizes that publicity is just one subfunction within the broader scope of public relations. How does focusing solely on publicity limit the understanding and effectiveness of public relations? Discuss how public relations professionals can balance the need for visibility with their broader responsibilities of managing relationships, advising management, and aligning policies.
3. **Role of Public Relations in Various Institutions:** Public relations serves a wide range of institutions, from businesses and government agencies to schools and religious organizations. How do the goals and challenges of public relations differ across these diverse sectors? Provide examples of how public relations strategies might be tailored to fit the unique needs of different types of institutions.
4. **Counselor and Mediator Roles:** The PRSA definition describes public relations practitioners as counselors to management and mediators between organizations and their publics. How do these dual roles influence the practice of public relations? In what ways can a public relations professional effectively fulfill these roles while balancing the often competing interests of an organization and its various publics?

1.2: The Function of Public Relations is shared under a [CC BY](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 1.3: The History and Development of Modern PR



Figure 1.3.1: Using a smartphone to capture history. (Unsplash free-to-use license; [Annie Williams](#))

(The following Chapter section was remixed from [3.1: The Historical Development of Modern Public Relations](#), which is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by [Anonymous](#).)

### Origins

Although there were ancient public relations—as far in the past as ancient Greece—modern-day public relations in the United States began with a group of revolutionaries mounting a public relations campaign to turn public opinion in favor of independence from England and King George. The revolutionaries effectively used words and actions to mount a successful activist campaign leading to the Revolutionary War. Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*, published in 1776, gave rise to the sentiment that England’s governance under King George III was unjust. The subsequent *Declaration of Independence* and outward acts of protest were largely influenced by the rhetorical arguments found in Paine’s pamphlet, which has been called the most influential tract of the American Revolution.

Slogans, such as *Don’t Tread on Me*, and use of printed materials, such as Colonial newspapers, were key message tactics used to sway opinion in favor of a revolution and a war for independence. Following independence, *The Federalist Papers* were used to ratify the United States Constitution. These 85 essays were, according to the assessment of Grunig and Hunt, exemplary forms of effective public relations.<sup>2</sup>

These founding fathers of the United States used public relations to build the public consensus necessary for a budding nation to form a new kind of government and establish the human rights necessary for the nation to survive.

Modern public relations in the United States can also be traced back to less illustrious beginnings than the creation of a new democratic republic.<sup>3</sup> P.T. Barnum, of circus fame, made his mark by originating and employing many publicity tactics to generate attention for his shows and attractions. Barnum was famous for coining the phrase, “There’s no such thing as bad publicity.”

He was even known to pen letters to the editor under an assumed name, outing some of his attractions as hoaxes just to generate publicity and keep a story alive. Unfortunately, Barnum’s ethics left much to be desired.

### One-Way Communication Models: Publicity and Dissemination of Information

Barnum thought that honesty was not the domain of a press agent and famously stated, “The public be fooled.”<sup>5</sup> Drove of press agents followed in Barnum’s tracks in efforts to get free space in the news for their clients. The clients they represented ranged from Hollywood figures to private interests, such as railroads and politicians. This approach to public relations was termed **press agency** by Grunig and Hunt because of its reliance on generating publicity with little regard for truth. For modern-day examples, we have to look only to the entertainment publicity surrounding a new film release, or the product publicity around a new energy drink or a new technological gadget. Publicity and press agency are synonymous terms meaning simply to generate attention through the use of media.

The next historical phase resulted in a new model of public relations that Grunig and Hunt termed **public information**. In this approach to public relations, a former journalist works as a writer representing clients, issuing news releases to media outlets in the same style as journalistic writing. The idea of the public relations specialist acting as a counselor to management, as opposed to a simple practitioner of press agency tactics, was born.

The pioneering public information *counselor* was a man named Ivy Ledbetter Lee, who revolutionized public relations practice at the time with the idea of telling the truth. Lee studied at Harvard Law School but went on to find a job as a journalist. After working as a successful journalist for a number of years, Lee realized that he had a real flair for explaining complicated topics to people and had the idea of being a new kind of press agent. Rather than tricking the public, Lee saw his role as one of educating the public about truthful facts and supplying all possible information to the media. Ivy Lee opened the third public relations agency in the United States in 1904 and represented clients such as the Pennsylvania Railroad, the Rockefeller family, and the Anthracite Coal Roads and Mine Company.<sup>6</sup>

Lee became the first public relations practitioner to issue a code of ethics in 1906. This was informed by his work changing not just the way the Pennsylvania Railroad communicated with its publics but also changing the way it did business.<sup>7</sup> Lee espoused the ethic of letting the public be informed, which replaced railroad tycoon Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt's infamous statement regarding letting the public be damned.<sup>8</sup> Ivy Lee ushered in a more respectable form of public relations that is objective and factual. His public information approach is still in use today, especially in government reporting, quarterly earnings statements, and similar reports intended to inform.

Both the press agency and public information models of public relations are based on merging writing skills, technical skills, and interpersonal skills. Professional public relations practitioners are skilled at working with words, images, online and mobile media platforms as well as other media professionals including journalists and other PR and marketing professionals. The core concepts of both the press agency and public information models are based on a one-way dissemination of information communication models. They are not fully evolved management-based models because strategic management is based on conducting research.

Research sets the strategic management approach to PR apart because it requires listening to your publics. In other words, gathering knowledge from data constitutes two-way communication. Press agency and public information models have long relied on making assumptions about the preferences of various publics and communicating in an almost strictly one-way or one-to-many communication model.

### Two-Way Communication Models: Strategic Management of Public Relations

The next two models of public relations are based on research. Using research to gather public opinion data led scholars to label these models two-way rather than one-way because they more resemble a conversation than a simple dissemination of information. Grunig and Hunt termed the two management models *asymmetrical* and *symmetrical*.

The **asymmetrical model** was pioneered between 1920 and 1950 by Edward Bernays, nephew of psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud and is based on the principles of behavioral psychology. Public relations research seeks to determine what publics know and understand or believe about the client organization, issues of importance, and so on. Then, in the asymmetrical model, once these beliefs are learned through polling and other means, they are incorporated into the public relations messages distributed by the organization. It is called asymmetrical because it is imbalanced in favor of the communicator; the communicator undergoes no real change, but simply uses the ideas they know will resonate in communicating with publics with the purpose of persuading them on some issue or topic.

For example, if I am a politician running for reelection and my research identifies tax cuts as an important topic with publics, then I include the importance of tax cuts in my next campaign speech. Research is a key component of this model, as it seeks to persuade publics to adopt the attitudes and beliefs that are favorable to the organization based on the collection of data about their existing beliefs.

The **symmetrical model** was also pioneered by Edward Bernays and several prominent public relations practitioners and educators between about 1960 to 1980. It also seeks to use research on public opinion just as the asymmetrical model does. However, it does not use research with the intent to persuade, but to build mutual understanding between publics and organizations. Organizations are open to changing their internal policies and practices in this model based on what they learn from their publics. It is a collaborative approach to building understanding, and, although not perfectly balanced, it is a *moving equilibrium* in which both

sides in the communication process have an opportunity to have input and change an issue. To revise this example, after research identifying tax cuts as an issue, a symmetrical politician would actually incorporate tax cuts into her belief system and offer ideas supporting those beliefs on the campaign trail.

In modern public relations, we often see a mixing of public relations models, tactics, and communication tools within one campaign. It is best to think of the models as theoretical constructs that in implementation become combined through the mixed motives of public relations. In most cases, public relations professionals not only want to aid their employer or client but also to assist the publics outside the organization to access and understand the inner workings of the firm. This **mixed-motive approach** is based on the real-world contingencies that impact public relations decisions, and the desire to facilitate communication on both sides of an issue, both for organizations and for publics.

### Summary of the Models of Public Relations

In summary, the historical development of the field showed four distinct models of public relations, as identified by Grunig and Hunt. With this brief background in the history of public relations, you now have enough context to recognize how each model appears in practice. All four models are still used in various forms today, and the terms remain common in both academic literature and practical public relations management.

The one-way models are not based on social scientific research; they simply disseminate information from an organization to its publics. The two-way models, by contrast, rely on research and feedback, making them strategic management approaches. In chronological order, the models are:

- **Press agency/Publicity Model.** One-way (information) dissemination focusing on publicity for persuasion/attention.
  - Example: A movie studio hires a PR team to create buzz around a summer blockbuster. The team arranges celebrity appearances, releases dramatic teaser posters, and organizes a viral TikTok challenge, all designed solely to get attention, not to build dialogue. The goal is visibility, not accuracy or relationship-building.
- **Public information Model.** One-way (information) dissemination of information.
  - Example: A university's communications office releases a formal statement and fact sheet about a new campus policy. It explains what the policy is and why it exists, but does not involve audience research or dialogue.
- **Two-way asymmetrical Model.** Two-way (research), which is imbalanced in favor of persuading publics to support the organizations' interests.
  - Example: A fast-food company conducts focus groups to learn why young adults are buying fewer burgers. After analyzing the data, the company launches a new advertising campaign designed specifically to appeal to this demographic's preferences. Although research is used, the goal is still to influence public behavior, not to adapt company policy or practices.
- **Two-way symmetrical Model.** Two-way (research), which is more balanced in terms of creating mutual understanding; moving equilibrium.
  - Example: A university plans to expand parking lots into a green space. Nearby residents express concerns about traffic, noise, and environmental impact. The university holds public forums, surveys community members, and consults environmental experts. As a result, the university modifies its plan to include green buffers, noise-reducing infrastructure, and community use areas. Both sides adjust to reach a workable outcome.

Due to the mixed-motives inherent in the public relations process, public relations professionals will most likely use a combination of these models in public relations management. These models suggest an overall philosophy of public relations, while situations require different approaches. Therefore, it is also useful to have public relations strategies that reflect a contingency of varying approaches and that integrate multiple types of media into a communication plan.

#### Discussion

The historical evolution of public relations has seen the development of various models, each reflecting different strategic communication approaches. From the revolutionary tactics used by early American activists to the more structured models

introduced by pioneers like Ivy Lee and Edward Bernays, public relations has shifted from simple publicity to a more nuanced practice involving strategic management and mutual understanding.

Consider the following questions for discussion:

1. **Historical Influence on Modern PR Practices:** Reflect on the impact of early public relations practices, such as those employed by Thomas Paine during the American Revolution and P.T. Barnum's press agency tactics. How have these early approaches influenced contemporary public relations strategies? Are there elements of these historical practices that are still evident in today's PR campaigns? Provide examples to support your points.
2. **One-Way vs. Two-Way Communication Models:** The text describes four models of public relations: press agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical, and two-way symmetrical. Compare and contrast these models in terms of their effectiveness and ethical considerations. How do the one-way models of press agency and public information differ from the two-way models in terms of their goals and methods? Discuss the advantages and limitations of each model in achieving effective communication with publics.
3. **Ethical Considerations in PR Models:** Ivy Lee's shift towards a more truthful public information model marked a significant ethical improvement over the deceptive practices of press agency. How do ethical considerations play a role in choosing and implementing different PR models? In what ways can modern PR practitioners balance the need for effective communication with maintaining ethical standards?
4. **Application of Models in Contemporary PR:** The text notes that modern public relations often involves a mix of different models to address various communication needs. How can public relations professionals strategically combine elements from the different models to craft comprehensive PR campaigns? Discuss how the mixed-motive approach might be applied in a current PR scenario, such as a corporate crisis or a new product launch.

2. Grunig and Hunt, *Managing Public Relations*

3. Scott M. Cutlip, *Public Relations History: From the 17th to the 20th Century: The Antecedents*, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 1995). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203811849>

4. Grunig and Hunt, *Managing Public Relations*, 28

5. Grunig and Hunt, *Managing Public Relations*, 29

6. Grunig and Hunt, *Managing Public Relations*, 32

7. Ray Eldon Hiebert. "Ivy Lee: Father of Modern Public Relations." *The Princeton University Library Chronicle* 27, no. 2 (1966): 113-120.

8. Hiebert. "Ivy Lee: Father of Modern Public Relations."

---

1.3: The History and Development of Modern PR is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 1.4: The SOEP Model for Media Strategy



Figure 1.4.1: Information about a fashion blog media kit (Unsplash free-to-use license; Swello)

The **SOEP** media model, which stands for Shared, Owned, Earned, and Paid media is an updated model for media strategy based on the PESO model.<sup>9</sup> (More information about [the PESO model can be found here](#)).

The SOEP framework helps public relations professionals categorize different types of media channel and craft a balanced, effective strategy for reaching key publics. SOEP also provides a helpful set of categories for measuring the success and effectiveness of campaigns. The costs and benefits of developing, maintaining, and promoting messaging in each category compared as opposed to other categories is easier to do if the framework is applied from the outset of strategic planning.

The essential elements of the SOEP Model include:

**Shared Media:** This encompasses content that is shared across social media platforms, such as posts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (X), LinkedIn, and other social networks. It relies on audience engagement, encouraging users to share content further, which amplifies reach organically. Shared media works well for brand awareness, creating community, and sparking conversation.

**Owned Media:** This includes all content the brand creates and controls, like websites, blogs, newsletters, and other digital properties. It's where brands have full control over message structures, platforms of dissemination and, of course, content. With owned media properties, the brand and its PR professionals can shape narratives in the most suitable ways for each platform or media type. Owned media is crucial for establishing authority, delivering consistent messaging, and providing in-depth information.

**Earned Media:** This is media exposure gained through organic, unpaid means. It includes publicity generated by word of mouth, press coverage, reviews, or social media mentions. In this regard, there is some overlap between Shared Media and Earned Media but it is important to note that social media spaces are both chaotic free-for-all spaces for individuals to publish almost anything they like *and* paid platforms where messages can be featured at a cost to the brand charged by the social media company. Earned media is valuable in comparison to owned media because it often carries higher credibility. Earned news coverage is often presumed by audiences to be accurate and trustworthy because it has been shared by professional journalists from recognizable news outlets. Since earned media is not paid advertising or other paid promotional content, it often feels more authentic to audiences; however, "earned" can be challenging to obtain and manage.

**Paid Media:** This is any form of advertising that requires payment, including display ads, social media ads, sponsored content, and influencer partnerships. It allows brands to target specific audiences and reach people quickly, though it can sometimes be seen as less authentic than earned or shared media.

This model prioritizes shared media, and since shared media platforms have seen massive growth over the past decade (2015-2025 at the time of writing), it is perhaps the best way to organize thinking and planning around the relatively classic concepts of paid, earned, and owned media with the addition of shared.

Combining these four types of media, organizations can develop a robust PR strategy, balancing controlled messaging (owned and paid media) with community-driven engagement (shared media) and external credibility (earned media). The goal is to leverage each type's strengths to create a cohesive, resonant brand presence.

### Sponsored Content and Ethical Concerns

The research paper cited in this section also points out that while these categories are helpful for developing strategies and measuring success across media types, a blurring of the lines between some of these types is occurring.

Sponsored content in professional news outlets may have elements of all four aspects of this model. Sponsored content often appears in the same context as news content with a similar look and feel, similar to earned media. It should be labeled as sponsored because it is in fact paid media, but it is not, strictly speaking, advertising content. Usually, sponsored content has few if any of the telltale signs of advertising. Since the brand is in control of which outlets it partners with for sponsored content and is ultimately in control of the message content, there are elements of owned media as well. Additionally, when sponsored content is promoted it is often done on shared media platforms.

This blurring of the lines between strategic categories has many in the public relations field calling for the development of new codes of ethics to account for these capabilities as media strategies evolve to include many multi-category content types.<sup>10</sup>

What follows is a suggested code of ethics for public relations professionals when preparing and placing sponsored content:

**Transparency and Disclosure:** All sponsored content must be clearly labeled as such, using language like “Sponsored,” “Advertisement,” or “Paid Partnership.” Disclosures should be conspicuous and easy to understand to avoid misleading the audience. This principle also includes disclosing relationships with influencers or partners in the content.

**Honesty and Accuracy:** Sponsored content should be truthful, accurate, and not misleading. PR professionals should ensure that any claims made in the content (about products, services, or brands) are backed by factual evidence. Exaggerations or false promises are unethical and can damage both the brand's and the professional's reputation.

**Alignment with Brand Values:** PR professionals should only promote products, services, or companies that align with their organization's values and that they believe will benefit their audience. Endorsing or promoting products that contradict a brand's or individual's ethics undermines credibility and trust.

**Audience Respect:** Sponsored content should be crafted with respect for the audience, aiming to add value rather than deceive or manipulate. Content should prioritize relevance and usefulness to ensure that paid promotions resonate with and respect the needs and expectations of the audience.

**Responsibility to Disclose Potential Conflicts of Interest:** If a PR professional or their organization has a vested interest in a product or service, this interest must be disclosed. A conflict of interest should never be hidden, as it can compromise the credibility of the content and damage relationships with the audience.

