



Research in Brief

The Social Media Release as a public relations tool: Intentions to use among B2B bloggers

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ABSTRACT

The Social Media Release (SMR) is emerging as a potentially powerful public relations tool in a world of social network media, particularly when targeted at influential bloggers. The research described here studies the factors that influence bloggers to use SMRs, using the Technology Acceptance Model as a theoretical framework, concentrating specifically on their perceptions of usefulness and ease of use.

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In the research described in this note, we examine a relatively new public relations (PR) device, the Social Media Release (SMR), and its effects on bloggers. Specifically, we seek to determine what factors will affect their decisions to use SMRs or components of these in the future. We proceed by examining SMRs, defining and describing them, and explore a theoretical framework that permits an explanation of the future uptake of SMRs by bloggers in a business-to-business (B2B) setting. Then, we present the results of a study of whether and why B2B bloggers would use SMRs or elements of them.

1. The Social Media Release

The Social Media Release (SMR) is best conceived of as a blend of the traditional press release, and digital social media (e.g. <http://www.socialmediarelease.org/>). The SMR has evolved as a response to the increase in interactivity permitted by social media and is best conceived of as a digital press release that includes the additional elements a reporter or consumer would want to see before they create their own content to broadcast or transmit further.

Like many offerings of the digital age, the SMR blurs the lines between content and technology. Whether it eventually gets used and becomes an established standard within an industry or a market still depends on whether its users find it easy to use and useful. Whether or not the SMR becomes an accepted standard within the PR community, and among the bloggers that surround it, will depend on the extent to which it is accepted as a technology.

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