



Article

# Public Relations Practices in Tourism: The Effective Tools and Implements

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**Abstract:** In the tourism industry, public relations (PR) practices are vital not only for promoting services but also for building and maintaining trust-based relationships between organizations and consumers. In today's competitive environment, tourism organizations rely on effective PR strategies to establish and sustain their reputation. This study employs a qualitative literature review approach by analyzing scholarly articles focused on PR practices in tourism. The selected studies, published over the last decade, examine topics such as communication through social media, brand awareness, trust building, and crisis management strategies. The literature review indicates that public relations strategies such as social media engagement, influencer marketing, press releases, public events, and corporate communications significantly improve brand visibility and customer interaction. These tools enable organizations to build strong communication channels and shape a favorable brand image. Choosing and effectively implementing the right PR tools not only enhances service efficiency but also contributes to the long-term sustainability of tourism organizations. Especially, real-time interaction via social media boosts trust and engagement, establishing public relations as a strategic asset in modern tourism.

**Citation:** Kosim o'g'li, E. T. Public Relations Practices In Tourism: The Effective Tools and Implements. Central Asian Journal of Innovations on Tourism Management and Finance 2025, 6(3), 1037-1045.

Received: 15<sup>th</sup> Dec 2024

Revised: 29<sup>th</sup> Dec 2024

Accepted: 11<sup>th</sup> Jan 2025

Published: 31<sup>th</sup> Jan 2025



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**Keywords:** public relations, tourism, hospitality, social media, company effectiveness, media, communications, PR strategies, organizations, relationships

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Preface

The concept of PR has shown that to understand the audience, it is necessary to consider their voice, opinion, and values to achieve the goals. Public relations are used in all areas of society, such as government agencies, hospitals, foundations, hospitality, educational and religious institutions, and businesses. In the era of technology, it is easier than ever to establish contact and hear an audience's opinion worldwide, but this does not make the problems any less; on the contrary, it has become more challenging to please the public and their needs. Building effective public relations means conveying messages that reflect the organization's goals and are aimed at increasing profits while meeting the audience's needs. The research seeks to study PR in the age of technology, its significance and influence, and most importantly, to understand why the audience's voice has been so important in all spheres for many years.

Public relations creates a constantly changing image using a specific language. It shapes people's perspectives and discusses various topics, fostering an environment where tourism can thrive. By analyzing the strategies employed by travel promoters, we can understand the paths they have taken. Public relations sometimes guide tourism,

trimming and nurturing to ensure long-lasting success for everyone involved. This field protects the connections between different sectors, repairing damaged relationships with carefully chosen words and telling captivating stories to attract more travellers. Experts use techniques to spread the desire to explore this field. Despite challenges, tourism continues to grow and flourish thanks to effective communication strategies that have been tested and proven successful. These strategies are crucial in maintaining an ever-evolving industry constantly shaped through careful wording. Tourism's growth can be compared to a wildfire fueled by skillfully crafted words. By examining past actions, we can uncover methods to expand the reach of travel even further. A single phrase from public relations can calm disagreements or ignite curiosity into an unstoppable force. By studying established practices, we gain insight into how effective communication contributes to this sector's ongoing revolution and endurance for years[1].

According to the topic, this research will consider the following issues:

1. How does public relations impact the effectiveness of the hospitality industry?
2. The relationship between tourism and public relations is intricate and multifaceted.
3. Is PR for Tourism businesses primarily used as a sales tool or for creating brand awareness?
4. Methods for connecting with the audience on social media platforms.

Hence, this study is proposed to determine the important connections between attitude, trust, skills, and control reciprocity and the efficacy of public relations techniques. Additionally, it aims to investigate which element has the biggest impact on the efficacy of PR strategies.

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Organizations are constantly scrutinised in a world where information travels at the speed of light. The never-ending news cycle and public perception can make or break an institution in minutes. This is where Public Relations (PR) practices come into play. Public relations, a cornerstone in shaping public perception and creating a positive image for any organization, is particularly effective in building trust among stakeholders, including customers, employees, investors, and the general public. Practitioners use press releases, events, social media campaigns, and other tactics to communicate effectively with these groups, positively influencing their perceptions[2]. Analyzing the effectiveness of such practices reveals its impact on organizational performance. When people trust an entity due to effective PR strategies employed over time, it leads to better sales figures since clients feel more confident buying from companies with positive perceptions[3]. This paper aims to research their effectiveness by analyzing theoretical studies regarding different articles' use of various communication channels during crisis situations along several relevant variables like cost-effectiveness, etc., highlighting best practices based on findings obtained so far[4].

