



**TECH CHILL  
BALTICS**

PR For Start-Ups

Colette Ballou, Ballou PR  
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# Client experience

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# First, the big picture



# Corporate reputation

# Done right, PR is a huge part of your reputation

- It is what people say about you whether in a newspaper, on a blog, on Twitter or to a colleague at an event like this one
- It is about good word-of-mouth that supports sales and increases valuation
- Your reputation is everything, and a good name can be damaged in a few keystrokes. Looking after your reputation is crucial

# Big misconceptions



**PR is more than media relations,  
but media relations is a big part of what  
we do**

**We don't control the media:  
we control the message.  
And understand media agendas, news  
cycles, trends, and how something  
becomes news and talked about**



**At it's most basic and tactical, PR is  
media relations, writing press releases,  
etc.**

**At it's best, it's reputation management**

# Humans are storytellers

# The most respected companies use PR as a strategic advantage

# There's a key factor in corporate reputation

# A good reputation has to be earned



# SendGrid

**If you don't speak, others will speak for you, and shape and thus control your reputation**

**Start early**

**Honesty, transparency, authenticity,  
integrity**

**Build and guard your reputation carefully**





# The smaller picture

# You probably don't need a PR agency

**If you are pre-seed or seed, you need to mine your friends and family (if B2C) or super-early users (if B2B) for feedback on what works and what doesn't. They are the ones that will put their heart and soul into pointing out bugs, giving feedback and spreading the word.**

**Focus on the product, product design, the basics of the business, leverage social tools and channels to enhance your marketing and your connections to spread by word of mouth.**

**PR is not a necessity at this stage in your life.**



# About PR

# Good PR is about building and maintaining professional networks

- » PR is more than traditional and non-traditional media relations: it means reaching influencers, your customers, prospects, and even your competitors to get good word-of-mouth that drives sales and increases valuation.

## What PR is: the basics

- » Key messages
- » Media training
- » Press materials distribution
- » Press releases
- » Proactive pitching
- » Opinion pieces
- » Media tours
- » Market analyst relations
- » Speaker placement at conferences
- » Awards

**PR does not replace sales – it works in tandem with it.**

**PR takes time. Up to six or even nine months depending on whether or not you already have traction and your industry.**



# Okay, but how do I get PR?

## » News is

- » New product (with customers)
- » Personalities
- » Expansion, failure
- » Financials
- » Layoffs, litigation

## » Can be news

- » Change in direction
- » Business as usual
  - » New customer
  - » Personnel appointment

## » Not news:

- » We're still here!
- » Product *still* selling
- » Our existing product is really better than our competitor's new product

## Determining your approach – what makes something news

- » Timeliness: is it part of the news agenda of the day?
- » Differentiation: is your technology disruptive or a refinement? Or has it been done before?
- » Impact: how does the story effect your industry, your competition – will it change things in any way?
- » Proximity and education: how is it relevant to the publication/journalist you want to write about it? Have they written about the subject before?
- » Controversy: will it divide opinion, will it get people talking?
- » Prominence: is there a well-known person attached to the news? Who is quoted in the release/any third party endorsement (market analyst or key influencer)?

- » Press release
- » ‘Surfing’ the news agenda/piggy-backing
- » Case studies
- » Product reviews
- » Bylined articles
- » Letters to the editor
- » Editorial calendars
- » Technical articles
- » Surveys

**Key messages:** the who/what/where/when/why and how of your company

- » Limited to three-five maximum
- » Supportable with factual data or proof points
- » Concise, clear, understandable

**Press kit/collaterals:**

- » Company boilerplate: a concise overview reflecting the key messaging and features of your company
- » Bios of key management: quick bios of your founding members, senior team, and investors
- » Testimonials: what do others have to say about your product?
- » Company fact sheet: a quick one page document describing your product, features, and audience

For internal use only: press Q&A - answer all the tough questions ahead of time



# The Press Release

When drafting your press release, it is important that you focus on the key news that you are announcing in a clear one- to two-page release

» Typically, a press release will follow this format:

» **Topic sentence: what you are announcing**

» *Subheader: how this affects the industry*

» The location, date

» Paragraph one: what your company does, what they are announcing, and what are the immediate and long term benefits

» Paragraph two: give more detail about the news. Use examples

» Paragraph three: use a quote from a key partner, customer, or influencer to discuss how they use your service

» Paragraph four: use a quote from your founder, or CEO to talk about the larger vision of your company. how does your announcement help you achieve that vision? What is next?

» Paragraph five (if necessary): technical details and requirements

» Paragraph six: your company boilerplate



## Wildfire launches new way to measure brand engagement on Facebook

*Wildfire Integrates with Facebook's new Insights data to provide brands with a richer understanding of engagement*

**London, UK.— 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2011—**[Wildfire](#), the leader in social media marketing software, announced today the release of [new analytics](#) that enable marketers to better understand their brand's reach on Facebook, including how well brands are accessing the friends of their fans and how successfully they are creating brand advocates. Wildfire's new analytics tap into new Insights metrics being announced by Facebook today, but also go deeper by enabling brands to view these metrics in aggregate across all their Facebook pages and tabs.

Selected by Facebook to help advise them on the new Insights metrics, Wildfire is in the unique position to offer its users immediate access to the new metrics when Facebook releases them in the coming days. Additionally, Wildfire's participation in Facebook's beta testing program allowed it to build out its own platform not only to provide its clients with an easy way to digest and track the new Insights metrics, but also to go deeper by providing additional insights, including the ability to aggregate the new analytics across multiple Facebook pages and tabs.

