

Stand out from the crowd: A guide to personality-packed PR

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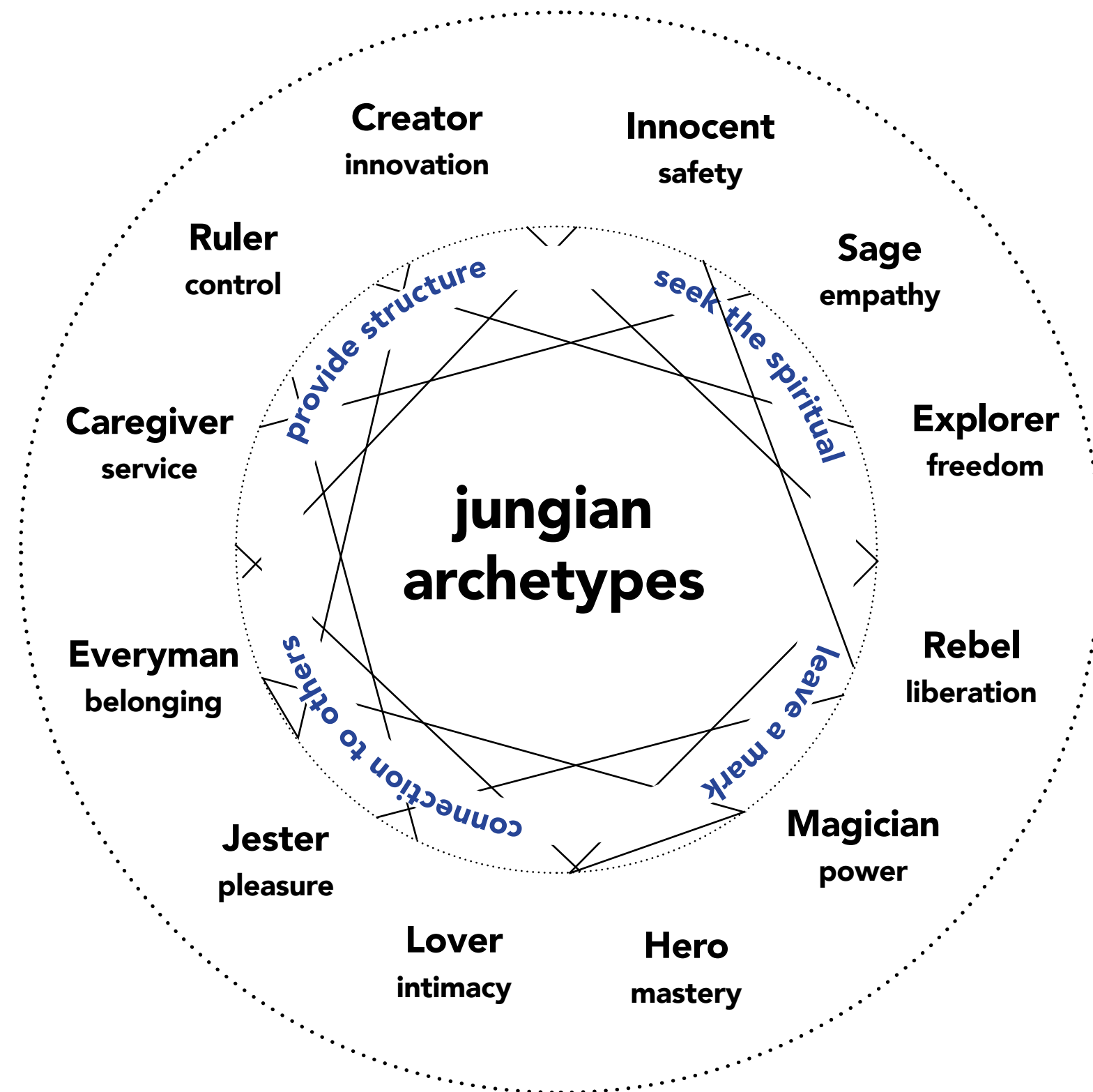
Chapter 1: Introduction

Successful communications strategy means creating messaging that resonates, building reliability and even likeability with key stakeholders — all major areas of public relations that define how the public perceives your business.

Some of the practices PR and comms professionals adopt to establish a brand's personality includes campaign messaging and visuals, all external and client comms, organisation-wide internal comms, social media management, video production, and much more.

A fundamental aspect of maintaining brand personality is knowing how you want to communicate campaigns and engage with your audiences. Many organisations use resources such as the work of behavioural scientist [Jennifer Aaker's Dimensions of Brand Personality \(1997\)](#) as a guide.





Or [Carl Jung's Universal Archetypes](#).

But what comes next? How do you ensure the brand you're communicating for is one consumers, clients, stakeholders and the public at large will want to connect with?

'The most famous PR campaigns, ones that stand out from their competitors, usually have the clearest personality and identity,' says [Pace Communications](#) client director Caroline Anson.

'Think of M&S, Virgin, Red Bull, Rolex; every touch point with the brand has a consistent personality that you immediately identify with.'

This white paper will take you through the basics of packing personality into your comms by creating a brand people will want to know. Expertise comes from PR and comms professionals throughout the industry, known for building genuine bonds with their audiences.

So, where do we begin?

Chapter 2: The building blocks of brand personality

Building your brand personality can really help with the day-to-day of PR. After all, how will your messaging land if you don't really know your brand?

Before booking in couples counselling for you and your brand, here are the foundations to get in place:

Brainstorm: What is your brand - and your team - all about?

Firstly, figure out what the brand you're working on actually IS. What does the company stand for, what is it offering? The team behind the brand is worth considering - after all, everyone is on the team for a reason:

'A great starting point is to get the team of internal stakeholders together and brainstorm who they are and what they stand for,' advises Caroline Anson at Pace Communications.

'Ask questions about why they do what they do, how they are different from everyone else, what style is their output, etc. — this will soon start to create a picture of personality type.'

Learn from the best: which brand personalities draw you in?

'Once you've got some thoughts about yourself on paper, it's time to look outward,' says Malineo Makamane, digital PR specialist at [Sweet Digital](#).

Figuring out what you and your team like about established brands is another way to uncover aspects of your own brand's core traits:

'Study those you admire and write down their defining characteristics,' adds Malineo. 'Reverse-engineer the things that make these brands special, and figure out how to put your own personal twist on it.'

Know thyself: If your brand was a person, who would they be?

Considering a company's traits alone can lead to something cold and robotic. Choosing human traits is how you get to an engaging personality (and, in turn, engage your team or clients in the journey, too).

