UNIT 11: PUBLICITY MEDIA FOR PR

UNIT STRUCTURE

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11.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

A thorough evaluation of the unit will bring to light

- the concept and definition of publicity
- the types of publicity media
- an integrated public relations media model
- recent trends in public relations media.

11.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous units, we have learnt about the crisis communication and how PR works in a situation of crisis. With this, we have understood the different kinds of PR tools utilized in emergency. We also learnt about rhetorical and social science approaches to crisis communication.

In this unit, you shall be introduced to the concept of publicity and the different types of PR tools used for the publicity.

The term publicity is eventually misinterpreted in a negative way by common people. But as a student of Mass Communication, your understanding of publicity and how differently the various media are used as a tool of publicity has to be crystal clear and true to the fact.

In this unit you will learn about publicity not just from the point of view

of a layman, but from the point of view of a public relation officer. We hope, after going through this unit, you will be able to have the basic concepts of publicity clear to your mind. So let us concentrate on the sections given below.

11.3 CONCEPT AND DEFINITION OF PUBLICITY

Concept of Publicity:

Publicity is a way of mass communication. It is not a paid form of mass communication that involves getting favourable response of buyers by placing commercially significant news in mass media. For doing publicity, an organization does not pay anyone. Publicity comes from reporters, columnists, and journalists. It can be considered as a part of public relations.

Publicity involves giving public speeches, interviews, conducting seminars, offering charitable donations, inaugurating mega events by film actors, cricketers, politicians, or popular personalities, arranging stage shows among others that attract mass media to publish the news about them.

Publicity is undertaken for a wide range of purposes like promoting new products, increasing sales of existing product and others. It also aimed at highlighting employees' achievements, company's civic activities, pollution control steps, research and development successes, financial performance, its progress, any other missionary activities, or social contribution.

In the era of globalization, it is impotant to maintain good relation with each and every person ai an organization. Good external and internal relations are the key factors for achieving goals and extending their business. For this, all organization needed publicity. So, that they are known by the public.

Definition of Publicity:

According to the **Merriam-Webster Dictionary:**

"An act or device designed to attract public interest; specifically: information with news value issued as a means of gaining public attention or support. Also : the dissemination of information or promotional material."

According to **William J. Stanton:**

"Publicity is any promotional communication regarding an organization and/or its products where the message is not paid for by the organization benefiting from it."

According to **Philip Kotler:**

"Non-personal stimulation of demand for the product or service, or business unit by placing commercially significant news about it in public medium or obtaining favorable presentation of it upon radio, television, or stage that is not paid for by the sponsor."

In other words, publicity is media exposure or attention for a product, person and an organization or event.

Characteristics of Publicity:

Key characteristics of publicity have been briefly described in the following way:

1. Meaning:

Publicity is not a paid form of mass communication that involves getting favorable response of buyers by placing commercially significant news in mass media. It involves obtaining favourable presentation upon radio, newspapers, television, or stage that is not paid for by the sponsor.

2. Non-paid Form:

Publicity is not a paid form of communication. It is not directly paid by producer. However, it involves various indirect costs. For example, a firm needs some amount for arranging function, calling press conference, inviting outstanding personalities, decoration of stage, other related costs and others.

3. Various Media:

Mostly, publicity can be carried via newspapers, magazines, radio, or television. For example, in case a product is launched by popular personality in a grand function, the mass media like newspapers, television, radio and magazines will definitely publicize the event.

4. Objectives:

Sales promotion is undertaken for a wide variety of purposes. They may include promotion of new product, pollution control, and special achievements of employees, publicizing new policies, or increase in sales. It is primarily concerned with publishing or highlighting company's activities and products. It is targeted to build company's image. In the long run, it can contribute to increase in sales.

5. Control of Producer:

Company has no control over publicity in terms of message, time, frequency, information, and medium. It comes through mass media like radio, newspapers, television and other channels of communication. It is given independently by the third party. It is presented as news rather than propaganda.

6. Credibility/Social Significance:

Publicity has high degree of credibility or reliability as it comes from mass media independently. It is given as news of social interest. It has more social significance compared to other means of market promotion.

