

# Practices of Public Relations in the Field of Tourism Media Campaign Planning

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## Abstract

The practice of public relations in the tourism sector acts as a bridge for communication between those interested in tourism both domestically and internationally. It functions to establish and strengthen both formal and informal relationships, resulting in an increase in the number of tourists, whether local or foreign. Additionally, it works on spreading tourism awareness and developing a spirit of knowledge about everything related to the tourism sector at various levels and classifications. Moreover, it brings together those interested in and benefiting from tourism both domestically and internationally, aiming to build a strong promotional tourism base that serves as the core for tourism media campaigns both within the country and abroad.

**Keywords:** Public Relations, Planning, Tourism Media Campaigns.

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## 1. Introduction

Public relations represent the diligent, continuous, and responsible effort to present public and private service and production establishments. They aim to create a positive image of an organization's personality, identity, and philosophy based on its fundamental functions (media and communication function, administrative and organizational function, psychological and social function, and research and investigation function). This includes the essential requirements for the success of media campaigns and their implementation methods.

## 2. Basic Concepts

### 1.2. Concept of Public Relations

- **Linguistic Definition:** Initially, it's noted that the term "Les Relations Publiques" in French and "Public Relations" in English poses a problem in Arabic when translated precisely to mean public relations with the masses. The word (Public) or (Publiques) does not mean general (Général) but "public," which can lead to negative connotations in Arabic, associating the

profession with "special relations" and "illegitimate" practices (Faraj, 2008, p.05). The word "relations" means: "the connections and mutual effects that arise in response to an activity or counter-behavior, where response is a fundamental condition for the formation of a social relationship. In social reality, relationships can be between an individual and another individual, an individual and a group, or there can be mutual relationships between phenomena and systems, and external relations between groups and other groups" (Hijab, 2007, p.168). The term "public" refers to: "the masses or different groups of people whose work is connected or whose interests and activities are linked to the entity, institution, or company. Often, it can be said that there is a special audience for every service or production entity, consisting of clients, beneficiaries, or professionals involved with the entity, institution, or company's activity" (Mansour, 2005, p.13).

- **Conventional Definition:** An administrative function with a planned nature aimed at gaining the understanding, empathy, and support of those related to it, and maintaining it by evaluating the public opinion concerning it in order to align its policies and actions as much as possible with the public interest (Aliyan, Al-Toubaşı, 2007, p.232).
- **Operational Definition:** A continuous process based on a planned communication activity aimed at developing and establishing trust and loyalty relationships with the organization's audiences, whether on the level of the internal public (employees) or the external public (clients), in order to achieve specific programs, a defined policy, a desired strategy, modify attitudes, change behaviors...

## 2.2. Concept of Planning

- **Conventional Definition:** Planning is that intellectual, voluntary activity directed at choosing the best possible use of available resources to achieve specific goals within a set period (Faraj, 2010, p.75). Planning is a thought process with logic and order, requiring effort to clarify the project's goal and search for the best means to achieve it (Al-Bakri, 2004, p.139).
- **Operational Definition:** A mental process and intellectual abilities based on a set of scientific and practical experiences fundamentally reliant on facts with the aim of predicting needs and operations through specific policies, well-considered programs, and innovative ideas intended for realization.

## 3. Planning for Media Campaigns in Tourism

Firstly, the Media Campaign: It is defined as "an organized set of efforts undertaken by a specific entity to promote a product, service, or item over a given period." Alternatively, it can be described as an extended and composite advertising activity that includes a series of interconnected advertisements aimed at achieving a specific result: the dissemination of information about an idea, service, or product in a planned and continuous manner over a sustained period, to elicit a response that aligns with the advertiser's goal through the planned use of media in a given time frame to achieve a common objective.

The use of planning in media campaigns brings numerous benefits, including achieving objectives at the lowest possible cost, optimizing the use of advertising within the objectives, ease of implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, building consumer trust in the advertised service,

and contributing to the achievement of overall goals and strategies based on the art of media planning.

The strategy of integrated media campaigns focuses on: The unity of strategic thinking in terms of planning, preparation, implementation, follow-up, coordination, and evaluation, moving away from the pattern of individually published advertisements without any links or relationships between them. This approach increases the effectiveness of advertising and the wise use of available resources to execute the campaign. Various methods are followed in planning media campaigns.

