

The #ConvoyPRGroup guide to

Global cyber-security comms



How to launch a multi-regional
PR or marketing campaign for your
cyber-security brand.





Contents

1	3-4
Introduction		
2	5-12
Ask the experts		
Hot off the press		
Goals and challenges		
3	13-18
Mastering the art of glocalisation		
4	19-22
Finding the right local partners		
Making the client-agency relationship work		



INTRODUCTION

Over 50% of Convoy partners named cyber-security as the most prominent b2b technology in their region in 2022 – and therefore a significant area of PR and marketing growth.

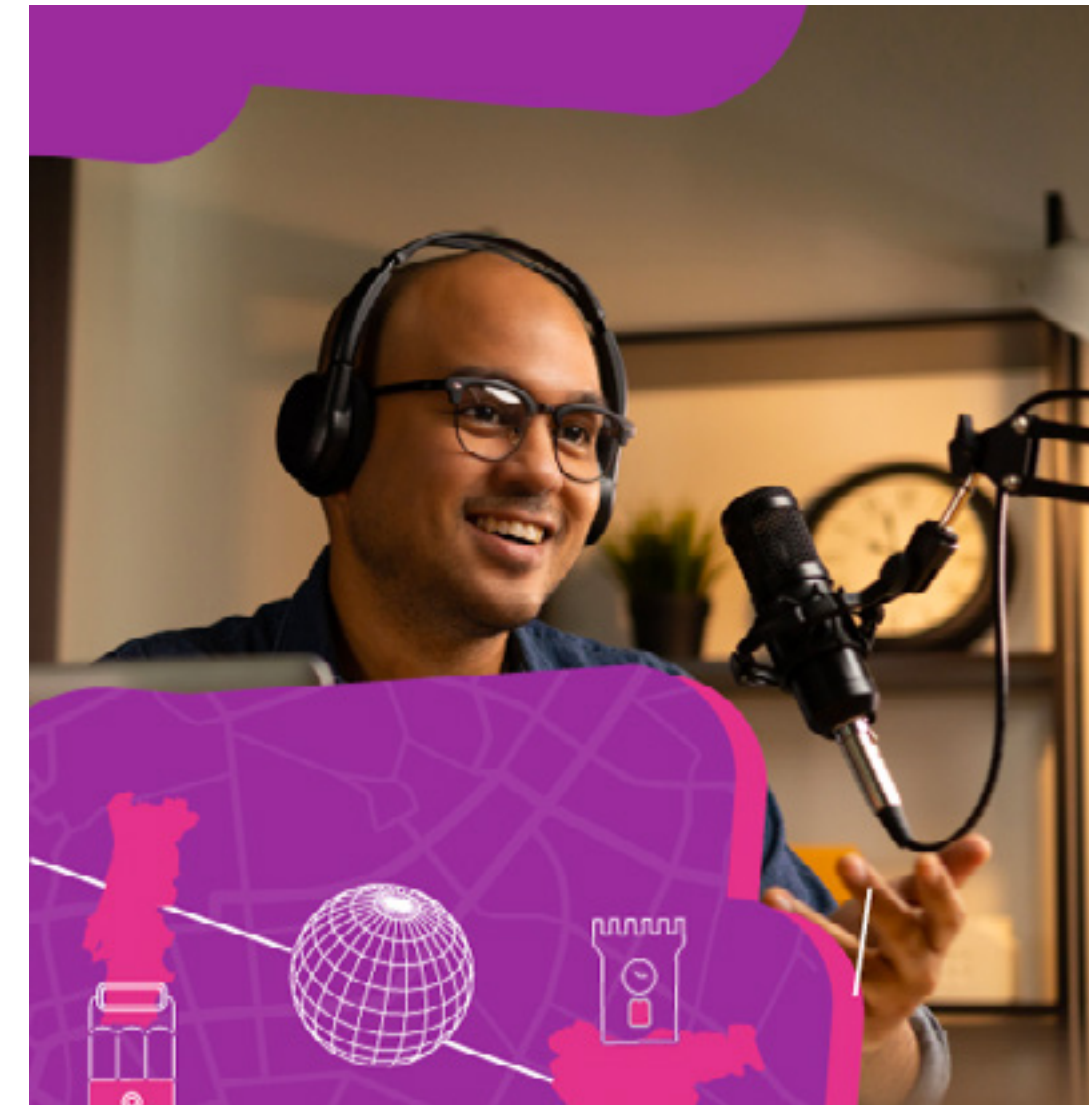
But the cyber-security landscape is more complex, competitive and fast-moving than ever. Marketers are under pressure to deliver – often with reduced budgets, thanks to current global economic turbulence.



A new way of connecting with audiences

In the current landscape, it's vital for cyber-security brands to address target audiences' specific needs and concerns. And to humanise the way they communicate, moving away from the highly technical, jargon-filled or fear mongering campaigns that have characterised cyber-security marketing for many years.

Ensuring cross-channel consistency is also key. This means marketers, salespeople and comms teams should be singing from the same hymn sheet – while also being sensitive to key differences between channels and geographies.



