



DO MORE WITH LESS

15 WAYS TO BE AN EFFECTIVE PR PRO ON LIMITED RESOURCES

When PR pros dream, they dream of seven figure budgets, a well-oiled team, and making a big impact. When they wake up...



As a group, PR and communications professionals are acquainted with having to make a lot happen on limited resources. Likely, you can find yourself somewhere on this list:

- Team of one
- Understaffed
- Lost your PR agency
- Small budget
- No budget
- Short on time
- Short on resources

If you found yourself nodding along, then this guide is for you. We've put together 15 ways you can be a PR pro on limited resources, whether that's a lack of time, budget, or team. From improving your productivity to putting data to work, these tips will get you started on doing more with less.

Let's dig in.

GIFT YOURSELF MORE TIME

In this section, we outline some tips to help you automate, streamline, or in some cases eliminate your regular processes. But first, we want to introduce the general idea of **saying no to low impact things**.

If you're trying to decide where best to distribute your limited resources, try Derek Sivers' method: "If you're not saying 'Hell Yeah' about something, say 'No'."

What are some of the activities you have planned for the next quarter? Are there any on your list that are non-essential and will take a lot of time, energy, or money for relatively low return on investment? Say no to those. Choose only the activities where the **output is worth the input**.

This principle applies to more than planned activities. Opportunities will arise and you'll have to decide if they're worthy of your resources. It could be a speaking engagement, strategic partnership, interview—you can't say yes to everything, but if you do, make sure it's a hell yes.

Now that you have this idea firmly in mind, we move on to...

■ 1. TEMPLATIZE YOUR PROCESSES

This may take a little extra work up front, but it will save you time and effort in the long run.

Use a format that works best for you and record the steps of projects you frequently undertake, for example, a press release, customer email, internal announcement, or webinar.

Instead of spending time making sure you haven't missed something or trying to remember what you did before, quickly reference your project plan.

As you write down the steps, templatize any associated documents that you can. News release—templatize. PowerPoint—templatize. Letterhead—templatize! Building everything from scratch all the time is simply unnecessary.

With thorough enough documentation, you may even be able to hand off some tasks to another department, team member, or intern.

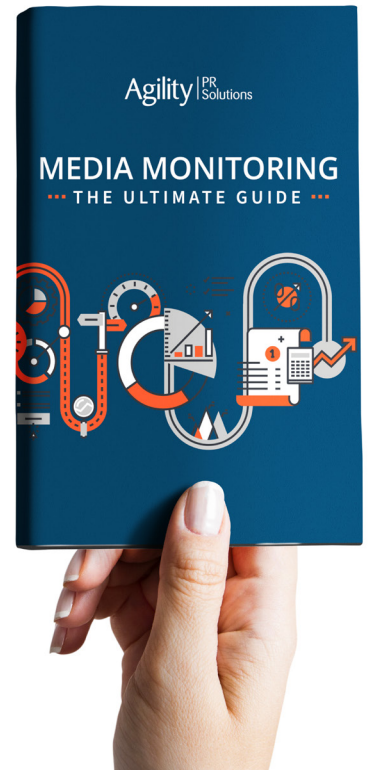
■ 2. AUTOMATE YOUR MEDIA MONITORING

Offload your manual searching of the daily avalanche of information—let the machines do it!

We have a whole [guide](#) as to why media monitoring should be part of your game plan. However, media monitoring can be time consuming if you're not using a tool or service to help you. Even if you can only afford a free option, it's essential to stay tuned into the conversations happening all around you, especially the ones about you, your competition, and your industry.

Consider setting up [Google Alerts](#) to monitor coverage in online news and blogs. But be warned, the results will likely be thin. You can augment this with some social media monitoring through [free](#) options.

A paid media monitoring software tool will surface a lot more coverage—especially relevant and meaningful coverage—than free options like Google Alerts, and will be searching a broader range of sources.



MEDIA MONITORING

It is listening to who's saying what about your brand, your competitors, your industry, and any other topic that's important to you and your operations. In today's world, media monitoring must include more than just print, extending to online, broadcast and social media.