For Nicholine Hayward, brand strategy director at [Teamspirit](#), clients must be involved in the workshopping process from the start:

'Take them through a series of exercises to uncover the 'human' attributes of their brand, for example, projective exercises - if the brand was a famous sportsperson, a figure from history, a politician, etc. Which causes would they champion? What would they be like to work with? How would they deal with success or failure? It's also looking at those Jungian archetypes - which of the 12 do they feel best reflects their brand and why?'

The basics: 'Which three words describe you?'

Still not sure where to start? Begin with adjectives. Think of the age-old interview or first date question - which words would you use to describe yourself, or in this case, the brand?

'Ask your team (or even the wider business) to choose adjectives they associate with your company's public face – for example, at DivideBuy we are "authentic" and "empathetic," says senior content and PR manager *Heather Wilkinson*.

'This will give you a strong foundation on which you can build your comms personality.'

If you're working with a client who doesn't know what their brand story is yet, dig deep and listen, says *Mia Hodgkinson*, head of consumer PR at [Sway PR](#):

'Our role is to find those nuggets of information that are PR gold dust. This could be anything from the reason for the company's inception, the stories of the people behind it, the processes they use or even just their vision.'

'Active listening is essential. This means focusing on what the client is saying and also not saying in order to understand what they are hoping to achieve as a brand.'

It's amazing how many clients don't realise their PR potential until they start talking to an agency. Once a client has established their brand identity they can engage better with their audience, attract new audiences and we can get the best level of media coverage for them.'

What definitely isn't part of the brand's personality?

'The most successful brand personalities are rooted in the business culture. You can't pretend to be something you aren't,' says *Susannah Morgan*, deputy MD at [Energy PR](#).

'Getting your culture clear and codified is important. Then you can define what that looks like in terms of behaviour – what you do and don't do, what you do and don't say. Your personality should become clear from that process.'

The ideal: Who do you want to engage with your brand?

Once you know your brand's core values, it's time to figure out who your ideal audience is.

For [Brand Building Co.](#), this makes for a much deeper connection and loyalty long-term:

'The goal here is to connect with consumers in a deeper way, give them access to a more memorable and brand values-driven story that differentiates a brand from their competitors,' explains founder and director Rachel Humphrey.

'Look at the brand's buyer personas. If they haven't defined this yet, then we work with our clients to refine it through workshops and strategy sessions.

'We also align this vision with the business goals. To really tighten the strategy to ensure it is meeting the brands goals commercially, too.'

Understand your audience: Will they actually like this personality?

Compatibility is as important in consumer and brand relationships as it is in human relationships.

'It sounds simple, but understanding who a company wants to speak to and how they want to be perceived by those people, is critical,' says *Laura Price*, partner at [Pagefield](#). 'Companies should research and understand

their target audience's demographics, psychographics, preferences, and needs. This knowledge will help shape the brand personality to resonate with the audience effectively.'

If your audience really, really like you, they'll be with you for the long-haul:

'Work out how your brand personality can resonate with them and turn them into brand advocates,' says [Fizzbox's](#) head of marketing *Tom Bourlet*.

Finding your voice: What is the right tone?

Authenticity is key, here - forcing a 'fun' personality on a decidedly unfun service or company, for example, isn't going to cut it: 'A brand cannot just bootstrap itself into a personality overnight - it will come off as

inauthentic, and audiences are just too smart and too savvy not to notice,' advises *Rosser Jones*, head of PR at [Unlimit](#).

Be bold... but just how bold should you be?

Going viral with a ballsy brand personality might be tempting. Being bold with responses on social media to the public, and even calling other brands out, may have worked for Wendy's, Lidl, and Tesco Mobile. But hold back before you build in too much sass...

'It's no surprise that in today's competitive marketplace, brands are looking to stand out from the crowd,' says *Sophie Baillie*, associate director, head of client services at [Conscious Communications](#).

'But, reward doesn't come without risk and brands should always be memorable for the right reason.

'Being bold can undoubtedly generate buzz but there is something equally admirable when brands exercise caution and reliability. Not all brands should be disrupters. It's the brands that strike a balance between bold campaigns and vigilance that will stand the test of time, who will continue to effectively engage with their target audiences while avoiding alienation and reputational risk. Through careful evaluation of the market and of the potential impact of marketing decisions, brands can navigate the fine line between risk and reward to achieve long-term success.'

[Considered Content](#) founder *Jason Ball* adds: 'Trying to make a conservative accountancy practice into the life-and-soul of the party

when it's not will never work. On the flip side, if the firm is that extroverted in the real world, this could be a major source of differentiation'.

Assets: What does your team need?

A team of one with a clear idea of what a brand's core traits are can create comms across all platforms, all in-line with the personality. A team with multiple people is going to find it harder (despite the greater resource) if there are no shared guidelines. We'll go into this further in Chapter 4.

Keep consistent: Do your comms back up your brand personality?

Brands can evolve with the changing times; people change, and so should brand personalities. But change things up too much, too quickly, and you risk losing consumers who have previously been devoted to you.

[Rebellion Marketing](#) founder *Jade Arnell* agrees: 'Consistency is key, so ensure your personality shines through in all communication channels. From marketing materials to customer interactions, let your brand's personality take the spotlight. And remember, as your company evolves, keep refining and adapting your personality to stay relevant and captivating.'

Keeping in touch: Are you giving your audience enough attention?

Making a strong first impression and then disappearing isn't going to do your brand any favours. Back up your personality by communicating across different channels, regularly, says [Impression's](#) head of digital PR *Damian Summers*:

'Creating a rounded brand personality requires multiple channels all working in tandem to communicate the same themes and messaging.

'PR and comms teams should ensure they have a dedicated spokesperson, someone that can build authority, expertise and trust among customers, and the industry.

'An authentic brand personality through PR is formed over time and comes naturally through consistency and expertise.'

Being bold: Redbull

'Red Bull is an example of a business with a strong brand and personality, all indelibly linked with the product. It has firmly established itself as the drink of daredevils, and everything the brand does emphasises that. Pushing the boundaries of daring and boldness.'

- **Energy** PR's deputy MD *Susannah Morgan*

Chapter 3: Nailing your tone-of-voice, by Marketing Island

Tone of voice isn't the words we say but how we say them. It is the language we choose, and the personality behind the screen. Brands often rely so heavily on graphics, colour pallets and typefaces, but having a distinct tone of voice is just as important for building brand affinity and familiarity.

In the wise words of Maya Angelou, 'People won't always remember what you said, but they will remember how you made them feel'. Mastering your own tone of voice is crucial, it's a major part of what makes you unique. A consistent tone of voice ensures you are easily recognisable and can resonate with your customers.