In 1982, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) first defined the concept of public relations as "PR is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics." This strategic nature of PR, with its main functions of influencing, engaging, and building strong relationships with many different audiences, such as customers, members, stockholders, local communities, and society at large, has transformed how organizations communicate. Nearly between the late 1800s and early 1900s, in the USA, the strategy of communicating with the public and creating a relationship with them has become an official career[5-6]. Today's public relations industry can be described as a mature profession in which practitioners and academics work together to understand the role of public relations better and to debate and clarify the many practical and philosophical issues that arise when defining the relationship between an organization and its public, Jerman, Vuković, & Završnik.

Public relations (PR) practices play a crucial role in the success of the tourism industry, as effective communication and relationship-building are essential for promoting destinations and attracting visitors. In articles, researchers have explored

various tools and strategies used in PR practices within the tourism sector to understand how organizations can effectively engage with their target audience and enhance their reputation[7]. For instance, the 'I Amsterdam' campaign, which used social media and influencer marketing to promote the city, was hugely successful. Another example is the '100% Pure New Zealand' campaign, which focused on media relations and crisis communication to maintain a positive image of the country. These examples highlight the effectiveness of PR practices in the tourism industry. One key aspect of PR practices in tourism is media relations, where organizations work closely with journalists and media outlets to secure positive coverage and increase visibility. By maintaining strong relationships with the media, tourism organizations can amplify their messaging and reach a broader audience. This proactive approach to media engagement helps promote tourist destinations, events, and attractions to potential visitors[8].

Social media has emerged as a powerful tool for PR in the tourism industry, allowing organizations to connect with travellers in real time and share engaging content. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter enable tourism organizations to interact with their audience, respond to feedback, and build a community of loyal followers. Organizations can showcase their offerings through strategic social media campaigns and create buzz around their brand. Influencer marketing has also become a popular PR strategy in tourism, with organizations partnering with influencers to reach new audiences and build credibility. Collaborating with travel influencers with a large following on platforms like YouTube and TikTok can help organizations showcase their destinations and experiences to a broader audience. Leveraging these content creators' influence can significantly impact a tourism brand's visibility and perception[9].

Furthermore, crisis communication is critical to PR practices in tourism, as organizations must be prepared to address negative publicity or unexpected events promptly. However, it's important to note that not all crises can be effectively managed through PR alone. Some situations may require additional measures or a different approach. Having a well-defined crisis communication plan and being transparent in communication can help mitigate the impact of crises on the reputation of tourism organizations, Watson. The literature on public relations practices in tourism highlights the importance of utilizing various tools and strategies such as media relations, social media, influencer marketing, and crisis communication to enhance brand visibility and engage with travelers effectively. By understanding and implementing these PR practices, tourism organizations can build strong relationships with their target audience and drive visitor engagement[10].

## 2. Materials and Methods

The thesis on public relations practices in tourism utilized a *qualitative literature review methodology* that involved scouring educational articles. In this qualitative literature review methodology, we aim to explore the existing research on public relations practices in the tourism industry, with a specific focus on identifying the effective tools and implements utilized by organizations to enhance their communication strategies. By conducting a comprehensive review of relevant literature, we seek to synthesize key findings and insights to inform our understanding of public relations in the context of tourism[11].

The literature search will be conducted using online databases such as Google Scholar, PubMed, and Scopus, as well as academic journals and conference proceedings related to public relations and tourism. Keywords such as "public relations," "tourism industry," "communication strategies," and "effective tools" will be used to identify relevant studies published in the last decade. Studies included in the literature review will focus on public relations practices, specifically within the tourism industry, examining the tools and implements organizations use to communicate with stakeholders. Research focusing on crisis communication strategies employed by tourism organizations will be considered for inclusion[12]. Crisis situations can significantly impact the reputation and sustainability of

tourism businesses, making effective crisis communication a critical aspect of public relations practices.