Going global

From London to Lagos and Ljubljana to Lisbon, more cyber-security brands are requesting multi-regional PR and marketing campaigns. Delivering these effectively requires a careful blend of consistency and localisation, as what works in one geography can fall completely flat in another. Combining a central strategy with local insights and genuine sector expertise is key to making an impact in multiple markets.

With these challenges and opportunities in mind, we've created a guide that brings together the insights of specialist cyber-security PR and marketing pros from 23 countries.



SECTION 2

Ask the experts





Hot off the press

"In an increasingly competitive space, proactive, well-informed spokespeople who can provide top notch advice and discerning insight are a massive help in running an impactful PR campaign."

Ian Saldanha, Procre8, United Arab Emirates

Any decent PR or marketing campaign needs data. So, we asked b2b tech PR experts from around the world to share their top tips – and to comment on any emerging trends they're noticing.

Global stories

In almost every geography we surveyed, the most prominent cyber-security stories related to Russian hacking (in Ukraine and throughout the globe).

The LAPSUS\$ hacking spree, whose victims included the likes of T-Mobile, Okta, Ubisoft, Samsung, Nvidia, Microsoft and Vodafone, was another high-profile global story. As was the Pegasus spyware scandal, in which spyware created by Israeli company NSO Group – purportedly designed to prevent terrorism – was discovered to have been used by various governments to track the phones of journalists and political dissidents.



Local stories

Many respondents named local stories as the most prominent in their region. Often, these related to high-profile hacks or local data. **But 'good news' local stories also featured, such as a flagship €1bn investment into cyber-security made by the French government, or the provision of cyber-security scholarships by South African companies.**

The wide variety of stories covered across different regions – and even the unique local spin placed on global stories – demonstrates the value of working with in-country PR experts. They have a unique understanding of which stories will resonate in a particular geography.





Unsurprisingly, given the highly technical and fast-moving cyber-security landscape, survey respondents named education as a key goal for brands and a challenge for marketers.

In your experience what is a cyber-security marketers' top goal when doing PR/marketing in your region?

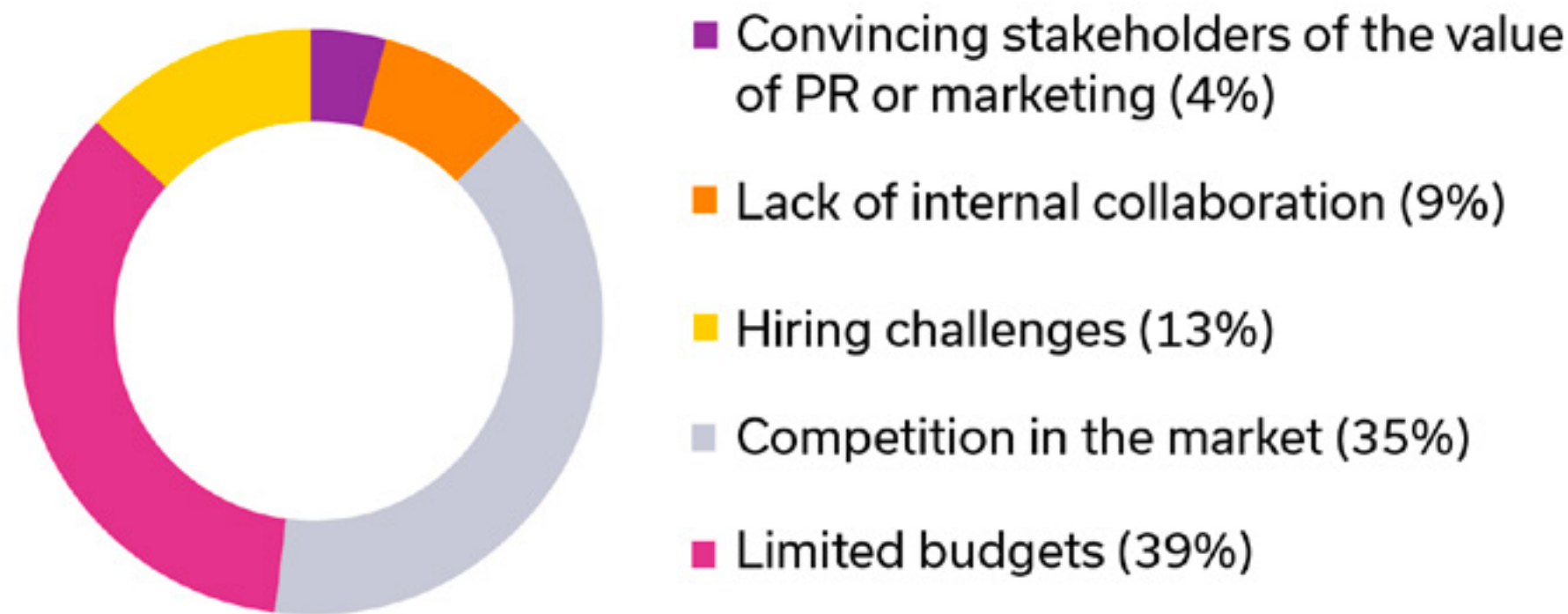
Goals and challenges



- Lead generation (10%)
- Raising brand awareness (19%)
- Educating their target audience about cyber-security in general (33%)
- Explaining the benefits of their specific product to their target audience (38%)



What's the biggest challenge for cyber-security marketers in your region?