When we speak face to face, we are not solely relying on the words leaving our mouths as we have the assistance of non-verbal

communication. Using facial expressions, gestures and different pitches allow us to correctly communicate what we are trying to say to others. A carefully considered tone of voice is vital for the representation of a brand online, as we lose all these additional factors. Online marketing such as email and social allow you to build strong relationships with your consumers through one to one conversations. Therefore, portraying the correct tone of voice can help you stand out against competitors and communicate authentically and honestly.

'If you're looking for your voice, tap into how you write and talk to your best friends – when you're not trying to impress or be someone else, but just telling your stories. That's the quickest way to find it.' – Jess Pan

Nailing it: Nando's

'Nando's has a hidden strategy that rarely gets the air time that it deserves. Have you clocked its napkins? Renowned for leveraging humour, the brand has not only built a strong brand personality online, but offline too.

'This is achieved by listening to its customers and staying relevant to current trends; the puntastic napkins include messages playing homage to Tinder with "wipe right", rapper Snoop Dogg with "Mop it likes its hot", and many more. A brilliant example of a low cost activation with a high return on investment.'

- *Sophie Baillie*, associate director and head of client services at **Conscious Communications**

Falling a little bit flat: *Bud Light*

Part of communicating your brand personality is knowing and understanding your existing audience. Not doing your research on the communities already engaging with your brand can mean that even a slight shift in comms strategy, the channels you use, and the influencers you work with can create confusion and, potentially, resentment among part of your audience. For example: the anger from more conservative Bud Light drinkers in the US towards the brand in April 2023...

'The most recent example of brand personality gone wrong that springs to mind was the Bud Light partnership with transgender influencer Dylan Mulvaney for a campaign earlier in the year. The collaboration was announced on social media during the NCAA March Madness tournament, where Mulvaney received a beer can with her face printed on the side. However, some fans were quick to take to social media to criticise the partnership, sparking a brand backlash.

'There were mistakes made in the handling of the crisis, with the parent company, Anheuser-Busch InBev, stepping in to take control after a prolonged period of radio silence, rather than allowing the brand to take ownership and work it through. The response appeared inconsistent with Bud Light's brand personality and worked against them.

"The company's marketing and communications approach seemed thoroughly misaligned, reinforcing the importance of having the communications team fully briefed and prepared for marketing campaign launches, with consistent brand personality integrated across all messaging, channels, functions and departments.'

- *Laura Price*, partner at **Pagefield**.

Chapter 4: Personality in practice: Assembling your assets

A whole team, multiple departments, even a number of brands under one company umbrella can share a brand personality. That's a lot of people communicating across a myriad of avenues. That comes with plenty of opportunities to go wrong.

A team tooled-up with what they need to communicate in one voice will be able to adapt depending on situation, audience, platform and the wider industry context at play.

They need a toolbox to work from, and this includes assets - a bank of logos, social cards, templates and guidelines to use.

Here's how to get these assembled to communicate and reinforce your brand personality:

A single source of truth

Brand guidelines that are clear and easily accessible to all who will be communicating on behalf of, or as, the brand are essential. No hasty guess work or last minute creativity will be needed in times of calm, or crisis if everything is already laid out:

'Guidelines and messaging frameworks can take time to create, but they're an essential part of aligning messaging across all departments,' says DivideBuy's Heather Wilkinson.

'Collaborate together to agree on tone of voice, words to use and avoid, and official spelling and grammar guidance. Having a single source of truth document is great practice and allows everyone to move forward with confidence.'

Personality on paper

What should brand guidelines look like? 'A brand style guide or a company communications handbook,' says Rosser Jones, Unlimit.

'This guide should be used to restructure or redraft the company's entire communications, internal and external, and it needs to be followed by everyone from the CEO to middle managers and the business development team.'

For external comms, make sure the guide is easy to work from by making it as concise as possible, says Tank's Martyn Gettings:

'Having external PR messages clarified on a single page for each client is a great way to ensure consistency across all comms. 'These messages are created with the core

brand identity in mind, so you can be confident that they are a solid basis for the vast majority of communications. This will help the brand personality filter down through the whole team and ensure it remains authentic.'

Double-check: Is everyone onboard?

No brand personality is going to work with its intended audience if it smacks of inauthenticity - a cause of this could be team members with a reluctance to use assets they didn't sign off on. Those at the c-suite level being hesitant to embrace and reinforce new guidelines also won't help:

'Consistency and dedication to showing up with a unified brand personality is the only way to truly embed it within the audience's perception,' says Laura Price, Pagefield.

All aboard (Ahoy agencies)

Ensuring an in-house team is all communicating in one voice is challenging enough. But what if you're bringing in an external agency to communicate for your brand?

'Put the right support mechanisms in place,' says Jess Farmery, PR lead at [SomX](#).

'During the agency's onboarding, dedicate time to explaining and exploring your brand guidelines, tone of voice, any 'dos and don'ts', and contextualised examples.

'Following this, ensure that everyone is provided with easy-to-access reference documents, templates, and further examples of how your brand guidelines translate into communication content across several different channels.'

Bringing everyone on the journey (e.g. clients) What about the other way around - when you're an agency who has put a personality together for a client? Here's advice from Mia Hodgekinson at Sway PR:

'Communication is at the heart of all marketing and comms strategies, so we find that regular meetings and being kept up to speed on what they have coming up in their content calendar aligns or informs any PR activity we undertake.

'It's really important to visualise yourself as another cog in a big wheel. We all have our roles to play and, while those roles are different, they all need to work together to achieve the end goal – driving awareness of a brand or company.'

Repeat until you're all singing from the same hymn sheet

Brand guidelines and the use of associated assets need time to be embedded into the muscle memory of your comms team, as well as in the culture of the company at large. This can only come with time, practice, and repetition, believes Laura at Pagefield.

'Companies need to allocate resource to focus on this, investing time in brand and messaging training to make sure everyone is singing from the same hymn sheet and is clear on the dos and don'ts of the brand voice.'

This doesn't mean army-like drills every morning (unless that works with your company's culture...). More practically, infographics can be pinned up around the office and quick reference guidelines printed out for desks at home. Absolutely vital, whenever people are working from - a shared online resource to dip into, whenever needed.

Refresher sessions

Those truly 'living' the brand personality in the day-to-day - social media managers replying to public enquiries, newsletter writers, campaign creators - will still need regular reminders of specifics as time goes on:

'Encourage members of the team to demonstrate and share with their colleagues how they've applied that tone of voice across a variety of different formats,' adds Laura.

'Many brands also stop after training staff members on the brand guidelines,' says FizzBox's Tom Bourlet.

