[Difference between publicity and PR?](https://www.axiapr.com/blog/whats-the-difference-between-publicity-and-pr)

Publicity and public relations are often wrongfully considered one and the same. In fact, publicity is just one aspect of public relations.

Publicity concerns a company, organization or individual’s presence in the media. Forms of publicity include news stories, articles and event information. Publicity creates public awareness and attention around a brand, and publicists gain publicity for their clients by promoting.

Unlike public relations, publicity is used solely to attract attention. It differs from PR in the sense that public relations focuses on more than just public attention. The intent in public relations is to accomplish an organization’s stated goals by sending strategic messages to the appropriate audiences in hopes of impacting their knowledge, behaviors or attitudes. In short, PR manages the overall reputation of the client while simultaneously building relationships among all of those who are affected by it. As a management function, PR focuses on building relationships and managing an image.

Although pitching a story, event or the latest development to the media is important in public relations, it isn’t the only aspect of the job. In public relations, publicity is viewed as a way to gain the client media coverage in a cost-efficient and immediate manner. Saying that publicity is the same as public relations ignores the true goals and objectives of each discipline and fails to acknowledge the remaining responsibilities of a PR practitioner.

**PR pros’ responsibilities and tools include (and are not limited to):**

* Media kits
* News releases
* Media monitoring
* [Crisis management](https://www.axiapr.com/what-we-do/crisispoint)
* Event coordination
* [Social media](https://www.axiapr.com/what-we-do/social-network) engagement
* [Reputation management](https://www.axiapr.com/what-we-do/reputationrestoration)
* Public service announcements
* Pitch letters
* Media advisories

The two terms Publicity and Public Relations (PR) are often termed synonymous but are in actuality two completely different disciplines. If you want to leverage the power of media in promoting your business then it’s a must for you to start with knowing the difference between Publicity and PR.

**What all is Publicity?**

Publicity is the art of attracting and achieving media’s attention and gaining as much market visibility with the public as possible. The primary focus of publicity is to achieve the maximum number of press coverage. The only thing involved with publicity is getting more the number of coverage, and it has nothing to do with how exactly media is portraying that particular event or story. This type of media stint will either up with good publicity or a bad one. Talking about the bad publicity it’s like making a story for an actress’s bad dressing style at her film’s promotional event instead of focusing on her tremendous performance in the movie. Turning towards good publicity, it’s like getting press coverage of a hometown boxer bringing home an Olympic gold medal after much struggle.

Considering the point that people don’t want always to read coring news and yearn for something unusual, interesting, exciting, and controversial and often an emotion provoking scandalous stuff. And, publicity stints are meant for info-tainment involving any of the above mentioned reactions. Media companies want to maintain high ratings with their audience and so chances of getting news stories involving publicity stints in media is quite easy. But such stories or news coverage can’t guarantee enhancement of your brand’s credibility or reputation.

**What is Public Relations (PR)?**

Public relation (PR) is the strategic process of getting positive media presence in order to maintain the reputation of an individual, organization or brand in the eyes of target audience. The difference between PR and publicity is simply that the former is concerned more with managing the reputation of the brand over simply getting tons of coverage and ink that the latter actually dies for. Publicity is one of the several tools that PR agencies at times use to shape up the consumer opinions favorably towards their client.

Damage control is also a characteristic feature that differs the two. One can earn a lot of publicity, especially the bad one if a thing or two goes wrong. However, use of PR is done for a completely opposite purpose. Instead of keeping the company’s reputation at stake, PR is more of repairing and uplifting the image of a company. This is known as crisis PR and this service is mostly provided with all the [PR companies in Delhi](http://www.tyccommunication.com/) but to get well- reputed position in market it is advised to go with the services of the reputed [PR services in Delhi](http://www.tyccommunication.com/services/public-relations/) only.

**Should You Get Publicity Or PR For Your Business?**

According to the PR experts from the reputed PR firms, one should promote themselves or their organization with a great mix of both. Publicity should not be another strategy but instead it should be the part of PR strategy only. The most important thing to remember is that a great PR strategy in hand is far better and valuable than the occasional mention in the paper or on television. Publicity is important as well to shape the way your audience perceives your brand and the credibility associated with it.

