



Whitepaper

# Newsroom Software Comparison Guide

This guide will help you compare software vendors so that your organisation can successfully implement a newsroom solution that helps achieve your communications strategy..

# Newsroom Software Comparison Guide

This document is intended as a guide to choosing the right newsroom software for your organisation. Choosing between different vendors and solutions is an important choice and we hope this document will guide you through that process.

We have outlined the different kind of newsrooms, the main benefits your communications team can expect from a newsroom and what features you should expect and look out for when comparing solutions. Additionally we have compiled a list of functional, system, and operational requirements you can use to compare the different solutions you are considering.

## Who is this document for?

While there is a large overlap between communications and marketing – we strongly believe there is a key difference in their organisational function. Where marketing's function is to let people **know what you sell**, communication's function is to let people **know who you are**.

Even if in many cases PR and communications roles fall under the marketing department – their key purpose still remains to communicate clearly about what the company stands for independently from marketing's need for attribution and direct lead generation. Our solutions are created specifically for PR and Communications teams and we believe they deserve their own toolset in order to be more effective.

Evaluation often also raises the question of building a solution in-house using organisations' existing technology stack, or buying a commercial platform, such as [pr.co](#). We've created this white-paper to help communications (and engineering teams) construct a well-researched decision on what newsroom solution fits your organisation.

After reading this document you should have a clear understanding of what is needed in order to implement a successful newsroom that aligns with your communications strategy and how to compare different vendors and solutions.

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*"Earned media and partnerships are an essential part of the WeTransfer brand. We needed a dedicated newsroom combining all our announcements, press kits, features in the media, contact details and company facts. Working directly with our creative team, pr.co built a great media center, fully matching with WeTransfer's branding."*

– Annematt Ruseler, Director of Communications, WeTransfer



# Newsroom Benefits

*If you already know why you need a newsroom solution, then of course skip this part and go straight to the [Feature Comparison section](#). We have included it in this comparison guide as it can be a useful internal tool to explain how it helps your organisation achieve your communication strategy.*

A newsroom is the public-facing heart of your company: it's where journalists, customers and stakeholders learn about latest company news and developments. Where the largest chunk of your website is focused on your products or services, so basically *what you do*. Your newsroom informs your audience *what's happening* and more importantly, it shows *why you do it*.

The benefits of an effective newsroom solutions can be summarised into four primary benefits, these are 1) *more professional branding*, 2) *boost your team's productivity*, 3) *increase media coverage*, and 4) *become independent from internal resources*. In the following pages we'll quickly explain each one in more detail.

# 1. More professional branding

## Beautiful tailor-made newsrooms

Your brand is what makes you unique and your newsroom should reflect that. With a gold standard newsroom as a baseline, your news will gain credibility.



### Look professional

Maintain a professional edge with high-quality, tailor-made company news.

### Smooth setup

Newsroom design, development, maintenance, and training: we handle technical worries so you don't have to.

### Stay consistent

Support brand consistency across all teams and agencies with one central hub for all your media activities.

### Maintain ownership

Control all the elements of your PR, from design to messaging, all in one straightforward tool.

## 2. Boost productivity

### Save your team time

PR can be time-consuming and often involves a small team. Transform hours of work into a few clicks with our straightforward, public relations tool. Save yourself time and money by eliminating technical drudgery and improve your work with our easily digestible reporting tools.



### Straightforward tooling

Liberate yourself from time-consuming tasks with our intuitive, easy-to-use tooling.

### Automate your reporting

Easily monitor your efforts by integrating your analytics, tracking page views adding news clippings to our uncomplicated reporting tools.

### Simplify complex workflows

Write and distribute interactive content, get feedback from your team and track results: all on in one place. Smooth setup

### Help your audience

Make your audience's lives easier with effortless navigation, early access to embargoed stories, and future news subscriptions.

### 3. Increase media engagement

Creating news releases that are more personalised to each media contact brings higher engagement. You'll be able to turn contacts into relationships, creating more compelling reasons for them to cover your stories.



#### Measure & improve

You can easily see which press campaigns are working and which ones are not with the data on your side. Track your media engagement and record your coverage, so you can continuously improve. Create reports on your PR and communication efforts to showcase your work to managers and stakeholders.

#### Make your output beautiful

Your brand message is a crucial part of its success. When your textual and visual branding supports your message, it resonates with your audience. High-quality output leads to your brand being taken more seriously.

#### Better planning

Plan the timing of your campaigns in advance for a calm, clear workflow. Control the exact timing of important moments in your campaign and gain confidence in their perfect delivery. Eradicate confusion for your team by knowing where information lives.

