

# Consumer Relations and Marketing

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#### SUMMARY

## PREVIEW

Consumer relations and marketing are playing a more prominent role in public relations practice. Sophisticated techniques must be applied to understand the needs of consumers, solicit their comments, and attract their attention as the following example illustrates.

Robyn munches on her morning bagel as her taxi zips through the early morning New York traffic. Today is the day she and others on the Lay's project team will learn if their months of planning will generate the desired level of media coverage and drive sales for the brand's new STAX, stacked potato crisps in a portable, resealable, crush-resistant container. Frito-Lay gave the assignment to the Entertainment Marketing division of Ketchum, one of the world's leading public relations agencies, in hopes of ensuring that the product would "stack up" against the competition.

*"Life is short, but good publicity lasts forever."*

The assignment was not without some pressure. Only public relations would serve as the primary sales driver for the brand. The national advertising rotation would not begin for two weeks.

The taxi arrives in Times Square, and Robyn surveys the scene as she pays the driver and exits the car. The 120-foot tall, 84-foot wide—roughly seven stories high—Lay's STAX container by the NASDAQ Tower is definitely catching the attention of passersby. She eyes the stage area and thinks the "Lay's STAX Challenge" banner will show up well in photographs. One of Robyn's early assignments was to secure the permits and city permission needed to utilize a designated area in the center of Times Square. Robyn waves at other Ketchumites who are visiting with representatives of their launch partner, Speed Stacks. The sport of cup stacking was considered a perfect fit for the stacked snack because it involved the brand's youth target while bringing the broad appeal of Lay's to a wide consumer audience.

Robyn takes her place by the press table and spends the next two hours handing out media kits to members of the media as they arrive. A large crowd starts to gather. Finally the big moment arrives. Speed Stacking World Record–holder Emily Post steps onto the stage, and as hundreds of New Yorkers cheer her on, breaks the world's record in 8.42 seconds. The departing crowd accepts product samples from street teams of Lay's STAX ambassadors.

But Robyn's day is not over. She will escort Emily to interviews, field other media requests, and generally assist the project team as needed to help ensure the desired results. It would be several weeks before Robyn learns that the event generated more than 33 million media impressions with a media equivalency of more than \$4.4 million and that sales projections for the public relations activities were met.

## TEAMING PUBLIC RELATIONS WITH MARKETING

Though it is wrong to view public relations as simply another method of product or service promotion, promotion is one of the most powerful ingredients in any organization's marketing mix. Public relations and marketing functions have some fundamental differences, but

they share one significant goal. Both attempt to help an organization respond to a very significant public: the consumers of its products and services.

For those desiring to work in the arena of consumer relations and marketing, the following examples of how public relations is involved in the marketing process makes certain things clear: anticipate a blistering pace, a constant turnover of products, and an ongoing search of “the next big thing”—oh, and a job that never leaves you bored.

### ***Reinvigorating an Older Brand***

Older brands often face the task of staying fresh and current in the face of increasing competition (see mini-case 12.1). Procter & Gamble's Tide brand, introduced in 1946 and the world's best selling detergent, faced such a challenge. To reposition, the company developed the energy-efficient Tide Coldwater. P&G aligned with the Alliance to Save Energy, and the two partners challenged attendees at the U.S. Conference of Mayors to encourage their citizens to wash their clothes in cold water—and save an average of \$63 a year in the process. Tide Coldwater also donated \$100,000 to the National Fuel Funds Network, a charitable energy assistance program.<sup>2</sup> Kosher-food maker Manischewitz pitched *Cooking Light* and *Gourmet* magazines in looking at Jewish food as another interesting cuisine, not an option just for holidays.<sup>3</sup>

### ***Exporting an Established Brand to New Markets***

Kia Motors has a 61-year history of innovation in automobile manufacturing in Korea. The company produced a number of firsts for the country: its first gasoline engine, passenger car, exported car, and diesel engine.<sup>4</sup> But in America, the brand has been almost forgotten among imports. To establish the make in the United States, Kia is reaching out to its key publics through public relations. Efforts include a clear-cut “young at heart”

positioning of the brand, an aggressive media relations program, enhanced relationships with dealer and employees, a new community relations function, and improved corporate communications. An additional challenge for the U.S.-based public relations office is to teach its Korean colleagues that American news about the company and its products may not always be completely positive.<sup>5</sup>

### **Reinforcing a Brand Positioning**

Subway was well positioned menu-wise when the company received a letter from Jared Fogle's mother. She wrote that her son had lost 245 pounds in one year on a steady diet of Subway food. This testimonial gave a face to Subway's desire to position itself as healthy fast food. Using Fogle as spokesperson, the company launched a healthy-eating campaign that has included guest appearances by Fogle on television talk shows, the launch of the Feel Responsible, Energized, Satisfied, and Happy (or FRESH) Steps program, sponsorship of the American Heart Association's Jump Rope for Heart program and a nationwide "Jared and Friends" school tour to promote a healthy lifestyle to young children.<sup>6</sup>

### **Getting an Image Makeover**

In an attempt to link an image of authenticity and individuality, Reebok launched a new campaign with the slogan "I am what I am" in early 2005. By using celebrity endorsers such as sports stars Andy Roddick and Nicole Vaidisova and rap artists Jay-Z and 50 Cent, the brand hopes to communicate a broad message of acceptance to young, hip urbanites. Print ads link the stars to personal anecdotes or histories.<sup>7</sup>

### **Anticipating What's Next**

A subhead in *The Wall Street Journal* reads: "It takes a lot of marketing to convince consumers what they're lacking."<sup>8</sup> Manufacturers pay big bucks to discover and create what the article calls "unmet needs." Such research led Procter & Gamble to create a CD-like player that spreads scents in a room. A pourable Betty Crocker cake frosting was one of 92 new products rolled out by General Mills in 2004. Some competitors let others do the R&D and then quickly replicate successes with products of their own. "You might be able to hold on to an innovation for six months, maybe 12 if you're really strong," says Bart Becht, chief executive of Reckitt Benckiser PLC. Pfizer's Listerine PocketPaks is one such example. The thin mouthwash strip caught on quickly with teens when introduced in 2001, but the plant where the strips were made closed in 2004 due to declining demand.<sup>9</sup>

These examples illustrate the following concepts, all used to describe a facet of how public relations and marketing can work together to build customer trust and loyalty while selling the product:

- **Public relations** focuses on the long-term goals of building positive relationships with consumers, suppliers, competitors, and other publics. Its primary goal is to "build and maintain a hospitable environment for an organization."<sup>10</sup> Customers want to be served, not sold. Public relations can help an organization's corporate climate to be conducive to customer service.
- **Relationship marketing** is a long-term process as the goal is to build trust that enhances the selling of products or services. "You can earn trust over a number of years, but you must work every hour, every day to keep it," says a Heinz executive.<sup>11</sup> Relationship marketing in action is when a customer buys the same laundry

**Situation Analysis and Research**

Americans know Kleenex facial tissue. In fact, the brand enjoys 98 percent awareness among consumers. However, a successful brand constantly finds new ways to keep itself relevant and influence purchase behavior by connecting emotionally with its target audience. For Kleenex facial tissue, the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens offered such an opportunity through the brand's role as an official supplier of the U.S. Olympic Team. The brand charged Ketchum Public Relations with developing a high-profile campaign that would attract national media attention and entice the Kleenex facial tissue audience, mothers aged 25 to 54.