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Publicists are narrowly-focussed on the media. Think of them as brokers who sit between journalists seeking stories and  people with stories to tell and/or sell – especially if it’s gossipy,  lurid or sensational. They often take money from both sides. You can only learn this job by doing it (I'm pretty certain there are no publicity-centric degree courses on offer anywhere)  
  
Public relations people generally have a wider scope of operation, a broader set of references and the possibility of studying their profession to advanced degree level (although they may well be interested in generating publicity for their employer/client). PR people should be interested in all audiences that matter to an organisation or brand, not just consumers.

Public Relations is a management function. It is a specialised as well as strategic management function. Its unique function is to help the organization establish, develop and maintain mutual understandings and relationships with stake-holders through effective communication.

Publicity is gaining public visibility or awareness for a product, service or an entity through media. It may be free of cost or paid for as against advertising which is always a paid form of publicity.

Therefore, Public Relations is a task while Publicity and Advertising are tools.

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Publicity is the act of attracting the media’s attention and gaining as much visibility as possible.  
PR, on the other hand, is the strategic process of maintaining the reputation of an individual, organization or brand in the eyes of the public.  
The difference between PR and publicity is that PR is concerned with managing the overall reputation of the brand over simply getting press coverage.

The key here is the difference between public relations and publicity.  
Public relations implies that you have a public to relate with, and that’s who you are speaking to.  
Preaching to the choir is another way of thinking about it, and I think that analogy applies even to damage control, since the choir gets pretty upset when the preacher disappears with the collection plate Publicity is something that helps you connect with people who don’t know about you yet, or those who may have heard about you, but are still on the fence.  
The emerging social media environment allows you to connect with these people in a whole host of ways outside of the mainstream media.

Publicity and public relations (PR) are often used interchangeably, but this ignores PR’s broad value and publicity’s focused expertise. To understand publicity vs PR, think of it this way: PR is the umbrella; publicity is one of the many facets that fall under it. This is similar to how advertising is part of marketing, not the same as it or separate from it.

Publicity is about public attention, which is just a fraction of what PR is about. There’s more to the job of PR than publicity itself, although publicity is an important aspect of it. Publicity and PR strive to portray a client’s idea, position, product or reputation in a positive light. Publicists and PR experts work with individuals or companies, including government agencies.

Overall, both publicity and PR focus on earned, unpaid communications. Taking out an ad in a paper or paying to have an article placed on a blog is not PR; that falls under [advertising and marketing](https://www.elegantthemes.com/blog/marketing/how-and-why-you-should-market-to-generation-z).

## Publicity Definition

Publicity refers to an individual’s or company’s presence in the media. Examples of publicity include:

* Event information
* Interviews or being quoted
* Magazine articles
* News stories
* Self-authored articles or stories
* Speaking engagements

Publicity is generally handled by a dedicated publicist. Publicity draws attention, awareness and credibility for a brand through cost-effective promotion strategies. The publicist strives to get media coverage quickly, as many times the client has a time-sensitive issue. For example, there may be an award that was just won or a crisis that needs controlling.

### Benefits of Publicity

There are numerous benefits of publicity:

* Build awareness about your brand, expertise, products or services, or team members
* Drive traffic to your website
* Educate your customers and the industry about common problems and how you solve them
* Increase participation in an event
* Open a dialogue with your audience

To get the most traction out of publicity, strategies should be tied to your business and marketing goals.

## Public Relations Definition

PR casts a wider net than publicity. The purpose of PR is to help an individual or company reach their goals. PR experts send strategic messages to specific audiences to influence attitudes and behaviors.

PR is responsible for the complete reputation and image of a client. At the same time, PR has to build relationships with any person or brand that’s impacted by the reputation of the client. That includes customers, employees, investors, partners and suppliers. PR includes the following:

* Civic engagements
* Crisis management
* Event coordination
* Media advisories
* Media kits
* Monitoring of media
* Pitch letters
* Press releases
* Public service announcements
* Reputation management
* Social media
* Supporting the arts and/or charities

PR doesn’t just reach customers and the people already connected with a person or company. PR reaches everyone, even those who have never heard of the client before.

