

Public Relations in Russia

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Part 1: Background information

Official Name: Russian Federation

Capital City: Moscow

Major Cities: Moscow, St. Petersburg

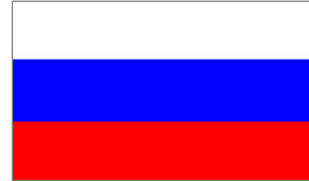
Official Language: Russian. Also, many minority languages are spoken.

Type of Government: Federation

Location: Northern Asia (the area west of the Urals is considered part of Europe), bordering the Arctic Ocean, between Europe and the North Pacific Ocean

Currency: Russian Ruble (RUR)

Culture: The Russian culture is one that is abundant and colorful. They have developed a rich cuisine. Russian art is considered to be very impressive and unique. Russian literature has greatly influenced world literature and their composers have enriched the classical world. And finally, Russians are known for their hearty sense of humor.



Part 2: Overview of the public relations industry

The practice of public relations increased in popularity during the 90s. The overall image of the profession was influenced by public perception of electoral public relations and the handling of the aforementioned political campaigns. The term public relations was widely associated with the idiom “black PR,” a term that is still used today. Public relations practitioners are most commonly enlisted for the planning and implementation of special events. The profession is not as respected or specialized as it is in the United States, and is generally less respected than advertising. Contributing to this is a lack of recognition and esteem for the profession among journalists in Russia.

Part 3: Overview of public relations as it relates to students

The emergence of public relations in Russia is usually associated with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Globalization and the formation of business relationships between Russia and the West helped spur the practice of public relations in the country. In addition, the creation of international companies and brands has contributed to the development of public relations.

The Moscow State Institute of International Relations became the first university to offer public relations education. The public relations major, offered through the international journalism department, was an effort to respond to the increasingly global marketplace.

Electoral public relations was an area of specialization that was developed rapidly. The impetus were the presidential elections of 1991, and especially 1996. The elections of the State Duma of Russian Federations in 1993, 1995 and 1999 also fueled this trend.

In 1991 the Russian Public Relations Society (RPRS) was founded as the pre-eminent institution for public relations development in Russia. In 1994 the Declaration of Professional and Ethical Principles for public relations practitioners was ratified by the RPRS.

The introduction of democracy in Russia brought new business and greater diversity. Technological advancements and opportunities also became more prevalent.

Education in public relations is characterized by several important trends. The most significant are described below:

1. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, each university was oriented toward a particular area of study, and it was rare for one university to offer many specializations (majors). For example, a university may be solely oriented toward those who want to study mechanical engineering. After the collapse of the U.S.S.R., however, universities expanded their program offerings to include a range of specializations. In addition, technical institutes began catering to those interested in the humanities, an area of study that was under-represented in the U.S.S.R. Public relations became one of these specializations.
2. Traditionally, the orientation of a university will determine which sector of public relations is taught. For example, the University of Civil Aviation would offer classes that teach public relations in aviation.
3. In most cases, there is a lack of practical knowledge in public relations education. There is a gap between what students are taught to do and what they do in practice.
4. There is a discrepancy between public relations education in big and small cities. In general, the public relations industry is more developed in large cities, such as Moscow and St. Petersburg, and students have more opportunities to interact directly with practitioners.
5. Generally, public relations professors do not have much practical experience in the profession. These professors were commonly language, communications, sociology, political science or history majors who were not formally trained as public relations practitioners.
6. The Russian Public Relations Student Society is working to provide students with more hands-on and practical experience before entering the workforce. In addition, universities with existing programs are continually working to develop and improve them.

Resources Used:

Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook. Retrieved February 8, 2007, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/docs/faqs.html>.

Wikipedia. Retrieved February 8, 2007, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_culture.