



# NIGERIA PR REPORT 2015

Inside the Public Relations industry in Nigeria.



by  
BHM Research & Intelligence



in partnership with  
Public Relations Consultants of Nigeria





# Rewriting the Future of PR

The #PR Industry is facing challenging but interesting times. The era of conversations has given absolute power to the consumer – deservedly so.

Only professionals who understand and speak the language can help brands break through the clutter, and benefit from the amazing opportunities social communities provide.

At BHM, we define our success, by indices that combine contributions from paid, owned and earned media; indices that show the potency of using traditional media in social ways, and integrating social content and tools into traditional platforms. We define our success by conversion, engagement, by feedback, even sales. Impact. Not just clippings and impressions.

It's an interesting and ultimately fulfilling mix that continues to distinguish our agency, in an age where many are sweating in confusion; and on a continent where the jury is still out on **#thefutureofPR**.

The landscape will continue to change, rapidly. And our industry will never remain the same.

We're already in the future. Waiting for You.



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**bhm**  
BLACK HOUSE MEDIA

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ISBN: 2251-094X

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First Published, in Nigeria by



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## AKNOWLEDGEMENT

Our sincere gratitude goes to the Public Relations Consultants' Association of Nigeria (PRCAN), Edem Vindah, Tokunbo Adodo, Yomi-Badejo Okusanya, Muyiwa Akintunde, Abisoye Fagade, Chido Nwakanma, Toni Kan, John Ehiguese, Henry Ekechukwu, Steve Babaeko for their keen interest and encouragement.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Wuraola Ogunsanya, Aaron Ikhalueme, Femi Falodun, Ruona Agbroko – Meyer, Yewande Fatowore, Anuoluwapo Komolafe, Dare Okesanjo, Oyindamola Bamgbola for their immense contributions in producing this work.

We thank profusely the staff, management and board of NET, ID Africa and BHM for their kind help and cooperation throughout the campaign period.

## FOREWORD

If you look deeply into the affairs of the private and public sectors in Nigeria and indeed elsewhere across Africa, what presents, is an increasing intervention by PR to help communities and organizations and governments solve problems they thought were insurmountable. But there's little data, if any, on how in-house PR teams and external consultancies are helping local and international brands make sense out of a chaotic business environment like Nigeria. You will go very far to see case studies on all the great work I'm aware have been done by Nigerian professionals on brands like *Wole Soyinka*, *MTN Nigeria*, *Star Lager*, *Dangote*, *Indomie Noodles*, *Airtel* and many others.

In 1961, Russian cosmonaut Yuri Alexeyevich Gagarin completed an orbit of the earth, effectively becoming the first man in space. If there had been no records of the event, any pictures or reports, did he really make the trip? Did he accomplish the feat?

We complain regularly that the quality of our work can be better. We excuse clients' lack of trust and investment with the belief that we really haven't shown value. But how do we get better if we do not have records of the work we do - the good, the bad and the ugly? How do we train beginners? How do we engage globally, in a space where the lingua franca is billings and case studies?

That's why our company BlackHouse Media created the campaign *#PrIsDead* in 2015. And it's why we decided, after relevant consultations, to begin this hopefully annual report on the Nigeria public relations industry. Of course it's inspired by *The Holmes Report (World PR Report)*, which, I hope, starting 2016, will begin to feature great Nigerian agencies doing amazing work.

It is possible.

Ayeni Adekunle Samuel  
Founder/CEO, BHM Group

## INTRODUCTION

On October 1, 2015, while marking Nigeria's 55th Independence Day celebration and the 67th anniversary of the inception of PR in Nigeria, social media users in Nigeria engaged in an extensive conversation about the present state of Public Relations and the future of the profession globally, in Africa and in Nigeria.

BlackHouse Media, a Public Relations agency conducted surveys across three major Nigerian cities, seeking to discover how much the population knows about the origin and practice of public relations and its impact on businesses.

The results of interviews conducted were documented and presented in a series of videos, infographics, memes, blurbs and articles.

*"PR needs to use its own medicine."*



A  
NATIONWIDE REPORT ON  
**THE STATE OF  
PUBLIC RELATIONS**  
IN NIGERIA  
BY  
**bhm**  
GROUP

## PR IN NIGERIA

With over 160 million inhabitants, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and the seventh most populous country in the world. The country has one of the largest youth populations in the world.

According to reports as at the end of July 2015, <sup>1</sup>Nigeria is the world's 20th largest economy, worth more than \$500 billion and \$1 trillion in terms of nominal GDP and purchasing power parity respectively. Nigeria is considered to be an emerging market by the World Bank; it has been identified as a regional power on the African continent, a middle power in international affairs and has also been identified as an emerging global power.

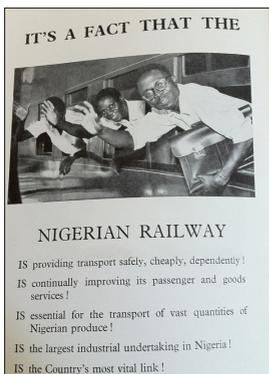


Fig 1. An advert from a 1950s magazine for the Nigerian Railway Corporation

The growth of civilization, industrialization and political development paved the way for PR's introduction into Nigeria.

PR practice in Nigeria began with the establishment of the *Iwe Iroyin* newspaper by the late Reverend Henry Townsend of the Christian Missionary Service (CMS) in 1859. Public Relations was fully initiated by the British during the colonial era, who

*"The growth of civilization, industrialization and political development paved the way for PR's introduction into Nigeria."* were seeking ways to convince Nigerians of the advantages of colonial rule because of efforts of nationalists to stir up the fight for independence in the public. The British employed Public Relations, through mobile cinemas, posters,

television programmes etc. These tactics were meant to sensitize Nigerians on what the colonialists were doing for the benefit of the nation as well as what the colonialists expected of Nigerians in return.

Today, PR isn't what it used to be. Technological advancement is gradually changing the landscape handed down by the founding fathers of the profession and providing opportunities and threats for an industry that is yet to achieve potential.

## EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

In the age of big data, PR has transformed from a profession of press releases, brown envelopes and media management to one of storytelling and big ideas. In recent times, the words “content” and “storytelling” have become dominant features of communication. Global PR professionals are adjusting and adapting. But we still have a long way to go.



Fig 2. Evolution of communication

Source: [instinct-pr.com/blog/2015/10/15/the-ever-evolving-industry-of-pr](http://instinct-pr.com/blog/2015/10/15/the-ever-evolving-industry-of-pr)

Parameters and numbers such as the ones below have become yardsticks for successful PR campaigns and growth in the communication industry.



*Fig 3. Research figures from Cision, Accenture and MediaPost on millennials and social media  
Source: [webbiquity.com/social-media-marketing/31-sensational-social-media-marketing-and-pr-stats-and-facts/](http://webbiquity.com/social-media-marketing/31-sensational-social-media-marketing-and-pr-stats-and-facts/)*

It is useless to hold on to the traditional methods that were used decades ago and expect to make reasonable impact in an age when everything is on the go. What PR pros need to do is to observe and study the patterns in the lives of identified publics, and then craft methods and messages that flow with these patterns.

## #PRISDEAD

### WHY PR IS DEAD

By Ayeni Adekunle

On July 9, 2015, almost 50 workers at BlackHouse Media, a public relations agency in Lagos, Nigeria were out of patience waiting for June salaries.

A week earlier, the finance team sent a mail to all staff, explaining the delay and promising payment in one week. It's the first time in many years that the eight-year-old agency is failing to pay salaries on time.



Fig 4. A graphic representation of PR Is Dead

BlackHouse Media, a member of BHM Group, is by Nigerian definitions a successful agency. It works for two multi-nationals, including the country's biggest brewer; it works for media giants and has a digital advantage over every competitor in the market. In 2014, the company launched Nigeria's first PR application, and recorded over 1 billion social media impressions for client campaigns. One year later, it launched its own digital agency, ID Africa.

BlackHouse Media is not struggling. But while staff salaries were only delayed for one week in June (after a cash flow hitch), the same cannot be said for a lot of other agencies in its category.

According to a 2015 survey, only a handful of public relations agencies in Nigeria are able to pay staff and contractors as at when due. A lot of old and new generation agencies are struggling to make ends meet in a market when creative agencies, digital marketing companies and media independents are making a kill.

Why is this so?

Many in the industry believe it is because agencies cannot charge much. Only a few get good budgets and are on retainers. As a result, only few can keep great talent. The flight from PR into advertising or client side is at an all time high; most of the agencies surveyed have lost senior consultants in the past year.

Only few can do great work.

*“PR is rarely in the room when management is planning or when the government is strategizing.”*

PR is rarely in the room when management is planning or

when the government is strategizing. When we do get called, it is often for traditional media relations or to ‘manage’ press events.

Clients complain they do not get value at the level of strategy; that they do not get help navigating social media; that they do not see creativity and innovation, especially in storytelling and community management.

Agencies lament on the frustration in not being properly compensated; not having access to senior management. They complain about phony pitches, poaching and government’s failure at regulation.

Nigeria’s federal government continues to engage services

of quacks for public relations roles even as many public and private organizations regularly engage unregistered foreign agencies to do PR work in Nigeria.

Many of the so called big agencies cannot pay competitive wages, and in recent times, several have owed up to three months' pay.

Pundits say creative and media agencies are not immune to these problems. Reports say only a handful of agencies in that segment are running profitably.

The difference? You can identify the big media accounts based on spend. You can understand why some agencies are getting lucrative creative briefs while others are idle. There are more than a few media, events and creative agencies turning over billions of Naira annually from one offs, commissions or retainer works. There is, at this moment, none in PR.

BHM Research & Intelligence predicts that more agencies

*“More agencies will see revenues dwindle if client trust is not restored.”*

will see revenues dwindle if client trust is not restored, if the industry

is not able to reattract super talents. And these will only happen if the practice is able to resurrect.

Yes, PR is dead.

What exactly do we bring to the table that clients and their publics cannot do without? The current system of press releases, buzz words and other fluff?

Nigeria has a population estimated at about 200 million. Most of these are young people spread round rural, semi urban and urban areas.

As at March 2015, there was an estimate of 195 million active mobile phones in Nigeria with GSM subscriber base of

144,486,786 by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC). Also, Nigeria has the highest Internet penetration rate in Africa with an annual growth of about 4 million.

Our country has over 7 million people on Facebook and is considered one of the top five African countries with the most Twitter activity. Also, the adoption of other platforms like WeChat, Whatsapp and Instagram is growing rapidly.

Newspaper circulation will predictably continue to drop. Some of the country's biggest titles have cut print runs consistently; several have shut down presses while others have completely gone off the stands. In a country where media relations is a core function for most PR professionals, how will this impact on our work?

More consumers are spending more time on their phones than in front of the TV. Media platforms are rapidly redefining themselves and aligning with consumer habits. Brands are using storytelling and content marketing to engage their consumers. Many consumers are becoming content creators and publishers in their own rights – be it through their Facebook status updates or by expressing strong opinions on Twitter. Some of the biggest media and influencer jobs of the past two years in terms of income and impact have been by individuals on social media; individuals who may never have been considered 'media' only a few years ago. Some of them are so powerful that the Nigerian government has nicknamed them 'cabal'.

But where are the PR people?

What do these figures mean?

It is time we shamed those who believe <sup>1</sup>“PR will never

take its long coveted seat at the boardroom table, where it will be recognized as an essential component of strategic business rather than a bolt on.”

*Ayeni Adekunle is the CEO of BHM group, parent company to Nigerian Entertainment Today (NET), Black House Media and ID Africa. He is a prominent PR practitioner, journalist, qualified scientist and entrepreneur.*

**NOW THAT PR IS DEAD***A Poem By Femi Falodun*

Now that PR is dead. Witnessed the demise,  
untimely passing of a once powerful practice  
Lost her dazzle, dulled by impotent strategies and tactics

Saw bullets fly, but can't tell the identity of her killer  
Bang! Bang! Bang! Did technology pull the trigger?  
Questions pile, whispers of whodunnit? Who to blame?  
Who held PR captive, as the world around continued to  
change.

So wise men gathered from far  
and wide to mourn the departed  
At the Black House, in black garbs,  
sombre faces of the broken-hearted  
So, who is to say that these ones never loved their mother?  
When she lived, wasn't she the one that fed their mothers?

Then again, they failed.  
To care for her when she was feeble and frail  
Ignored by the audience, like gist that is old and stale

Till a Millennial army of voices came  
swarming down social channels  
And the consumer, stole power,  
blowing out Old Media's candles.

Who killed PR? We may never truly know.  
But the way to go, the wise men have begun to show:  
Social convos, content marketing, storytelling, tech and data,  
Creative forces of today, cutting edges in the future like laser.

*Femi Falodun is COO of ID Africa, a digital and content marketing agency, as well as Chief Digital Officer at BHM Group. Femi is a poet, digital communications and content marketing strategist.*



892 tweets were posted on Twitter with #PRisDead.



Fig 7. Number of Twitter posts and users that used #PRisDead with the reach covered and impressions gained

The hashtag served its purpose, as the responses were both controversial and insightful.

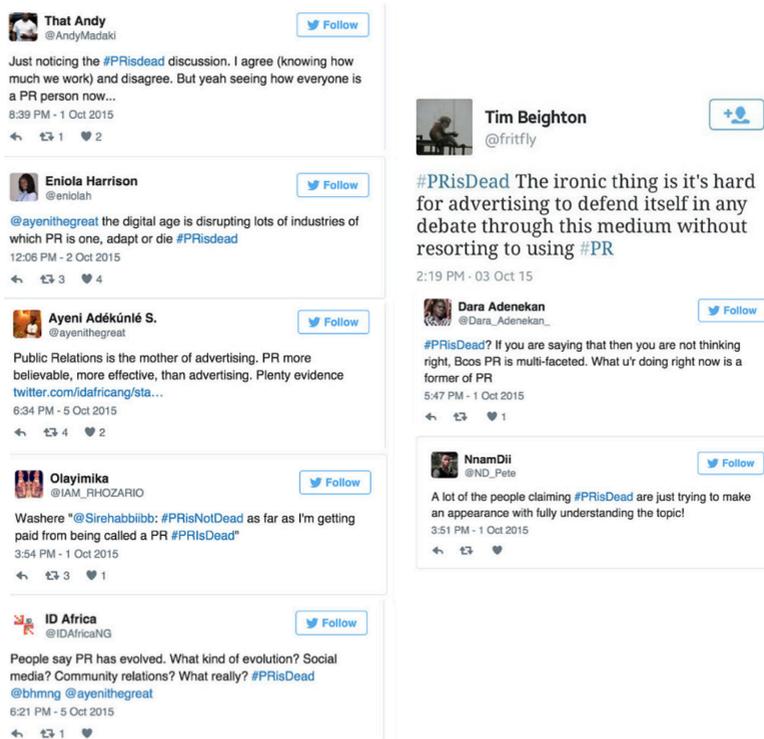


Fig 8. Some tweets from the conversation

# Keyhole recorded 118 posts on Instagram bordering on #PRisDead.



Fig 9. Number of Instagram posts and users that used #PRisDead with the reach covered and impressions gained

The comments on each post show that Instagram users took the topic far more lightly than Twitter users did.