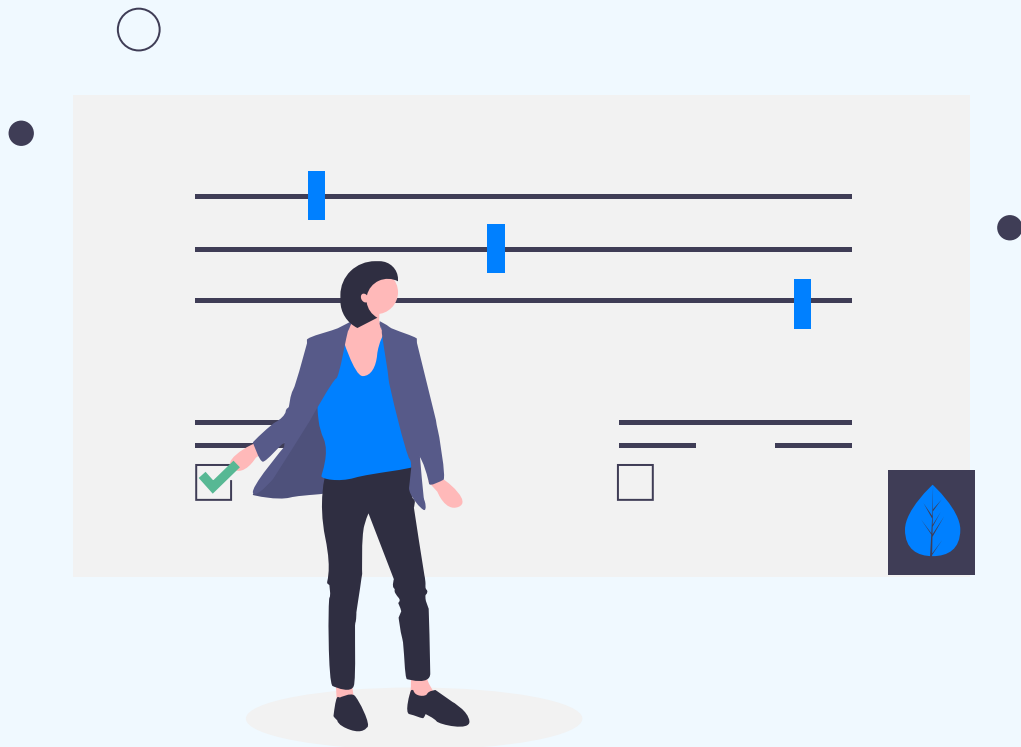
#### Help your audience

Make your audience's lives easier with effortless navigation, early access to embargoed stories, and future news subscriptions.



## 4. Independence from internal resources

Choosing an independent vendor to power your newsroom provides a fourth benefit. You can then get rid of your technical headaches with a fully integrated platform that your team can control. No longer worry about scheduling time with your IT department to change anything, big or small, in your newsroom. When your technical hurdles are removed, you have the freedom to do what you do best: tell your brand story.



### No IT-dependency

No longer wait days or weeks to get change requests handled.

### Automate reporting

Easily monitor your efforts by integrating your analytics, tracking page views adding news clippings to your reporting tools.

### A reliable platform

A reliable publishing platform can handle high volumes of traffic.

### Legal? SEO?

GDPR, SEO optimisation, mobile friendliness, cookie regulations, easy social media sharing, all this and more is handled by our team and tooling.

Creating an online newsroom can be a great asset for your brand. The ability to pitch interactive content, receive direct media feedback, and track results: provides your PR and communications teams with a powerful tool to grow your brand. Creating a tailor-made newsroom should integrate into your existing website and branding and strengthen your overall digital communication efforts.

Now that we've listed the potential benefits of a newsroom in the next sections we will go through the specific features you will need in order to create newsroom that delivers the above benefits.

# Newsroom Types

*If you know exactly what kind of newsroom you need then feel free to skip this section and go straight to the section that compares the solutions benefits or features. However it can be helpful to better understand the type of newsroom solution that you would like to create. Below we have outlined a few typical approaches for different needs.*

A newsroom is the public-facing heart of your company: it's where journalists, customers and stakeholders learn about latest company news and developments. Where the largest chunk of your website is focused on your products or services, so basically *what you do*. Your newsroom informs your audience *what's happening* and more importantly, it shows *why you do it*.

## 1. **Branded newsroom**

A company branded newsroom will provide your organisation with a go-to place for news about your company. Good for company that publish large volumes of news, product launches, events or financial updates.

