



**Red Lorry
Yellow Lorry**

Engaging a global audience

A GUIDE TO INTERNATIONAL PR AND B2B LEAD GENERATION IN ENTERPRISE IT



Convoy

GLOBAL PR NETWORK

— Growing an enterprise IT brand globally is hard

With so many channels to consider, engaging the right audiences, with the right content, at the right time is a major challenge. To succeed, enterprise IT brands must feed intelligent local insights into an integrated campaign.

Content marketing campaigns drive leads, while a consistent corporate story that is balanced with the needs and nuances of local markets and media landscapes will build the brand.

In this myth-busting eBook, we've gathered regional expertise from our global PR agency network, Convoy. Discover tips and tricks to maximise the effectiveness of your global PR and lead gen campaigns.

Contents

4. Asia Pacific

6. China

8. Japan

10. Korea

13. Middle East and Africa

13. Middle East

15. South Africa

18. The Americas

18. North America

20. South America

24. Europe

24. DACH

26. Nordics

28. Russia

30. UK

32. Top takeaways

Myth-busting PR in... Asia Pacific



**Kunalan Chakravarthy, Chief Executive of
Singapore-headquartered communications agency
[Priority Consultants](#)**

PRIORITY

Regional overview

"Brands tend to underestimate how diverse the region is. Too many fall into the trap of treating all countries in APAC the same, rather than considering the vast cultural differences between them and how the local markets and media operate.

Markets can vary significantly from country to country, so businesses have to understand the different requirements. Singapore, for example, has become much more technically sophisticated than Vietnam in recent years.

Local media and influencers are becoming increasingly inward-looking in their approach to content. Brands need to cater to that by addressing local issues and showcasing local stories, case studies and proof points. Businesses have to be prepared to create specific PR and marketing plans for each country if they want to make a real impact in the region."

Key challenges

"The biggest challenge in such a vast and complex region is the language barrier. There are more than 20 languages spoken across India alone and, around ten spoken daily in Southeast Asia.

The saving grace for Western businesses is that English is still fairly prevalent, especially in India, Southeast Asia, Hong Kong, Australia and New Zealand. It's not spoken everywhere, but businesses can get away with English-speaking content.

Markets across Asia also vary enormously. Media environments in Singapore and Hong Kong are extremely sophisticated and comparable to London and the US, while processes in India, Indonesia and Thailand are still maturing. Editorial cycles in the Philippines are still dominated by news announcements, while pay-for-play is extremely prevalent in Vietnam. Brands can't afford to overlook these differences."

— **“Businesses have to create specific PR and marketing plans for each country if they want to make a real impact.”**

Media relations

"Having a local spokesperson is advantageous, but English is still fairly widely spoken. Businesses should focus on building the profile of a local spokesperson who understands regional issues, rather than relying on someone who just flies in for a couple of days to talk at a high level.

The challenge comes when talking about technical topics and issues. In Malaysia, for example, journalists tend to lack understanding of complex business processes and concepts.

Thoughtful, localised content with a focus on addressing local issues is critical in generating media interest. However, every market here is different so the mix of PR, social media and lead generation will vary. And respected local sales partners are key to success."

Lead generation

"Lead gen campaigns are fundamental to sales and marketing for brands based in the region, especially for those that have a remit beyond one city or territory. The increasing sophistication of marketing tech and analytics is driving a more granular view of lead nurturing and marketing comms.

Content has to be focused on addressing local needs and challenges, while retaining a level of contextual relevance. It has to connect to real-world issues and show empathy to resonate with audiences.

Finally, trade shows remain an important aspect of the marketing toolkit and we're seeing more virtual events taking place. Asia is very relationship-focused, so new technologies can sometimes have better success through word of mouth than big budget marketing programmes."

— **"Content has to be focused on addressing local needs and challenges. It has to connect to real-world issues."**

What services or skills do you need in a local PR agency?

"A keen appreciation for the business side of things is critical. Developing engaging content is predicated on the ability to translate fundamental business issues into compelling stories that will capture the attention of local media and influencers. Journalists now demand this approach, making it a key requirement for brands.

The level of technical maturity in the region is also changing rapidly. Being able to appreciate this change, and adapt to it, is critical to success."

Myth-busting PR in... China



Dr. Gordon Wong and Claire Walker from Beijing and Hong Kong based technology PR agency [Techworks Asia](#)



Regional overview

"Many well-known international brands believe they will automatically receive a warm welcome. But China doesn't work that way, due to the diversity and wide variations in local market dynamics.

Companies entering the market need to understand that web-based communications are extremely well developed in the region, so it's imperative that they set up their own Chinese-language websites.

Social media is embedded in society now in a way that many in the West struggle to comprehend. A well-managed social media account in China is just as important as having a company website.

There are also plenty of cultural nuances that may seem a little unusual to first-time clients from the US or Europe. For example, the care and manner with which business cards are viewed, analysed and exchanged."

Key challenges

"One potential barrier is a lack of understanding of the region's needs, which differ from country to country. There is intense competition and there can be cultural difficulties in localising services, support and product delivery.