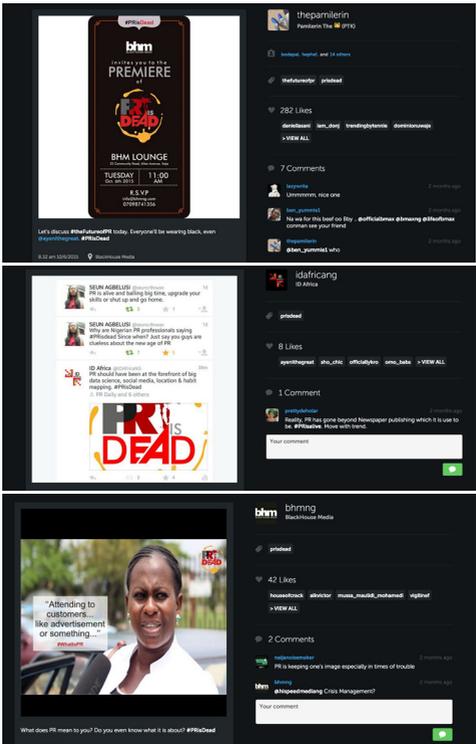


Fig 10. Some comments on Instagram posts related to the conversation

Facebook users gave more background information than users on other platforms in their contributions on the topic.

**Ayeni Adekunle** October 1 · 🌐

Our agencies IDAfrica and BlackHouse Media kicking off a conversation about #PR industry in #Nigeria. We think #PRisDead

👍 Like    ➦ Share

11 people like this.

**Adehdoshu Dosueto Adehcunlay** Truly, i also share the idea that PR is dead. The last time i heard of PR is at era of Pop icon Michael Jackson, Tupac and the rest. Even in the days of the Ellegant Stallion, King Sunny Ade, it never resurface itself. The era of BHM that brought about the press conferences for Nigeria Artistes and the Nigeria Breweries amongst many blue chip companies, i sincerely hope to see them resuscitate it.  
Like · 👍 1 · October 1 at 9:40am

**Ufuoma Surface Dogun** I disagree that PR in its traditional form is dead but i think it is dying. The reason for this is not far fetched as the bulk of its practitioners remain in the analog era while the practice itself is globally touching Pluto.  
Like · 👍 1 · October 1 at 10:13am

**Shaibu Hussein** PR is not DEAD and would never die as long as there is a desire to establish goodwill and mutual understanding. However it may appear that it is DEAD because of the many misconceptions about the profession and its practice. But there is now a growing effort to correct those misconceptions and am sure that is part of what this event will achieve. I have no doubt that a new dawn for the profession has come in Nigeria considering the determination of the present leadership of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) to rid the industry of quacks and to enforce the provision of its enabling act which makes certification by the institute a requirement to practice in Nigeria. I am impressed with how the Dr. Rotimi Oladele led council of the NIPR are so committed to the project. They started a recertification campaign that closed yesterday and the next step is to begin to sort out the boys from the men.  
Like · 👍 2 · October 1 at 10:52am · Edited

**Offor Chudi Okafor** Blame it on otumokpo. #PRisdead  
Like · October 1 at 2:52pm

Fig 11. Facebook comments from a Facebook post related to #PRisDead

## Offline

BHM visited three major cities in Nigeria – Port Harcourt, Abuja and Lagos – to find out what Nigerians know about Public Relations. About 200 citizens were interviewed in total.



Fig 12. Faces of Nigerians interviewed in Port Harcourt, Abuja and Lagos with excerpts of what they know about Public Relations

A short documentary was created for the campaign. It included shareable skits that were used on social to attract millennials and laymen outside the PR industry.



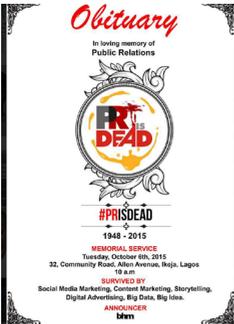
PR Is Dead (Full Documentary)  
BHM GROUP



Fig 13. Screenshots from the documentary  
Video available on [www.youtube.com/user/bhmgroup](http://www.youtube.com/user/bhmgroup)

## SERVICE OF SONGS

On October 6, 2015, five days after the campaign kicked off, BlackHouse Media held a service of songs in honour of PR. C.E.Os., enthusiasts, executives, bloggers and even those outside the industry were present to witness the event. Those who expected the event to border on the death of the prestigious profession were surprised to find out that it was a gathering to discuss the rise and future of PR.



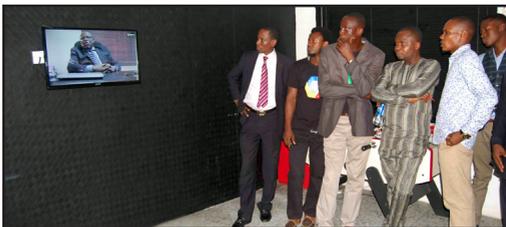
Obituary of Public Relations, which was distributed on streets in Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria, and was also published on social media.



(L-R) Corporate Communications Consultant, Henry Ekechukwu, Chairman of SabiNews, Niran Adedokun, CEO CMC Connect, Yomi Badejo - Okusanya, Managing Editor, SabiNews, Peju Akande, CEO X3M Ideas, Steve Babaeko and Managing Partner SabiNews, Toni Kan.



A guest filling the condolence register.



Guests watching the documentary titled PR Is Dead.



(L-R) PR Administrator, Anita Aiyudu, That1960Chick Blogger, Lateefah Adesanya, OloriSuperGal Blogger, Tosin Ajibade.



Editor Brandcrunch, Lekan Babatunde (L) and Corporate Communications Consultant, Henry Ekechukwu (R).

# PERSPECTIVES ON THE CAMPAIGN

## PERCEPTION AND RECEPTION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ADVERTISING IN NIGERIA

By Ruona Agbroko -Meyer

What is PR? What is Advertising?

Public Relations, on the one hand, helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization (or brand) and its publics. It involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinion; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest, and helps management to keep abreast of, and effectively utilize change.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ADEVERTISING AND P.R.	
Advertising	Public Relations
Paid	Earned
Builds exposure	Build Trust
Audience is skeptical	Media gives third-party validation
Gauranteed placement	No guarantee, must persuade media
Complete creative control	Media control final version
Ads are mostly visual	PR uses language
More expensive	Less expensive
"Buy this product"	'This is important"

Fig 14. SOURCE: <http://www.slideshare.net/cag714/marketing-vs-advertising-37953115>

Advertising, on the other hand, is a paid, mediated form of communication from an identifiable source, designed to persuade the receiver to take some action, now or in the future

Prior to the advent of integrated marketing communications, the Nigerian marketing communications industry exhibited a disposition towards PR, with town-crying and hawking being the earliest forms of advertising. These have survived in many of Nigeria's rural communities till date.

## HISTORY AND CHALLENGES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ADVERTISING

The development of modern public relations in Nigeria began around 1948 when the pre-colonial administration set up a public relations department with offices in Lagos, Ibadan, Kaduna and Enugu. In charge of the department was PR expert Mr. Harold Cooper. The activities of Cooper, his team including expatriates and Nigerians initially concentrated on publicity work that dealt with problems arising from World War II, such as shortages of goods and the imposition of an austerity regime by the colonial government.

One interesting novelty was to address a letter of welcome to all Nigerians returning from overseas, offering them as-

*“With the economic and political growth of Nigeria came unique challenges of public communication”* assistance towards job hunting or resettlement in other ways.

Similar publicity activities were simultaneously taking place in large organizations such as UAC, and the Nigerian Railway Corporation, which for example used the services of Ernest Ikoli, a veteran journalist.

Cooper’s deputy, Mr. John Stocker, who was assisted by Nigerians such as Ayo Lijadu, and Mobolaji Odunewu in consolidating and expanding government information and PR activities in the country, succeeded Harold Cooper.

With the economic and political growth of Nigeria came unique challenges of public communication. As the country moved towards the emergence of political parties and the fight for independence, campaigns for the Nigerianization of both the public and private sectors resulted in a PR revival. Foreign firms, which dominated the economy of the country,

saw the need for some form of PR activities for dealing with press criticisms and the people's misconception of their roles in Nigeria.

### 1950s to 1960s

The next significant changes in the development of PR in Nigeria began with the attainment of independence, the



Fig 15. UAC House, Odunlami street, Lagos Island, Lagos, Nigeria

discovery of oil and the shift of emphasis from general trading to industrialization. Companies like UAC and Shell were compelled to launch planned programmes covering government, press and community relations. The creation of PR departments in companies increased, alongside the development of Nigerians to manage such offices.

*“PR gained significant professional identity in 1962, with the establishment of the Public Relations Association of Nigeria”*

Nigeria's first set of PR consultants set up

shop in the late 50s and focused on press agency. They existed until two decades after. Founding consultancies include OAB Press, Publicity Services Nigeria Limited, Gab Fagbure & Associates, Gab Idigo & Associates, Uloma Nwachukwu & Associates, Bob Ogbuagu & Associates and Praction Partners Limited.

PR gained significant professional identity in 1962, with the establishment of the Public Relations Association of Nigeria (PRAN) under the leadership of late Dr. Sam Epelle, a former director of the Federal Ministry of Information. The association helped to draw together an increasing number of practitioners who over the years had become members and

associates of the British Institute of Public Relations (BIPR).

### Mid-60s to 80s

From the mid-sixties to the mid-eighties, the Public Relations Association of Nigeria (PRAN) subsequently adopted the more professional name of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) in 1972.

Mass Communication, crucial to effective marketing communications practice, was first introduced as a course in Nigeria at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, the University of Lagos and the Institute of Management Technology, Enugu.

<sup>1</sup>The increase of PR firms caused the emergence of Public Relations Consultants Association of Nigeria (PRCAN) in 1984. Six years later, the long standing Nigerian Institute of Public Relations was chartered in 1990.

With respect to media advertising, print media made inroads into Nigeria in 1859, with *Iwe Iroyin*, a Yoruba language newspaper published by Reverend Henry Townsend at Abeokuta; the paper featured advertisements such as announcements for the Anglican Church.

The main challenge to advertising was low literacy rates, but the need to capture the Nigerian public necessitated some formal research into advertising because by the 1960s, more than 300 firms were registered to do business in Nigeria, and the country's population was already formidable, standing at 55 million. At the time, one in four people living in Africa was Nigerian.

<sup>2</sup>The United States of America (U.S.A) Department of Commerce researched the existence of various media in Nigeria, naming these as crucial for firms hoping to reach the

(1) Sunday Odedele (2008), *Public Relations and Communication Management in Africa*.  
 (2) <http://www.prforafrica.org/prcomm.pdf>, <http://www.prcan.ng/history.html>

Nigerian consumer market for US goods, as reproduced below:

Media	Disseminating	Receiving (Estimated)
Radio	5 broadcasting Stations	1.5million sets in use
Television	4TV broadcasting Stations	14,000 TV sets in use
Motion picture	90 Theatres	5million persons annually
Local English newspapers	4 major dailies	Circulations from 47,300 to 114,600
Local English newspapers	4 major weeklies	Circulations from 28,000 to 147,300
Local English Language Magazines	4 major monthlies	Circulations from 25,000 to 108,000

Fig 16. Varieties and coverages of Advertising Media in Nigeria (1960s)  
 Source: U.S Department of Commerce, Market for U.S Products in Nigeria (Washington D.C.,1964), PP48-51).

The main mode of advertising in these early days was radio - considered particularly effective, as it bypassed literacy levels. Motion picture adverts were also popular, because many people visited theatres for recreational purposes. But perhaps the most widely used advertising formats were paper, cardboard, metal posters and signs near the point of sale. Personal selling was a hit; product sampling was widely practiced in market areas, as well as sales promoters with loudspeakers and moving vehicles, a technique, which is still in use.

Experts quickly discovered that advertising was “generally more effective when direct, forceful and continuous.”

Examples of advertising lines in those early days are:

*“The ubiquitous ‘Guinness gives you power,’ next to the bulging biceps of an African arm has made Guinness stout the big-*

*gest seller in Nigeria.”*

*“Buy Raleigh, the all steel bicycle on radio, billboard and poster has kept this manufacturer’s product tops for years.”*

Other challenges were that at the time, an estimated 80% of the adult population had little or no formal education but they still formed an important consumer base. Also, businesses quickly realized that Nigerian consumers were no monoliths to be communicated with in the same way. Raymond Baker, then president of Overseas Economic Development Incorporated of New York, summarized the advertising landscape

*“Advertising was “generally more effective when direct, forceful and continuous.”*

of the times and advised thus:

*“The Yoruba of the western region is a very outgoing and friendly individual while the Hausa of the Northern region is rather quiet and reserved. Colours may be important; for the Yoruba, blue is always favoured. Even the direction of hands and eyes is sometimes significant. Marketing in Nigeria must be considered with an appreciation for the tribal and cultural background as well as the education and income of the people.”*

He ended with:

<sup>1</sup>*“Gradual changes can be expected to take place in techniques of advertising and promotion, and in the long run, improvement of the education and literacy of the people will bring further changes. Product advertising expenditures may require a large percentage for development of brand image, and introductions new items may become possible through media campaigns instead of more personal promotions.”*

## CASE STUDIES COMPARING SUCCESSES AND FAILURES OF NIGERIAN PR AND ADVERTISING

### Advertising: Virgin in Port Harcourt vs Mama Na Boy

<sup>1</sup>Relying on pun as its chief linguistic device, airline company Virgin Atlantic's widely successful campaign tapped into the socio cultural belief that virgins are hard to find, through its use of taglines such as: "*Who says there is no virgin in Port Harcourt?*" and "*the real Virgin has arrived*" respectively.

