

The Marketer's Guide to PR and Social Working Together

Uncover New Opportunities and Navigate Risk



Assemble Your Team



Social Media: The Huge Disruptor

Gone are the days in which a public relations professional sends off a press release on the wire and crosses their fingers for the best. But we can learn to accommodate the disruption in the PR space by making sure PR and Social teams work together to become a powerhouse.

Oftentimes, PR teams need to be faster, more nimble, more 'relatable,' and engaging. They need to have a pulse of what's going on in the world and what's being said about their brands. Social should be a top platform for all public relations experts. Similarly, Social Media Managers should always be collaborating with their PR counterparts.

Unfortunately, a lot of PR teams still play under an old traditional role and rule. They often feel like they are cold calling and knocking on doors to make a connection. That said, having the right tool to evangelize a PR and social marketer relationship is crucial.

This Field Guide on how PR and Social can work together will help you to reach out to your social team and take your working relationship to the next level.

Today's PR Team Must Be:



Faster, more nimble, 'relatable' and engaging



Connected to the pulse of what's going on in the world



Aware of all brand and industry-related conversations

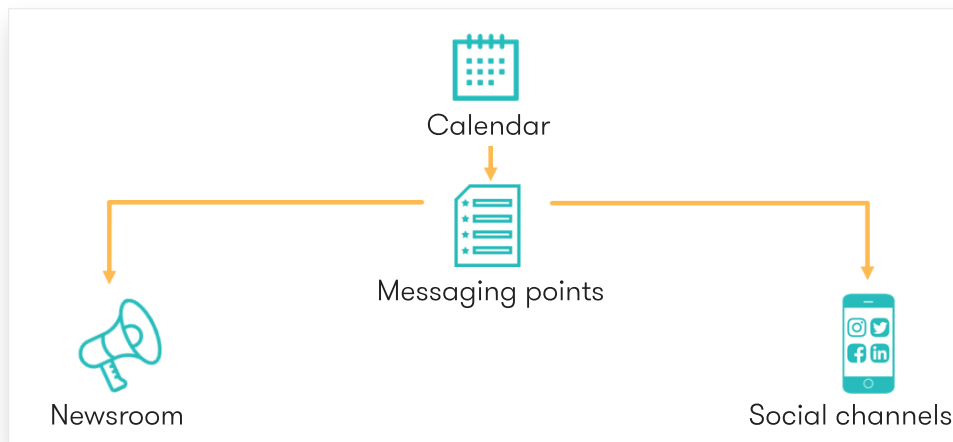


Ready to reach out to your social marketing counterparts

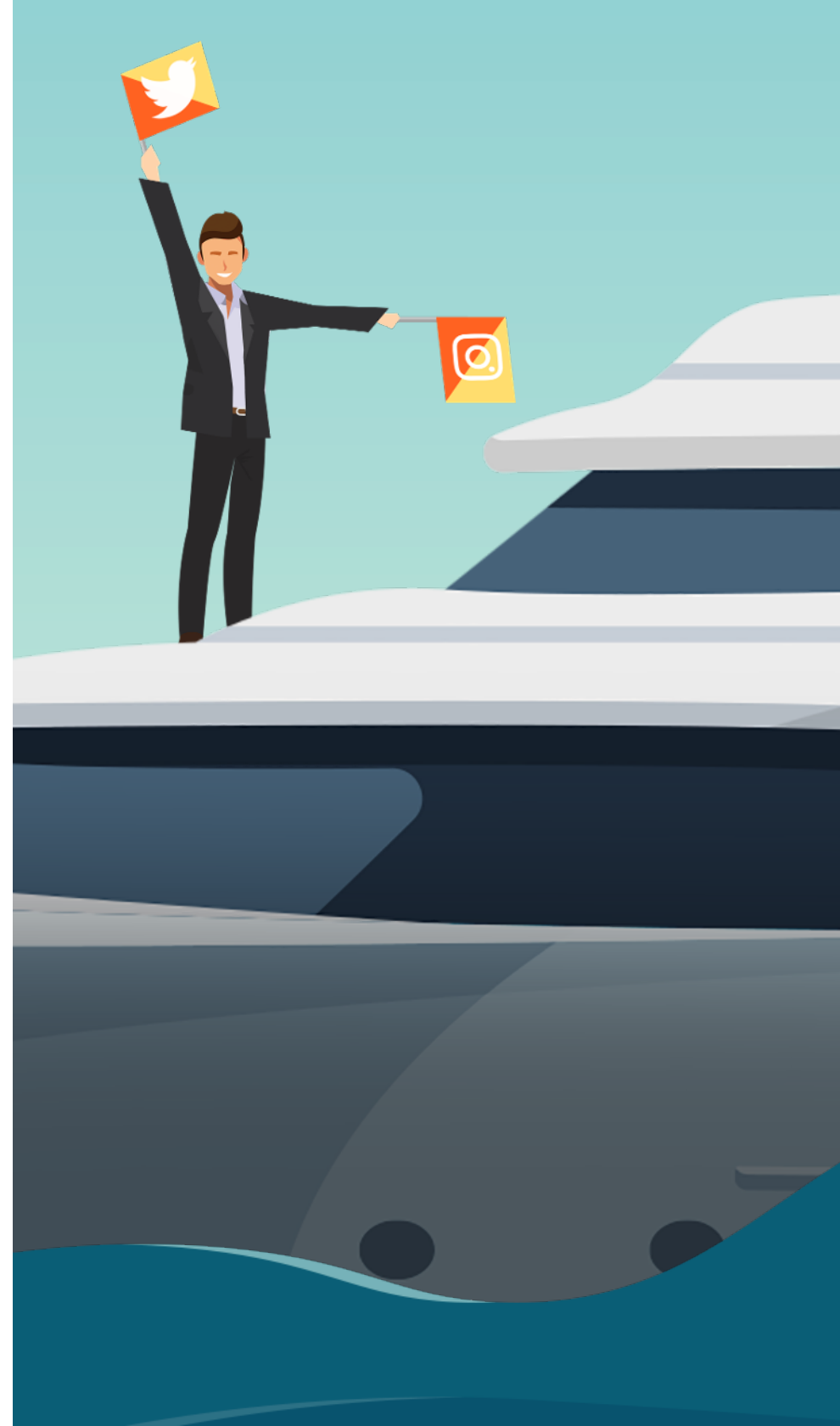
Announcements and Why They're Important

Announcements could be anything from posting about awards and accolades for the brand, to company product launches, to acquisitions and company updates.

While journalists may not deem most of these announcements press-worthy or newsworthy, your social following will definitely appreciate the transparency and good news from your brand. Also, on social, everything travels faster. You can turn anything boring like a product release for the new IOS 12 and make it much more relatable. It then becomes strategic as an audience response and feedback on social could reveal current trends.



The how is really easy. It means collaborating early on with your social team, and working on shared calendar messaging points, dispersing announcement content between your social channels and the newsroom.



Influencers

With a robust social listening tool like **Meltwater's**, you can identify prevalent and highly engaging socialites, celebrities, social influencers, and politicians that are talking about and engaging with your brand.

In collaboration with the social team, you could come up with a plan on how to engage with them, or amplify their positive messages on social, creating an influencer engagement plan.