The linguistic challenges are also quite formidable. A PR company in Asia will go nowhere without staff who are fluent in Chinese – both Cantonese and Mandarin. They have to be able to edit and translate written materials, whether in Simplified or Traditional Chinese.

Companies wishing to enter the China market will also have to do their homework on the country's various regulatory frameworks, as well as its economic and political realities. China's wider economic goals play a much bigger role in successful PR than the equivalent in other regions."

— **"Social media is embedded in society in a way that many in the West struggle to comprehend."**

Media relations

"It's vital to cultivate relationships with local journalists, especially if the client is yet to find local customers. Face-to-face meetings and interviews (if possible) are key to engaging the media and developing mutual respect.

International companies need to meet with print and online publications on the ground, and launch campaigns through social media platforms such as WeChat and Weibo. This will extend the Chinese audience considerably.

Recently, we've been using social media, particularly WeChat, to take up the slack from face-to-face events. A few key outlets have also been running webinars, inviting vendors to contribute to create informative and interactive programmes.

Finally, dispel the notion that the country is 'pay-to-play'. To infer that media coverage can simply be bought is disingenuous. If you invite an editor to meet with you, you pay the travel expenses, but that's generally it."

Lead generation

"Lead generation campaigns have been a key part of the marketing mix for many years. Webinars have long been popular and we're currently seeing a revolution in live streaming taking place as more users and brands seek direct engagement.

More clients are turning to virtual exhibition booths, hosting content on dedicated China video channels and harnessing social media to support their lead generation activities.

It's hard to know whether physical events will return. It's likely that direct face-to-face contact will regain its foothold – as long as it's backed up with appealing social media campaigns to extend the opportunities for engagement.

In terms of content, quality and relevance is vital. Also, everything needs to be presented in the local language – both linguistically and technically – while the dominance of social media means that careful content management is key."

— “More clients are turning to virtual exhibition booths and harnessing social media to support lead generation.”

What services or skills do you need in a local PR agency?

"Businesses need an agency that has the language skills, local contacts, resources and understanding to localise PR and marketing campaign delivery. Agencies that have the necessary skills to communicate via social media and mobile messaging apps now have a central role to play.

Culturally, enterprise IT brands have to develop trust by working with local customers. This will cement long-term business relationships. A local PR partner with long-term experience in China is best placed to provide the local know-how required to get results."

Myth-busting PR in... Japan



Yukiko Harada, managing director of boutique communications agency [TrainTracks](#)



Regional overview

"Many global companies think people will give them attention straight away, so don't tend to bring anything that relates specifically to the region. They just try to lever pre-existing content from other regions into the Japan market. This is a mistake.

Campaigns specifically relevant to Japan are much better received. If this isn't possible, it's important to at least add some sort of local flavour and references to ensure your audience's interest is piqued.

The way features are selected and produced is also slightly different. Topics are dictated by publications' in-house editorial teams, and then employee freelancers execute them. It's not common for freelancers to pitch feature topics."

Key challenges

"Journalists tend to change jobs and beats relatively frequently, making it hard for tech businesses to build up personal rapport. A journalist could be heading up the agriculture division one day and writing about business trends the next.

They are mostly generalists and write about a huge breadth of topics, as opposed to specialising in a particular niche such as enterprise IT.

This means they don't generally have the same level of technical expertise as journalists in other regions. Businesses therefore have to spend a lot of time educating the press about technological concepts and the nuances of their products and solutions."

— **"It's important to at least add some sort of local flavour and references to ensure your audience's interest is piqued."**

Media relations

"Brands shouldn't expect journalists to take briefings in English. International businesses have to hire a professional translator, so these costs must be factored into all campaigns.

The spokesperson doesn't necessarily have to be from the region, but journalists typically prefer face-to-face interviews if possible.

This means it's important to have a spokesperson on the ground in Tokyo. C-Level executives or regional directors can be used provided they have an interesting story to tell, or have something to link back to the local region."

Lead generation

"We're currently seeing a rise in social and digital media activities, and more ad-driven programs to drive sales leads. The key is that all content marketing should have a Japanese element.

Companies are also using alliance marketing with other brands to gain more attention, which is proving to be effective for lead generation.

The lack of tradeshow means virtual events and webinars are popular – a trend which is likely to continue for the rest of the year and beyond. Some of the major IT/tech publisher's virtual seminars are getting fully booked months in advance."

— **"We're seeing more social and digital media activities, and more ad-driven programs to drive sales leads."**

What services or skills do you need in a local PR agency?

"Businesses attempting to break into the Japanese market should look for an agency that is equipped to provide local business advice, as well as PR and brand strategy.

It's also important that the agency understands the country's business protocol inside out. This is where working with a local partner can make all the difference."

Myth-busting PR in... Korea



June Cha, managing director of
[Chayun Public Relations](#)



Regional overview

"The biggest mistake made by companies new to the region is that they tend to think of Korea as a developing country. They also often compare Korea with other regions such as China and Japan, but these comparisons just aren't accurate.