In contrast, telecommunication provider MTN had an <sup>2</sup>advert where a mother-in-law received a call, breaking into song and dance when told "*Mama, na Boy*" meaning her son's wife had just given birth to a son.

This cliché, despite being used in society daily, was deemed offensive by many Nigerians and NGOs, as critics said the words "*Mama, Na boy*" reinforced the Nigerian mindset relating to the preference of boys over girls as children.

MTN pulled the advert and commenced PR measures to overcome the resultant bad press.

(1) Nnadi, I. (2013). *Son Preference - A Violation of Women's Human Rights: A Case Study of igbo Custom in Nigeria* =, *Journal of Politics and Law*; Vol. 6, No. 1; 2013  
 (2) Ezejideaku, E. and Ugwu, E.N (2010). *The Linguistics of Newspaper Advertising in Nigeria*. *Language in India*. Volume 10:3 <http://www.languageinindia.com/march2010/vol10i3march2010.pdf#page=3>

## Indomie vs My Pikin



Fig 17. Indomie Instant Noodles logo and a bottle of My Pikin

<sup>1</sup>In May 2004, rumours surfaced that the consumption of Indomie Noodles was causing illness and death.

The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) closed all factories and distribution facilities belonging to manufacturer De-United Foods Industries Limited (now known as Dufil Prima Foods Ltd), while carrying out its investigations. As public outcry and fear increased, then CEO Roger Yeo refused to focus on the negatives by publicly declaring his companies' losses. He instead appealed for the conclusion of all investigations, scoring points with some members of the press and public by saying, *"our distributors are angry because they have been selling and eating this brand for 10 years."*

When NAFDAC recalled a few batches of products but gave the company the go ahead to resume operations, De-United Foods Limited kicked off with public adverts in newspapers and radio announcing the news, as well as a pledge to ensure the best quality. The company then embarked on an aggres-

(1) Akpabio, E. (2008) Management of "killer" indomie scare and impact on consumer confidence: a case study. *The Public Journal of Semiotics* 11 (1), January 2008, pp 22-36 [http://www.ubrisa.ub.bw/bitstream/handle/10311/468/Akpabio\\_IJSC\\_2008.pdf?sequence=1](http://www.ubrisa.ub.bw/bitstream/handle/10311/468/Akpabio_IJSC_2008.pdf?sequence=1)

sive PR drive; road shows were organized, free noodles were given, with promos and education focused CSR activities becoming a staple for De-United Foods till date.

<sup>1</sup>On November 19, 2008, NAFDAC was told children were dying, after taking in baby teething syrup called *My Pikin*. By the next day, 11 cases were reported, with 8 children dead, but manufacturers Barewa Pharmaceuticals immediately released a statement, categorically denying being responsible

*“As public outcry and fear increased, then CEO Roger Yeo refused to focus on the negatives by publicly declaring his companies’ Losoes.”*

(without carrying out checks), and instead reassured the public to keep

buying. This contributed to a worsening of outcomes as by February 2009, at least 84 children were dead, and NAFDAC had discovered the company was indeed culpable and begun prosecution proceedings. In May 2013, a <sup>2</sup>Lagos Court ruled that the company be wound up, its assets forfeited to the government. Two employees were also sentenced to 7 years’ imprisonment.

(1) <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/tainted-teething-syrup-kills-84-babies-in-nigeria-1570715.html>

(2) <http://www.pharmanewsonline.com/court-orders-barewa-pharmaceuticals-makers-of-my-pikin-syrup-to-be-liquidated-assets-forfeited/>

## PR (Digital): #Surulere versus Sound Sultan



Fig 18. An old photo of Dr. Sid and a 2014 photo of him placed side by side to create a #surulere meme.

In January 2014, producer Don Jazzy (Michael Collins Ajereh) and artiste Dr. Sid (Sidney Onoriode Esiri) released *Surulere*, which means, patience is rewarding. At the same time, they ran an online campaign on social media where they placed personal throwback pictures with their then current

pictures. This was done to encourage their followers and the public to stay focused on their goals. By the time the music video of *Surulere* was uploaded on YouTube on January 23, 2014, fans and celebrities alike had also begun uploading pictures of them transitioning from grass to grace. Because they could relate to the artistes, the public bought into the concept and also tagged their own pictures with #*Surulere*. The song remains a hit and the term is still used on social media. #*Surulere* is now fully entrenched in local lingua, an enduring PR boost for the artistes and their company Mavin records in the eyes and hearts of the public.

A little over a year later, in May 2015, singer Sound Sultan (Olanrewaju Fasasi) intended to release a new song titled *Oba Lola* but tweeted that he would only do so if he got 2000 retweets from the public. Instead, the artiste faced great ridicule, with people mainly mocking him and counting the slow pace of retweets. However, after 23 hours, the post finally got 2,100 retweets and Sound Sultan kept his side of the bargain.

### Consumers' Perception of PR and Advertising

The medium matters, e.g. food and drink adverts are bet-

ter retained when presented with moving images – as seen on TV, but also achievable via web and mobile media. Sales promotions should be regular, while billboards must be designed with caution.

#### Case Study A: Bournvita food drink



Fig 19. Bournvita logo

<sup>1</sup>A survey of 315 consumers examined “the influence of advertising on consumers” purchase of Bournvita, manufactured by Cadbury Nigeria Plc.

Of more than 12 different food drink brands, which featured in this study, Bournvita topped the brand preference table – both in the food drink industry in general, and in Cadbury’s own food drink brands in particular. According to the respondents, advertising and quality are the major factors responsible for the success of Bournvita. Very few subjects cited other reasons such as price, packaging and availability for their choice of the brand.”

*“Advertising and quality are the major factors responsible for the success of Bournvita.”*

“A combination of electronic and print media is employed in advertising Bournvita but television is seen as the most potent and effective medium by 71.43% of consumers. This may be because television combines motion, sound, and special visual effects. The product can be demonstrated and described on T.V, which also offers wide geographic coverage and flexibility as to when the message can be presented. The implication of this is that price and other variables seem

(1) Ayanwale, A.B., Alimi, T and M. A. Ayanbimipe (2005). *The Influence of Advertising on Consumer Brand Preference*. *Journal of Social Science* 10(1): 9-16 (2005)  
<http://krepublshers.com/02-Journals/JSS/JSS-10-0-000-000-2005-Web/JSS-10-1-001-076-2005-Abst-PDF/JSS-10-1-009-016-2005-164-Ayanwale-A-B/JSS-10-1-009-016-2005-164-Ayanwale-A-B.pdf>

not to count much to the consumers as long as the quality of a product is maintained and the brand is also supported by heavy advertising reminding and persuading consumers to continue to buy.”

#### Case Study B: PR and Advertising among GSM networks

<sup>1</sup>A random sample of 500 students of four Universities in the North–east were given detailed questionnaires.

The authors report that: “advertisement and sales promotions influence initial purchase and additions; this was indicated by the respondents as 80% of them agreed that advertising and sales promotions played a role in their addition of (another telecoms) network. Sales promotions should be done at shorter intervals, since it was found to induce more purchase from customers.”

They recommended: “service providers should use the television in advertising their services” and “the benefits of the service should be stressed in all advertisements, such as the bonuses and free gifts available, because what customers are actually looking for are the benefits.”

#### Case Study C: Amstel Malta billboards in Onitsha, Nigeria



Fig 20. Amstel Malta logo

<sup>2</sup>A sample of 373 individuals, “drawn purposely from the population of Amstel Malta consumers in Onitsha” and surveyed via questionnaires “showed that models in billboard advertising attract more attention to themselves than to products advertised and that audience

(1) Amin, H. J and Bashir, A.M (2014). *The Impact of Advertising and Sales Promotion on Initial Purchase, Addition and Change of Existing GSM Networks by Students in Nigeria*. *International Journal of Business and Management*; Vol. 9, No. 10; 2014 <http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ijbm/article/view-File/38561/22498>

(2) Edegoh, L.O.N, Nanolue, I.M and Ezeh, N.C (2013). *Audience Assessment of the Use of Models in Billboard Advertising: A Study of Consumers of Amstel Malt in Onitsha, Nigeria*. *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities* Vol. 6, No. 1 (2013), pp. 217-227 [http://www.irssh.com/yahoo\\_site\\_admin/assets/docs/25\\_IRSSH-650-V6N1.334175859.pdf](http://www.irssh.com/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/25_IRSSH-650-V6N1.334175859.pdf)

recall models in billboard advertising more than the product advertised. It was therefore concluded that audience attention was more on models used in billboard advertising.”

The study recommended “billboard advertising should use models sparingly and concentrate on making the product or service advertised more conspicuous on billboard to ensure easy (brand) recall.”

### WHEN PR PROVES MORE VALUABLE THAN ADVERTISING

Case Study: The Planned Parenthood Foundation strategy

<sup>1</sup>As the world began understanding AIDS in the 80s, a need also arose for the promotion of healthier sexual reproductive practices and family planning in Nigeria. The Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN) decided to lead with a PR campaign, by using music to propagate the need for a wider use of family planning and condoms.

PPFN’s Adebola Adejo said the method was used because at the time, there was more of a listening audience than a reading audience.” The campaign kicked off with renowned artistes Onyeka Onwenu and King Sunny Ade producing and singing two songs ‘Choices’ and ‘Wait For Me’ (sponsored by

America’s John Hopkins University), with the latter track sung in Pidgin. *“Over 30 newspaper and magazine articles were written about the release of the album.”*

A national launch came by late 1989 and both songs were immediate hits, rising to the charts and remaining there for weeks on end. Over 30 newspaper and magazine articles were written about the release of the album, “Wait for me.” In addition to performing to large crowds and publicizing child survival and family planning through live performances, King Sunny Ade and Onyeka Onwenu also visited mater-

(1) <http://www.ipsnews.net/1997/01/music-nigeria-theres-a-message-in-the-sound/>

nal/child health and family planning clinics and gave talks on family planning to the public, all of which garnered added press coverage. The deliberate concentration on PR rather than advertising was revealed when Adejo, said: “Sunny Ade is a well known polygamist who now tells his audience he knows the evil of polygamy, given how much it costs him to take care of his large family. This in a way helps others who plan large families to think before jumping into it.” About two years later, the songs were then linked to public service announcements from June till November 1992. Impact assessments later revealed that family planning awareness which stood at 45% in 1990 when the *Ade-Onwenu* album was released, climbed to 75% awareness by 1993. Contraception prevalence in Nigeria also increased from 3.5% in 1990 to 10% in 1993.

## USING ADVERTISING WHERE PR WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE EFFECTIVE

Case Study: Gala Sausage Roll vs Indomie Noodles



Fig 21. Indomie's Super Millionaire Promo ad circulated on Facebook

<sup>1</sup>At the end of January 2012, UAC Foods Limited utilized bulk SMS to

send text messages to customers informing them of a price increase from N50 to N70 thus: Some customers were vocal in their denouncement of this technique: This would not be the first time. The company had also used radio adverts to announce a price increase from N40 to N50, which had

(1) <http://www.nairaland.com/860160/gala-now-n70>  
<http://www.nairaland.com/74572/worst-commercial-advert/1>

rubbed some customers the wrong way. Five years before the SMS message from UAC Foods, a customer complained in 2007.

Altogether, this trend of events meant that the customers expressed that the company was not listening, as shown in this excerpt culled from the comment thread: “...*stupidly they tried using adverts to improve sales.*”

By contrast, that same year, Dufil Prima Foods Plc, makers of Indomie Noodles focused on relating with the public, when they increased product prices. It started in early September 2012, when customers began to grumble that there seemed to be a change in the price of Indomie Noodles. Just three days later, the company kicked off its Super Millionaire Promo, which encouraged people to buy more of the higher priced 120g Indomie noodles, to stand a chance to win millions of Naira weekly. The promo was not given a time limit, initially tagged as “for a limited period.” It therefore continued, even as more people realized there was a price.

Newspapers were awash with interviews of

“*Makers of Indomie Noodles focused on relating with the public when they increased product prices*”

winner, while the company continued to engage with the public, notably on social media. Dufil Prima Foods Plc also went ahead to carry out a different promo with a longer duration called Indomie Flash Contest, which gave consumers the chance to win a month’s supply of Indomie. By the time this promo ended, around mid 2013, its customers were fully eased into, and therefore firmly settled into the new price regime.

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## WAR AGAINST PUBLIC RELATIONS

By Ayeni Adekunle



Fig 22. Obituary of PR distributed on streets in Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria and also shared on social media

Chido Nwakanma was still president of Public Relations Consultants Association of Nigeria (PRCAN) when we sat in my office at BlackHouse Media in 2014.

BHM, where I am currently CEO, was launching Nigeria's first mobile application in the PR industry and Nwakanma attended with the

association's excos John Ehiguese, Muyiwa Akintunde, and others. As we demonstrated and tested the app, one question appeared consistent: how did we plan to get the right information, in a country where the PR market was shrouded in so much secrecy?

One year later, our industry has opened up a bit. A late 2014 survey gave us an idea of who is billing what. Journalists have more information about accounts' movement and pitches. Many agencies are now providing campaign case studies on the go. The industry is opening up to international affiliation and collaboration and PR agencies here are beginning to use their own medicine.

But while that is happening, there appears to be a sustained assault on the industry. The perpetrators? Those whose job it is to protect and develop public relations; those who profit from the profession; those who deeply need the industry.

Some of these people know what they are doing. Others have no idea.

As I have noted repeatedly, the public relations industry in Nigeria has been at best disappointing. While many complain about everything there is to complain about, it is often my style to look at what we did wrong in the past 20 years. Top on the list is the fact that we did not embrace technology early. Information and communication technology has transformed the way humans interact. As public relations professionals, we should have been at the forefront of big data science, of social media, of location and habit mapping.

*“We should have been the pioneers of digital marketing and experience design and brand story telling.”*

We should have been the pioneers of digital marketing and experience design and brand story telling.

