

Public Relations Campaigns: An Integrated Approach

Reviewed by
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Public Relations Campaigns: An Integrated Approach
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In 2006, the Commission for Public Relations Education (CPRE) report recommended public relations programs should include a course on public relations campaigns (DiStaso, 2019). A decade after this recommendation, CPRE released a follow-up report that found undergraduate public relations programs were teaching (92.5%, $n = 186$) and requiring (80.1%, $n = 157$) students to take a course in public relations campaigns (DiStaso, 2019). Furthermore, the 2017 report found that among practitioners, 97.9% ($n = 390$) agreed that a campaigns and case studies class should be required for undergraduate students (DiStaso, 2019). A course in public relations campaigns is an essential part of many undergraduate public relations curricula and can enhance the student experience by giving them an opportunity to complete a campaign for a client.

Given the relevance and importance of courses in public relations campaigns, it is essential that public relations educators have resources available to help students create successful campaign projects grounded in research and theory. *Public Relations Campaigns: An Integrated Approach*

by Regina M. Luttrell and Luke W. Capizzo provides one such useful resource. The book walks students through the public relations process following the ROSTIR model (Research, Objectives, Strategies, Tactics, Implementation, and Reporting) and incorporates emerging models such as the PESO model (paid media, earned media, shared media, and owned media), thus allowing students to see how various media outlets fit into public relations campaigns.

Structure and Organization

The book is organized into an introduction, 11 chapters, appendix, and glossary. As previously mentioned, the book uses the ROSTIR model for campaign planning, and this model provides the organizational structure for the book. In terms of thinking about how to structure a class around this book, it can be organized into two sections. Section 1 can include the Introduction, Chapters 1-3, and Chapter 11 of the book, which provides a comprehensive overview of the necessity of public relations campaigns and provide a big picture look at public relations campaigns through the use of theory, models, and case studies. Chapters 4-10 make up Section 2 where these chapters detail the ROSTIR model with two chapters devoted to research and individual chapters devoted to objectives, strategies, tactics, implementation, and reporting and evaluation.

The introduction, in particular, focuses on public relations theories and principles, and emphasizes the importance of planning campaigns based on sound public relations theory. Some of the theories explained in the introduction include excellence theory, systems theory, agenda setting, two-step flow model, and situational crisis communication theory, among others. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the models of public relations practice and public relations planning. Chapter 1, "Introduction to Integrated Campaigns" explains the ROSTIR model, and provides a rationale for using it. In Chapter 2, Luttrell and Capizzo review the fundamentals of public relations campaigns including an introduction

to the elements of a strategic plan. The third chapter in this section introduces students to the PESO model and how to use the model as part of the campaign planning process. Chapter 11, “Formulating an Integrated Campaign – Case Studies” features six case studies with topics including product marketing, activism, engagement, crisis communication, global and multicultural, and internal communication and employee relations.

The second section of the book, Chapters 4-10, cover the step-by-step process of designing, implementing and evaluating an integrated public relations campaign. Chapters 4 and 5 are devoted to the research phase of the process. Chapter 4 covers more of the “how-to” of research for public relations campaigns with topics including diagnosing a problem and/or opportunity, research terminology and techniques, and how to conduct secondary and primary research. Chapter 5 focuses primarily on goals associated with public relations campaigns and explains how to set and write campaign goals. Chapter 6, “Objectives” demonstrates how to write SMART objectives. Chapter 7 (“Strategies”) and Chapter 8 (“Tactics”) explain how to choose campaign strategies and tactics within the PESO model. Chapter 7 also includes a section on how to develop strategies for targeted audiences, and Chapter 8 includes specific tactics aligned with the PESO model that students can integrate into their campaigns. Chapter 9, “Implementation” covers project management and tips for how to work with various groups associated with a campaign including the media and non-PR people. This section wraps up with Chapter 10 “Reporting and Evaluation” that cover how to evaluate and report on campaign outcomes. Chapters 4-10 are supplemented by the appendix, which includes more detailed instructions and examples for each step of the ROSTIR model.

Contribution to Public Relations Education

Public Relations Campaigns: An Integrated Approach makes a significant contribution to public relations education, in particular as a

resource for teaching undergraduate public relations campaigns courses. A strength of this book is the utilization of the “Concept Cases” and “Case Studies” that accompany each chapter. These sections provide real-world context to the concepts and steps covered in the previous chapter and effectively expose students to the real-world applications of concepts covered in public relations classes. These case studies use consistent terminology, call back to the PESO model, and identify a theory or model applicable to the case. Applying theory to a public relations campaign can be a difficult concept for students to grasp, so the inclusion of these examples in the textbook is an excellent way to reinforce this skill for students. Furthermore, the emphasis on theory, when it comes to planning campaigns, is useful for instructors.

Recommendations

Public Relations Campaigns: An Integrated Approach would make an ideal text for undergraduate students in a public relations campaigns course. The structure of the book lends itself well to course planning and the resources within the text are useful for students at each stage of a public relations campaigns course. The chapters are concise and detailed as they clearly explain core concepts necessary for planning and implementing a public relations campaign. Furthermore, the inclusion of practical step-by-step instruction and examples is useful for service-learning courses that include client-based work. Luttrell and Capizzo consistently connect theory to practice throughout the text in a way that is easily understandable and applicable. Finally, the inclusion of “Concept Cases” and “Case Studies” with each chapter, along with including an entire chapter devoted to case studies, exposes students to a variety of problems, approaches, and methods used in public relations campaigns.

References

- DiStasio, M. (2019). Undergraduate public relations in the United States: The 2017 Commission on Public Relations Education report. *Journal of Public Relations Education*, 5(3), 3-22.