**Compliance with Legal and Industry Standards:** All sponsored content should adhere to applicable laws, regulations, and industry standards, including the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) guidelines in the United States or equivalent authorities in other countries. This includes guidelines around truthful advertising and proper disclosure of paid relationships.

**Continuous Review and Adaptation:** Ethical standards in PR are dynamic and can change as digital platforms and audience expectations evolve. PR professionals should regularly review and update their approach to sponsored content to stay aligned with best practices and new ethical considerations.

#### Discussion

The SOEP model identifies four general media types including Shared, Owned, Earned, and Paid. Using this framework enables PR professionals to estimate costs and return-on-investment, which can help prioritize what content to develop and where to place it or attempt to place it. Consider the following questions for discussion:

1. **Understanding Media Types:** Among the four media types in the SOEP model (Shared, Owned, Earned, Paid), which do you think is most essential for building long-term brand credibility? Why?

2. **Strategic Application:** How can a brand effectively balance shared and paid media in a campaign to reach a broad audience while maintaining authenticity? In what situations might an organization rely more heavily on earned media rather than owned or paid media? Discuss the potential risks and benefits of this approach.
3. **Ethical Considerations:** The chapter mentions a growing "blurring of the lines" between strategic media types. What are some real-life examples of this, and how might they influence audience trust? How might PR professionals address ethical issues around transparency in sponsored content to avoid misleading audiences?
4. **Evaluation and Measurement:** What metrics would you prioritize in evaluating the effectiveness of each media type in a PR strategy?
5. **Future Implications:** As media platforms evolve, do you think additional categories might be needed in the SOEP model? If so, what might they be and why? How might new ethical guidelines or codes impact how public relations professionals approach sponsored content across different media types?
6. **Personal Insight and Application:** Can you think of a recent campaign or brand that exemplifies a successful SOEP strategy? Which media types did they leverage, and why do you think it was effective? If you were to create a PR campaign for a brand, how would you prioritize these media types in your strategy, and how would you address potential ethical challenges?

9. Jim Macnamara, May Lwin, Ana Adi, and Ansgar Zerfass. "'PESO' media strategy shifts to 'SOEP': Opportunities and ethical dilemmas." Public Relations Review 42, no. 3 (2016): <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2016.03.001>

10. Jim Macnamara, May Lwin, Ana Adi, and Ansgar Zerfass

---

1.4: The SOEP Model for Media Strategy is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 2: Social Media Today

2.1: How Did We Get Here?

2.2: Where do we go from here?

2.3: Benefits and Challenges of Social Media

---

2: Social Media Today is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 2.1: How Did We Get Here?



Figure 2.1.1: Social media app folder on a smartphone. (Unsplash free-to-use license; Panos Sakalakis)

To understand why social media are so powerful and so ubiquitous, it helps to understand a key fact: **Social networks are not new.** Social networks are as old as civilization itself. The term refers to groups of people collaborating to support each other and get things done.

The formal analysis of social networks dates back to the 1930s. Anthropologists, sociologists and others have worked for nearly a century to map and study how and why people form social groups. We develop and nurture social groups for safety, friendship, trade and to get things done that require large numbers of people.

The most relevant lessons from fields that study social networks in depth for those who need to use social networking communication tools as professionals involve how people connect and communicate in order to live and work together.

We have been successful at networking socially since long before there were digital social networking applications. Digital tools enhance and extend capabilities we have had for tens of thousands, possibly hundreds of thousands of years.

For example, global trade routes date back thousands of years. Global empires and religions are built on social networks. One way of looking at colonialism is as an effort to make some human social networks more powerful, successful and efficient by decimating, displacing or disregarding others. Many shipping routes, i.e. oceanic shipping, are hundreds of years old. In the name of building stronger social networks, some people were lifted up while others were subjugated.

Humans built networks of networks and used them to connect, communicate, commingle, do commerce and do combat with each other from the dawn of society through the 20th century.

In the 21st century, for the first time, we have the power of fully networked, global high-speed electronic communication networks to utilize and to try to manage.

It should come as no surprise that at the same time we are developing more powerful ways to live, work and play in networks that we are also more immediately aware of the downsides of the use of power around the globe.

Figuring out how to make the most of digitally connected human networks without destroying society is probably the most important social challenge of this millennium next to dealing with global climate change.

What digital social networking capabilities afford is near-instantaneous access to existing human networks as well as the ability to quickly create and leverage new digitally connected networks of people. We can pretty much disregard the limits of space and time on this globe when it comes to matters of communication, and we have only begun to understand the power of social networking applications to disrupt, augment, and build new social structures.

### Every Network is an Island

(This section is remixed from Intro to Social Media by Cheryl Lawson, CCBY-Attribution)

Navigating your path through the terrain of social media can seem daunting, particularly when deciding which social media platform is most suitable for your business. You've defined your objectives; you may be aiming to hone your skills as a social media manager for a business or leveraging your knowledge to boost your organization's reputation or growth. In either scenario, the question of **"Which social media platform is the best for my business?"** inevitably arises.

This is a longstanding debate, yet it's important to realize that each network carries its own significance. The choice of platform hinges not on general perceptions of 'the best', but on what best aligns with your unique business goals and fits the specific needs of your target publics.

Social media platforms were developed with distinct objectives in mind. **Facebook** sought to unify individuals worldwide, **LinkedIn** established an avenue for professional networking, **Instagram** provides a platform for all age groups to capture and chronicle their significant moments through photos. Consequently, understanding the benefits unique to each platform is vital. It's about deciding which platform offers the capabilities that best serve your business goals, aligns with your industry, and resonates with your target publics.

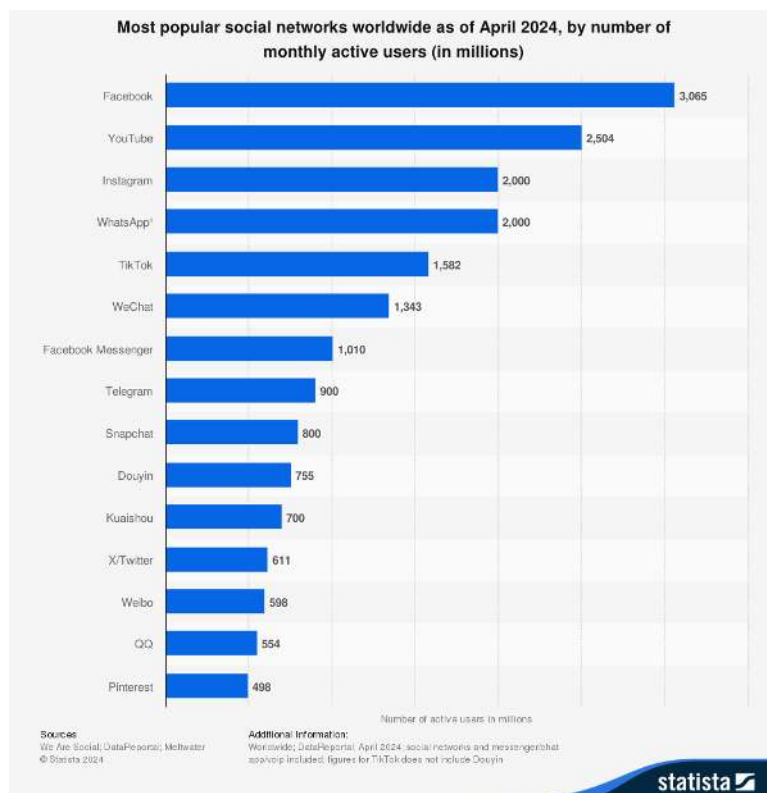
Keeping your specific industry and your target publics in mind is key when assessing these platforms. Each one offers unique benefits and reaches specific demographics, so consider where your publics are most likely to be active and engaged. The platform that best reaches your publics and aligns with your business objectives is the one you want to focus on.

### Side Note:

Regardless of whether you're a budding startup or an established brand, it's wise to secure your brand name across all social media networks, even if you're not actively using them in your current strategy. This preemptive measure ensures your brand name isn't hijacked or misused by others. The last thing you want is for someone else to lay claim to your brand's name.

### Who Lives There?

A primary appeal of social media for communicators is the extensive targeting options it provides. Unlike traditional PR and marketing which often focus on mass media relations and mass marketing, social media communication allows you to target precise audiences for your PR campaigns.





Facebook is populated mostly by adults of the 25-34 age group. The second largest group is 18-24 years, who make up 23.8% of Facebook's population, and only 4.8% of users fall into the senior age group. The biggest country present on the platform is India, while users from the US and Canada are only 10% of the total Facebook population. As for gender, males dominate the platform with 56% of the total population. Also, 51% of active users visit the website several times a day, and 75% of Facebook users are at least college graduates (Statista, 2024).



YouTube's user base in 2024 is diverse, with 25-34 year-olds making up the largest age group, accounting for about 12% of the total users. The platform has 2.5 billion monthly active users, with India leading in user numbers, followed by the United States and Brazil. In terms of gender, 54.3% of users are male and 45.7% are female globally, though in the U.S., this ratio flips, with more female users than male. YouTube is heavily accessed by younger users, particularly males aged 25-34, who form the largest demographic segment. The platform is also available in over 100 countries and supports 80 languages (Statista, 2024).



On Instagram, the highest population is 25-34-year-olds, who make up 33.1% of all users, and the age group of 18-24 years is second with a 29.6% share. Most of them come from the US, whereas India and Brazil hold second and third positions respectively. 43% of these users are college graduates, and 42% earn over \$75,000 per year. Over 510 million users are female, with males behind by 20 million. These users spend around 28 minutes a day on Instagram. Most users follow at least a single brand on the app, and 73% of teens in the US find Instagram the easiest way to reach and interact with a brand (Statista, 2024).



TikTok is a customer-favorite app. Its users are present in 141 countries. China, India, United States, and Turkey are among the countries where it is most frequently downloaded and used. About 44% of TikTok users are female, and 56% are male. Out of these, 41% of users are aged 16-24 years and spend at least 52 minutes every day on the app, watching videos related to entertainment, dance, pranks, fitness, and other categories. 90% of TikTok or Douyin users access the app via Android smartphones and maintain a healthy engagement rate of 52%. In 2019, people spent \$115.3 million on the app for in-app purchases, influencer marketing, etc. In September of 2023, TikTok launched the TikTok Shop, which enables users to explore deals without leaving the app. The addition of the shop spawned the growth of content creators whose sole aim is to drive users to their shop. Often a link to a specific item within a shop will appear in videos on the "For You" tab.



Snapchat is predominantly used by younger audiences, with 48% of users in the 15-25 age group. Another 30% of users are aged 26-35, while only 5% are over 55. This makes it especially popular with Gen Z and Millennials. The platform also maintains a near-even gender distribution, with females slightly dominating at 51% of the global user base. In terms of geography, India has the

largest number of Snapchat users, with over 200 million, followed by the U.S. with about 106 million users. Snapchat is known for high engagement, with users opening the app around 40 times a day on average.



While many brands still use X, formerly Twitter, for promotional purposes, attitudes about X are mixed and evolving the more partisan the site becomes and the less the site restricts hateful content, which can be detrimental for brands to associate themselves with. Consider [this article from PR News](#), which states that opinions among PR professionals about X are starkly mixed as some are moving away completely while others have seen competitors to X rise and fall several times.



Bluesky is a popular microblogging app built on an open source protocol. Its user base grew substantially in October and November of 2024 after it announced the ability to easily block users, a feature no longer fully functional in X (Twitter).<sup>11</sup>

For most brands engaged in debating whether to use X, Bluesky or both, the most reliable approach continues to be to go where their customers are.

This was a brief overview of some popular social platforms. You should opt for the platform that suits your business needs.

### What Language Do They Speak?

Whether you're talking to friends at a party, communicating with little kids in social gatherings, or sharing thoughts with business associates in a professional setting, you should always be aware of your audience. When you choose the language or tone they understand, you can conveniently communicate with each other without misunderstandings.

The following graphic is based on a longstanding tradition of using donuts to explain how social media platforms function. Often times, the functions afforded by the platform will shape, or at least influence, the audiences you encounter there.

# Social Media Platforms Explained with Donuts

**For reasons that are historically ambiguous, donuts are the preferred reference point for explaining the primary functions of social media platforms. This is a 2025 version by Mark Poepsel. ccbv**



Facebook. I like donuts. I'm part of a local donut connoisseur community group. I once bought a used donut-making machine on Marketplace, and I met the seller at the local police station.



YouTube

YouTube. I'm watching donut review videos and might watch some videos about how donuts are made or about the history of donuts. I need to be wary of flat-donut conspiracy theorists.



Instagram. This is where I share photos of donuts but only the best couple of donuts I see each day. People need to know I'm discerning when it comes to donuts.



TikTok. I made a video of myself dancing with my donut using the latest trending donut sound. Sometimes I will mouth the same words as a trending donut sound but write contradicting captions



Snapchat. I made a short video of me with my donut. The video will disappear very quickly, probably.



X, formerly Twitter. I'm battling



Bluesky to be the place where people discuss current #donut events.

Figure 2.1.1: This is an updated version of an explainer graphic used to provide context for social media platforms. (CCBY; Mark Poepsel, SIUE)

Do not forget to consider the relationship between platform and audience. This will help when you need to target publics on social media.

Creating social media profiles is easy. What is more difficult is spreading your message and getting people talking about your organization in a positive manner; however, this objective can be achieved by determining what type of content the audience prefers and creating posts that are relevant to that group and that uses a tone they are familiar with and comfortable with.

## Hashtags (#)

Hashtags were introduced by Chris Messina in an attempt to organize content on social media. Twitter (now X) first introduced this feature in 2007. It was later adopted by Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, LinkedIn, and TikTok due to its utility. A hashtag categorizes content on the basis of a topic. If you want to reach the right audience for your business, you need to target popular and relevant hashtags. You can also create custom hashtags to promote your campaigns.

Here is an example: Imagine a roofing service provider hires you as a social media marketer. To build their business online, you need to come up with suitable hashtags for the social media strategy. Here are a few trends and hashtags that may prove useful:

- #roofing
- #roofingcontractor
- #construction
- #greenroofing
- #roofrepair
- #roofgutters

## Long Form vs. Short Form Content

Those of us who spend a lot of time online tend to have short attention spans. We easily get distracted and can ignore posts if we don't find them interesting. This is why campaigns using digital media focus on concise, captivating content that can keep readers

hooked till the last line.

If we need to keep the content short, how can we share important information with the target audience?

It's common for social media communicators to get confused about the ideal length of content in posts. Remember that the content length depends on audience interests as well as the norms and trends of the platform where you intend to post it.

### Long-form content

If you are planning to publish long-form content, it is best to set up a company blog. The purpose of blogging is to educate people about a relevant topic and offer comprehensive solutions to problems. For example, if you are an expert in providing electrical installation and repair services, you may want to write posts about safety tips for customers. Blog posts can be 500-1,000 words, but you should aim to publish blogs of 2,000-2,500 words to boost SEO.

LinkedIn is also suitable for posting long-form content. You can write about your area of expertise and experiences to share knowledge with other professionals.

Other social platforms such as Facebook, X, Instagram, etc. may be suitable for short-form content. Whether you are thinking of creating text posts, videos, or images, it's a better option to keep the content short for better engagement.

Don't forget that long form videos aren't compatible with most social websites. So, if you are creating long-form informative videos, it may be a good option to post them on YouTube and share a brief snippet on X and other social websites.

Take, for example, stand-up comedians. Their career depends almost entirely on their ability to garner and hold an audience's attention. A common approach for stand-ups is to publish long-form videos on YouTube or possibly as a podcast and then to clip their stand-up sets into brief videos for Instagram and TikTok. This allows for audiences to find them on different apps and to check out longer sets, which might encourage them to become more serious fans.

Importantly, information about upcoming live shows is usually shared on all platforms, whether the videos are short-form, long-form or somewhere in-between.

If you are representing a brand, it is not necessary to try to be funny, but you do need to locate followers who find your topic interesting where they spend the most time on social media. If you grab their attention with a quick teaser video clip and make easy-to-follow links, many will visit your YouTube channel to watch the entire video.

### What's Their Favorite Dish?

Back in the day, social media campaigns were all about text posts and still images. With technological advancements, a wide variety of content is now available to internet users. Let's first take a look at the most popular types of digital content. After that, we will discuss which content goes well with popular social media apps and sites.

### Common Types of Digital Content

Below are some of the most frequently used formats in strategic communication. Understanding how and why they work will help you choose the right "dish" for each platform and audience.

- Blog post and other articles - Great for thought leadership, FAQs, and deep dives that require context or expertise. These build authority and support SEO.
- eBooks - Longer, more comprehensive pieces that can establish expertise or serve as downloadable resources in exchange for emails or sign-ups.
- Images (still images, GIFs, 360° images) - Essential for visual storytelling, quick engagement, and brand identity.
- Videos (recorded videos and live streaming) - Currently the most engaging content type across platforms; ideal for product showcases, behind-the-scenes content, Q&As, and announcements.
- Infographics - Perfect for condensing complex data or processes into visually digestible information.
- Testimonials - Social proof that builds trust—especially powerful for nonprofits, healthcare, education, and service-based brands.
- Contests - Designed to boost engagement and reach by encouraging participation, sharing, or user-generated content.
- Polls - Quick two-way interactions that give you insights while prompting audiences to participate.