If you do not disrupt yourself, then you must get ready to be disrupted. It happened to the search industry, happened to media and photography. It has happened to computing and mobile messaging. It happened to advertising. And now, as the transportation and telecommunications industries face unprecedented disruptions, public relations itself is undergoing an assault by new ideas and tools. New technology has ensured that every industry today must innovate or die.

Newspapers are now playing catch up with blogs and websites. Telcos are being forced to rethink their business model because of obvious threats from Skype, Whatsapp, Facebook and co. Google built a global advertising business while ad giants were snoring. The Kardashians are launching best-selling apps and engaging millions of millennials without breaking a sweat. Taxi associations are grumbling as Uber

and Lyft make a mess of tradition and reinvent an entire industry. Apple, which itself disrupted the music industry with the introduction of iTunes, was a late comer to the party as Spotify, Deezer and Soundcloud changed the way we consume music. Netflix? You know the story of the disruption that took down Blockbuster. You know of how Blogger and WordPress gave everyone the power to be online publishers and how that impacted traditional news brands. You know of how Android OS caused a revolution that took down more than a few mobile phone companies.

As the global public relations industry faces the biggest threat in decades, many insiders are admitting that indeed, PR is Dead. Writing in his 'book of the same title, Robert

*“PR has run out of options and has missed its moment to lead. It is in terminal decline.”*

Phillips, a former Edelman executive says, “PR has run out of options and has

missed its moment to lead. It is in terminal decline. About to be overrun and overwhelmed by the age of data, PR today is to communications what analogue was to digital at the turn of the century.”

This was my exact position, when I met with staff of X3M Ideas, a Lagos communications group recently. My exact position when I addressed participants at the African Public Relations Association conference in 2014.

These admissions are not to nail the coffin on the profession and move on to something else. Rather it is information to help us understand what has happened so we can adapt and survive. We have since killed the press release. We are making measurement more scientific and using storytelling in better ways than ever. We are investing in data and tech

and redefining the kind of talents that make up an agency.

In Africa, where the PR industry is hitherto traditional and conservative, dominated by press agency, practitioners are dumping old habits and moving into the future. Many agencies are staffing web developers and programmers; designers and editors, as well as community managers and influencers. One Nigerian agency is employing psychologists while another has put out an advert for in-house comedian.

And those who matter have noticed. There's a renewed client and employer trust, as evidenced by a 2014 PRCAN survey. There is a surge in the number of young undergrad-

*“There is a surge in the number of young undergraduates interested in working in PR”*

uates interested in working in PR, and an interesting

increase in the number of foreign agencies interested in doing business here. In Nigeria, the country with Africa's highest GDP, highest Internet penetration and highest population, at least two affiliations have been announced in the past six months. Burson-Marsteller has partnered with a leading Nigerian agency, CMC Connect while Fleishman Hillard only recently signed an affiliation with Mediacraft Associates LTD. Bell Pottinger has collaborated on projects with Black-House Media while Edelman last year partnered with Sese-PR, a Lagos based agency.

As the quality of service is improving and new ideas are helping the profession rebound, regulators Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) and Public Relations Consultants Association of Nigeria (PRCAN) are working to step up industry governance, kick out quacks, provide resources for training and development, and ensure certified practitioners

in public service achieve chartered status like their colleagues in accounting, human resources and medicine.

But I suspect recent happenings may make all the work of the past few years come to naught. Foreign agencies are opening shop in Nigeria without recourse to NIPR or PRCAN. Those who are not physically here are getting and executing briefs from their base in Europe and America. Public and private organizations are patronizing PR staff and agencies which are not certified to practice by NIPR, nor accredited by PRCAN.

*PRCAN was established by an NIPR byelaw of 1993. The association was also registered as a not-for-profit organization in 2007*

There is a good precedent in what Advertising Practi-

tioners Council of Nigeria (APCON) and Advertising Agencies Association of Nigeria (AAAN) have done. No foreign agency can currently practice advertising in Nigeria without 75% local ownership. No advertising agency can do business without an AAAN membership certificate (registration fee is at least N750, 000).

The recently formed Experiential Marketers Association (EXMAN) is as we speak, setting up policies and procedures to sanitize and regulate their practice, hoping to curb falling standards and ensure a system that can help clients tell the difference between quacks and professionals.

Since our agency BHM was inducted into PRCAN on November 23, 2013, I have been part of several meetings where standards have been discussed. The association has spent time engaging with clients and employers, travelling round

the world to see what is happening elsewhere, partnering with Holmes Report, ICCO, APRA, etc for training, data exchange and resources, while developing a masterclass programme that continues to receive praise.

NIPR was established in 1963, and chartered in 1990 by Decree No 16 to regulate the practice of public relations and

*“We have bigger battles to fight as an industry. It’s time to get together and put in the work required to guarantee our future.”* monitor professional conducts through an established code of ethics and professional conduct regime. The law stipulates standard academic and professional qualifications for admission into the institute. A 22-man governing council elects the president every two years.

PRCAN was established by an NIPR byelaw of 1993. The association was also registered as a not-for-profit organization in 2007. Just like NIPR, PRCAN was set up to promote the professional practice of public relations in Nigeria.

As both organizations work to ensure that individuals and organizations that are not certified do not parade themselves as professionals, there has been a vehement attack on both bodies and their executives, by those – as I said earlier – who should be working to develop an industry from which they profit.

Having followed the <sup>1</sup>discussions around NIPR and PRCAN’s letters to Guinness Nigeria and MTN requesting they do not work with non-accredited agencies, and having followed media reports on the matter, I am convinced the reputation of our entire industry is being dragged in the mire by

(1) <http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/nipr-vs-xlr8-between-legality-and-illegality/216945/>

this unnecessary campaign. NIPR and PRCAN are not being unrealistic in their stand that having won PR accounts already; the agencies concerned must regularize their papers with the associations. The request, I am assured by PRCAN excos, is not for their contracts to be terminated, but for them to do what is appropriate and sort out relevant memberships. I do not think it is too much to ask from agencies actually working in public relations and representing clients who themselves mostly identify with relevant associations – be it NIPR or APCON or PRCAN.

To do otherwise, and instead embark on a war against NIPR and PRCAN is, to put it mildly, bite the finger that's feeding you.

We have bigger battles to fight as an industry. It's time to get together and put in the work required to guarantee our future. If we continue to put personal interests, ego, and sentiments ahead of the industry's interest, it will remain impossible for us to build the kind of ecosystem that can ensure PR does not die a painful death.

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*He is a prominent PR practitioner, journalist, qualified scientist and entrepreneur.*

## INSIDE THE PR INDUSTRY OF BROWN ENVELOPES, PRESS RELEASES AND QUACKS

By Ayeni Adekunle

*Honoraria. Flava. Keske. T-fare. Brown Envelope.*

These are just some of the code names by which cash exchange for editorial coverage is known in Nigeria.

In a country where there are over 50 newspapers and magazines on the newsstands, hundreds of radio and TV stations, and an ocean of blogs and websites, it is no surprise that the media environment is industrious.

Everyone wants to be in the media – politicians, motivational speakers, consumers, brands, entertainers, pastors, even bankers, fraudsters and climbers.

To be frank, only few deserve coverage, but in a country where a tabloid journalist earns less than \$100 per month, where most newspapers owe up to six months' salaries, and TV stations pay tokens for wages, it is no surprise that the numbers of reporters and editors patronizing their subjects have been increasing.

*“Most newspapers owe up to six months’ salaries, and TV stations pay tokens for wages”*

Some of the busiest journalists are freelance agents;

securing advert placements, planting news and features in their journals, managing celebrities and consulting for banks and politicians. Many of their bosses are aware of these activities – if not equally guilty.

According to a May 2015 report by the Nigerian Union of Journalists, about 9 Nigerian newspapers owed salaries up to 18 months.

The media scene is a mess and the public relations industry

in Nigeria is a beneficiary. Driven by a news conference and press release culture, PR pros in these parts have mastered how to speak the language of envelopes. For decades, they have connived with poorly remunerated reporters and struggling publishers to fill papers and magazines with promotional content that scarcely catches the interest of the readers. There are now about 50 agencies registered with Public Relations Consultants' Association of Nigeria (PRCAN), the body recognized by government to regulate PR consultancy in Nigeria. Yet, there are hundreds more, practicing in every sector, without certification by NIPR or PRCAN.

*“PR agencies are not doing any better. Many are unable to keep senior staff due to poor remuneration. Salaries are owed regularly”*

A 2015 BHM Survey estimates that around 1,900 press releases are issued

per day in Nigeria. Most of these are from politicians, corporate organizations and celebrities.

Journalists on every beat are bombarded with emails and phone calls requesting priority. Usually, only those from ‘friendly’ sources make it into the pages in consequence of bank alerts, gifts and promises. Most of the time, the press releases are announcing a new product, countering a report, promoting a new artiste, or an event.

In 2013, three top 10 agencies paid out over \$250,000. One year after, the figure could have quadrupled for each of these agencies.

Meanwhile, newspaper sales continue to drop at an alarming rate. At least, 6 print publications – The News, Entertainment Express, Sunday Express, NET Newspaper, PM News, Y!,- have gone under in the past year; many have reduced fre-

quency of publication while others are shutting down presses and cutting staff.

PR agencies are not doing any better. Many are unable to keep senior staff due to poor remuneration. Salaries are owed regularly – a sad reality for an industry that pays less than half what advertising pays. Just as it is in the media, some of the brightest talents in PR have fled, in search of better packages. The verdict is clear – consumers don't care about press releases. Consumers only care about themselves and what is important to them. When agencies and media began to bore audiences, they wasted no time in switching to an alternative: blogs and websites, which spoke their language.

*“PR professionals need to think and behave like copywriters, filmmakers, storytellers, comedians, designers, editors and bloggers.”*

Elsewhere, in the United States and England, agencies are

embracing story-telling and big ideas. Agencies are news jacking, blogging and breaking the Internet. The press release has been murdered and buried. Elsewhere, bribery is a sin and if it does happen at all, it is clandestine with clear understanding of implications.

Moreover, PR is driven by clear strategy and clear measurement indices. Media is driven by circulation figures and ethics. Those who practice otherwise are the exception, not the norm as it is here in Nigeria.

Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) and PRCAN are working hard to cleanse the practice and lead the industry into the future. The National Union of Journalists (NUJ) and other associations are working to ensure organizations treat their journalists better, and more than a few agencies are determined to execute campaigns that meet current glob-

al standards.

Great case studies are emerging from Nigeria. Little agencies are doing big things and interests in membership for NIPR and PRCAN is at an all time high.

But experts claim some things will need to happen before we experience this big transformation.

- Journalists will have to be better trained and remunerated.
  - Media organizations will have to be better funded and run.
  - PR professionals will need to embrace new thinking – we will need to think and behave like copywriters, filmmakers, storytellers, comedians, designers, editors and bloggers.
  - Regulation will have to be stringent to make it more difficult for quacks to find and keep business.
  - PR consultancies will have to be better funded and run.
- There will have to be mergers, acquisitions and partnerships.

In-house PR staff will have to embrace technology, stay updated on trends and be at the forefront of helping management understand that *#PRisDead*.

Training, according to all the experts surveyed, is at the centre of it all. We all -media, agencies, regulators – must invest in training and tools if we are to change our stories and change our lives. All three must work together to create the kinds of experience that will lure the audiences back.

*Ayeni Adekunle is the CEO of BHM group, parent company to Nigerian Entertainment Today (NET), Black House Media and ID Africa. He is a prominent PR practitioner, journalist, qualified scientist and entrepreneur.*

## PUBLIC RELATIONS: THE PROFESSION THAT IS ACCEPTED BUT NOT UNDERSTOOD

By Oyindamola Bamgbola

In the 1989 edition of *Introduction to Public Relations*, Sam Black, former secretary general of the International Public Relations Association (IPRA), stated:

“Public Relations has become generally accepted as an important element of business, government and all aspects of everyday life. Accepted does not necessarily mean understood.”

These words still apply today as many who seek and engage the services of public relations practitioners cannot firmly describe the main function of public relations or how it

*“It is imperative that PR practitioners understand how different publics think.”* works. Most can see output, but

how many can link PR work to outcomes?

Generally, there are many questions that get people – even those in PR – confused. One of such is the question of function.

### What are the Functions of PR?

Defining PR as the profession that deals with just publicity and promotion is inadequate. As a matter of fact, scholars like Sam Black have put forward important functions that provide proper insight into what Public Relations is all about:

#### 1. *Counselling based on understanding of human behaviour*

Public relations is the mediator between organizations and their stakeholders. To serve both parties effectively, it is imperative that PR practitioners understand how different publics think. It is also important to know expectations of the different parties.

## 2. *Analyzing future trends and predicting their consequences*

Habit mapping, trendspotting and other processes of behaviour analysis are means through which PR pros can help organizations discover new ways of interacting with consumers. This function is also useful for delineating the consequences and advantages of new means of communication.

## 3. *Research into public opinion, attitudes and expectations and advising on necessary action*

Research is a very significant tool in Public relations. As it is often said, change is the most constant thing in life. The situation and statistics for yesterday are not the same as today.

*“The PR department is responsible for identifying issues, analyzing them, setting priorities in planning and strategy and implementing”*

According to Venture Beat, \$720 million was

spent on mobile video ads in 2013 while in 2014, \$1.5 billion was spent on the same thing.

What changed here? Enlightenment.

## 4. *Establishing and maintaining two-way communication based on truth and full information*

What is a brand without its consumers? What is the public without goods? Both are mutually beneficial to each other and play important roles in their existence. Hence, ensuring smooth communication and weaving memorable experiences at points of interactions is a crucial function of Public Relations.

## 5. *Preventing conflict and misunderstandings*

In cases of conflict or disasters, the first point of call is usually the Public Relations department. The PR department is

responsible for identifying issues, analyzing them, setting priorities in planning and strategy and implementing clever programmes of actions that will soothe a critical situation.

*6. Promoting mutual respect and social responsibility*

PR pros search for opportunities to build understanding, empathy, acceptance and loyalty between its clients and publics.

*7. Harmonizing the private and the public interest*

Public Relations is not one-sided. It cares for the brand as much as it cares for the public. Both parties must go home happy having gotten a good bargain.