People think that they can use their experiences from other regions as benchmarks for the Korean market. But just because you do something a certain way in one country, that doesn't mean it'll work in Korea.

There's also still a big focus on sending out blanket pitches to a wide audience. Pitches don't have to be as targeted as other regions. What's key is having something tangible for journalists to take away – a substantial story, a presentation, a press release, or the right spokesperson."

Key challenges

"Having relationships with local journalists is very important. It can be tricky for any company to get coverage without them, so businesses have to develop them before they can start pitching.

It's also vital to have a local angle. The major horizontal publications primarily focus on local companies like Samsung and LG. They don't spend much time on foreign companies unless news links or contributes to the local market.

Finally, the media market has shrunk significantly in recent years, particularly in print. There is now much less variation – publications tend to be less niche and less specific, with fewer industry focuses. This means businesses have to fit into broader categories. It's a very different media ecosystem."

— **"The media environment has less variation, which means businesses have to fit into broader categories. It's a very different media ecosystem."**

Media relations

"Most global enterprise IT companies that expand into the region don't have a local head spokesperson or any local experience to lean on, but this isn't necessarily an issue.

Many journalists actually prefer having access to someone from the company's head office for interviews and media briefings, even if they don't speak the language. Interviews can be done in English with an interpreter – journalists are generally open to these cross-language briefings.

They will always respect C-level executives, no matter the nationality. It's seen as a sign of respecting the media, instead of putting forward someone more junior."

Lead generation

"Demand for lead generation programs is increasing significantly mainly for content syndication and tele-marketing which are packaged with social media, newsletters and media relations. However, there is a need to search for the right platforms and tools with profiled databases to get the best results.

This rise in lead gen is down to a combination of a reduced number of physical events and tradeshows, and the shrinking media landscape – both of which have made opportunities scarcer and more competitive.

As such, companies are increasingly turning to ad-driven social and digital media campaigns. Webinars have also become extremely popular."

— **“Demand for lead generation programs is increasing significantly. Companies are increasingly turning to ad-driven social and digital media campaigns.”**

What services or skills do you need in a local PR agency?

"Look for an agency that can provide consistency in terms of service quality. An agency's size and prestige are less important. It's more about whether they've taken the time to build up relationships with the media and if they know how to work within the ecosystem.

Factors such as local expertise and longevity are vital – along with turnover as this tends to be higher than other regions. Most companies start by asking about specific services, but the most important thing is to look in-depth into the core of the agency."

World view

What type of social media platforms are typically used by b2b audiences in your region?

DACH

"Germany has its own professional networking platform – Xing – which is similar to LinkedIn but is purely for German speakers. Twitter is also widely used as a b2b marketing tool."

China

"Facebook and Twitter aren't permitted in China, so local variants dominate. Mobile messaging platform WeChat is particularly popular, along with the Twitter-like Weibo. Both are powerful tools for b2b communications."

Korea

"From a b2b perspective, Facebook is the biggest platform. Unlike other regions, LinkedIn is still generally considered to be more of an HR tool, so isn't as widely used for PR and marketing."

Japan

"Unlike in the UK or US, LinkedIn isn't used as a b2b marketing tool – it's almost exclusively used for networking. Twitter and Facebook are the leading tools for b2b social media marketing."

Myth-busting PR in... Middle East



Nick Leighton, CEO of Dubai-headquartered [NettResults](#)



Regional overview

"PwC has previously commented that 'companies in the Middle East are in the top ten in the world in terms of their investment in technology, but in the bottom 50 for education and training in this area.' This stands it apart from most regions and offers a significant opportunity for the right providers.

The region has ambitious plans to leverage smart cities and IoT. The quick adoption of technology by governments is going to be interesting and possibly ground-breaking over the coming years.

Also due to the absolute buying power and availability of liquid funds, any campaign should have a focus on the Royal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA)."

Key challenges

"Western brands tend to underestimate the variation in the region. Dubai is a prime example. Out of a population of 9.2 million, expatriates make up about 7.8 million and Emirati nationals around 1.4 million. This is much lower than most people think."

With such vast demographic variation, there are a high number of nationalities to consider. If you're communicating to this diverse demographic, your message needs to be crystal clear.

Finally, the culture is very different and adapting to it is typically a challenge for Western companies. It takes an experienced marketing team that fully understands the cultural nuances to avoid making costly mistakes."

— **"With such vast demographic variation in the region, your message needs to be crystal clear."**

Media relations

"Dubai acts as the hub for the region in terms of logistics, intellectual property, the technology industry, and media – and it's a complicated market. For a high-value media technology sale, there are likely to be many different people and nationalities involved in the buying decision.

Enterprise IT companies have two options for engaging the media. They can either centralise services (normally in Dubai) and outreach to multiple countries, or they can run in-country campaigns wherever they are needed across MENA. It usually depends on the size of the company."

Lead generation

"At the end of the day, people buy from people. The foundation for successful sales and marketing in the MENA market comes down to understanding people, the needs of the local audience and the various cultural nuances. This should then feed into the content creation process.

When using content marketing and lead generation tactics, brands must be prepared to embrace multiple vehicles, including social media, email marketing and PPC campaigns, to get their message to the target audience in the most effective way."