"Facebook Insights provide marketers with powerful social media measurement tools to better understand and influence the discussion between a brand and its audience," said Victoria Ransom, Wildfire founder and CEO. "Partnering with Facebook allows us to deliver a fully-integrated analytics solution that builds upon the foundation provided by Facebook's platform. Our enhanced social marketing tools give Wildfire customers an advantage when it comes to brand engagement."

When used in combination with Facebook Insights, Wildfire's new analytics deliver critical value to the social space, which according to key players like Mark Zuckerberg, is becoming increasingly focused on engagement, as noted in the f8 keynote. With engagement rising to the forefront of social marketing strategy, marketers look to quantify the impact of their social media efforts, which requires more than a tally of how many fans or followers they have on a particular social network. Facebook Insights and Wildfire's integration provides brands with state-of-the-art, actionable data.

Wildfire's announcement today is part of its ongoing commitment to providing brands and agencies with a complete social marketing solution. Companies such as Electronic Arts, Travelocity, the Indianapolis Colts, and Virgin Atlantic use Wildfire to power social media campaigns and manage their social properties. On the heels of the release of its [Social Marketing Suite](#) earlier this summer, the integration with Facebook's API provides marketers with advanced analytics to help them create more tailored campaigns with a precise strategy. Using Wildfire tools like Messenger and Page Manager, brands can optimise the Facebook conversation with their customers and reach a wider audience.

Download PDF: [http://lp.wildfireapp.com/rs/wildfire/images/Facebook\\_Insights.pdf](http://lp.wildfireapp.com/rs/wildfire/images/Facebook_Insights.pdf)

Read more blog post (will go live Oct 3, 6am PST): <http://blog.wildfireapp.com/?p=2989>

Like Wildfire on Facebook at: <http://www.facebook.com/wildfireinteractive>

Follow Wildfire on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/wildfireapp>

## About Wildfire Interactive

Headquartered in Redwood City, Calif., Wildfire is the leader in social media marketing software and the only social media marketing company to have received an investment from Facebook's fbFund. Our patent-pending technology allows large brands, small businesses and agencies to easily create their own attractive, branded social campaigns (e.g. sweepstakes, contests, giveaways, coupons and more), build and manage social pages, monitor and communicate with their social audience and measure the performance of their own and their competitors' social media marketing. Intuitive, streamlined and affordable, our software is simple enough for even the least tech-savvy business manager to use and flexible enough to suit the needs of the most creative marketer or advertising agency. Wildfire serves tens of thousands of companies, including Facebook, Amazon, Ogilvy and Target, and has offices in Redwood City, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York and London.

More information about Wildfire can be found at <http://www.wildfireapp.com/>.

## Email key press:

- » Note: for most high level press, you need to send a short pitch email, introducing yourself and your company, along with your release

## Who are your main press targets?

- » Provide your release to them under embargo. To secure high level press, look to use “exclusives”. Keep in mind that some publications do not honor embargoes, so it is important that you get confirmation before you email your release and pitch

## Wire distribution:

- » There are many different types of wire services:
  - » Businesswire, PR Newswire, etc.
- » Some are free, many are expensive. Generally, you get what you pay for. Make sure to decide ahead of time whether the cost of distribution is a factor

## Do Your Homework:

- » Get involved in social communities: look for early industry friends on Twitter, Quora, and blogs
- » Get familiar with your writers: use RSS keywords to track news in your industry. Read and comment often
- » Get the press involved (provide specific high level outlets with exclusives and early beta access. Get feedback before you launch)
- » Watch your competitors: Google alerts works great for this

## The Actual Pitch:

- » Email and Twitter are your best channels of communication
- » Tailor your pitch for press and publications. Have they recently written about your industry?
- » Be friendly, concise and honest. Stay away from terms like “revolutionary” and don’t be afraid to mention competitors
- » Understand timing: do not pitch during industry shows
- » Begin pitching early in the week. No reporters open email at 5:00 PM on a Friday
- » Provide visual assets and video
- » Confirm meeting times ASAP. Reporter schedules are often busy

# A few words about start-up competitions



# A few words about conferences



- » It's very important not to be the creepy lurking person. Very
- » Be thoughtful of speakers, VCs and journalists, they get LEAPT upon at conferences. Say your piece, then let them be
- » Get the business card. Give yours
- » Always re-introduce yourself to people. Never say "Do you remember me?" It puts the other person in a terrible position.
- » When someone re-introduces themselves to you, don't make them feel stupid or rude for possibly not remembering you. They are trying to help you. Don't repay kindness by making them feel like an idiot
- » Don't approach someone when they are in the middle of something, for example, when they are mobbed, trying to get off a stage, or trying to leave the venue
- » Please accept when the other person has to close the conversation. Make it easy for them and allow them to go
- » Think twice before touching anybody. It doesn't create closeness or confidence where there was none; most times, it just is creepy and off-putting



- » Bring a wingman, or better yet, a wingwoman. They can make sure you get into and out of conversations smoothly, help you with names, etc.
- » Building on the wingman concept: an introduction is gold. Get a mutual friend or colleague to introduce you – it's more powerful
- » Watch the other person for cues, such as body language, on when to wrap things up. It's polite and appreciated, and you will be remembered!
- » Remember that the point is NOT to hog the other person's time for an hour. The point is to be compelling and memorable
- » Have a clear "ask" if you are trying to speak to someone, and get to the point. Don't just say, "We should have coffee."
- » If appropriate, consider approaching with a "give" instead of an "ask" – "I saw on Twitter that you are keen to invest in the Baltics, may I help you get to know Estonia?"

# ballou >> pr<sup>TM</sup>

London – Paris – Berlin

Thank you! Other questions?

@coletteballou

@balloupr

More about us:

<http://www.slideshare.net/BallouPRUK/bpr-creds>