## 2. **Media Center**

Building on the branded newsroom, a media centre emphasises visual elements in your news releases where that is appropriate. Often used for companies that features a lot of products and product updates.

## 3. **Thought Leadership Blog**

When you are trying to establish your brand as a thought leader it is helpful to have a dedicated thought leadership blog. This allows your communication team to efficiently write articles, publish beautiful long form pieces, organise content by categories in tabs, pitch to be a guest author.

## 4. **Investor Relations Platform**

Manage your financial information as required by the SEC so that your investors and stakeholders have all the required information they need about your company. Being able to schedule sensitive information in a timely way allows your team to never miss a deadline again.

## 5. **Media Image Bank**

This newsroom type is specifically for companies that want to present large volumes of images online for the press and to make sure they are used correctly. Create a media image bank and track the results of your media outreach.

## **Mix and match**

Since no organisation is the same, neither is their approach to how they communicate to the outside world. The news any organisation creates can't always be pigeon-holed into one of the above categories and thus in practice any newsroom is a mixture of the above newsroom types. Having the right information at hand within your newsroom makes it easier for your communications team to be effective on a day-to-day basis in achieving the goals of your communications strategy.

# Comparison Worksheet

A well-designed public-facing website that functions as your brand's newsroom is not the only thing required for a good newsroom solution. An important part is the software platform that your communications teams will work with. This platform must comply to your organisations' standards in terms of system requirements. Lastly the operational process in which the newsroom is implemented and maintained over time is important to ensure a consistent quality in your newsroom. A key component of this is the training and support to help your communication teams excel. We will explain the different kinds of requirements in the following chapters.

In order to make it easier to compare different solutions and vendors we have created a worksheet for you to fill in based on the different types of requirements we have identified here. When reading the explanation for each features or requirement we are referring to a specific row in the Comparison Worksheet.

Use the button below to go to the worksheet – or use this url:

<https://go.pr.co/comparison-worksheet>.

		Vendor #1	prco	Vendor #2	Vendor #3	Vendor #4
1	<b>Newsroom Feature Comparison Sheet</b>					
2	<b>Functional requirements</b>					
3	<b>Public facing newsroom</b>					
4	Articles, stories and news releases	Can articles, news or any form of content and show each individual article in a nicely designed layout that fits your brand.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Media kits and other media assets	Show different media kits, such as your products, brand logos, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Organisation of content through tagging & subcategories	With tagging you can create different categories or subcategories that you can then also use in a self-navigation of your newsroom.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Company bio pages	Allow for more information and background about an organisation. Typically one or more static pages.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Pages with spokesperson, and how to contact them	Showing exactly which people are public spokespersons and how they can be reached allows for better focused PR possibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Follow newsroom	Subscribe to a newsroom in order to receive updates when a company updates their newsroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Multiple language support	Support for multiple languages - including CH, PT, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Multiple countries support	Support for multiple countries. This is different from languages as many countries are multilingual.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Private news articles	The ability to share articles through the use of a private URL.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Embargo'd news releases	Feature to send news under a clear 'DO NOT PUBLISH' message. This provides journalists with enough time to prepare a story.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Optimised for social media sharing	Allow social media metadata within all news releases so that any thing shared on social media will look great.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	News is automatically optimized for SEO	How your newsroom is structured has a big impact on your SEO quality. Having this built in can be a big time saver.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

[Open Worksheet →](https://go.pr.co/comparison-worksheet)



*"My goal is to get as much free media exposure as possible. The best way I can do that is by making sure my relationships with media contacts are as good as they can be. I make sure information is clear, consistent and sent in good time. **I need to be reliable.** This is where pr.co really helps."*

– Ben Hillsdon, PR Officer, Shimano Europe

**SHIMANO**

# Functional Requirements

*This chapter is best used together with the accompanying worksheet as outlined in the previous chapter. Find each section heading, e.g. "public facing newsroom", in the workflow sheet with the individual functional requirements listed per item in the rows below each header corresponding the following categories, then you can fill in each row as you compare different vendors or solutions.*

The functional requirements include all the features the solutions must have for a communications team to reach their goals. This includes the public facing newsroom that your target audience will see and the corresponding features of this newsroom. It also includes all the tools necessary to manage your content, build your media relations, create an efficient workflow between your internal, external and international teams and measure the results of your campaigns.

Even though we'll cover each of these functional requirements here in more detail, please be mindful that not all communications teams will need all of these requirements - so if something doesn't apply to your team or situation then of course skip or remove it from your evaluation. Neither is the list intended to be applicable to all situations. We hope though that it provides you with a good starting point to compare the different solutions you are considering.

