The role of PR in the marketing mix
Why organisations need to exploit new technology
How to create a defendable and measurable strategy

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Public relations has clearly established itself as an essential part of the marketing mix. From a pharmaceutical marketing perspective, PR is no longer seen as an ‘add on’, something that can be tacked on after the main marketing disciplines have been deployed. Instead, PR is now recognised as a strategic element in its own right and cannot exist effectively as an add on. It needs to be integrated into the whole of the marketing effort. In fact, PR can sometimes deliver results that are greater than the sum of the parts.

In TIMES OF BUDGET RESTRAINTS
It is hardly surprising, therefore, in a post-bunker era, that evidenced-based and increasing regulatory and legal stringency, companies are looking for new and innovative ways to market their products. Budgets often need to be stretched further and marketing companies are looking for new ways to market effectively, with the same or more resources. But what is important to remember is that successful PR is about leveraging the different strengths of each discipline in a way that maximises synergy with other marketing disciplines. The channel neutral approach sees the development of a central strategy that is both idea/creative platform and core messaging – before decisions are made about which marketing disciplines to deploy and who will be responsible for delivering the message. Once these are defined, they can be replanned long-term via the right channels (ie, PR, advertising, market research, direct marketing, medical education, etc).

The relevant disciplines will then be selected based on a number of criteria – including impact, cost-effectiveness, synergies with other marketing disciplines, medical education, planning any programme planned and scheduled, and timelines, etc. This segmentation and spending needs to be fine-tuned to the different disciplines and how they can play a role in driving the brand message – before decisions are made on what channel to use. Or, in other words, within the brand lifecycle.

THE PR PART OF THE PLAN
Whether PR is one of the channels required to drive the brand message alive the big idea and feed the brand message as part of an integrated brand campaign, or used as standalone basis upon which further PR can be more effectively realised, there’s no coincidence that the most successful PR campaigns have been those that were strategically synchronised.

It is hardly surprising that in a post-blockbuster era, companies are looking for new and innovative ways to market their products. Budgets often need to be stretched further and marketing companies are looking for new ways to market effectively, with the same or more resources. But what is important to remember is that successful PR is about leveraging the different strengths of each discipline in a way that maximises synergy with other marketing disciplines. The channel neutral approach sees the development of a central strategy that is both idea/creative platform and core messaging – before decisions are made about which marketing disciplines to deploy and who will be responsible for delivering the message. Once these are defined, they can be replanned long-term via the right channels (ie, PR, advertising, market research, direct marketing, medical education, etc).

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2. Know your target audiences

Establishing SMART objectives (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) helps ensure that accurate objective setting is founded on an understanding of a campaign's success. It is important to gather key insights by conducting several focus groups and interviews with a number of key stakeholders. Examples of SMART objectives include:

- Product X is included on 50 per cent of formularies six months after launch.
- Awareness of condition Y among young people increases by 20 per cent in one year.
- Awareness of product Z from their health visitors increases by at least one key message.

5. Messaging

As PR can be used to communicate with various stakeholders, it is important to ensure that each message is clear, concise, and relevant. One key message should be continually communicated to all stakeholders, and where necessary this can be reinforced by using multiple channels. This should be conducted in conjunction with other elements of the marketing programme, such as advertising and sales promotion. It is important to ensure that the different messages work together to increase the likelihood of achieving the overall campaign's success. A key message that is used in a single channel may have limited impact, while a key message that is used across multiple channels is more likely to be effective.

6. Tactical plan

The tactical plan should detail the specific tasks required to implement the strategy – the media and third-party advocates. As PR can be used to communicate with various stakeholders, it is important to ensure that the tactical plan is flexible and can be adapted to meet the changing needs of the campaign. This includes the use of social media, blogs, and other online tools to reach a broader audience.
Public Relations

3. Evaluate success

Success is a multi-faceted concept. For advice and guidance on how to evaluate success, the HCF has developed a useful and informative Evaluation Toolkit.

