

## **INDUSTRIAL PR – AN ANALYSIS FROM BLACK AND WHITE TO TODAY**

By Ian Deavin BSc, M.D. – The Industrial Marketing Agency

e-mail: [ian@theindustrialmarketingagency.co.uk](mailto:ian@theindustrialmarketingagency.co.uk), [www.theindustrialmarketingagency.co.uk](http://www.theindustrialmarketingagency.co.uk)

It is not that long ago – late 1970's – that an industrial press release typically consisted of text plus black and white photograph posted second class snail mail to probably around 20 editors of monthly hard copy feature based magazines. These magazines only used black and white internally and if you sent more than one release a month the effort was wasted as only one was ever likely to be used each month – they were rarely kept for later use – although some did occasionally turn up in annual features.

That was it – 12 releases a year in black and white per company, with occasional opportunities for a feature if your client advertised a lot and/or you knew the editor quite well. Strangely it worked, it was the only game in town and everybody played it.

So what happened – well first low-cost colour printing, then low cost publishing, product based journals that made money on selling advertising to companies keen to submit product editorial, the transfer of responsibility and cost for writing of feature articles from editors to the companies in the industry.

Then the internet happened and things really took off. Directories – which had been expensive (perhaps purchased alternate years) and little used – now came into their own as up to date readily searchable information sources. Then online journals, frequently as a sort of “copy” of the parent hard copy magazine and these soon also took on the role of industry directories.

Printed newsletters which had been expensive and poorly received were replaced by e-newsletters – much less expensive and actually better received by virtue of the much larger circulations made possible, but also because they became so easy to use – just click-and-go, don't want it? Then unsubscribe.

Websites of course were initially expensive artistic exercises until everyone calmed down and got to grips with the idea of a company website as a continuously updated product brochure, data sheet, sales platform, corporate statement, help line etc. etc. – available 24/7.

Along with online magazines of course came online editorial and advertising – initially this advertising was hugely over-priced and actually held back development for perhaps a couple of years, but when prices became more realistic then the whole online publishing scene too off.

With this came the advent of the voracious web – capable of taking as much content as we are able to throw at it – limited only by the cost of creating sensible material in the first place.

So far so short of Blogging and Social Media – for some the jury is still out (yes, even now) – although at The Industrial Marketing Agency we have been running industrial online blogging and social media activities for nearly two years now in parallel with PR programs and have seen a 2 to 3 fold increase in client web profiles over that time.

What you may ask is a web profile? Well, we define it as the presence of client links on Google organic searches on pages 1 and 2 in response to specific relevant keywords or word strings.

So, if for example we have a client with 150 keywords they are each searched (manually!) and links to the client noted from pages 1 and 2, along with their position on that page. The profile consists of how many results there are and where they are. Sadly the search needs to be manual since the client name may not appear in the search result – or the result may be presented in the form of an image or text which leads via a directory or journal to the actual client.

In this way we are able to say:

- We know PR works
- We know Blogs work
- We know Social Media works

Because we see the results in organic searches

We can also see when there is a problem with a client website – perhaps Google simply cannot find it. We can also see which journals and directories are actively appearing in searches – they are the ones of greatest value when advertising budgets are reviewed.