



## **PR Growth Hacking: Creating Buzz for Your Startup**

Presented by: Kathleen Reid, Founder, Switchboard  
Public Relations

# About Me

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- Currently the Managing Director and Founder of Switchboard Public Relations
- Previous work experience: Vision Critical, Cityfone, NATIONAL Public Relations and Teck
- Worked with and for companies in all stages of growth (startup, scaleup and large multinationals)
- Here to share my experiences and give back to the tech ecosystem



# About Switchboard

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We're here to create positive change in our communities and the world. That's why we choose to work with innovators and changemakers – organizations that are on a mission to disrupt the status quo, to challenge the way we do everyday things. To make life better. Our clients' unwillingness to stop pushing is what energizes us, day in and day out. And energetic we are – no matter how big the challenge, how heavy the load, we get sh\*t done.



**@switchboard\_pr**



## About Switchboard

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- Earned and sponsored media
- Business development
- Areas of focus:
  - Issues management
  - Technology & Innovation
  - Media relations
  - Content creation

# Agenda

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- Presentation (30 minutes)
  - Objective
  - What is growth hacking?
  - What is PR?
  - Strategies
  - Takeaways & resources
- On-the-spot media training (15 minutes)
- Q&A (15 minutes)



# What is your objective?

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- Take a moment to write down why you are here and what you want to get out of this session



## Our objective...

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Leave you with (*at least*) one tool you can use to...

**1**

**Ensure your  
communications  
efforts count.**

**2**

**Get your messages in  
front of the right  
audience.**

**3**

**Have the tools to  
create buzz and  
troubleshoot along  
the way.**

# Growth Hacking

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- A process of rapid experimenting identifying the most efficient ways to grow.
- Experimentation happens across:
  - the marketing funnel
  - product development
  - sales segments
  - and other areas of the business





# What is public relations?

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The strategic management of relationships between an organization and its diverse publics, through the use of communication, to achieve mutual understanding, realize organizational goals, and serve the public interest

- **Canadian Public Relations Society**

One of the most important things to have during the startup and growth phase

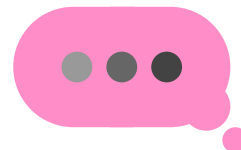
- **Kathleen Reid**

# What is public relations?

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Something that usually only gets attention once it's too late.

- *Most startups*



- Kathleen Reid

# Why you're here: startup stages

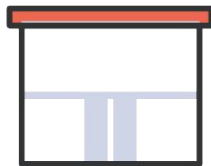
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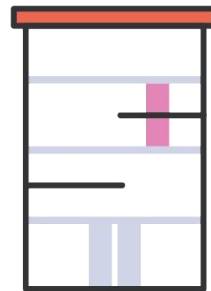
**Idea  
stage**



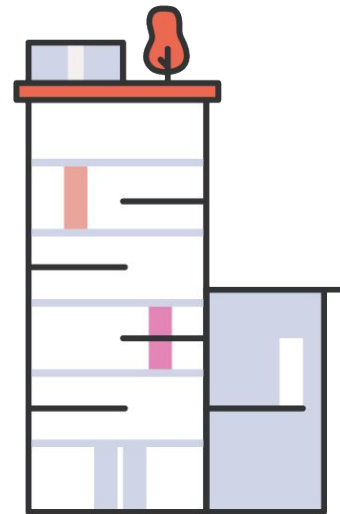
**Friends &  
family**



**Seed  
round**



**Series A  
funding**



**Beyond**

# Strategies



Strategy one:

# **Communications Plan**

# 1. Communications plan: the basics

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- 1** **Goals** (and tools to measure them)  
Communications goals → Business goals
- 2** **Target audience**  
Who you need to reach to actualize your goals
- 3** **Key messaging** (test these)  
What you need to communicate to your audience

# 1. Communications plan: the basics

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4

## **Strategy & tactics**

The plan for achieving the goals and KPIs

5

## **Timeline**

If you don't plan it out, it won't happen

6

## **Considerations & challenges**

What are the obstacles that could stand in your way?