- Podcasts - Long-form audio storytelling suited for interviews, discussions, and brand narratives.
- Webinars - Educational or training-based content that builds authority and allows for real-time interaction.
- How-to guides - Instructional content that positions the brand as a helpful resource and drives practical value for audiences.

Choosing the right type of content isn't just about what looks good, it's about matching your goals (awareness, engagement, conversion, education) with the platform where your audience is most likely to respond.

**Instagram** is primarily a visually-driven platform, and to promote your brand you should still share high-quality photos, stills, 360° images, and videos of products, team members, and events. However, the platform now strongly emphasizes short-form vertical video (particularly Reels) for discovery and reach. Reels are no longer strictly limited to 15-90 seconds: as of early 2025, Instagram now allows Reels up to 3 minutes in length, opening up more flexibility for brands. [The Verge+1](#)

Although photos remain important for brand identity or catalog posts, the Instagram algorithm now frequently favours Reels for broader distribution, especially for reaching new audiences. [Later+1](#)

Instagram Stories still automatically disappear after 24 hours (unless saved as a Highlight) and can be a powerful tool for urgency, behind-the-scenes, limited-time offers, or follower-only content. Captions and hashtags remain important for discoverability, but more critical now are factors like *engagement in the first few seconds of a video, shares via direct message, saves, and comments*. [Dataslayer+1](#)

In short: share visuals and video, but lean into Reels for growth, use Stories for immediacy, and maintain high quality photos for brand consistency. Always tailor the content style to what best suits the format and your audience behaviour.

A similar visual strategy is suitable for **Pinterest**, where you can capture attention through high-quality images and video Pins. Pinterest functions more like a visual search and discovery engine than a traditional social feed, so brands should focus on creating clear, keyword-rich Pins that link back to useful content or products. If your organization sells products online, it may be helpful to join Pinterest's Verified Merchant Program so your product Pins are eligible for shopping features and additional visibility. It is still important to publish content regularly to well-organized, clearly labeled boards, but unlike fast-moving platforms such as Instagram or TikTok, Pinterest content is relatively evergreen: Pins can continue to reach users months after they are posted. Rather than posting once to a single beautiful board and walking away, brands should plan a steady cadence of fresh, relevant Pins that fit how users search, plan, and shop on the platform.

As for **Facebook**, video remains one of the strongest-performing content types, especially short-form video, which Meta continues to prioritize across the platform. This includes live streams, which often generate real-time engagement, as well as edited highlight videos that recap organizational events or tell short stories. While videos generally receive better reach than photos or text posts, the types of videos that perform best tend to be those that encourage comments, shares, and watching past the first few seconds.

Brands can also post videos specifically developed for Facebook advertising, including Reels-style vertical videos, which are increasingly used in both the Feed and the Reels tab. However, it's important to note that images, link posts, and text posts still have value when used strategically. Facebook's diverse user base engages with multiple formats depending on the purpose of the post.

For organic performance, consistency, relevance, and meaningful audience interaction matter as much as the format itself. Engagement signals such as comments, shares, and direct messages influence whether Facebook continues showing your content in users' Feeds.

With the increasing popularity and cultural influence of **TikTok**, it should play a key role in any modern social media or marketing strategy. TikTok is built around short-form vertical video, and its algorithm recommends content based on user interests rather than follower count—making it possible for brands of any size to reach large audiences with creative, relevant content. Videos can be supported with captions, sounds, and on certain accounts, clickable links to websites or product pages.

For product-based brands, TikTok Shop has become an important e-commerce tool, allowing users to purchase directly within the app. This is especially effective because TikTok reaches a younger demographic than most other platforms, providing opportunities to build long-term customer relationships early.

It is important to note that TikTok faces ongoing regulatory scrutiny in the United States related to concerns about data privacy, national security, and its parent company ByteDance. While TikTok is headquartered in Singapore and Los Angeles, U.S. policymakers continue to debate how to manage foreign ownership and data protections. These concerns do not currently prevent brands from using TikTok, but they are worth monitoring as regulations evolve.

In the past, the **Twitter** network (now X) was mostly known for its credibility in news and information. Users of this platform showed more interest in professionally published content, which includes text posts, text threads consisting of multiple posts discussing a single topic, informational infographics and videos. As of 2024, the credibility of the platform has tanked and active users have dropped precipitously as Elon Musk's new rollouts (the ability to pay for verified status, for example) have blurred the lines of trustworthiness on the platform. Use of this platform for any campaign should be carefully weighed against the potential of having brand content appear alongside hateful and racist rhetoric, which tends to plague the platform whenever its publishing guidelines are relaxed.<sup>12</sup>

While **Bluesky** is not a perfect replacement for finding Twitter-like audiences, many of its functions as well as its growing popularity with journalists and influencers may make it a viable option for presenting certain newsworthy content in quick posts or brief threads of text and photos on a reliable platform that functions much like Twitter did historically. After all, Bluesky was created by Jack Dorsey, the former CEO of Twitter.

For **LinkedIn**, long-form content such as articles, user guides, and eBooks can still help establish expertise, but today the platform rewards a wide variety of formats. Short text posts, carousel-style PDFs, and thought-leadership updates often generate more engagement because they are quick to consume and encourage discussion. LinkedIn Newsletters have also become a popular way for brands and leaders to publish recurring long-form content to a built-in subscriber base. While video can perform well when it feels authentic and educational, posts that emphasize professional insight, industry knowledge, and conversation tend to perform best. Overall, LinkedIn is most effective when content provides value to professional audiences rather than direct promotion.

**YouTube** has long been one of the most popular platforms for pre-produced videos, educational content, and live-streaming events. Brands can upload videos of almost any length or file size, making YouTube ideal for tutorials, behind-the-scenes content, interviews, and long-form storytelling. In recent years, YouTube Shorts (its short-form vertical video format) have exploded in popularity, with more than 70 billion daily views. Shorts often serve as a major discovery tool, helping new audiences find a brand before engaging with longer videos.

YouTube remains widely used across all age groups, and because it functions both as a social network and as the world's second-largest search engine, it is considered a core component of most social media and PR strategies. Brands that use YouTube effectively often combine short-form, long-form, and live content to maximize visibility and build deeper relationships with their audiences.

### ***Suggested Reading:***

<https://www.oberlo.com/blog/social-media-marketing-statistics>

<https://backlinko.com/social-media-users>

## **📌 2.1 Discussion**

1. **The Evolution of PR Campaigns:** As social media evolved from early platforms such as Friendster and MySpace to today's global networks including Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, etc., how have public relations campaigns adapted their approaches to publishing on social media? Discuss specific changes in tactics, audience engagement, and message dissemination, and consider how social media's growth has shifted the balance between legacy media (newspapers, magazines, radio, television, etc.) and digital PR strategies.
2. **Power Dynamics in Digital Networks:** The reading highlights that while digital networks connect people globally, they also magnify the risks of the misuse of media power. What are some examples of how digital social networks have both empowered and subjugated communities in recent years? How should social media platforms handle these power dynamics? What is the role of public relations organizations in navigating or demanding change in these platforms? What is the role of brands in pushing for change in the way social media platforms are managed when they deem it necessary

3. **Choosing the Right Platform:** Each social media platform prioritizes particular purposes and patrons. How should a public relations professional choose a platform for a campaign? Discuss how the target audience, business goals, and platform capabilities should influence this decision.

11. Gael Cooper, "Bluesky Explained: Why This Social Media Network Is Growing by 1 Million Users a Day," CNET, November 18, 2024, accessed November 18, 2024, <https://www.cnet.com/tech/bluesky-explained-why-this-social-media-network-is-now-growing-by-1-million-users-daily/>

12. Emmet Lyons and Joanne Stocker, "World Bank Halts Paid Advertising on X after CBS News Finds Its Promoted Ad under Racist Content," CBS News, September 3, 2024, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/world-bank-advertising-elon-musk-x-racism-pro-nazi-accounts/>

---

2.1: How Did We Get Here? is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 2.2: Where do we go from here?

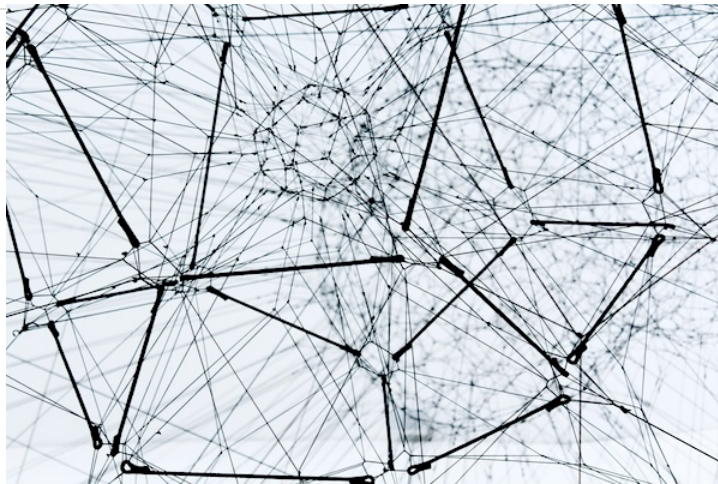


Figure 2.2.1: A tangible graphic representation of a network. (Unsplash free-to-use license; [Alina Grubnyak](#))

(The following chapter is remixed from [Competent Communication, Lisa Coleman, Thomas King, & William Turner, Southwest Tennessee Community College, Chapter 9.3: Social Media and Web 2.0](#))

Social media provide a public platform for users to create a personal profile that has the potential to reach mass audiences. As Internet technology evolves rapidly, most users have few qualms about moving to whichever app offers the better experience.

Most users have profiles and accounts on many services at once, but as relational networks become more and more established and user attention becomes concentrated on a few social media sites, it becomes increasingly difficult for newcomers and lagging challengers to offer the same rich networking experience. The character of a social networking site is highly dependent on the type of relationships built there.

Social networking sites rely on **network effects** to be successful. In simple terms, the concept of network effects refers to the idea that “nothing attracts a crowd like a crowd.” People will tend to use a platform more if others are already there, particularly others whom they either know personally or are interested in because of their fame, expertise, and/or capabilities.

LinkedIn caters to business professionals looking for networking opportunities. LinkedIn is free to join and allows users to post resumes and job qualifications to make “connections” of various degrees. Its tagline, “Relationships matter,” emphasizes the role of an increasingly networked world in business. A LinkedIn user can use the site to promote professional services.

Twitter (which we might use interchangeably with its new name, X) offers a different approach to social networking, allowing users to “tweet” 280+-character messages to their “followers,” making it something of a hybrid of instant messaging and blogging. In fact, in the academic literature, X is often referred to as a “microblogging” site. Twitter is openly searchable, meaning that anyone can visit the site and quickly find out what other X users are saying about any subject.

Prior to the purchase of Twitter by Elon Musk, X proved useful for journalists reporting on breaking news who were interested in what people near the breaking news event were experiencing. It was also used as a resource to highlight the “best of” the Internet; however, loosened content moderation guidelines on the private platform have made X a challenging space for journalists to use, and many have left the site or have decided to rely on it less in recent months as of this writing, January of 2025.<sup>13</sup>

For the better part of a decade, X was also useful for communicators looking for a free public forum to disseminate campaign messages. As mentioned previously, however, this site has diminished in relevancy and quality in 2024 and should be used with caution. New microblogging sites have cropped up to capitalize on X’s decline. Many former X users have moved to Threads, Bluesky, and Mastodon, to name a few.

Another category of social media, blogs, began as an online, public version of a diary or journal. Short for “web logs,” these personal sites give anyone a platform to write about anything they want to. Some services, like LiveJournal, highlighted their ability to provide up-to-date reports on personal feelings, even going so far as to add a “mood” shorthand at the end of every post. The Blogger service allows users with Google accounts to create their own blogs and to follow friends’ blogs and post comments.

WordPress.com, the company that created the open-source blogging platform WordPress.org, and LiveJournal both started with freemium models allowing users to create sites with basic settings for free with the option to pay for things like custom styles, photo hosting, and more advanced features.<sup>14</sup>

What most blogging platforms have in common is their bundling of social networking functions (such as the ability to easily link to and comment on friends' blogs) with an expanded platform for self-expression. At this point, the use of blogs, X, and other social media platforms varies widely in different media organizations. News outlets may use some or all of these tools as a way to allow their reporters to update audiences instantly and often. They also use social media to draw users into their own proprietary spaces online; however, news organizations are growing wary of the ways misinformation and disinformation spread on social media, and their employees may not have time to maintain blogs while keeping up with day-to-day reporting tasks. Making the most of social media is a necessary part of managing a mass media business, but preferred practices change with the evolution (and devolution) of platforms.

Reminder: There are many additional [types of social media](#) available, many of which can be called to mind with a single name: YouTube (video sharing), Wikipedia (open-source encyclopedia composed of “wikis” editable by any user), Reddit and Discord (community billboards) Flickr (photo sharing), Instagram (photoblogging), SnapChat and TikTok (video communication) are all popular social media platforms, and there are hundreds more that cater to niche audiences. Traditional media outlets have referred to social media services as “Web 2.0.” for decades. Web 2.0 is not a new version of the web; rather, the term is a reference to the increased focus on user-generated content and social interaction on the web, as well as the evolution of online tools to facilitate that focus.

## Going Viral

Media content on networked platforms that spreads from person to person particularly broadly and rapidly is said to have gone viral. Marketing and advertising agencies have deemed advertising that makes use of this phenomenon as “viral marketing;” however, many YouTube/Snapchat/TikTok sensations have not come from large marketing firms.

For a classic example, consider how the four-piece pop-punk band OK Go (whose frontman has a background in advertising) went viral back in 2006. The group filmed a music video on a tiny budget for their song “[Here It Goes Again](#)” and released it exclusively on YouTube. Featuring a choreographed dance done on eight separate treadmills, the video quickly became a viral sensation. The video helped OK Go attract millions of new fans and earned them a Grammy in 2007, making it one of the most notable early successes of viral Internet marketing. As of November 2024, the remastered official video released in 2009 has more than 65,980,058 views and counting.

Viral marketing is, however, notoriously unpredictable and is liable to spawn remixes, spin-offs, and spoofs that can dilute or damage the messages that communicators intend to spread.

That being said, when successful, a viral campaign can reach millions of people for very little money and can even make it into mainstream news.

Not all viral media is part of a deliberate campaign, however. Again, looking at a classic example, in 2007, someone posted a link to a new trailer for *Grand Theft Auto IV* on the video games message board of the web forum 4chan.org. When users followed the link, they were greeted not with a video game trailer but with Rick Astley singing his 1987 hit “[Never Gonna Give You Up](#).” This technique—redirecting someone to Rick Astley—became known as Rickrolling and quickly became one of the most well-known Internet memes of all time.

An Internet meme is a concept that quickly replicates itself throughout the Internet, and it is often nonsensical and absurd. One of the earliest memes, “Lolcats,” consists of misspelled captions—“I can has cheezburger?” is a classic example—over pictures of cats. Often, these memes take on a metatextual quality, such as the meme “Milhouse is not a meme,” in which the character Milhouse (from the television show *The Simpsons*) is told that he is not a meme.

Chronicling memes is notoriously difficult because they typically spring into existence seemingly overnight, propagate rapidly, and disappear before ever making it onto the radar of mainstream media—or even the mainstream Internet user.

Memes have evolved over the past two decades. Historically, memes started as still images, often single frames with bold text on top and bottom, but now video memes have become more common, thanks to platforms including TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube Shorts.

Still images are still widely used, especially for quick, easily shareable humor. Video memes, though, add more creative options, like music, voiceovers, and visual effects.

Video memes, including memetic sounds on TikTok, often feel more dynamic, so they tend to go viral quickly on short-form video platforms, though image-based memes still appear on more established social media platforms.

Which format you see more depends on the platform: Instagram, Twitter, and Reddit still favor image memes, while TikTok and YouTube Shorts focus on videos.

## 2.2 Discussion

1. How do the networking functions of LinkedIn differ from the way X is used for news, journalism, and PR/marketing? What advantages and challenges do PR professionals face when using these platforms for campaigns?
2. As users switch between multiple platforms (e.g., TikTok, Instagram, Twitter), how do social circles and the nature of relationships impact the effectiveness of PR campaigns on each platform?
3. Viral social media campaigns often rely on user-generated content. What are some of the benefits and risks of a PR strategy that involves viral social media? Can PR professionals control how messages spread?
4. In what ways has the rise of micro-blogging transformed the role of traditional media in public relations? How do brands leverage blogs and social media content to promote transparency and to interact directly with their publics? What are the strategic management implications of conducting more and more public relations work on social media platforms?

