

Short-term rental technology: The power of strategic PR

How to develop a winning public relations and thought leadership strategy to enhance your brand and influence the market.





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Chapter 1: Five signs your short-term rental tech start-up needs public relations

You've been through the start-up phase, hit your initial funding goals, hired a great team, and developed a groundbreaking short-term rental tech solution. You're on your way to greatness! But your marketing team is saying it's time to supercharge your current growth phase with the help of public relations. As the founder and CEO, you aren't so sure. You've had lousy PR experiences in the past. It's hard to measure the results of PR. What are the KPIs? You hate the idea of self-promotion and thought leadership.

So, how do you know when the time is right to engage a PR strategy beyond a few LinkedIn posts? To get you started, here are 5 common signs that your short-term rental tech business needs to add PR to its marketing arsenal:

01

Nobody understands what our tech business does

It's not easy crafting that elevator pitch — yet it is essential. It's your message to your market and your potential customers. Many businesses in the short-term rental sector have been operating for some time and still can't clearly define what their platform does for property managers or what pain points they solve for hosts.

02

We want to scale but we can't reach the next level

This is a frequent problem in any business. You are transitioning from being a start-up to a serious company with funding. You have ambitious growth plans based on investor belief in your fantastic tech platform but are struggling to scale.

Growing a business is hard. A seasoned PR agency knows all about this and will have helped a whole

host of companies like yours make the leap to the next level through strategic counsel, first-class media relations, and targeted reputation-building tactics.

From this solid base comes growth in the form of sales conversations driven by higher website traffic and conversations with potential customers, as well as interest from investors.

03

We need to make the right connections in the industry

One of the top reasons for hiring a specialist agency, one with a carved-out niche, is the existing relationships it will have built up over time.

PR is not just about getting great media hits. It also involves supporting clients in winning speaking opportunities at high-ranking trade shows or a guest column in a sector-specific publication which leads to good conversations with strategic partners.

Making the right connections in the short-term rental industry can be invaluable. It's a part of PR that is hard to measure but crucial to the reputation building process.

04

We have a specific business goal to achieve

Perhaps your tech business or enterprise property management company has a specific aim to achieve over the next year. It could be a funding goal, a potential sale, or a desire to build up the **thought leadership** of your CEO.

Clear goals mean clear KPIs. The right PR partner will work with you to develop a PR strategy that implements tactics to achieve your business goals.

05

We need strategic counsel and strategic communication

PR involves an element of strategic counsel. When you decide to bring on board an agency, you let that agency into your business. You reveal your

business's secrets and goals – it's a close relationship. The agency gets to know you well and, ideally, has a direct relationship with the C-Suite.

A good PR strategy will guide a company and suggest strategic methods of communication to achieve your specific aims. A PR strategy is your roadmap to success, which many companies lack when they try to 'do' PR themselves. DIY PR works to a certain extent, but it won't get you to the next level or offer the strategic overview a professional PR agency provides.

There are many other reasons to deploy a PR strategy, but these five are some of the most common challenges that tech companies look to PR to help them solve.



Chapter 2: The difference between a PR strategy, PR plan, + SMART objectives

A robust, forward-thinking B2B PR strategy goes way beyond sending out a few standard press releases. Instead, if you want to grow the reputation of your short-term rental tech business, you will need a laser-sharp PR strategy.

Strategy vs Campaign

The terms 'PR strategy' and 'PR campaign' are closely linked and often used interchangeably. However, they have very different meanings.

So what's the difference between a strategy and a campaign in PR? When your PR agency says they have masterminded a plan for your tech brand, what does that actually mean?

By definition, a PR strategy is a high-level, long-term plan – think of it as your road map. Your strategy is the where and why of the destination you are heading for. Helping your strategy to succeed are your PR campaigns and tactical actions. To design a PR strategy with the best chance of success, you need to lay the groundwork first – it's all in the research and planning stages.

Before you do anything else, you need objectives. These will differ depending on the type of tech your company is providing and the markets it is targeting. Each business will have individual requirements, from access tech to property management or AI tech.