— **"The foundation for successful sales and marketing comes down to understanding the needs of the local audience and the various cultural nuances."**

What services or skills do you need in a local PR agency?

"As in the rest of the world, Middle East PR and marketing communications has changed massively over the years. Enterprise IT companies should pick an agency that is able to provide a complete service.

Our clients have been focusing on media relations, crisis communications, media training, integrated marketing and social media/digital. These areas represent the heart of PR in the region."

Myth-busting PR in... South Africa



Ronelle Bester, founder of South Africa-based
[Red Ribbon Communications](#)



Regional overview

"Many brands see Africa as a single country, rather than a collection of independent and vastly different nations that have to be treated as such. The range of cultures, languages and technical maturity across the region means a blanket approach to PR isn't feasible.

Take Nigeria and Kenya for example. In Nigeria, you have to pay for coverage, as well as for journalists to travel to and attend briefings. This makes everything quite expensive.

In Kenya, the media landscape is more mature, and the internet connectivity is much better. This puts a greater focus on blogs and online content. In a region as diverse as ours, PR strategy has to be focused and regional."

Key challenges

"Brands new to South Africa assume that online content is everything, but that's not the case. The internet connection is shaky, and 3G infrastructure only exists in urban areas.

The number of different languages can also pose a challenge. There are eleven official languages in South Africa alone! Though most Africans speak relatively good English, it's not their first language. That's one of the reasons why local language newspapers are still in high demand.

Another reason is that mobile data in Southern Africa is still extremely expensive. People can't afford to spend their journeys scrolling through Twitter, so reading the news in print is much more common than in the US or EMEA."

— **"The range of cultures, languages and technical maturity across the region means a blanket approach to PR isn't feasible."**

Media relations

"Virtually all b2b tech news is written in English. In terms of briefings, a lot of international brands think it'll be easy to secure interest. But the local connection is really important – it's vital to show that you're serious about the territory.

Without a local spokesperson, you lack vital market knowledge and journalists are most interested in stories with local relevance. This is particularly true in broadcast. Local broadcasters are generally not interested in Skype interviews – they want their interviewees to be physically in the studio.

Technical expertise also varies a lot. An article for a South African audience would have to be simplified and any technical concepts explained before it could be used in a neighbouring country."

Lead generation

"Interest in digital campaigns has skyrocketed recently. With the lack of live events, sales teams need more assistance than ever. Although this started as one-off projects, more businesses are now running campaigns on a monthly basis because they can see the value.

Content is proving to be a great tool in the awareness phase of the digital sales process, especially when people are retargeted with rich media to push them through the sales funnel. Virtual events and webinars have also seen a big update in Africa.

For developing sales leads in South Africa, digital is the future. LinkedIn is growing in South Africa as a social business tool and Twitter is also effective – enterprise IT brands will have to step up their social media engagement."

— **“Interest in digital lead gen campaigns has skyrocketed recently. With the lack of live events and tradeshows, sales teams need more assistance than ever before.”**

What services or skills do you need in a local PR agency?

"Local knowledge is a vital trait to look for in a PR agency in Southern Africa. Beyond that, digital expertise is also growing in importance. It's no longer about traditional media relations in our region – media relations must be omnichannel for it to have real impact."

World view

What do CTOs/CIOs in your region typically care about?

LATAM

"Their concerns are similar to other markets – they want solutions to really meet their customers' needs. And as most b2b tech is launched in another currency, price always needs to be addressed."

China

"Industry 4.0 is extremely prevalent, so innovation and AI are key buzzwords. CTOs are focused on replacing old-style industrial mass production with automation, and contributing to China's wider transformation."

Korea

"CTOs and CIOs are heavily influenced by political, economic and social factors. From a technology perspective, AI, IoT, smart factories, autonomous cars and semiconductors are the most prevalent topics."

APAC

"Budgets are a key concern. CTOs are looking to extract value from their IT investments. There's also a sharp focus on cybersecurity, with legislation forcing CIOs to take the responsibility more seriously."

Myth-busting PR in... North America



Kim Willsher, director, Los Angeles,
[Red Lorry Yellow Lorry](#)



Red Lorry
Yellow Lorry

Regional overview

"People often think they need to be based in the same location as their target journalists. This isn't true. The US is large, but PR is so digital now and so many journalists are freelance that brands (and their PR support) can be based anywhere. They don't have to be in the office next door.

Brands also think they need local customers to do PR in the US. It helps, but they don't have to rely on having customers to build media awareness.

And not all product news is newsworthy. What was once news – e.g. funding and acquisitions – is now commonplace, making it much less likely to gain top spot. It has to have a unique element, a demonstrable market need and show some kind of traction (e.g. funding, beta customers etc) to get picked up."

Key challenges

"The market is highly scrutinous. People are looking for brands to fail and there is hypersensitivity around brand morals and ethics. Editorial teams are also more scrutinous about content. You can't mention the client, and with some publications you can't even talk about the industry they're in.