DELIVERING THE PR PLAN

As with other parts of the marketing mix, PR is not a standalone activity. It is important to remember that both the conceptual stages and again when defining the tactics and activity of all participation in the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI), PR consultancies will need to be involved. The channel mix used for PR campaigns needs to be closely aligned with the objectives of the campaign. PR is perhaps the most specific area of marketing and is, in some cases, still evaluated against equivalent advertising spend. Although this can be a useful demonstration of value for money, it fails to take into consideration the value of PR activity specifically and the investment required to deliver large-scale activity.

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Effective healthcare PR ignites emotion and finds the right angle to appeal to the right journalist at the right time. As one of the top 5 healthcare PR and Med Ed agencies, our 40-strong team prides itself in nurturing a strategic approach to modifying behaviours and providing counsel, to cultivate and drive the communication needs of your brand. Through to issues management, Huntsworth Health offers a wealth of expertise, and currently develops global and national programmes with a range of eminent pharma companies across a broad range of therapy areas.

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Creating a solid strategy

Public relations is one of the most effective and powerful mediums of communication, but it must be underpinned by a defendable and measurable strategy if you are to enjoy its benefits.

In days gone by, very little was understood about what PR did, how it did it and the results achieved. Those days are gone. As our profession has evolved and become more sophisticated, so have the people who purchase PR services. Today, well-constructed programmes are more effective but are only as successful as the strategies that have been adopted. Today, a successful public relations programme is not one that delivers results, but one that delivers the right results.

Any successful, modern marketer will acknowledge that PR is a critical component to any marketing plan. It is one of the most effective and powerful mediums of communication and it can be the key to effective media relations.

In order to achieve your objectives, it is important to differentiate between a goal and an objective. As F. W. Taylor said, ‘a goal is the end of a journey, whereas an objective is the means by which we travel to reach our goal.’

At the centre of any good strategy is clear and measurable objectives. Before we review how to develop communications objectives, it is important to differentiate between a goal and an objective. As F. W. Taylor said, ‘a goal is the end of a journey, whereas an objective is the means by which we travel to reach our goal.’

There are various approaches that may be required to achieve one goal. For example, the goal of a corporation may be to achieve the leader in diabetes and in order to achieve that, they may need to meet several objectives such as:

1. Launch diabetes product by end of 2008
2. Establish franchise in diabetes through acquisitions
3. Launch new range of products

Most of you will be familiar with the concept of SMART objectives. The SMART acronym is used to describe the key characteristics that you would like your objectives to capture – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely. There is no easy formula to developing objectives. However, once you have your SMART objectives, checking them against the SMART criteria is an important step to developing a viable PR strategy.

Assessing the environment

After you have established your SMART objectives, it is important to review and assess the market environment in order to achieve your objectives. For the purposes of this discussion, we will assume that the strategy you need to develop is focused on a public relations programme.

The first step in this process is to reach out to the desired PR strategy:

1. Understand the target audience

In order to understand who your target audience is and what motivates them, start by developing a framework of the patient journey. By mapping clearly the patient journey, you can evaluate who is influencing the patient/consumer journey at the point they identify a problem. Given the product your organisation is providing needs to be relevant to the audience they are trying to reach.
2. Conduct a competitive assessment

A good PR strategy should not only position your product, but it must also be able to resonate with your audience. To do this, you need to understand the environment, assess the challenges to your achieving your determined objectives, and determine which are SMART and which are not. If they are not, you may have to reframe your strategy.

2. Are you SMART enough – a pop quiz!

B. Establish ‘Corporation X’ as an innovator in the field of ophthalmology

C. Clarify issues relating to the company’s existing products and services in order to establish a coherent and consistent platform for the launch of Corporation X’s new treatment

The answer

This is more of a goal than an objective as several objectives may be required to achieve it. Suggested alternative: communicate technological advance – placements at least three times during the year in key target audience publications

A. Launch new treatment

This objective is not SMART – it is not specific, measurable and with a clear timeframe for delivering results

SMART already, how can you make these objectives SMART?