Strategy two:

# **Media Relations**



## 2. Media relations

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- Which reporters are writing in your space?
- Follow them on social media and engage with their content (don't bug them)
- Know when you have a story, and when you don't
- Don't confuse a real story with a request for free advertising
- Designate and train a spokesperson
- Develop protocol for media requests
- Remember, you can say you don't know

Strategy three:

# **Be PR Ready**

### 3. Be PR Ready

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1

#### **Media Contact**

Have a main point of contact to deal with all media inquiries.

2

#### **Media Kit**

A simple pre-packaged kit of information about your company for members of the media.

3

#### **Media Page**

Add an easily navigable media page on your website.

Strategy four:

# **Media Training**

## 4. Media training

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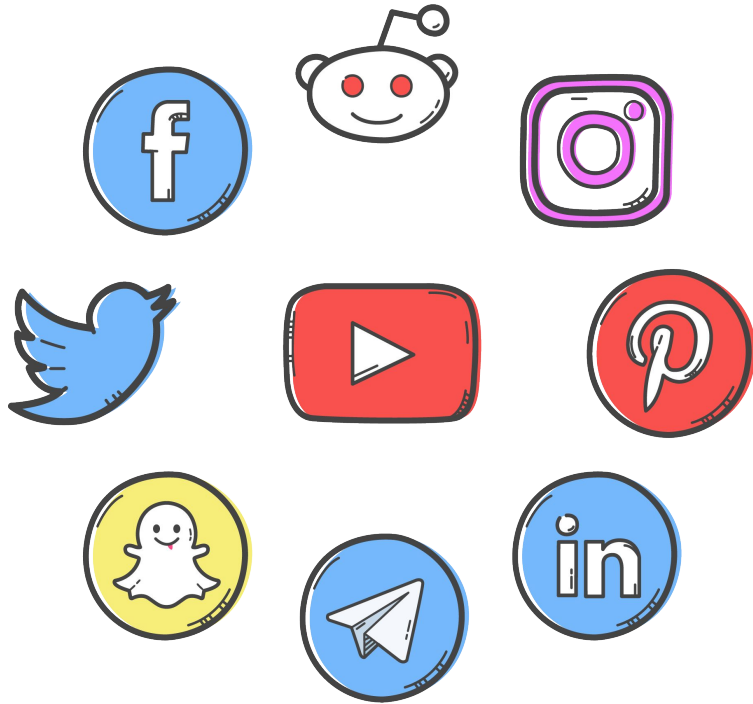
- Does not always have to be the highest executive member of your company.
- Designate a spokesperson.
- Develop consistent messaging, Q&A documents.
- Outsourcing a PR company for media training.
- PRACTICE!
- Do your research. Define your audience.  
Understand your media sources.

Strategy five:

# **Social Media**

## 5. Social Media

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- Define your objective and strategize accordingly.
- Rule of thirds.
- Lead generation - initiate consumer interest
- Media relations
- Always stay on brand. Consistency.
  - Pictures.
  - Messaging.
  - Posts.
- Choose the right platform for your audience.
- Don't over promote.
- Provide meaningful content and create value.

# Takeaways

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1. **Communications Plan:** always have one (remember it's fluid)
2. **Media Relations:** stories, not ads; build relationships
3. **Be PR Ready:** media kit, media contact, media page
4. **Media Training:** designate a spokesperson, hire a PR professional, practice, and know your media sources
5. **Social Media:** define your objective, strategize, be consistent

## Resources:

Communications plan template: [bit.ly/CommPlanTemplate](https://bit.ly/CommPlanTemplate)

Media relations infographic: [bit.ly/MediaInfographic](https://bit.ly/MediaInfographic)

Public relations checklist for startups: [bit.ly/PRStartupChecklist](https://bit.ly/PRStartupChecklist)





# Exercise (15 minutes)

On-the-spot media training

# Questions?



# Switchboard

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