

Threads will add significant value to PR

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Four university students, one of whom was Mark Zuckerberg, changed the world of communication in 2004 when they launched Facebook. The platform quickly grew into the largest social media network in the world with close to three billion users as of 2021 - half of which access their account on a daily basis.



The power of social media is undeniable. Traditional news agencies such as CNN, the BBC, and TMZ have all identified social media as a significant threat and the future of news consumption.

It comes as no surprise that from a PR perspective, social media plays a significant role when it comes to brand management.

The move to Instagram and the inclusion of Threads

Once Facebook became a stable product – with a steadily growing user base – Zuckerberg quickly turned his attention to other social media platforms that would not only grow Facebook's user base through acquired growth but would prove to be a future headline act.

Zuckerberg was attracted to Instagram for two reasons:

- Neurologists have proven that almost half of the human brain is directly or indirectly involved in processing visual information; and best-selling author Steven Pinker's quote which stated that visual information is retained by the brain while sounds fade.
- Like Facebook itself, Instagram showed significant growth. However, ever the innovator, Zuckerberg recently announced that Meta would be launching Threads, which will eventually be used in conjunction with Instagram.

Threads will be following a similar formula to X (previously known as Twitter) where users will have a 500-character limit to convey information. However, it will be possible to bypass this by combining multiple threads.

Following the announcement of Threads, the platform reached the 10 million sign-ups milestone within seven hours of its launch.

Can Threads add benefit to your social media strategy?

In a previous post, we discussed how social media should be a significant part of any PR campaign as it can offer significant benefits to any company. Some of the significant benefits of social media include being top of mind and humanising your brand.

Threads will offer the same benefits as other social media platforms with the added benefits of being able to build a narrative and having a visual component once it is integrated with Instagram. Threads will offer an added advantage for early adopters of the platform.

PR is about eyeballs and organically growing your client's digital tribe. As people gravitate towards Threads, they will be instantly attracted to your client's posts as they navigate their way through the platform and start claiming accounts and usernames.

Both Facebook and Instagram are governed and run by very precise algorithms which dictate what information is placed on specific timelines and when it is placed. If your posts do not follow this specific formula and are not posted at the right time, they can get lost in the traffic that is associated with these networks.

However, if you are an early adopter of these platforms before an algorithm is developed, your messaging will be seen by a large number of users on an unrestricted basis.



PR still remains relevant in a digital world

Lola Lazarus, Bullion PR & Communication 25 Jul 2023



Will Threads be a game changer for PR?

One of the biggest challenges of PR is that it takes time to develop a narrative whose messaging can often be lost if there is a restriction on words or characters. However, this is an unfortunate reality of any social media platform.

PR messaging needs to evolve in line with the human evolution towards social media. Humans gravitate towards social media because these platforms are able to package content in a consumable manner that fits into the hustle and bustle of our daily lives. Threads will be a game changer for PR because it will allow you to develop a shorter hook that will reel followers into reading a longer narrative.

Important highlights of your messaging will play a vital role in your PR strategy. A key client of Bullion PR and Communication recently developed a platform that is playing a major role in the proactive battle of fraud prevention. The client wanted to highlight that a significant recent development of this platform was the creation of a single hotline where users can report fraud to several relevant authorities.

While this was an important message that our client wanted to communicate, we would recommend highlighting the savings that the client provided the industry since 2021 as the messaging that would be placed on Threads. This would generate attention and force users to ask how our client managed to achieve this. They would therefore read the longer messaging.

Threads will be an important development when it comes to the future of PR, provided that PR companies adapt their strategies in line with the benefits that short-form messaging offers companies that want to use social media as a messaging platform.

The final issue to focus on is whether a company favours Threads over X. I feel that both platforms have their place as social media platforms generate significant loyalty. X users won't just abandon the platform because of Threads. Companies should maximise their exposure; I would include both Threads and X in any social media component of a PR campaign.

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