## Public facing newsroom

Your public facing newsroom is the key element of what your target audience will see. Whether its a more classic newsroom aimed at the press or an investor relations site aimed to inform different financial stakeholders or a thought leadership magazine – this is at the heart of your newsroom solution. It needs to support the basics such as showing press releases, product news, articles, as well as the right navigation, optimization for social media, search engine optimization, and support for multiple languages.

## Public facing newsroom: PR-specific features

There are a few specific features that a specific PR-focused solution will have, that a generic solution, such as Wordpress, will not have. One example is the ability to send press releases under embargo so your media contacts will have a clear label on the top of the page stating that this article is not for publication yet. Other specific features include: support for multiple

country to accommodate local news per country or geographic market, displaying spokespersons, sharing private unpublished links for colleagues to check, media kits organised per product line, or executive team.

## **Content management system (CMS)**

Managing the creation and publishing process of your news efficiently is the second functional requirement you will want to judge. The ability to easily and quickly write articles and publish them online while they always look on brand can be challenging. You'll need an editor that supports rich media content, such as high resolution images, videos, pdf documents, and other documents. Additionally you will want to support 3rd party services that allow embedding of services like Youtube, Vimeo, Spotify, Datawrapper, etc.

Communications teams need to be able to optimize for social media with the correct metadata, without having to modify code themselves. Lastly allowing for efficient collaboration between in-house teams and external parties according to internal policies and legislation means having clear roles and permissions in order to manage consistency and decrease chance of accidental publications.

## **Media contacts relationship management (Media CRM)**

Another unique element of a specific PR-solution is the ability to manage your media contacts within the same platform. To start off you will need an import function that has the ability to upload a .csv or .xls of media contacts into your media database. Managing the CRM means adding, editing and deleting contacts to maintain a clean database. You should be able to filter and segment your contacts based on your own tags or use smart tags based on any other attribute of a contact. Adding notes to contact is helpful so that you can track where you've met, what interactions you've had or any other contact-specific information you want to record or share with your team.

Whether you have a large or small database of media contacts you will want to search the database quickly and easily. For a CRM to be effective you will want to be able to track media contact interactions such as open rates, click rates, unsubscribes.

## **News distribution**

Another important benefit of having your content and contacts in the same solution is that it makes pitching your stories easier. Usually this is done directly through email distribution to targeted lists of media contacts that your team manages. Having a system that allows you to



send emails to media contacts within campaigns saves you a lot of time doing tedious work. Having a spam control feature means using the right kind of authentication and security methods will prevent emails from going to spam. In this way the email you are sending actually makes it to the inbox of the intended recipient.

What has recently become a more important topic is GDPR compliancy. Next to being a legal requirement, adhering to GDPR standards of how organisations should deal with contact information is also becoming a time consuming job unless you have an easy way to manage this.

You can only fix what you can measure - thus viewing the results of your distributions is important. Having a tool that tracks the open, unsubscribe and bounce rates of your sent emails is key to measuring the effectiveness of your outgoing campaigns. Lastly, an integral part of your CRM is automatic handling of unsubscribes (and bounces) of your outgoing emails.

## Workflow Management

The ability to collaborate effectively as a team is important for multiple reasons. Primarily the direct productivity of your team in terms of output is key. Next to that having a consistent brand message between news releases *and* team members, it will help a lot if everyone is using similar processes and tools. Having the right collaboration tools means your team can view each others' changes through activity feeds that show the history of all actions of your team. Today's comms teams need to work together not only between in-house teams and external agencies, but also across multiple geographies or target markets and languages.

Having the possibility to comment directly within campaigns about content, progress or pitching becomes an invaluable asset in efficiency and time saving. Having revision history will show the change-log per campaign and the ability to restore past versions. Specific approval workflows allow you to get final approval from key stakeholders before publishing that key press release.

Being able to delegate news to colleagues abroad becomes important for larger teams that need to ask a team in another country to work on a release based on a release in their home country's newsroom. Correspondingly then being able to manage the translation workflow post-delegation becomes important.

Within effective workflow management it is important to have solid, clear user and access management. Having fine-grained control of user access per newsroom and per sections of your media contact database becomes important when people leave or join your communications team.

