

“ET Kaleido Jury for Public Relations and Communications awards”



Weekly Learnings 19 / 2024

I was part of this year's Jury. This year's Jury had 24 jurors, 20 women and just 4 men. I have never seen this ratio in any jury before. Kudos to ET, Prasad Sangameshwar, Ankita, Harin for this.

Listening to the pitches and going through the entries taught me a lot about the PR Industry and Communications professionals. Here are my learnings:

1. The Global PR industry and the Indian PR industry is very small. Globally it is 107 billion USD and in India it's about 2400 crores or under 300 million USD. So we are 0.3 pc of the global industry. The largest Indian PR agency is about 500 crores
2. I looked at the global advertising industry as a reference. The global advertising industry is about USD 900 billion of which India is 12 billion, about 1.3 pc. of the Indian economy, that is a little more than 3 pc of global GDP, it will take some time for these industries to get to more than 1.5 pc.
3. Marketing folks are the best friends of the PR department followed by Internal Communications.
4. PR has moved from press releases and editor lunches to more strategic areas like reputation management, crisis management, influencer Marketing etc.
5. The top 3 skills needed for PR professionals are story telling or narrative building followed by handling social media and Internal communications. Crisis management is moving up the charts thanks to social media bloopers and account hacking excuses!!

6. Specialization is the way forward, we saw entries from agencies specializing in health, in luxury, in education etc. This industry will first fragment before it consolidates.

7. Great PR campaigns are about building Awareness, shaping Attitude and Influencing Behaviour or a combination of all three.

8. An industry grows and builds reputation when the leaders of industry work for the good of the industry, when there is mutual respect amongst the leaders and when data is robust to be verified. Every PR agency in India has more than 100 clients, essentially making it more a project business and less a full client business. This is more true of newer agencies. Clients and projects are dime a dozen.

9. PR works when messaging is for the company and not the owner or CEO. Dictats to Communications professionals like 'I want to be on the cover of a magazine' do more harm than good to the Industry.

10. Internal communications is a good barometer for external communications. In many companies people get details of the company and its activities from the media and not internal communications. That depletes trust. Internal communications can always release it internally a minute or two after the stock exchange is notified.

This industry is about trust and everyone working here should work towards building trust.

I learnt a lot and enjoyed the 'women dominated jury' discussions.

Shiv

www.shivshivakumar.com

06 May 2024