An automated media monitoring tool is one that you set up (usually with the help of the provider) and maintain yourself. It includes a dashboard, the option for you to receive automated briefs and alerts, and integrated reporting capabilities that make it easy to share the results of your media monitoring efforts among stakeholders. It's much more robust than a free online tool.

The best paid tools will give you the capability to build presentation-ready charts. Better still, reporting on sentiment and coverage over time also helps you figure out what's working (or not) so you can make the necessary activity shifts, evolve as a communicator, and demonstrate the business impact of your PR efforts.

EXERCISE

Brainstorm a list of your top 15 topics to monitor. This list should include your business name, competitors' business names, industry keywords and some relevant taglines.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

■ 3. USE A NEWS RELEASE TOOL TO GET YOUR MESSAGE OUT

Marketing and PR pros use news release distribution tools to increase brand awareness, reach, and visibility, generate coverage on major news outlets, and in some cases, boost search engine rankings.

A news release service is an affordable trick to have up your sleeve when you want wide distribution to a broad range of newsrooms and outlets, but don't need to personalize the message. With a service, you will be able to see how your release is performing through detailed reports which provide visibility on interaction and outlet pickup.



Read [News Wires 101: Everything You've Ever Wanted to Know](#) to learn how to make the most of your news release service.

■ 4. STREAMLINE YOUR SOCIAL POSTING

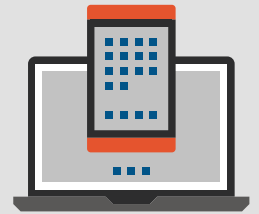
Much of social media is reactive and spontaneous. Conversations flow organically, and you can't always predict what people will say about you. But there is some element of social media that can be proactive and scheduled.

Write the social posts that don't need to be spontaneous, in advance. This way you can prepare a lot in a short time, you aren't left wondering what to say on any given day, and you can maintain a consistent posting schedule.

Not sure what to write? Choose evergreen topics, share blog posts or company updates, promote your pillar pieces, find holidays or national observances that are relevant to your industry (or are just fun), choose sound bites from podcasts or webinars, share an infographic, or post a 10-second video clip. In preparing your social strategy, remember that not everything is appropriate for every channel (but we'll get to this and other content ideas later).

Read how advertising and marketing agency Mower used the [Hygiene, Hub, Hero strategy](#) on its client's social media channels to increase engagement by 142% and impressions by 32%.

Now that you've got a batch of social ready, use a free or affordable online tool to schedule your posts. Some social media sites allow you to schedule posts directly on their platform, like [Facebook](#), but you can also use tools like [Hootsuite](#) and [Buffer](#) to schedule posts on multiple platforms.



Okay, let's not forget the spontaneous side of social. Set aside a chunk of time every day or a few times a week to engage with your audience. **Respond to comments, share someone else's relevant post, answer a poll... be engaged!** But once the timer runs out, return to other activities.

NURTURE RELATIONSHIPS

As a PR pro you know that people matter, whether you're solo consulting, in an agency or part of the internal comms team of a company. There's always a human on the other end of the line, the other side of the screen, and the other side of your press release. These tips will help you nurture beneficial relationships with your community, partners, clients, and employees.

■ 5. INVEST IN YOUR HIDDEN EXPERTS AND BRAND AMBASSADORS

Find the “hidden experts” in your organization. These are the people that know a lot about something very niche. These hidden experts can help your media relations efforts—they can provide information on something relevant to a journalist writing for a niche audience who may not typically think of your company as a possible source.

Your colleagues are messengers. They are the people that go home, go to BBQs, and go to coffee shops and talk about what they do and where they work. Their everyday conversations impact brand perception.



People trust other people, which is why reviews are so important. Take for example the fact that 92 percent of consumers trust their friends' recommendations. In the webinar “Like it or not, everyone's a spokesperson,” Gabriel Sanchez says to provide the same care and interest you do for your external audiences to your internal audiences.