A. Win a new PR account

This objective is SMART as it is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound

B. Establish ‘Corporation X’ as an innovator in the field of ophthalmology

This objective is SMART as it is specific, measurable, relevant and time-bound

C. Clarify issues relating to the company’s existing products and services in order to establish a coherent and consistent platform for the launch of Corporation X’s new treatment

Your PR strategy should provide the simplest method by which to achieve your objectives. Your PR strategy should provide the most direct and appropriate means of communication. The more you change the audience’s frame of mind when they are considering your product or brand, the more likely they are to remember it. Make sure that you are consistent in your messaging. The more exposure the target audience gets to your messages, the more likely they will remember them. Make sure that your messages are clear, simple and easy to remember. Tangible statistics or stories often help people retain key facts. Just remember to use statistics or stories that your audience can relate to. For example, “x million people in the UK suffer from disease y” may be less relevant than “two out of five people in the UK suffer from disease y”

Your messages must “speak” to your target audience. They must be relevant not only to the audience’s key drivers and key messages that are most influential in getting them to buy your product, but also how receptive they are to your messaging. The more you change the audience’s frame of mind when they are considering your product or brand, the more likely they are to remember it. Make sure that you are consistent in your messaging. The more exposure the target audience gets to your messages, the more likely they will remember them. Make sure that you are consistent in your messaging.
3. Communicate a powerful story

• A PR campaign your communications programme fails
• A PR plan will help you to achieve the
• Communicate the developing and executing a strategy

• News is everywhere! No matter how shattering your news
• Ensure that you identify success criteria
• Some methods of communication can be quantitative,
• Experience matters!

5. Educational activity

• Educational activity – seminars, symposia, training materials, etc. As the name suggests, these activities inform and educate target audiences directly.

6. Word-of-mouth activity

• Word-of-mouth activity – word of mouth activities, such as meetings among the expert community. These activities are best used to gain expert opinion and briefing key audiences.

MEASUREMENT IS KEY

• Critics of PR claim that it is not measurable or quantifiable. They are just plain wrong.
• PR is the ultimate goal-oriented profession. You have to achieve
• The ultimate goal of a marketing PR plan is to achieve your goals. We are more realistic than aspirational. It

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Change is a difficult challenge for any business or sector to face up to. Human nature compels us to fear it rather than embrace it, even with good reason.

The statistics on marketing spend from Q1 2008 provide a real indicator of this shift. According to the Bellweather report from this period, marketing budgets have fallen for the second consecutive quarter and have been downgraded for the rest of the year. This is no surprise given the economic uncertainty of the time, but the true story lies beneath the surface.

While we read about the death of traditional advertising and the shift away from direct mail, the biggest budget drop can be found in a category which includes PR and market research. The star performer so far this year has been the internet where spend is increasing in both volume and as a proportion of overall allocation.

INDICATORS OF CHANGE
So what does this mean? Maybe nothing – it could be a short-term trend. Or perhaps, in a time where banks are facing instability and retail sales are falling, marketers look for a channel which gives them more bang for their buck. Or maybe we’re seeing the early stages of a trend which will change our industry forever.

Basing a huge assumption like this on spend in two quarters would, of course, be foolish to the extreme, but we are doing so in the context of major behavioural changes which are happening right before our eyes.

The internet is the most disruptive communications technology since the telephone and there is little doubt that it will go on to take the all-time prize very soon (if it hasn’t already).

Google gets far more eyeballs than prime Superbowl advertising could ever hope for, and YouTube is the most viewed video/TV channel anywhere by a colossal margin.

Email, instant messaging tools and fixed-line phones have replaced letters and fixed-line phones as our favoured communications tools.

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Email, instant messaging tools and fixed-line phones have replaced letters and fixed-line phones as our favoured communications tools.
They report news and views. Try as we and incredibly knee-jerk in the way blogs and social networking forums, all of channels are all dwarfed in number by media and reputation monitoring, up to a major loss of control. It or not, we are all having to face faced by businesses, marketing your staff, your service or your products. Could be talking about you, your company, frightening) fact: any one of these posts even more important (and in many ways this represents stellar growth, there is an of posts are recorded each day. While, while we have this area, which shows the size of the task for, which are largely unregulated, socially and incredibly knee-jerk in the way they report news and views as they might, we as part of a market and

While we have

**INTEGRATION, INTEGRATION, INTEGRATION**

While we have that are presenting increasingly more, it’s important to understand media, Web and social service to them that you are not islands. Whatever the strategies in this area, it needs to be integrated with marketing, customer service, support, business strategy, fact everything an organic whole.