However, the best objectives are always SMART goals: specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and anchored within a time frame.

SMART objectives get results

At Abode Worldwide, we always agree on an overall strategy with our clients at the outset of our partnership, and then set clearly defined objectives. This ensures that our work is both targeted and measurable.

An example of a PR objective might be: to position a CEO as a thought leader with authority and influence in the short-term rental technology sector within 12 months.

To outline objectives, you first need to assess the business in its current state. If you don't know where you're starting from, you can't work out where you want to go. It's important to understand the business's target audience: its customers and potential customers. You can also gain context by conducting a SWOT analysis.

Most great PR strategies have one primary objective and a couple of secondary objectives. These keep everyone focused. You can then develop your messaging and agree on the story you want to tell about your tech business and how you are going to tell it.

A PR strategy is crucial to generating leads, building reputation, and attracting customers. It's a defined plan which helps your business optimize its success in the media. So, yes, strategy is vitally important in the competitive short-term rental space, because, 'If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time' (Zig Ziglar).



Chapter 3: Stronger together: How public relations and content work hand in hand

A targeted **public relations strategy** elevates your company's reputation, taking it to the next level. In contrast, an expert-led **content creation plan** educates your potential customers and drives them further down the sales funnel. Both have the power to differentiate your company from its short-term rental sector competitors. And, both are essential parts of your marketing toolbox.

4 reasons why public relations and content creation are better together

01

They both build reputations

Public relations and content creation are best friends – especially at an agency like Abode Worldwide where the **two teams** work collaboratively. Despite their clear differences, public relations and content creation share the same goal: to spread awareness of a brand's key message. Where public relations achieves this through media coverage and credibility building with our **Rise program**, content creation delivers in-depth answers to property manager questions or longer-form industry content to showcase sector expertise with our **Shine program**.

Executed well, owned content on your company's website can amplify messages being seeded in thought leadership articles or campaigns by the public relations team. It's subtle. But, mighty powerful as a combination.

02

They amplify each other

Public relations has the strength to raise the profile of lodging tech pioneers, and content can make this increased brand awareness shine through expert hospitality technology and proptech knowledge. Amplification is hugely valuable to short-term rental tech companies in building their reputations in their vertical.

For example, a public relations campaign might secure a speaking opportunity at an industry conference, a podcast slot, and a thought leadership article in an industry publication for your CEO – all effective platforms from which to articulate and reiterate your messaging to customers and the wider sector. Meanwhile, content can be created to support this campaign and amplify its reach – we call this the ripple effect. Blogs on your website, a gated whitepaper delivering supporting data, and a company newsletter can all boost the simultaneous public relations work. That's teamwork.

03

They create a consistent brand message

Both strategies are driving home the same message; your short-term rental tech brand is a leader in the sector. This creates a consistent, unified, and strong brand for your customers, allowing for trust to be built between them and your business.

04

They reach further and higher

How we decide to absorb information is different for everybody. Some listen to a podcast during their morning commute. Others scan the news over coffee. And, then there are those who wish to dive deeper, to understand their options before investing fully. These people are looking for long-form content, such as whitepapers or reports. Combining public relations and content enables tech companies to widen their reach and satisfy everybody looking to learn more about your brand, your solution, and your company – from the C-suite to investors, from potential customers to potential employees.



Switch your mindset from thinking public relations and content creation are mutually exclusive. If you want to supercharge your company's progress, harness both services so they can work together effectively – find out how we do it at Abode Worldwide.

Contact us →

Chapter 4: Social media for business – is your STR tech platform using TikTok yet?

Social media plays a vital role in **B2B public relations**. It can increase the visibility of your short-term rental technology business's core brand message and expand your market reach. Of course, you know all of this. You're probably already on LinkedIn, Twitter, and maybe even Instagram. But, it may come as a surprise when we tell you that the trendy app TikTok can also be hugely beneficial for **raising the profile of your hospitality tech business**.

We're increasingly seeing short-term rental tech brands using this platform to gain greater influence and build a community.