'The next step should be regular quality checks. This isn't about micromanaging, but simply ensuring everyone is communicating in the pertinent manner.'

Evolve and adapt

As times change, brand identity and assets will need to evolve:

‘Remember to keep team members and agency partners abreast of any evolutions to your brand and communication guidelines,’ says Jess at SomX.

‘The easiest way to do this is to schedule regular comms team all-hands sessions to share relevant updates. Listen to what your agency partners have to say regarding TOV, too - they are actioning the guidelines day in day out, which gives them a unique perspective on how the brand is cutting through and resonating with the media and with stakeholders.’

Review, review, review

Onboarding, training, and refresher sessions can only do so much - everyone makes mistakes. Just as there’s safety in numbers, getting as many eyes as possible on content before it goes out can avert any dangers (be that typos, or something much worse).

‘Before any content is published, it ought to go through a centralised review process to ensure consistency and alignment,’ says Jess. ‘Any edits should be collated and fed back to the relevant person(s).’

Have a ‘buck stops here’ person, or people, that have ultimate sign-off, or are available for advice and support to ensure words and imagery stay consistent throughout:

‘Brand bibles are usually developed and maintained by brand guardians, which is a politer name than brand police,’ says *Susannah Morgan at Energy PR*.

‘When a brand is fairly new, or the guidelines are really crucial to business success, then you have to be strict. It is very risky to leave any elements of brand application open to interpretation.

‘Brands are built with consistency over time. Inconsistency is very damaging – it confuses the audience and prevents them knowing what to expect, so a clear brand is never formed. PR teams need to know what not to do, as well as what to do. What would a brand never do, look, or say, is often easier to remember than how to get it right.’

Don’t forget: Measurement is also an asset...

Yes, really:

‘Including key brand messages in reporting processes as a KPI helps to ensure consistency in the long-term,’ says Martyn at Tank.

‘Reporting on the cut-through of brand

messages on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis makes it easy to see which elements of your brand’s personality resonate most with your key audiences. There is little point investing in a brand voice and personality unless its performance and impact are measured.’

In Chapter 6, we’ll delve deeper into the performance of your brand personality in the media.

Chapter 5: From B2C to B2B: Is brand personality good for business?

A vibrant and fun brand personality is — usually — a natural fit for B2C, but what about business to business comms? Sure — overly sassy and snarky won't work, but B2B brand personalities don't have to be stuffy or buttoned-up.

'With B2B you are trying to provide a solution for businesses rather than talking to an individual so you can't tailor your approach as much,' says Pace Communications' Caroline Anson. 'With B2C you can get a bit more personal with your approach.'

Personality isn't just for consumer comms

'B2B doesn't have the luxury of being personality-first in the way many commodity B2C brands are,' acknowledges Jason Ball, Considered Content. But that doesn't mean a brand personality can't play an important role in a B2B's bottom line:

'A strong personality should help demonstrate what the business will be like to work with post-sale. B2B purchases are often high-cost and high-risk for the buyer. A strong, consistent personality is a way of de-risking a sale. It helps buyers road-test the relationship before spending serious money.'

'Many B2B brands prefer to play it safe, and are forgettably bland as a result. They reason that having an overly overt personality will turn away potential customers. This is a false trade-off. In the real world, a standout personality can help you turn away poor-fit customers, who'll cost you time and money, and attract like-minded prospects who will be easier to convert.'

Part of the family

In fact, B2B brand personalities can share a lot with their B2C counterparts. They're siblings

that get on well within a family unit, believes Teamspirit' Nicholine Hayward:

'If part of the same business, I would describe B2B and B2C brand personalities as siblings. The same parents, but might play different roles within the family or have different jobs and career paths - but they always come home together for Christmas. If you look at brands that have B2B and B2C audiences, e.g. Google, Amazon, PayPal, they have different facets of their personality that they will dial up or down, but they come from the same masterbrand.'

'All brand personalities will differ according to the brand but the fundamentals of building one across different industries or sectors should remain the same,' says Impression's Damian Summers.

'As long as consistency and expertise are an acknowledged and considered factor across strategies, the personality of a brand from a PR perspective will follow. The foundations shouldn't need to change depending on whether the brand is B2C or B2B.'

Adapt

Consistent, but different where needed, is the key, adds Heather Wilkinson at DivideBuy:

'Maintaining consistency across your B2C and B2B brand channels is key to building trust — so the tone shouldn't be dramatically different. However, depending on your target B2C audience, you could experiment with more playful language, graphics – or dip your toe into meme culture a bit deeper than you perhaps would with B2B. DivideBuy has both B2C and B2B audiences, and we try to keep our tone fairly consistent across both channels.'

Rules and regs don't have to be negative

B2B brands can be subject to greater legislation, more industry-specific standards, in addition to a need to be more 'corporate' in tone, but, for Energy PR's Susannah Morgan 'it's a misnomer that B2B brands must be boring. Equally, there's nothing to say that a B2C brand must be all zingy'.

Building a B2B brand personality in-line with B2C brands? Just remember turn down the quirk when appropriate, advises Tank's Martyn Gettings:

'While the days of B2B brands being seen as dull and drab compared to their more vibrant and creative B2C counterparts should be resigned to the past, the characteristics of brands will need to differ depending on the audiences and topics they are addressing.'

'Some products and services for instance will need to be serious and professional while others might be quirkier.'

Getting down to business

Malineo Makamane at Sweet Digital breaks it down to the basics: 'The goal of B2B branding is to convert prospects into customers; after which a salesperson takes over. B2C branding's purpose is to convert customers into buyers; buyers make their own decisions without a lot of hand-holding. Therefore, for B2B companies, brand personality builds deeper relationships with prospects. When prospects are familiar with your brand, they are more likely to conduct business with you.'

Add spice, to taste

'B2C and B2B don't need to be polar opposites when it comes to personality, but a little differentiation won't hurt,' adds Jade Arnell, Rebellion Marketing.

'B2C brands often tug at heartstrings, aiming for emotional connections, while B2B brands focus on trust and expertise. After all, consumers want to feel warm and fuzzy, while businesses seek reliability. But here's the catch: regardless of the arena, both must align with core values. So, spice up your B2C personality with a dash of creativity, and let B2B exude professionalism. Strike the right chord, and your brand will dance its way into customers' hearts.'

Cheeky challengers: Aldi

“I’ve always been a fan of Aldi’s social media personality,” says **DivideBuy’s** Heather Wilkinson.

‘This is a brand that consistently has to fight stereotypes of being a low-budget shop and is often accused of copying other brands. The decision to adopt a playful tone which pokes fun at itself and others has been a huge boost for the brand, and we’ve seen other more conservative brands adopt similar styles in recent years.’