*“Prioritizing and implementing the most cost effective programme of action is another function of Public Relations.”*

*8. Promoting goodwill with staff, suppliers and customers*

Internal stakeholders are as important as external stakeholders. PR identifies the need for mutual understanding among staff, shareholders, suppliers, employers and other key stakeholders within an organization.

*9. Improving industrial relations*

The most popular and respected organizations in the world have public relations to thank for their reputation. This feat was not achieved suddenly. Lobbying, corporate social responsibility, quality control, environmental scanning (which are essential parts of PR) play an important role in ensuring organizations stand out in their industries.

*10. Attracting good personnel and reducing labour turnover*

*11. Promotion of goods and services*

Publicity and advertising aid the job of Public Relations.

12. *Maximizing profitability*

Prioritizing and implementing the most cost effective programme of action is another function of Public Relations.

13. *Projecting a corporate identity*

Consistent and strategic communication of what an organization stands for projects an identity. How the public absorbs this identity becomes the corporate image.

Public Relations is more than the business of looking good and being in the news. Understanding its functions will help the society use it better.

***Oyindamola Bamgbola** is a copywriter and content executive at ID Africa, a digital marketing agency. She is also a Public Relations practitioner and social community manager.*

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Building brands and managing perceptions for Nigeria's best



Managing the multiple stakeholders critical for business success is serious business. No wonder, foresighted managers turn to PRCAN agencies for stakeholder engagement, deploying the many subsets that the credibility, flexibility and cost effectiveness of public relations delivers.

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www.prcan.ng

## THE FUTURE OF PR: HOW SOCIAL MEDIA IS DISRUPTING AN INDUSTRY AND WHAT PRACTITIONERS MUST DO NOW

By Oyindamola Bamgbola

Print readership has declined drastically over the years, with Facebook and YouTube now regarded as television's competition. Press releases, buzz words, press conferences are no longer as effective as they were during the times of Edward L. Bernays, Sam Black and Sam Epelle.

Today, technology has led to the evolution of traditional tools of PR and power has shifted from the hands of media companies

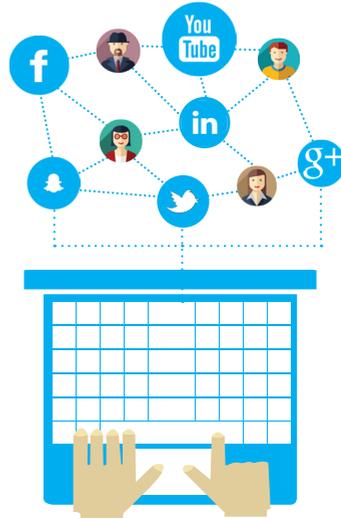


Fig 23. Sharing information is now instantaneous, thanks to the Internet

*“Consumers now have the loudest voice, the line between online world and offline world has become thinner.”*

and PR professionals to that of the consumer. So-

cial media is ruling the world of communication and the fear of displacement and irrelevance has taken over the media industry. This is not unusual, as people fear what they do not understand.

Some believe that the way PR works in the ‘real world’ is different from the way it works on social media. This notion has caused big companies to take ‘expert’ advice from ‘influencers’ who are not certified by NIPR and PRCAN – PR regulatory bodies recognized by the Nigerian government.

Since power shifted and consumers now have the loudest voice, the line between online world and offline world has become thinner. One tweet, Facebook post, Instagram post can damage the reputation of an entire organization. Citizens on social media are constantly challenging the actions and press releases of government. Powerful movements against injustice and corruption such as *#OccupyNigeria*, *#BringBackOurGirls* and *#OpenNASS* began on Twitter.

Consumers are now more informed than they were in the past, thanks to the infinite amount of information available online. This fact has made it necessary that PR practitioners use social listening tools in order to strategically interject their point of views into the discussions on social media to either change the negative perception of the public or position who or what is represented in good light.

The success of social PR is heavily dependent on rich and fruitful relationships.

Tech companies have created platforms and opportunities to make communication between brands and their publics more amiable and intimate. Consumers relate their stories everyday on social, on their blogging platforms, on their photo or video sharing platforms. What PR needs to do is to observe and study the patterns in these stories, and then craft their messages to empathize with the public and flow with these patterns.

Sending out excessive bulk e-mails or SMS is not really 'PR'. As the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) plans to regulate the menace of unsolicited text messaging, PR professionals must now focus on adopting acceptable and pleasant means of communication with their publics.

<sup>1</sup>Theaker claims that organizations have experienced criticism about their behaviour on social media. However, foreign brands like Oreo, Charmin, Virgin, Dutch Airlines, Heineken and others are using social media in creative and commendable ways and getting remarkable results.

On the issue of control, no one can stop consumers on social media from sharing negative or positive opinions on brands. What PR pros can do is to be proactive online and create a wonderful experience for audiences whenever they interact.

How else can one counter or nip negative opinions in the bud? <sup>2</sup>Gilpin and Murphy gave an example of a campaign that was created by a blogger who claimed that Johnson & Johnson's Motrin painkiller brand failed to monitor their on-line media on weekends. Now, this may puzzle some people because most companies take weekend breaks; but it is a well-known fact that social media never sleeps. Hence, it is imperative agencies must use monitoring tools as their eyes for as long as possible.

It is also not enough for brands to just tell their stories. They must have a passionate community of consumers who have, over time, become believers and evangelists, happy to share their experiences, which are strong enough to convert even the worst skeptic. The marriage of smart technology and great content is the social couple that can ultimately achieve this.

***Oyindamola Bamgbola** is a copywriter and content executive at ID Africa, a digital marketing agency. She is also a Public Relations practitioner and social community manager.*

(1) Theaker A., (2012). *The Public Relations Handbook*. USA: Routledge

(2) Gilpin, D. R., & Murphy, P. (2010). *The Handbook of Strategic Communication*. USA: Routledge

## PRACTITIONERS' VIEWPOINTS ON PR AND ADVERTISING



Chido Nwakanma, MD/CEO of  
Blueflower Communications Limited

*“Audience segmentation and the deployment of digital channels are crucial”*

1“Modern communication management requires more listening than speaking. This concept finds support in the public relations planning model that positions research and action before communication and evaluation. (We have to) segment audiences effectively...(it is) time to draw up a Nigerian communication demographic map. A significant portion of youths is now to be found only in that (digital) space. This is moreso as the 87 million persons on the Internet in Nigeria actively engage social media. The 2015 elections mobilized them for participation, at least online. Public communication managers must engage and define. Otherwise, citizens – informed, uninformed or plain obnoxious – would define at will.”

“Digital marketing is going to be huge and there are a lot of things that would happen in the digital market space only if the environment is conducive for it to thrive. Things have started happening but it is not at the scale that it is meant to be. The truth about it is that traditional advertising can never go away. The two main problems we have



Kunle Ogunmefun, Vice Chairman,  
Bluebird Communication Limited

*“Digital will be huge”*

in the advertising industry is data collection; we lack a lot of

(1) <http://www.brandcrunch.com.ng/bnrch/index.php/marketing-papers/2167-agenda-for-communication-management-under-buhari#.VaiM99xjBZg>  
(2) <http://www.punchng.com/business/highflyers/lack-of-data-major-problem-in-advertising-industry-ogunmefun/#sthash.gol70aQk.dpuf>

data in this industry. The second one is building professional capacity in terms of the staff members. Perhaps if we had adequate training institutions that would prepare people for this sector, the industry would grow.”



John Ehiguese, President, Public Relations Consultants Association of Nigeria (PRCAN) and Group Managing Director of Mediacraft Associates Ltd.

---

*“Digital media presents both challenge and opportunity”*

---

1“The ascendancy of digital media is a challenge to the extent that it is one of the manifestations of how media forms are evolving, affecting consumer information consumption habits, and ultimately impacting the way we communicate with the consumer. But then it also presents many opportunities. With online media, speed is of essence because of its realtime nature. Adverse news or information online can go viral within minutes and cause severe damage to a brand or company’s reputation. That is why one of the most important elements of online reputation management is “listening.” You must be listening to the online conversation as it affects your brand, so that you can respond promptly to address any negative or inaccurate piece of information before it goes viral and causes reputational damage.”

---

*“Concerning New niches, M&A likely in the industry”*

---

“We need to be more creative in our business development drive, to identify new market niches and opportunities. And they are there, waiting to be harnessed. [As for] mergers and acquisitions in the industry, essentially in order to build scale, to be able to gain more clout, and to service big clients effectively... we haven’t seen much of that happening yet in Nigeria, but

(1) <http://thenationonlineng.net/why-nigeria-is-excluded-from-global-pr-ranking/>

it will come with time. The merger and acquisition fever appears to have caught on globally, and I believe that it's just a matter of time before we begin to see it in Nigeria.”



Biodun Shobanjo, Chairman,  
Troyka Group

*“People no longer just consumers”*

<sup>1</sup>“Marketing communications is about connecting people and brands, is about doing something educative, entertaining and useful for people and also about tapping into the human element; it is not just about making 30 second commercials. The digital revolution has ensured that people are no longer just consumers, but participate in the creation of ideas and products, production and distribution, as much as any marketing communications agency.”



Femi Falodun  
C.O.O ID Africa

*“Social media has not come to displace public relations “*

<sup>2</sup>“Social media has not come to displace, replace or exterminate public relations. Traditional media is still important. However, when strategically paired with social media, the impact of traditional media becomes very powerful. Wall Street Journal reports that global spending on social media currently represents 13% of marketing budgets and in the next five years, that percentage is projected to rise to more than 25%.

(1) <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2012/03/troyka-chairman-gives-insight-into-marketing-communication-in-nigeria/#sthash.n4HENwEi.dpuf>  
 (2) Who Is Afraid of Social PR? – NIPR Digital Media Workshop with Femi Falodun <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VvyTOljE6C8>

The key for PR pros is to interject our point-of-view with new age processes by using social and advanced tools to (proactively) be accessible to our audience. Social media equates to unrestricted access.”



Robert Phillips, Author, Co-founder  
Jericho Chambers.

*“PR should desist from using content marketing as an excuse to not fixing its foundations”*

<sup>1</sup>“PR is not dead. It’s been said that where there is a buyer, there is a market and clearly people are still buying PR, hence its existence will continue for sometime. But I don’t believe it is fit for purpose and I believe it needs to have a radical reappraisal about what it does and how it goes about it.

Hanging on to the word *content* is one of the series of proof points that PR uses as an excuse to avoid re-evaluating its structure.

Also, there is an obsession on outputs and not outcomes; PR is not data ready in the age of big data and the industry still lives in a myth of hierarchies in the age of networks.”



Ayeni Adekunle  
CEO/Founder, BHM Group

*“New technology has ensured that every industry today must innovate or die”*

<sup>2</sup>“Just like PR, today’s communities are witnessing fundamental changes. Communities are now defined by not just who, when, why and where, but by indices no one would have imagined just a few years ago.

If we master the tenets of PR, and understand the importance of the psychology of the communities we want to manage, we’re already on a smooth ride.

(1) My Newsdesk interview with Robert Phillips, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5tdb5lmmik>  
(2) <http://ayenithegreat.ng/pr-is-dead/>

Information and communication technology has transformed the way humans interact. As public relations professionals, we should have been at the forefront of big data science, of social media, of location and habit mapping. We should have been the pioneers of digital marketing and experience design and branded story telling. It's time to get together and put in the work required to guarantee our future."

# DEDUCTIONS FROM THE #PRISDEAD CAMPAIGN

## WHAT NIGERIANS OUTSIDE THE INDUSTRY KNOW ABOUT PR

64%

note that PR is about talking, relating and communicating with people:  
*"PR is the relationship between the public and the individual..."*

2%

make reference to the need for segmented tools and audiences in the deployment of PR:  
*"There's an online part and everyday parts of it..."*

35%

have no idea what PR is even though they are bombarded by it and influenced by it:  
*"I have not heard about Public Relations..."*

## BETWEEN PR AND ADVERTISING

50%

50% stated they would rather spend on PR.  
*"The right PR agent will give you good advertising, good publicity..."*

50%

of all respondents were hesitant to choose either PR or advertising, stressing that both are crucial, before being pressed to make a choice:  
*"They kind of rub off on each other..."*

40%

40% report they would rather spend solely on advertising.  
*"You have to create awareness with your brand for you to sell...I have to advertise."*

20%

20% prefer advertising over PR due to their current needs:  
*"Probably advertising right now...I have (a product) I want to push out..."*

30%

30% of all Creatives polled specifically based their preference for PR on its ability to ensure later advertising resonates.  
*"Because PR spreads across, it gets you in there..."*

10%

10% of respondents polled cited PR as useful only in response to crisis management:  
*"PR, you just solve issues with it."*

10%

10% stated that they could not choose between the two.  
*"They both need each other, to work together...Even though I use one more than the other."*

### 3 FACTS ABOUT PUBLIC RELATIONS

#### 1. *Public Relations is NOT Advertising*

The Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) posits that PR “is the discipline which looks after reputation, with the arm of earning understanding and support and influencing opinion and behaviour. It is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its public.

American marketing author, consultant and professor, Philip Kotler defines advertising as “any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of goods, services or ideas by an identified sponsor.”

The difference between these two definitions is clear.

#### 2. *Public Relations is a VERY important part of communication and management*

The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) defines PR as “a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics.” PRSA notes that this definition focuses on PR as a communication process. It further explains that ‘process’ can be used interchangeably with ‘management function’ because it involves top-down communication, which evokes control.

President of Public Relations Consultants’ Association of Nigeria (PRCAN) and Group Managing Director of Mediacraft Associates, John Ehiguese briefly explains how PR pros can use digital media for management - “one of the most important elements of Online Reputation Management is “listening.” You must be listening to the online conversation as it affects your brand, so that you can respond promptly to ad-

dress any negative or inaccurate piece of information before it goes viral and causes reputational damage.”

### 3. *Publicity is a PART of Public Relations*

According to American author, Seth Godin, PR is the focused examination of interactions, tactics, products and pricing that when combined determine what and how people talk about you while publicity is getting unpaid media to pay attention.

Godin goes further to explain that a publicity firm will tell you stories of how they got a client ink while a PR firm will talk about storytelling and being remarkable and spreading the word.

It has been said that all PR professionals can do publicity but not all publicists can do PR because PR is a broad and encompassing field.