## Tracking and reporting

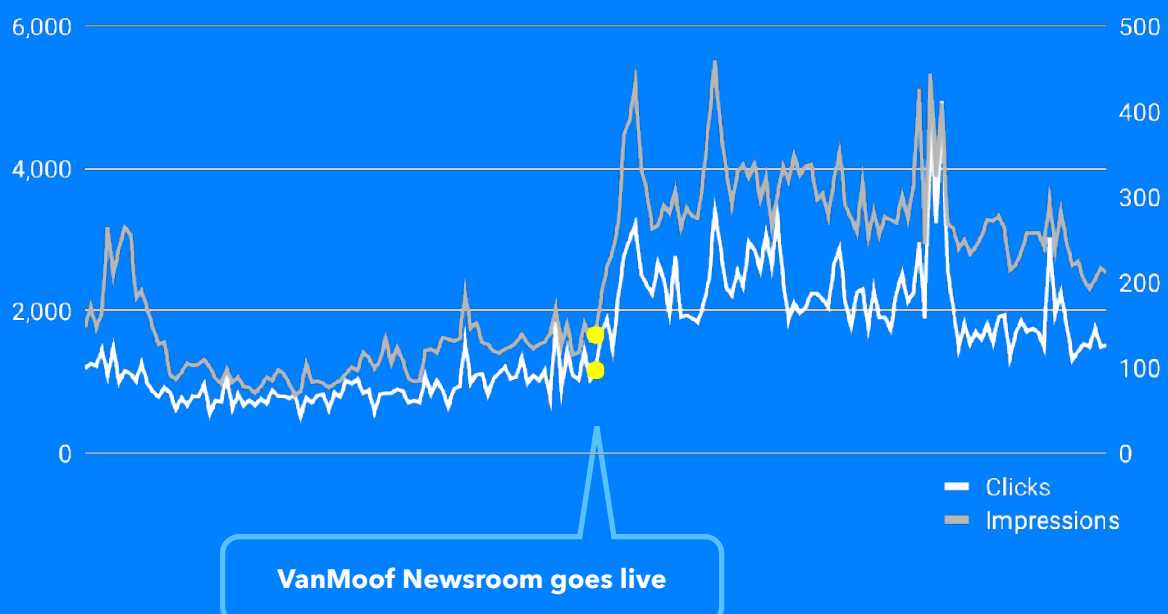
The last section of functional requirements are your newsroom analytics. You want to view the results per campaign in terms of traffic, shares and clippings generated. Having more in-depth reports about your distribution will show the results of your pitching efforts in terms of emails sent, opened, clicked.

What can also be useful is to share reports with stakeholders by sending a private URL to see the results of a specific campaign.



*"Together with PR.co and our hosting provider we moved our newsroom from a subdomain to a subfolder. Based on our data in Google Search Console this reverse proxy setup resulted in*  
**136% increase in impressions** and  
**133% increase in clicks.**"

– Simon Vreeman  
Growth Marketing Manager, VanMoof



# System Requirements

*Just as in the previous chapter, this chapter is best used together with the accompanying worksheet as outlined before. Find each section heading, for example in this chapter "security", in the workflow sheet with the individual system requirements listed below. As you try to fill these in, some will not compare directly between vendors - in our experience it's helpful to ask a vendor for a security outline and an availability report for their solution which they should be able to provide you with as you fill in the spreadsheet.*

Just as functional requirements are essential to help your team- or teams- do their job; system requirements provide the boundary conditions that any company solution needs to meet. They can be equally important when choosing a newsroom solution. These requirements include compliance with security regulations, legal requirements (for example government legislation such as GDPR), the required uptime (availability), access management (the ability to manage user accounts & access), the software's usability (ease of use) and lastly the requirements your digital marketing team will have regarding the discoverability of your news content (SEO).

## Security

We take pride in the fact that Pr.co is fully compliant with all security and privacy regulations within all legislative territories that we operate in. Below we have listed the different aspects of our security adherence. While the list here is without further details or explanation we can supply a detailed document with the full technical outline of our security features written for IT departments (or other people that understand the geeky details). Please find the list of security features we support in the worksheet.

## Availability

Availability is any solutions' up-time measured in a percentage over a given period, obviously the closer to 100% the better. For pr.co our average uptime has been a stable 99.99% for years.

We have achieved this by having multiple fail safes, fall back systems and early warning systems when a part of our system is at risk of being overloaded. All services of pr.co are distributed, where all components are hosted on separate servers, running independently from each other. This way, if one of the servers encounters an issue, the other will continue to perform. A more technical detail: all of our public facing newsrooms are behind a load balancer, this ensures that

we can setup multiple servers for the same task and that the load is balanced between those servers. If the servers get too busy for a certain period, another server will be added automatically.

A newsroom in particular needs to be always available, even when the rest of the website is down. In times of crises, your newsroom is where you control the narrative. In case of server failure, AWS automatically sets up a replacement. Our codebase is specifically designed to cover for this scenario so that no data is lost.