Short-term rental brands flourishing on TikTok

Big names in the travel industry, like Marriott's loyalty program Bonvoy and Expedia Group-owned Hotwire, have launched campaigns using hashtags to gain global engagement through the social media app. **Booking.com** launched its first TikTok campaign in 2022. Back in 2021, American Airlines even began allowing passengers to access TikTok for half an hour during their flight without having to purchase WiFi.

Short-term rental tech brands using the platform

- Guest experience-focused, short-term rental tech company, **Enso Connect**.
- **Marcus Rader**, Founder & CEO of PMS and channel management company, **Hostaway**.
- Property management software company, **Guesty**.

Not sure if the platform is right for what you do? The perception may be that **TikTok** is for a younger audience, but that's not entirely true. What if we told you that the social media app records over **one billion active users per month**? Just having a presence on the app could raise awareness of your short-term rental business, not to mention the potential for appealing to, informing, and converting customers. Have we now got your interest? Let's find out more...

Five ways TikTok can boost your business

We work in the hospitality and lodging technology world, which is innovative and ahead of the curve. So, your short-term rental tech brand should be too. Below are 5 reasons why you could start using TikTok for business:

01

Increases visibility and expands your market reach

Did you know that TikTok's audience spans way beyond the younger demographic? Only a quarter of its users are aged between 10 and 19 years old. The majority, **64%**, are **20 to 49 years old**. There are also users over the age of 50 using the app.

A social media platform with access to every generation or market type is a goldmine for businesses looking to appeal to more customers, widen their reach, and attract new demographics. It's the perfect place to grow your hospitality tech business's brand awareness.

02

Offers a space for free marketing

The bonus of using social media for marketing your business, is that it allows the reuse of repurposed content (which, since it's already written/recorded, is basically free). You don't need to spend your time or money creating something new to reap the benefits of social media marketing.

Posting regularly across your platforms keeps your business in front of your audience – so, repost those blogs, articles, bylines, **podcasts**, and everything else you have in your back pocket ready to promote your short-term rental tech business.

03

Educates your audience

Conversions can be lost when your customers don't fully understand what your business offers. So, make this information easily accessible. Take advantage of short-form content and create snappy (yet memorable) educational videos, showing your market what you do and how you can solve its pain points.

Emotion has the potential to influence buying decisions, and with a platform that enables a little more creative license, you may be able to make a lasting impression. This is especially true for **B2B marketing**, as factors including aligned values, excitement, and trust can influence buyer behavior.

04

Connects with influencers

You may be thinking, "I'm a hospitality tech brand, not a make-up company", but the power of making connections with influencers is still very important for brand awareness. Especially when there are influencers for everything now. **short-term rental reviewers? Influencers. Airbnb educators? Influencers. Travel experts? Influencers.**

As a business professional, you understand that who you know is important. Connections have the potential to bring about otherwise unreachable opportunities for yourself and your brand. And, when it comes to influencers, who often have thousands, if not millions, of followers watching and copying their buying habits, connections have the power to boost sales.

05

Creates a community around your brand

The internet, and more specifically, social media platforms, has the power to bring people together. With a designated space where your business can

speak directly to your market, you'll be able to create a community for your brand. Communities such as these can help consumers feel more connected to a business, building that all-important trust between brand and customer. It provides a place where they can engage with your company, ask questions, and gain insider insight; therefore, they'll feel better connected to who you are and what you do.

Opportunity to trend worldwide

Due to the nature of the social media platform and how videos are shared – when creating content for TikTok, with the right video, your brand and what your business offers have the potential to become a worldwide trend. And, as we know, publicity encourages even more publicity, including press coverage – who wouldn't want that?

There's a place for your **short-term rental** tech business on TikTok. Harness the platform's global and multi-generational reach, and the creative freedom of short video content, to build your market, trust, and excitement for your brand, product, or service.



Chapter 5: Five ways to build your thought leadership

A thought leader is someone who has earned consumer trust and authority in a sector with their experience, expertise, and vast accomplishments in their niche. Thought leadership taps into the talent and knowledge of the people inside an organization. It is closely linked to how a tech company can successfully build its reputation in the short-term rental industry in order to reach its business goals.