*Research data determined several significant findings:*

- Couples tend to watch the Olympic Games together, so messaging should appeal to both male and female audiences.
- Mothers aged 25–54 prefer human-interest stories to sports statistics, so programming should focus on the moments, not the medals.
- The target audience enjoys replaying emotional moments, so execu-

tion should feature an engaging, interactive call-to-action.

In response, Kleenex and Ketchum PR developed a brand-defining idea called Kleenex Moments, which celebrated unforgettable emotional moments of the Olympic Games – both past and present.

The campaign's launch faced several critical considerations. First, the media initially focused on terrorism and security issues. Second, the U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC) had to approve all program activities to ensure they coincided with the value of the U.S. Olympic team and didn't violate athlete eligibility regulations. Third, the Olympic games and on-site Kleenex Moments activities occurred eight hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time, and NBC instituted a 48-hour tape delay for several athletic competitions occurring in Athens.

**Strategy and Execution**

The Kleenex Moments campaign was executed in three phases. Phase 1 included participation in the U.S. Olympic Media Summit, a virtual who's who of accredited journalists. Having a presence at the summit enabled

the Kleenex brand a chance to align itself with larger worldwide sponsors. Summit participation also served as the first step toward seeding the term "Kleenex Moments" among key audiences like athletes, USOC members, and accredited journalists.

Phase 2 involved the 2004 U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame induction ceremony. This was the first induction ceremony held in 12 years due to lack of funding, and the Kleenex brand was an associate sponsor. The event provided the ideal environment to honor Kleenex Moments of past Olympic games. To celebrate them, the Kleenex brand produced vignettes for each of the inductees, during which they discussed their most emotional Kleenex Moments. These vignettes were played during the broadcast. A satellite media tour also was conducted with two new Hall of Fame inductees.

Phase 3 served as the climax of the Kleenex Moments program on-site in Athens. Each day, the Kleenex brand and NBCOlympics.com selected three unforgettable Kleenex Moments and invited consumers to vote for their favorites online. These moments also were edited into vignettes and played daily at the USA house-home base

detergent year after year. The consumer has learned that this product does a satisfactory job of keeping her clothes clean and, as a result, does not feel the need to try other products.

- **Marketing communications** refers to all activities, be they research, strategies, tactics, that support the selling of products and services.
- **Integrated communications** is a truncated way of referring to **integrated marketing communications**. Marketers use a variety of tactics such as advertising, public relations, sponsorships, and the like to reach consumers.

Public relations and marketing are similar in that they do extensive research, identify target publics, and develop communication action plans. Public relations provides support to the overall efforts to market goods or services. Because public relations is integrated completely into the marketing process, it is easy to understand why the distinction between the two functions is difficult for many to grasp.

Public relations addresses the following elements not associated with marketing:

- Internal publics such as employees, stockholders, and management.
- Reputation, or image building.

of operations for the U.S. Olympic Committee. Live television and radio remotes were conducted live from Athens with the athletes featured online, all of which included Kleenex Moments messaging and an invitation to consumers to vote online for their favorite Kleenex Moments™ of the Day.

#### Measurement and Evaluation

After the 2004 Olympic games, Ketchum PR conducted a comprehensive survey of 1,000+ Americans (33% Kleenex brand target audience) to assess awareness, understanding, attitudes, and behavior toward the Kleenex Moments program.

**Awareness:** Twenty-one percent of those surveyed were aware of the Kleenex Moments program. These numbers increased dramatically if the audience also visited NBCOlympics.com to vote for their favorite Kleenex Moments of the Day (33 and 19%, respectively).

**Understanding:** Fifty-two percent recalled emotional moments in Athens, which means the target audience comprehended the role of emotion in the Olympic games. This number increased when the

audience visited NBCOlympics.com (80%), or was aware of the sponsorship (64%).

**Attitude:** Sixty-three percent believed it was natural for the Kleenex brand to be linked to the emotional moments of the Olympic games. Thirty-seven percent thought more favorably of the Kleenex brand because of this. These numbers increased when audience visited NBCOlympics.com (80 and 61%, respectively).

**Behavior:** Seventy-nine percent of those aware of the sponsorship and those who had heard of Kleenex Moments™ were much more likely to purchase Kleenex facial tissue next time. Among those who plan to purchase Kleenex facial tissue in the future, 7 percent are buyers of other facial tissue brands.

#### Additional Measures:

- Media outreach generated 1,716 news stories (goal was 850) for a total of 134,981,869 media impressions (goal was 100,525,000). Placements included *Fortune* magazine, *BRANDWEEK*, *USA TODAY*, *Reuters*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Pittsburgh*

*Post-Gazette*, *Rocky Mountain News*, *Philadelphia Daily News*, *WGN-TV*, *FOX News* (national), *FOX & Friends* (national), *Good Day Live*, *MSNBC*, *CNBC*, *ABC Radio Network* ("Satellite Sisters" radio program three times), *Westwood One* (syndicated nationally), *USA Radio Network* (nationally syndicated).

- NBCOlympics.com reported a total of 70,923 votes for the Kleenex Moments of the Day. The Kleenex Moments Web page received the second highest traffic and garnered nearly a quarter of all sponsored page views (373,435 page views).

#### Questions

1. What element of the Kleenex moments campaign contributed to its success?
2. How did the campaign ensure that its message would appeal to both males and females in the Olympic viewing audience?
3. Which strategies in this campaign could be effectively used by other marketers?

Source: Kimberly-Clark Corporation and Courtney Leddy, Ketchum Public Relations, September 2005.

- External publics (other than consumers) such as government and suppliers.
- Crisis management.
- Public opinion change and social issues.
- Issues management.

