

**Integrated Marketing Communication**  
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**Lecture No 49**  
**Public Relations**

Hello and welcome back again to a very important session of integrated marketing communication. Starting from lots of creativity - a fascinating world of advertising, moving through personal selling, direct marketing, cause related marketing, now we are moving towards public relations.

Public Relations - Having an aspect related to influencers: influencing people's thoughts. Getting influencers to influence the thought process of our customers, our stakeholders, it is not complex at all. It is how effectively we can reach out, how effectively we can share our views, how effectively we can associate whatever is happening around us with our organizational orientation and project it rightly.

And this is what public relation is all about. It generates word of mouth. Word of mouth is generated by so many things but public relations management generates effective word of mouth and that is what we are going to see while we are talking about this. I want you to go for analyzing and understanding several organizations through their PR efforts.

I want you to see that what they intend to do through public relations exercises and how they are influencing your opinion if you look at yourself as a target customer. For example, Oil Company getting associated with different societal causes through their PR exercises. Are they making a difference if they are successful? For example a large mining organization: how they are getting associated with different kinds of cause related marketing communications?

Cause related marketing for that matter getting associated with different kinds of societal causes around them and then developing a public relations exercise, telling about their efforts is it making a difference? If it is, then definitely they are successful. So, that is what you have to look into.

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Public relations are managed by separate department within organizations. There are PR agencies

who manage it. This group focuses upon developing positivity around the names of the organizations through several press releases and several modes which we will be talking about. But whatever is coming our way from different kinds of medias, vehicles within medias about an organization through an integrated manner and the specific element which is directed towards building up a positive image about the organization while demonstrating their actions that is what public relation exercise is.

It is away from paid form of advertising. It integrates the advertising efforts. Just in simple terms while looking you find one advertisement in a television about an organization then you find an internet clipping about that organization, next morning you find something similar advertisement about that organization in a newspaper, the next day you find a particular kind of a press release about that organization about how they got associated with a an event and so on. And then the next day they are sponsoring some effort around them. They are standing by something which is required by the society and so on. And there are agencies, there are internal people who are handling that.

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Now what are the objectives? Explicitly communication has one objective as I have been repeatedly saying to develop the brand equity, to develop a positive image about the organization and the products they produce services they have in the minds of the customers and people at large. But that can be broken down into very specific objectives when we look at public relations exercise.

Promoting goodwill: that is positive image and that good will has an accounting reality remember this because that converts into stakeholder's response and stockholders value as well. So, that is magical when it converts into that later on.

Counteracting negative publicity: There are several questions which are being raised about several organizations from all around. For example, if you are into large businesses like mining or transportation or let us say when you inevitably are contributing somewhere into climate depletion. But you are into a business which is relevant, which no one can do without it. Somehow it is paradoxical but you have to live by it. So, there are some questions always raised upon you and those questions have to be fend off while standing by the cause you are pursuing, by following the law of the land precisely, by abiding by the rules on the one side but on the other side pushing away the negative publicity through positive publicity and that is what precisely PR works for.

Talking about public relations of a bank: they generate trust amongst customers through different modes or news releases all the time because banking is related to trust. Even if you are not into a

business which is struggling to support the environment while somehow contributing against it. You are into a business where you are related to finance then trust is a big issue.

Next are promoting a product or service and developing internal communication as well strengthening a feeling of trust amongst the employees who are the brand ambassadors for the organization for the outside world.

Giving advice and counseling to the stakeholders.

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What are the tools press releases where you have to have very strong media relations. Media relations is a part of public relations. You have to have a very effective communication linkage with media where you can suggest that this is worth reaching to the common masses. Because media would take or carry forward whatever they would believe in is worth reaching to the masses because they are the fourth pillar of the society and nation.

There are company newsletters where on the one side these newsletters are informative, on the other side these newsletters carry so many things which on daily basis one cannot tell people through advertisements or messages. So, you have to have a detailed description of what you are up to, what you are supporting.

Then there are press conferences: a part of media relations. Interviews from the side of the managerial teams and so on. And then there are sponsored events as well.

