

The Unseen Engine: The Hidden Role of PR in the Technology Industry

BY FIORENZA MELLA, CEO AND JESS MCMURRAY,
SENIOR CONTENT STRATEGIST AT XPRESSO COMMUNICATIONS

IF THE TECH INDUSTRY WERE A ROCK BAND, PUBLIC RELATIONS WOULD BE THE ROADIE. WE DON'T TAKE THE STAGE, WE DON'T BASK IN THE SPOTLIGHT, AND WE CERTAINLY DON'T THROW TVs OUT OF HOTEL WINDOWS. BUT WHEN THAT POWERFUL SOUND THUNDERS OUT ACROSS THE STADIUM, IT'S BECAUSE THE STAGE WAS SET BY THOSE WHO KNOW THE MUSIC, KNOW THE INSTRUMENTS, AND KNOW HOW TO SET THEM UP SO THAT THE STARS CAN SHINE. AND, CRUCIALLY, SO THAT THE AUDIENCE CAN HEAR THE MESSAGE ACROSS THE DIN.



In a world fuelled by visibility - clicks, impressions, headlines - PR professionals in the technology sector occupy a curious space: essential, but intentionally hidden. This is not an oversight. It's the unspoken rule of the game. The illusion of organic authority is precisely what gives earned media its power. A feature in a trade magazine or a quote in Forbes doesn't - and shouldn't - come with a footnote saying, "Brought to you by a PR agency."

That quiet anonymity is by design. Journalists guard the appearance of editorial independence. Brands want their messaging to feel authentic, not manufactured. And PR? We keep the gears turning, silently.

It's tempting to compare PR to roots or operating systems (and many have), but perhaps it's closer to the duck gliding across a lake: serene above the surface, legs paddling furiously beneath. The difference is - nobody sees the legs. Nobody should.

PR IN THE TECH SECTOR

That's especially true in technology. In more consumer-facing industries, PR can

sometimes lean toward the spectacular: planned leaks, red-carpet launches, viral stunts. In tech, the glamour is subtler. We're not selling hype. We're translating innovation into meaning. PR in the tech sector is about bridging two sides of a complicated conversation: connecting engineers and developers with broadcasters, integrators, CTOs, decision-makers. We help shape stories that are clear, relevant and rooted in real-world impact. In B2B technology, credibility is the currency - and PR helps companies earn it, one thoughtful article or strategic interview at a time.

That takes more than just buzzwords. It demands subject-matter fluency, editorial instinct, writing skill and industry trust. And perhaps most importantly, the ability to give a company its voice - not a generic brand tone, but a specific, consistent and human voice that resonates across platforms. Its multidisciplinary work, often involving research, trend analysis, technical understanding and collaboration across marketing, sales and product teams.

Yet, unlike advertising - where MadMen-esque grandeur often sees an agency's name tucked into the bottom corner of a magazine ad, PR professionals often

receive no such accolade. And there is satisfaction in that silence: when a thought leadership article drives engagement. When a company is recognised as a category leader. When an editor picks up a story and places it prominently, not because they were sold to, but because the angle was compelling and the pitch was relevant. That's the win.

BRAND ENABLEMENT

Of course, PR's intangible nature also creates a challenge. While advertising delivers easily quantified metrics - impressions, click-throughs, conversions - PR impact is harder to pin down. How do you draw a straight line from a published Q&A to a €500K equipment deal? You don't. But you can point to momentum, trust and the cumulative effect of consistent, credible visibility. PR is sales enablement: it opens doors.

THE PERSONAL TOUCH

The problem is, with the real power of PR remaining the industry's biggest secret, it can be easy to overlook its value; especially when it appears - on the face of it - that AI can replicate many of its core functions. The irony is that in reality, greater levels of automation in content creation are making PR's value more pronounced, not less. After all, sending out generic and identifiable AI content (and excuse me, we were using the em-dash long before AI commandeered it) on a scattergun, cold-call basis to random journalists is more likely to stir up negative sentiment for the firm you're representing. And that's the opposite of the goal.

Because ultimately, if you set aside the subtleties associated with crafting content appropriate for its market (could you articulate the differences between an EMEA feature versus a US press briefing?), the central point is that ChatGPT - charming as it can be - doesn't foster meaningful relationships with key stakeholders in the market. It doesn't know who is moving from Broadcast Europe to IBC Daily. It doesn't know that you should never mention European Football leagues or margaritas around Bob from Cable Weekly. It doesn't know how to foster personal connection, credibility and trust. And it certainly doesn't spend the summer on a 'workation' chasing down last-minute approvals for a press call at 9pm on a Sunday.

At Xpresso Communications, we believe in doing the work behind the curtain. We've built our reputation on exactly that - helping complex, innovative technologies reach the right people, with the right message, at the right time. We're proud to have earned the trust of clients across the broadcast and broadband landscape - not by demanding credit, but by delivering results.

In the end, good PR doesn't need to be seen. It needs to work. That's what we do. And if we get a quiet nod, a thank-you in passing, or simply the opportunity to write an article championing our role in SCTE's quarterly publication? Well, that's more than enough.

ABOUT XPRESSO COMMUNICATIONS

Representing technology firms across the globe, Xpresso Communications have won awards for their provision of integrated communications services, creating original content that dynamically balances both long-form and short-form approaches - including traditional PR, articles and white papers, social media, direct emails, blogs, industry leadership thought pieces, newsletters, brochures and advertising copy.

Headquartered in The Netherlands but with an international reach, Xpresso's focus has always been on communicating technology from the human perspective - focusing on conveying meaningful, tangible business benefits, and fostering connection, trust and authenticity - both between us and our clients, and our clients and their customers.

www.xpressocommunications.com