#### 4. Methods of Planning Public Relations Media Campaigns

- **Continuous Plan Method:** This involves directing the media message to the targeted audience throughout the campaign duration. The media message may remain unchanged during this time and contains data and information repeatedly published in the used media or the campaign may cover a set of media each containing a specific idea or application with no relation to one another except that they are issued by a single advertiser.
- **Intermittent Plan Method:** Typically used when the target audience consists of diverse groups with specific characteristics and traits. This method divides the recipients into defined categories, preparing for each an advertising message or a series of messages that address that group in a suitable manner, containing information and data that interest its members specifically. Parts of the campaign are then directed to one group after another until the campaign is complete.
- **Integrated and Coherent Advertising Plan Method:** Based on a set of ideas or media claims, each aims to achieve a partial goal. The media messages are prepared so that each message addresses a single idea. In this manner, the second message follows from the first, and the third from the second, until the completion of the media campaign, where they are all interconnected in meaning and effect, addressing the entire advertising issue so that the ultimate goal is achieved by the end of the media campaign. The company conducting the media campaign determines the method it will implement before executing the campaign plan. (Al-Bakri, 2004, p.161).

#### 5. Public Relations Tools in Planning for Tourism Media Campaigns

Public relations within an organization, regardless of its activities, utilize all available tools and means in society deemed suitable for its activities. These tools are divided by researchers and academics in media and communication sciences and management into various classifications. Among these divisions, we find the following classification:

Here's a translation and copy-edit of the text:

**A) Public Relations Communication Tools:** These tools and means can be produced by any business organization within its internal environment with the aim of demonstrating and explaining the activities carried out by the organization. These produced means are as follows (Al-Jawhar, 2007, p.68):

**I. Corporate Magazine:** A periodical published by the management of a business organization, whether it is governmental or private, an institution or a company. It is directed at the

organization's relevant publics and is one of the most common and widespread public relations tools.

- II. Annual Report:** This is a management report for its stakeholders, generally directed towards shareholders, but it may also be directed to other relevant audiences such as union members, cooperative associations, legislators, regulatory bodies, or management boards, offering various insights.
- III. Press Releases or News Previews:** Essentially a simple document aimed at conveying information in a publishable format. It is sent to editors working in various media outlets—print, broadcast, or digital—where it is judged based on the significance of its news content, its timeliness, and sometimes its suitability for the specific media outlet and its editorial policy, among other factors.
- IV. Newsletter:** Designed primarily as an informal publication distributed to a targeted audience in an organized manner. Its name clarifies its purpose: a friendly and agile message containing news used by various business organizations to communicate with their publics. Companies use it to communicate with employees and shareholders, non-profits with their members, and voluntary organizations with theirs, providing information, expert opinions, and more.
- V. Bulletin Board:** Most frequently used by public relations management. Rarely does a business organization not have a bulletin board, sometimes being the sole tool used by public relations. However, its effectiveness lies in its proper use. Success comes from keeping it attractive and attention-grabbing so that passersby regularly check it for updates.
- VI. Exhibitions and Displays:** Often used as a public relations tool, these can range from small, simple, and inexpensive to large, complex, and costly. They can be placed in front of an organization's offices or in public spaces, with the type determined by the location.
- VII. Tours:** A type of special event organized by a business to demonstrate and explain its operations, showcasing machinery, equipment, and capabilities. For instance, a press house might show how it gathers, edits, prints, and distributes news, while a hotel might showcase its rooms, dining areas, pools, steam baths, meeting rooms, children's play areas, kitchens, main hall, etc.
- VIII. Invitations:** Another type of special event prepared and arranged by public relations, offering various types of food and drink. Depending on the time of day, this could take the form of a breakfast, lunch, or dinner invitation. This event might be associated with another activity like a meeting or seminar, or it can stand alone, necessitating prior arrangements and preparations, including reservations, menu agreements, and guest lists.
- IX. Press Conference:** Hosted by different business institutions to present an issue or matter to media and press representatives. However, deciding to hold a press conference is not taken lightly; it should not be conducted unless there is a significant issue that cannot be addressed through a phone call, written bulletin, or similar means. Press conferences allow for quick and wide dissemination of information and opinions through various communication means, reducing the time needed to publish information across different media, ensuring all outlets receive the information simultaneously, thereby minimizing any potential bias or sensitivity arising from one outlet gaining information before others. However, one challenge with press conferences is the

potential for the spokesperson or representative to face unexpected questions or uncomfortable situations.