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Press releases: How press releases are used? They can be used for product launches, they can be used for announcing new associations: partnerships, mergers, acquisitions, takeovers or even slightest of the thing which you are doing. In the academic institutions press releases are very good mode of public relations. Government educational institution is supported by public money. So, people they are eligible to know what the institution is doing. So, institutions keep on releasing details about what kind of researches are being carried forward, what achievements are being done by their students and faculty and staff and how they are pursuing to become excellent day by day or how they are pursuing the excellence itself.

So, that is a very important thing. In today's world perception about institutions are being used for ranking the institutions. Perception build up is supported by public relations exercises and specially press releases. Then to promote an event, to announce an award, press release are used. Awards become mode of building a trust about an organization or let us say in simple terms

contributing in the brand equity of an organization as such.

If organization wins an award, it is commended by an agency or large rating organization or the government of the nation or the awards which are won by the leadership of an organization (corporate excellence awards etc) then press releases contribute in fundraising to announce specific appointments.

And that is very important because it becomes a point of discussion amongst several stakeholders and masses at large. If a large corporation is getting a new leadership and they want to know who is going to lead that organization because that organization is touching upon the lives of several people all around, here press releases are used.

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Apple: They released about one of their products where they are talking about fault detection, advanced fitness, features and family setup watch OS 7. And this press release mentioned about design performance advanced features, health and safety, family setup and optimizations and pricing and availability. Because many a times these kinds of things must complement the advertising campaign.

Apple would go for a product in which people would know what it constitutes of because that can be known by the people through different sequential campaigns or demonstrations which would be done on spot. So, this would definitely have a very strong complementary role from the side of the same organization if it is talking about data security, fall detection etc. Then it becomes the matter of press release but that contributes towards the larger image build of the organization itself.

So, here one example can be chosen to talk about the press release in relation to one of their products and on the other side their image building at large.

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Feature stories: You invite a journalist and request them to write about one issue, one aspect or organization at large. That is where feature stories come in. WHO wrote feature stories celebrating human resilience, ingenuity and creativity during pandemic time in which the title of the stories “one year into the COVID 19 pandemic - Six stories that inspire hope”

One story LAO PDR was related to unlocking the full potential of small and medium sized enterprise, then one story was related to Costa Rica wherein women fire fighters on the front line of resilient recovery. And one story about Kenya that talks about creating sustainable jobs for youth.

That is how these stories were put up as features, demonstrated the efforts of several organizations involved. And all this is to build up the confidence of people that there are people at the backdrop who are working day in day out to bring humanity out of this situation.

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Company newsletters I have already mentioned about those specifically interviews and press conference.

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Publicity: The generation of news about a person, product or service that appears in the media. Now the point of generation is the concern as far as the publicity goes. What relevance you would bring in that story or how it would be considered as relevant by media? And see it carries free media exposure. If you remember I discussed about Gillette story wherein Proctor and Gamble went for Shavathon.

Now that carried lots of press releases and lots of media coverage and lots of specific stories about Gillette's effort and that brought in lots of publicity for Gillette and definitely that was free media coverage. So, you will analyze through those cases the space they acquired in the mind of customers.

And probably then the impact analysis would have to be done on the basis of customer response generated per rupee which was spent on that advertisement. Free publicity on the other side is more trustworthy because that is generated through independent source on the basis of some action and event which has been organized by an organization.

So, it is purposeful, it is paid and customer looks at it with a different benefit which he may get out of purchase he would made at the end of that whole process. But publicity is seen as a neutral aspect where context of trust is slightly more as compared to other modes. So, publicity is backed about with lots of advertising.

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There was an incident of snap incorporated, where remark by its CEO became controversial some time back. He happened to mention about rich people, poor people and named our great nation and it was immediately responded to with lots of refutation. If some organization is thinking in terms of earning money out of a particular customer class who belong to a nation and you are saying something against that nation those people would not take it happily and should never do that, no nation should do it but if you have said then there are repercussions. Customer would immediately refute to that and that is precisely what happened with this organization. The

intent for this demonstration here is that you should understand the difference between negative publicity and positive publicity.

Negative publicity is based on the negative intent which your statement might carry. Although you may always apologize for that later on and you would say that it came as a spurt or it was a passing remark, but passing remarks are hurtful and we should not hurt the feelings of others. And especially when we are seeking their favors as customers although we should never hurt feeling of others in any case.