The Ford/Firestone tire crisis in 2000 is a key example of how quickly consumers respond to negative information about a product. The tread separated on some models of Firestone tires that were mounted as standard equipment on certain Ford vehicles, resulting in numerous injuries and fatalities. More than advertising and other traditional marketing tools are needed to restore customer confidence and sales in such situations. Firestone replaced millions of tires. Ford took the bold step of severing its more-than-century-old relationship with Firestone. This decision not only had business ramifications, but also personal ones. Likewise, product publicity can augment advertising efforts and make other marketing techniques more effective.

The positive relationships a company develops through public relations with its consumers and other publics are a means to an end: sales and profits that can be strengthened quarter after quarter, year after year. In many organizations the structure of departments and divisions blurs the relationships between public relations and marketing

to the point that the two are almost always linked. Mergers of public relations firms and advertising agencies have further clouded this issue in the minds of many managers and others.

## THE STARTING POINT

It's important to point out that consumer relations and marketing must be integrated into the overall communications planning process. One obvious reason for this is to ensure that a problem actually can be addressed by communicating. No amount of public relations activity can make up for an inadequate distribution system, a food that doesn't taste good, or a poorly designed product.

In a *New York Times* column, David Pogue talks about his research for a book he's writing on the backstage story of Palm, Handspring, and the palmtop craze. He noted that in the early days, Palm's vice president of marketing had a favorite saying: "Delight the customer." Pogue thought the saying not only sounded obvious, but hackneyed. No company sets out to disappoint the customer, he felt. Pogue's coauthor, who was one of the original Palm employees, responded by saying that that wasn't the point. "In the technology industry, you'd be surprised how much 'Delight the customer' ISN'T the point. The alternative isn't 'Disappoint the customer,' but 'What can we do with this neat technology?' The customer doesn't even come up in the product designers' thoughts. . . . When you think of delighting the customer as a guiding light in making choices, it explains a lot why the Pilot ended up being a product people loved, and are so emotionally attached to."<sup>12</sup>

All companies have probably been guilty, to some degree, of overlooking, disregarding, or ignoring the needs of their customers. McDonald's focus on themselves may have been part of the reason for years of declining sales. Theme lines such as "We do it all for you," "We love it when you love it," and "We love to see you smile," were indicative of the problem, says the company's marketing chief. "We took our eyes off the consumer and we lost consumer relevance," he said.<sup>13</sup> The difference is that the smart, thriving companies constantly *listen* to their customers and act upon what they hear.

## APPLYING PUBLIC RELATIONS TECHNIQUES TO MARKETING

Imagination is the limit when it comes to applying public relations techniques to marketing. When Hewlett-Packard wanted to send out the message that it is a "total solutions provider" and an "innovative technology leader," the company felt that the Formula One motor sport racing at the Indianapolis Grand Prix provided the right kind of environment for this message.<sup>14</sup> Hasbro, maker of the Monopoly board game, had the public pick the first new game piece in 40 years and created a world championship as a way to keep up interest in the game.<sup>15</sup> Using a collection of pantomime-like cows (see photo), Chick-fil-A formed a political party called the Cow Preservation Party with a platform of promoting chicken consumption.<sup>16</sup>

### **Product and Service Design**

Because public relations practitioners keep in constant touch with the various publics of an organization, they can provide valuable insight into consumer behavior issues. This type of informal research can be an important check on other data used in the design of products and services. The frequent monitoring of mass media, the use of

social forecasting services, and other forms of environmental surveillance discussed in chapter 6 make public relations practitioners important sources of information in the marketing process.

All products and services have life cycles that must be a part of the marketing plan. The product life cycle starts with the development of new products and services, which are then introduced to a market. As industry sales increase during the market growth stage, so does competition. This often results in higher promotional costs and lower profits. The intense competitive environment of the third stage, that of market maturity, is usually marked with a decrease in sales and profits. The product life cycle begins to repeat itself during the final sales decline stage, as new products and services replace old ones.

Public relations can help extend the life cycle of a product or service at several stages by developing events to support product introduction and sales and by generating positive news coverage of products and services. When a new product is launched, special events and publicity can help develop a positive reception. Schick Shave Shack, a mobile karaoke competition born from the idea of people singing and shaving in the shower, promoted the company's entire product line and attracted more than 100 million media impressions.<sup>17</sup> Publicity can help increase consumer awareness during the growth stage of a product. Tiger Woods has not only attracted more people of all ages and ethnicities to the sport of golf, but also has prompted increased coverage of products he endorses.<sup>18</sup> When a mature product has achieved almost universal name recognition, it often gets taken for granted and needs help in maintaining its visibility. For example, in spite of the high brand awareness that the Red Cross has developed in its 100+ years, public relations and other marketing activities are needed on an ongoing basis to maintain the nation's blood supply.<sup>19</sup>

The public relations' information base regarding a wide range of publics, including but not limited to consumers, can be instrumental in naming, style, and packaging. Marketing texts are filled with examples of ill-chosen names that doomed or delayed the success of a perfectly good product. The Chevrolet Nova ("doesn't go" in Spanish) is one of the most famous of these legends. After PalmOne introduced its Tungsten palmtop, next-generation T2 and T3 versions were created to satisfy customer demands for new features. Their successor was the T5, not T4, as the word "four" sounds like a word for death in some Asian languages.<sup>20</sup> For that matter, should any restaurant have the word *unforgettable* in its name? In today's merger mania, brand names that profit from instant recognition are being lost as they are exchanged for initials or fused into new corporate identities. Beyond the name, consumers view products and services as a bundle of



Chick-fil-A used a collection of their "cows" to form a Cow Preservation Party to dramatize a "platform" of more chicken consumption.



utilities or collection of attributes that hold value. Packaging and style must add to that perception. Because of their skill in communication and understanding of publics, public relations practitioners can contribute to the selection of proper styling and packaging for products and services.

### **Distribution**

Public relations people, and the information they provide, can assist marketing in making decisions about how and where a product or service will be offered to the consumer. Issues of logistics related to location and time availability must be thoroughly analyzed for target markets before a product or service is released.

Johnson & Johnson made a marketing decision to merge the sales forces for its German pharmacy and retail trades. German pharmacies did not carry feminine hygiene products before the merger. Pharmacies now carry J&J women's hygiene products o.b. tampons and Carefree protection shields, plus baby-care Penaten products. Nonpharmacy retail outlets sell Neutrogena hand cream for the first time, a product only previously available in pharmacies. The integration saves customers money as products are less expensive in nonpharmacy stores. J&J promoted the new product distribution with a combination of advertising and public relations activities, including television and cinema commercials, print ads, and event marketing.<sup>21</sup>

Banks learned that automated teller machines must be safe to use as well as near to their customers' homes and workplaces. Today, these machines are found in most supermarkets and convenience stores in addition to after hours at banks. Wireless technology addresses the desire of consumers to receive their e-mail, access the Web, and perform a host of other communication activities from anywhere in the world. Again, communication and promotion about product and service availability are important for success.