As in many markets, newsrooms are shrinking. Journalists are now expected to cover more beats, so there's more competition for their time. This makes it harder for enterprise IT brands to stand out.

The same is true for lead generation. People are bombarded with information from hundreds of brands across multiple touchpoints. Businesses must be prepared to make more of an investment, as it's much harder to be heard. It all comes down to speed and competition."

— **"Newsrooms are shrinking. Journalists are now expected to cover more beats, so there's more competition for their time."**

Media relations

"Phone interviews are usually preferred. Brands don't necessarily need an in-region spokesperson, but they have to be able to operate across different time zones. They should also be fluent in conversational English, although most journalists will take a written Q&A instead, if needed.

Brands have to always keep in mind why journalists' readers will care, or their part will get cut. And don't be surprised if you get hit up for sponsorship – editorial and sales crossover is becoming more common.

Journalists also tend to move around and change beats a lot, so it's vital to keep track of the changing media landscape.

Finally, authenticity is vital. If businesses can't back up their content and product messaging, they're going to come unstuck. Always have proof points, as no-one's going to just take a brand's word at face value."

Lead generation

"Lead gen campaigns are extremely important. The US is super crowded and every industry has dozens of viable players, making it very noisy and hard to shine through.

Awareness and top of the funnel stuff are great, but tying efforts more directly to revenue goals and sales through more specific lead gen campaigns is important to show more tangible ROI.

In the US, customisation is key. People are inundated with (often bad) cold emails and promotions, so the ones that address 'why change, why now, why you' in specific relation to business pain points have the best chance of breaking through.

Businesses are also realising that they don't need massive investments in tradeshows to generate leads. Doing more work leading up to an event to cultivate qualified meetings, and creating bigger marketing initiatives can be much more effective."

— **“Authenticity is vital. If businesses can't back up their content and product messaging, they're going to come unstuck.”**

What services or skills do you need in a local PR agency?

"Agencies can't just focus on one discipline anymore. Brands need a partner that can represent them across the board – including PR, digital marketing, social media and influencer relations.

Brands also need a partner that has been around the block before. They need to have specific experience in the enterprise IT sector, rather than just a general understanding."

Myth-busting PR in... South America



Mauricio L. Figueras, President of
Interamerican Marketing Solutions (IMS)

Vania Gracio, CEO of Brazil-based Sing



Regional overview

"The most common mistake is to treat the whole region as a single market. In reality, each country is distinctive – with different languages, cultures and ways of working. The biggest difference is between Portuguese-speaking Brazil and the rest of the region. But even in Spanish-speaking LATAM, there are variations in words, dialects and cultures.

In the US, companies can succeed by having one office covering the whole 50 states. But in LATAM, it's better to have people on the ground in each country. You need to localise content and language.

Brazilian PR is also slightly underdeveloped compared with Europe – some people still think it just means press releases. And here you often pay media outlets. You work together to develop the content and there's a fee."

Key challenges

"Some brands think they just need to send out a Spanish language press release, but it's not as simple as that. News and marketing tactics have to be tailored to each country. For example, Brazil needs to be treated as a separate region entirely. It's a challenging market with a unique dialect, so always get a Brazilian to proofread content.

Our journalists are very tough, too. They want to know what's in it for them. Global brands sometimes think that we're just waiting for them to launch here, but this isn't the case! Brands have to show what they can bring to the local market.

Finally, businesses need to understand that the political climate in the US can cause ripples and currency fluctuations can have a big impact on local buyers."

— **"In LATAM, it's better to have people on the ground in each country. You need to localise content and language."**

Media relations

"We prefer to have a local spokesperson with local contacts and knowledge, but there are ways around it. For example, we could host a webinar and let people know the content will be in English. The big media companies always have English-speaking journalists.

Use English if you're not confident in Spanish or Portuguese. As long as you understand the local laws, culture and language, you don't even need to be in Brazil. Just use a local agency to translate and localise content.

Also, international companies should show how their product or service is good at solving problems. Brazilians are early adopters, but they're not interested in getting deeply technical. Offer a solution, good local language customer service, pricing in the local currency, and examples of happy customers."

Lead generation

"Lead gen campaigns are an important part of the marketing mix in LATAM. To be effective, they must offer market intelligence, specialised consultancy or some form of in-depth content customised to the interests of the potential lead.

With physical events on the decline, the best approach is to use social media platforms and digital marketing to reach and develop leads. Many companies and event organisers are now hosting virtual events. Due to the high demand and promotion on social channels, it's key to have well-known speakers such as politicians or successful businesspeople.

Companies should consider conducting online webinars with a well-known customer to add credibility. Some trade media are also partnering with vendors, organising webinars on their social channels and offering editors to host webinars."

— **"The best approach is to use social media platforms and digital marketing to reach and develop leads."**

What services or skills do you need in a local PR agency?

"Look for an agency that understands the market and has excellent relationships with local journalists. A good agency will help familiarise an international company with the media, and with local customs.

For example, you'd never do a breakfast meeting in Argentina. Brunch is fine, but breakfast just wouldn't work. Whereas in Mexico, breakfast is perfectly acceptable.