13. Gina Kaufmann. "News Organizations Are Leaving Twitter. What About You?" Nieman Reports, January 31, 2024. Accessed November 1, 2024. <https://niemanreports.org/articles/news-organizations-are-leaving-twitter-what-about-you/>

14. Rob Watts, "How Much Does WordPress Cost? 2024 Pricing Guide," *Forbes*, accessed November 1, 2024, <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/software/wordpress-pricing/>

---

2.2: Where do we go from here? is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 2.3: Benefits and Challenges of Social Media



Figure 2.3.1: Team building at RGB Parkour Tour back in 2014. This is now available for purchase on Rounce's [RedBubble store](#). (Unsplash free-to-use license; [Shane Rounce](#))

Social media allows for an unprecedented volume of personal, informal communication in real-time from anywhere in the world. It allows users to keep in touch with friends on other continents and fosters casual conversations to take place even where great physical distances separate users. Blogs, including microblogging sites, allow us to gauge a wide variety of opinions in real time. These have given “breaking news” a whole new meaning. Now, news can be distributed throughout various social media platforms almost instantaneously, and different perspectives on an event can be aired concurrently. In addition, news organizations can harness social media users as sources for real-time news updates, in effect outsourcing some of their news-gathering efforts to bystanders on the scene.

This practice of harnessing the efforts of several individuals online to solve a problem is known as **crowdsourcing**.

The downside of the seemingly infinite breadth of online information is that there is often not much depth of coverage. The superficiality of information online is a common concern for journalists who are now rushed to file news reports several times a day in an effort to compete with influencers and others who may be more focused on short-term clout than long-term social understanding.

Popular influencers are free to post original news stories but often prefer to aggregate previously published news from other sources. This enables both the social media producer and social media platforms to profit off of the legwork done by professional journalists.

Whereas traditional print organizations at least had the “luxury” of the daily print deadline, now journalists may be expected to post multiple times per day as their stories develop, which does not leave as much time for fact checking and analysis.

For more on this topic, which has been a challenge for nearly two decades at the time of writing, read [Ken Auletta’s “Non-Stop News,” \*Annals of Communications\*, \*New Yorker\*, January 25, 2010](#).

Additionally, news aggregators like Google News profit from linking to journalists’ stories at major newspapers and selling advertising. Although Google shares some revenue with news outlets, estimates are that Google utilizes \$14 billion worth of news content each year and returns nowhere near that amount to news companies.<sup>15</sup>

It is often difficult for journalists to keep up with the immediacy of the nonstop news cycle, and with revenues for their efforts being diverted to news aggregators, journalists and news organizations increasingly lack the resources to keep up this fast pace. News organizations have been shedding jobs and folding at alarming rates over the past two decades.<sup>16</sup>

Twitter (X) presents a similar problem: Instead of getting news from a specific newspaper, many news consumers simply read the articles that are linked from their X feed. This does not afford for any payment to go to the news organizations or journalists who actually reported the news, although, as stated, the constant flow of information on X and similar social media platforms creates constant deadline pressure for many in the news industry.

The constant news cycle leaves journalists little time for analysis or cross-examination of interview subjects. Increasingly, journalists will simply report, for example, what a politician or public relations representative says without following up on these comments to fact-check if they are true or how true they are. It is common for journalists to receive half-truths from public relations and public affairs professionals.

When public relations pros do their job, they represent the best interests of the organization they represent. They do not tend to lie to journalists, but they may leave out important information to audiences that would harm their client if it were the focus of a news story. Thus audiences receive quite a bit of news that, although factually true, only represents a part of the real story. In other times and other contexts, these “sins of omission” might have been caught more often and more quickly by virtue of the regular reporting process of professional journalists.

With shortened and de-contextualized news cycles, it is much easier for journalists to be exploited as mouthpieces for corporate, government and political propaganda. Here, propaganda does not necessarily mean lies. It means something closer to “persuasive speech.”<sup>17</sup>

Consequently, the very presence of social media influencers and their importance even among mainstream media has made some critics wary. Internet entrepreneur Andrew Keen is one of these people, and his book *The Cult of the Amateur* follows up on the famous thought experiment suggesting that infinite monkeys, given infinite typewriters, will one day randomly produce a great work of literature.

Proposed by T.H. Huxley (the father of Aldous Huxley), this thought experiment suggests that infinite monkeys given infinite typewriters would, given infinite time, eventually write *Hamlet*. “In our Web 2.0 world, the typewriters aren’t quite typewriters, but rather networked personal computers, and the monkeys aren’t quite monkeys, but rather Internet users.”

Keen also suggests that the Internet is really just a case of my-word-against-yours, where bloggers (to which we would now add influencers) are not required to back up their arguments with credible sources.<sup>18</sup>

“These days, kids can’t tell the difference between credible news by objective professional journalists and what they read on [a random website],” Keen said.

Commentators like Keen worry that this trend will lead to people’s inability to distinguish credible information from a mass of sources, eventually leading to a sharp decrease of credible sources of information. In fact, since Keen first wrote about these concerns there has arisen widespread concern that information consumers no longer know whom to trust in news and social media.

It is not just the spread of misinformation and disinformation that weakens society. It is the breakdown in trust in well-supported, well-researched and informative news resulting from the sense of chaos created in social media platforms that weakens the social fabric.

For defenders of the Internet, this argument seems a bit overblown. A 2009 article by Greg Downey said: “A legitimate interest in the possible effects of significant technological change in our daily lives can inadvertently dovetail seamlessly into a ‘kids these days’ curmudgeonly sense of generational degeneration, which is hardly new.”<sup>19</sup>

Downey offers that, on the contrary, “far from evacuating narrative, some social networking sites might be said to cause users to ‘narrativize’ their experience, engaging with everyday life already with an eye toward how they will represent it on their personal pages.”

But since 2009, purposeful disinformation campaigns have become commonplace on social media platforms, and massively wealthy and influential individuals have purchased news outlets and social media platforms with the intent to influence policy or to limit others’ influence.

Social media's detractors also point to the sheer banality of much of the conversation on the Internet. Again, Downey keeps this in perspective: "The banality of most conversation is also pretty frustrating," he says. Downey suggests that many of the young people using social networking tools see them as just another aspect of communication; however, Downey warns that online bullying can pervade larger social networks while shielding perpetrators through anonymity.

Another downside of many of the Internet's segmented communities is that users tend to be exposed only to the information they are interested in and opinions they agree with, sometimes referred to as an "echo chamber." This lack of exposure to novel ideas and contrary opinions can create or reinforce a lack of understanding among people with different beliefs, and make political and social compromise more difficult to come by.

Algorithms that aim to keep users hooked on social media apps and video websites may send users down "rabbit holes" where information not only reiterates similar messages but trends in the direction of more and more extreme content. Shocking and titillating people is one means of holding their attention, but users, for instance on YouTube, have been known to begin consuming content with little or no political bent only to end up in a short amount of time viewing incredibly extremist content.<sup>20</sup>

There are clearly some important arguments to consider regarding the effects of the web and social media in particular. The main concerns come down to two things: the possibility that the volume of amateur, user-generated content online is overshadowing better-researched sources, and the questionable ability of users to tell the difference between the two.

### Privacy Issues With Social Networking

Social networking provides unprecedented ways to keep in touch with friends, but that ability can sometimes be a double-edged sword. Users can update friends with every latest achievement—"[your name here] just won three straight games of solitaire!"—but may also unwittingly be updating bosses and others from whom particular bits of information should be hidden. The shrinking of privacy online has been rapidly exacerbated by social networks, and for a surprising reason: conscious decisions made by participants. Putting personal information online—even if it is set to be viewed by only select friends—has become fairly standard.

Dr. Kieron O'Hara studies privacy in social media and calls this era "Intimacy 2.0," (Zoe Kleinman, "How Online Life Distorts Privacy Rights for All," *BBC News*, January 8, 2010), a riff on the buzzword "Web 2.0." One of O'Hara's arguments is that legal issues of privacy are based on what is called a "reasonable standard." According to O'Hara, the excessive sharing of personal information on the Internet by *some* constitutes an offense to the privacy of *all*, because it lowers the "reasonable standard" that can be legally enforced. In other words, as cultural tendencies toward privacy degrade on the Internet, it affects not only the privacy of those who choose to share their information but also the privacy of those who do not.

Social media on the Internet has been around for a while, and it has always been of some interest to professional communicators. The ability to target messages based on demographic information given willingly to the service—age, political preference, gender, and location—allows communicators to target messages extremely efficiently. Increasingly, communicators are turning to social networks as a way to reach these publics, even creating a new category of employment called Social Media "Influencers" and "Content Creators" who monetize their fanbase on various sites and apps. Culturally, these developments indicate a mistrust among consumers of traditional campaign techniques; communicators must now use new and more personalized ways of reaching publics if they are going to sell their products.

Social media enables real-time, informal communication globally, facilitating personal connections and rapid news distribution. Blogs and platforms like X and TikTok contribute to a constant stream of news and information, where speed often comes at the cost of depth and thorough fact-checking. Crowdsourcing news from bloggers and on-the-ground bystanders has become a common practice, but it raises concerns about the credibility and superficiality of information.

Critics like Andrew Keen argue that the proliferation of amateur content overshadows professional journalism, while defenders like Greg Downey see social media as a valuable tool for narrative-building and niche community engagement. Concerns about privacy and targeted marketing also persist, with social networks contributing to a broader erosion of personal privacy norms.

## Discussion 2.3

1. How has the real-time nature of social media impacted the depth and reliability of news reporting? What are the advantages and disadvantages of using platforms like X and TikTok in modern journalism?
2. Do you agree with Andrew Keen's concerns about the dominance of amateur content over professional journalism on the internet? How do you think this affects public perception of news and information credibility? How does the advancement and proliferation of AI affect the credibility of information shared across social media?
3. How do social media privacy concerns, such as those raised by Dr. Kieron O'Hara, shape the way users interact with social media platforms? How have privacy concerns shaped the way you interact with social media? In what ways can PR practices adapt to this shift in online behavior that is more protective of privacy?

15. Gitanjali Poonia, "New Study Says Google and Facebook Owe U.S. News Outlets \$14B Every Year for Content," *Deseret News*, November 13, 2023, <https://www.deseret.com/2023/11/13/23959128/new-study-says-google-and-facebook-owe-u-s-news-outlets-14b-every-year-for-content/>
16. David Bauder, "A Bleak Outlook for Journalism as McClatchy, Other News Outlets Face Major Layoffs," *Associated Press*, October 30, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/journalism-layoffs-business-messenger-83afe18984c2a1fc78e78184ddddee17d>
17. Cambridge University Press, s.v. "Propaganda," *Cambridge English Dictionary*, accessed November 1, 2024, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/propaganda>
18. Andrew Keen, *The Cult of the Amateur: How Today's Internet Is Killing Our Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 2007).
19. Kevin Downey, "Is Facebook Rotting Our Children's Brains?" *Media Life Magazine*, 2009.
20. NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks, "Christo Wilson on 'The Rabbit Hole of YouTube,'" Northeastern University, accessed November 1, 2024, <https://cssh.northeastern.edu/nulab/christo-wilson-rabbit-hole-youtube/>

---

2.3: Benefits and Challenges of Social Media is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 3: Using Social Media for PR

3.1: Understanding your target public

3.2: Engaging with Publics

3.3: Creating content for your campaign

3.4: Social media analytics and campaign measurement

---

3: Using Social Media for PR is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.1: Understanding your target public

(The following Chapter remixes [this OER chapter](#) from *Foundations of Public Relations: Canadian Edition* by the Canadian Department of Communication Studies. This text is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License)

Research is a crucial component of the public relations process. There are several key reasons why research is so important. First, research allows us to develop a PR strategy. This information will allow us to design specific campaigns with particular targets and goals, to ensure we aren't wasting time, money, and energy. This helps public relations operate as a strategic function of the organization, contributing to overall organizational goals and objectives.



FIGURE 4.1 Purpose of research

Another reason why research is so important in public relations is that it can be used to measure the effectiveness of our public relations efforts. For example, we can measure how often our key public is purchasing our product before our campaign, during our campaign, and after our campaign. This way, we can understand if our campaign has an impact on purchasing habits. Was the campaign worthwhile? Was it effective? Research helps us answer these questions and justify the value of public relations within organizations by directing funds to effective strategies.

If we do research before we begin communicating, we can ensure we are capturing the views of our [publics](#). We can identify key publics, develop targeted communications based on what is important to our publics, and build relationships with those publics who may be interested in our messaging. This contributes to [two-way communication](#), instead of outdated methods of disseminating information [one way](#) to our publics. Research is what allows us to understand our publics, their needs, and their values, and ensures that we are as effective and strategic as possible in the public relations process.

If we didn't do research, PR would not be a key strategic function of organizations. Instead, we would be making decisions based on hunches and instinct, and generating publicity without any clear sense of who our publics are and what matters to them. As a central, strategic function of organizations, public relations relies on research to identify issues, problem solve, prevent and manage crises, develop and maintain relationships with publics, and deploy useful strategies and campaigns to support organizational goals and objectives.

Being able to understand, conduct, and report on research also allows public relations professionals to demonstrate the value and worth of PR activities and helps ensure PR is part of the organization's dominant coalition. In short, research matters!

#### Defining target publics for a PR campaign

Before you can begin research for a campaign, you have to define who will be the target public for your campaign. When defining a target audience for a social media campaign, you can consider the following factors:

**Demographics:** Age, gender, location, education, income, and other relevant characteristics

**Interests and hobbies:** What your target audience likes and what aligns with your brand or content niche

**Psychographics:** Values, attitudes, lifestyles, motivations, and behaviors

**Online behavior:** How your target audience uses social media, which platforms they prefer, and how engaged they are

**Information needs:** What kind of information your target audience is looking for and why

**Lifestyle:** Income, spending habits, travel, likes, and dislikes

**Location factors:** Specific locations like school zones, college campuses, or neighborhoods

How do you determine where your target public falls within all of these factors? First look internally at organizational data that may already exist about key publics that you've interacted with before. Perhaps if you are running a campaign for a political candidate, you have access to voter rolls where you can see data related to all the relevant location factors. If your target publics have signed up for more information about your organization or business (either online or at an event), you will likely have their email and could gather information via online surveys.

Social media is also a great way to collect information on your target publics. You can use the audience insights tools on your preferred social media platforms to help you identify your target audience. You can also monitor your current audience to see who follows you, what they interact with, and what common characteristics they share.

Audience insight tools on social media provide valuable data about a campaign's target audience, enabling communicators to tailor their strategies effectively. These tools analyze audience demographics, behaviors, and engagement patterns, offering a deeper understanding of who is interacting with your content and why. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (X) have built-in insights that allow you to track metrics such as age, gender, location, interests, and online activity of your followers. This information helps you identify which segments of your audience are most engaged with your campaign, and which content resonates best with different groups.

For example, Facebook's Audience Insights tool can help you explore your audience's demographics, behaviors, and interests in detail. By monitoring who is viewing, liking, sharing, or commenting on your posts, you can gain insights into what type of content attracts attention. Additionally, tools like Instagram Insights allow you to see the peak times your audience is online, enabling you to schedule posts for maximum visibility. Understanding these patterns helps ensure that your content reaches the right people at the right time.

Beyond demographics, audience insight tools also track more nuanced behaviors such as purchase intent, social media habits, and even what devices they use to access content. This can inform your decisions on content format and messaging style. For instance, if you discover that a significant portion of your audience interacts primarily through mobile devices, you can optimize your content for mobile viewing.

Ultimately, using these insights enables PR professionals to refine their campaigns, making adjustments that align with the needs and preferences of their target audience. By continuously analyzing audience data, you can improve engagement, tailor content, and enhance the overall effectiveness of your social media strategy.

Research is an essential part of the public relations (PR) process because it helps in developing effective strategies and measuring the impact of campaigns. By understanding the needs and behaviors of target publics, PR professionals can design focused campaigns that align with organizational goals. Research ensures that PR functions strategically, rather than relying on guesswork, and allows for two-way communication with publics, leading to more meaningful relationships.

Additionally, research helps in evaluating the success of PR efforts, justifying their value within an organization, and making informed decisions. Ultimately, research strengthens PR as a critical, strategic organizational function.

### Discussion 3.1

1. How does audience research shape the development of a PR strategy, and what key factors should be considered when defining target publics for a campaign? Explore how understanding audience demographics, psychographics, and behaviors can lead to more effective and targeted PR strategies.
2. How can social media audience insight tools (like Instagram Insights or Facebook's Audience Insights) help PR professionals better understand their audience, and what role do these tools play in refining a campaign? Consider how real-time data and analytics can help tailor content to audience preferences and maximize engagement.

