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Enterprises in the press through the "pseudoevents"



This thesis shows the presence of public relations activity in the press news in Catalonia through the identification of events created by companies to gain media coverage. These events, which are part of the publicity practices, are described by several authors as pseudoevents, and research identified them as generators of 21.8% of the news in which a company is the main subject. This thesis has won the Prat Gaballí award from the Col·legi de Publicitaris i Relacions Públiques de Catalunya. More info: <http://www.colpublirp.com/>

The practices of publicity in public relations in Catalonia have full effect. PR agencies strive to produce material for the newspapers to get coverage for their clients. There are some reasons to explain this.

First, the agencies mainly use press clipping as a system to evaluate their efforts. This evaluation tends mainly to serve as justification for their work, and that's why their main interest is to get media coverage, as this will serve to endorse the work they carried out.

And from the standpoint of journalism there is another explanation to the use of these practices.

Journalists welcome the appearance of pseudoevents because they require little effort to turn them into news. And at present, which thins the editorial staff and editors look for maximum productivity, this is something that is taken into account. In this context, pseudoevents do the work to attract the attention of journalists and ensure they are picked up by newspapers as news. So there is a conjunction of interests between public relations professionals who seek for news space for their clients and journalists, who welcome the packed news packaged as they are easy to publish.

The study is based on a content analysis of all news published in 2010 in the economy section of the four most widely read newspapers in Catalonia, provided by lmente, a company that provides online news management. Trough probabilistic sampling techniques 1298 news have been codified, and statistical tests as well as intercoder reliability tests have been carried out to ensure the validity of the data. Other cross-data have been obtained with newspapers, news subject and types of pseudoevent to reach detailed conclusions.

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References

"The publicity, the pseudoevents and their presence in the press in Catalonia" docotoral thesis defended by David Andrew at the Faculty of Communication Sciences on 16 December 2011.
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