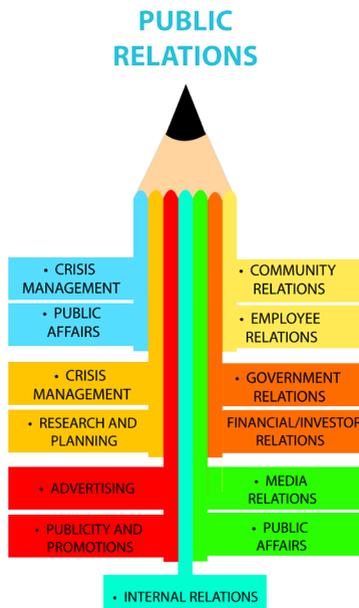


Fig 24. Functions of PR

## CONCLUSION

Consumers all over the world including Nigeria are becoming content creators and publishers in their own rights – be it through their Facebook status updates or by expressing strong opinions on Twitter, funny Instagram videos, crazy vine loops or instructional YouTube videos.

More consumers are spending more time on their phones than in front of the TV. Media platforms are rapidly redefining themselves and aligning with consumer habits. PR should do the same.

Many do not realize that most positive communication methods they use on a daily basis are PR methods. Helping people understand the profession through education and publicity should be the major goal of the industry now.

Public Relations needs to use its own medicine.

**Global PR industry is  
up 7% to more than  
\$13 Billion in 2015**

- Holmes Report 2015

#PRIsAlive

Fig 25. PR is alive





# **NIGERIA PR REPORT 2015**

Inside the Public Relations industry in Nigeria.

by  
**BHM Research & Intelligence**

In partnership with  
Public Relations Consultants' Association of Nigeria

**PRCAN**

### **ABOUT NIGERIA PR REPORT**

**N**igeria PR Report is an unbiased endeavour to depict the situation of the PR industry in Nigeria. The state of the industry is perpetually generalized and notions about its set up are more subjective than objective. While some claim the industry is in a state of decline, others believe there has been growth and a few consider the industry stagnant. By sticking to these notions from a variety of individuals, we would never be able to tell the real situation of the industry except through annual surveys and genuine answers from the agencies themselves.

The goal of Nigeria's PR Report is to purposefully place Nigeria on the global PR map by producing annual analyses; giving insights into tools, trends, campaigns and issues the industry should pay attention to.

The report is prepared for the use of agency CEOs, brand managers, students, institutions, journalists, consultants, regulatory bodies and researchers.

### **ABOUT BHM RESEARCH & INTELLIGENCE**

BRI is an independent intelligence team working from Nigeria, Germany and England, to gather and analyze data for brands and organizations in public relations, advertising, ICT and Media.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report reveals that the industry is not in a state of decline as perceived by those who have declared the profession dead and redundant. While 50% claim there is growth, the remaining 50% have claimed that the Nigerian PR industry is only crippled by stagnancy.

Although Nigeria was excluded in the 2015 World PR Report also known as the Holmes Report, a few PR agencies did remarkable work in 2014 and 2015. Last year, three agencies announced partnerships with foreign agencies: Edelman and 13 year old Sesema PR based in Lagos, Nigeria, Media-craft Associates now represents FleishmanHillard in Nigeria and CMC Connect kicked off affiliation with Burson-Marsteller.

The table below was derived from the following points embedded in the Public Relations Consultants' Association of Nigeria (PRCAN) and BHM Research and Intelligence (BRI) 2014 and 2015 surveys respectively, which was circulated among PR professionals.

1. Billing: band of fee income
2. Identified campaigns/projects/case studies
3. Affiliations and awards

Total respondents for both surveys: 36

PRCAN: 17

BRI: 19

It should be noted that the figures, which fall under band of fee income, are unaudited and were derived solely from the

two surveys mentioned above. Also, there was no comprehensive data on 20 agencies registered under PRCAN. 16 agencies out of the 52 agencies failed to fill both surveys, therefore, information about them not made public have been marked as N/A (Not Available).

S/N	NAME OF AGENCY	BAND OF FEE INCOME	NO OF SERVICES OFFERED	AGE OF AGENCY	LOCATION
***	Anonymous	5m–7.5m	8	10 years +	N/A
1.	Absolute PR Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
2.	As+ A Communications	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
3.	BD Consult Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
4.	Bifocal Communications	N/A	N/A	N/A	Kaduna, Nigeria
5.	BlackHouse Media Group	5m–7.5m	12	5-10 years	Lagos, Nigeria
6.	Blueflower Limited	250-5m	12	5-10 years	Lagos, Nigeria
7.	Brooks and Blake Ltd	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
8.	Caritas Communications	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
9.	C & F Porter Novelli	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
10.	Chain Reactions Limited	0.5m-7.5m	5	5-10 years	Lagos, Nigeria
11.	Compact Communications Ltd	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
12.	CMC Connect Ltd	0.5m-1m	18	10 years+	Lagos, Nigeria
13.	Concrete Communications	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
14.	Evolve Integrated	2.5m-5m	10	5-10 years	Lagos, Nigeria
15.	FCB Redline	1m-2.5m	7	10 years+	Lagos, Nigeria
16.	Hally Sports International	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
17.	Hi-Tek Productions	N/A	N/A	N/A	Abuja, Nigeria
18.	Image Consultants	250–5m	5	10 years+	Lagos, Nigeria
19.	Imagelink Communications	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
20.	Integrated Indigo Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
21.	JSP Communications	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
22.	Leap Communications	2.5m-5m	15	2-5 years	Lagos, Nigeria
23.	Marketing Mix and Company	250–5m	3	10 years+	Lagos, Nigeria
24.	Mediacraft Associates	10m and above	16	10 years+	Lagos, Nigeria
25.	Messages Inc	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
26.	Mediamark Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
27.	Metro Media	5m-7.5m	6	5	Lagos, Nigeria
28.	Mindshare Communications	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
29.	Mike Okereke Consulting Ltd.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
30.	Nansolyvan PR	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
31.	Nadeem Media Consult	N/A	N/A	N/A	Kano, Nigeria
32.	NECCI Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
33.	Neo Media & Marketing	250–5m	5	2	Lagos, Nigeria

S/N	NAME OF AGENCY	BAND OF FEE INCOME	NO OF SERVICES OFFERED	AGE OF AGENCY	LOCATION
34.	Oyster St. lyke Ltd.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
35.	PFCAfrica Communications Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
36.	Prizeworth Consulting	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
37.	Publicis Consultants Soul-comm	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
38.	Red Gecko Ltd.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
39.	Red Media Africa	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
40.	Rytkeys Concepts Ltd.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
41.	Sesema PR	250-500	11	9	Lagos, Nigeria
42.	Silver Bullet Public Relations	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
43.	SY & T Communications	250-5m	8	6	Lagos, Nigeria
44.	Synthesis Communications	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
45.	Tanus Communications Ltd.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
46.	The Quadrant Company	5m-10m	5	10+	Lagos, Nigeria
47.	Timex Intermedia	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
48.	TPT International	2.5m-5m	17	11	Lagos, Nigeria
49.	Topcomm PR	2.5m-5m	5	3	Lagos, Nigeria
50.	TruContact Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
51.	Whitewater Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria
52.	Winning Concepts	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lagos, Nigeria

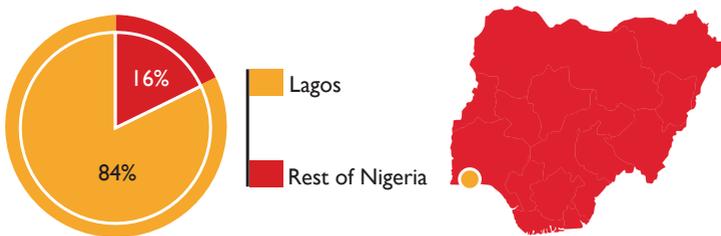
**Table 1** : Names of PR agencies,band of fee income, number of services offered, age of agency and location of agency

The analysis following this page explains other survey results.

## ANALYSIS

### INDUSTRY LOCATION

Over 80% of agencies and individuals that work in PR are based in Lagos. This is due to the centralization of the busiest firms in the rich former capital of the country, which serves as <sup>1</sup>Nigeria's financial, commercial and industrial cornerstone with over 2,000 manufacturing industries and over 200 financial institutions (banks, insurance companies etc) including the Nigeria Stock Exchange, the Central Bank of Nigeria (C.B.N) and the Security and Exchange Commission (S.E.C).



**Figure 1** : Distribution of PR Agencies in Nigeria

Lagos harbours 60% of the Nigeria's total industrial investments and foreign trade while also attracting 65% of Nigeria's commercial activities. It also accounts for more than 40% of all labour emoluments paid in the country.

(1) <http://www.lagosstate.gov.ng/pagelinks.php?p=10>

### STAFF STRENGTH AND AGE OF AGENCY

Respondents indicate that less than 30 staff service the average Nigerian PR firm, denoting that over 40% of PR agencies in Nigeria are run on a small scale.

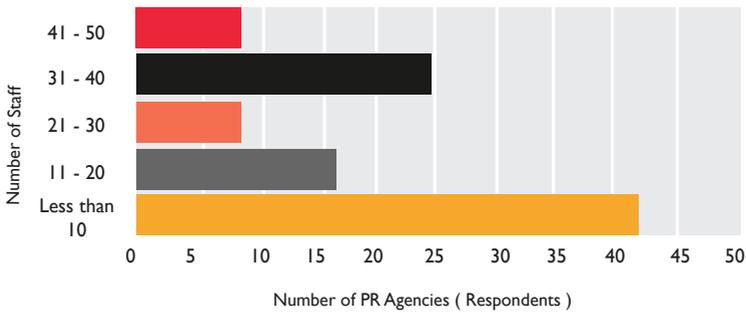


Figure 2 : Number of staff in Nigerian PR Agencies

Figure 3 notes that a greater number of PR agencies in Nigeria are less than 10 years old. This indicates that either the industry is a relatively young one, or older agencies have become extinct.

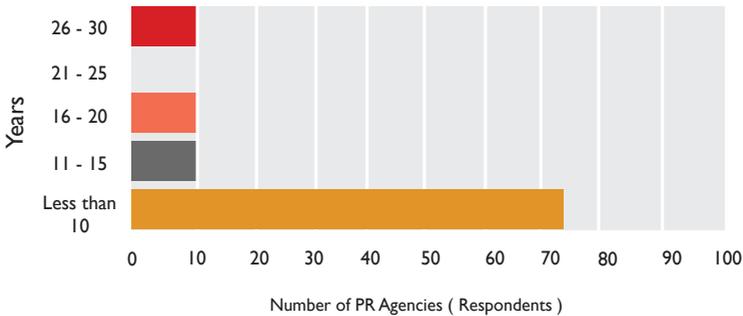


Figure 3 : Age of Nigerian PR Agencies

## REVENUE

A juxtaposition of 2014 and 2015 revenues indicates that 2015 was a profitable year for some PR agencies despite the wavering Nigerian economic situation. Firms with low-income revenue band moved to the mid-income revenue band.

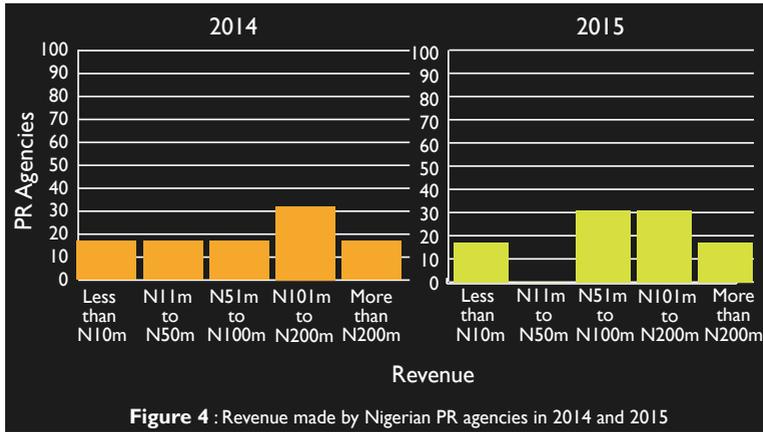
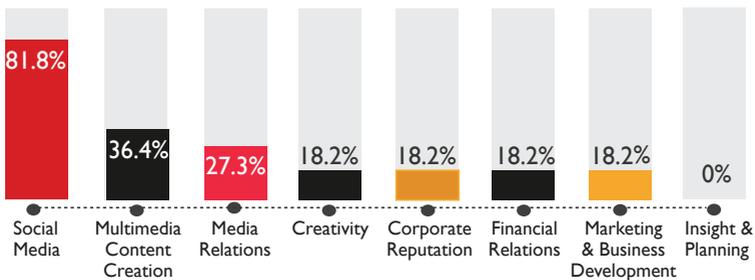
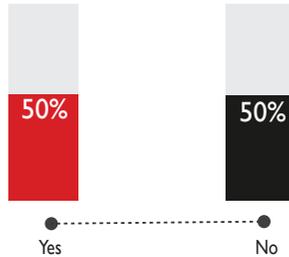


Figure 5 projects that if more agencies offer social media/community management and other digital and new media services, there will be an outstanding increase in 2016's revenue.



**Figure 5** :Areas in which PR agencies experienced growth in 2014

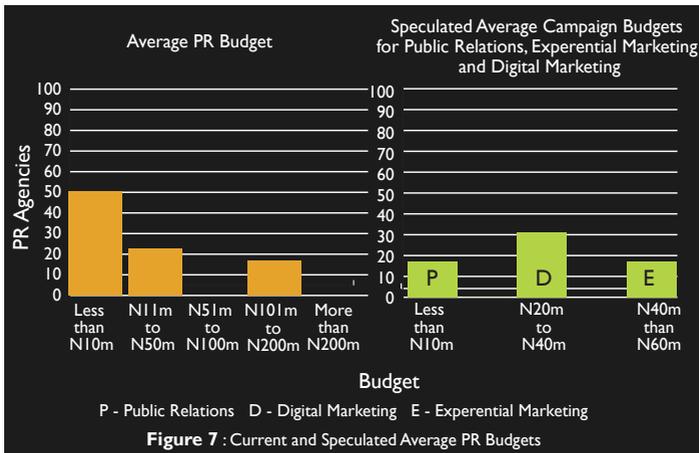
Figure 6 shows that 50% of agencies have sister agencies through which they generate additional income by exploring other areas of marketing communications or other industries.