3. Why is research into audience behavior and preferences critical in ensuring the success of PR campaigns, particularly in relation to message delivery and platform selection?  
Discuss the importance of knowing which platforms your audience engages with most and how it influences content creation and distribution.
4. In what ways does continuous research during a campaign (such as tracking audience engagement) allow PR professionals to adjust strategies, and how might this contribute to achieving campaign goals? Examine how ongoing analysis of audience response can lead to real-time adjustments in strategy to improve campaign outcomes.

21. Grunig, JE. (Ed). *Excellence in public relations and communication management*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1992.

---

3.1: [Understanding your target public](#) is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 3.2: Engaging with Publics



Figure 3.2.1: SWOT analysis illustration. (CCBY; University of Kansas Center for Community Health and Development; Community Toolbox)

(The following section is a remix of [a chapter by Cheryl Lawson](#), which is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License,)

Once you've established who your target publics will be, you also need to conduct research on your competition. All organizations, businesses, and even public figures have competition. Ignoring what your competitors are doing on social media is not an option. You can learn from their tactics, their successes, and their failures.

So, who are these competitors?

**Direct Competition:** These are your most obvious competitors. If you're selling pizzas, it's the other local pizza shops. If you are a political candidate, your direct competition is the other candidate(s).

**Indirect Competition:** These are a bit more complex. If you have a toy shop downtown, your indirect competition might be Amazon, who sells toys online to children across the globe.

**Replacement Competition:** This one is about the alternatives, the substitutes. The folks who sell something different, but can still replace what you're offering. Like Kindle becoming the replacement for traditional books. If you are the St. Louis Blues NHL team, depending upon the time of year, your replacement competition (for ticket sales and attention) may be the St. Louis Cardinals MLB team or the St. Louis CITY MLS team.

### Why should you bother to perform a social media competitor analysis for your strategy?

First and foremost, understanding your competition gives you an understanding of your customers. It's easy for businesses to get tunnel vision, focusing on their strengths while forgetting to take a look around at what's happening in the marketplace. Competitive analysis, especially on social media, gives you a fresh set of eyes and a clearer perspective on what your customers want and need.

Secondly, it helps you identify potential threats. Keeping tabs on your competitors' social media activities gives you a heads-up on potential threats lurking around the corner. Whether it's a new market entrant or a disruptive technology, a thorough analysis of your competitors' social media activities will alert you well in advance.

Thirdly, it allows you to set relevant benchmarks. Businesses often set performance standards or Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), but without a solid understanding of the competitive landscape, these benchmarks may be out of step with the market realities. Monitoring your competitors on social media helps ensure your benchmarks are in line with industry standards.

Moreover, a social media competitor analysis is a fantastic tool for recognizing market gaps. Even in a crowded market, there's always a blind spot your competition is missing. Through a careful study of your competitors' social media activities, you could discover an untapped niche or a customer group that's been overlooked.

For instance, say you're in the furniture business. You might find that none of your competitors are targeting the millennial market on social media. There's your gap. You can then develop a social media strategy to engage millennials with modern furniture designs and grow your customer base.

A deep dive into your competitors' social media might uncover some struggling businesses. Here's where potential opportunities for acquisitions or mergers could come up. By merging with or acquiring these businesses, you could expand your operation, improve your product quality, and tap into their distribution network to reach new markets.

In conclusion, a social media competitor analysis isn't just a "nice-to-have" for your social media strategy; it's a vital tool that can steer your business in the right direction, help you stay ahead of the curve, and ultimately, succeed in the marketplace.

## How to Perform a Social Media Competitive Analysis

[This article from Hootsuite](#) outlines a step-by-step process for conducting a social media competitive analysis, which is a critical tool for any business wanting to excel in the online space. Here's a summary of the key points:

- **Identify Your Competitors:** Start by listing out who your competitors are. These could be businesses that offer similar products or services, operate in the same geographical area, or target the same audience demographic. You can use social listening tools, many of which require a subscription (Mention, Sprinklr, Meltwater, etc.), or conduct a simple Google search to identify these competitors.
- **Choose Which Social Networks to Analyze:** Your competitors may not be active on all social networks, and neither should you. Prioritize the platforms where your target audience is most active.
- **Analyze Your Competitors' Social Media Presence:** Look at your competitors' overall presence on each platform. How many followers do they have? How frequently do they post? What's their brand voice and personality?
- **Evaluate Your Competitors' Content:** Study the types of content your competitors share. What gets the most likes, shares, or comments? Is it videos, images, infographics, or user-generated content? Use this information to inform your own content strategy.
- **Measure Your Competitors' Engagement:** Look at how your competitors interact with their audience. How do they respond to comments or complaints? Do they use any specific hashtags? Do they run contests or giveaways?
- **Track Your Competitors' Posting Frequency:** How often are your competitors posting? This can help inform your own posting strategy.
- **Analyze Your Competitors' Audience:** This involves studying the demographic details of your competitors' followers. What's their age, gender, location, and interests?
- **Use Tools for Social Media Competitive Analysis:** There are various tools available that can help streamline this process, such as Hootsuite, Sprout Social, or BuzzSumo.
- **Document Your Findings:** As you gather all of this information, document it in a way that allows you to make direct comparisons between your social media performance and that of your competitors.
- **Make Strategic Decisions:** Finally, use all this information to make strategic decisions about your own social media strategy. Maybe you need to post more frequently, diversify your content, or engage more with your audience. Whatever it is, a competitive analysis will help you spot the areas where you can improve.

## SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis is a useful tool for evaluating the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to your organization – or in this context, your social media strategy. Here's how it applies to social media:

**Strengths:** These are the things your organization does well on social media. Maybe you have a highly engaged community, your video content receives massive views, or your customer service via direct messaging is top-notch. This could also include factors

like having a well-defined brand voice that resonates with your audience, or having influencers or brand advocates who regularly share your content.

**Weaknesses:** These are the areas where your social media campaign could use some improvement. Perhaps your post frequency is inconsistent, your engagement rate is low, or your content isn't resonating well with your audience. Or maybe your response time to public queries is too long. Identifying these weak points can help you devise strategies to improve them.

**Opportunities:** Opportunities are external factors in your organizational environment that could provide a boost to your social media presence. Maybe there's an emerging social media platform where your competitors are not yet active, or a trending topic that aligns with your brand which you can capitalize on. Perhaps there are relevant events, holidays, or popular hashtags related to your organization that you could leverage for increased visibility.

**Threats:** Threats are external factors that could potentially harm your social media presence. This could be anything from changes in social media algorithms that decrease your organic reach, to negative reviews or public relations crises that emerge online. Also, it could be potential actions of your competitors – if they're planning to launch a big social media campaign, for example, it could overshadow your own efforts.

Conducting a SWOT analysis in the context of a social media competitive analysis involves not just looking at your own strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, but also those of your competitors. This can give you a clearer picture of where you stand in the social media landscape and help you identify ways to improve your performance and gain a competitive edge. Remember, the goal isn't to copy your competitors, but to understand what they're doing well and identify areas where you can differentiate yourself.

### Example SWOT Analysis for Social Media Competitive Analysis

**Company:** SunnyFit Apparel

SunnyFit Apparel is a startup in the activewear industry focusing on sustainable and inclusive fitness clothing. The company wants to evaluate its social media presence in comparison to competitors like Lululemon and Gymshark.

---

#### Strengths

1. **Engaged Niche Audience:** SunnyFit's target audience actively engages with their content due to its focus on sustainability and inclusivity, resulting in higher engagement rates compared to larger competitors.
2. **Authenticity:** Their brand story, focused on eco-friendly materials and body-positive messaging, resonates strongly with their followers, creating a loyal and vocal fan base.
3. **Content Creativity:** High-quality, diverse content, including user-generated posts, influencer collaborations, and behind-the-scenes videos, enhances their relatability and visibility.
4. **Growing Platform Presence:** SunnyFit has rapidly expanded on Instagram and TikTok, leveraging short-form video content to drive virality and brand awareness.

---

#### Weaknesses

1. **Limited Budget:** As a startup, SunnyFit has fewer resources for paid social media campaigns, making it difficult to compete with the ad budgets of larger competitors.
2. **Inconsistent Posting Schedule:** Lack of a structured posting calendar occasionally leads to dips in visibility and engagement.
3. **Platform-Specific Strategy Gaps:** Strong on Instagram and TikTok, but underperforming on Twitter and LinkedIn, where professional engagement and industry thought leadership could improve.
4. **Analytics Deficiency:** Limited use of advanced social media analytics tools means SunnyFit struggles to track ROI and optimize campaigns effectively.

---

#### Opportunities

1. **Expanding into Untapped Platforms:** Growing a presence on Pinterest and YouTube could attract new segments of the fitness community.
2. **Partnerships with Micro-Influencers:** Collaborating with niche influencers who share SunnyFit's values can drive authentic engagement at a lower cost than major sponsorships.

3. **Sustainability Trends:** Increasing consumer demand for sustainable products aligns with SunnyFit's mission and can be highlighted through strategic campaigns.
4. **Innovative Social Features:** Leveraging new features like Instagram's shoppable posts and TikTok's live shopping can directly drive sales.
5. **Localized Campaigns:** Engaging regional fitness communities through location-specific campaigns could boost brand visibility in untapped markets.

---

### Threats

1. **Intense Competition:** Established competitors like Lululemon and Gymshark dominate the market, with larger followings and more significant resources.
2. **Algorithm Changes:** Changes to Instagram or TikTok algorithms could negatively impact organic reach and engagement.
3. **Negative Publicity Risk:** As a sustainability-focused brand, any missteps—like perceived greenwashing—could harm SunnyFit's reputation.
4. **Platform Saturation:** Overcrowded social media spaces in the fitness industry make it harder for new campaigns to stand out.
5. **Economic Downturn:** Reduced consumer spending on non-essential goods could impact overall sales and social media ad budgets.

---

This SWOT analysis helps SunnyFit identify where it excels in the social media landscape and where improvements are needed. While they've cultivated an engaged niche audience and excel at creative content, addressing weaknesses like inconsistent posting and underperformance on certain platforms will be key to staying competitive. By seizing opportunities such as platform diversification and micro-influencer partnerships while mitigating threats like algorithm changes, SunnyFit can strategically enhance its social media presence.

In conclusion, research is fundamental in the public relations process for developing strategies, targeting key publics, and measuring the success of campaigns. It ensures PR efforts are efficient and aligned with organizational goals, helping professionals design campaigns that resonate with their target audiences. Research also enables PR practitioners to evaluate the effectiveness of their campaigns by tracking metrics like a target public's behavior before, during, and after initiatives. It fosters two-way communication by understanding the needs and preferences of publics, allowing for more meaningful engagement.

Without research, PR would rely on instinct rather than data-driven decisions, undermining its strategic role within organizations.

#### Discussion 3.2

1. Why is research considered essential in developing PR strategies, and how does it contribute to the effectiveness of public relations campaigns?
2. How does research support two-way communication in PR, and why is this an improvement over one-way communication methods?
3. In what ways can PR professionals use research to justify their value within an organization, and what risks might arise from a lack of research?

---

3.2: Engaging with Publics is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.3: Creating content for your campaign



Figure 3.3.1: Stencil graffiti encouraging reader to think. (Unsplash free-to-use license; Lucie Hošová)

This section is remixed from [this chapter](#) by Cheryl Lawson, which is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License)

Author and marketing executive Avinash Kaushik's "**See, Think, Do, Care**" framework is an innovative strategy to understand your target public's journey and align it with your social and digital content. Imagine it as a cycle that your publics are constantly flowing through, with each stage reflecting a different state of mind, a different need, a different level of engagement.

Here's a brief rundown:

**See:** This is the largest possible audience, all the folks out there who could potentially be interested in your ideas, products, or services. They may not know they need your idea, product, or service yet, but you're trying to catch their eye.

**Think:** This is a subset of the "See" crowd. These are the people who are actively thinking about an idea, product, or service like yours, but haven't quite made the decision to act yet.

**Do:** Now we're getting into serious territory. This group is smaller still, made up of people who are ready to make a move. They're ready to donate, buy, subscribe, download, you name it.

**Care:** This last group is the cream of the crop. These are your most loyal publics. They've donated, bought, subscribed— they're happy, and they're likely to do it again. Not only that, but they're also likely to tell their friends about how great you are.

Now, how do we tackle content for each of these stages? This is where the fun begins. Each stage requires a different approach.

The beauty of the **See-Think-Do-Care** framework lies in its versatility and applicability to virtually any social media campaign. It provides a clear roadmap to content creation, helping you address the unique needs of publics at different stages in their journey. Let's break down how to use it in your social media strategy:

**See:** At this stage, your aim is to raise awareness and attract potential donors, supporters, fans, customers, voters, etc. Content here should be engaging, informative, and shareable, but it doesn't need to directly promote your idea, product, or service. Think of blog posts, infographics, and videos that answer common questions or solve problems in your field or industry. Share this content on your social platforms to attract a broad audience, gain followers, and build your reputation.

**Think:** Here, your audience is contemplating their options. They're aware of a problem or a need and are actively seeking solutions. Your social media content should guide them towards your ideas and offerings without being overly promotional. Case studies, testimonials, product comparison posts, and 'how-to' content that features your cause, product, or service can be effective here. This type of content can help sway their opinion in your favor and push them further down the funnel.

**Do:** At this stage, your public is ready to take action. They've done their research, they've weighed their options, and they're ready to make a decision. The content here should be targeted, direct, and persuasive, with clear calls to action. Offer exclusive discounts,

highlight the unique selling points of your cause, product, or service, share product demos, promote free trials, and provide direct links to donate, register, subscribe, etc.

**Care:** This stage is all about nurturing and retaining your existing publics. Engage with your loyal publics on social media by sharing user-generated content, offering exclusive promotions or sneak peeks at new products/services/events, and asking for their input on upcoming promotions, events, features, or products. Your goal here is to keep them interested and engaged with your organization, transforming them into brand advocates.

### SunnyFit: Applying the "See, Think, Do, Care" Framework in Social Media Marketing

Using Avinash Kaushik's "See, Think, Do, Care" framework, SunnyFit, a boutique fitness studio, can structure its social media marketing to align with its audience's journey and drive engagement and loyalty. Below is a breakdown of the framework as applied to SunnyFit:

---

#### See: Awareness Stage

**Objective:** Attract a broad audience by increasing awareness of SunnyFit's brand.

**Content Strategy:**

- Share visually appealing content like reels showcasing vibrant group fitness classes, quick workout tips, and behind-the-scenes glimpses of instructors preparing for sessions.
- Use hashtags such as #SunnyFitVibes, #GroupFitnessLife, and #FeelGoodFitness to expand reach.
- Collaborate with local influencers who align with SunnyFit's brand values to introduce the studio to a wider audience.

**Platforms:** Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook for reach and visual storytelling.

---

#### Think: Consideration Stage

**Objective:** Encourage the audience to consider SunnyFit as their go-to fitness solution.

**Content Strategy:**

- Post educational content addressing common fitness questions or myths, such as "How to Start Strength Training Safely" or "5 Tips for Staying Motivated."
- Share testimonials or transformation stories of SunnyFit members to build credibility.
- Host live Q&A sessions on Instagram or Facebook to answer potential clients' questions about fitness goals and membership options.

**Platforms:** Instagram Stories, YouTube, and blog links shared on social media.

---

#### Do: Conversion Stage

**Objective:** Motivate the audience to sign up for a class or membership.

**Content Strategy:**

- Offer time-sensitive promotions, such as "Join This Week and Get Your First Class Free!"
- Run retargeting ads on platforms like Facebook and Google for users who visited the website but didn't complete sign-ups.
- Use call-to-action posts encouraging immediate action, such as "Click the link in our bio to book your spot in tomorrow's class!"

**Platforms:** Paid social ads on Instagram and Facebook, email campaigns targeting leads.

---

#### Care: Loyalty Stage

**Objective:** Retain existing clients and turn them into brand advocates.

**Content Strategy:**

- Share user-generated content (e.g., clients tagging SunnyFit in their gym photos or workout milestones).
- Create exclusive content for loyal members, like "SunnyFit Member Spotlight" posts or shoutouts.
- Offer referral discounts or loyalty perks for members who bring friends or renew memberships.

- Use direct messages and surveys to gather feedback and continually improve the experience.

**Platforms:** Instagram DMs, member-only Facebook groups, and email newsletters.

This framework ensures SunnyFit delivers tailored content at every stage of the customer journey, fostering not only growth but also long-term relationships with their audience.

By understanding and implementing the See-Think-Do-Care framework, you can ensure that your social media content is hitting all the necessary touchpoints, effectively guiding your audience from awareness to conversion, and beyond.