Energy PR’s Susannah Morgan agrees:

‘Aldi is a great example of a cheeky challenger brand, taking on the big traditional supermarkets and beating them at their own game. The cake wars with M&S over Colin the Caterpillar and Cuthbert the Caterpillar have rumbled on entertainingly, despite a lawsuit in M&S’s favour. Aldi is almost brazen with its taunting of the stuffier M&S.’



Chapter 6: How reliable is your brand? Boosting your reputation in the press

News travels fast — particularly if it's negative. In today's 24/7 news cycle, both online and off, the rate of misinformation and disinformation is higher than ever before.

The reliability of your brand is at a greater risk than ever, so what can you do to remain a trusted name in your industry?

In our recent webinar, Vuelio's Insights Content Lead Hollie Parry explained how to build a trustworthy reputation in the press, and shared tips on how to protect and grow your brand:

What makes a 'reliable' brand?

Before getting into specifics, what exactly do we mean by a 'reliable' reputation?

1. Trusted by journalists — Firstly, reliability means that your brand has a trustworthy voice. With this, journalists will want to talk to you and your spokespeople more than your competitors. When trending or controversial topics that run the risk of misinformation arise in the news cycle — like climate change, or crypto — the media will know your voice is one they can rely on.

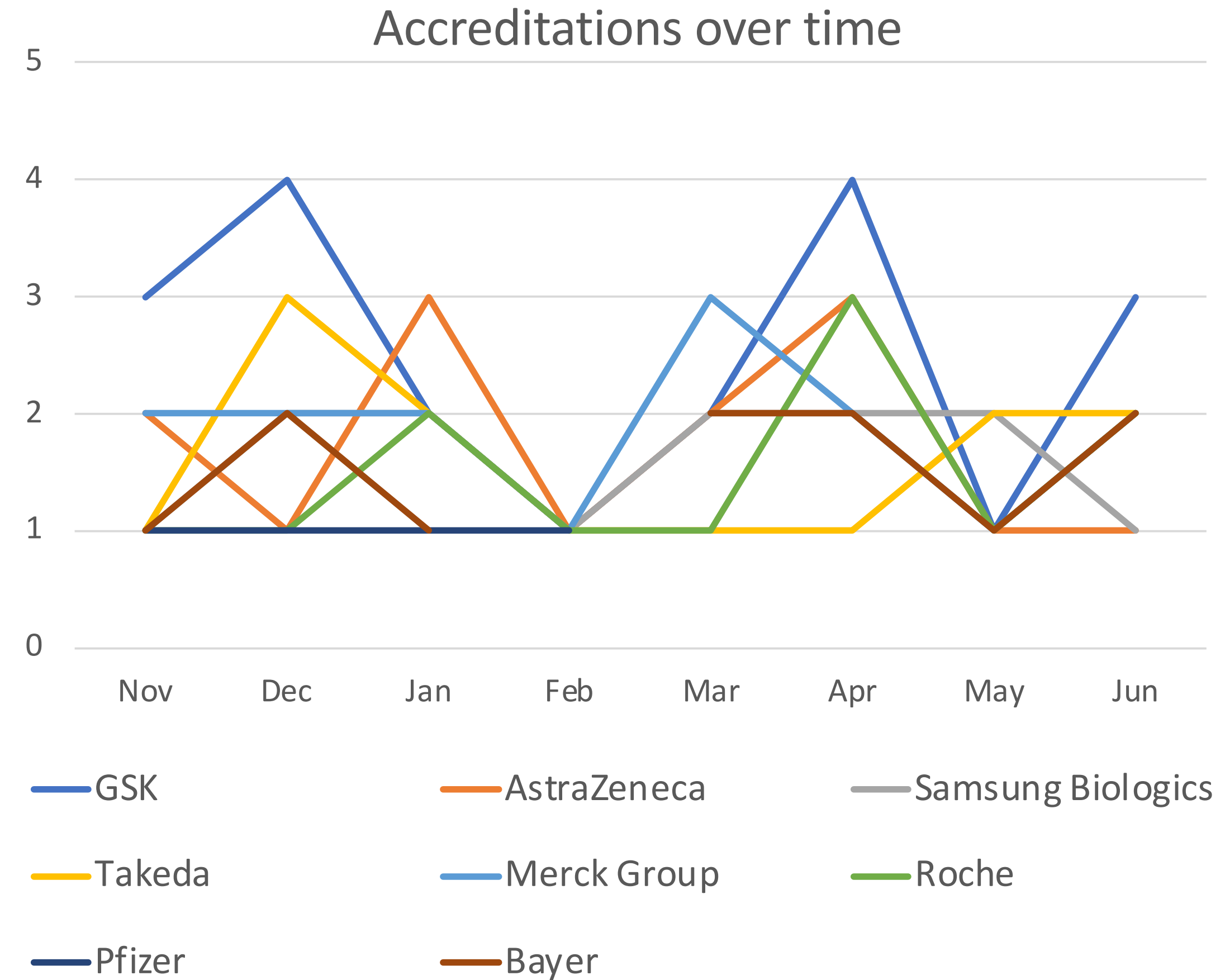
2. Honest and authentic announcements — Secondly, that your communications and company updates are seen as both legitimate and impactful — rather than false promises for the sake of media awareness. With a history of following through with your actions, your story is far more likely to be picked up by the press.

Over the past year, Vuelio has conducted several in-depth research studies on trusted brands leading the sustainability conversation across the media landscape. We found that brands that are deemed more reliable are more likely to attain coverage in the media, and, ultimately, greater brand awareness.

But, let's say you're already established and not seeking to grow any time soon. Why should you bother investing in your reliability? According to our research, brands with a reliable reputation had a much lower risk rate of misinformation and disinformation — making it an effective crisis aversion tool.