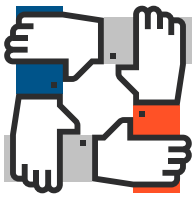
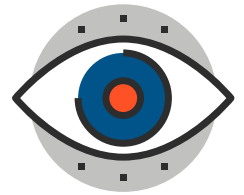
At the core of hidden experts and brand ambassadors is this: keep your company communications loops open and transparent.

■ 6. GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

We could write an entire guide on why you should get involved with your community, but here are just a few reasons why it's good PR.

Brand reputation

Building a positive presence in your local community will help define you as a socially responsible brand. Volunteering, sponsoring local events, and donations are all good ways of getting involved. They also increase brand awareness and people associating good feelings with your company.



Personalize your business

Show your community there are people behind the glass and cement façade. Investing in your community, especially through activities that bring you outside of your office walls, will help provide a face to the company. People want to do business with people.

Increase the conversation

Remember how we said your employees are brand ambassadors? Well, here's where some of the conversation can happen. Help your employees build connections with the community and you never know what business or networking opportunities will get unearthed!



■ 7. NURTURE THE RELATIONSHIPS YOU ALREADY HAVE

Relationships are the cornerstone of PR—it's in the name. Maintaining and nurturing relationships will keep you moving forward.

As author Sally Norton at Miami Moving Guide says, “You are searching for new business and clients, but if you lose the old ones you will be right where you started. After all, your business is up and running because of your current customers and clients.”

Your clients aren't the only ones that need or want to hear from you. Your relationships with partners, journalists and influencers have likely been crucial in getting you where you are. Gloria Kopp from UK Top Writers says, “It's important to stay in touch with your influencers, even when you don't have news or projects to share with them. This helps you to maintain your relationships with these individuals and can be as easy as sending them an email or sharing an article with them that they might find interesting.”

EXERCISE

1. Write down three priority relationships. These could include clients, partners, journalists, etc.
2. Do you have a process for maintaining these relationships? If yes, brainstorm three ways it could be improved. If no, brainstorm a process to make your priority relationships feel valued and in the loop.

“You want to see what moments you can create [with your clients] immediately. What do you have in common? What’s important to them? Understand how people like to communicate. Are you a text person? Are you a phone person? Are there any times that are off limits? Really try to understand how they work and how they work best.”

Robin Beaman, President of Beaman Inc. at the 2020 Earned Media Mastery virtual summit

BONUS TIP: LEVERAGE YOUR CUSTOMER TESTIMONIALS.

Those relationships you’ve put the work into are the foundation of your credibility. Share your clients’ successes. Potential customers want to hear those nice things your current customers have said about you! Some ideas from the [Content Marketing Institute](#) on how to use testimonials include:



- Feature them in the sidebar of a blog
- Highlight them on the product or service page they’re related to
- Put them next to your CTAs on outbound material
- Turn them into social posts
- Dedicate an entire page to them on your website
- Transform them into case studies

EMBRACE DATA

Use data and analytics to measure success and determine areas of opportunity and improvement.

■ 8. BECOME A MASTER OF THE NUMBERS

PR pros can accomplish more—and simultaneously boost their own value—by learning to properly capture, manipulate, and measure data.

A study by Splunk called “[What is Your Data Really Worth?](#)” found that advanced data strategy was tied to improved outcomes like higher customer satisfaction and retention, revenue growth, and faster time to market.



You can track and measure almost anything you want now. [Google Analytics](#) lets you track website traffic. Tools like [HubSpot](#), [Marketo](#) and [Pardot](#) can help you track email opens. And [Agility PR Solutions](#) provides services like news release distribution and media monitoring to allow you to track and build reports related to pick-up and coverage.

Some of these tools can be automated to save you time and hassle while still providing you the essential information you need to turn numbers into results.

A white rectangular sticky note with a piece of yellow tape at the top. The text "WHY IS BENCHMARKING IMPORTANT?" is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Below the text is a blue arrow pointing to the right.

WHY IS
BENCHMARKING
IMPORTANT?



You may have heard us say this before, but benchmarking is all about driving improvement based on measurable results. Without benchmarking you'll have nothing to compare your results to—so how will you know if they're good or bad? Good results identify areas of opportunity. Bad results establish areas for improvement. Benchmarking allows you to efficiently allocate your time and resources to the areas that need it most and will make the greatest amount of difference.