### **Communication**

Today's marketers are finding they can't live by advertising alone. When Hertz Latin America experienced disappointing results with an advertising-only strategy, the vehicle rental company added public relations to its communication mix. Media relations efforts targeted business editors and columnists, hoping that such coverage would increase Hertz's travel and tourism accounts.<sup>22</sup>

Ziff Davis Media realized it couldn't count on reputation, advertising, or magazine covers alone to sell its publications. The company created a public relations department to help launch new titles and to highlight content in current ones such as *Expedia Travels* and *Family PC*.<sup>23</sup>

Arby's coordinated its biggest national public relations program with its first centralized advertising campaign to promote its new deli sandwiches. While the advertising reaches the fast-food public, the business-to-business public relations efforts are designed to help the franchisees implement promotions on the local level. Included in the Market Fresh PR guide are step-by-step instructions on how to reach out to local media, how to develop a media list, and how to create community outreach programs. Press release templates and media-ready folders for the restaurateurs to distribute to local reporters with food samples also were supplied.<sup>24</sup>

When *Pearl Harbor*, a movie about the 1941 Japanese attack that drew America into World War II, made its debut, the Walt Disney Corporation and U.S. Navy spent a reported \$5 million on events in an effort to create box office buzz. Their efforts earned the front cover and extensive coverage in *Newsweek*, the major wire services, and enter-

tainment television shows. The navy sent almost 40 navy reserve information officers to Hawaii to handle prerelease activities. The film screening for journalists was held on the outdoor flight deck of the USS *Stennis*, a working navy ship. The public relations endeavors paid off with to-die-for endorsements and being rated in polls as the summer's most anticipated movie.<sup>25</sup>

As you can see, public relations plays a natural role in supporting a variety of marketing activities. This makes it easy to overlook the critical role public relations can have in the company's larger environment of image and reputation management and handling whatever crises may occur.

### **Your CEO as the Marketing Spokesperson**

The chief executive officer is usually the ideal spokesperson during a crisis. Does the same hold true for marketing activities? When the late Victor Kiam acquired Remington Product's shavers, the company was ailing. A positive bottom line one year later was the result of staff cuts, product line changes, and Kiam starring in Remington's aggressive television advertising campaign. "I liked it so much, I bought the company," confirmed Kiam's commitment to the brand in the ads.<sup>26</sup> David Oreck promotes the virtues of the eight-pound Oreck XL vacuum sweeper. The late Dave Thomas appeared in ads for his daughter's namesake restaurant, Wendy's. The spokesduo for Bush's Baked Beans, Jay Bush and his dog, Duke, credit the brand's great taste to a secret family recipe.

Bill Gates used television ads and personal appearances on talk shows to present Microsoft's side of the story in its antitrust battle with the U.S. Department of Justice. Lee Iacocca, former CEO of Chrysler, spoke to the American public about his personal pledge to quality when the company was experiencing credibility problems.

Merrie Spaeth, president of Spaeth Communications, Inc., Dallas, Texas, provides the following guidelines for using company CEOs in their own ads.<sup>27</sup>

1. The CEO who is an owner or part of the family who has owned the company for several generations can communicate a personal commitment to the brand.
2. The copy should sound like the CEO actually talks in real life.
3. Delivery skills are important but should not be the only criteria for determining if your CEO is suitable for the job. Message and audience also should be considered.
4. Charisma counts, as it lends credibility to the message. The listener or viewer needs to believe that the speaker believes what he's saying.
5. Reasons not to use your CEO include diction problems that probably can't be overcome or a top executive who doesn't look the part.

Although some CEOs enjoy being in the limelight and not having to pay for talent saves money, practitioners need to understand the strategy before selecting a CEO spokesperson over a celebrity endorser. For example, the accomplishments of major sports figures can influence buying decisions for athletic brands such as Nike, Reebok, and L.A. Gear in a manner that would be difficult for a CEO. Similarly, glamorous models and famous actresses build and refresh cosmetic brands. Movie, television, and rock stars can capture the attention of their fans as they try to increase awareness of a product or service. Britney Spears, for example, appeared in Pepsi commercials.

What matters in selecting a spokesperson, CEO, or celebrity is the ability of that individual to add value to the brand. Consumers' perception of the qualities of the spokesperson must match the messages that need to be communicated to the target audiences. Spokespersons must be able to transfer their values.

## Integrating Disciplines and Technology

Unbelievable as it may seem, terms like **podcasting**, **blogs**, **DVR/TiVo**, **satellite radio**, **advergaming**, **RSS**, wireless, **advertainment**, and **VOD** weren't part of our vocabulary until the early 2000s. It seems like every week some new channel opens up for potential integrated marketing communications. Even though technology is expanding the opportunity for consumer contact, traditional print and electronic mainstays still have a role in today's communication mix.

"The traditional marketing model we all grew up with is obsolete," says James R. Stengel, global marketing officer of Procter & Gamble, the world's largest advertiser.<sup>28</sup> He warned marketers who are using only TV, newspapers, and magazines that "they must become more accountable, innovative and creative or be doomed to failure."<sup>29</sup> Says Marian Salzman of J. Walter Thompson, "It's all about your gut now. The Internet has changed everything."<sup>30</sup>

Today's elusive consumers are moving targets and not limited by traditional marketing channels. Generation Xers, for example, may opt to get their news from *The Onion* and *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* or a 10 to 15 minute news block on CNN.<sup>31</sup> The 2005 State of the Media report by the Project for Excellence in Journalism confirms this. The study indicates that roughly 36 percent of Americans are regular consumers of four or more different kinds of media outlets.<sup>32</sup>

Beyond technology, though, there are several factors as to why organizations have moved to an integrated approach. One is that an increasing concern for the bottom line has caused management to look at ways to reduce expenses. A second factor is that public relations firms and advertising agencies are merging with and acquiring one another. This has created a natural tendency to consolidate functions that overlap between advertising, marketing, and public relations. Another explanation for integration is an increased emphasis on relationship marketing and one-to-one marketing, both of which require development of a good reputation, or image building, which is a public relations activity. A final motivation for integration is the importance of good governmental public relations. Influencing laws and regulations at the local, state, and federal levels often affect a firm's sales and marketing aspects.

Given the stealth speed with which new techniques develop and blend with current practice, the following is intended to serve only as an overview of integrated marketing techniques.

