

Beyond Journal Publications: Using PR to Promote Research for Impact

Health Policy Research Group (HPRG) Media Bootcamp
University of Nigeria

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Public Relations: What is it?

Influencing, engaging and building a relationship with key stakeholders in order to shape and frame the public perception of an organization.

What PR People do

- Crisis management
- Environmental Scanning
- Handling publications
- Government (public Affairs) and Community relations
- Event management
- Media Management: position papers, media contacts, media responses and inquiries, tracking and evaluating media coverages, and handling press briefing, etc



Roles of PR in a University

- Use strategic communication to support the overall goal of the university and assist its various faculties and research groups to achieve their goals.
- Present accurate account of staff, students and programs of the university to relevant audience.
- Help disseminate research outcomes from faculties and research groups to policymakers and other stakeholders.
- Track and monitor media coverages on the university, its programmes, and policies that may affect its interest.



How PR People Work with Researchers for Impact

- Develop strategic communications plan to market research findings
- Develop policy brief to reach policymakers
- Engage the media directly with a press release
- Be active on SoMe



Communication Plan: Why Do you Need it?

- To effectively deliver the findings of your research to appropriate stakeholders
- To identify the messages you need to promote, to whom you're targeting those messages, and the best communication channels to use
- It gives you a sense of direction on your expectation from the media



Elements of a Communication Plan

- Title
- Duration
- Summary
- Specific measurable objectives
- Analysis (Audience /SWOT)
- Key communication messages
- Communication channels
- Tools – Press release, newsletter, position papers, pictures, policy briefs, etc
- Budget and evaluation



What is a policy brief?

- A short document that presents the findings and recommendations of a research project
- It provides distilled lessons learned from the research
- It provides policy advice
- It aims at a non-expert audience



Elements of a policy brief

Recommended length: 1-3 pages

**1. Name
(& logo)**

2. Label: Policy brief

3. Headline

4. Summary

5. Recommendation

6. Introduction

7. The body

**8. Call to
action/policy
options**

**9. Photos, graphics,
charts**



How to make them read your policy brief

- Interesting and relevant headline
- Keep it simple (no jargon or difficult words)
- Keep it short (no redundant words, sentences, or paragraphs)
- Keep it relevant for the target group
- Don't state the obvious
- Give specific advice



What is a press release?

- A press release is an official statement delivered to the media to provide information or an announcement
- It has a certain format with a number of important components
- It follows to a large extent the format of a news report
- ...which helps journalists make a quick assessment of whether it is valuable for them
- It can be disseminated as an e-mail, on a website, on social media, in a press conference etc



A press release is likely to “fly” if

- It presents something new
- It relates to a trending topic
- There is some controversy
- It’s surprising or unusual
- It’s relevant to a large group of people



Components of a press release

**1. Name
(& logo)**

**2. Label: Press
release**

**3. Release
Date**

**4. Catchy
heading**

**5. Punchy first
paragraph**

**6. Supporting
paragraphs**

**7. Direct
quotation**

8. Facts box

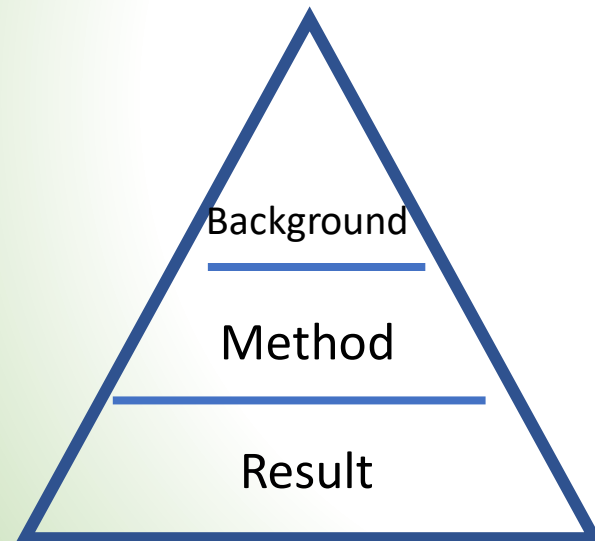
**9. Contact
Information**



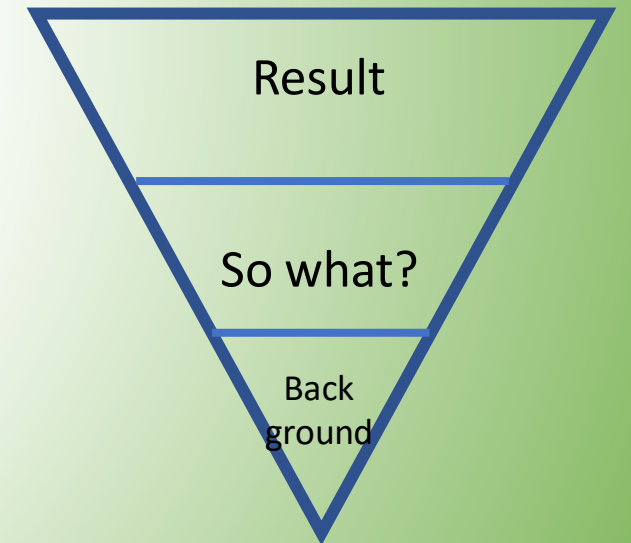
Tips on Writing a Press Release

Use the Inverted Pyramid Format of News Writing

- Researchers:



- Journalists:



Note: Numbers don't speak for themselves

Instead of...	Why not try...
A 90 % increase in urban population	Urban population almost doubled
Health sector corruption is 2% higher in AWA countries than FWA countries	Health sector corruption in AWA countries is twice higher than health sector corruption in FWA countries
A lifetime probability of developing liver cancer is 0.46% out of 1000	Out of every 1,000 people, a little less than 5 will develop liver cancer



Use Active Voice

Instead of...	Why not try...
Passive	Active
The child was bitten by the dog	The dog bit the child
It has been found by researchers that more men die annually than women	Researchers have found that more men die annually than women



What are the differences between a policy brief and a press release?