Our servers are running in multiple availability zones, this means that we have servers running across multiple data-centers. If any of the data-centers encounters an issue, our servers in the other data-centers will scale up to handle the load.

## Access management

It is important to provide the right level of fine-grained access control so that you can control which members of your organisation can access which data. This should be done on three different levels:

1. *Organisation Level* → the organisation role applies to users across the complete [pr.co](#) platform. At the organisation level the permissions are either Admin or User. An Admin automatically has full rights to the system.
2. *Newsroom Level* → the publishing rights for a user apply within a newsroom and can be different between different newsrooms. Each user can have publishing roles and rights that are: Publisher, Writer or Reviewer. Admins are always publishers and have full control of a newsroom.
3. *CRM Level* → The CRM roles and rights apply within the CRM. CRM roles and rights are per user level and fairly detailed (organisation admins can restrict users per list). Per list you can give users full or restricted access. Permissions include creating, editing, changing, removing, and exporting contacts. You can also restrict someone from sending emails to a certain distribution list.

See below the list of user role permissions within [pr.co](#)'s platform.

### User role permissions within pr.co

Permissions	Writer	Reviewer	Publisher
Write articles	✓	✓	✓
Publish press kits	✓	✓	✓
Create mailings	✓	✓	✓
Ask for approval.	✓	✓	✓
Approve campaigns.	✗	✓	✓
Publish campaigns (to live environment)	✗	✗	✓
Send mailings live	✗	✗	✓

## Usability

At the risk of listing obvious requirements, it is important to include in your checklist and cover to test whether the chosen solution will actually be adopted by your teams. Chief amongst the usability requirements is of course the intuitive aspect of the software and to be sure that your team will find it easy to use on a daily basis.

## Branding customizability

Does the vendor support the right level of customization that will allow your brand to stand out? If you are looking to set yourself apart from your competition, making sure you have a solution that supports the level of design that you need to stand out and showcase your unique brand.

## Compatibility

Are certain types or versions of client operating systems, browsers, or other software required to use the solution correctly? For [pr.co](#), we have focussed to make our software fully functional for all Google Chrome, Safari (any WebKit based browser actually) and Firefox browsers on both MacOS and Windows. For Internet Explorer, certain functionalities are not supported.

## Legal

Contact management and email distribution needs to happen in compliance with GDPR legislation. Failing to do so can result in (very) high fines.

Pr.co complies with the GDPR in the EU, and as such we have two different forms of data, each with different retention policies. The first is business-relevant data, which is created either by the user (e.g. an email, a comment on a campaign, a contact in the CRM) or by our system (e.g. newsroom analytics, activities that happen). This data is kept until the user decides to delete it themselves, or until 90 days after they terminate their subscription to pr.co. If the user requests, pr.co can remove user business data before this. The second kind of data is temporary data generated by our backend system, think access logs, logged SQL queries etc. This data is automatically purged after 30 days.

The intellectual property of the content and contacts that any organisation creates with the solution must remain with the organisation. All customer data that is hosted on pr.co is the property of the customer.

Our customers are the data controller of the data they enter and generate inside the pr.co system and are therefore responsible for the legal basis on which they have their data processed by pr.co.

Pr.co is the data processor and is responsible for processing and storing the data in a secure and reliable manner. Since GDPR pr.co is also obliged to execute any GDPR-related requests by any data-subject processed or stored by the pr.co system.

## Discoverability

The last of the system requirements is certainly not the least. Built into your newsroom should be SEO optimizations on multiple different topics that together allow your news to be ranked higher in Google.

Firstly the basics of having the right internal SEO optimizations within each article page and list pages. This includes supporting canonicals tags, international SEO (for example the hreflang-attribute), optimizing for mobile (for example mobile-friendly viewport), hosted on HTTPS, and your average load-time. All our public facing newsrooms are cached and rendered as static HTML making them lightning fast.

Secondly being able to create the right site structure around your urls is key. You will want to host your newsroom on your own domain, there are two possibilities with pr.co:

1. Using a subdomain → your newsroom can be hosted on news.example.com

2. Using a reverse proxy → this is an alternative to a subdomain allow your newsroom to be hosted on [example.com/news](#). This allows for better url-structures that gives you a higher ranking in Google.

Being able to automatically generate a sitemap and allow for easing crawling of all your pages becomes important for your search engine discoverability.



