

## **DRPR Guideline on Media Cooperations**

### ***Preamble***

Media organisations or publishers have two distinct roles in relation to PR: firstly as editorial offices and secondly as commercial enterprises. In this second role, they are often co-operation partners of other commercial enterprises and PR agencies for certain periods of time or specific topics. Such partnerships are primarily known as media co-operations.

For PR experts in commercial enterprises and PR agencies, it is essential to keep the two roles strictly separate. With regard to the first role, what the German Council for Public Relations has described in its guideline on dealing with journalists applies: Editorial freedom must be respected and preserved. PR experts and PR agencies refrain from any action that could impair this freedom.

When cooperating with media companies, PR experts and PR agencies must adhere to the following principles.

### **Principles of co-operation with publishers**

1. Media co-operations must not tempt the business partner and its PR agency to exert influence on the editorial freedom of the medium co-operating with them. Even insinuations are to be avoided.
2. Media co-operations usually have an exclusive character, as generally only one media partner per media category (print, online, TV, radio) can be active in a partnership. However, exclusivity must not mean that editorial reporting by third parties, non-participating media, is excluded after initial publication.
3. Exclusivity reaches its limits when it leads to exclusive placements on the part of the business partner and is responded to by the media partner with exclusive editorial reporting. Such exclusivity should be avoided. It constitutes an unauthorised tying arrangement.
4. The provision of information, texts and so-called material services is not media co-operation. The public and PR professionals can and must assume that journalistic due diligence is exercised in their publication. This is the sole responsibility of the media themselves.
5. The use of advertising space or special forms of advertising must not be associated with favourable or critical reporting. Penalising reporting by

withdrawing promotional material is unfair. Any attempt to mix or combine editorial content and advertising is prohibited.

6. The exclusion or attempted exclusion of other media from public events and events of public interest in order to maintain exclusivity for a preferred partner company is not permitted.
7. The offer and agreement of special formats, special supplements and other conceivable forms of advertising are not objectionable, even if they contain purchased editorial space, as long as they are clearly labelled as advertising or special publications.

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