**Figure 6 :** Answers by respondents when asked if they have sister agencies

### AVERAGE PR BUDGET

The average Nigerian PR budget for 2015 recorded (at less than 10 million Naira) is meagre comparative to digital and experiential marketing budgets at a speculated range of 20 to 40 million Naira and 40 to 60 million Naira respectively. It should be noted that the average PR budget includes mostly third party costs such as logistics, honoraria, photography, production, blogger fees, etc.



**Figure 7 :** Current and Speculated Average PR Budgets

## CLIENTS & CONTRACTS

Out of 140 clients serviced by 17 agencies, 83 were project-based while 57 were on retainers. This denotes that project-based contracts are more common, and as such one of the reasons most agencies cannot keep highly skilled staff on a full time basis.

Billing structure is also warped, seeing more companies pay commissions on overall budget, instead of professional fees.

Moreover, a greater number of agencies have less than 5 clients on retainer. Only a few can boast of 11 to 15 clients.

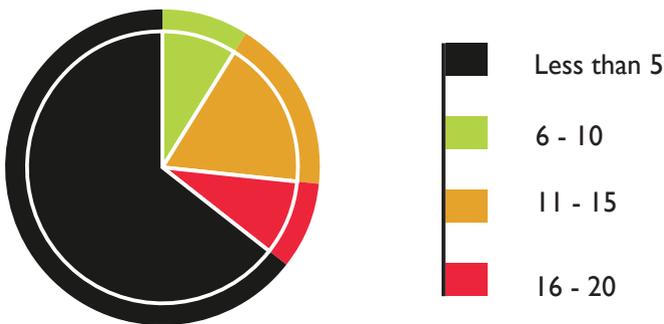


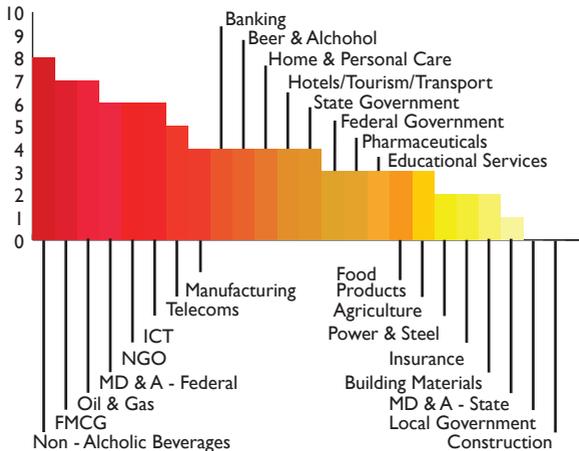
Figure 8 : Number of clients (Retainer and Project based)

NAME OF AGENCY	RETAINER	PROJECT
Mediacraft Associates	5	5
Image Consultants	2	4
Concrete Communications	6	9
BlackHouse Media	3	7
Metro Media	0	5
TPT International	10	12
Evolve Integrated	1	4
Leap Communications	0	6
TopComm PR	3	0
PR Redline	2	6
Blueflower Ltd	2	5
Anonymous	2	4
CMC Connect	4	5
Sesema PR	6	3
Caritas Communications	8	4
Neo Media & Marketing	0	1
SY & T Communications	3	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>83</b>

**Table 2 :** Names of PR Agencies and the type of clients they serve

### MOST TO LEAST SERVICED SECTORS IN PR

Non-alcoholic beverages take the lead with FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods) and Oil and Gas coming in at second and third positions respectively.



**Figure 9 :** Industry sectors serviced by Nigerian PR agencies

### SERVICES OFFERED

These are the 13 most common services offered by Nigerian PR agencies

1. Strategic Planning
2. Media and Research
3. Lobbying
4. Publicity
5. Government Relations
6. Events Management
7. Crisis Management
8. Digital Marketing
9. Production
10. Media Relations
11. Social Media Marketing
12. Community Relations
13. Corporate Communications

### MOST SOUGHT AFTER SERVICES IN 2014 AND 2015

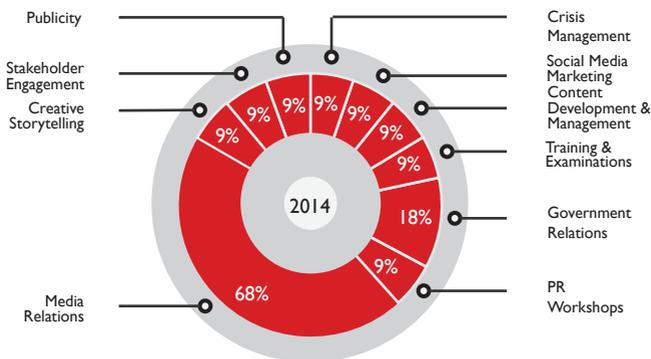


Figure 10 : Services carried out by PR agencies in 2014

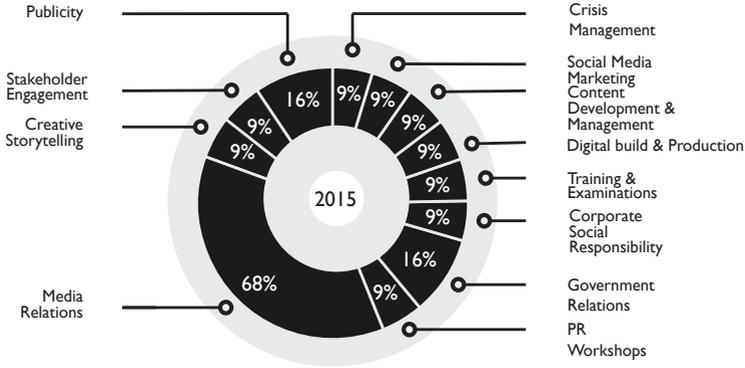


Figure 11 : Services carried out by PR agencies in 2015

### GROWTH & ATTITUDES

Perception of growth was on a 50:50 level with that of stagnancy (on a scale of 100) when agency principals were asked about the state of the PR industry in the past three years. While 33.33% of agency respondents declared growth, 66.67% claimed stagnancy when asked about increase in agency profitability in the past three years.

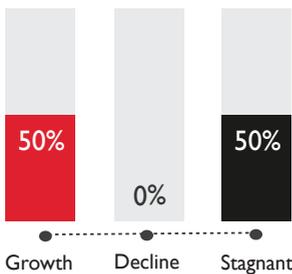


Figure 12 : Agency principals responses concerning the state of the PR industry in the past 3 years

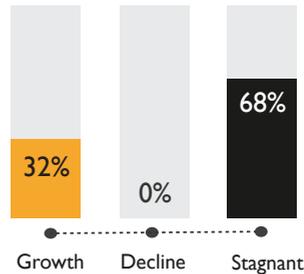
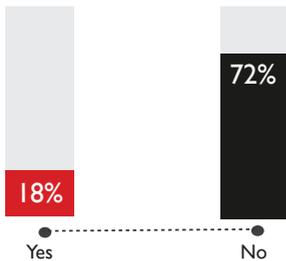
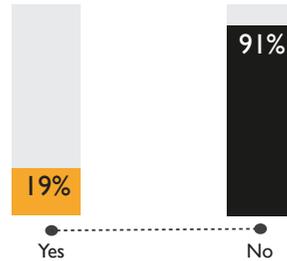


Figure 13 : Agency principals responses regarding an increase in profitability in the past 3 years

Agencies affirm that marketers are not spending more on PR relative to advertising and digital marketing. Consequently, agencies are not optimistic about the willingness of clients to turn to PR for non-traditional services, including advertising, digital and social media marketing amongst others.

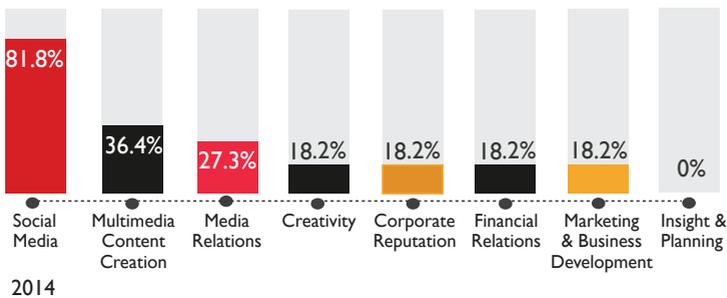


**Figure 14** : Survey responses when asked if their clients were willing to turn to PR for non-traditional services.

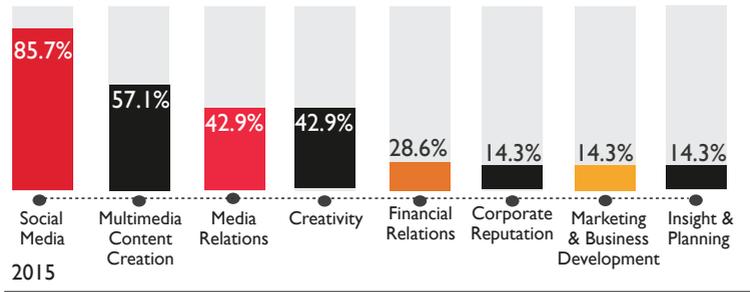


**Figure 15** : Survey responses when asked if marketers are spending more on PR compared to advertising and digital marketing.

When asked what areas of business witnessed the most growth in 2014, agency principals rated social media and community management the highest at 81.82%. The result for 2015 was similar to 2014's with social media and community management taking the first position with 85.71% and multimedia content creation in second place with 57.14%.

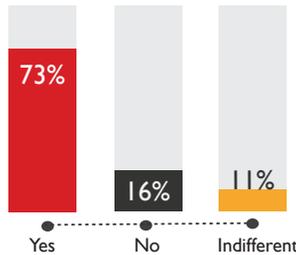


2014



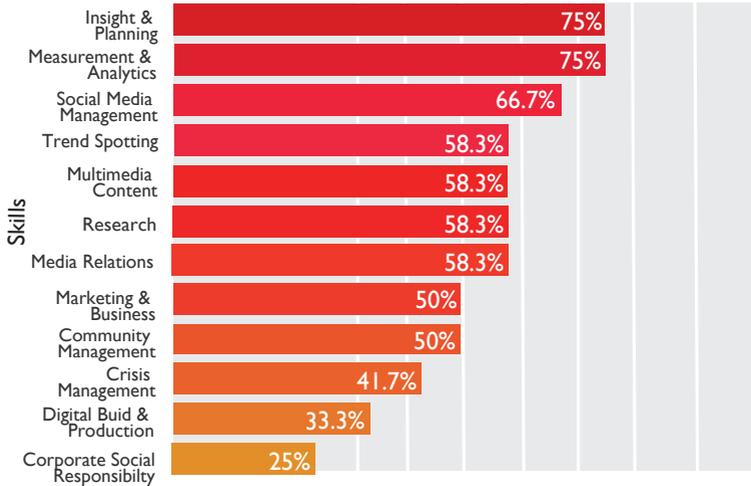
**Figure 16** :Areas in which PR agencies experienced growth in 2014 and 2015

75% of respondents claim corporate CEOs take their corporate reputation serious – denoting that PR agencies are implementing policies and actions that create positive impressions about their organizations and are also cultivating beneficial relationships with their publics.



**Figure 17** : Survey respondents replies when asked about their opinions about Nigerian PR CEOs.

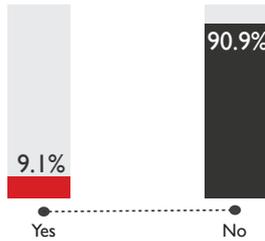
## SKILLS



**Figure 18** : Most relevant skills that PR executives need in coming years

However, 90.91% of the industry postulate that there is insufficient supply of capable, well-qualified talent in the Nigerian market for the following reasons:

- Long established belief that professions like medicine, law, banking are more important occupations
- Supposition that payment is higher in industries like banking, oil and gas, etc
- Low staff motivation and retention on account of staff remuneration
- Loss of highly skilled talent to client side and public service on account of better remuneration and structure.



**Figure 19** : Response of PR agencies when asked if they thought there was enough supply of talent in the Nigerian Market

**15 MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS NECESSARY FOR SUCCESS IN TODAY'S PR INDUSTRY (IN ORDER OF VOTES)**

1. Creative Thinking
2. Writing, Storytelling and Content Creation
3. Strategic Planning
4. Data Analysis and Research
5. Budgeting and Financial Planning
6. Behavioural Psychology and Sociology
7. Media Relations
8. People and Networking Skills
9. Community Relations and Influencer Marketing
10. Project Management
11. Social Media Marketing
12. Presentation, Pitching and Selling
13. Digital Advertising and SEO
14. Design, Graphics and Animation
15. Events Management

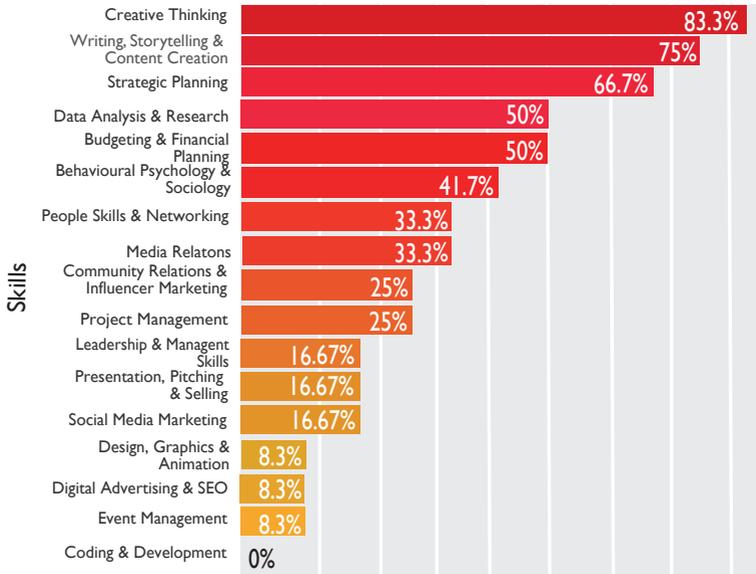


Figure 20 : Today's most critical PR skills

## CHALLENGES

In 2015 consultancy principals in Nigeria cited **staff retention** as the biggest challenge facing PR firms. Closely followed by Staff retention is **digital and new technologies**.