# Operational Requirements

*Like previous chapters, use this list together with the accompanying worksheet as outlined before.*

## Implementation & Onboarding

Be sure your vendor of choice realises what is involved in getting your newsroom solution launched on time and can provide adequate project management. This can greatly reduce implementation time, since managing multiple stakeholders can be tricky – but when done right from the start, the process will be smooth *and* fun! Implementing a newsroom solution will typically have a few critical phases that need to be managed correctly:

Phase 1: Requirement gathering. In our case a kick-off meeting with key stakeholders in PR, comms, branding and marketing teams where they define what content is required and design is desired.

Phase 2: Design process & development. After a design is approved, the newsroom will be developed and set up according to the requirements.

Phase 3: Integration into existing systems. Lastly the created solution needs to be integrated into existing websites, working together with IT departments to finish the necessary technical setups.

In parallel, it is useful to immediately get started on training and content migration. The timeline is anything between 2 and 8 weeks. But this greatly depends on the availability and response times of the different stakeholders involved.

## Ongoing support

First of all having a good existing online support channel becomes a key resources for your teams using any tool directly. Therefore providing direct access to first and second level support staff will help get your team up to speed fast, but also help solve any issues they might have. Especially when there is a tight deadline it's nice to know someone has your back.

After the initial onboarding, your team will change and you'll want new team members to have access to the same resources and learn your newsroom solution. We provide ongoing team training, with videos and written documentation as well as on-site training.

For bigger changes it's helpful to have your own dedicated account manager, in our case that means direct access to your account manager to help guide you through the process of change requests, training or other aspects of your newsroom.

Change requests for branding, navigation, or other changes made to your public facing newsroom are responded to very quickly. Together with the customer, we look for the quickest solution to deliver change. With pr.co your change requests are built into the subscription fee.

## **Product maintenance**

The last element of operational requirements we can be brief about – all the required software bug fixes are built into your normal subscription fee. We regularly update our software based on user feedback and will be developing new features that help your team be more efficient or more effective. We send out monthly newsletters that explain the changes to our all our users.

It is also possible to add custom functionalities on request.

## **Recurring costs**

As teams grow to include more communications professionals, marketers, analysts, and external agencies, they will inevitably require more complex features from your internal tool. Some examples of advanced features are approval management, news delegation to colleagues abroad, email personalization features, multi-language and multi-country support, etc.

## **Other costs**

Other costs to consider or often hidden change requests. Coming from other vendors these will often be charged on a per issue base - knowing that your branding will evolve, it's important to be aware of this before making your decision. Another factor to take into account is the need for upgrades and feature improvements, for example does a vendor charge extra for new features or do you get them as part of your subscription fee.

If you are considering using a generic platform that requires development resources to make changes you should factor in the IT salaries of staff required to make changes.

# Costs of Ownership

*The rows included in the worksheet are provided as a guide - not a final comprehensive ROI calculation. Each company will have its own way to calculate the costs, so modify it so that it fits your situation best. If you need more information on your specific situation from us, don't hesitate to reach out and we can fill in the details.*

Comparing the costs of different vendors or a more generic solution can be tricky since the costs often don't compare directly. Usually the costs can be broken down into the setup costs, recurring costs and other costs.

## Setup costs

Building an in-house newsroom solution typically comes with a relatively small upfront investment. Over time, however, additional features and customizations become necessary as more in-house teams and external partners start to use the tool, and maintenance burdens begin to distract engineers from core product focus.

When something breaks, there's someone who can fix it. Companies who successfully scale their external communications with a homebuilt system have engineers on staff who are dedicated to supporting the system with ongoing maintenance and enabling others in the organization.

While the initial cost can already be significant once you factor in the costs of the development resources required to build a solution, the ongoing maintenance also needs to be taken into account. Software updates, feature requests, internal customer care, service and training of your solution and the teams are areas where you'll spend even more precious resources.

In many smaller teams, the person who built the tool holds much of the knowledge of how it works and how to troubleshoot, so documentation and support often become secondary priorities to work on customer-facing features. But what if that person leaves? With in-house built websites and platforms, teams often find it difficult to prioritize the work necessary to keep the tool up and running for regular use. Engineers will get pulled into other, customer-facing projects. And let's face it - isn't that where we need them most?

*We have another document that can help if you are considering building a newsroom solution yourself and to help consider all the risks involved of creating one from scratch. Please find it using this link: <https://go.pr.co/build-vs-buy>*

# Final Considerations

We believe that correct brand communication plays a critical role in any organisations' success. It's important to find a solution that correctly represents your brand to your target markets and your target media. Often the solution direction isn't only between vendors but between building or buying and between generic or industry-specific solutions. Below we quickly highlight the differences between these considerations

## Build versus Buy consideration

Some organisations are successful in bringing communications to scale with an internally built platform. However, more often we have seen that it is very hard to free up the required resources to build a complete newsroom solution from scratch for most organisations. In practice the comms team will (unfortunately) lose out to development priorities from other departments.