Let’s say you’re the host of a pop culture [podcast](https://www.elegantthemes.com/blog/tips-tricks/how-to-use-libsyn-to-podcast-with-wordpress). You’ve just won an award for your show. Your publicist gets a journalist to cover the story. This has a lot of reach:

* Current listeners hear about how well your podcast is doing and they’re impressed. Not only will they keep listening, but they’ll probably tell their friends and family about your show.
* Other podcasters learn that you’re a force to be reckoned with. A few reach out to discuss cross-promotion.
* Advertisers contact you because they share your audience and they want to pay you to promote their products.
* A person who has never heard of your podcast before Googles “pop culture podcasts” and the news story about your award is in the top results. They give your podcast a try and love it.

### PR and Reputation Management

Another aspect of PR is reputation management (and damage control). Sometimes PR experts have to jump in when an individual or company damages their reputation or when hearsay does the damage for them. Whichever way you lean on certain celebrities and public figures, this is happening in the media right now practically every day.

Also, check out the [Stuff You Should Know podcast episode about the Tylenol murders](https://www.stuffyoushouldknow.com/podcasts/the-tylenol-murders-part-i.htm). The way that Johnson & Johnson handled the mar on the brand’s reputation is one of the finest PR strategies in history. Their response also made over-the-counter drugs safer for everyone.

## Why Stories Must Be Newsworthy

Publicity is only as strong as the story – if the story isn’t newsworthy, it’s not going to make an impact. Stories that are newsworthy are interesting, novel, relevant and timely. This is much harder than it sounds, which is why people hire publicists.

### What Not to Do

I’ve written for my local paper for years, and I’ve built relationships with many of the people and businesses I’ve covered. Even the most successful business owners and the most charismatic hustlers make these common mistakes:

1. They say, “You should write about me!” when (a) I don’t write profiles, (b) they haven’t considered the audience I write for and (c) they haven’t give me one compelling reason to write a story about them other than that they think they’re great.

2. They ask, “How do I place this story in the paper?” as though the public can dictate what the paper publishes. The only way you can “demand” that something gets published is by paying for advertising, which is not the same as publicity.

3. When providing information that a news outlet will pick up, they leave out differentiating details. They want the coverage without talking about anything that will actually make it compelling for the audience.

Information isn’t interesting simply because it’s there. Even publicists who have fantastic, longstanding relationships with journalists, bloggers, vloggers, etc. still have to pitch them something newsworthy.

### Here’s a Better Way

* Connect with the bloggers, reporters and publications that matter most for your company, industry and announcement.
* Create a calendar that matches interesting and relevant story ideas with key events throughout the year.
* Make sure that every pitch or story has something new to say and that you provide details. For example, if you’re writing a press release about an event, saying that food and drinks will be available isn’t nearly as interesting as describing the dishes and cocktails, and even talking about the chef and mixologist who will be preparing them.

Journalists get an overwhelming number of requests to cover stories. It takes a lot to impress them since they’re already used to speaking with big names and well-known companies. You have to think beyond, “Hey, I think I’m important, I run a multi-million dollar company and I’m a public figure.” Present them with something they – and their audience – actually care about.

## Wrapping Up

It’s important to understand the difference between publicity vs PR so that you don’t talk about one when you actually mean the other. Publicity is the part of PR that focuses on media coverage. PR encompasses an assortment of other responsibilities, from crisis management to charity involvement.

There are distinct similarities between the two, too, since publicity is part of the PR puzzle. Storytelling plays a major role, and publicists and the journalists they connect with have to be good storytellers. All the information in the world doesn’t matter if you can’t get your audience to listen. Sometimes PR has to rewrite a story after one comes out that can damage the client. Other times, it’s the initial story, the story a client is known for from the beginning, that PR writes.