The agency also has to have sector-specific knowledge and be able to provide an all-around service that goes beyond press releases. Ultimately, you need to find an agency that really understands the local market, with an ability to see the big picture."

World view

Can you still use PR to build a customer pipeline, even if you don't currently have any customers in the region?

LATAM

"It's beneficial to have local customers, or at least be hiring locally, as this carries weight with the media. But there's still plenty that can be done to build media partnerships and visibility."

DACH

"PR is an excellent tool, but shouldn't be relied on for lead generation. It should be used as part of an integrated approach. One option is to use international case studies with high-profile brands."

South Africa

"Building a customer pipeline without a local presence can be tough, but it is possible. We recommend conducting a survey to gather region-specific data, and visiting the country regularly to show commitment."

APAC

"We've seen that activities such as building customer advocacy programmes can be successful, especially in India, Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand. Brands can partner with respected local companies to build awareness."

Myth-busting PR in... DACH



Diana Sali, Senior account executive,
Red Lorry Yellow Lorry



**Red Lorry
Yellow Lorry**

Regional overview

"As with any region, culture in the DACH region is unique. The key differences are deeply embedded in how the region consumes media. Many companies forget that DACH is made up of three distinct countries, even though they share the German language.

Germany, Austria and Switzerland each have their own culture and media landscape. The level of journalist expertise also varies. Swiss journalists, for instance, are more likely to have an in-depth technical knowledge of blockchain than their German or Austrian counterparts.

Germany specifically is one of the largest newspaper markets in Western Europe – we have over 320 daily newspapers with a total circulation of 40 million. There's still a certain prestige attached to coverage in print media, which is considered trustworthy."

Key challenges

"Language poses an interesting challenge in DACH. German is the main language, but French and Italian are also spoken widely, while some enterprise IT publications are open to receiving and publishing content in English.

Unlike some other regions, Germany has no single media hub – the landscape is extremely decentralised and some publications, especially within the enterprise IT sector, have a very small number of staff. This poses problems when it comes to deciding where to host a press event or product launch, for example.

There's no such thing as a one-size-fits-all approach to PR and lead generation in DACH. Each country requires a bespoke approach. With editorial staff shrinking, good relationships with local journalists are key."

— **"There's no such thing as a one-size-fits-all approach to PR and lead generation in DACH."**

Media relations

"Although some enterprise IT trade media have started to publish more international content, the general rule when pitching German media, is to always pitch in German. Most importantly: get straight to the point. German journalists are more averse than most to marketing jargon and hollow language.

Pay-to-play opportunities are also commonplace in DACH, which is an unwelcome surprise to many businesses new to the region. Commercial agreements with influencers and bloggers are central to the operation of a PR campaign.

Finally, businesses must understand that not every media pitch will result in coverage, especially with national and tier one press. Sometimes pitching is a relationship-building exercise – it's not all about achieving a quick hit."

Lead generation

"When it comes to content marketing and lead generation, it can be tough to cut through the noise. Communication across multiple channels with a cohesive message is key. With events and trade shows cancelled, it's important to share your message as widely as possible and to include social media in your strategy.

There should also be some local relevance in your content, as regional flavour is crucial. Germany has 16 federal states, each with strong regional pride. Understanding this dynamic is vital, as the intel can be applied to the relationship-building process.

Across all marketing campaigns, engaging on a personal level with tailored information always yields better results. And don't forget to factor in time for translations and localisation."

— “Communication across multiple channels with a cohesive message is key for content marketing and lead gen.”

What services or skills do you need in a local PR agency?

"I always tell businesses that it's important to use a local PR partner, full stop. That's the most important piece of advice I can offer. They speak the language, they know the media landscape, and they will have existing relationships with journalists.

Businesses should also select a partner with the expertise most relevant to your business and its goals, and that you connect with on a personal level. You'll be working closely for the foreseeable future, so it's important you can form an effective working relationship."

Find out more about PR in this region. Go to Alexa or Google Assistant and say "open Red Lorry Yellow Lorry" and ask about "PR in DACH".

Myth-busting PR in... Nordics



Jan Fredriksson, managing director of Swedish firm
[Northern Link PR](#)



Regional overview

"Most businesses think of b2b PR as completely different from b2c, but we're seeing the two worlds becoming much more closely integrated in our region.

The real difference is the influencers you target. With b2b, you're influencing journalists, politicians, organisations and educators. In consumer PR, they're media celebrities, bloggers and YouTubers. What's important is what you're trying to convey with your content.

Finally, industry consolidation is less prevalent in our market. Acquisitions are less common with smaller companies, as there needs to be a critical mass of clients and turnover to establish a brand value that's separate from individual clients. When smaller agencies get acquired, it's often due to their specialist niche expertise."

Key challenges

"Product press releases, analyst reports and award announcements don't tend to result in much coverage. Nordic tech journalists often find them too inside-out focused. Instead, personal, one-on-one meetings generate better results.

We also have fewer media outlets and every country has one or two titles that dominate each industry. Comparing Nordic countries, there is some truth to the stereotypes: Swedes try to establish consensus; Danes are more assertive; Finns are nice and funny, and Norwegians tend to be very self-confident.