**Multitasking Portable Gadgets** Cell phones, Blackberrys, iPods, DVDs, wireless broadband-enabled laptops and other multitasking portable gadgets signal a major shift from mass production, mass marketing, and mass merchandising to an era of customized products and services.<sup>33</sup> Not only are the gadgets themselves multifunctional, but consumers are also using more than one of them at one time: looking at TV, talking on cell phones; working on their computers, instant-messaging, and listening to the iPod and the like. "The amount of time people spend consuming media is growing, but the share of advertising possibilities is shrinking," says the CEO for MediaCom.<sup>34</sup> Many experts feel that the ability of any form of marketing communications to compete successfully in this realm is slim.

**Product Placement** Personal video recorders like TiVo enable consumers to skip commercials altogether. Soft drink companies, computer manufacturers, cell phone makers and others are using **product placement** to raise the visibility of their products in videogames and other electronic programming options as well as traditional channels. Some examples:

- CBS digitally imbedded the logo of the new Chevrolet Impala in five of the network's prime-time shows during premiere week of its new fall 2005 schedule, and gave away one car each night of the promotion.<sup>35</sup>
- In the "Meet Mister Mom" reality show, dads drive Nissans, use Clorox to clean, and shop for the families at JC Penney.<sup>36</sup>

What is under debate in the industry is how much product placement should cost and if it is really effective. For example, Procter & Gamble's Crest toothpaste appeared in "The Apprentice" show. Tracking indicated that the placement was equal to 10.8 30-second commercials, which would cost \$4.2 million. But, says the senior vice president for Mitsubishi Motors, "I will not do it [product placement] unless there is some quantifiable measure of what we are going to get out of it."<sup>37</sup>

Product placement can have public relations implications beyond those for marketing purposes. The German Linux Association protested against "product placement in informational and news broadcasts" when the country's ARD, the public Channel One station, displayed Microsoft's logo on election reports. Explains the Association's executive director, "News reports on public television lose credibility and authenticity when they are mixed with advertising."<sup>38</sup>

**Web sites** Web sites are an integral part of almost every integrated communications plan. Food brands offer recipes, promotional booklets, screensavers, meal planners, and dozens of other features to strengthen their ties to the consumer. Fast-food restaurants provide nutrition information about their menu items, entice users to participate in their sweepstakes, and identify their locations. They also might create, as Burger King did, a "Subservient Chicken" Web site where you could give orders to a garter-clad hen in a dinghy motel room.<sup>39</sup> A campaign for Procter & Gamble's Tide included a Web site where consumers could see how many people in their area tried the product.<sup>40</sup> **Branded news** is live, Internet-based newscasting, narrowly focused on news about the product or service category of that organization that is providing the newscast. One example of a branded news Web site is NRA (see the end of chapter 15).

Web sites, though, are more than a tactical tool for the marketers. They are also products. When launching the beta version of Brilliant Shopper, a site that helps consumers do comparison shopping, the company's CEO tapped into blogs to reach the target market. Research indicated that a "hub and spoke" approach would help maximize their \$25,000 public relations budget. The goal was to focus on the most prominent bloggers (hubs), whose work was often picked up by others (spokes). The campaign also allowed bloggers to break the news before traditional media. Page views increased about 250 percent as a result.

**Search engine marketing** With so many consumers using the Web for product information and cost comparisons, the ability of a company to come up at the top of a search is critical. Search engine marketing is a tool that companies can use to increase the possibility that their listings and brands will appear when one searches for a particular term.<sup>41</sup> Research is important to identify the terms and language used by consumers for goods and services. Still, even the best key words are of no use unless the copy is well written and appeals to your users.<sup>42</sup>

**Guerilla Tactics** When budgets are small, time is tight, the product isn't the category leader, or a host of other challenging factors exist, practitioners often turn to **guerilla tactics**. Guerilla tactics are considered "under the line," which means that they aren't standard operating procedures. It's a way of nontraditional communication

vehicles to gain recognition and to get out information about a company's products or services. Many guerilla tactics, like sidewalk art, Internet chat rooms, mass e-mail messages (estimated to be more than 960 billion in 2006<sup>43</sup>), and radio talk shows are available at low or no cost and can be targeted to specific publics. As a result of increased television coverage of crime scenes, some funeral homes are printing their names on their body bags. Trendy young people visit clubs and bars, initiating brand conversations with the question, "What are you drinking?"

**Contests and Sweepstakes** Contests and sweepstakes can be a fast way for companies to have direct contact with their current and prospective consumers. Many vied for an opportunity to have a brown-bag lunch with Duchess of York Sarah Ferguson when French's GourMayo Flavored Light Mayonnaise brand staged a contest.<sup>44</sup> Contests and sweepstakes to win new furniture; home makeovers; backstage meetings with rock stars; trips to Disney, Bangkok, and other cities; home entertainment systems; and tons of other products and services are offered online, in print, at point-of-purchase locations, at events, and the like. Winners are announced daily, weekly, monthly. For the marketer, contests and sweepstakes can be an inexpensive way to gain valuable information about its customers and to reach them with news and information of interest.

Some truisms, though, apply regardless of all that technology has to offer. Never put anything in writing that you don't want someone else to see is one. And, there is no substitute for old-fashioned face-to-face communication. The head of Sears public relations learned this when he inadvertently sent an uncomplimentary e-mail about a columnist—to the journalist himself. While not surprised given what he had written about Sears, the columnist wished that the executive had talked to him directly: "I would like to see PR people, if they have issues, put them on the table."<sup>45</sup> See Spotlight 12.1 for some helpful tips on supporting consumer relations.

## CONSUMER RELATIONS BRIDGES THE CORPORATION AND THE CONSUMER

**Consumer relations** is the bridge between the consumer and the manufacturer. When unexpected shipping charges are added to a mail order, when the quality is poor, when a warranty is not honored, when local branches are unresponsive to requests for help, when products are not safe, when the advertising is misleading, when repair people don't fix the problem, when information

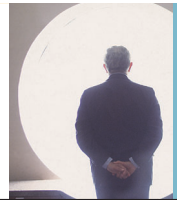
is desired, when a multitude of things can and do go wrong, consumer relations is there to respond. And for good reason. What companies do and how they do it are under scrutiny like never before. Consumer relations helps a corporation cope and thrive under this analysis.

