



FIVE PRINCIPLES FOR

# B2B PUBLIC RELATIONS

The evolution of public relations is real. Emerging tech, audience expectations and our changing media landscape have all joined forces to upend PR as we knew it.

It's for the best. Too many practitioners think of media clips, press releases and awards as public relations' full extent. We know our sphere of influence is much broader.

Public relations is about shaping how audiences perceive us, and it's those massively impactful shifts in perception that define our success. While it rarely happens overnight, by adopting Arketi's five principles for B2B public relations, you too can realize the full potential of your program.

# TO BE A THOUGHT LEADER, YOU FIRST NEED TO HAVE A THOUGHT

When you think of a thought leader, who comes to mind? An industry expert? A futurist or technologist? Someone in academics or research? Thought leadership is shared in a variety of ways. What remains consistent, however, is the value provided. A successful thought leader offers authentic knowledge and insights to build trust with audiences.

Effective B2B thought leadership programs are not defined by a consistent blog schedule or social media calendar.

## THOUGHT LEADERSHIP ALSO REQUIRES...

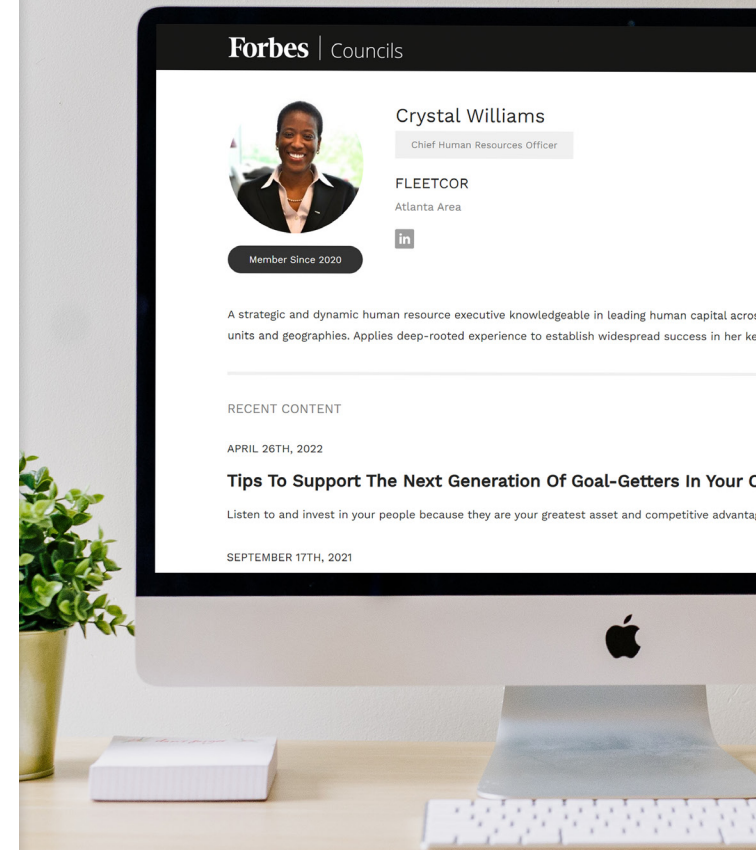
**Original insights** – Don't just repeat what everyone else is saying, offer a perspective that encourages action or change.

**A committed spokesperson** – Thought leaders are made not born, and if you can't commit to creating and sharing meaningful content, it's likely not worth the effort.

**Teaching over promoting** – You may have the best product or service on the market, but your audience isn't looking for a sales pitch. They want to learn something they couldn't anywhere else.

## CASE IN POINT:

The Chief Human Resources Officer of global payments powerhouse FLEETCOR translated her passion for workforce development and engagement to establish a rich, genuine thought leadership platform.



# MERCHANDIZE PR OR DON'T DO IT

Public relations has a bad habit, and no, it's not sending journalists overwritten pitches or using too many superlatives in press releases. Though some journalists probably disagree.

The bad habit is missing out on the full value of our PR efforts and investments. Media coverage, awards, case studies, speaking engagements and everything in between can all be used well-beyond what's expected.

## THINK ABOUT IT THIS WAY...

**Don't leave media coverage on the shelf** – Link to and share coverage in sales emails, employee updates, social media posts, executive communications, videos and blogs.

**Ladder up awards** – Use awards as an opportunity to turn customers into raving fans. Once you've won an award together, the likelihood of them joining in on a news release, case study, webinar or media relations campaign increases exponentially.

**Leave an artifact** – You've got a speaking gig, but now it's time to be greedy! Always have an asset, content or some form of thought leadership to offer your audience afterwards. And don't forget to include a call to action.

## CASE IN POINT:

For Cybersecurity Month each October, Fiserv conducted original research which was then translated into a report, news release, webinar, paid and organic social media posts, sales emails, bylined articles and everything in between – resulting in a pipeline of \$9.3MM.





# THERE IS AN INFLUENCER FOR EVERYTHING

Much like thought leaders, influencers present themselves in many forms. And, while today's influencers are typically thought of as social media stars, it is not an exclusive club.