EXERCISE

What are your top three key performance indicators?

In the table below, write them down and record their current values. If you already have benchmarks from past performance, write those down in the third column, if not, maybe do some research on relevant benchmarks from online industry stats. Finally, decide when you'll next measure against this benchmark to compare your results—one month from now, three months, six months? We've left the last three columns blank for you to decide.

| | KPIs | CURRENT VALUE | BENCHMARK | | | |
|----|------|------------------|-----------|--|--|--|
| 1. | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | |

CHOOSE THE RIGHT TIME INTERVAL FOR YOUR KPIs. 

■ 9. TEST, MEASURE, AND LEARN FAST

Data and analytics are the most strategically sound way to measure results and inform efforts. For most pros, finding, collecting, and viewing data isn't the challenge. It's making sense of it and putting it to work.

Don't sit on your data! Here are a few things to consider thanks to our friend [Matt Moreno](#):

- The data doesn't necessarily call for a drastic change—incremental changes can have dramatic results too.
- Play the long game. As Matt says, "Consistently examining data over a long period of time can help you identify opportunities sooner. And the earlier you're able to get in position, the greater the odds your approach will be successful." Using data as your guide, you can anticipate where your consumers are going to be, and be an early adopter.
- Data can be predictive but it's not a crystal ball.

USE DATA AS A HOOK FOR JOURNALISTS.

You may not think your data is exciting to anyone else but you, but your mundane data may provide a new angle, needed insight, or relevant fact for a journalist's story. Your data might be niche, but there's an audience for everything out there.

Data shows you what is and isn't working.

Use reporting to measure results and pinpoint the most rewarding efforts by identifying patterns among the successes. Repeat the tactics that work to potentially get bigger results with the same or fewer communications.

Instead of starting from scratch every time, update successful content and campaigns, which leads us right into...

BOOST YOUR CONTENT

Content is king, especially for getting organic traffic. Take it from the master, Google: “Organic or word-of-mouth buzz is what helps build your site’s reputation with both users and Google, and it rarely comes without quality content.”

■ 10. UPDATE YOUR PILLAR PIECES

How long has it been since you updated the pillar pieces on your website? We’re talking the in-depth, substantial, informative pages on a specific topic. Likely the page you built around a specific keyword.

Google likes relevant information, so make sure your pieces are up to date. Refresh them every few months with new stats, ideas, and industry trends or know-how.

If you’re not sure where to begin, check out the lesson “Creating Topic Clusters and Pillar Pages” from HubSpot academy.

■ 11. GIVE VIDEO A CHANCE

According to author James Daniels, video can help connect audiences with an otherwise “faceless” company and “makes the message more genuine and accessible to the average person.”

CONSIDER USING VIDEO IN A CRISIS.

Take for instance, the early responses to COVID-19. Brands needed to get a message out quickly that would reassure their customers and show that they were taking things seriously. Using video can elevate the level of personalization since it’s coming straight from the mouth of a company representative.



A 2019 survey from marketing video firm Animoto, found that 93 percent of businesses landed a new customer because of a video on social media. It also found that YouTube dethroned Facebook as the platform that most affects consumer behaviour.

You don't have to be a videographer to make a 15- or 30-second video for your social feed. A lot of the time all you need is a smartphone or digital camera plus a free or affordable platform to help you edit your footage.

Learn “[How to make social videos that your followers will share](#)” from Victor Blasco, CEO of Yum Yum Videos.

■ 12. SHARE YOUR EXPERTISE

Aside from your owned channels, where can you meaningfully participate in a conversation, offer an opinion, or answer a question for somebody?

Engage intelligently in groups or threads on social

Don't make a comment just for the sake of making a comment, but where you can add a hot take, point of consideration, or constructive commentary, do so!

Submit articles to relevant blogs or publications

Seek out opportunities to pitch a story to a relevant trade or industry magazine. Free press in a credible and respected publication will increase brand awareness and give you improved authority and credibility in your field.