7. Part of Public Relations:

Publicity is a part of broad public relations efforts and activities. Public relations include improving, establishing, and maintaining direct relations with all publics. Publicity can help improve public relations.

8. Costs:

Publicity can be done at much lower cost than advertising. Company needs to spend a little amount to get the event or function publicized.

9. Effect:

Publicity message is more likely to be read, viewed, heard, and reacted by audience. It has a high degree of believability as it is given by the third party.

10. Repetition:

Frequency or repetition of publicity in mass media depends upon its social significance or the values for news. Mostly, it appears only once.

Publicity is normally positive and demands self-belief on the part of a publicist. It is not sales promotion, but borders on the PR activity of creating a reputational image of a person or an istituition.



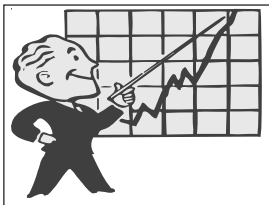
ACTIVITY 11.1

1. Think of 10 major items that were covered by the newspaper in the past two days and identify that news is published in the form of publicity or news.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1 What do you mean by publicity?

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Q.2. What are the characteristics of publicity?

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11.4 TYPES OF PUBLICITY MEDIA:

You have already learnt that the basic goals of publicity are:

- To attract public attention
- Win belief
- Achieve understanding, and
- Earn goodwill

But how is this achieved? Let us answer this question.You have already known that in the process of publicity, any message is used to target a particular audience. Let us take the example of a school principal who has to address her students before their examinations. She will have to prepare her talk effectively so that the students feel encouraged and motivated. Consider the example of another message appealing to the public to participate in a campaign to keep the city clean. This may be broadcast through radio or television.

A website can also be used to provide information. You may try looking up to the website of a university which gives vital information on the courses offered,procedure for applying for the course and so on.All these are examples of tools or media used in publicity.

Let us now broadly classify the Publicity media used to communicate to the public:

- Oral communication
- Printed and graphic communication
- Print media
- Outdoor media (electronic displays, hoardings, posters)
- Broadcast media (radio, television, films)
- Other media (websites, endorsements, exhibitions)

ORAL COMMUNICATION

You may recall what you have learnt about interpersonal communication. It is a two way communication. Let us consider the example of a conversation between a doctor and a patient:

The patient has a sever health problem and the doctor wants to talk to her to find out the reason for her health issue. The patient is given an opportunity to express her problems and the doctor tries to console her and guide her so that she can take care of her health. This is an example of oral communication between a patient and a doctor.

Oral communication is similar to interpersonal communication as in this form of communication there is a two way communication process going on. This is also called face to face communication or person to person

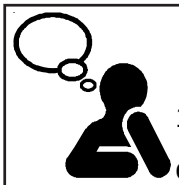
communication. This is the only form of communication when there are no means of modern communication. Oral communication is an effective publicity media which allows for questions and clarifications.

Speech and interview

You must have heard or seen the Prime Minister or President addressing the public on occasions like elections through the radio or television. Have you found their talk impressive? What have you learnt from their messages?

This is an example of a speech which is a primary form of oral communication. A good speech helps in effectively interacting with the people. If the speech is delivered in any rally before a live audience, it creates a situation of a two-way communication.

You may even have heard or seen an interview with a film star or celebrity on radio or television.Now let us understand what the term 'interview' means. Interview is another form of oral communication where you find one person which is called as interviewer asking questions and the other, the interviewee answering them. In this method, the interviewee gets an opportunity to impress the audience, fulfilling one of the goals of public relations.



ACTIVITY 11.2

1. Conduct an interview with any renowned personality of your city.

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PRINT MEDIA

You must have learnt about the newspapers and magazines that they are part of print media. Now let us see how print media is used as a publicity medium in PR. You must have seen several advertisements appearing in newspapers and magazines. What do they consist of? They consist of textual messages like slogans as well as some visuals or pictures. These advertisements are some of the examples of PR tools used in the print media.

They are prepared effectively to attract the reader's attention away. Besides this, some other tools of print media are also used for publicity by the public relation officers.

