



# Healthcare Technology: 2012 Public Relations Forecast

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A white paper from Westside Public Relations  
[www.westsidepr.com](http://www.westsidepr.com)

# 1. Visibility = Credibility

## In a crowded field, news coverage builds reputation

The healthcare information technology marketplace will be larger and more fragmented than ever in 2012. Based upon early 2011 numbers, *Kalorama* information projects 10-20% market growth through 2012. A separate report by *MarketsandMarkets*, a global research firm, reports the EMR marketplace to grow from \$2.1 billion in 2009 to some \$6 billion by 2015, a compound growth rate of 18%.



The latter study found the US EMR market highly fragmented with more than 1,000 players and no one vendor with more than 15% of the market.

In such a crowded marketplace, with customers bombarded by so many marketing messages, coverage in leading industry publications builds reputation and helps establish thought leadership.

When your CEO is quoted or your company's announcement highlighted in a leading print or digital publication, you receive "implied third-party endorsement." When your company is featured in a mass circulation publication, your Google search ranking increases as does traffic to your web site.

A recent survey by *Marketing Sherpa* found the top sources of information for technology buyers who were evaluating vendors were:

1. Articles in general business press
2. Vendor web sites
3. Vendor white papers
4. Articles in trade publications

Leading Industry publications regularly publish "focus" issues on key topics such as meaningful use, ICD-10, health information exchanges and accountable care organizations. When your company is included in these overview or round-up articles, it gives you important recognition and provides timely information about your products to potential customers.

### New Standards Top HIT Media Issues For 2012 ICD-10, HIE, Meaningful Use Top Editors' List

*Most popular editorial topics for 2012 among healthcare technology media (print, digital)*

1. ICD-10
2. HIE
3. Meaningful Use
4. Mobile/handheld
5. HIMSS

Source: Westside PR

## 2. Media Usage: C-Suite Values Industry Pubs

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### 93% of execs read industry magazines (print & digital)

Despite the proliferation of new content forms such as blogs, traditional print publication (in either hard copy or digital form) remain the primary source of news for C-level executives. In fact, a July 2011 survey by *Martin Akel & Associates* found that compared with three years ago, 30% of executives reported that readership of professional magazines had remained the same and 50% said it had increased.

The survey found 98% of executives reported regularly reading a professional journal and 93% reading business news in a newspaper (print or online).

Respondents read an average of 2.2 industry publications and 1.9 newspapers on a regular basis. Seventy per cent of respondents reported that *“magazines are a reliable way to keep updated on my area of work.”*



### How important are communications in building your brand?

The *Akel* survey found that while 9.1% of industry executives said they prefer to do business with vendors they have used before, when they are looking at vendors they have not used, 76% are likely to investigate companies they have come to know through various communications (news, ads, trade shows, online conferences).

## 3. The Winning Pitch: Editors Prefer Email to Twitter

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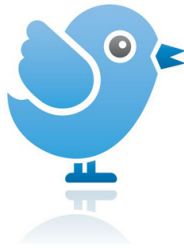
### They want unique story ideas with links to content

*The Powerlines* public relations newsletter conducted a survey of 200 journalists in January 2011. The survey found 82% preferred to receive pitches by email, while only 12% preferred Twitter. The reporters indicated they preferred email because it was “*quick to scan, sort and store*” and because it can contain links to additional content such as photos or bios. Also, a well-crafted email pitch provides contact information and notes about interviewee access (times, phone).

According to *Deborah Crowe*, healthcare reporter for the *Los Angeles Business Journal*, “*I monitor Twitter to see what people are talking about, but I don’t use it for story ideas. When a piece of news or gossip goes on Twitter, everyone has it. I need to break news, so I want unique ideas.*”

### Should you send images or documents attached to your email?

There is no consensus on this issue. *The Powerlines* survey found reporters split. Many said they do not want any attachments. “*Please, no attachments. High resolution photos create very large files that can clog my email. Also, I won’t download anything sent to me unsolicited because of viruses,*” said one respondent.



Other reporters said they prefer to receive images with the release, because it saves them time.