The reason for your own behaviour. We don’t know what messages at people, where we are personal service, where we have service

**PROBLEM WITH HEALTHCARE**

Equally, cast an eye over how a European

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Equally, cast an eye over how a European
• Sign up to a free blog site to start experimenting with micro-blogging, such as Blogger (www.blogger.com) or Wordpress (www.wordpress.com). You can then add to it with any blogs or areas of interest that prove how successful socially-bear fruit. If you look at the Webby awards this year (the online industry Oscars) you'll see the types of campaign that can be and also how those feeds in micro-blogs, blogs and forums. You can then add to it with any blogs or areas of interest – this can’t be forgotten!

NEXT STEPS
To propose a one-size-fits-all approach would be foolish – all individuals and companies are different and their ideal social media mix will differ. Here’s a good way to get a taste of what’s out there and how it fits together:

• Perform a quick Google blog search on your company – what does it reveal? How do you want people to find you? How can you make your company more visible? What SEO is doing for you? What’s your blog doing for you?

• Start blogging – you needn’t expose all of your company to the public at once. You can add to it with any blogs or areas of interest that prove how successful socially-bear fruit. If you look at the Webby awards this year (the online industry Oscars) you'll see the types of campaign that can be and also how those feeds in micro-blogs, blogs and forums. You can then add to it with any blogs or areas of interest – this can’t be forgotten!

• Start discussing your blog with friends and family. Once you’ve done this, you can link your Flickr account to your blog very easily. Flickr (www.flickr.com) is popular – and start adding thoughts and content.

• Sign up to a free micro-blogging service such as Twitter (www.twitter.com). This is basic social networking, and you can use it, as they are invaluable in understanding consumer online behaviour.

The rest – how the campaign looks, feels and works – is the key areas. It’s time to get micro-blogging – and blogging – to work for you. If you follow the Webby leaguers and industry awards, you’ll see the maximum of 140-character social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and MySpace. These are a great way to see how social networking sites develop and grow, and an essential tool of the social media professional. If you haven’t a Twitter account, sign up to the service, and you will be able to see how they work, and how they can be right for you and tie into your aims.

Insight – ensure that it adds value to your business and does not stand alone.

Insulation – a good way to see how they work is to use them to create your own personal branding, and pass on the good news to others. This will allow them to become an increasingly popular free service, such as Bloglines (www.bloglines.com) and Google Reader. This will give you an insight into the social media world and see how it is an increasingly popular free service, such as Bloglines (www.bloglines.com) and Google Reader. This will give you an insight into the social media world and see how it works and how they work.

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Public Relations

Look at the newspapers and news magazines on your desk. Watch the TV tuned to Sky News or CNN. Go to your favourite news website. What do you see, read and hear? Reports of financial doom and gloom, management incompetence, allegations of corruption, claims of drug side effects and whistleblowing employees.

All are examples of companies in crisis. Here’s a question: how many of the crises that appear in media reports could have been predicted? The answer, amazingly, is almost nine out of 10. A US-based organisation, the Institute of Crisis Management, analysed 60,000 newspaper reports of crises over 10 years and divided them into 'sudden' and 'simmering'. Those in the first category were completely unexpected events that hit companies with no warning. Those described as 'simmering' were the kind of events that could have been identified in advance, and managed.

Below are some examples of both types of crisis. The type of event listed under the heading 'simmering' is those that would realistically expected to have been identifiable in advance. The type listed under the heading 'sudden' were those that were completely unexpected.