In addition to that, you can also work on how to identify and engage with negative social content from a potential influencer and integrate that into your crisis communications plan. The success of managing negative sentiment can be reported on via metrics.

Find your next journalist or blogger in the **Meltwater Influencer Database**

Identify and Engage with Influencers



With a robust social listening tool, you can identify social influencers

- Celebrities
- Social superstars
- Taste-makers and opinion-shapers
- Politicians



Create an influencer engagement plan

- Coordinate, target, and manage campaigns
- Prepare for crisis scenarios
- Measure success and report



Learn, Plan and Engage



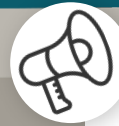
Follow journalists

- How active are they?
- Have they already engaged with or talked about your brand?
- What are their interest?



Join the conversation

- Share their articles to your audiences
- Comment on relevant posts
- If invited, you can even pitch on social



Prepare to make contact

- Updating your media database with what you learn
- Grouping journalists into categories for easy organization (current interests, location, hobbies)

Media Relationship Management

Use social listening to find out which journalists are active on social and who have already engaged with your brand. Make sure to follow them and use tools like Twitter lists to group journalists into categories for easy organization.

PR can easily join these conversations with journalists, present certain angles. Social listening will help you better understand a journalist's

voice and beat to better craft pitches and press releases to them.

The great thing about following journalists on social is understanding how active they are, how many times they've already engaged with or talked about your brand and what are their main interests are.

Brand Management

On social media you can continually fine tune and express your brand personality, as well as experiment and learn by looking at your results and metrics to help inform your content strategy. This helps you to align yourself to new trends.

In addition to the outbound marketing messages that you may want to push out on social, the key is to also engage with the inbound messages coming in either directly, or tagging or talking about your brand.

With a social listening tool and your social marketing team, it allows you to amplify any positive brand engagement coming from your consumers or your audience.

When identifying threats coming from influencers and even general consumers, make sure to understand their volume, and whether it's a product-related outage first. More info will help you to come up with a plan to neutralize those threats as quickly as they appeared.