But when you are looking them as customers then it is absolutely not acceptable with all the business logic as well. So, the message is very clear that publicity should always be positive and organizations should be responsible. We should respect the feelings of others and that is what public relations is all about.

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Avon came up with a wonderful campaign (publicity campaign) and public relations exercise where they said that “isolated but not alone” and the objective here was that in the midst of the pandemic women and children definitely came under lots of risk of domestic violence. And several cases were reported and they were vulnerable. This came out at several discussion forums, cases were reported.

Now Avon along with a foundation for women launched this exercise or this event or a public relations exercise #isolatednotalone campaign. And they partnered with three NGOs Shakthi Shalini, Swam and Family Planning Association of India and issued a total grant of US \$122500 (approximately 94 lakh rupees) to sign post help for those in need.

Now to spread awareness Avon hosted live sessions on instagram with opinion leaders such as Lakshmi Agarwal, Vrinda Grover, Faraz Ali, Faraz Arif Ansari, Dr Sameer Parikh and Roshni Bhatia. Avon also engaged with instagram influencers who actively talk about societal issues such as Aishwarya Sharma and Nivedita, Priya rana and Nazara through which the brand was able to reach out to over a million unique users.

You can find the details about the speakers and the people associated with this campaign and exercise through different resources on YouTube and Google and specific resources are being mentioned at the end of the slides as well. And the results were good. Because Avon is associated with such products and getting associated with this project made lots of smooth association with the customers.

And then you are going for a public relations exercise through different tools available which

makes lots of sense, which brings in lots of trust and develops a meaningful contribution from your side for the society.

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Then there is event sponsorship: companies sponsor events as a matter of public relations. Where your name (brand) come along with. For example there are technical festivals: one of the technical festivals of IIT Roorkee is Cognizance which is supported by different kinds of organizations and that makes sense because they belong to those fields.

Then there is a cultural festival which is known all over the country (Thomso, IIT Roorkee). And it is supported by several organizations which come forward to get associated not with different students from all over the country as such but their orientation (the orientation of their products and services) is such which is liked by youth. Then there is lots of statistics available when we talk of agency holding groups and independent networks worldwide by PR revenue.

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For example, Omnicom PR group, their income in 2020 was 1301.8 million US dollars, that is the kind of fee they earned. So, there are several other groups which are related to this business and the slide is explicit you can read about that. Now comes in influencer marketing, let us look at some dictionary element of that as well.

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According to Cambridge dictionary an influencer is a person or group that has the ability to influence the behaviour or opinion of others. Influencer holds a position in society or even a common man whose experiences are shareable and can influence your thoughts.

A common lady on the road purchasing vegetable can be an influencer if she is wearing a saffron (white) Saree which is brighter than the sari of the another lady who is purchasing fruits and vegetables from the same market as such. A student who is doing very well in his life can be an influencer. A Paralympic champion can be an influencer, a cricketer can be an influencer and so on. So, it is also related to a series of personalized marketing techniques directed at individuals or groups who have the credibility and capability to drive positive word of mouth in a broader and salient segment of the population.

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Influencer marketing market size worldwide has grown to 13.8 billion dollars in 2021 which is big.

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Professional influencer programs: Professionals are experts in the field, hired professionals, celebrities possessing a solid strength of character who can contribute to the process creatively and have the ability to change behavior e.g., Akshay Kumar talking about women hygiene and there are sportsmen who talk about healthy living, good life.

In the past influencers were limited to celebrities but this has been expanded to athletes, thought leaders, industry experts, owners of the organizations themselves who have been successful, who have been societal icons, small children who have done well, Malala who herself is an icon for youth who has done so much for the world and so on. There are several people whom we can look up to.

For example four time Olympic gold medalist and grand slam record holder Serena Williams has been publicly vocal about several issues. So, at the end of the day we are talking about public relations, we are talking about different tools, we are talking about press releases, effectiveness of press releases, how to generate effectiveness around press releases.

And in this session we are stopping at the role of influencers and influence in generating public relations.

Keep watching, keep looking around you and keep getting mesmerized by integrated marketing communications.

I will see you next time.

Till then goodbye.