### *The Challenges of Consumer Relations*

Nothing is perfect, of course. People have bad days. Products can be defective in spite of rigorous testing. As was noted earlier in this chapter, smart organizations constantly *listen* to their customers and act upon what they hear. When the Hedstrom Corporation, of Bedford, Pennsylvania, received reports about the seats on its backyard swings falling off, causing children to drop to the ground, it asked consumers to stop using the swings immediately and to detach them from the gym set. The company made a free repair kit available through a toll-free number.<sup>46</sup> The manner in which Hedstrom resolved this problem works well with the customer complaint process discussed later in this chapter.

## Public Relations Tactics to Support Consumer Relations and Marketing Efforts

Spotlight 12.1



As a public relations practitioner, you can customize the tactics you use to reach your objectives. The list below is but one way to think about how to use some of these tools. Consider how the scope and focus might change if the tactic were to be used for a different purpose.

**Media relations:** News releases, pitch letters, backgrounders, biographies, fact sheets, desk-side visits, media advisories, media tours, press conferences, photographs.

**Publicity:** Press conferences, research results, satellite media tours, autograph parties, announcements, speeches, talk show appearances, video news release.

**Collateral material:** Brochures, downloadable pdf handouts, fact sheets,

product specifications, photographs, and other graphic images.

**Special events:** Anniversary and other commemorative activities, celebrations, conferences, time capsules.

**Corporate relations:** Identity programs, position papers, letters to the editor, advertorials, spokesperson training, policy statements, vodcasts.

**Integrated marketing communications:** Podcasts, Web sites, handbooks, sponsorships, brochures, grassroots campaigns, instruction manuals, pamphlets, article reprints, direct mail, demonstrations, sales promotions (POP, coupons) mass advertising (radio, TV, print, outdoor), targeted direct marketing (Internet, kiosks), sweepstakes.

**Awards/recognitions:** Achievement awards, commemorative events, certificates.

**Community relations:** Advisory boards, open houses, speakers' bureaus, presentations, public service announcements, exhibits.

**Employee/dealer relations:** Intranet, e-mail, conferences, memorandums, training aids, contests, gifts.

**Online word of mouth:** Consumer-to-consumer e-mails, postings on public Internet discussion boards and forums, consumer ratings Web sites, blogs, moblogs where digital images, photos, and movies are posted.

At the same time, some consumers have not demonstrated common sense when using some products. One woman sued a fast-food company when she was burned after putting a hot cup of coffee between her legs while she was driving. Although parents should know better than to leave their infants alone in a baby bath seat in a filled tub, some want the product banned because some babies died when left alone in the seats. Consumers are often quick to blame others for their own lack of judgment or failure to follow directions. Unfortunately there's little a manufacturer can do when consumers choose to ignore safety guidelines, printed warnings, and other measures that spell out the safe use of a product or service.

Trust is at the heart of these issues, and there are no easy answers. What is for sure, though, is that these issues aren't new and they won't go away. Finger-pointing and not taking responsibility for one's actions isn't only a 21st century phenomenon. History provides abundant examples. Today's business environment requires both corporations and consumers to be much more diligent and proactive. Consumers demand a greater emphasis on product performance, quality, and safety than ever before. They're more aware of their rights and more responsible to political and legal initiatives to protect those rights.

Consumer relations is a direct reflection of a corporation's values about its business in general. The Palm example presented earlier in this chapter discussed how the company's desire to "delight the customer" drove the product from its development stage. August A. Busch III, president of Anheuser-Busch, has a saying: "Making friends is our business." A-B makes friends by encouraging responsible consumption of its products by adults of legal drinking age and by investing in communities through education, disaster relief, and environmental and numerous other areas.<sup>47</sup> This consumer relations viewpoint is nothing new. Thomas Carlyle is just one of many famous philosophers through the centuries to observe, "Thought is the parent of deed."

The bottom line is that consumer relations should be more than a toll-free hotline to the company. It's how an organization fulfills its promise to serve its key publics.

### Know Your Consumer

Good consumer relations begins with an organization's knowledge of its key publics. It's hard to identify an area that isn't affected by this knowledge in some way, from the product itself and packaging to how the product is described and the selection of communication tactics. However, knowing your customer isn't always as easy as it first might seem. For example:

*Your consumer might change traditional consumption patterns.* Fast-food chains used to ignore the late-night eaters, those wanting a burger or pizza or other munchies between 10 P.M. and 5 A.M. No more. Denny's and Taco Bell restaurant chains say the late-night segment accounts for about one-fourth of their annual sales. Wendy's saw a significant 30 percent growth in purchases after 10 P.M. in 1999.<sup>48</sup>

*Economic and social shifts might open up new audiences.* Many states are recording an increase in their Hispanic, Asian, and other ethnicities populations. Reaching them might necessitate additional consumer research, marketing in languages other than English, adapting products, and using nontraditional communication vehicles. This trend affects global markets as well. By targeting distinct ethnicities in Brazil, manufacturers found 160 million new consumers who wanted to purchase clothes, cosmetics, soft drinks, toys, and a host of other personal and household products and services.<sup>49</sup>

*Your brand may no longer resonate with your consumer.* Nike's consumers started to switch to leather shoes from athletic shoes in 1997 and the company didn't produce this type of footwear. Competitors lured Nike's customers away with new products and aggressive marketing campaigns. Nike hopes the innovative technology in the recently introduced Shox will allow it to reestablish itself as a market leader.<sup>50</sup>

The preceding illustrations highlight that shifting demographics, converging technologies, and changes in customer expectations all reinforce the point that your consumer group isn't static and often isn't satisfied. Thus, consumer relations programs must be proactive to ensure that they are meeting the needs of those they serve. This might mean extending the hours of customer service phone lines, initiating new research projects, exploring alternative communication outlets, repositioning a brand, creating new packaging, and a host of other considerations.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

In the past three decades, consumer affairs units have become fixtures in most organizations that have direct links to consumers. A variety of names describe this function: public affairs, customer relations, consumer relations, consumer advocate, or public relations. Whatever the title, these staff members usually work both inside and outside the organization. The staffing of consumer affairs units varies tremendously, with smaller organizations having only one consumer affairs specialist and larger ones having more than 100. Organizations frequently staff their consumer affairs units with employees who have enough prior experience in the company to handle complaints and investigate problems effectively.<sup>51</sup> Frequently, the staff is divided into groups responsible for certain functions, such as complaint handling, publications, consumer education, and the like.

The goal of consumer affairs is to improve the organization's relationships and communication with consumers by investigating consumer issues and conveying the results to management. Responsibilities of the consumer relations unit may include resolving customer complaints, disseminating consumer information, advising management on consumer opinion, and dealing with outside consumer advocate groups.