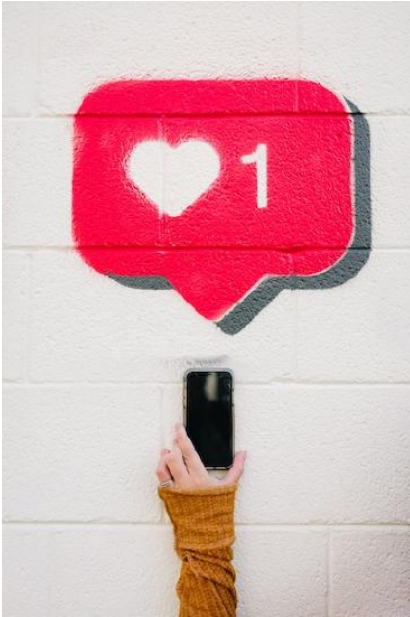
### Discussion 3.3

1. How can the "See, Think, Do, Care" framework be adapted for different social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, or TikTok? Which platforms are most effective at addressing each stage of the framework, and why?
2. How does the "Care" stage of the framework contribute to building long-term relationships with your public? Discuss how user-generated content, loyalty programs, or exclusive offers on social media can strengthen this stage.
3. Choose a successful social media campaign and identify how it used the "See, Think, Do, Care" framework. How did the brand or organization move their audience through each stage, and what lessons can be applied to future PR campaigns?

3.3: Creating content for your campaign is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 3.4: Social media analytics and campaign measurement

---



A public relations campaign is only as good as its impact. Whether the campaign you are tracking is targeted to a broad public audience or more tailored publics such as customers, investors, voters, donors, employees and other internal stakeholders, it is essential to know if your work is doing the job.

Strategy and analytics fuel each other in a dynamic fashion. PR professionals develop mindful strategies for putting the best messages in front of the right audiences at the right times, but they need analytics to know if the strategy is working as is, if it needs minor tweaks, or if they need to redirect resources to strike closer to the heart of their target audiences.

Analytics work is about more than measuring engagement and traffic. When useful data are gathered and reasonable decisions are made based on actual data, you can move the needle of behavior.

Yes, public relations at its core is about brand building and reputation management. Managing perceptions is a huge part of the day-to-day work, but conversions can be incredibly rewarding for the PR professional, the institutions they represent and the publics they serve.

The ability to track human behavior successfully inspired or successfully shifted is incredibly powerful. This section covers essential tools and basic processes of social media analytics.

In today's digital landscape, social media has become integral to public relations campaigns. As organizations leverage platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok to engage their audiences, the need for effective social media analytics and campaign measurement is more critical than ever. The ability to track and analyze performance data across these platforms allows PR professionals to optimize campaigns, demonstrate ROI, and make data-driven decisions that align with strategic goals.

### The Importance of Social Media Analytics

Social media analytics refers to the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data from social media platforms to inform strategy and evaluate campaign effectiveness. It goes beyond counting likes and shares— it provides insights into audience behaviors, preferences, and engagement patterns, helping PR professionals:

- Understand audience demographics and psychographics
- Monitor sentiment and public perception
- Identify trends and optimize content

- Track the impact of PR campaigns in real time

### Key Metrics to Track

The metrics PR professionals should focus on depend on campaign goals, but some common ones include:

- **Reach:** The number of unique users who have seen your content.
  - **Engagement:** Interactions such as likes, shares, comments, and clicks.
  - **Impressions:** The total number of times your content was displayed.
  - **Conversion Rate:** The percentage of users who take a desired action (e.g., sign-ups, purchases).
  - **Sentiment Analysis:** Tracking the tone of comments to gauge public opinion.
- 

### Facebook Analytics

#### Key Features:

Facebook offers a robust suite of analytics tools through **Meta Business Suite** and **Facebook Insights**. PR professionals can track page performance, post reach, audience demographics, and more. Key tools include:

- **Page Insights:** Provides detailed data on reach, engagement, and audience demographics.
- **Ad Manager:** Tracks the performance of paid campaigns, including cost per click (CPC) and click-through rate (CTR).
- **Audience Insights:** Helps segment users based on behavior, interests, and demographics to better target content.

#### Metrics to Focus On:

- **Post Reach and Impressions:** Measures how many people your content reaches.
- **Engagement Rate:** The number of interactions (likes, shares, comments) divided by the total reach.
- **Video Performance:** View counts, average watch time, and percentage of video watched are key for video content.

#### Tools:

- **Meta Business Suite:** <https://business.facebook.com/>
- 

### YouTube Analytics

#### Key Features:

YouTube provides deep insights into video performance through **YouTube Analytics**. This platform tracks everything from views and watch time to audience retention and traffic sources. PR professionals can leverage this data to optimize video content.

#### Metrics to Focus On:

- **Watch Time:** The total time users spend watching your videos.
- **Audience Retention:** Tracks which parts of your video hold viewer attention and where they drop off.
- **Traffic Sources:** Identifies where your views are coming from, such as external websites or social media shares.

#### Tools:

- **YouTube Analytics:** <https://studio.youtube.com/>
- 

## Instagram Analytics

### Key Features:

Instagram provides insights through **Instagram Insights**, which is available to business profiles. It tracks performance metrics for posts, stories, and IGTV content, giving detailed breakdowns of audience demographics and engagement.

### Metrics to Focus On:

- **Follower Growth:** Tracks the increase or decrease of followers over time.
- **Story Engagement:** Provides insights into taps, exits, and replies to Instagram Stories.
- **Content Interactions:** Likes, comments, and shares of posts are essential for understanding engagement.

### Tools:

- **Instagram Insights:** <https://business.instagram.com/>
- 

## Snapchat Analytics

### Key Features:

Snapchat offers its own analytics tool known as **Snapchat Insights** for creators and businesses. This tool provides a snapshot of audience demographics, story views, and engagement metrics.

### Metrics to Focus On:

- **Story Views:** The number of people viewing your Snapchat stories.
- **Completion Rate:** Tracks how many users watch a story to completion.
- **Engagement:** Measures interactions such as screenshots and swipe-ups on ads.

### Tools:

- **Snapchat Insights:** <https://forbusiness.snapchat.com/>
- 

## TikTok Analytics

### Key Features:

TikTok has quickly become a powerful platform for engaging younger audiences. Through **TikTok Analytics**, brands can track performance metrics for organic and paid campaigns, making it easier to understand how videos are resonating with audiences.

### Metrics to Focus On:

- **Total Video Views:** Measures the total number of times your videos were viewed.
- **Follower Growth:** Tracks how your following increases over time.

- **Hashtag Performance:** Important for tracking the reach of campaigns that involve user-generated content.

#### Tools:

- **TikTok Analytics:** <https://www.tiktok.com/business/en>

---

### Best Practices for Campaign Measurement

When measuring the success of a social media PR campaign, it's important to follow these best practices:

1. **Set Clear Goals:** Define what success looks like (e.g., increased brand awareness, engagement, conversions).
2. **Choose the Right Metrics:** Focus on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that align with campaign goals, such as engagement rates, sentiment, or follower growth.
3. **Benchmarking:** Compare campaign results against industry standards or previous campaign data.
4. **Continuous Monitoring:** Regularly check metrics to adjust and optimize campaigns in real-time.

### Conclusion

Social media analytics and measurement are essential components of running successful PR campaigns. By leveraging the tools provided by platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok, PR professionals can gather valuable insights, adjust strategies, and prove the value of their efforts. From understanding audience behaviors to tracking campaign performance, mastering these analytics tools will help PR practitioners drive impactful results.

#### ? Discussion 3.4.1

1. How do social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok allow PR professionals to optimize campaigns in real-time? Discuss how audience insights tools from these platforms can shape the success of a PR campaign and help meet organizational goals. Can you think of a situation where adjusting strategy mid-campaign based on these insights could significantly impact results?
2. Compare the key performance metrics provided by Facebook, YouTube, and Snapchat. How do the differences in what each platform measures reflect their unique user behaviors and content types? In what ways should PR professionals tailor their measurement strategies based on the platform they're using?
3. While there are many options when it comes to social media listening or monitoring tools, most require a paid subscription. Do a google search to find "FREE social media monitoring" tools or platforms. What did you find? Explore and evaluate the various free options that you found. If you had to select one, which would you use and why? Compare the free social media monitoring tools with any tools that require a subscription. Do you think the paid tools are worth it? Why or why not?

---

3.4: Social media analytics and campaign measurement is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 4: Social Media for PR Case Studies

4.1: Case study, the rise of Gymshark

4.2: Case study, John Fetterman's successful use of social media in a U.S. Senate campaign

4.3: Case study, Wendy's social media success with the "Roast" campaign

4.4: Case Study, ALS Association's ice bucket challenge - a social media triumph

---

4: Social Media for PR Case Studies is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.1: Case study, the rise of Gymshark



Figure 4.1.1: Shark! (Unsplash free-to-use-license; [David Clode](#))

### Case Study: The Rise of Gymshark

#### Company Overview

Gymshark, a UK-based fitness apparel and accessories brand founded in 2012, has rapidly risen to prominence through strategic social media use. The company, initially starting as a small business selling supplements, shifted focus to fitness apparel and has since become a global leader in the industry. Gymshark's success can be attributed, in large part, to its innovative and effective use of social media.

#### Background and Challenge

By the mid-2010s, Gymshark had established itself as a growing brand in the fitness industry. However, the competition in this market was intensifying, with established players (Nike, Adidas, etc.) and new entrants (Lululemon, etc.) alike vying for consumer attention. Gymshark faced the challenge of differentiating itself in a saturated market while maintaining its brand identity and engaging with a diverse and global audience.

#### Campaign Objectives

1. Increase Brand Awareness: Gymshark aimed to expand its reach beyond its initial market and build a global presence.
2. Drive Engagement: The company wanted to foster a strong community of fitness enthusiasts and create a space for dialogue and interaction.
3. Boost Sales: Through increased visibility and engagement, Gymshark sought to drive higher sales and strengthen brand loyalty.

#### Social Media Strategy

##### 1. Influencer Partnerships:

Gymshark's approach centered on collaborating with fitness influencers and athletes. The brand partnered with a wide range of influencers, from rising stars to established figures in the fitness industry. These partnerships were not just about endorsements but involved creating authentic content that resonated with the influencers' followers. Influencers were given the freedom to showcase Gymshark products in their natural fitness routines, fostering genuine connections with their audiences.

## 2. Community Engagement:

Gymshark built a strong community by engaging with its audience directly. The brand utilized Instagram and Twitter (now X) to interact with followers, respond to comments, and share user-generated content. The hashtag #GymsharkSquad became a rallying point for Gymshark enthusiasts to share their fitness journeys and achievements, further reinforcing community bonds.

## 3. Content Creation:

The company invested heavily in high-quality, visually appealing content. Gymshark's content strategy included professional workout videos, behind-the-scenes looks at product design, and motivational posts. This content was tailored to resonate with their target demographic—fitness enthusiasts who value both aesthetics and performance.

## 4. Product Launches and Events:

Gymshark used social media to create buzz around new product launches and events. The company effectively utilized Instagram Live, TikTok, and YouTube to stream product releases and exclusive behind-the-scenes content. For instance, Gymshark's "Black Friday" and "Cyber Monday" sales were heavily promoted across social media channels, creating anticipation and driving traffic to their website.

## 5. User-Generated Content:

Encouraging users to share their own content wearing Gymshark apparel played a crucial role. The brand featured this user-generated content on their social media profiles, which not only provided social proof but also made customers feel valued and included in the brand's journey.

## Results and Impact

### 1. Brand Awareness:

Gymshark's strategic use of social media led to significant brand growth. The company gained millions of followers across various platforms, including over 3 million on Instagram and over 2 million on TikTok. This vast online presence translated into heightened brand recognition and expanded global reach.

### 2. Engagement and Community Building:

The #GymsharkSquad hashtag became a popular trend, with thousands of posts from users showcasing their Gymshark gear. The brand's social media engagement rates soared, with high interaction levels and positive sentiment from the community.

### 3. Sales Growth:

Gymshark experienced explosive sales growth, with reports indicating a revenue increase from £176 million in 2019 to £320 million in 2021. The effective use of social media not only boosted sales but also established Gymshark as a leading player in the fitness apparel market.

### 4. Brand Loyalty:

The emphasis on community and user-generated content fostered a sense of loyalty among customers. Gymshark's direct engagement with its audience helped build strong customer relationships, leading to repeat business and brand advocacy.

## Conclusion

Gymshark's successful public relations campaign underscores the power of social media in modern brand strategy. By leveraging influencer partnerships, fostering community engagement, and producing high-quality content, Gymshark was able to differentiate itself in a competitive market and achieve impressive growth. This case illustrates the potential of social media to drive brand awareness, engage audiences, and boost sales, providing valuable lessons for other companies aiming to harness the power of social media in their PR efforts.

#### Discussion 4.1

1. Gymshark's social media strategy heavily relied on influencer partnerships. What are the benefits and potential pitfalls of using influencers to build brand awareness, and how can the risks be mitigated?
2. How did Gymshark's focus on community engagement and user-generated content contribute to its success in building a loyal customer base? What lessons can other brands learn from Gymshark's approach to fostering an online community?
3. Gymshark's strategic use of social media led to significant sales growth and brand awareness. How can companies measure the effectiveness of their social media public relations efforts, and what metrics would be most valuable for evaluating success?

---

4.1: Case study, the rise of Gymshark is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.2: Case study, John Fetterman's successful use of social media in a U.S. Senate campaign



Figure 4.2.1: John Fetterman, U.S. Senate official portrait

### Case Study: John Fetterman's Successful Use of Social Media in his U.S. Senate Campaign

(This case study analysis is based on information from [this article](#).)

#### Overview: John Fetterman

John Fetterman, a Democratic politician known for his progressive policies and unconventional style, served as the Lieutenant Governor of Pennsylvania before launching his U.S. Senate campaign in 2022. With a towering figure, tattoos, and a working-class image, Fetterman stood out in contrast to traditional politicians. He positioned himself as a champion for blue-collar workers, focusing on issues like health care, legalizing marijuana, and economic fairness. His authenticity and ability to connect with everyday Americans played a crucial role in his appeal, particularly on social media.

#### Background: The Stakes of the Campaign

The 2022 Pennsylvania U.S. Senate race was one of the most closely watched and highly consequential elections in the country. The seat was open due to the retirement of Republican Senator Pat Toomey, and both Democrats and Republicans saw it as pivotal to control of the Senate. John Fetterman faced off against Mehmet Oz, a television personality and celebrity doctor endorsed by former President Donald Trump. Fetterman represented the Democratic Party, while Oz was the Republican candidate.

The race became a high-stakes contest, not just for Pennsylvania but for the balance of power in the U.S. Senate. Fetterman's campaign faced significant challenges, including his recovery from a stroke just before the Democratic primary, which raised concerns about his health. Meanwhile, Oz's celebrity status gave him a national platform, but it also opened him to critiques about his authenticity and residency in Pennsylvania. This set the stage for a contentious campaign in which social media would play a central role in shaping public perception.

## Campaign Objectives

The primary goals of John Fetterman's campaign were:

1. Win the U.S. Senate seat for Pennsylvania by appealing to a broad coalition of voters, including working-class Americans, suburban voters, and young progressives.
2. Define Mehmet Oz as an out-of-touch celebrity disconnected from the needs of Pennsylvania residents, capitalizing on the narrative that Oz was not a true Pennsylvanian but a wealthy outsider.
3. Leverage social media to amplify Fetterman's authentic image and counter negative press coverage, particularly related to his health.
4. Mobilize younger voters and progressives, many of whom are digital natives and rely heavily on social media for news and political engagement.

## Social Media Strategy

John Fetterman's social media strategy was one of the most distinctive aspects of his campaign, particularly his use of humor, meme culture, and viral content to engage with voters and define the narrative around the race.

1. **Leveraging Humor and Memes:** Fetterman's team adopted a playful and often irreverent tone on social media, using humor to criticize Mehmet Oz. For instance, they mocked Oz's well-documented wealth and celebrity status, referring to him as "Doc Hollywood" and questioning his connection to Pennsylvania. Memes highlighting Oz's perceived elitism were shared widely, helping the Fetterman campaign control the narrative.
2. **Platform-Specific Tactics:** Fetterman's campaign was particularly active on Twitter (now X), Instagram, and TikTok. On X, they used real-time commentary to call out Oz's missteps, such as a viral video in which Oz appeared out of touch with grocery shopping norms, referring to "crudités" rather than using a more common term like "veggie tray." On TikTok, the campaign engaged younger voters with content that felt organic and entertaining, using current trends and challenges to increase engagement.
3. **Grassroots Authenticity:** Fetterman's social media presence was crafted to reflect his image as a relatable, down-to-earth politician. His team posted photos of Fetterman in casual settings, often wearing his signature hoodie, contrasting sharply with the polished image Oz projected. The campaign also shared personal stories about Fetterman's stroke recovery, using social media to humanize him and address concerns about his health head-on.
4. **Engaging With Viral Moments:** Fetterman's campaign was quick to capitalize on viral moments and internet culture. One particularly successful moment was when they used Snooki, a celebrity from the reality TV show \*Jersey Shore\*, to create a video poking fun at Oz's ties to New Jersey. The lighthearted jab resonated widely, especially with younger voters familiar with both Snooki and meme culture.
5. **Crowdsourced Campaigning:** Fetterman's team also leaned into user-generated content. Supporters were encouraged to create and share their own memes and videos, which the campaign often reposted. This approach fostered a sense of community and ownership over the campaign's messaging, making the campaign feel more participatory and grassroots.

