

AI Enhanced Communication and Public Relations

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ABSTRACT

Public relations is built upon communications. Its many disciplines rely on the clear understanding of public and media sentiment, and timely, accurate messaging that can enhance and protect reputations. Gather Stars AI enhanced communications reduces the daily load on PR practitioners through the automation of mundane tasks, while helping them react faster to any development, and assisting them with the creation of appropriate materials to achieve their company or client goals.

INTRODUCTION

“Public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics.” - Public Relations Society of America

There may be no profession more closely tied to the need for clear communications than public relations (PR). It exists solely to manipulate and enhance the reputations of businesses, individuals, and political parties in the eyes of their customers, audiences, and the general public as a whole. This article will focus on the business side of PR, however many of the same tools and techniques that Gather Stars uses can be applied to other fields.

PR practitioners need to be aware of the company's aims and objectives, as well as how the public currently perceives them, in order to create strategies that will drive the company forward; meaning that the ability to thoroughly research public opinion, and recognize the public's sentiment towards the company is key.

Unlike publicity, which is controlled and disseminated by external actors, PR is managed from within a company, or at least from within a company's chosen agency, which makes it an ideal candidate to benefit from Gather Stars AI enhanced communication solution.

GOALS

1. **Prevent** harm to a company's reputation, the spread of misinformation, the leaking of sensitive or classified information
2. **Predict** public and media responses to messages, press releases, stories
3. **Recommend** changes in communication style, media contacts, responses to inquiries
4. **Improve** speed, accuracy and completeness of responses, media relations, brand reputation

PR DISCIPLINES

PR consists of a multitude of disciplines, but at its core it is concerned with anticipating, analyzing and interpreting public opinion, and then communicating carefully controlled messages that can enhance and protect the reputation of the company. Here we focus on some of the better known PR functions.

Media Monitoring

Whether done internally, via an agency, or outsourced to a monitoring service, media monitoring is a time consuming task whose repetitive nature means that key stories can be missed. Normally carried out by junior team members, who may not fully comprehend the material they are reading, its reports are sent on a daily basis for review, but are frequently ignored until it's too late. Gather Stars solves this problem in two ways:

1. By assisting in the actual monitoring process. Gather Stars can summarize any news story that is fed into the system, saving team members time. More importantly, it can recognize the sentiment and tone of an article, alerting users to positive or negative news that needs to be addressed. Furthermore, Gather Stars AI is able to track stories as they develop and recognise changes in tone and the impact of responses.
2. In addition to the summaries created by either a team member, or Gather Stars itself, the system can generate summaries of daily reports for managers, alert them that a report contains positive or negative news that needs to be acted upon, and even create summaries of the entire progression of a story.

Media Relations

PR and its practitioners are frequently portrayed in a negative light in the media¹. Despite this, the relationships between journalists and their PR counterparts are normally good, and PR agencies

¹ <https://bit.ly/3uBkcy3>

regularly make use of their existing relationships with the media to either help their clients, or win new ones.

Understanding these relationships can be crucial when distributing press releases, reaching out in response to stories, and proactively seeking interviews and article placements. Questions that a manager may need to answer include: who has the best relationship with publication X? Who has the best performance following up on press releases? Who has the most success deflecting 'awkward' questions from journalist Y? How will publication Z perceive the value of this story?

Gather Stars graph database constantly tracks relationships between team members and the media, allowing it to quickly answer questions like these and many more besides, and thanks to its natural language interface, no additional training is required to start optimizing a team's full potential.

Content Creation and Distribution

Gather Stars cannot create all of your content (yet), but it is able to assist in the creation of responses and follow-ups by ensuring that key information, including information that exists within other systems is included. As an example, if an enquiry is received about a new product launch, Gather Stars will recommend answers based on existing press releases, boilerplates, and spokesperson biographies. Perhaps more importantly, it also reviews any outgoing emails to ensure that they do not contain sensitive or embargoed information, and that the team member sharing the information concerned has sufficient authorization to do so.

Crisis Management

"It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently." - Warren Buffett, CEO, Berkshire Hathaway

It is always preferable to prevent a crisis than to react to one, and Gather Stars is designed to do so, however external events, inappropriate behavior, poor decisions, and leakage of information can still occur. Any of these can damage the public's opinion of a company meaning, crisis management is essential. Popularly thought of as a reactionary process, crisis management actually consists of three phases - (1) pre-crisis, (2) crisis response, and (3) post-crisis², and Gather Stars assists in each of them.

