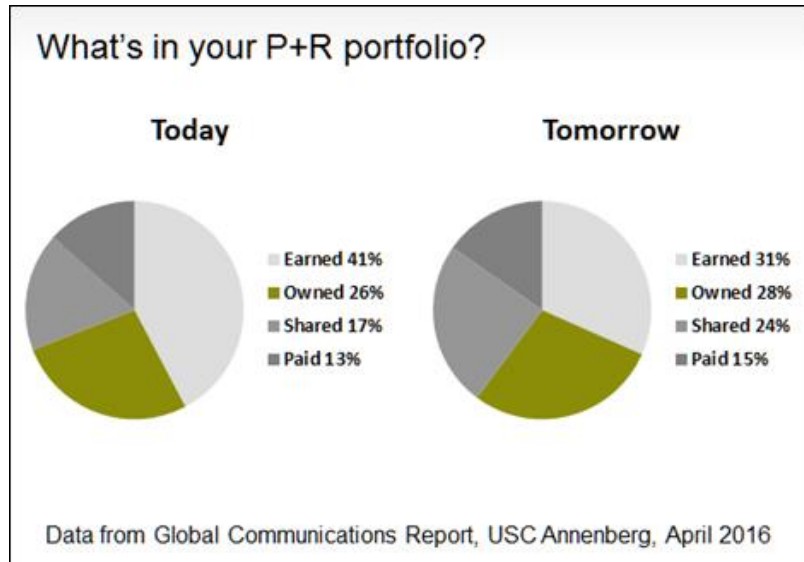


The terms "advertising" and "public relations" are often confused. Until recently, the easiest explanation was that advertising is paid media -- print ads, commercials and billboards -- vs. public relations which is earned media or news coverage.

As technology continues to advance to help companies better communicate with customers and prospects, the lines are blurred even more. Earned media is still the bread and butter of PR, but other equally important categories continue to evolve and gain traction: owned media, shared media and paid media.



A recent study by USC's Annenberg Center for Public Relations surveyed PR firms and in-house communications professionals, and compared the breakdown of these four categories now and projections for 2020. Today, earned media is just 41 percent of the total PR resources allocated, followed by owned media (26 percent), shared media (17 percent) and paid media (13 percent). The numbers are expected to shift even more dramatically by 2020 with earned media sliding to just 31 percent, followed by owned (28 percent), shared (24 percent) and paid (15 percent).

Companies must embrace these additional categories and challenge their PR firms to deliver balanced communications programs that take advantage of all opportunities. Like a good investment portfolio, you must diversify to manage risk. A balanced PR portfolio also helps you weather the storm and stay relevant with all audiences while you're waiting for that *Wall Street Journal* article to run.

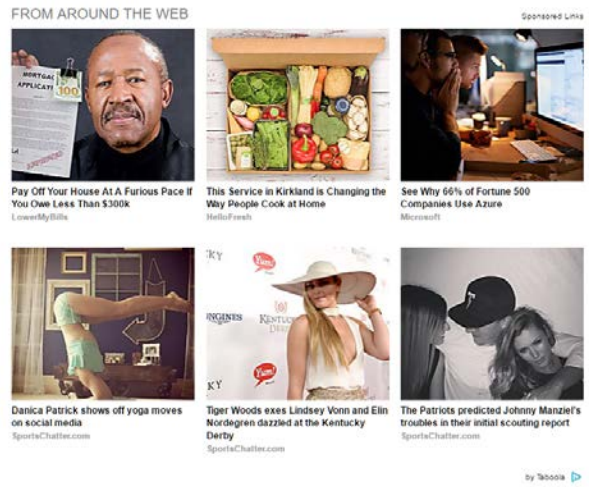
Even the term PR is changing to include these other categories. Instead of standing for public relations, PR now encompasses four categories of publishing and relations (P+R):

**Earned Media** -- Earned media cannot be purchased and will always carry the most credibility -- estimated at 10 to 1 vs. advertising. Profiles on your business and articles that include you as an industry source remain key for driving bottom-line business results.

**Owned** -- Blog postings, long-form LinkedIn posts, online newsrooms and shorter posts on all social media platforms allow you complete control of the message with anyone actively engaged in digital platforms.

**Shared** -- Think of social media in terms of shares and engagement. It's important to build followers, but how you interact with those followers is key. What's your engagement percentage and how is that flourishing over time?

**Paid** -- This can be as simple as distributing your news releases through a wire service such as Business Wire or include paid guest articles, radio news releases, print article services like NAPS, Twitter ads, boosted Facebook posts, etc. The *Los Angeles Times* has paid online ads that look like news articles and can reach 100,000 or more people. Taboola and Outbrain are services that take earned media that has already appeared on another site touting your business and extends its reach and lifetime. Instead of just appearing on one site, the article appears on sites throughout the Internet. These are those stories you can't help but click on at the bottom of your favorite sites.



**Taboola helps extend the reach and lifetime of the best articles about your business.**

The proliferation of platforms and need to engage appropriately keeps us on our toes and always looking forward. Like Einstein said: "Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving."

[Tracy Williams](#)

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## Top talent additions at OWC

As public relations continues to evolve to include categories beyond earned media, the skillset of the team must be just as diverse. [Olmstead Williams Communications](#) is pleased to announce the addition of two highly skilled tech savvy, millennial professionals: Trish McCall, managing associate, and Paulo Acuña, associate.

Trish describes herself as a "textual predator" keenly focused on concise, effective communications, and brings a proven track record in social and traditional media. She managed the PR department at her previous agency, A Design Partnership, where she landed



Paulo Acuña



Trish McCall

major news coverage and garnered significant social amplification of client projects, product launches and overall brand awareness.

Paulo writes, edits and designs across multiple platforms, both traditionally and digitally. His background includes Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center and *BELLO Magazine*. Born and raised in Puerto Rico, he is passionate about the power of communication to inspire and spread a positive message.