It's important to understand the different cultures as well as the languages inside out in order to be successful at PR and lead generation. For example, many campaigns tap into our customs, the political climate and current issues."

— **"We have fewer media outlets and every country has one or two titles that dominate each industry."**

Media relations

"In the Nordics, journalists have a very high level of integrity. Personal relations have no impact on how much they write about our clients. Instead, the most important aspect is knowing his or her interests so that we always provide value.

Although we expect physical events to come back to some degree, virtual events have quickly become popular. However, media interest has been moderate – partly as a result of journalists becoming overwhelmed with virtual event offers.

Nordic journalists also prefer to speak to local spokespeople rather than US- or UK-based CEOs – unless they're from major companies. And press conferences only work when it comes to large Swedish stock-noted companies. Be as local as possible."

Lead generation

"We have a highly developed social and online media in the Nordics. Only well-crafted, informative, relevant and non-intrusive content with local references works. When done well and combined with the technology solutions available for distribution and reporting, this is a good basis for lead generation.

We're seeing an increased focus on long-term content-based strategies, with lead nurturing over time becoming more and more important. This mainly applies for high consideration b2b products and services, but is relevant for b2c products as well.

Many businesses want to implement a data-driven approach and some do so effectively. However, in general, there is still a need for smarter reporting attribution to make sure that the campaign generates the best ROI over time."

— **"Only well-crafted, informative, relevant and non-intrusive content with local references works. This is a good basis for lead generation."**

What services or skills do you need in a local PR agency?

"Enterprise IT brands need to pick an agency that is nimble and able to adapt to industry trends. For example, businesses are now using more channels than ever before. And not just social media channels, but also ambassadors and influencers.

Increasingly, there's a paid element to PR campaigns. Agencies therefore have to understand paid and non-paid campaigns in order to obtain the best PR results."

Myth-busting PR in... Russia



Natalia Khludova, communications and PR director at Moscow-based PR and marketing agency [ContActive](#)



Regional overview

"Russia's PR and marketing industry is much friendlier for foreign companies than many people think. It's also one of the most dynamic and high-growth markets around.

Marketing infrastructure is developing rapidly, and the quality of services is increasing. To be successful, brands need to invest in making their communications more targeted and effective. Increasing share of voice and engaging directly with audiences are key objectives for most brands.

Also, Russia – and CIS in general – is one of the most digitised regions in the world. Media consumption has quickly moved to the digital landscape. This form of media is having a greater impact on the market, which has made our work more diverse.

Everything is getting faster and more complex, and blurring the lines between industry sectors."

Key challenges

"At a basic level, the brand messages that are typically relied on in America and Western Europe are not as effective in Russia. There is a different mentality for local business communications."

Also, Russia's digital landscape consists of several local social networks that won't be familiar to international companies. VK, Odnoklassniki and Viber are three of the most-used social media platforms, coming ahead of all the major Western platforms except YouTube.

Unlike in the rest of the world, LinkedIn ads won't deliver much value, but email campaigns can still work. Depending on the product or solution offered, Instagram, Facebook, Telegram Messenger and the local VKontakte can be the right choice.

Finally, the sheer size of Russia can also be problematic. The country spans 11 time zones, which can pose logistical challenges."

— **"Brands need to invest in making their communications more targeted and effective."**

Media relations

"Traditional media credibility is on the decline. New media influencers are more personal and inspire more confidence with their audiences.

Communication with target audiences primarily takes place within the digital sphere. This is driving change in PR activity at every stage – from planning to running and evaluating a campaign.

When it comes to content marketing, materials created for worldwide use may be too generic here. The best type of content to offer is local case studies. Audiences are looking for informative content with practical tips, and stats if possible.

Finally, influencer marketing has become a real trend. In the Russian-speaking region, it's about more than just spending money on recruiting celebrities. Engaging with influencers and opinion leaders is one of the most important tactics for expanding reach and maintaining a positive brand image in both b2b and b2c markets."

Lead generation

"Content syndication and commercial projects aimed at lead generation have become more popular, as well as webinars and online conferences. A mix of gated content, promotion and telemarketing outreach tends to work well.

The key is to define the right channels. The more effectively brands do this, the more likely they'll hit their target audience – particularly when offering a niche solution. There are plenty of relevant websites in the enterprise IT space where brands can run online lead gen campaigns.

In terms of content, the main criteria are that it is informative, valuable and localised (not just translated). There's a high demand for content that truly delivers value. Pay attention to the title, subtitle and opening lines of text.

But it's not just about digital. Personal connections, relations and networking are very important in local culture, so physical events still have a role to play."

— **“In terms of content, the main criteria are that it is informative, valuable and localised (not just translated).”**

What services or skills do you need in a local PR agency?

"Nowadays, you can't afford to be an expert in just one sphere. The market demands are such that a modern agency in Russia should have a wider set of competencies – from PR and marketing to digital media production.

This is being driven by the need to accelerate work processes and eliminate time-consuming communications between field-specific agencies. Every minute counts."