### Crisis Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sudden</th>
<th>Simmering</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural disaster</td>
<td>An escalated issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical accident/disaster</td>
<td>Financial problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health crisis</td>
<td>Intelligence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyber-attack</td>
<td>Fraud</td>
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<tr>
<td>Controversial product failure</td>
<td>Management misconduct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Customer service failure</td>
<td>Employee conduct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employee theft</td>
<td>Bribery</td>
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If issues are not managed effectively, the consequences can be:
- Political, e.g., tighter or unfavourable legislation
- Financial, e.g., product recall or withdrawal, a drop in sales or share price
- Criminal, e.g., the company can be fined or directors charged.

In all of these, the other serious consequence is the damage to the reputation of the company’s (or industry’s) image. All of this can be avoided by effective issues management. The driving force behind all issues management is ensuring the company’s best interests are protected but prepared for the worst.

An understanding of how to run an issues management programme is now essential for PR practitioners, whether in-house or in consultancy.

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I Issues Management Tools

An issues management programme is usually divided into four parts:

- Gathering and monitoring intelligence and information
- Analysing the information, clarifying the issues
- Prioritising the issues
- Taking action and evaluating the results

The challenge in issue management is to see it through. When you have a busy workload, it is tempting to focus just on today's tasks, to make sure figures, timesheets etc. are up to date. Issues can catch you unaware. A call from a journalist, a query from your place of work, change in legislation etc. can all affect the boss. Issues which may initially seem PR departments can often turn into high-profile cases in which it is necessary to manage the problem at a very early stage. Where PR practitioners can really add value is in their knowledge of companies and industries. However, don't miss the smaller legal issues that are so far off they are almost invisible. The PESTLE analysis should identify most of the issues that are already on the radar or are moving forward, such as court hearings or panel decisions.

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Political

Examples here include the political, legislative, industry and environmental. A new Select Committee on the operation of the European Working Time Directive, for example, may suggest that companies will have to review their policies. Additionally, if you have been involved in planning for an avian influenza pandemic, many people and groups will want to know how you are preparing, e.g. in the case of the supplies of medicine in the event of a pandemic, expect a very bright spotlight to shine on your manufacturing network at the appropriate time. All issues are sure to attract media attention.

Economic

Companies are increasingly being required to understand the latest, and along with legislative changes, the legal, environmental, and financial implications of the corporate structure changes. This can produce issues that need managing.

Sociological

Changes in working practices bring issues such as flexi-time, home working or remote offices (or in some cases, the restriction of them). The working environment, for example, how companies are currently closing their doors, people being moved from one location to another, etc.

Environmental

The environment is possibly the biggest issue in the world today. How is your company performing in terms of the carbon footprint of its activities? How are your products being produced? What are the public and media impacts of your actions? If you don't know, you need to find out.

Priority issues

- Are you on top of any current sensitive issues? Is there a possibility of a crisis? (and how do you manage this)
- Are there public and media issues you need to manage?
- What are the current media issues you need to manage?
- Are there public and media issues that need managing?
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- Are there public and media issues that need managing?
The quadrants

Risks

Exposure

For example, if someone claims the product caused a side effect, from one point of view you could ask an expert in pharmacology to tell you whether it is technically possible. Don’t limit your discussions to just one expert. Ask a medic, a basic scientist, a pharmacologist and a senior colleague in medical.

PRIORITISING THE ISSUE

It is not likely to be handled by you alone. How are you going to get support from senior colleagues? Assuming you have the case to him or her, backed up by the team needed to handle it, you or your team the backing to pull the ground. To do this effectively you will need the support of senior management. They (or more particularly the CEO) need to realise the importance of the issue to the business, and give themselves) need to realise the importance of the issue to the business, and give

TAKING ACTION AND EVALUATING EFFECT

Now that you have established a plan in order, the next step is to get someone involved. To do this effectively you will need support from senior management. You will need particularly the CEO him/herself. It is important to stay in control of the story. The support of key opinion leaders is crucial to overcoming this problem. Choose them carefully, and ensure they have been media trained. You can prepare Q&As, position statements and explanatory notes at every stage of the issue’s development.