Outbound



Work closely with your social team to:

- Ensure all messages align with brand values
- Share and promote all brand content
- Be proactive with your brand voice



On social you can continually:

- Craft, fine tune, and express your brand personality
- Experiment and learn by measuring results
- Align yourself to new trends



Inbound



With social listening:

- Amplify positive brand engagement
- Identify brand threats from influencers and consumers
- Neutralize threats quickly



Work closely with the social team on a game plan to:

- Listen and share
- Establish response frameworks
- Address brand threats



Planning is Everything



Be synced up

- Work hand-in-hand so your press release and your social posts are released simultaneously.
- A shared content calendar allows for easier collaboration and encourages a unified comms strategy



Plan well in advance for various crisis scenarios and establish

- Escalation plans
- Initial responses with relevant links for more information



Remember, with social, you have access to:

- Large, attentive audiences
- Channels that enable instant—and when necessary—ongoing response



It's all about teamwork

- Do heavy lifting in the beginning by establishing a clear strategy with your social team
- Partner up early and often
- Empower your social team while you focus on the pitch

Crisis Management

Planning for potential crises in advance is key. Build out your escalation plans and initial responses, but note that social media is a much faster, much more nimble beast than what may go out in the news. Things could happen at the drop of a dime.

Having phone trees setup, a plan whom to contact, when to contact, and any email blasts already written, will make your life a lot easier.

See what the world's most powerful PR platform can do for you.

Meltwater Media Monitoring

Execution is Key



Measure, measure, measure

- If you can show growth with one person on your team, you can potentially justify hiring more people to expand your operation



Smart metrics

- Don't just focus on "Vanity Metrics", likes and followers. Without context these numbers don't mean much.
- "Engagement Metrics" are much more useful information. Who shared? Who commented?
- What is the brand sentiment?
- Social Listening tools enable you to get under the skin of the conversation.

Crisis Management Execution

What should your response plan look like?

Whatever your crisis response details look like - it needs to be lightning fast on social media. Remember, you have a large attentive audience, and channels that enable instant and, if necessary, ongoing responses. So even you may have specific response frameworks set up with your social team, there may potentially be a dialogue in play that requires you to have a plan B and C on how to respond.

Who will decide on your response strategy and channels?

Define a clear chain of decision-making so you can decide which ideas to move on and execute your plans quickly. Remember, in opportunity marketing, a good idea quickly executed is usually better than a perfect idea delivered just a little too late.

Who will write and design your creative assets?

Real-time marketing is the wrong time to agonize over the perfect wording or search for just the right shade of blue. Designate creatives who can make swift, confident decisions to produce the assets you need.

USE CASE: Saying Goodbye to AOL Instant Messenger

As Yahoo was preparing to retire the long running AOL Instant Messenger, they worried about the sentiment surrounding the event and were conscience that this would a cultural moment for many users. It was decided that a situation like this should not be approached with fear and the 'stashing away' of an old fact, but a legacy to be celebrated. Retiring a pop-culture phenomenon like the AOL icon should be a proactive conversation on social media, not a reactive crisis management.

Yahoo therefore decided to move away from the traditional press release process through a business wire to announce the end of AOL Instant Messenger. Instead, they agreed on a multi-channel approach through Tumblr, social media and press outreach.

The press release was built as a blog post on Tumblr, which was owned by Yahoo as well. It was framed and themed with some beautiful creative and animated gifs. All media and journalists where directed to this [Tumblr post](#) when inquiries came in, while it also enabled some organic discovery from the web.

The approach for social media was to animate the infamous running man from AOL, putting on his party hat, and celebrating his last chapter. It was his last 'away message' for the world to see. With this, Yahoo bid him a farewell.

The post had extremely high engagement rates for a social post coming from a brand itself. But strong interest and high inquiry volumes were anticipated. The customer care team and the PR department had worked on a crisis communications plan beforehand, and the whole campaign was a great success, even though the goal of the campaign was to retire Instant Messenger for good.



AOL INSTANT MESSENGER (AIM)

Where Instant Messaging began in 1997.

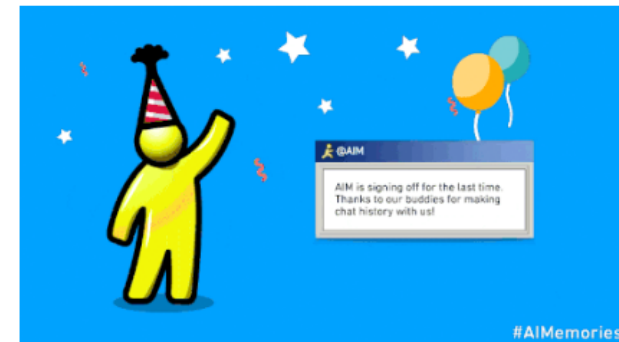
One Last Away Message

Powered by Tumblr
Discovery Theme by UltraLinx

By Michael Albers, VP of Communications Product at Oath

If you were a 90's kid, chances are there was a point in time when AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) was a huge part of your life. You likely remember the CD, your first screenname, your carefully curated away messages, and how you organized your buddy lists. Right now you might be reminiscing about how you had to compete for time on the home computer in order to chat with friends outside of school. You might also remember how characters throughout pop culture from "You've Got Mail" to "Sex and the City" used AIM to help navigate their relationships. In the late 1990's, the world had never seen anything like it. And it captivated all of us.

