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## Public Relations:

**How to Use PR to Boost Your Sales  
Without Blowing Your Budget**

By Jennifer Nagy, President of JLNPR



There are hundreds of articles published by industry media outlets about how hotels can improve their marketing to potential guests, increase their ROI, secure more customers, etc.; unfortunately for companies that are selling a product or service to hotels, there is much less information available about effective business-to-business (B2B) marketing.

## That's where I come in...

My agency, [JLNPR](#), specializes in B2B marketing in the hospitality industry. When many competitors offer similar products within the same marketplace, credibility and brand recognition are *crucial* to make your company/solution stand out from the crowd.

In this guide, I will outline how you can use public relations (PR) to improve your company's visibility with potential customers (hotels!), establish credibility in the industry, shorten your sales cycle and boost your revenue.

So let's get started by answering  
a very common question:



What is  
PR?

and how will it help me sell my  
product/service to hotels?



PR is a highly effective tactic to educate potential customers, grow brand awareness and build credibility within the industry – all at a fraction of the cost of traditional marketing.

## What is Public Relations (PR)?

According to the Public Relations Society of America, “Public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics.” In practice, a B2B company can use PR to suggest stories and information to journalists about their company, product or service, in an attempt to secure editorial coverage. PR is a highly effective tactic to educate potential customers, grow brand awareness and build credibility within the industry – all at a fraction of the cost of traditional marketing.

When shopping for a vendor, most hoteliers will start researching the companies that they already know and trust; however, if the buyer isn’t familiar with any suppliers, most will look for recommendations from trusted third parties. Articles in a well-respected industry magazine/newspaper/blog automatically establish credibility for any company, product or service mentioned in the article, as potential

customers will perceive the coverage as an endorsement from a trusted third-party. This type of endorsement will ensure that your company is at the top of the list when hotels begin the search for a new supplier.

Once the initial information request is made by a potential customer, there is another important benefit from PR: it will drastically shorten the sales cycle because the potential client already knows your level of expertise and trusts your company because they have read articles written about you (or by you, if you’ve followed my campaign strategy outlined in this guide) in the hospitality industry media outlets.

To learn more about PR, please visit **The Huffington Post** ([here](#) and [here](#)) and **Hotel Business Review** ([here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)).

# The Customer Buying Cycle

In order to become more effective at marketing your product or service, it's important that you first understand each step of the customer buying cycle - and how effective marketing can help you overcome the common obstacles experienced by most B2B companies selling to hospitality companies.

## STEP 1.

### NEED RECOGNITION

The first step in the customer buying cycle is 'need recognition', in which a potential customer decides to look for a solution to a specific problem. In this stage, most potential customers will have little to no knowledge about the products/services/vendors currently available that could address the problem or the vendors who offer them; therefore, he/she will need to do some research before making a purchase.

This is your opportunity to educate potential clients about the issue (that your company's solution solves), including why it happens, how it can be prevented, etc.

Keep in mind that this is not the time to sell your product or service specifically; instead, provide a high-level overview of the issue and the available solutions on the market. By being the company who provides educational, unbiased information about ALL of the possible solutions, a potential client is more likely to trust your company - and therefore, is more likely to select you as their service provider.

## STEP 2.

### RESEARCH

Once a customer has determined that they have a need, they will investigate the companies that they know provide a related product/service (before undertaking research into the other companies offering similar services).

Brand awareness is a key component of a successful sales strategy; if your company has good brand awareness with decision-makers at hotels, you will receive more leads and have greater success in selling to each potential customer.

## STEP 3.

### EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

When creating a shortlist of vendors, most (potential) customers will select the vendors with a good reputation and pre-established expertise in the industry. The same applies for the final decision to purchase: potential customers who already have knowledge of (and trust in) your brand are more likely to decide to purchase your product or service.

By continuing to provide a high-quality product or service to every customer, publicizing your company's good news (i.e. growth, new customers who sign-up to use the product, sharing positive testimonials and current customer results, etc.) and executing a strong brand awareness campaign, your B2B company will be able to positively influence the credibility that your company has in the minds of potential customers.

# Hospitality Trade Media

As like most other industries, journalists who work in the hotel/hospitality media market write articles, Q&As and share topical industry info; however, (unlike the media in other industries) many publications are willing to publish articles written by guest authors (like yourself!). This gives you the opportunity to write and submit articles regularly to media outlets on topics related to their area of expertise, in order to increase visibility with potential customers.

