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# analyst relations: a how-to

## analyst relations: an overview

Industry or market research analysts are concerned with trends and forecasts. Based on their expertise and research findings, analysts predict future trends and report ways that industries can attract new customers.

Companies can influence industry or market research analysts through strategic analyst relations. Large companies usually have an Analyst Relations person or team that briefs industry analysts about their company's strategy, products and services; fulfills their research requests; and persuades them to represent them in the best possible light. Analyst Relations is usually part of a company's corporate communications function, although it can also report to marketing, sales, or a number of other groups.

### **analyst relations: measuring R-O-I**

Targeting analysts can deliver significant R-O-I (return on your investment). Here are three:

#### **(1) Return on Impressions**

Industry analysts reports are disseminated throughout the industry and business world to journalists, investors, customers, and competitors. Their opinions drive business decisions.

#### **(2) Return on Image and Influence**

By leveraging your company as an expert resource for analysts, you can enhance your perceived expertise and position your company as an industry or market thought-leader.

#### **(3) Return on Impact**

Interested in tying analyst relations to business lead generation and sales? You can contract analysts to write white papers or "instant analysis" briefs on behalf of your company, and then distribute these documents to customers and prospects. Doing so provides a great lead generation tool. An endorsement from the right analyst may help your company overcome sales objections.

### **analyst names you should know**

The two largest U.S. research firms are Gartner (NASDAQ:IT) and Forrester Research (NASDAQ:FORR). The largest European firm is UK-based Ovum. In addition to these well known national names, there are many independent industry analysts who specialize by topic category.

### **analyst relations versus traditional media**

Approaching an analyst is not that unlike approaching a journalist. Though they have many similarities, they have several important differences. A few to note:

- Journalists look for the most interesting newsworthy angle. Analysts want to know why what you're saying is important to the marketplace.
- Analysts want empirical data, usually to a greater degree than reporters. If you go to them with vaporware, they're just as annoyed as reporters.
- With reporters, you tend focus on events or a specific point in time during your discussion. Analyst relationships focus on long term issues and are not as time-sensitive.
- Different reporters look for different types of news, but analyst firms tend to look for the same kind of information: proof points, customer references, and indicators that the company is well managed.

### **recommended analyst relationship building strategies**

You can leverage the analyst community in marketing vehicles while at the same time increasing communication with them. Some suggested tactics:

- Secure a specific quote from an analyst for your newsletter or site.
- Quote industry statistics from analysts in press releases, brochures, or backgrounders, changing your analyst source every 6 months.
- Enlist a leading analyst for a Webinar or telebriefing.
- Use an industry statistic from an analyst as a headline on your company Web site to bolster your take on the market.
- Cultivate personal relationships with analysts by arranging face-to-face lunches and meetings to coincide with your travel schedule.
- Send notes to follow up on analyst media quotes, personally acknowledging their good insight from your executives.

### **dos and don't for pitching to analysts**

#### *Dos*

1. Know what you want to say. Be as clear as possible, plan to address a few key points, know what points you want to have stick.
2. Make those points quickly. You have at most ten minutes while people are listening before they start doing their e-mail or sending IM messages to one another about how bored they are. Omit the philosophy and background. Do not waste those first ten minutes.
3. Answer the basic questions. How big is the market (why they should care?), how are you different, and how does your business model let you win? If all you do is answer these three questions, then your presentation will be a success.
4. Teach—help them understand the space better and in an interesting way. Analysts are always looking for new ideas to include in the next report. If you address the problem and their issues in an interesting and innovative way, the analyst may steal what you tell them and use it in their work. If they promote a problem for which you have the solution you will ensure a worthwhile visit.
5. Know an analyst's personal opinion and business perspective before you arrive.
6. Explain how you fit in. There are many of big players in the technology world that exert significant influence on customers. They want to know how your company will succeed despite (or because of) the presence of the big players.

#### *Don'ts*

1. Don't bring a large presentation team – keep it small. Do not bring along someone if all he or she is going to do is sit there and smile. Focus the meeting on your target audience and get the most out of their time.
2. Don't quote other analysts. It is rude and unproductive.
3. Don't be a brown noser. Do not ask for an analyst's opinion unless you really want it and are willing to hear their input. Listen to what they say and acknowledge their perspective (you do not have to agree with it).
4. Don't do all the talking. Let analysts get a word in.
5. Don't tell them something that they have heard before. Don't waste time pointing out the crudely obvious.
6. Don't slam the competition.

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