Frequently, the consumer relations unit is linked to the public relations department of an organization. This connection is natural, since consumers are one of the publics that public relations practitioners have traditionally served. The exact placement and design of consumer relations units vary, depending on the size and nature of the organization and the diversity of its products or services. One common characteristic does appear among the different approaches: The vast majority of consumer relations units report directly to top management. This provides the necessary autonomy to investigate issues and identify problems early with easy access to those who make policy decisions.

### **Consumer Information and Education**

The major tenet of consumer advocacy is that consumers lack adequate information for making purchasing decisions. The complexity of the business system and the proliferation of products contribute to this difficulty, but many consumer problems result from product misuse or improper maintenance. A satisfied customer may tell another five to eight people, but dissatisfied and angry customers are taking their complaints to public forums like Web sites, talk shows, and other media outlets, in addition to telling 10 to 16 of their friends and acquaintances. Consumer relations units have responded to the need for fuller and clearer information by providing simplified warranties, clarified product use instructions, and educational programs to help consumers select the right products for their needs and use them properly.

Toll-free numbers, e-mail, and Web sites are among the ways that consumers can reach companies with their complaints, questions, and suggestions. What is important is that companies actually follow through and reply to customer complaints and inquiries. Some research suggests that corporations are failing miserably in responding to the feedback they have received or are not communicating to consumers the actions that have been taken to rectify the problems. As has been noted earlier, the kinds of organizations that gain the most from their marketing and consumer relations activities are those that constantly listen to their customers and act upon what they hear.

Consumers usually value a message more if it comes from the media than from company representatives. Recognizing that, managements work with their consumer and public relations staffs to schedule new product releases and major announcements for times when they will gain the most publicity possible. General Nutrition Centers rolled out its newest supplement, The Officially Licensed NASCAR(r) Kids Multi-Vitamin, for instance, at the Milwaukee Mile. The chewable vitamins come in three-dimensional race-car shapes, and the company included a free die-cast replica of the No. 36 GNC Live Well race car with purchase.<sup>52</sup>

When audiences are difficult to reach through traditional media, organizations must be extra creative.

### **Generally Satisfied, But Not Always Served**

A 1999 Harris Interactive poll found most people believe that computer hardware and software companies, airlines, hospitals, car manufacturers, banks, telephone companies, and pharmaceutical companies generally are doing a good job in serving their customers



and would do the right thing if they had a serious problem with one of their products or services. Although this is encouraging news, there are two other sides to the story. One is that this overall degree of satisfaction has been falling since 1997, from 67 percent to 55 percent.<sup>53</sup> The other is that 65 percent of consumers feel that businesses care more about selling them products that already exist, rather than coming up with something that really fits consumers' lifestyle.<sup>54</sup>

Thus, the potential for problems often begins with the products and services themselves. Mass-produced products don't work and behave like those that are custom designed. This can be a breeding ground for consumer frustration and disappointment.

### **Unfair and Deceptive Practices**

Damage to the buyer-seller relationship occurs when products and services are promoted using unfair or deceptive means. Although only a small percentage of goods do not live up to their advertising, enough consumers have had bad experiences with products in general to believe the worst and be suspicious of claims and promises.

Voluntary self-regulation is the primary reason why unsubstantiated claims are not allowed to proliferate in advertising. The National Advertising Division (NAD) and the Children's Advertising Review Unit, both part of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, are the investigative arms of the industry's program. Competitive challenges come from other advertisers and also from self-monitoring traditional and new media and consumers.

For example, a review board determined that AT&T had a reasonable basis to substantiate that its 1-800-CALL-ATT collect calling service "always cost less than MCI's 1-800-COLLECT."<sup>55</sup> A concerned consumer questioned whether M&M Mars's "NEW" Peanut Butter Twix bar could be described as "new" since it had been on the market before being discontinued in 1997. The panel found that the "new" version of Peanut Butter Twix was materially different from its earlier version and that the "new" claim was truthful and nonmisleading.<sup>56</sup> Unilever was asked to modify certain advertising claims for its Ther-masilk line of shampoos and conditioners. While it was found that Ther-masilk products help protect hair from damage caused by heat, there was inadequate evidence to support the claim that heat styling with the brand will make hair healthier.<sup>57</sup> The voluntary self-regulation system works. There is about a 96 percent compliance rate in the more than 3,750 cases reviewed since NAD's founding in 1971, with only about 4 percent referred to government agencies for further action.

Public relations practitioners need to be careful not to mislead or dupe the gatekeepers to the consumer: the media. When dot-coms were closing and agencies were handing out pink slips, *PRWeek* received a press release about a "Seattle Company Upsizing." It turned out the Internet and marketing firm in question had hired an art director. Future news releases from the company probably won't receive much attention.<sup>58</sup>

### **Handling Consumer Complaints**

Although they are hard to quantify, probably the overwhelming majority of consumer inquiries and complaints are handled in a routine manner. The item is replaced or repaired, the purchase price is refunded, instructions are given, or whatever action is appropriate is taken. Companies of all sizes realize the critical importance of consumer relations and want to be responsive. Some companies like L.L. Bean, Lands' End, and Nordstrom have service reputations that are legendary in the retail business.

The Council of Better Business Bureaus expanded its 2003 annual complaint survey to include Canada because e-commerce and cross-country shopping makes it easy for buyers to do business with merchants anywhere in the world. Automobile dealers

topped the list of the most-complained-about industries. Cell phones and credit card companies came in second and third. Others in rank order were Internet services, credit collection agencies, mortgage and escrow companies, computer sales, home furnishing stores, telephone companies and banks.<sup>59</sup>

The more expensive the item, the more likely the consumer will complain, according to Consumer Reports. This is why household goods like computers, electronics, appliances and furniture receive so many complaints. Consumers gripe about defective products, deceptive advertising, and manufacturers that don't honor warranties and refunds.<sup>60</sup>

Of course, not all complaints are routine. Azza Basarudin found profanity and racial slurs written in the used copy of the Quran that she had ordered from Bellwether Books through the "Marketplace" section of Amazon.com. Both Amazon and Bellwether issued apologies and gift certificates to the Los Angeles graduate student, recognizing that the book was used, not new, and that such books can contain written comments by the previous owner. The incident made national headlines.<sup>61</sup>

### **Technology and Complaints**

Many opinions and complaints are never sent directly to the manufacturer or company. Instead, technology has made it possible for consumers to share their honest assessment about any or all aspects of a product or service with each other. The much-hyped *Harry Potter* Book 6 received more than 2,600 comments—and four out of five stars—from readers on Amazon.com. Buyers on eBay rate the sellers on everything from honest presentation of the product to customer service.