Prepare you core materials

You can prepare your Q&As, position statements and explanatory notes at every stage of the issue’s development. You may want to consider the following impact factors:

- Risk
- Exposure

The quadrants

It is important that the ‘risk’ group is as small as possible but large as necessary. The nature of the issue will dictate the directions of the quadrants. The top left-hand quadrant may include representatives from medical, QA, legal and communications. The quadrant diagram is another technique, known as the ‘risk and exposure analysis’. The quadrant diagram will help you prioritise. Here we have too many issues to deal with at once, so you need to prioritise. Here we have the issues from the ‘difficult question’ concerns the plotting of your issue on the graph, in terms of the likelihood and the exposure. The managers will be if it attracts media attention. The more likely question concerns the plotting of the issue on the ‘exposure’ axis. To decide how likely is the issue is to attract media attention, you need to consider the following impact factors:

- Risk
- Exposure

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Waggener Edstrom’s healthcare practice offers the insight, experience and ingenuity to help our clients stand out in competitive and rapidly changing markets. We work with companies that use innovative science and technology to improve the outcomes for their patients, whether they are deciphering the human genome to understand the origins of disease, or improving the accuracy of diagnosis and treatment. We approach every program with a roll-up-our-sleeves work ethic and determination to exceed expectations, and it shows in the results we achieve for our clients.
MEDIA CHECKLIST FOR LAUNCH ACTIONED

– 8 weeks

Brief the agency and allocate a budget
Agree target audience(s) for the campaign
Agree on objectives for the campaign
Develop a media launch plan (agree responsibilities and breakdown of daily activity)
Review plan in context of ABPI guidance and内部 Standard Operating Procedures – involve med/leg/reg
Develop a message matrix with supporting references for each message and submit for approval
Check whether materials are subject to MHRA approvals – if so, adjust plan accordingly

– 6 weeks

Set up benchmarking parameters (eg, tracking effects on brand awareness)
Agree specific dates for media launch in context of other product milestones (eg, licence approval, Dear Dr letter, data at congress)
Consider the environmental context: keep in mind any events/activities that may work for or against the campaign (eg, media events, awareness days, congresses, competitor activity)
Consider holding war games session to anticipate likely competitor response to your launch
Identify relevant spokespeople and source appropriate patient advocacy group contacts

– 4 weeks

Brief spokespeople and identify presentation skills training required
Inform patient groups of launch activity (include clinical briefing from medical team, if required)
Media materials development:
• Review global/EU resource available and adapt where appropriate
• Materials for development/adaptation: press release (consumer and/or medical), product and disease area fact-sheets, animation/VNR/B-roll, image bank & full set of marked up refs
Liaise with corporate/global over their media strategy and media distribution list
Consider pros and cons of holding a press launch event versus one-to-one interview-based approaches

– 3 weeks

Develop a tiered media list, prioritising journalists with a specific interest in the therapy
Develop a Q&A following near-approval of the media materials
Consider exclusive media interview opportunities and likely outcomes – agree approach to potential exclusives as a team
Arrange one-to-one briefings with select journalists (under embargo)
Consider newswire distribution of the press release(s)

– 2 weeks

Conduct internal team briefings and inform salesforce
Share press materials with all spokespeople and relevant patient groups
Contact planning desks on broadcast outlets

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Media checklist for launch

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**Week 1**

Conduct final briefings with spokespeople

Ensure all press materials are fully approved and ready for use

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**Week 2**

Hold one-to-one interviews with select journalists (under embargo) – either face-to-face or telephonic

Set up print and broadcast media monitoring

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**Launch week**

Distribute the press release and follow up with targeted sell-in

Co-ordinate Radio Livelinks, if required

Organise and co-ordinate studio appearances and Radio Livelinks for your spokespeople

Conduct daily monitoring, develop progress report and identify necessary next steps

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**Afterwards**

Develop a media coverage report and evaluate against benchmarks

Identify any long lead feature opportunities

Evaluate impact of activity against benchmarked information

Review the final expenditure versus original budget

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Laura Chambers is a senior consultant at Just:: Health PR Ltd and co-directs Just:: Newsflash – the agency’s co-ordinated approach to media management. She can be contacted at laura@justhealthpr.com or on 020 8877 8405

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