## Results and Impact

Fetterman's social media campaign was widely regarded as a success, contributing significantly to his election victory. The following key outcomes illustrate the impact:

1. **Voter Engagement:** Fetterman's social media efforts successfully energized younger voters and progressives, two critical demographics for his campaign. His approachable style, meme-driven content, and humorous attacks on Oz went viral multiple times, keeping his campaign top-of-mind in the weeks leading up to the election.
2. **Defining Mehmet Oz:** Fetterman's social media campaign was instrumental in framing Mehmet Oz as an outsider, out-of-touch with Pennsylvania voters. The relentless focus on Oz's wealth, residency issues, and celebrity status hurt Oz's credibility with key

voter groups. The campaign's ability to generate viral content around Oz's missteps—like the crudités video—helped solidify this narrative.

3. **Positive National Media Coverage:** The social media campaign generated significant national media coverage, with major news outlets picking up on Fetterman's viral moments and memes. This coverage amplified his message beyond social media platforms and helped reach voters who might not have been following the campaign online.

4. **Electoral Victory:** Despite concerns about his health following a stroke, Fetterman won the U.S. Senate race with a decisive margin. His social media strategy, particularly his ability to humanize himself while attacking Oz's weaknesses, was seen as a key factor in overcoming the challenges he faced during the campaign.

## Conclusion

John Fetterman's use of social media in his U.S. Senate campaign against Mehmet Oz provides a powerful case study on how modern campaigns can effectively leverage digital platforms to engage voters, define opponents, and shape public perception. Fetterman's campaign excelled in using humor, authenticity, and viral moments to overcome significant challenges, including his health concerns and his opponent's celebrity status. By tapping into internet culture and connecting with voters in a relatable way, Fetterman's campaign demonstrated the growing importance of social media in political campaigns and its potential to influence electoral outcomes. This case highlights the critical role of a well-executed social media strategy in modern political campaigns, especially for candidates seeking to connect with younger and digitally-savvy voters.

### Discussion 4.2

1. How did John Fetterman's social media strategy help him shape the narrative of his campaign, particularly against a high-profile opponent like Mehmet Oz? What specific techniques were most effective in this effort?
2. Fetterman's campaign used humor, memes, and viral content to engage voters. What are the advantages and potential risks of using such an approach in political public relations? How does this strategy compare to more traditional forms of campaigning?
3. In what ways did Fetterman's social media presence reflect his personal brand and campaign goals? How important is authenticity in social media-driven public relations, and how can it impact public perception in a political campaign?
4. Fetterman's campaign leveraged user-generated content and crowdsourced campaigning. How does involving supporters in creating and sharing content enhance a campaign's reach and effectiveness? What challenges might arise from relying on user-generated content?

4.2: Case study, John Fetterman's successful use of social media in a U.S. Senate campaign is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 4.3: Case study, Wendy's social media success with the "Roast" campaign



Figure 4.3.1: Wendy's flagship restaurant in Dublin, Ohio. (CCBY; Nheyob)

#### Case study: Wendy's social media success with the "Roast" campaign

(This case study analysis is based on information from [this article](#).)

##### Overview: Wendy's

Wendy's, an international fast-food chain known for its burgers and fries, has distinguished itself in the fast-food industry not only through its menu but also its distinct and bold personality on social media. Wendy's rose to social media prominence with its witty, humorous, and often sarcastic Twitter (X) presence. In particular, the brand's "roast" campaign, where they humorously engaged with followers and competitors, garnered widespread attention. This campaign not only helped solidify Wendy's online presence but also became a powerful tool for engaging a younger, digital native audience.

##### Background

By the mid-2010s, Wendy's faced increasing competition in the fast-food industry, especially from other major chains like McDonald's and Burger King. The landscape was saturated, and the rise of health-conscious consumers posed additional challenges. Wendy's needed to find a way to stand out among its competitors, especially among younger generations who value authenticity, humor, and interaction from brands.

At the same time, social media platforms, especially Twitter, were becoming hubs of brand interaction, where consumers increasingly expected quick, witty, and engaging content. Wendy's identified an opportunity to use social media to reinforce its brand identity and engage with a younger audience, using humor and personality as key drivers.

##### Campaign Goals

1. **Increase Brand Awareness:** Wendy's sought to boost its visibility in a crowded fast-food market by creating a distinctive online presence that would resonate with younger consumers.
2. **Drive Engagement:** The campaign aimed to foster high levels of interaction and engagement on social media, encouraging users to interact with the brand in a fun and authentic way.
3. **Improve Brand Perception:** Wendy's wanted to shift consumer perception of the brand from just another fast-food chain to a company with a bold, playful, and authentic personality.
4. **Promote Menu Items:** Although the primary goal was to build brand awareness, the campaign also intended to subtly promote Wendy's menu items, driving both online engagement and in-store sales.

## Social Media Strategy

Wendy's crafted its strategy around the idea of using humor and wit to engage with its audience in real-time, capitalizing on trends and building momentum through interactions with both followers and competitors.

1. **"Roast Me" Twitter Campaign:** The centerpiece of Wendy's social media strategy was its "roast" campaign. Users were invited to tweet at Wendy's asking to be roasted, and in response, Wendy's would craft witty and humorous insults in reply. This interactive, playful content quickly went viral, as people eagerly waited to see what sharp retort Wendy's would deliver. This approach humanized the brand and gave it a personality that stood out from competitors.

2. **Real-Time Competitor Engagement:** Wendy's social media team wasn't afraid to engage directly with other fast-food brands, especially competitors like McDonald's and Burger King. By playfully taunting them in tweets, Wendy's created viral moments that were widely shared. These "brand wars" made Wendy's a key player in the online fast-food conversation, with humorous and lighthearted banter that captured users' attention.

3. **User-Generated Content:** Wendy's heavily encouraged user-generated content, especially through its "roast" format. Thousands of Twitter users tweeted at Wendy's for a chance to be roasted, creating a constant stream of user interaction. This user-generated content, combined with Wendy's humorous responses, helped the campaign gain organic reach.

4. **Pop Culture References:** Wendy's incorporated pop culture references and internet trends into its tweets, making its content feel timely, relevant, and appealing to a younger audience. By engaging with trending topics and internet culture, Wendy's ensured that its content was not only engaging but also likely to be shared.

5. **Multi-Platform Presence:** While Twitter was the primary platform for the campaign, Wendy's also leveraged Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat to extend the campaign's reach. These platforms were used to post behind-the-scenes content, highlight new menu items, and showcase the most popular roasts from Twitter.

6. **Memes and Visual Content:** Wendy's used a mix of text-based tweets and visual content like memes and gifs, which helped drive engagement and made its tweets more shareable. By combining humor with visual content, Wendy's was able to amplify its message across social media platforms.

## Results and Impact

Wendy's social media campaign, particularly its "roast" strategy, had a significant impact on the brand, both in terms of engagement and sales.

1. **Increased Brand Awareness:** Wendy's Twitter account saw a dramatic increase in followers and visibility. The brand went viral multiple times, and the roasts were covered by major media outlets, extending the reach of the campaign beyond Twitter. By embracing an irreverent, humorous persona, Wendy's was able to stand out in a crowded market.

2. **Massive Engagement:** The "roast" campaign resulted in unprecedented levels of engagement for the brand. Wendy's tweets regularly garnered tens of thousands of likes, retweets, and comments. The real-time nature of the responses encouraged users to actively engage with the brand, with many eagerly awaiting a Wendy's roast of their own.

3. **Positive Brand Perception:** Wendy's playful and witty social media presence helped shift consumer perceptions. It wasn't just seen as another fast-food chain—it became known for having a personality that resonated with younger consumers who appreciate humor and authenticity from brands. Many customers now associate Wendy's with being "cool" and relatable, which is especially important for Gen Z and Millennials.

4. **Increased Sales:** While the primary goal of the campaign was to build brand awareness, Wendy's also saw a direct increase in sales as a result of its increased social media presence. By continually promoting new menu items and creating buzz around limited-time offers (such as promotions related to its burgers and fries), Wendy's successfully drove traffic to its stores.

5. **Awards and Industry Recognition:** The campaign earned Wendy's several awards for its innovative use of social media, including industry accolades for best social media presence and real-time marketing. The campaign became a case study for how brands can effectively engage with consumers on social media while building an authentic online personality.

## Conclusion

Wendy's "roast" campaign serves as a powerful example of how social media can be used to build brand awareness, engage with consumers, and shape public perception. By adopting a bold, humorous tone and encouraging user interaction, Wendy's was able to differentiate itself in a highly competitive market. The campaign not only resonated with a younger audience but also generated significant engagement, media attention, and sales growth.

This case highlights the potential of social media to humanize a brand, create viral content, and foster strong relationships with consumers. Wendy's success underscores the importance of authenticity, real-time engagement, and creativity in social media-driven public relations campaigns.

### Discussion 4.3

1. Wendy's Twitter success is largely attributed to its witty, humorous, and often irreverent tone. How does this approach align with the brand's identity, and what risks does a company face when using humor and sarcasm in public relations?
2. What role did real-time engagement and competitor interaction play in Wendy's social media success? How can other brands leverage these strategies to generate viral moments and engage consumers?
3. In what ways did Wendy's "roast" campaign foster user-generated content and community building? How can brands encourage user-generated content and engagement while maintaining control over their brand image?
4. Wendy's campaign earned significant media attention and industry recognition. How can brands measure the long-term impact of social media-driven public relations campaigns on brand loyalty and customer relationships?

4.3: Case study, Wendy's social media success with the "Roast" campaign is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.4: Case Study, ALS Association's ice bucket challenge - a social media triumph



Figure 4.4.1: Ice bucket challenge. (Wikimedia Commons, CCBY; Kimberly Quintano)

### Case Study: ALS Association's ice bucket challenge - a social media triumph

(This case study analysis is based on this [article](#) and this [website](#).)

#### Overview of ALS Association

The ALS Association is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advocating for individuals living with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. The organization provides resources, support, and funding for ALS research and awareness campaigns. In 2014, the ALS Association became the focal point of one of the most viral social media campaigns in history: the Ice Bucket Challenge. This campaign not only raised awareness about ALS but also led to a significant increase in donations to fund research.

#### Background

ALS is a rare and progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord, leading to muscle weakness and paralysis. Though widely known, the disease had not garnered much media attention in the years prior to 2014, and funding for research remained limited. The ALS Association was in search of ways to raise awareness and support for ALS research when the Ice Bucket Challenge organically emerged through social media. What started as a grassroots, community-driven movement quickly turned into an international viral sensation, catching the attention of celebrities, politicians, athletes, and everyday social media users.

#### Campaign Goals

- 1. Raise Awareness:** The primary goal of the campaign was to educate the public about ALS, as many people were unfamiliar with the disease.
- 2. Generate Donations:** The campaign aimed to raise funds for ALS research, helping to find treatments and eventually a cure for the disease.
- 3. Engage the Public:** The Ice Bucket Challenge sought to involve as many people as possible through an interactive and fun way to contribute to the cause.
- 4. Leverage Influencers:** By encouraging celebrities and influential figures to participate, the ALS Association wanted to expand the campaign's reach.

## Social Media Strategy

**1. Viral Content:** The challenge was simple: participants filmed themselves dumping a bucket of ice water on their heads, then nominated friends to do the same within 24 hours or make a donation to the ALS Association. The videos were shared across social media platforms with the hashtag #IceBucketChallenge, allowing the content to spread rapidly. The public nature of the nominations encouraged mass participation and kept the campaign circulating.

**2. Celebrity and Influencer Engagement:** The ALS Association capitalized on the involvement of high-profile celebrities, such as Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey, and LeBron James, who posted their videos online. As more celebrities participated, media coverage grew, which helped extend the reach of the campaign. The participation of influencers amplified the message and encouraged their followers to join in.

**3. User-Generated Content:** The campaign's interactive format encouraged user-generated content on an unprecedented scale. Everyday social media users became both participants and promoters of the cause, leading to millions of video uploads globally. This peer-to-peer engagement kept the momentum going, with new videos and donations being shared across social networks daily.

**4. Cross-Platform Promotion:** The ALS Association strategically used multiple social media platforms to promote the challenge, sharing stories, highlighting key participants, and providing updates on the campaign's progress. Facebook was the primary platform, but Twitter and YouTube were also heavily used for video content, which played a key role in sustaining the viral movement.

**5. Emotional Appeal:** ALS patients and their families shared personal stories on social media, creating an emotional connection with the audience. These stories served as a reminder of the cause behind the challenge, increasing the likelihood of donations and reinforcing the campaign's core message.

## Results and Impact

The Ice Bucket Challenge proved to be one of the most successful social media-driven public relations campaigns in the nonprofit sector. Its results were remarkable both in terms of awareness and financial impact.

**1. Awareness Raised:** The campaign brought ALS into the global spotlight. According to the ALS Association, more than 17 million people uploaded their challenge videos, and the campaign was mentioned in over 2.2 million tweets. By reaching a massive audience, it succeeded in significantly increasing public understanding of ALS.

**2. Financial Success:** The ALS Association reported raising over \$115 million in donations in just eight weeks during the peak of the challenge, a substantial increase compared to previous years. These funds were used for ALS research, patient services, and advocacy efforts. A portion of the donations led to the discovery of a new ALS gene, highlighting the campaign's long-term impact on ALS research.

**3. Sustained Engagement:** Although the Ice Bucket Challenge was at its height in 2014, the ALS Association continues to benefit from the attention and goodwill generated by the campaign. The organization has seen a continued increase in both donations and volunteer support since the campaign.

**4. Global Reach:** The campaign spread far beyond the United States, with people from all over the world participating. This global reach helped turn a local, community-driven effort into a global phenomenon, engaging millions of people across different countries and cultures.

**5. Media Coverage:** The viral nature of the Ice Bucket Challenge resulted in widespread media coverage, from major news outlets to niche blogs, further amplifying the message. This constant media attention contributed to the campaign's visibility and longevity.

## Conclusion

The success of the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge lies in the combination of an easy-to-participate activity, peer-to-peer engagement, and the involvement of high-profile influencers. By leveraging social media platforms, the ALS Association was able to raise awareness, engage the public, and generate unprecedented donations, all while creating a campaign that resonated emotionally with participants.

The Ice Bucket Challenge exemplifies the power of viral social media campaigns in the nonprofit sector, demonstrating that with the right mix of creativity, engagement, and platform strategy, even a small organization can achieve global impact.

#### Discussion 4.4

1. What specific factors contributed to the viral nature of the Ice Bucket Challenge, and how did the ALS Association leverage these factors to achieve global reach? Discuss the role of peer-to-peer engagement, user-generated content, and the participation of celebrities and influencers in amplifying the campaign.
2. In what ways did the emotional appeal of the campaign (through stories of ALS patients) contribute to its success, and how important is emotional storytelling in nonprofit social media campaigns? Explore how connecting with audiences on an emotional level can encourage participation and donations in nonprofit campaigns.
3. How did the Ice Bucket Challenge's reliance on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube impact the campaign's visibility and long-term success? Could the same campaign be as successful today, and why or why not? Consider how social media trends and platform usage have evolved since 2014 and how they might affect a similar campaign today.
4. What lessons can other nonprofit organizations learn from the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge about using social media to raise both awareness and funds? What are some potential challenges or risks associated with trying to replicate this kind of viral success? Discuss the balance between creating viral content and maintaining focus on the campaign's mission.

4.4: Case Study, ALS Association's ice bucket challenge - a social media triumph is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 5: Final Project

5.1: Client Selection, Competitive Analysis, and SWOT Analysis

5.2: Social media campaign goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics

5.3: Social media campaign evaluation

---

5: Final Project is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 5.1: Client Selection, Competitive Analysis, and SWOT Analysis

In Chapter 5, we walk you through a final project assignment based upon creating a social media plan for a PR campaign.

The finished product is meant to be a document that you can feature in your professional portfolio and use as a template to create social media plans for clients in the future.

Your Final Project is a three-part PR social media campaign designed to demonstrate your complete understanding of the course text, *Social Media for Public Relations*, and your ability to apply its concepts analytically, strategically, and creatively.

Each section of the project builds on the previous one.

All work must show your reasoning. I don't just want answers, I want to know *how* you reached those answers.

Superficial, vague, or AI-generated work will not receive credit.

Your job is to justify every choice based on research, theory, and course concepts.

### Select a Client (with rationale):

- Your client should be active already on at least one social media platform
- Your client must have multiple competitors that are active on at least one social media platform
- Your client may be local, national, or international, but large, multinational organizations (for-profits or nonprofits) will require more research, more social media activity, and more resources (in other words, it is not recommended that you pick a large, multinational organization)
- You will use the same client for the rest of the Final Project, so select a client that will be interesting or relevant to your future career.