Flyer

Have you come across single printed sheets of paper that are distributed among the people on the road side? You find that the flyers give information about any upcoming event, any new openings of shops or schools. You can see that they provide a lot of useful information about various services in your locality.

These sheets of paper with advertisements provide information commonly referred to as fliers, hand bills or pamphlets.



LET US KNOW

Key points about the flyers are:

- This was the first written material used for public relations.
- It is a simplest and easiest tool used in publicity for dissemination of message.
- These are unfolded sheets posted on bulletin boards delivered by mail or distributed by hand.
- It presents a single message rather than a series of separate message units.
- It is time specific and addresses a particular event.
- It serves awareness objectives through information.



Activity 11.3

1. Collect flyers/ handbills which are distributed along with your newspaper for a month and write down the purpose for which they were developed. Did you find any one of them useful?

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Brochures

When the message is needed to be transmitted beyond the bound of time and space so that it remains in the minds of the audience,then one sheet of information, as in a flyer, may not be sufficient. In such acase, a multi-page publication or in other words, more than one page of printed matter, is produced as a PR tool, in the form of a brochure. But sometimes it is also called as leaflet, folder or pamphlet on the basis of its size and purpose for which it is developed.

Let us see some examples of brochures:

A brochure produced by an NGO provides information about its target audience,plans and programs offered, success stories, partner companies and so on for the needy ones for whom the NGO is working. Similarly, MNCs brings out brochures which give information about their products and achievements to the stock holders.

Press Release

Let us now study about a press release which is different from other forms of printed media that you have studied so far.A press release is the most important form of written communication, used by the public relations professional to announce something to the media. It is handed over personally or posted,faxed or e-mailed to the media.

Press release is a short, compiled form of news story written by public relations professional. The aim of a press release is to arouse the interest of journalists or media professionals. The press release should contain all the essential information about the event or information like who, what, where, when, how and most importantly why for the journalists so that they can easily produce their own story.



ACTIVITY 11.4

1. Write a press release on a workshop organized by the state government for outlining preventive measures against an emergency situation faced by the country or the state.

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OUTDOOR MEDIA

Have you ever seen huge boards displaying messages on a particular company of bike or any beauty product with beautiful faces?These display boards are called hoardings. And now a days you can find that many of the hoardings are electronically operated (electronic hoarding) to make them attractive and catch the attention of the viewers.

Hoardings are one of the best examples of an outdoor medium which is commonly used by the public relations professionals.

Likewise, you must have read messages about chocolates or any edible items written on bus panels and on huge boards at bus terminals, airports and railway station.This form of written message is called a poster. On these posters you must have noticed that the stress is on the visual message that is visible to the audience. The poster message carries a beautiful illustration with a catchy headline. This form of communication is used to remind the audience of a certain product or idea.

BROADCAST MEDIA

You must know about the broadcast media such as radio and television. Now here you can get to learn about how this broadcast media is used by the public relations professional for the publicity. Let us take an example of the television. You must have watched information through this medium. The characteristic feature of this medium is that it is audio- visual with different effects which create an impact on the audience. Television advertisement which combines audio and visual message is a typical tool used for public relations.

Similarly, take the case of new media. Here, you can see pictures or images as well as hear a message or music. These images have certain particular features.They are seen to move as well as make sounds, thus creating a huge impact on viewers. Reality music and dance shows, cricket matches which are sponsored by business organizations are examples of new media being used to attract public attention to a particular product.

Now let us compare these with the different forms of oral and print media. The print media are found to be more static in comparison to the broadcast media. Here images are moving and words are spoken simultaneously but in print media texts are found static.

Therefore, you can now see that the broadcast media offers possibilities for interaction which makes it possible to present creative and attractive messages to their target audience. So, the scope for including movement and sound makes it a very appealing tool for communication.

OTHER FORMS OF MEDIA

Celebrity Endorsements

Have you heard or seen a celebrity or in other words, a well-known personality talking about a particular brand of deodorant or toothpaste on radio or television?Here, you always find that a person who is popular among the audience is chosen to promote a product and to encourage the public to use that product.