Studies investigating using social media platforms as tools for communication and engagement in the tourism industry will be included. Social media has become a powerful channel for reaching and interacting with audiences, making exploring its role in public relations practices essential. Research that examines community relations initiatives undertaken by tourism organizations to build positive relationships with local communities will be incorporated into the literature review. Engaging with host communities is essential for sustainable tourism development and responsible business practices. By applying these inclusion criteria, the qualitative literature review methodology ensures a focused and comprehensive exploration of public relations practices in the tourism industry, specifically identifying effective tools and implements organizations use to enhance their communication strategies[13].

### 3. Results and Discussion

Public relations, or indirect advertising, is a powerful tool in shaping public opinion about a product, service, manufacturer, seller, or country. It's more than just propaganda; it's a strategic system of social information management. This system encompasses the entire process of producing and promoting information, all to cultivate a positive perception of the advertiser in the public circles they are interested in.

PR acts as a commercial policy to gain a favourable opinion of specific social and professional groups or individuals. Public relations, as an essential part of the intra-firm policy, contributes to the creation of its own opinion and the creation of the firm's image and persuades the public of the beneficial impact of the firm on the public welfare. Public relations contributes to seeking mutual understanding and forming contacts with the press, public figures, government and other circles[14].

Public relations is the most important tool of communication policy for the hospitality industry. It is necessary to create a positive image of enterprises and their services and to attract consumers through favorable public opinion created by the press, politicians, and representatives of cultural and scientific societies, Lane.

As a producer and seller of a wide range of services, the hotel should have properly built and constructive relations with clients, intermediaries, suppliers, and the general public.

As a rule, Public Relations performs several functions:

- *establishing and maintaining relationships with the press*: placement of information of cognitive, informative and event character in mass media to attract attention to products, services and the enterprise itself;
- *publicity to products and services*: popularization creation of fame through actions aimed at attracting the attention of the public;
- *corporate communications*: formation of the communication policy of the enterprise in terms of expanding favourable relations with partners, customers, auctioneers, investors and others;
- *public relations activities*: formation of a system of relations with the public at various levels (local, regional, national).

With the help of PR, it is possible to significantly impact public opinion at the lowest cost compared to commercial advertising. Promoting its information through PR means, the enterprise does not pay for time and space at the existing advertising rates; it pays only for the work of media personnel, actually paying for the idea of a journalist, director or manager who realized this event. However, practitioners and experts are unanimous in the opinion that the consumer prefers an interesting article, radio report, or stories of experts or eyewitnesses to an advertising clip. It is obvious that in modern society PR performs a more complex function than advertising and plays an important role in accomplishing the following tasks:

- assisting in the appearance of new products and services on the market;
- inducing a change in attitudes towards goods and services;
- developing and revitalizing interest in partially or completely forgotten products and services;
- influencing certain target groups to create a favorable image of the enterprise;
- protection of the offered products and services in problematic situations, usually in case of loss of reputation;
- creating an image of the enterprise in the eyes of consumers, favorably reflecting on the image of products and services.

Acute competition between tourism and hospitality enterprises, and sometimes between entire tourist and resort regions, causes information wars. Only a well-thought-out public relations policy can reduce their intensity and direct them in a civilized direction.

The main PR tools are:

*Publications* - articles, reports, newsletters, magazines, brochures. All of these widely circulated tools contribute to the creation of an attractive image of the firm and convey interesting messages to target markets;

*Activities* - the enterprise draws consumer attention to products and services at exhibitions, seminars, conferences, contests, and presentations that reach the general public and target audiences. Presentations, or otherwise performances, are becoming especially popular[15]. They are promotional events of a rather complex nature, sometimes including not only a demonstration of goods or services but also theatrical performances, concerts, dinners or buffets, various performances, auctions, etc.;

*News* - PR specialists' main task is to provide exciting and favourable news about the enterprise and its services. PR specialists should have good journalistic skills to competently form an idea to address the audience and send press releases to the editors of newspapers and magazines about the activities and prospects of the enterprise they represent. A press release is a prepared brief material about a product, service or company for possible free publication in the press. It is sent to publishers, given to participants of press conferences, symposiums, presentations, and exhibitions, as well as to journalists attending these events;

*Speeches* are one way of spreading the word about the firm and its services. This type of activity is usually the prerogative of business executives. The ability to speak in public, be persuasive, and make strong arguments in favour of their business - is an essential skill for managers of companies. Large firms and companies, realizing the importance of this tool, use the services of professionals in the field of PR technologies. After all, the prestige of the company is the most important capital of the company, which has built up over the years, forming a favourable attitude toward the brand among different generations of consumers[16].