Another key point, mentioned in numerous reporter surveys, is to include correct contact information. “*Please, give the correct phone or email and be available when the release crosses the wire. Include your cell phone or home phone, if necessary. My biggest peeve with news releases is that I can’t locate the PR person when I need them.*”

## 4. Content Marketing Success Defined

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### Web traffic, lead quality, SEO are top goals

According to a February 2011 report by the *Content Marketing Institute* and *Marketing Profs*, the average company is now spending 26% of its marketing budget on content marketing (white papers, news releases, articles, and news-



letters). This commitment is required if a company is going to stand out in a crowded marketplace where customers are bombarded with more than 5,000 ads, offers and messages every day.

Timely, reliable content can reach customers through *PUSH* (email, newsletters) or *PULL* (news articles, search results).

The goals for effective content marketing go beyond *BUZZ*.

Increasingly, marketers are developing content that can persuade customers through all stages of the buying cycle.

The study found that the top goals for measuring content marketing success included web traffic and improved sales lead quality.

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|----------------------|-----|
| • Web traffic        | 56% |
| • Direct sales       | 49% |
| • Sales lead quality | 44% |
| • Customer feedback  | 44% |
| • SEO ranking        | 29% |

Additional, secondary goals for content marketing included increased customer awareness, improved buyer sentiment and additional cross-selling opportunities.

## 5. Public Relations: A Twofer Marketing Value

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### Builds credibility and generates sales leads

When it comes to the heavy lifting of generating sales leads, marketing executives at small and medium-sized businesses often turn to the tried-and-true tactics of email and telephone soliciting. However, public relations (often just thought of in terms of reputation building) has proven an effective technique for generating sales according to a recent survey of small business marketing executives.

Marketing techniques ranked *moderately or very effective* for increasing sales:

- |                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| • Email marketing    | 81% |
| • Website            | 79% |
| • Telephone          | 78% |
| • Public Relations   | 77% |
| • Online advertising | 62% |
| • Social media       | 56% |
| • Direct mail        | 45% |

*Source: Constant Contact, March 2011  
Survey of Small Business Marketing Executives*

On this list, public relations can be considered a “twofer” because it offers key benefits the other marketing tactics lack. First, it builds credibility through *implied third party endorsement* and second, it boosts organic search ranking. In addition, because it is a nonintrusive PULL form of marketing, it can be highly effective for companies wishing to reach healthcare providers, who are notoriously hard to reach by phone and email.

On another metric, audience reach or cost per impression, public relations also ranks very high. One metric used to measure reach is *Advertising Value Equivalency*. AVE is often used to measure the size of the coverage gained, its placement and to calculate what the equivalent amount of space, if paid for as advertising, would cost. Generally, a multiplier is used, commonly in the range of 3 to 5 to allow for the credibility factor of news coverage over advertising.



## 2012 Public Relations Forecast

A full-page ad in a leading health-care monthly magazine can cost from \$6-12,000. Given a modest AVE factor of 3X, one can see that just a single major (full page) news article or two-three smaller news article placements would be equal to \$18,000 or more in paid advertising.

Public relations also serves to establish executive credibility. By having your company's senior executives quoted in trend stories and commentary articles, your CEO and your company can be viewed as an industry leader. A skilled PR agency talks to editors on a daily basis and provides guidance on what issues and technologies to discuss with editors.

Additional, secondary goals for content marketing include increased customer awareness, improved buyer sentiment and additional cross-selling opportunities.

### **Westside Public Relations** **Experience + Creativity = Results**

Our agency, founded in 1999, is a leading national provider of marketing services to healthcare technology companies. We have helped software vendors, medical device manufacturers, managed care organizations, hospitals, provider organizations and financial services companies to reach their target audiences.

We have an outstanding record of developing creative solutions and efficiently managing programs to achieve results for our clients.

For more information including recent results and case histories, see [www.westsidepr.com](http://www.westsidepr.com), or contact [jtharris5@ca.rr.com](mailto:jtharris5@ca.rr.com)  
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