Bulldog Reporter has been providing news, best practices, and insights to PR and communications professionals since 1980. Every single day it provides articles and exclusive guest contributor research or opinion pieces on a wide range of topics including media relations, crisis communications and influencer marketing. A wide range of PR pros and associated marketers have already been featured. Could you be next?

Present on a webinar

Keep open calls for presenters on your radar and submit a proposal for a presentation. In return you'll receive a platform to share on a topic that is relevant to your audience and garner some free publicity. One thing we suggest: an informational webinar is not the time to have a sales heavy approach. People sign up for webinars to learn.

WHY WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR CONTENT TO SOMEONE ELSE?

1. Boost online presence
2. Get backlinks to your site, improving your SEO
3. Build credibility

■ 13. USE BRANDS YOU ADMIRE AS INSPIRATION

Have you ever felt like you've written everything you possibly could on a subject? Don't let boredom creep in. Find inspiration in the work of others.

Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. Pick a brand whose PR you aspire to. Ideally, the company is outside of your industry, creating even more of a divide between the type of copy they produce and the type of copy you'll produce. Now, we're not suggesting you do a copy paste and call it a day. But the ideas at the core of their work—the ones you admire, that drew you to the piece in the first place—could help inspire your own content. If it's their innovation, write how your company innovates. If it's their community spirit, write about how your company gives back.

Successful brands with huge teams like the ones you admire have identified areas that resonate with the audience, so borrow from their research, but translate it to meet your needs.

EXERCISE

1. Write down three brands that inspire you.
2. Why do they inspire you?
3. How can that inspiration apply to your company?

■ 14. LASER FOCUS YOUR CHANNELS

As we mentioned earlier, streamlining your social media is one way to become more productive. This tip takes it a step further in deciding what channels you should really be on. It's far better to do a few channels well, than all of them poorly. A dead channel can also reflect negatively on you as a company.

Start with your audience. Who are they? What's most important to them? What platforms are they on? Who or what do they consult for information? Focus your time and energy there. And don't take on a new channel unless you're sure you can do it well. The common thread among all social media platform success: consistency. If you're only going to be able to keep up a platform for a couple of weeks before things fizzle out, it's better to not begin.

Once you've determined what channels to invest in, get nitpicky about what you will post and how you will post it. Each social media platform has a different reason for its popularity, a different tone that does well, and a different type of media that works best. Do your research to find out what types of content perform well for engagement on specific channels and what new features people are making the most of.



On Twitter, people are 21% more likely to respond to questions.

Quicksprout



On Facebook, posts containing video received 59% more engagement on average.

Buffer



Long articles, between 1,000 and 3,000 words, get the most shares on LinkedIn.

Disruptive Advertising

■ 15. REPURPOSE OR SPLINTER CONTENT

Use a long-form piece as your jumping off point. From one 3,000-word article or five-minute video you can create multiple pieces of content—social posts, blogs, infographics. For more ideas, check out Gary Vaynerchuk's content strategy, which takes one pillar piece and breaks it down into 30 pieces of content.

Here are a couple strategies to try:

- Create micro content, which is content that can be digested in 30-seconds or less, like a Tweet or 15-second video.
- Repurpose your evergreen content by putting it into different formats. If it started as an article, try putting it into a SlideShare, infographic, or vlog.

Here are few affordable infographic resources as recommended by Sandra Fathi, Founder and President of Affect.

- Easelly: \$2-\$5 USD/month
- Venngage: \$19-\$49 USD/month
- Piktochart: \$24.17-\$82.50 USD/month
- Visually: Connect with a professional designer

There you have it. Fifteen ways to be a PR pro on limited resources. We hope that these can be a starting point for you and your PR pursuits.

For more resources, visit [Agilitypr.com](https://agilitypr.com) to view our full library of webinars hosted by PR pros and our free, downloadable content on media monitoring, media relations, PR measurement, crisis communications, and PR strategy.

If you're interested in getting a monitoring software and news release tool, we'd love to tell you about ours. Visit our [media monitoring](#) and [newswire](#) pages to learn more, or [take a tour](#).