## B) Public Relations Communication Tools Used Externally

These tools and means cannot be produced by the organization at its internal level. Therefore, it must resort to the external environment to use them with the goal of reaching a vast number of its external audience. These used means include (Hafez, 2009, p.252):

- **Press:** Experiments conducted by Lazarsfeld, Dob, Wiles, and Pearson have shown that printed media such as newspapers, magazines, books, and posters are superior for the reading public. They offer the ability to present detailed and lengthy topics, helping to clarify issues for readers and allowing for thoughtful study at a convenient time and place, adding a personal touch.
- **Radio:** Radio is the first media tool that managed to reach its audience anywhere, overcoming barriers of illiteracy, geographical challenges, and political restrictions. It does not require full attention for listening, allowing for multitasking, such as cooking or working on other tasks. Experts recommend that public relations media programs should take the form of dialogues to engage listeners as if they are part of the discussion.
- **Television:** Studies by Blumer and Dob suggest that audio-visual means like talking movies and television have a stronger impact than audio or visual means alone. This is because they combine both, requiring viewers to use both sight and hearing, thereby enhancing focus and alertness. These studies indicate that audio-visual means surpass other types in terms of audience recall, although further proof is still needed.
- **Film in Television and Cinema:** Communication through visual means is considered the most effective in conveying ideas in public relations. Scientists believe that the impact of visuals on the sense of sight is significantly greater than the impact of audio on hearing, by more than twenty-five times. Additionally, the sense of sight is the fastest in recording mental images, with vision constituting 83% of the information we acquire, making it the most dominant sense for information acquisition.
- **Public Relations Advertisements:** Advertising is used not only for promoting goods and services but also for achieving some public relations objectives, such as contributing to public service or creating a positive image among the public. This is evident in many American TV programs, where large companies sponsor popular shows that provide media services of public interest.

**6. Conditions for Successful Media and Advertising Campaigns in Tourism:** For media and advertising campaigns in the tourism sector to achieve their goals, a set of conditions must be met:

- High-level execution of tourism media campaigns that surpass counter-campaigns, appealing to an enlightened audience with high social and cultural standards.
- Scientific basis for the campaign, meaning tourism media and advertising should not just be images, journalistic articles, tourist films, attractive scenes, or posters but rather research, studies, and plans based on realistic and sound knowledge of global tourist markets and how to address and influence the target audiences.

- Honesty in media content and avoiding deception, with campaigns based on tangible facts and accurate representation of reality.
- Truthfulness in presenting prices and exact costs for trips, hotels, restaurants, and all services and entertainment, as failure to do so can erode trust and credibility between tourism companies and tourists.
- Creativity and innovation in tourism advertising and media to compete with rival or counter-campaigns, ensuring campaigns are based on solid advertising principles rather than coincidence, to maintain achieved results.
- Sufficient financial support to cover global tourist markets and ensure campaign continuity without disruption.
- Consideration of the campaign's duration and timing, taking into account the general, economic, social, and cultural conditions of the countries where the campaign will be executed (Al-Bakri, 2004, pp. 164-165).

Public relations aim to disseminate information and facts through various media to provide tourists with important tourism news and use propaganda with an emotional aspect to entice and influence tourists. Advertising focuses on highlighting the benefits of a product or service, prices, and material incentives, promoting tourism companies, and harmonizing communication forms and arts to achieve the goals of media campaigns successfully and with precision.

**Conclusion:** It can be concluded that practicing public relations is a fundamental mechanism for developing and promoting investment in the tourism sector. It acts as the driving force behind tourism activation through scientific and practical planning of tourism media campaigns, especially after the shift from directed market policies to free market policies. This has initiated competition among institutions through public relations, distinguishing each institution to ensure its continuity and profitability.

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