### TOP 10 CHALLENGES FACING THE NIGERIAN PR INDUSTRY

1. Staff retention
2. Digital and new technologies
3. Staff motivation
4. Competition from clients from other PR firms
5. Staff recruitment
6. Financial Pressure to meet profit/margin targets
7. Lack of client understanding of PR
8. General economic challenges

9. Clients unwilling to commit sufficient funds  
 10. Clients too focused on short-term goals

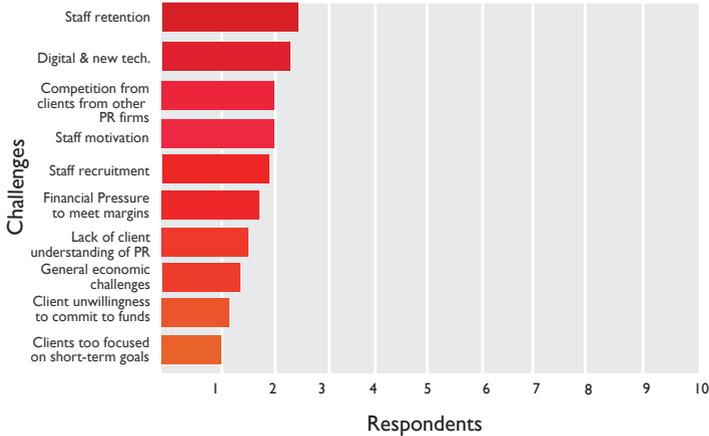


Figure 21 : Respondents indicate how challenging specific areas in the PR industry are

**OPPORTUNITIES**

In <sup>1</sup>January 2013, Euromonitor International posited that Nigeria (with Indonesia) was one of the strongest new emerging markets of the world showing the strongest real GDP growth between 2008 and 2013, averaging 6%, followed closely by the Philippines (5%).

Public relations in this market has shown potentials of becoming a multi-billion Naira industry with its revenue growth between 2014 and 2015 and continued provision of services such as social media management, government relations and digital/new media related services.

The Internet, which creates avenues for increased knowledge sharing, will ultimately serve as one of the most important means of educating the Nigerian public about the PR profession rather than physical educational institutions.

(1) <http://www.euromonitor.com/new-emerging-markets-nigeria-indonesia-mexico-the-philippines-and-turkey/report>

Also, there is opportunity for foreign direct investment (FDI) taking into consideration international recognition from global agencies. Most of the experts surveyed for a 2015 survey noted there will have to be mergers and acquisitions to ensure agencies can have muscle, stand the test of time, and capture opportunities in Nigeria and the rest of Africa.

Finally, creativity and knowledge of evolving and new technologies will ultimately attract more business and increase industry reputation (see Figure 15).

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE NIGERIAN PR INDUSTRY**

- More trainings, programmes, seminars, workshops should be organized for agency principals and executives on a regular basis
- Implementation of policies and carrying out actions to improve industry image
- Encourage partnerships and affiliations to create exposure, global opportunities and encourage best practices
- More efforts should be put into industry regulation
- Information about the industry should be made public and shared with members often
- PRCAN and NIPR need to partner with the likes of CIPR and CIPD in building learning and knowledge platforms
- The gap between theory and practice needs to be closed, through industry and academic collaboration
- Create and adopt measurement and evaluation models for clients' investment
- Provide standard fee template
- Carry out frequent research, encourage data gathering methods to help with understanding different publics

(1) <http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/m-as-and-the-growth-of-marketing/229676/>

## REGULATORY BODIES

### PUBLIC RELATIONS CONSULTANTS' ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA

The Public Relations Consultants Association of Nigeria is a trade sectoral group for the public relations industry in Nigeria. Public Relations Consultants Association of Nigeria (PRCAN) was founded in 1984. Public Relations Consultants Association of Nigeria aggregates and articulates the interest of member firms. PRCAN works to uphold best practice in public relations in Nigeria in the areas of standards, conduct as well as economic well being for the public relations industry generally and public relations consulting in particular for the benefit of all stakeholders.

#### Enabling Law

PRCAN's Enabling Law Public Relations Consultants Association of Nigeria draws legal backing primarily from Bye Law Number 3 1993 of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations Act 16, 1990, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria. The Corporate Affairs Commission incorporated PRCAN Limited by Guarantee as a "private company" with legal personality on May 24, 2007. The primary objective of PRCAN is the promotion of professional reputation management in Nigeria within the public and private sectors. Other aims and objectives include to

- Promote the practice of professional public relations consultancy in Nigeria;
- Support, educate, promote, encourage and assist Nigerian professional public relations consultants;
- Promote public relations ethics and professionalism amongst Nigerian professional public relations consultants;
- Award monetary grants, facilities, support and assistance to

Nigerian professional public relations consultants;

- Provide institutional, intellectual and other productive support to professional public relations consultants within Nigeria, and to establish a pool of financial and material resources, which will be made available to public relations consultants in Nigeria;
- Admit eligible public relations consultants/practitioners into the Association;
- Instill and continuously maintain a high level of professional discipline and standard amongst the members of the Association through the implementation of the provisions of the Code of Professional Conduct prepared and maintained by the Association for its members;
- Hold seminars, lectures and conferences on substantive issues relating to professional public relations consultancy in Nigeria in order to enhance public relations and appreciation of the role of professional public relations consultants in promoting an open and civil society;
- Keep and maintain a Register of public relations consultants; and
- Act as the spokesperson of public relations consultants in Nigeria and to generally cater to the welfare of public relations consultants in Nigeria.

Exclusion from practice by virtue of its enabling law, membership of PRCAN is a legal requirement for firms wishing to offer public relations services in Nigeria. It is illegal for companies and organizations not registered with PRCAN to offer public relations services in Nigeria, and for clients to offer briefs to them.

### Code of Consultancy Practice

A member firm has a general duty of fair dealing towards its clients, past and present, fellow members and the public.

In this respect, a member firm shall:

- Be free to represent its capabilities and services to any potential client, either on its own initiative or at the behest of the client, provided in so doing it does not seek to persuade the client to break any existing contract or detract from the service of same.
- Cause all its clients to be listed in the Annual Register of PRCAN. Cause all its Directors, Executives and Retained Consultants who hold Public Office, as members of National and State Assemblies, and members of Local Government or any statutory organization or body, to be recorded in the relevant sections of the Annual Register of PRCAN.
- Not engage in any practice, which tends to corrupt the integrity of channels of public communication or legislation.
- Not propose to clients any action that would constitute an improper influence on organs of government or legislation.
- Not intentionally disseminate false or misleading information, and is under obligation to use reasonable care to avoid dissemination of false or misleading information.
- Only represent competing interests with the consent of all those concerned.
- Inform a client of any shareholding or financial interest held by that firm in any company, firm or person whose services it recommends.
- Negotiate, propose or agree terms with client based on the resources that can reasonably be expected to apply. Be free to accept fees, commissions or other valuable considerations from persons other than a client, in connection with services

for that client, provided such considerations is disclosed to the client.

- Not support to serve some announced cause while actually serving an undisclosed special or private interest. Not offer to give or cause a client to offer or give any inducement to such persons as described in Article 4 above who are not Directors, Executives or Retained Consultants with intent to further the interests of the member or of the client if such action is inconsistent with the public interest.
- Not engage in any practice and not to be seen to conduct itself in any manner detrimental to the interest of Public Relations Consultancy.
- Safeguard the confidence of both present and former clients and shall not disclose or use these confidences to the disadvantages or prejudice of such clients or the financial advantage of the member firm.

#### Criteria for admitting new members

##### 1. Head of agency must have

- First Degree or equivalent
- NIPR membership
- 5 years experience

##### 2. Agency to have

- 5 Employees minimum
- 3 functional departments minimum (Media, Client Service and Corporate services)
- Heads of the departments must have first degrees or equivalent, and NIPR membership

### Application Process

- Executive Secretary acknowledges each application
- Membership Committee sits to screen/evaluate applications
- Schedule and visit the agency for inspection/assessment
- Reports/recommendations to the Executive Committee
- EXCO makes final decision
- EXCO communicates decision to the Applicant
- Formal Inauguration

## NIGERIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS (NIPR)

Established in 1963, Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) the professional body of qualified Public Relations Practitioners, attained charter status in 1990 with Decree 16 (now Act of the Federal Republic of Nigeria).

The law mandates NIPR to regulate the practice and direct the development of Public Relations as a profession in Nigeria. The law also makes it illegal to practice Public Relations, under any title, in Nigeria without NIPR certification.

### Objectives

- To promote and develop the art and science of Public Relations practice in Nigeria.
- To establish, prescribe and ensure the observance of high standards of professional and ethical practice.
- To provide facilities, advice and opportunities for executives to meet and discuss Public Relations problems and case studies, and thereby improve the standards of Public Relations practice in Nigeria.
- To encourage the acquisition of professional qualifications in Public Relations through the provision of examinations and other facilities.
- Build a credible and dynamic professional institution that is responsive to Nigeria's needs.
- To conduct research, collect and disseminate information on all aspects of Public Relations.
- To publish journals, books, practice papers and guidelines.
- Promote professional excellence through members upholding the Code of Ethic, Code of Conduct and through the Professional Standards Guide (PSG). The PSG entrenches a

system of life long learning as well as gaining stakeholders' commitment to high standard of PR practice to give more value and strategic to those the professional serves.

- Encourage a more relevant institutes and more reputation sensitive society, by working with appropriate associations to generate sustained focus on the contributions of stakeholders in different sectors.

### Nipr Code of Ethics

Nigerian Institute of Public Relations Public Relations Practitioners Decree No. 16 of 1990 empowers the Council of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations to determine what standards of knowledge and skills are to be attained by Public Relations practitioners. For high standards of practice. The Institute must from time to time update its Code of Professional Conduct. The decree empowers the Council to make bylaws and other rules not inconsistent with this decree as to acts which constitute professional misconduct.

In pursuance of the provision of the decree, the Council of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations hereby makes the following Bye Laws to be known as “The Nigerian Institute of Public Relations Code of Professional Conduct Bye-laws No. 1 of 1992.

### Membership Criteria

Qualifications for membership of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations are periodically reviewed to meet the requirements by the public and the organized private sector (industry and commerce).

In 1998, a decision was reached that all entrants must hold any of the following qualifications:

- The Institute's Professional Certificate and Diploma in Public Relations
- CAM Foundation Certificate and Diploma in Communications Studies and Public Relations
- British Institute of Public Relations Membership Diploma
- Business Education Examinations Council (BEEC) Professional Certificate and Diploma in Public Relations
- B.A., B.Sc., HND, MA. Msc., or Ph.D in Public Relations; B.Sc., B.A. (Mass Communications), MBA with major / specialization in PR; or any recognized equivalent qualification.

## DIRECTORY OF PR AGENCIES IN NIGERIA

Almost all respondents belong to the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR).

There are 52 registered PR firms under the Public Relations' Association of Nigeria (PRCAN).

Respondents belong to other national and international bodies such as the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), Public Relations Consultants Association (PRCA), Association of Public Relation Agencies (APRA), Advertising Practitioners' Council of Nigeria (APCON), Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM), and Institute of Directors (IOD).

### **Absolute PR Limited**

Contact: Akonte Ekine  
Akonte.ekine@absoluteprnig.com  
www.absolutepr.ng

### **As+ A Communications**

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As\_communications@yahoo.com

### **BD Consult Limited**

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www.bdconsultonline.com

### **Bifocal Communications**

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modris11@yahoo.com, the-marketing@yahoo.com

### **BlackHouse Media Group**

Contact: Ayeni Adekunle Samuel  
ayeni@bhmng.com  
www.bhmng.com

### **Blueflower Limited**

Contact: Chido B. Nwakanma  
chidonwakanma@blueflowerafrica.com  
www.blueflowerafrica.com

### **Brooks and Blake Ltd**

Contact: Sola Fijabi / Taiwo olujimi  
sfijabi@brooksandblake.com  
www.brooksandblake.com

### **Caritas Communications**

Contact: Adedayo Ojo  
ceo@caritaspr.com  
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**C & F Porter Novelli**

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nnemeka.m@candf.com.ng  
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**CMC Connect Ltd**

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**Concrete Communications**

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**Evolve Integrated Services**

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evolvenigeria.com

**FCB Redline (PR Redline)**

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www.prredline.com

**Hally Sports Int. Ltd**

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win@hallysports.com

**Hi-Tek Productions**

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chaguf@yahoo.com , htp@  
htpng.com  
www.htpng.com

**Image Consultants Ltd**

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voyo@imageconsultantsnigeria.com  
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**Imagelink Communications**

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oyster3000@gmail.com

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**Publicis Consultants Soulcomm**

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**Red Media Africa**

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**Silver Bullet Public Relations**  
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www.topcommng.com

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**Whitewater Limited**  
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**Winning Concepts PR**  
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www.winningconceptsng.com

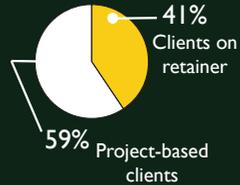
# NIGERIA'S PR REPORT 2015

## INDUSTRY LOCATION



About 80% of PR agencies are located in Lagos

## CONTRACT TYPE



## STAFF STRENGTH & AGE OF AGENCY

**52**

PR agencies are registered with PRCAN



Less than **30**

No of staff in the average PR firm

**80%**

of agencies are less than 10 years

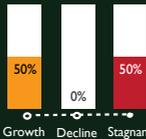


Staff retention is the 1st challenge facing the industry

## GROWTH & ATTITUDES



Social Media & Community Management is the area in PR that grew the most in 2015



50% of people in PR believe the industry is growing

## REVENUE



2015 was a very profitable year for PR agencies



Half of PR Agencies have sister agencies for extra income

Average PR Budget is less than

**₦10m**

## TOP 5 SERVICED SECTORS IN PR



**1ST**

Non-alcoholic beverages



**2ND**

FMCG



**3RD**

Oil & Gas

**4TH**

MD & A - Federal

**5TH**

NGO

**91%**

think the PR Industry needs more talent



## **ABOUT BHM RESEARCH AND INTELLIGENCE**

BRI is an independent intelligence team working from Nigeria, Germany and England, to gather and analyze data for brands and organizations in public relations, advertising, ICT and Media.

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