## **INCORPORATE INFLUENCERS INTO YOUR B2B PR BY...**

**Working with influencers outside social media**, such as academics, analysts and even journalists.

**Engaging nano- and micro-influencers**, or individuals with a narrow, but dedicated, following.

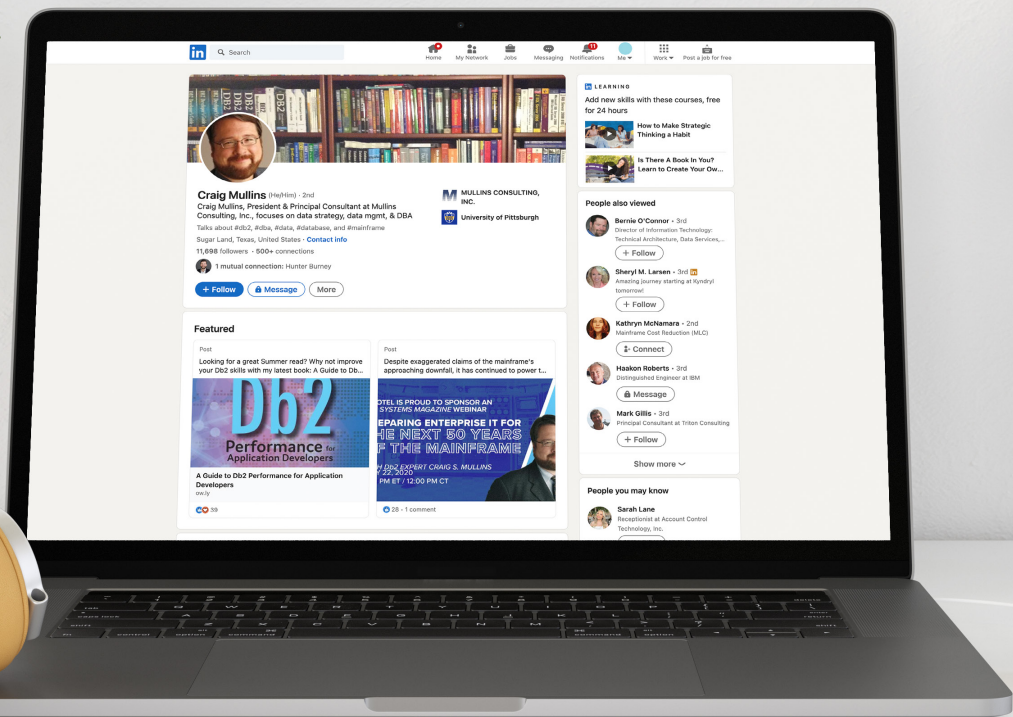
**Letting influencers get creative** so they can engage and excite their audience with your brand narrative. Trust us, they know what works.

## **CASE IN POINT:**

There may not be a huge audience for database management trends, but for those who do follow along, they are sure to tune in if excited. That's why SoftBase engaged micro-influencer Craig Mullins, an expert in data management and design, to share his insight and advice for users looking to upgrade their servers, with nearly 1,000 prospects in attendance.







# MAKE YOUR CUSTOMERS THE HERO – AND CENTER OF YOUR PR

There's a hero at the center of every story: someone who climbs the mountain, faces insurmountable challenges and defeats the evil dragon all to build a better, safer world.

The same is true in public relations, except, rarely are you the hero of your own tale. Instead, it's customers and users who take up that role.

Audiences want to know how you helped others overcome the same challenges they face. They are looking for a trusted guide, one with the wisdom and experience to steer them in the right direction. Use public relations as a tool to share your customers' stories and see for yourself how much it drives engagement.

## FOR EXAMPLE...

**Journalists care more about users and their experiences**, than they do your company's brand, solutions or spec sheets. Pitches should be tailored with at least one customer example to showcase.

**Connect public relations with customer success**, to build a running list of engaged and excited users who are willing to speak on the record (positively, that is).

**Two is better than one**, when it comes to speaking proposals. You won't get accepted pitching a product demo, but your chances at presenting a case study alongside a customer are much higher.

## CASE IN POINT:

Video interviews, case studies and thought leadership are just a few of the many ways DefenseStorm builds trust with media and its target audience. The built for banking cybersecurity company collaborates with customers to share their story and success throughout the financial services industry.





# MEASURE WHAT MATTERS

Measurements abound in public relations. Ad value equivalency, share of voice, media impressions, audience reach, the list goes on. But do these metrics truly demonstrate the value of public relations?

The answer is... complicated, and that's why PR remains one of the most challenging practices to track and measure.

Consider that one multi-million-dollar client you acquired after they saw your company featured in an industry publication. Who gets the credit? The article or the sales teams' follow-up? Do you measure the value of the article or the deal? These are difficult questions to answer.

## INSTEAD OF BOILING THE OCEAN WITH EVERY METRIC POSSIBLE...

**Keep it simple** – Establish what types of PR activities are most important to your business, whether that's speaking engagements, awards or earned media coverage. Then, narrow your focus to the two or three most relevant KPIs.

**Focus on outcomes** – Are those activities working? Are you seeing an increase in media coverage? Perhaps website traffic is up? If so, keep at it.

**Integrate PR** – Tie your public relations program to all other marketing and sales activities. Now, you can draw a line between results and revenue. If you're not generating revenue, rethink where your line starts from.

## CASE IN POINT:

To measure PR success, NCR established a ranking system defining the top 10 qualities of earned media coverage, including tone, backlinks, inclusion of a quote, use of a headshot and direct mentions.





# AND LOOK GOOD DOING IT

The 'death' of public relations has been greatly exaggerated. Rather, our sphere of influence has grown. Audiences have more freedom and choice than ever, and the same goes for how we approach engaging them.

In fact, public relations and communications practitioners have more tools at their disposal than ever before – the challenge is identifying and tracking which have the most impact on your audience.

By incorporating these five principles into your own approach, well, that's how you make the most of your public relations.

**Need help building a public relations program that resonates with your audience? Let's talk. Reach out to Mike Neumeier at 404.451.7832 or [mneumeier@arketi.com](mailto:mneumeier@arketi.com).**

