

# What exactly is public relations (and why should I care?)

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## **Think of public relations as what we do when we build a relationship: we communicate with each other, and everybody benefits.**

The official definition from the Public Relations Society of America is "Public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics."

People ask me why they should worry about reaching out to the public (the classic "What's in it for me?" question). Here's what I tell them:

1. Your customers like to hear good things about you and see that you're engaged in the community and industry. It reaffirms their decision to do business with you.
2. You get noticed by potential customers.
3. Getting the word about your expertise helps you to become known as a subject matter expert - a "go to" resource.
4. When somebody Googles you, you show up - in a good way - in the search results.
5. Your competitors are communicating about their activities and successes with your current and future customers. Don't be overshadowed by the competition.

So, just in case "public relations" conjures up images of flacks or mouthpieces or publicists, remember that public relations is something that enhances our relationships with our publics, and is something we all should be doing every day.

If you have any questions or would like more information or examples of how you can reach out and communicate, please email me (or call me at 210-601-4572).

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