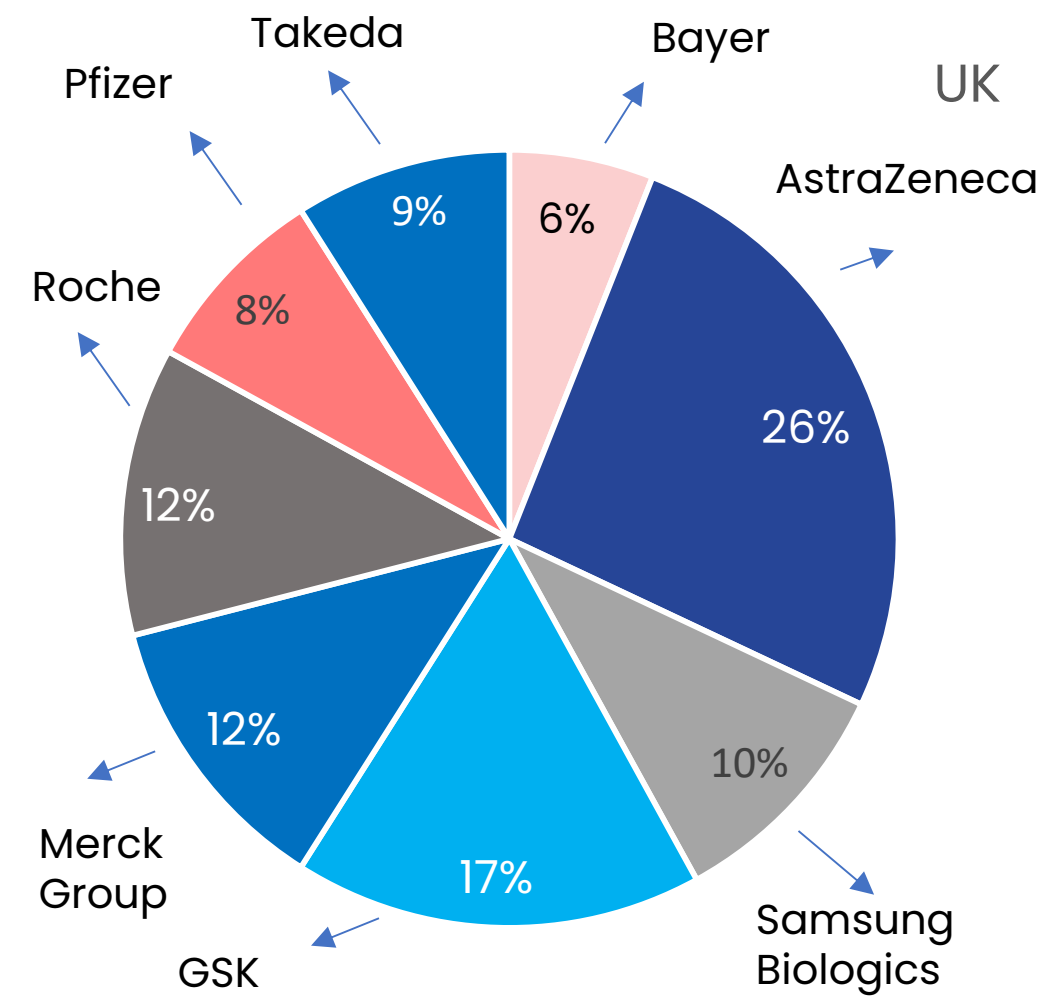
Case study: Which brands are getting reliable reporting in the press, and how?

The Vuelio Insights Team conducted a six-month study on international press coverage of pharmaceutical brands and their sustainability efforts following November 2022's COP27. The eight brands we studied were the most-mentioned throughout the study period: Pfizer, Takeda, Roche, Bayer, Merck Group, GSK, Samsung Biologics, and AstraZeneca.

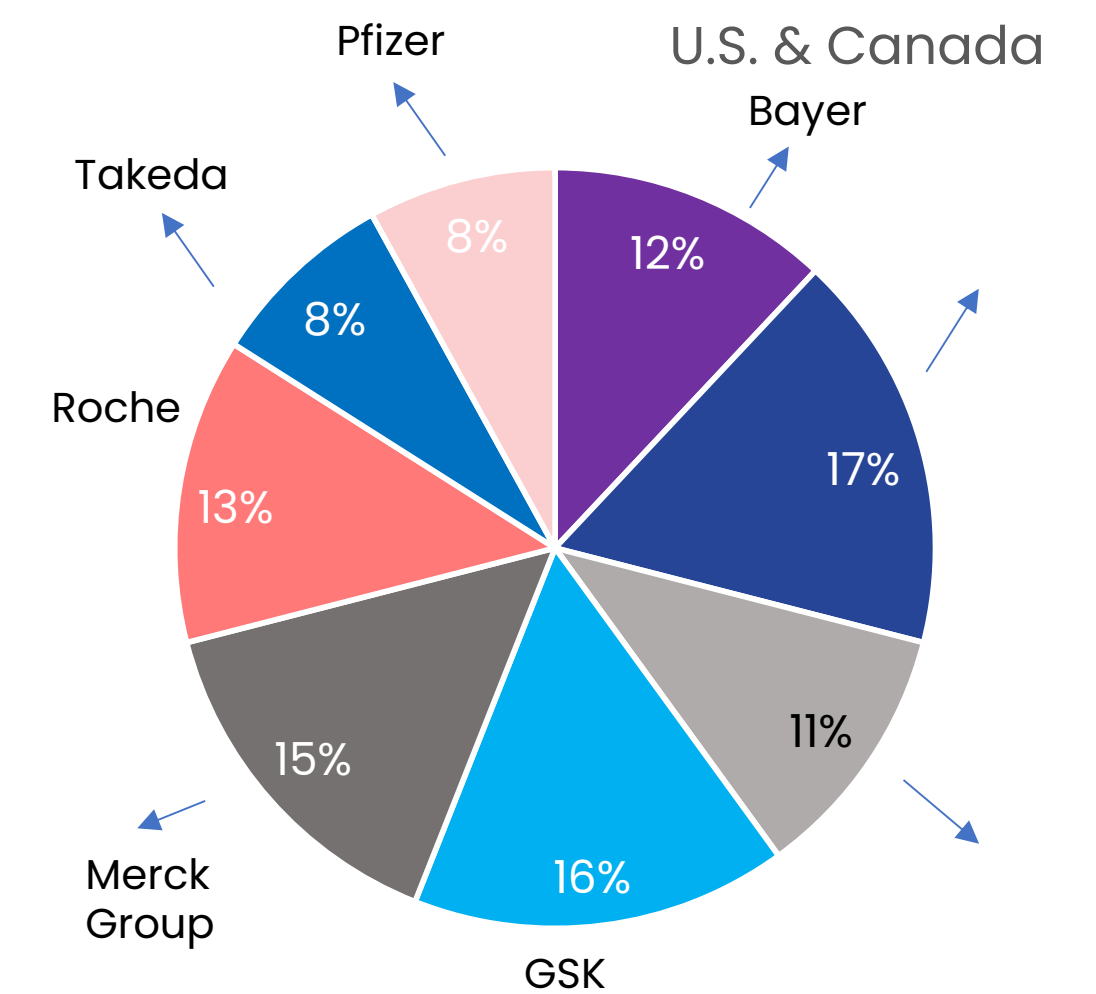
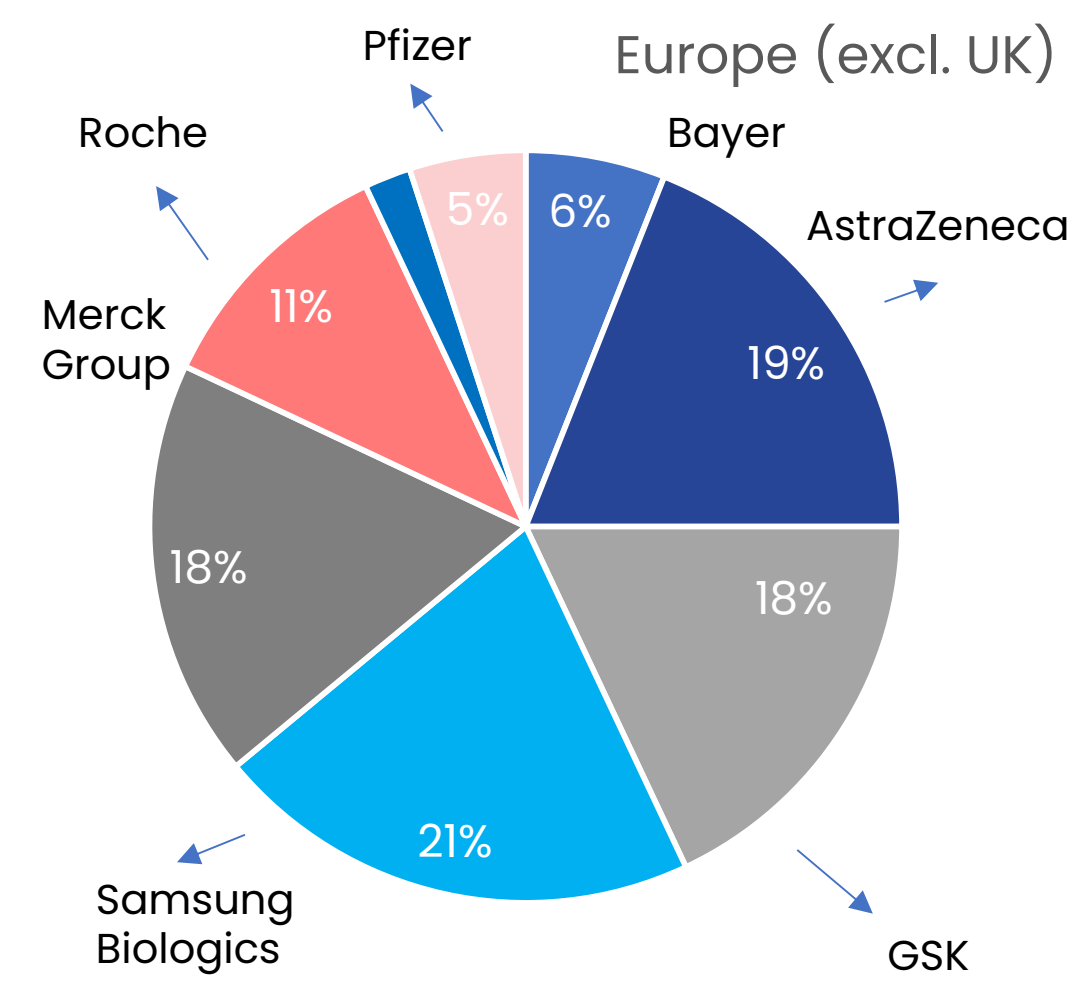