This kind of promotion is called as celebrity endorsement. Celebrity endorsement is a PR tool which influences target audiences to buy products such as soft drinks, soaps, eatables, clothes, toothpaste, beverages and many other products by creating awareness or interest in them through celebrities or popular people.

Exhibitions

Have you ever visited an exhibition? There you must have seen several products being displayed and sold in an open area or in huge halls. You may have even bought a few items. You would also have come to know

about several new products present or may be coming in the market.

From this, we can say that:

- Exhibition is another PR tool to enhance public relations activity.
- The product or items exhibited leave a lasting impression on the minds of the people.
- It involves participation of people on a large scale
- Exhibitions open up a new way for generating business.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.3 What are the major kinds of publicity media?

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Q.4 What do you mean by press release?

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11.5 AN INTEGRATED PUBLIC RELATIONS MEDIA MODEL:

Till now you have studied about the different tools of media used for publicity by a public relations officer. Then, a question must be arising in your mind that what kind of medium is suitable for which type of publicity. For answering this question, here we shall learn about an Integrated Public Relations Media Model.

For any public relations program planner it is needed to know the traditional approaches which are used broadly and strategically for making any effective publicity plan. As for making any impactful public relations programs, it must employ the techniques from traditional mass media to highly individualized interpersonal communication.

For this, an Integrated Public Relations Media Model is proposed by Kirk Hallahan. This model suggests that by using this model the public relations people can utilize media strategically and efficiently in program planning. As such, this model is focused primarily on how to select different types of media. It advocates that all media used in public relations can be distinguished into five groups:

1. Public media
2. Interactive media
3. Controlled media
4. Events and groups
5. One to one communication

CHARACTERISTIC	PUBLIC MEDIA	INTERACTIVE MEDIA	CONTROLLED MEDIA	EVENTS/GROUPS	ONE-ON-ONE
Key use	Build awareness	Respond to queries; exchange information	Promotion; provide detailed information	Motivate attendees; reinforce attitudes	Obtain commitments; resolve problems
Examples	Newspapers, magazines, radio, TV	Computer-based: WWW; databases; email listservs; newsgroups; chat rooms; bulletin boards	Brochures, newsletters, sponsored magazines, annual reports, books, direct mail, point-of-purchase displays, video-brochures	Speeches, exhibits, meetings/conferences, demonstrations, rallies, sponsorships, anniversaries	Personal visits, lobbying, personal letters, telephone calls, telemarketing
Nature of Communication	Nonpersonal	Nonpersonal	Nonpersonal	Quasi-personal	Personal
Direction of Communication	One-way	Quasi-two-way	One-way	Quasi-two-way	Two-way
Technological Sophistication	High	High	Moderate	Moderate	Low
Channel ownership	Media organizations	Common carrier or institution	Sponsor	Sponsor or other organization	None
Messages chosen by:	Third parties and producers	Receiver	Sponsor	Sponsor or join organization	None
Audience involvement	Low	High	Moderate	Moderate	High
Reach	High	Moderate-low	Moderate-low	Low	Low
Cost per impression	High	Moderate-low	Moderate-low	Low	Low
Key challenges to effectiveness	Competition, media clutter	Availability, accessibility	Design, distribution	Attendance, atmosphere	Empowerment, personal dynamics

The model postulates that media planning is complexly linked to the strategic uses that media are best suited to formulate a public relations programme. Other suitable characteristics of media or benefit of special vehicles should be secondary considerations in the planning process.



Activity 11.5

1. Make a media planning strategy for any product, multinational company or non- governmental organization.

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11.6 RECENT TRENDS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS MEDIA

As communication evolves and the needs and preferences of the audience shift, the practice of public relations has undergone a dramatic transformation. In this technological era,the world of social media, online marketing and public relations are fast paced and constantly evolving. In order to stay competitive in these fields, it is essential to keep up with the latest news and happenings.

That's why publications and media outlets are navigating changing revenue models, new communication channels are also opening, and more business leaders are establishing their voices in the industry.