PR specialists at the hotel took successful steps to cover events that could attract both the press and the general public. Such events were thematic festivals of the national cuisine of different countries, held in the restaurants of Marriott hotels. Special cooking classes were organized in the restaurants, where journalists writing on gastronomic topics were invited, which led to a significant increase in the popularity of hotel catering facilities. As the following steps, measures were taken to strengthen and expand the already formed information field, which could cause a positive public response. These were the activities on press coverage of three more directions of hotel activities: sponsorship of cultural events, organization of art exhibitions and charity events.

Professionals in the field of PR technologies applied in the hospitality industry emphasize the need to be open, flexible, active, and aggressive. For a specialist in the field of practice, it is mandatory to have organizational skills and the ability to control and coordinate the work of all services involved in the conduct of events, Watson. Hotel PR management must be able to use any public event held in the hotel for its benefit. For



example, when the Marriott Grand Hotel hosted the International Economic Forum, called in the press Moscow Davos, the hotel's PR specialists, coordinating with the press service of the forum, directed the considerable interest shown to this event by the media and business circles to the hotel itself, raising its prestige and importance.

At the same time, it takes work to assess the contribution of PR activities to the final result of the hotel's activity. The most common criteria for evaluating pre-RR activities are the number of contacts, change in awareness and understanding of target audiences, and contribution to increased sales and profit growth.

The activity in developing and implementing public relations technologies in the tourism industry is specific due to the peculiarities and trends of development in this market. Here, we are talking not only about the effective promotion of services but also about creating a reputation, a favourable image, building trust, and commitment of both consumers and partners, contractors, employees, and the professional community. In the tourism industry, with these components, it is possible to realize the tourist product and increase business profitability effectively.

Another feature of the tourist market is the high level of competition. In all major cities, there are many travel agencies and tour operators branches, actively fighting for consumers with the help of various means and methods of advertising and public relations technologies. The situation is also complicated by a high rate of commoditization when the services of the subjects of the tourist market in the perception of customers are the same. Hence, there is a need to identify and differentiate services that determine the company's positioning.

Today, tourism is one of the most actively developing areas of the industry, and it is a good source of income for many countries. This statement has yet to be applied to Uzbekistan, where tourism is only in its infancy. The main problem is that many illegally operating firms and tour operators must also improve their work. In Uzbekistan, the number of such travel agencies is growing yearly, and people need to be more trusting, especially when travelling abroad. This is due not only to imperfect legislation but also to the great competition in the market of tourist services, which affects both large and small firms.

To promote your company in the market, you need good PR service. Unsurprisingly, today, tourism PR is in demand as never before, and many tourism companies invest substantial funds in this area. PR is necessary to attract attention and create the image of the tourist company and its further maintenance[17-18].

As other countries' experience shows, increasing a travel agency's competitiveness in the world market can be achieved only by actively promoting tourist products. Moreover, the task of PR service is not only to promote the tourism products of a particular company but also to create a positive image of the country in the eyes of customers. Such tactics are a nationally significant task.

*PR in the field of tourism industry can be aimed at the following goals:*

- Establishing contacts between organizations that offer tourism services and their target audiences, as well as the media, to identify common perceptions and mutual interests.
- We are achieving mutual understanding with the target audience based on truth, knowledge of the necessary information, and full awareness of tourism organizations' activities.
- One key goal of PR in the tourism industry is to establish a relationship of trust between tourism organizations and the community. This trust is not just a desirable outcome but a fundamental pillar of the industry's success, underscoring the responsibility that PR professionals hold in their hands.
- It ensures the fame of the travel agency and the formation of its image.
- Popularization of the national tourist product, as well as the tourist product of a particular company.