The first major discovery we found was that the more sustainability coverage brands released throughout the year, the higher the volume of coverage in the press.

As we can see above, GSK and AstraZeneca announced the most green efforts over time (i.e. qualifications, initiatives, awards, donations, etc.) and as a result also received the most write-ups and the most sustainability recognition from the media.



Share of Voice



In contrast, despite being ranked as highly sustainable around the time of COP27, Bayer and Pfizer had a much lower volume of coverage. The differentiator here was that the two brands released the bulk of their green efforts in a much shorter period of time, when media discussion was already high. Other brands fared better due to proactive and consistent releases around their sustainability efforts.

We also found that where brands were mentioned in a broad-spectrum sustainability article, 52% of coverage also referenced a recent accreditation by said brand. This goes to show that having a backlog of proven initiatives in the press will really serve your PR when journalists are looking for reliable voices, particularly on pressing or widely debated topics.

The lesson: Invest in relevant accreditations throughout the year that support your business objectives. Even when it doesn't seem necessary, it always pays off in the long-term.

How can brands measure their reliability in the press?

As we've now learnt, regular releases of accreditations and philanthropic efforts – relevant to your brand, of course – is an investment that pays off in established brand reliability and heightened media awareness.

Now that we know why we should invest in reliability, how do we measure it and prove our successes to stakeholders?

Choose a specific topic to track

Gather coverage of a specific topic that would be valuable to have a trusted voice on. For example, if your brand is in tech, you

could lead the discussion around artificial intelligence. Or if you work in the charity or not-for-profit sector, you could be the voice of new policies that are likely to be snapped up by reporters in need of expert comment.

Not to mention, if you're in a short or long-term crisis, or see one on the horizon, measuring reliability outlines how your reputation has been impacted against competitors – as well as getting in early on preventing the next one.

Focus on quality over quantity

When it comes to media measurement, it's easy to gravitate towards quantitative figures. Volume matters less when it comes to reliability, exploring qualitative data is really going to expose your best work.

Some of our go-to metrics for measuring reliability are:

Key messages: What messages keep coming up about you vs your competitors, and how does this tie back to your trust as a brand? Target publications: Is your reputation growing in the right places? Are you being trusted by sources of value to you? It's no good having high reliability in an outlet unrelated to your audience and brand.

Article features: Where are you being heard and how widely is your reliability demonstrated in comparison to your competitors? For example, do you have a few quotes, where your competitor has extended studies or statements featured?

Accreditation recognition: How often have your efforts been mentioned? Analyse broader coverage about your chosen topic as a whole

and exclude articles where the main focus is your effort itself – you’re looking for examples of your reliability being organically boosted within a wider discussion.

Vuelio impact score: For bespoke measurement built to your brand’s objectives, Vuelio’s Impact Score can serve as a marker of reliability. Find more information [here](#).

Seven quick tips for boosting your reputation in the media

- Assess and refine which areas of discussion are most important to your brand reliability
- Consider how much you can invest over time
- Choose a consistent set of general and reliability metrics
- Diversify your efforts
- Utilise partnerships
- Consider hiring around areas of struggle
- Research your target audience(s)

Flying high, even in times of turbulence: Ryanair

‘Ryanair has used social media to embrace their organically created image as rough around the edges and no nonsense,’ says **Pagefield’s** Laura Price.

