

# 5 tips on how to succeed with a PR agency

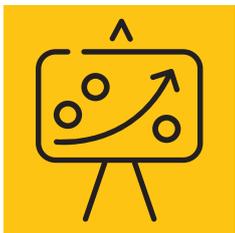


For the best advice on how to get the most out of a PR agency, it's always a good idea to hear what other marketers have to say.



Someone like Vic Heyward, head of brand at Digital Asset Management (DAM) business Bright. Vic has been looking to use PR to build greater recognition of the Bright brand, as well as to educate the marketing industry on the advantages of DAM. A range of activities has resulted in the company forming partnerships with key media and the creation of a research paper aimed at senior marketers. Bright has also featured in high profile publications such as *The Guardian*, *The Times* and *The Drum*.

We asked Vic what advice she would give to other marketers looking to work with a PR agency. Here are her 5 top tips:



## 1. Agree a clear strategy

Having an agreed strategy helps you both to know if you are on track for success. Vic believes that having clear objectives also helps when you are updating stakeholders. "It will help you explain what you're trying to achieve and justify how the budget is being spent," she says. Vic also advises reviewing that strategy with your agency, regularly – preferably every quarter to six months. "You don't want to roll out a strategy and let it go stale. When necessary, you should be prepared to adapt it – if the focus of your business changes, for example."



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## 2. Arrange regular contact sessions

Holding regular contact sessions where you can discuss activity is an essential element of the agency relationship. Vic says it's important that these meetings happen at regular intervals, and on a frequency that suits you – be that monthly, fortnightly or weekly. Vic adds: "To get the most out of these sessions, it helps to have a clear agenda, so everyone knows what you are looking to achieve every time you meet."



## 3. Be responsive

The nature of the media can mean that when requests for comment come along, you need to be able to react quickly. Vic says: "If you can, turn those requests around quickly so the agency can take advantage of the opportunity being offered to you."

But she also adds that you need to be realistic about your capacity to respond. Vic says: "My advice would be, at the beginning of your working relationship, outline any potential blockers to your PR agency so they're aware. And when those requests come through, be clear whether this is something you can or cannot respond to."



## 4. Be honest and transparent

It's important to remember that the relationship between you and your agency is a partnership, so collaboration is essential. Vic explains "The more your PR agency knows about you, the better their chance of finding the opportunities you need to make your campaign a success." She adds: "An element of vulnerability is also fine here. It's not your job to know it all. You want to work with an agency that will explain anything you don't understand. You should feel free to ask them anything."



## 5. Have a sense of humour

It should be a pleasure to work with one another – so a good cultural fit is important. A good sense of humour will also help you both cope with the unpredictability of the media. Vic explains: "Things don't always go to plan, and you need to be relaxed about that. When things don't go as well as you hoped, you need to be prepared to accept it, move on and look to the next opportunity."



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