Myth-busting PR in... UK



Hannah Patel, director of UK,
[Red Lorry Yellow Lorry](#)



Red Lorry
Yellow Lorry

Regional overview

“Enterprise IT journalists aren’t always as expert and well-researched as you expect. Publications are having to create more content on smaller budgets, requiring journalists to write about topics they might not know much about.

With both PR and lead generation, you can get further with one piece of content in the UK than you can in other countries. If it tells an engaging story and links to wider industry trends you should be able to repurpose it a few times across different channels and outlets.

Also, marketing content and press releases tend to be shorter and less wordy. Whether your content is aimed at journalists or potential customers, you’ll have a better chance of catching their attention if you get to the point quickly and succinctly.”

Key challenges

“The enterprise IT media landscape is shrinking. Many of our editorial contacts have gone freelance and are now trying to sell content into editors at multiple publications.

Cynicism is also at an all-time high. Due to our ailing political situation and recent negative news coverage, there is a natural distrust towards big businesses. Marketing spin can be sussed out at ten paces. Whether for lead gen or PR, authentic and natural communication is vital.

Also, even though people think it gets a lot of coverage, the UK market is less focused on product and corporate news. It might be ground-breaking to you, but product announcements generally aren’t the best way to drive engagement.”

— **“Marketing spin can be sussed out at ten paces. Whether for lead gen or PR, authentic and natural communication is vital.”**

Media relations

"UK enterprise IT outlets are interested in strong opinions, relevant data points and customer references. Most publications are interested primarily in UK or European customers and projects, but they might consider stories from other regions if there's something particularly unique or interesting about them.

The shameful thing about the UK market is that most people don't speak a second language, so expect spokespeople to conduct interviews in English. Broken English is generally fine, but if that isn't possible there are still ways around it.

Pre-written content that has been translated and localised into English is a good way to tackle any language barrier. But remember that content must resonate with a UK audience. Just because we speak the same language as the US, it doesn't mean a one-size-fits-all approach will work."

Lead generation

"UK decision makers don't appreciate a hard sell. They're looking for the 'why' as well as the 'what,' and this needs to come across in all lead gen content. Why are you getting in touch? Why would they benefit in talking to you? Why should they join your online event? Don't make them do the hard work.

To engage prospects, it's vital your content gives them something they don't already have access to. That could be industry insights, tips and tricks, advice – something that positions you as an industry expert. That will drive them to get in touch at a far earlier stage of the buying cycle.

Finally, LinkedIn is the best place to focus your content marketing budget if you're targeting b2b decision makers here. We're seeing great traction with well-written and well-timed lead generation forms on LinkedIn."

— **"UK decision makers don't appreciate a hard sell. They're looking for the 'why' as well as the 'what,' and this needs to come across in all lead gen content."**

What services or skills do you need in a local PR agency?

"Brands need to partner with an agency that truly understands the b2b tech landscape in-country and can generate engaging data-led content that's relevant to the market.

It also must have existing relationships with key journalists and influencers, along with an understanding of the market beyond traditional media. If you can find an agency that can support your regional sales teams as well as meet your corporate goals, you'll be well set."

— Top takeaways

Generating leads and brand awareness in a new market takes time, experience and detailed planning.

Knowing what to focus on is easier said than done. Here's our list of top PR tips for taking your enterprise IT brand global.

- 1. Be open to different cultures** - Regional markets work in many different ways, each with their own cultural nuances. Enterprise IT brands that fail to embrace these differences will struggle to deliver local campaigns effectively.
- 2. Customise your campaigns** - Taking a blanket approach to PR and marketing in a new region doesn't work. Each country requires its own bespoke approach. A successful campaign is one with local relevance.
- 3. Think global, act local** - Integrate in-country activity into a consistent global strategy with centralised management and reporting. Lock down processes to ensure effective communication between HQ, the hub agency, local field teams and regional partners.
- 4. Embrace digital channels** - With fewer tradeshows and less opportunities for physical meetups, this is now essential. Consider hosting webinars and running LinkedIn pay-per-click campaigns to reach target audiences and generate leads.
- 5. Standardise measurements** - Establish a consistent methodology of measuring success across all regions. Standardise KPIs worldwide and set expectations early so the teams in each region know what's required of them.
- 6. Engage local partners** - Glean insights on the local market, culture and sales channels in your target region by speaking to a local established agency, business partner or reseller. These insights will shape your marketing and PR strategy.



Spread your PR wings

Are you looking to generate leads or roll out content marketing campaigns in a new region but don't know where to start? We can help.

Our [global PR network Convoy](#) lets us seamlessly deliver campaigns worldwide. Handpicked local enterprise IT specialists in every major territory provide on-the-ground advice that feeds into a global PR and marketing strategy.

We simplify the delivery of complex international campaigns, while you get a flexible, consistent and cost-efficient service.

Get in touch with us for a chat about some of the key differences between regions and how Convoy can help you engage a global audience and grow your brand internationally.

Visit us at rlyl.com
Email us at hello@rlyl.com



Convoy
GLOBAL PR NETWORK