Teams that choose to build a solution in-house, often do so because it will give them unlimited flexibility to integrate with their application codebase and existing systems and processes. However, many teams quickly find that public relations and newsroom solution design is not their core competency, and that unlimited flexibility means more opportunities for something to break.

We have a whitepaper specifically cover your build-versus-buy considerations, you can download here: <https://www.pr.co/build-vs-buy>.

## Generic versus Specific Software

When choosing your vendor you will have the option to choose a more generic solution, like Wordpress or Medium.com, instead of a specific solution that has a more narrow focus on delivering a newsroom for your brand, and the software that fits your publishing workflow. While this is partly a philosophical consideration, there are a few benefits of choosing a specific solution over a generic one:

- ✓ **Efficiency** → when using a tool designed for your specific profession, in this case a communications and PR role, the software has been designed to align with your workflow and will generally be much more efficient than a generic tool.

- ✓ **Feature Innovation** → your organisation will benefit from receiving software feature updates that other people in the industry are asking for and you'll be automatically receiving these software improvements over time.
- ✓ **Integrated data** → having your content management system *and* your a media CRM in the same system means that combining the data from your campaigns and media outreach will be more meaningful, since you can more easily track what campaigns are successful for what journalists.
- ✓ **Better support** → With [pr.co](#), you have experts on call when needed, firstly we can help you on a software level to make sure everything is working correctly, or we can connect you with a large network of like-minded professionals that can help you with any aspect of the PR professionals' job.
- ✓ **Brand Control** → You remain in full control of your branding with a team ready to make changes and updates when required. You no longer have to wait for your internal resources to free up.

## Benefits of Software as a service

Software-as-a-service (SaaS) goes by many names—cloud-based, web-based, outsourced, on-demand—but try not to get confused. They all mean essentially the same thing: you won't be housing the software on-premise. Instead of purchasing a one-time license, you'll pay a periodic subscription (usually per month) to use the software. A lot of popular consumer software, such as Dropbox and Spotify, operate using this web-based subscription model. And software consumers of all ages now demand that their software looks, feels, and works like their consumer technology, meaning fast updates, easy to use UI, and responsive service. A SaaS product can meet these demands, usually by offering cloud services for a monthly or annual subscription fee.

SaaS software provides:

- ✓ Lower upfront cost
- ✓ Better scalability to size
- ✓ Faster roll-out and implementation
- ✓ Faster product innovations for all users of the platform

SaaS is here to stay. Be sure to capitalize on these benefits.

# Get a Free Consultation

We believe that correct brand communication plays a critical role in any organisations' success. It's important to find a solution that correctly represents your brand to your target markets and your target media.

We hope that this document provides a good framework to design the requirements and find the right solution, and has done a lot of the heavy lifting for you. When you use this guide as a selection tool, we can help filling in the blanks for your specific situation according to the features you value most.

## Questions?

Are you having a hard time to decide? Or do you have more questions about all the numerous aspects of features and requirements? We're all yours and happy to help, please contact us using the information below and we will get in touch with you as soon as possible.

### **Sjors Mahler**

Commercial Lead

email: [sjors@pr.co](mailto:sjors@pr.co)

phone: [+3164226510](tel:+3164226510)

## Who is pr.co?

We are an Amsterdam-based Software as a Service company that equips communications teams at global brands to get exposure.

Our services are two-fold:

1. **We design, develop and maintain websites for brand communications websites**

Our solutions are tailor-made websites for communications teams, such as newsrooms, corporate blogs, thought-leadership platforms, and investor relations websites.

2. **We equip communications teams with workflow software to get the job done in less time and form better media relations**

We've built an all-in-one platform that helps communications teams write and publish rich media stories, schedule and send out news announcements, manage relationships with media contacts in accordance with GDPR, simplify editorial workflows between internal teams and external parties, and easily track what teams are working on.





## A sample of our customers

We work with 300+ companies, all over the world. Our customers include global brands like Heineken, TaylorMade Golf, Dolby, Shimano, WeTransfer, Viacom, and Bell Flight.



## Our partnerships

Originally born in the editorial newsroom of one of the worlds biggest tech blogs, [thenextweb.com](http://thenextweb.com), pr.co operates closely with the best technology companies and has an extensive network of communications and public relations professionals.

