**The difference between advertising and PR**

Do you know how companies try to promote their business, product or services? Read on to find out.

Many businesses believe that advertising and public relations play the same role for their business and if they do advertising they don’t need PR, and vice versa. However, PR and advertising have completely different roles for your business, which are important to understand to help you reach your target market and achieve your business objectives.

**Advertising** is creating paid announcements to be promoted through different types of media including online, print, TV, out-of-home and radio.

**PR**, on the other hand, is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organisations and the public. PR is great for building a connection with your audience and promoting your key messages, consumers are more likely to believe and take note of something written in an article, rather than an advertisement that has been paid for.

Here are the top seven differences between advertising and PR.

**Paid vs. free**

Advertising: you pay for an advertisement to be placed in the media.

PR: your PR agency develops strategies for you to gain publicity in the media. PR professionals develop a range of tactics to gain positive media attention for your brand, which is very effective at increasing your target audience’s brand awareness.

**Message control**

Advertising: you have control over the content of your advertisement including where and when it will be seen in the media.

PR: you have less control of your coverage in the media. Once you send a story idea to a journalist they have control over it. They can choose to change your story idea or not even publish it at all. However, your PR agency should offer you media training so you know how to control an interview and make the most of any media opportunities they create for you.

**Credibility/believability**

Advertising: Advertisements have less credibility than the coverage gained by PR. When your target audience sees an advertisement they know it has been bought by a company trying to sell them something.

PR: PR provides information and newsworthy stories to a journalist so they can write an article about your product or business, if they chose to. An article written by a journalist will be presented in an unbiased manner. This means your target audience may view the article with more credibility than an advertisement because it is not blatantly selling them something. PR can be a very powerful tool because it can help shape public opinion.

**Target audiences**

Advertising and PR are similar in that they both want to convey a message to their client’s target audience. However they convey that message differently and in different mediums.

Advertising: your company can pay for an advertisement to be placed directly in the media your target audience is interested in, whether this is women’s magazines, TV or drive-time radio.

PR: PR professionals can communicate your message to a target audience in a variety of channels. The key to reaching a target audience is to place your message in the channel that your target audience is likely to use. For example; the channel could be an article in a company newsletter, a letter to local residents, an email to specific people, a blog post, a tweet, an article by a journalist and much more. This means that PR may be more effective than advertising because it can help your business reach their target audience in a variety of mediums.

The most powerful method of communication is when advertising and PR are used together as part of a strategic integrated communication campaign.

Match the following words with their definitions

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| --- | --- |
| 1. convey 2. integrated 3. audience 4. unbiased 5. credibility 6. publicity 7. mutually 8. beneficial 9. consumer 10. awareness 11. blatantly 12. likely | 1. δημοσιότητα 2. ενημερότητα, γνώση 3. ευεργετικός 4. ενσωματωμένος 5. αμερόληπτος 6. εμφανώς, ξεκάθαρα 7. πιθανόν, δυνατό 8. μεταφέρω, μεταβιβάζω 9. κοινό, ακροατήριο 10. αξιοπιστία, φερεγγυότητα 11. αμοιβαία 12. καταναλωτής |

Answer the following questions.

1. Give the definition of advertising and PR.
2. In which method do you have more control over your message?
3. Which is free?
4. Which has more credibility? Why?
5. Which method uses more channels to pass your message?
6. In what ways are the two methods similar?
7. What is the ideal way of promoting your business or product?

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