Little gets by today's bloggers or those who use consumer-generated media. They check out facts, provide the inside scoop about what's going on in companies, and share personal experiences. Puffery, dishonesty, misleading statements, and the like are exposed for what they are. There is no room to hide. Blogger BL Ochman called Daimler-Chrysler "clueless" for limiting its "journalist-only" blog for those who work for a known or established media organization, which apparently doesn't include blogs.<sup>62</sup>

### **Marketing and Complaints**

One way companies handle consumer complaints is through advertising. In the debate as to who's responsible for the nation's obesity problem, especially children, General Mills launched an advertising campaign that touted the healthy benefits of eating its sugary cereals in the morning. The idea is that eating breakfast is a healthy behavior, and while nutritionists may cringe at the product's high sugar content, they agree that the approach is better than no breakfast at all.<sup>63</sup>

### **The Corporate Liaison**

The consumer affairs role within corporations has become that of consumer spokesperson to management. Most consumer affairs specialists see it as part of their jobs to take an active role in decision making by speaking out for the consumer. They actively solicit consumer opinion and make management aware of the effects various decisions will have on consumers. The in-house ombudsman must balance the needs of the actual customers, the demands of consumer activists, and the goals of the organization. This role of liaison has always been the highest calling for public relations professionals.

Those who understand the purpose of public relations realize that the practitioner must do more than echo the company line. Public relations professionals should help senior managers stay in touch with their various publics. Doing so is especially critical in emergencies, when public relations professionals must serve as management's bridge to the media and the public.

## Case Study

### Operation Geek Squad

#### Overview

When it comes to computers, most users want nothing more than a machine that works day in and day out. Setup, software installation, repairs, and whatever else is needed to maintain computer health—and the owner's sanity—is best left to an expert. This is where Geek Squad's team of highly skilled technical support agents triumph.

When electronics retailer Best Buy purchased Minneapolis-based Geek Squad in 2002, they had an opportunity to differentiate themselves by expanding this small, local, elite technical service nationwide. No other electronics/computer retailer could offer consumers nationwide multichannel computer setup, repair, and education (i.e., in-home, in-store, Web site, and 800 number).

In 2004, Best Buy was ready to launch Geek Squad in all its stores, and they turned to Ketchum for help in developing the public relations campaign. This campaign would receive no advertising support, relying solely on public relations to attain Best Buy's business goal. The business goal was to increase the number of consumers who accessed in-home and in-store Geek Squad service in the 45 launch markets across the country. To accomplish this, Ketchum and Best Buy identified three communications objectives:

- Raise Geek Squad awareness.
- Protect the established brand identity of Geek Squad while introducing it as a new customer service unit of Best Buy.
- Differentiate Geek Squad from its technical support service competitors.

#### Research and Planning

A Best Buy-commissioned survey of Minneapolis residents established awareness benchmarks for future Geek Squad markets. National and local competitive analyses were conducted by Ketchum to verify differentiating Geek Squad factors and existing service availability. Finally, a national survey helped determine the current mindset of consumers' technology fears and frustrations. Basic findings showed that generally, consumers were ready for someone or some company to help them understand technology at their own pace.

The following tactical elements of the plan initially focused on anyone owning or using a computer, executed through nine launch waves, infiltrating each of the 45 markets:

- Pitch print exclusives to media where Geek Squad brand identity and story could best be showcased.
- Execute guerilla-marketing tactics that reflected the brand's quirkiness while sparking customer curiosity.
- Find potential influential users and recommenders of Geek Squad services in every market to drive trial and generate word-of-mouth buzz.

After the story of Geek Squad was released in seven of the nine launch waves, the team shifted their focus from local to national, riding the building momentum from the local media placements.

## Execution

A three-pronged approach to drive trial in a calculated manner included local/national media strategy, local/national events, and "influencer" outreach.

Offbeat local and national events to drive consumer curiosity included using a live agent working on a laptop inside a giant glass box that read, "In Case of Technical Catastrophe, Break Glass," and swarms of 8 to 12 Geek Squad's signature Geekmobiles weaving down heavily traveled roadways and downtown business districts. The ringing of the New York Stock Exchange's closing bell and a celebrity bash at Los Angeles' Cineramadome offered further visibility for Geek Squad's launch.

To seed markets with advocates of Geek Squad services prelaunch, influencer kits containing "Advance Reconnaissance Offers" of free Geek Squad services were made available to individuals deemed "influential" in each market.

## Evaluation

Geek Squad's national launch campaign exceeded Best Buy's desired business results and unaided awareness goals. A Geek Squad feature story was secured in all 45 of the launch markets. An analysis of the media content revealed that in three of every five stories, Geek Squad agents were positioned as tech experts; 89 percent of Geek Squad coverage included key messages; in nearly all coverage, Geek Squad was mentioned more than competitors or competitors were mentioned not at all, clearly differentiating the brand from its technical support service competitors.

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Source: Robyn Massey, Ketchum, September 2005.

### Questions

1. What are the benefits of a multiapproach public relations plan, not just media?
2. How could a marketing mix have added to the results?
3. Why is it important to reach out to influencers?
4. Why is it important to stay within or protect a mass retailer's brand's image?
5. Why was it important to "go national" at the point in this campaign when Ketchum did?
6. What other nontraditional media could Ketchum have considered?
7. What was the importance of media training?
8. What guidelines should be considered when considering a guerilla-marketing strategy?
9. What questions might have been asked in the research to determine awareness levels, competitive positioning, and consumer mindsets regarding Geek Squad?

## Summary



For self-testing and additional chapter resources, go to the student CD and the Online Learning Center at [www.mhhe.com/lattimore2](http://www.mhhe.com/lattimore2)

Public relations and marketing can work together to build customer trust and loyalty while selling the product or service. The kinds of organizations that gain the most from their marketing and consumer relations activities are those that constantly listen to their customers and act upon what they hear.

A multitude of communication tools is available for marketing and consumer relations activities, to be used singularly, in a multitiered effort, or to synthesize into new cross-discipline vehicles.

An organization fulfills its promise to serve its key publics through trust. Consumer affairs improves an organization's relationship and communication with consumers by investigating and resolving consumer issues and concerns.

## Key Terms



Use the CD-ROM and Online Learning Center at [www.mhhe.com/lattimore2](http://www.mhhe.com/lattimore2) to further your understanding of the following terms

**adveragaming**

**advertainment**

**blogs**

**branded news**

**consumer relations**

**DVR/TiVo**

**guerrilla tactics**

**integrated communication**

**integrated marketing communication**

**marketing**

**marketing communications**

**podcasting**

**product placement**

**public relations**

**relationship marketing**

**RSS**

**satellite radio**

**VOD**

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