1. Target groups
2. Content
3. Format
4. Distribution
5. Etc



Exercise: Let's write a headline

5-10 words. Include a verb

Topic: Addressing security threats affecting primary healthcare service delivery and uptake in Nigeria

Result: There is lack of vital security infrastructure across the health facilities, and we recorded reports on armed robbery attacks, theft of drugs and other items, including a case of a stolen newborn. These findings are structured in three themes that reveal experienced threats in PHC facilities, their implications on health service delivery, and responses that can be taken to make PHC facilities safe. Conclusion: Security challenges constrain both access and provision of essential and affordable healthcare services at the primary healthcare level in Enugu, Nigeria.



Responses:

Exercise: What about these?

5-10 words. Include a verb

- Insecurity stops people from going to hospitals in Enugu
- Enugu Public Hospitals are Den of Robbers
- Stealing of babies, drugs bane of Enugu hospitals



Social media

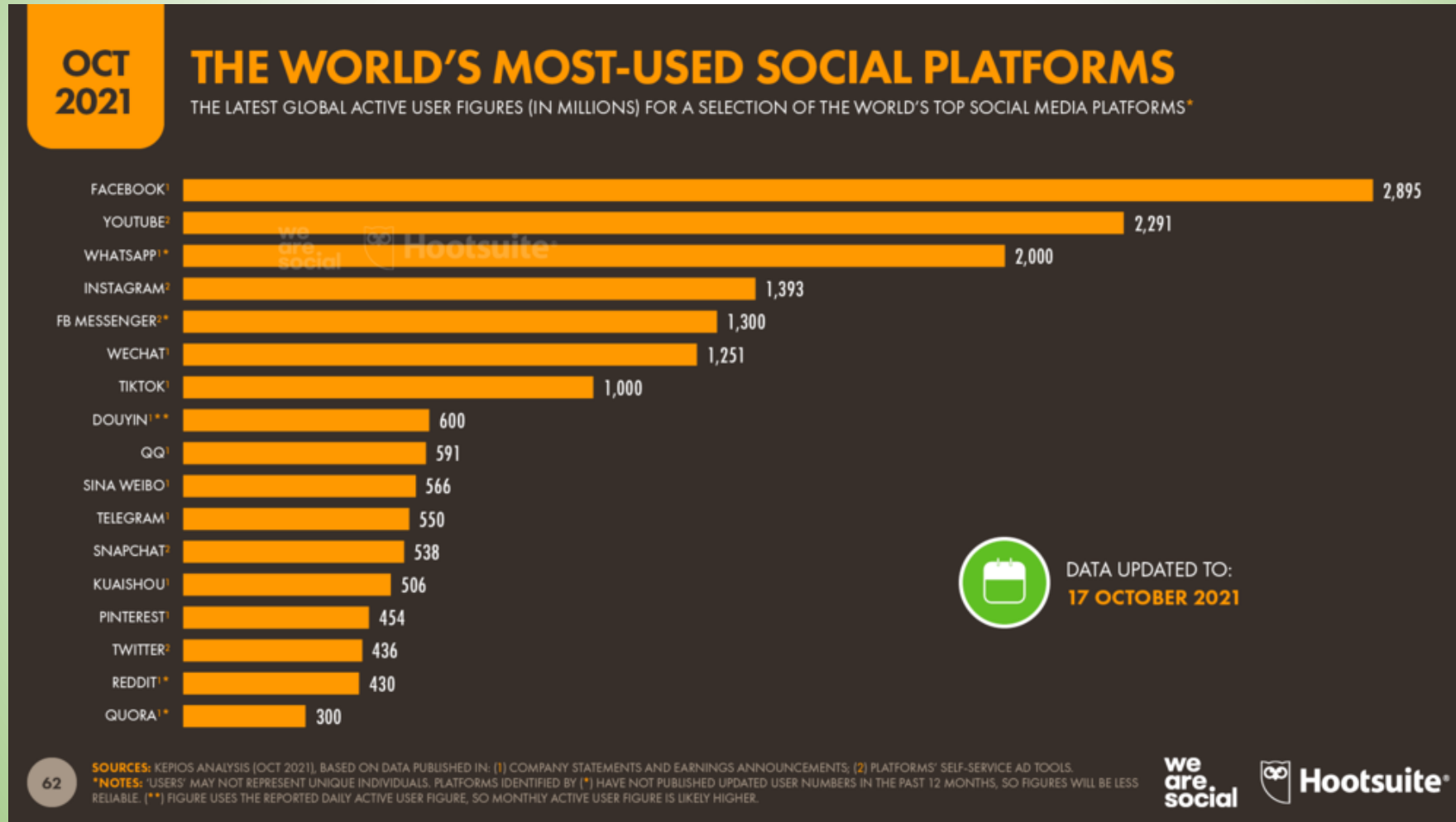


How digital are you?

1. I use LinkedIn to promote my research
2. I use Twitter to promote my research
3. I use Facebook to promote my research
4. I have a blog and/or comment on others' blogs
5. I have personal pages on Google Scholar, Research Gate, Academia, and/or Mendelay
6. I maintain my pages regularly
7. ...and track my impact on those platforms
8. I engage with other people on digital platform



Social media users



LinkedIn has about 830 million users, in June 2022



Thank
you!