AIM tapped into new digital technologies and ignited a cultural shift, but the way in which we communicate with each other has profoundly changed. As a result we've made the decision that we will be discontinuing AIM effective December 15, 2017. We are more excited than ever to continue building the next generation of iconic brands and life-changing products for users around the world.

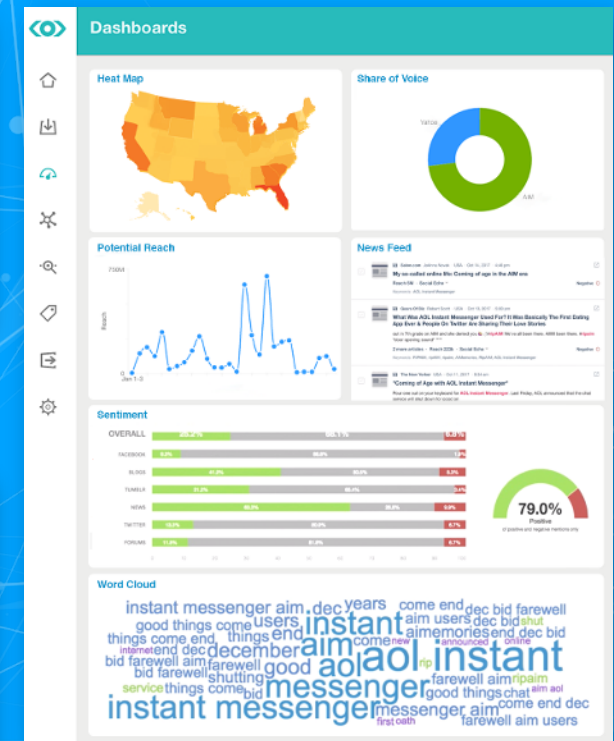
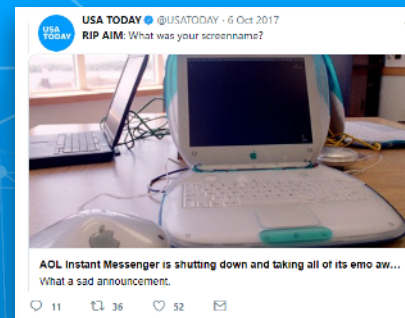


Thank you to all of our AIM users. And definitely stay tuned as we're fired up to provide more products and experiences that people around the world love.

#AIMemories



Key Elements of the AOL Instant Messenger



The right message to the right publications.

The imagery of the campaign was key to the success. A lot of journalists picked it up from Tumblr posts and from what was provided to them from the PR team. The journalists themselves were happy to have something intriguing to supplement their stories with.

Social influencers promote an authentic response.

Yahoo saw a lot of social influencers post authentically about the end of life for AOL and AIM, and what AIM had meant for their lives. **Mark Zuckerberg** talk about it in a long engaging post. CEOs from different companies, celebrities and actors like **Joseph Gordon Levitt** spoke about it. Blink182 even named one of their songs in response to the AIM handle on twitter.

Insights through social listening.

Yahoo tracked campaign responses through their social listening tool and saw that the conversation shifted. People and AIM users were not getting angry that the service was going to be gone. Yahoo succeeded in turning people nostalgic and emotional about AIM's legacy and impact on their lives. Working with the PR team made sure that messaging wasn't robotic or serious which eventually changed the conversation and allowed for proper crisis and brand management.



Go Further with Meltwater

PR and Social Working Together Can Be for Your Company, Too!

PR and Marketing, or even Social teams working together can provide a huge opportunity to both departments. This holds true for both positive brand management campaign, as well as for times of crisis, when risks have to be navigated.

Real-Time Marketing is often done better with good tools that help you uncover social influencers, collect keywords most often used in combination with your brand or company, and accurately report your posts' reach.

Utilizing an all-in-one communications platform can also help PR and social teams to work as one, and share resources and efforts. The retiring of AIM is just one enticing example of many amazing ways to turn a story around by crafting proactive media management plans.

Learn More About Real-Time Marketing

To keep track of the latest best practices for PR and social media management, take a look at our additional resources.

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