Pre-crisis

Pre-crisis activities include the creation of a crisis response team and crisis response messaging. Gather Stars awareness of internal and external relationships, as well as areas of expertise assists in the selection of the most appropriate team members to handle different crises. To help perfect

² <https://bit.ly/34LEKt4>

messaging, Gather Stars is not only able to recommend content and quotations, it is able to predict how these messages will be received by the media and general public, preventing a bad situation from being made worse by inappropriate responses.

Crisis Response

While pre-crisis planning helps, when a crisis hits the response needs to be quick, accurate and consistent. Gather Stars immediately flags monitored stories or inquiries that could have a negative impact on brand reputation and notifies the correct individual or response team to handle the situation, providing them with recommended responses and pre-approved statements. In addition, to ensure that media and/or clients are kept updated, even when there is no new information to impart, it recommends that replies give a clear timeline for updates, and alerts the response team when it is time to send the next communication.

Post-Crisis

While the crisis may no longer be management's main focus during this phase, reputational repair is important, as are the lessons learnt from the crisis.

Firstly, any promises made during the crisis must be adhered to - if information was promised, it must be delivered, or else there is a further risk of additional loss of trust. Gather Stars keeps track of all communications and reminds stakeholders of follow-up actions that they need to take, even if the follow-up process lasts for over a year.

Secondly, fresh messaging should be prepared, and targeted at the appropriate media by the appropriate spokesperson. The company needs to show that it is aware of the damage done, and make the public aware of the changes it is making. Gather Stars recommends the best spokesperson for the task, ensures that messages are in line with new or existing company guidelines, and targets the best media to carry the message.

Finally, it is vital to learn from the experience. Gather Stars does this automatically, its graph database and AI are constantly learning, but it also provides recommendations to prevent similar incidents occurring again, for example by limiting employees ability to share information, or by suggesting HR interventions, thus helping the organization not only heal, but improve.

REAL WORLD EXAMPLES

Leaked Conservative MP Group Chat Reveals ‘Disgusting’ Marcus Rashford Message

When employees and MPs use WhatsApp to communicate with each other, they can forget that their messages won't always remain private, and more importantly, forget that their messages should adhere to company regulations and messaging. These leaks can be damaging to a company (or government), but by continuously monitoring these communications, GSAI can recommend that the message not be sent in the first place.

<https://tinyurl.com/yd72bd9f>

Mr. Kalanick's departure from Uber's board ends one of the tech industry's defining stories of the last decade

Investors forced Mr. Kalanick to resign as chief executive in 2017, after a series of privacy scandals and complaints of discrimination and sexual harassment at the company.

Mr. Kalanick's stepping-on-toes behavior became the cultural norm at Uber, which came to be known for its willingness to value growth at all costs. But 2017 was a year of reckoning for Mr. Kalanick and Uber: A former engineer at the company spoke publicly about her experiences of sexual harassment at Uber and said her managers did nothing to curb the behavior.

<https://tinyurl.com/wlxpr2b>

Bobby Kotick's necessary resignation is bigger than Activision Blizzard

A bombshell report from The Wall Street Journal reveals that Kotick failed to address sexual harassment issues at the company, and he was at the very least complicit in a workplace culture that allowed them.

<https://t.ly/FwFU>

Microsoft busted Bill Gates for ‘inappropriate’ emails to female staffer

Microsoft executives once ordered Bill Gates to stop sending flirty emails to a female subordinate, according to a new report.

The alleged misbehavior occurred more than a decade before the Microsoft board learned of an affair between Gates and another female employee, which preceded Gates' divorce and resignation from the Microsoft board.

<https://t.ly/m45z>

Campbell Ewald CEO Fired After Employee's Racist Email

Interpublic Group (IPG 0.05%) said it has fired the chief executive of its Campbell Ewald agency, a move that comes days after a racist email from one of the agency's creative directors circulated on the Internet.

"Interpublic Group announced that it has terminated Jim Palmer, the CEO of Campbell Ewald, effectively immediately. Leadership of the organization will be assumed by Kevin Wertz, the agency's President," the company said Friday in a statement. An Interpublic spokesman declined to comment further on Mr. Palmer's termination.

<https://t.ly/PQK9>