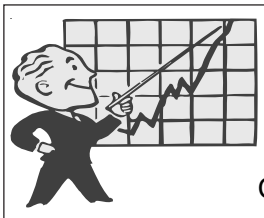
As the industry is witnessing a PR growth, tools and tactics have evolved and in some cases have been replaced with others.As a consequence, the PR professionals have adapted and expanded the form of corporate communications and marketing programs – and continue to do so.

For staying on top of the business and ahead of competitors, PR professionals keep up with the practices to shaping their industry. To help, here are some major digital PR trends which PR professionals are using in the twenty-first century to be with new trends of public relations for their companies or stakeholders:

1. The traditional press release is transformed into digital press release.
2. Online reputation management will be necessary
3. Use of paid promotion and social ads will continue to rise
4. Growing importance of online security
5. Instant publishing of articles and corporate official information.

The other duties of a publicist include:

1. Management of crisis communication
2. Public issues or affairs management
3. Effective product/event publicity
4. Efficient media relations
5. Help maintain public visibility, and also
6. Encounter negative publicity with positive stories.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.5 Who are responsible for making a publicity marketing strategy in any organization?

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Q.6 What are the major trends of public relations media in the twenty-first century?

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11.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have been introduced to the basics of publicity media. Let us quickly recapitulate these once again:

- Publicity is a non-paid form of mass communication that involves getting favourable response of buyers by placing commercially significant news in mass media.
- Public relations officers use different forms of media such as oral communication, printed and graphic communication, print media, outdoor media (electronic displays, hoardings, posters), broadcast media (radio, television, films), other media (websites, endorsements, exhibitions) for communicating with the publics.
- Press release is a short, compiled form of news story written by public relations professionals.
- An Integrated Public Relations Media Model was proposed by Kirk Hallahan.
- This model is focused on providing information as how one should select different types of media
- New Media or Internet is very often used as the most effective tool of publicity by the public relations officers.



11.8 FURTHER READING

1. Aggarwal, Vir Bala and Gupta, V.S (2001). Handbook of Journalism and Mass Communication. New Delhi : Concept Publishing Company.
2. Heath, Robert L (2000). Handbook of Public Relation.U.S.A : Sage Publication.
3. Reddi, C.V. Narshimha (2010). Effective Public Relation and Media Strategy. New Delhi: PHI Learning Pvt.Ltd.



11.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No 1 : Publicity is a non-personal stimulation of demand for a product or service, or business unit by placing commercially significant news about it in a public medium or obtaining favourable presentation of it

over radio, television, or stage that is not paid for by the sponsor.

Ans to Q. No 2 : The main characteristics of publicity are that it is non-paid, objective, low cost, effective and repetitive.

Ans to Q. No 3 : Major kinds of publicity media are oral communication, printed and graphic communication, print media, outdoor media (electronic displays, hoardings, posters), broadcast media (radio, television, films), other media (websites, endorsements, exhibitions).

Ans to Q. No 4 : Press release is a short, compiled form of news story written by apublic relations professional. It should contain all the essential information about the event or information like who, what, where, when, how and most importantly why for the journalists so that they can easily produce their own story.

Ans to Q. No 5 : Public Relations Officer and the Public Relations Department of the organization are responsible for making a publicity strategy for the organization.

Ans to Q. No 6 : The major trends of public relations media in the twenty-first century are:

- The traditional press release is transformed into digital press release.
- Online reputation management will be necessary.
- Use of paid promotion and social ads will continue to rise.
- Growing Importance of online security.
- Instant publishing of articles and official corporate information.



11. 10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions:

Q.1. What do you mean by publicity?

Q.2. What are the different media of publicity?

Q.3. What do you mean by a flyer?

B. Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words):

Q.1. Why is it necessary to prepare an Integrated Public Relations Media Plan?

Q.2. What is the difference between flyers and brochures?

Q.3. What is the difference between print media and oral media?

C. Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words):

Q.1. “Publicity is any promotional communication” – Discuss.

Q.2. What do you mean by the publicity media? Briefly discuss the various media used for publicity.

Q.3 Explain the Integrated Public Relations Model.