Name the client you have chosen.

Provide a 1–2 page explanation answering:

1. **Why did you choose this client?**
  - Connect your choice to your future career goals, industry interests, or skill development.
2. **Which publics does this client serve?**
  - Based on the book's segmentation models (e.g., demographics, psychographics, situational theory of publics).
3. **Which social media platforms does the client currently use?**
  - Describe their level of activity and what role each platform currently plays.
4. **Why is this client interesting from a *strategic communication* perspective?**
  - Identify a challenge, opportunity, or gap that social media can solve.

Important: You must integrate concepts from at least three textbook chapters and cite them here (e.g., public segmentation, platform characteristics, relationship building, challenges of social media, etc.).

### Performing a Social Media Competitive Analysis

(Review Part 3: Chapter 2)

1. Identify Your Client's Competitors:
2. For **at least 3 competitors**, provide a research-based analysis that includes:
  1. **Which platforms competitors use and why you believe they chose them** (supported by platform characteristics from the book).

## 2. Content analysis using course concepts

- Content categories (informational, persuasive, community-building, UGC, promotional, etc.)
- Tone, messaging, voice
- Use of visuals
- Application of the SOEP model
- Evidence of relationship management

## 3. Engagement evaluation

- Not just the numbers — explain what they *mean*.
- Connect engagement patterns to target publics, message strategies, and algorithmic considerations.

## 4. Posting frequency and timing + interpretation

- Identify frequency and patterns.
- Explain how they align (or fail to align) with best practices in the textbook.

## 5. Audience analysis

- Who follows competitors?
- What segments do they appeal to (demographic, psychographic, behavioral)?
- How do you know?

## 6. Tools used (manual or software) to analyze competitors' social media and why they were appropriate for this analysis.

## 7. Strategic takeaways for your campaign

This is the *most important part*.

Students must clearly articulate:

- What did you learn from studying competitors?
- How does this inform *your* strategy?
- How will you differentiate your client?

To earn full credit:

You must explain reasoning, not simply list findings. This analysis should read like an early draft of a professional social media audit.

## SWOT Analysis for your Client

(See Part 3: Chapter 2)

Your SWOT analysis for your client must be **exhaustive, evidence-based, and limited to social media**, addressing:

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities

- Threats

For each item, students must provide:

1. A clear statement
2. Evidence from their research
3. Explanation of why this matters for PR
4. Implications for strategy (what this tells you to do next)

Requirement:

Each SWOT item must include at least 3–5 sentences of explanation, showing original analytical thought about your client.

---

5.1: Client Selection, Competitive Analysis, and SWOT Analysis is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 5.2: Social media campaign goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics

(This Chapter is remixed from [9.1: Constructing the Strategic Plan for a Public Relations Campaign](#) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by [Anonymous](#). This Chapter also references [Social Bee](#).)

Your Social Media plan should be focused on resolving or capitalizing on the situation identified in the SWOT Analysis (Part 5: Chapter 1). It begins by flipping the SWOT Analysis into a **goal**. In the case of a political candidate client, for example, the goal might be the following: “To use social media to increase support among voters in order to successfully win the election.” Notice that there is room to change social media plans while still using this same goal statement. The end goal is to win the election, and in order to achieve this the politician may need to make adjustments to the social media strategy. Care should be taken not to write goals that suggest that the public will do something you want them to do. Because publics cannot actually be controlled, it might set up the client for failure. Instead, focus should be on what can be done to achieve the goal, such as communicate and act in such a way that earns the vote or endorsement of these publics.

Some example goals can be taken from the case studies in this textbook.

The ALS Ice Bucket Challenge campaign goals were:

- 1. Raise Awareness:** The primary goal of the campaign was to educate the public about ALS, as many people were unfamiliar with the disease.
- 2. Generate Donations:** The campaign aimed to raise funds for ALS research, helping to find treatments and eventually a cure for the disease.
- 3. Engage the Public:** The Ice Bucket Challenge sought to involve as many people as possible through an interactive and fun way to contribute to the cause.
- 4. Leverage Influencers:** By encouraging celebrities and influential figures to participate, the ALS Association wanted to expand the campaign’s reach.

The goal provides the direction for the Social Media Plan and **objectives** provide the direction of specific and measurable outcomes necessary to meet the goal. A good objective should be SMART:

- **Specific:** Your social media objective should include details about what your client is looking to achieve, who’s in charge of the process, and a set of steps that need to be taken.
- **Measurable:** If your purpose is to gain 200 followers more on your social media pages, you also need a starting metric. It’s all about setting a threshold and finding some key metrics.
- **Achievable:** If your objective is not realistic, you might be setting yourself up for disappointment. Know what you can do and set your objectives accordingly.
- **Relevant:** It will help you solve a problem your client is facing (see the SWOT Analysis). Knowing why you’ve added an objective to your list will give you a clear idea of whether it fits your overall strategy or not.
- **Time-bound:** This refers to set specific time frames. Knowing when you will start and finish a list of tasks will give you a strong idea of where your social media campaign stands.

The objectives should advance overall goals such as increase brand awareness, boost brand engagement, or (to use the previous example of a political candidate) increase voter support. They should also be written within the parameters of possible outcomes. Here are some example objectives:

- Increase followers on Facebook by 20% over the next 6 months among young people (ages 18–24).
- Increase website traffic by 10% over the next 12 months.
- Increase the reach of client’s Instagram posts by 25% over the next 6 months.
- Increase the TikTok engagement rate (total number of engagements divided by the total number of impressions) by 15% over the next 6 months.

Once the goal of the social media campaign and measurable objectives have been established, it is time to turn attention to **strategies**. Strategies provide the means by which objectives are reached. There are certain elements that should be included in this step. First, *identify* what is trying to be accomplished with each public (tie the strategy to an objective). Second, *segment the public*

based on common characteristics. Third, *create* communication strategies that are focused on the self-interests of the publics. And, fourth, identify how publics will be *reached*.

### Tie Strategy to Objective

Too often public relations programs have been primarily tactical and have skipped the strategic step of creating objectives. Public relations professionals are doers and often want to get to the action first. However, too many tactics have been executed because of tradition (“We have only ever used Facebook.”) than because of strategy. What makes public relations *strategic* is having the action tied to the real needs of the organization. If you come up with a really clever tactic but it does not help meet any objectives it should be seriously reconsidered. Far too many resources often are wasted on creative tactics and fall short of addressing the needs of the issue. At the same time, brainstorming on strategies may lead to a legitimate idea that was not considered during the objectives phase, and it may require reevaluating the objectives. But if a strategy cannot be tied to an essential outcome, then it should not be executed.

After strategies are set, every campaign plan will also include tactics, or the individual steps or actions you will take to fulfill your strategy. For example, if Wendy’s strategy was to utilize user generated content, a tactic had to be to elicit that user generated content by creating posts across their social media channels that requested or attracted user generated content that fit the “Roast” campaign theme. The actual writing of those specific posts is the tactical implementation of the campaign strategies.

You must translate the SWOT into a **single, strategic campaign goal**:

### A. Campaign Goal

Requirements:

- Must directly address a problem or opportunity identified in your SWOT.
- Must reflect what *the organization* can do, not what publics will do.
- Must be broad, directional, and meaningful (not a metric).
- Must be consistent with the textbook’s approach to goal-setting.

Students must also provide a **paragraph explaining the rationale behind the goal**, citing course concepts.

### B. SMART Objectives (minimum of 3)

For each objective:

1. Write a full SMART objective.
2. Show:
  - **How it ties to the goal**
  - **Which public segment(s) it targets**
  - **Why this objective is relevant**
  - **What strategic insight from your research supports it**

Requirement: Simple statements of “increase followers by X%” are not enough. You must justify the objective with research and theory from the course.

### C. Strategies (at least one per objective)

Each strategy must:

1. Clearly connect to the objective it serves
2. Identify the public(s) it targets

3. Explain the public's self-interest (as taught in the book)
4. Use concepts such as:
  - Engagement theory
  - Relationship management
  - SOEP model
  - Platform affordances
  - Content creation principles
  - Two-way symmetrical communication
  - Message framing
5. Provide a clear **rationale** for why this strategy is the most effective approach

Requirement: Strategies must be conceptual, not tactical. (“Leverage TikTok influencers to highlight the client’s sustainability practices” is a strategy; “Post two TikTok videos per week” is a tactic.)

#### D. Tactics (at least one per strategy)

Tactics must:

- Directly align with the strategy
- Identify the platform(s) used and justify why
- Describe the content you will create (not just “post more”)
- Explain timing, posting frequency, and message style
- Show evidence of creativity + understanding of the platform’s culture

You must show *how* each tactic fulfills a communication need and ties back to strategy, objective, and goal.

---

5.2: Social media campaign goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 5.3: Social media campaign evaluation

### *Measuring the Success of Your Social Media Campaign*

After completing your proposed social media plan (Part 5.2), you must develop a detailed and rigorous evaluation plan that demonstrates your ability to measure the effectiveness of your strategy. Your evaluation plan should show critical thinking about data, analytics, publics, platform behavior, and how goals and objectives translate into measurable outcomes.

This assignment is not a list of metrics, it is a strategic, analytical document grounded in everything you learned in the course.

Your evaluation plan must address **all** of the following components:

#### 1. Define Success for Your Plan

Begin by articulating what “success” means for this specific campaign.

This section must include:

- A clear explanation of how your definition of success connects to your overall campaign goal and each SMART objective (from Part 5.2).
- A brief rationale showing your strategic reasoning:
  - Why does this definition of success matter for your client?
  - How is “success” different for different publics or platforms?

#### 2. Identify Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Each Objective

For **each** SMART objective, identify the metrics that best measure progress.

Your KPIs may include (but are not limited to):

- Engagement (likes, comments, shares, saves)
- Reach and impressions
- Click-through rate (CTR)
- Conversion metrics (sign-ups, downloads, purchases, RSVPs)
- Follower growth or retention
- Audience demographics
- Watch time or completion rate (for video-heavy campaigns)
- Sentiment analysis
- Volume and tone of mentions
- Share of voice compared to competitors

For each KPI, you must provide:

1. A clear justification rooted in your client’s needs, publics, and platform choices
2. A brief explanation of why this KPI is meaningful for PR (not just marketing)
3. A link between the KPI and the objective it measures

Requirement: You must demonstrate understanding of why you chose each metric. Listing KPIs without explanation will not receive credit.

### 3. Describe Data Collection Methods

Explain *how* you will gather the data needed to evaluate your KPIs.

This may include:

- Native analytics (Meta, TikTok, X, YouTube Studio, LinkedIn)
- Third-party tools (Hootsuite, Sprout Social, Buffer, Meltwater, Brandwatch, etc.)
- Manual coding of comments or sentiment
- UTM parameters for link tracking
- Google Analytics
- Social listening tools
- Surveys or feedback forms

For each method, you must address:

- Why this method is appropriate
- What it can measure accurately
- What its limitations are (important for critical thinking)
- How you will ensure the data is valid and ethically collected

### 4. Establish Benchmarks and Timelines

To evaluate performance, you must set realistic, evidence-based benchmarks.

Your evaluation plan must include:

- Benchmarks drawn from competitor data, client history, or industry standards
- A measurement schedule (weekly, biweekly, monthly, campaign-end, etc.)
- A rationale for why your timeline makes sense based on:
  - platform algorithm cycles,
  - audience behavior,
  - seasonality,
  - or campaign pacing described in your strategy.

Benchmarks must show thoughtful analysis, not guesses.

(Example: “Client X averaged 50 Instagram likes per post last quarter; therefore a target of 70 likes per post is ambitious but realistic.”)

### 5. Analyze and Adjust (Iterative Optimization Plan)

Describe **how** you will analyze the data and make decisions based on it.

Your plan must include:

- How you will determine if a tactic is underperforming

- What specific indicators would trigger a change
- How you will optimize tactics
- How the evaluation process reflects two-way symmetrical communication
- How you will incorporate audience feedback into the campaign (qualitative + quantitative)

This is where you show you understand PR strategy as an ongoing, adaptive process, not a one-time plan.

## 6. Evaluate ROI (Return on Investment)

Explain how you will measure both tangible and intangible ROI:

Tangible ROI examples:

- Revenue impact
- Lead generation
- Event registrations
- Membership sign-ups
- Downloads
- Click-through conversions

Intangible ROI examples:

- Improved sentiment
- Increased trust or loyalty
- Stronger relationships with key publics
- Enhanced brand reputation
- Growth of online community engagement

For full credit, you must:

- Explain which ROI categories matter most to your client and why
- Identify how your metrics connect to business or mission outcomes
- Address any limitations in calculating ROI for social media PR campaigns

## 7. How This Evaluation Plan Reflects What I Learned in This Course

You must reference at least 3 specific concepts from the textbook (e.g., SOEP model, segmentation, relational strategies, analytics, platform affordances, challenges of social media) to explain how this evaluation plan reflects the knowledge you gained during this course. Be specific and explain your thought process.

---

5.3: Social media campaign evaluation is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## Index

---

### D

dire

# Glossary

**Sample Word 1** | Sample Definition 1

---

## Detailed Licensing

---

### Overview

**Title:** Social Media for Public Relations

**Webpages:** 34

**All licenses found:**

- [Undeclared](#): 94.1% (32 pages)
- [CC BY 4.0](#): 5.9% (2 pages)

### By Page

- [Social Media for Public Relations](#) - *Undeclared*
  - [Front Matter](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [TitlePage](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [InfoPage](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [Table of Contents](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [Licensing](#) - *Undeclared*
  - [1: Origins of PR and PR Principles](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [1.1: Defining Public Relations](#) - *CC BY 4.0*
    - [1.2: The Function of Public Relations](#) - *CC BY 4.0*
    - [1.3: The History and Development of Modern PR](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [1.4: The SOEP Model for Media Strategy](#) - *Undeclared*
  - [2: Social Media Today](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [2.1: How Did We Get Here?](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [2.2: Where do we go from here?](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [2.3: Benefits and Challenges of Social Media](#) - *Undeclared*
  - [3: Using Social Media for PR](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [3.1: Understanding your target public](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [3.2: Engaging with Publics](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [3.3: Creating content for your campaign](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [3.4: Social media analytics and campaign measurement](#) - *Undeclared*
  - [4: Social Media for PR Case Studies](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [4.1: Case study, the rise of Gymshark](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [4.2: Case study, John Fetterman's successful use of social media in a U.S. Senate campaign](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [4.3: Case study, Wendy's social media success with the "Roast" campaign](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [4.4: Case Study, ALS Association's ice bucket challenge - a social media triumph](#) - *Undeclared*
  - [5: Final Project](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [5.1: Client Selection, Competitive Analysis, and SWOT Analysis](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [5.2: Social media campaign goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [5.3: Social media campaign evaluation](#) - *Undeclared*
  - [Back Matter](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [Index](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [Glossary](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [Detailed Licensing](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [Detailed Licensing](#) - *Undeclared*

## Detailed Licensing

---

### Overview

**Title:** Social Media for Public Relations

**Webpages:** 34

**All licenses found:**

- [Undeclared](#): 94.1% (32 pages)
- [CC BY 4.0](#): 5.9% (2 pages)

### By Page

- [Social Media for Public Relations](#) - *Undeclared*
  - [Front Matter](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [TitlePage](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [InfoPage](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [Table of Contents](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [Licensing](#) - *Undeclared*
  - [1: Origins of PR and PR Principles](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [1.1: Defining Public Relations](#) - *CC BY 4.0*
    - [1.2: The Function of Public Relations](#) - *CC BY 4.0*
    - [1.3: The History and Development of Modern PR](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [1.4: The SOEP Model for Media Strategy](#) - *Undeclared*
  - [2: Social Media Today](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [2.1: How Did We Get Here?](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [2.2: Where do we go from here?](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [2.3: Benefits and Challenges of Social Media](#) - *Undeclared*
  - [3: Using Social Media for PR](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [3.1: Understanding your target public](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [3.2: Engaging with Publics](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [3.3: Creating content for your campaign](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [3.4: Social media analytics and campaign measurement](#) - *Undeclared*
  - [4: Social Media for PR Case Studies](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [4.1: Case study, the rise of Gymshark](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [4.2: Case study, John Fetterman's successful use of social media in a U.S. Senate campaign](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [4.3: Case study, Wendy's social media success with the "Roast" campaign](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [4.4: Case Study, ALS Association's ice bucket challenge - a social media triumph](#) - *Undeclared*
  - [5: Final Project](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [5.1: Client Selection, Competitive Analysis, and SWOT Analysis](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [5.2: Social media campaign goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [5.3: Social media campaign evaluation](#) - *Undeclared*
  - [Back Matter](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [Index](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [Glossary](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [Detailed Licensing](#) - *Undeclared*
    - [Detailed Licensing](#) - *Undeclared*