Why thought leadership is so important

The founder and CEO of *Abode Worldwide*, Jessica Gillingham, explains, “As competition increases and businesses find it more challenging to gain traction in a crowded marketplace, developing a ‘thought leadership’ strategy supports tech companies to both differentiate themselves from their competitors as well as provide valuable insight to their customers.”

Thought leadership can be at a brand level. Often demonstrated through brilliant content, expert-led whitepapers, research reports, and at trade conferences, but also at a leadership level. What opinions, insight, and direction can the founders or the C-suite bring to the table that can be translated into valuable collateral to leverage a business’s influence, trust, and authority?

Let’s take a closer look at those strategies:

Five key elements for building a successful thought leader

01

Giving an expert opinion

Since Bill Gates pointed out in 1996 that “content is king”, it continues to ring true. And, digital channels are increasingly gaining more and more influence over our daily lives. This is why a consistent presence in the media, through quality and well-articulated informational thought leadership, helps clients position themselves as valuable resources.

Using *Abode Worldwide*’s in-depth expertise and connections with top news publications in the short-term rental industry, we support our clients

in becoming the go-to experts in their niche sector. Our skilled PR team secures opportunities for clients to show an understanding of *industry trends* and issues impacting their target audiences through a range of media outlets. These methods include pitching targeted opinion articles, announcements (of new products or partnerships), newsjacking, and suggesting expert comments on wider industry trends. This provides a platform for our clients to stand out from competitors and gain credibility with up-to-date knowledge and data.

It’s vital all content is consistent to retain the trust built alongside a thought leader’s audience. Editorial planners are a great tool to help keep on top of this.

02

Speaking opportunities

To reach the goal of being known as a thought leader, speaking opportunities are an obvious stepping stone. Appearing on a conference panel, online webinar, industry, or roundtable conference discussion is a prime opportunity to communicate with your target audience directly, human to human.

A third-party validation confirms the speaker has a valuable and expert point of view to bring to an industry-wide discussion. This may be their innovative outlook on the future, including trend predictions, or their takeaways from recent lessons learned. Either way, the aim is to illustrate their knowledge of the current pulse of the industry and use this to educate their audience and provide useful insights.

03

Building a social media profile

7 in 10 American adults use social media to connect, engage with content, share information, and entertain themselves, showing the power of the social digital world and its ability to connect businesses with potential customers.

Since thought leadership is all about the presence and reputation of a CEO, a founder, or a company, social media platforms should be utilized in B2B PR to build reputation, authority, and to communicate core messages.

04

Facilitating connections

Our clients rely on our experience and connections in the short-term rental tech industry to gain top-tier media and speaking opportunities, introduce them to other leading experts in the space, and build beneficial relationships.

These connections are built on credibility. Instead of sending out mass pitches, we hand-pick the right publications for your company and pitch intelligently. To maintain good connections with key media publications it's essential to be in regular contact and always produce top-notch content.

A great PR company will already have these relationships in place so that technology companies can access the right media at the right time.

05

Growing your reputation through specialist PR

Through the above methods, tools, and strategies, we build and maintain our clients' public image by generating awareness of their brands and supporting them in communicating with their audiences. We use media relations with the support of data nuggets and analytics to achieve this goal.

These five key elements build the framework for a successful thought leader. If implemented alongside a strong B2B PR strategy that includes top-quality content, up-to-date industry knowledge, and media connections, success will come.



About Abode Worldwide

Abode Worldwide is a global public relations agency on a mission to supercharge the authority of the tech pioneers transforming the way we work, rest, and play.

Launched in 2017 with a vision to raise up innovative technology brands serving the short-term rental space, Abode Worldwide quickly expanded to work with leading technology providers across the lodging sectors, including hospitality technology, multifamily, and the 'living' real estate sectors.

Our team of experts provides cut-through public relations and content marketing with unique industry partnerships and worldwide reach to help your business grow and succeed.

If you'd like to learn more about our work, please [get in touch](#).

[Contact us](#) →



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