# Digital Media and Public Relations

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## Course description

Public relations campaigns are currently using digital media intensively. A comprehensive approach to the fields is taken to deepen the understanding on how PR strategies can be optimized. The fundamental of PR campaigns and strategies are presented within the digital sphere, as well as key drivers of the field such as strategic issue management, public affairs and advocacy campaigns. Also, digital metrics, tools and indicators are presented and used to position, plan and evaluate the impact of these campaigns.

## ECTS Credits

4 ECTS Credits

## Specific competences

At the end of the course, the student will be able to…

› To understand the role public relations play in today's society.
› To apply public relations strategies to different types of cases and scenarios.
› To design and produce public relations strategies in digital media,
› To design strategies of issue management and crisis communication
› To align public relations strategies with current public affairs and advocacy campaigns
› To apply digital techniques in public relations campaigns.
› To manage communities of digital stakeholders.

## Learning outcomes

At the end of the course, the student…

› Will have acquired the fundamentals of public relations in the digital environment: key concepts, techniques and tools of positioning and evaluation.
› Will have learned the advantages, outcomes, challenges, and process of public affairs and advocacy in the digital sphere.
› Will be able to plan, design, produce and test strategic communication campaigns in the digital media.

## Content

The course covers 9 topics to be presented in the 9 sessions. The 10th session is dedicated to the final presentation by students and the professors' feedback:

1. Fundamentals of digital PR campaigns
2. Public relations strategies in the digital environment
3. Strategic issue management and crisis communication
4. Lobbying and advocacy in the digital sphere
5. Public Affairs and case studies
6. Objectives, strategies and metrics of digital communication
7. Search engine marketing
8. Display, Programmatic and email marketing
9. Paid social and the figure of the community manager
10. Final project presentation

## Method of presentation

The teaching method combines lectures and practical work in the form of readings, debates, case-studies, presentations, problem solving. Every session will have 90 minutes lecture (approximately) to present the main concepts, theories, techniques and tools of the topic. And then, students will work on a topic for debate, a case study, a reading (uploaded previously in the virtual campus) or do a presentation. In both parts, the student's participation is highly valued, and many examples can be used. The students will be working from session one in an individual assignment about an innovative PR campaign. This assignment will be presented in session 5. Then, students will join in pairs or groups, or keep working individually if they prefer, to implement and evaluate the impact of this campaign. A presentation of the Final Project is required in the last session.

## Course assessment

This course's assessment is compounded of three parts: participation in class (debates, case-studies and readings), assignment 1 and final project. Students will work in class with readings and case-studies provided by the professor. Also, students have to submit an assignment and do a short presentation in class in session 5. Finally, a final project of a real PR campaign will be submitted and presented in the last session:

› Attendance/participation in readings, debates and case studies: 25%
› Assignment 1 (individual): 25%
› Final project (individual or in pairs): 50%

## Course schedule

| Weeks | Content of the class | Practical activities |
|---|---|---|
| Week 1 | Fundamentals of digital PR campaigns | Brainstorming Debate |
| Week 2 | Public relations strategies in the digital environment | Reading 1 and 2 & Debate |
| Week 3 | Strategic issue management and crisis communication | Case study |
| Week 4 | Lobbying and advocacy in the digital sphere | Reading 3 & Debate |
| Week 5 | Public Affairs and case studies | Assignment 1 |
| Week 6 | Objectives, strategies and metrics of digital communication | Reading 4 & Case-study |
| Week 7 | Search engine marketing | Reading 5 & Debate |
| Week 8 | Display, Programmatic and email marketing | Other class dynamics |
| Week 9 | Paid social and the figure of the community manager | Case-study |
| Week 10 | Final project presentation | Public defense |

## Required reading

Grunig, J. E. (2009). Paradigms of global public relations in an age of digitalisation. PRism 6(2): http://praxis.massey.ac.nz/prism_on-line_journ.html

Martín-Guart, R. y Fernández-Cavia, J. (2014). Advertising and media agencies in the face of the change in the media ecosystem. Cuadernos.info, (34), 13-25. DOI: 10.7764/cdi.34.572.

Pérez-Latre, F. J. (2009). Advertising fragmentation: the beginning of a new paradigm? En Powell, H., Hardy, J., Hawkin, S. y MacruryI, I. (Eds.), The advertising handbook London: Routledge.

Pfeiffer, M. y Zinnbauer, M. (2010). Can old media enhance new media? Journal of Advertising Research, 50(1), 42-49.

Vercic, D., Tkalac Vercic, A., Srirameshc, K. (2015). Review Looking for digital in public relations. *Public Relations Review*, 41: 142–152.

Verhoeven, P., Tench, R., Zerfass, A. Moreno, A., Vercic, D. (2012). How European PR practitioners handle digital and social media. *Public Relations Review*, 38: 162–164.

 \* Other reading materials can be provided during the course.

## Recommended reading

van Dijk, J. (2013). The culture of Connectivity. A Critical History of Social Media. Oxford University Press.

Wirtz, B.W, Nitzsche, P. y Mory, L. (2014). Cross-media marketing strategies. En Liu, Yu-li y Picard, R.G. eds (2014). Policy and marketing strategies for digital media, London/New York: Routledge.