‘Ryanair’s brand personality on social media is perhaps an extreme example of how being authentic in the wake of criticism can reflect positively,’ adds Martyn Gettings, Tank. ‘It’s a brand that puts value at the heart of its offering to customers, and its personality reflects this to a tee’

‘Getting the tone right can be like walking a tight-rope, but doing your research and taking the time to understand the current social and cultural climate before communicating is key. Then using a tone that is appropriate for the situation is also crucial. Responding to a customer complaint, for example, means most brands will need to use a different tone than if you’re sharing a funny meme on social media. If your brand is friendly and approachable, don’t try to be edgy or cool. Throughout, being authentic, not trying to be something you’re not and being respectful are all centrally important.’

Chapter 7: 13 tips for building a brand personality

1. Discover your purpose to uncover your personality

'To begin giving your brand a voice and building long-term customer relationships, first, discover the purpose behind your brand. Every successful brand has a powerful purpose behind it; Why do you exist? What differentiates you? What problem do you solve? Why should people care?'

*Malineo Makamane, **Sweet Digital***

2. Unleash the charisma

'For brands or companies lacking a 'personality' in their comms, it's time to unleash your inner charisma! Start by understanding your brand's values and target audience. This will lay the foundation for your personality. Next, develop a distinctive brand voice that speaks to your audience. Are you fun and playful or professional and authoritative?'

*Jade Arnell, **Rebellion Marketing***

3. Know what your brand stands for

'It's important to identify the core values that drive the company. Consider what the brand stands for, what it believes in, and how it wants to impact its customers. These values will form the foundation of the brand personality.'

*Laura Price, **Pagefield***

4. Be consistent

'Building a clear and authentic brand voice is a long-term project and consistency is key. Your brand's personality should be clear in every piece of comms you share with your target audiences, whether that's across PR, email marketing campaigns, or social messaging.'

*Martyn Gettings, **Tank***

5. But be prepared to be flexible

'Working in an agency, you will need to write for different brands and spokespeople across a

range of sectors every day, so the ability to jump between different tones-of-voice is essential.'

Martyn Gettings

6. Have a reason before you post

'From a social media side, I love brands that don't just create a post for the sake of it, but that each and every post has clearly had a lot of thought and effort put in. It's a personal pet peeve when brands think the best course of action is to throw something up on social simply because they're trying to hit a rota. This will lead to a lack of engagement, which will reduce future impression numbers.'

*Tom Bourlet, **Fizzbox***

7. Socialise consistently to grow your audience

'Posting regular stories and Reels is good but you have to make sure you engage with your audience consistently, too.'

'The content you post will need to be consistent. Pick fonts, colours and a style that suits you and make sure that you keep this across everything that you post on, say, Instagram. This will help your audience to easily identify you when they are scrolling through the latest posts. Audience analytics will enable you to see the follows you've gained or lost, as well as the location, age or gender of your followers. This will help with customising your content so that you're appealing to the demographic viewing your page. You can also delve into reach, impressions, and profile activity to get a full picture of how your Instagram account is performing.'

*Andrew Strutt, **ResponseSource Journalist Enquiry Service***

8. Enquiry Service

'It's vital to ensure that the content you are posting to your social media channels is emulating the brand's personality; this could be funny, yet relevant memes, question polls and compelling blogs. You should also put real effort into replying to messages, comments and posts from social media followers, with all comments consistently relaying the brand voice.'

*Orla McCormack, **EverBold***

9. Bring humanity to your brand

Adding 'personality' to your communications can be as simple as being more human, talking about the people within the business, bringing your product or service to life. 'Day in the life' content is a great way of doing this.'

*Susannah Morgan, **Energy PR***

10. Keep in mind: your brand can't be all things to all people, and that's okay

'Even the best brands stumble on occasion. Picture this: a customer support disaster, or a crisis handled with all the finesse of a bull in a china shop. How to avoid these blunders? Simple! Stay true to your brand's personality in good times and bad. If things go awry, acknowledge the mistake, apologise sincerely, and respond with the appropriate tone.'

'For instance, a playful brand should add a sprinkle of humour, while a serious brand must convey empathy and reassurance. Remember, a crisis can become an opportunity to showcase your brand's true character. So, own it, learn from it, and turn a fiasco into a triumph!'

*Jade Arnell, **Rebellion Marketing***

11. Build up trust = build a better bottom line

'Remember, 59% of consumers prefer to buy new products from brands familiar to them. If people can't trust you enough, they will struggle to buy from you. Suppose, a bricklayer approaches you and offers you a lesson on "how to become a billionaire." Will you buy it? Your sales margin is due to the brand (personality) you have created.'

*Malineo Makamane, **Sweet Digital***

12. B2B? Don't be scared to get personal

'It's true that B2C companies tend to favour informal language and a more conversational tone, and B2B companies prefer professional terms and industry terms. But I don't think being a B2B brand means you cannot address its audience conversationally. A brand should aim for an authentic voice that is accessible, relevant and relatable to its audience, whether it's B2B or B2C.'

*Rosser Jones, **Unlimit***

13. Remember what brand personality is for

'Brand personality is more than just 'not being boring', it's about being consistent, authoritative and trustworthy, knowing your customer and ensuring values are driven across all communication and content, this has to be an inherent part of all activity.'

*Damian Summers, **Impression***

About Vuelio:

Vuelio helps organisations make their story matter providing monitoring, insight, engagement and evaluation tools for politics, editorial and social media in one place. We help you determine who and what is most influential to your audience and brand. With a wealth of reporting and relationship management options, you get real-time feedback to create even more effective communications.

From journalists, social media influencers to MPS, we provide PRs, public affairs and political professionals with the relevant data, insight and connection for your communications to have impact. Our technology is used by organisations across the world, from international brands, large enterprises and communications agencies to public sector bodies and not-for-profits in the third sector.

We're part of the Access Intelligence Group that includes ResponseSource, a network that connects media and influencers to the resources they need fast, Pulsar, an audience insights and social listening platform, and Isentia, the media intelligence and award-winning insights company headquartered in Sydney, Australia.

[Vuelio.com](https://vuelio.com)

Want to start reaching out to the UK media?

Get in touch to hear about the [Vuelio Media Database](#) to start building connections with journalists, broadcasters, podcasters, and influencers and get requests from them directly to your inbox with the [ResponseSource Journalist Enquiry Service](#).

Stand out from the crowd: A guide to personality-packed PR



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