Articles should educate hoteliers on your company's area of expertise and provide easy-to-execute tips on how to improve operations. This creates brand recognition and positions your company as an expert in the hotel industry – and specifically, in the area of the industry in which you offer products or services. For example, if your

company sells revenue management technology, you could write an article with specific tips on how hotels can improve their revenue management strategies to increase bookings and revenue, or share the features of the most effective revenue management systems (RMS), etc.

It is very important to remember that your articles cannot be self-promotional. In order for an article to be published free-of-charge, most hotel trade publications require that the article be vendor neutral; other than your company name in your byline and a boilerplate (a section at the bottom of the article that provides information about your company and product/service, along with the contact info and website), there can be no mention of your company or specific product/services in the article.

As you continue to release informative articles, hoteliers will begin to recognize your company name and will, eventually, be interested enough to investigate your company (and the product(s) or service(s) that you offer) further.

Because you haven't been trying to sell them on your product/service via your articles, the credibility that you've established with the potential customer will also help shorten your sales cycle significantly. If, at a later date, the hotelier needs to purchase a similar product/service, brand recognition will put your company at the top of their list of vendors – and may even encourage them to proactively reach out to you directly for more info or to make the purchase!





# 6 TIPS

## To Make Your Articles More Interesting To Hotel-Industry Readers

1. Write in a conversational, friendly tone.

2. As much as possible, remain positive and helpful throughout the article.

3. Answer potential customers' key questions in the article.

Segment the article to first address the audience's concerns and then use the remainder of the post to answer readers' most common questions on the topic: "Why should they change?", "Why should they act now?" and "Why should they choose your company?"

4. Your article can be detailed and technical, as long as it is easily understood by all readers (not just those with a background in technology or development).

In general, B2B PR campaigns convey your message to a more defined audience than B2C campaigns; as such, your articles (or PR messaging) can be more in-depth and technical in nature (if applicable). Keep in mind that your audience may not have a strong understanding of technology; if you do include technical information, make sure that you use layman's terms and that you provide sufficient detail to effectively communicate the features and benefits of your product/service.

5. Consistency is key.

Publishing articles on an ongoing basis will ensure a much greater ROI, as it takes time for brand awareness to develop. The longer that you continue your PR campaign, the more your visibility will grow and the greater the effects (shorter sales cycle and increased revenue) will be. This brings me to my next point...

6. Less is more.

Never share articles more frequently than once a week, as it will overwhelm your readers; instead, I recommend distributing a new article every two weeks.

# Now, all that's left to do is to start writing!

There you have it... a veritable treasure trove of tips that will boost your company's visibility and brand awareness with purchasers (at hotels), position your company (and spokespeople) as industry experts and boost your sales and revenue.

If you need more guidance implementing your PR campaign, check out our soon-to-launch DIY.JLNPR course, a comprehensive online course that will teach you how to execute your own highly effective B2B PR campaign (including step-by-step instructions and templates to help you create your own media materials). Visit [www.diy.jlnpr.com](http://www.diy.jlnpr.com) for more info or to sign up to be notified when the course launches.

If you would prefer a hands-off approach, JLNPR can also develop and execute highly effective PR and content marketing strategies on behalf of your company.

To find out more, please contact Jennifer at [jenn@jlnpr.com](mailto:jenn@jlnpr.com).





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## About JLNPR Inc.

JLNPR Inc. is a full-service public relations and marketing agency that lives and breathes all facets of the travel technology industry. From online travel agencies to revenue management systems, tablet-based aviation automation solutions to IFE technology, hotels to airlines and everything in between, JLNPR uses our knowledge and experience to get your B2B travel technology company noticed by media, influencers and potential customers – and whenever possible, without the overused, often abused press release. In addition to traditional media relations outreach, we also ghost-write exciting, informational copy that will be published (in our client's name) by top hotel industry media outlets – in order to increase your company's visibility with potential customers, boost brand awareness and increase sales.

In February 2017, JLNPR will launch the DIY.JLNPR course, which will offer a comprehensive online course that will teach businesses how to develop their own highly effective hotel/hospitality PR campaign without hiring an expensive PR agency. The course contains 30+ hours of step-by-step teaching materials, as well as easy-to-use templates, enabling you to create press releases, media alerts, a media kit and all other written materials necessary. In short, the DIY.JLNPR course gives your business the tools necessary to sell your product to hotels, without blowing your budget.

To find out more about JLNPR (and our out-of-the-box philosophy on press releases), please visit [www.jlnpr.com](http://www.jlnpr.com). To find out more about the DIY.JLNPR course, please contact Jennifer at [jenn@jlnpr.com](mailto:jenn@jlnpr.com).