- Another crucial role of PR in the tourism industry is refuting inaccurate information. This is not just about correcting falsehoods but about wielding the power of truth to shape public perception, highlighting PR professionals' influence in the industry.
- We are providing support for the tourism product from different target audiences.

*Main directions of PR activity in the sphere of tourism*

To date, there are three main directions of PR activities in the field of tourism:

- International,
- National,
- and intra-industry.

It is possible to distinguish the following tasks that face PR organizations in the field of tourism:

- *We are working with the media.* Managing the target audience through this lever is essential to attracting potential customers' attention to the information provided. Attracting authoritative people to form the image of tourism organizations is also necessary. For example, the words of a popular presenter about travelling will cause more trust than the opinion of independent experts.
  - *Release of informational materials.* Today, information rules the world, and this position also applies to tourism activities. Modern tourists have become very demanding; they need to know where they are going, what they will get from the tourist product and how much exactly it will cost. Most of them want to get this information without leaving home. Therefore, creating information booklets and designing Internet sites where customers can get the necessary information and order a tourist product is essential. An important indicator is representation in international global booking systems.
  - *Production of information materials.* Today, information rules the world, which also applies to tourism activities. Modern tourists have become very demanding; they need to know where they are going, what they will get from the tourist products, and how much they will cost. Most of them want to get this information without leaving home. Therefore, creating information booklets and designing Internet sites where customers can get the necessary information and order a tourist product is essential. An important indicator is representation in international global booking systems.
  - *Organization of press tours.* These are promotional trips tailored for specific clients, such as lottery winners. They can also be offered to travel agency employees as a reward for their excellent work. In these instances, the power of word-of-mouth marketing comes into play. A person who has had a memorable vacation is bound to share their experience with friends and acquaintances, who might then be inspired to embark on similar trips.
  - Holding international forums and landmark events will allow them to share their achievements in tourism and create a positive image of the visited place or country.
- Impact of PR on the Tourism Sphere*
- Any PR, from straightforward methods of promoting tourist products to unusual, creative events, positively impacts tourism. Information support for event tourism and festival organization is essential in this context.
  - Black PR is also often used in the tourism industry. The technologies of this PR are less widespread in the tourism sector than in other economic spheres, but companies resort to it in some cases. For example, through black PR, you can spoil the image of a competitor's product by misleading potential tourists. Such attacks are often carried out through Internet resources, as they could be more controllable. These can be website publications, independent reviews, blog reviews, etc. Tourist organizations need to monitor such publications in time, write competent rebuttals, and give interviews and more detailed information to customers. If such reviews are received on the site, they can be deleted or refuted.

- The use of PR technologies in tourism largely shapes the state's image. Every tourist who travels abroad is a PR manager of his state. PR specialists also need to work with foreign tourists so that when they leave the country, they want to return to it.

#### 4. Conclusion

Public relations (PR) practices play a vital role in shaping the image and reputation of tourism organizations, fostering trust, and ensuring long-term competitiveness in an increasingly dynamic market. This study demonstrates that strategic tools such as social media engagement, influencer collaborations, press releases, public events, and corporate communications significantly enhance stakeholder relationships and brand visibility. By establishing effective communication channels, organizations can increase consumer loyalty and strengthen their market positioning. Crisis communication planning and transparent interaction with local communities are also essential components of a robust PR strategy, helping organizations to maintain credibility during challenging times. In markets like Uzbekistan, where tourism is still developing and consumer trust remains fragile due to the proliferation of unregulated operators, well-structured PR activities are increasingly necessary. Effective PR not only promotes individual tourism enterprises but also contributes to shaping a positive national image in the global tourism landscape. Moreover, by delivering truthful and engaging narratives, PR professionals can correct misinformation and influence public perception. As tourism becomes more digitized, future research should further investigate the impact of emerging technologies—including social media algorithms and artificial intelligence—on PR strategy effectiveness. Ultimately, tourism organizations must invest in integrated communication strategies that are proactive, transparent, and audience-focused to navigate market uncertainties and sustain growth. Thus, public relations should be viewed not merely as a promotional function but as a strategic asset essential for fostering trust, differentiation, and resilience within the tourism sector.

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