“Although CSOs and CISOs are cyber-security savvy, in the end the decision to hire a provider falls to other members of the board of directors, most of whom know nothing about security, and instead make the decision based on cost or other parameters. As such, it’s essential to develop engaging and relevant cyber-security stories for the wider business media – which are key to reaching these audiences.”

Arantxa Aguilera, Canela, Spain





Limited budgets and market competition also featured heavily as key challenges named by respondents. There's no doubt that marketing budgets are under pressure, given current global economic turbulence. However, cyber-security has so far shown itself to be highly resilient. So, rather than stemming from an overall lack of budget, many issues boil down to spend being allocated unequally between regions.

"Be consistent and budget at least \$7,500 for Mexico, \$7,500 for Brazil and another \$7,500 for the rest of LATAM per month."

Mauricio Figueras, IMS, LATAM

"Hungary has important opinion makers. To reach them brands should dedicate budget to exhibitions and events."

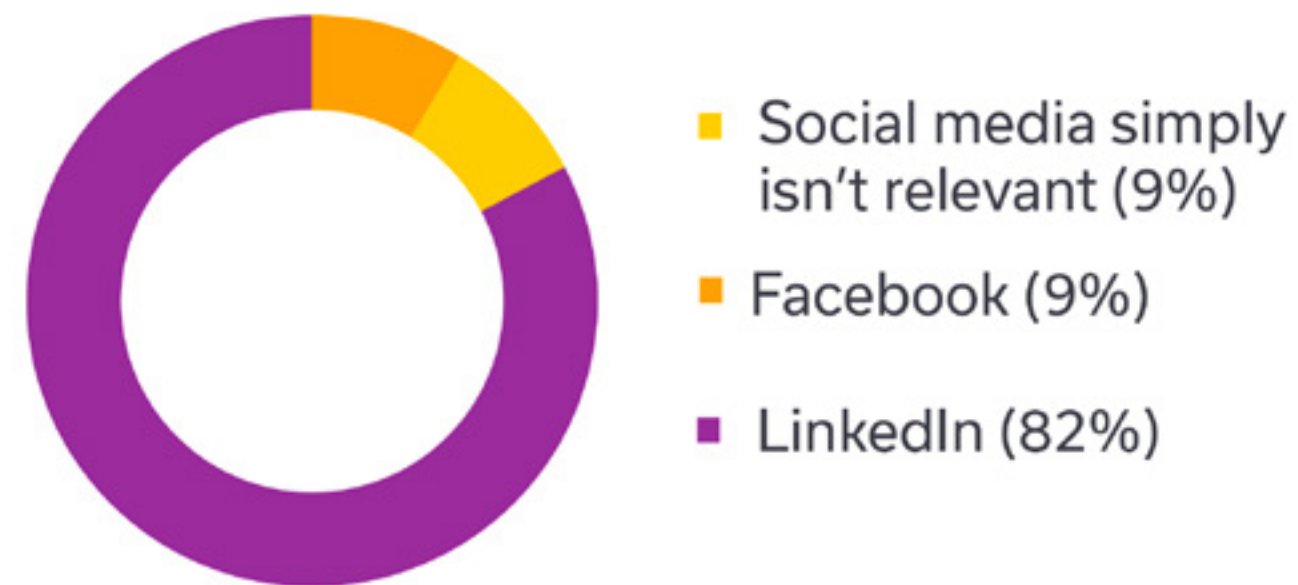
András Petrányi-Széll, PS:PRovocative, Hungary





Social media

What's the most effective social media channel for b2b cyber-security brands to use in your region?



"People buy from people, not brands. This is the most important thing to remember on LinkedIn. Utilise your expert spokespeople, not just your corporate page. And make sure what they're saying sounds authentic and human!"

Justin Ordman, Red Lorry Yellow Lorry, USA

Like many other b2b segments, LinkedIn is the most valuable social media platform for cyber-security brands. However, there are some notable exceptions to LinkedIn's dominance.

In Israel, for example, community engagement via Facebook and WhatsApp groups – which encourage real-time, free-flowing conversation – is much more effective than traditional social media outreach. **According to Alona Stein, partner and VP at Israeli agency ReBlonde**, Israelis view LinkedIn as insufficiently 'real-time'.

By contrast, Yukiko Harada, founder of Tokyo-based agency TrainTracks, says that using social media as part of a b2b cyber-security marketing strategy is almost unheard of in Japan. **Instead, Japanese audiences prefer to get their information from trusted media outlets, analysts and researchers.**



“Make sure you’re taking an integrated approach. Use social media as a supporting tool in addition to media relations. LinkedIn is an essential tool for b2b communications. But also think about adding other channels like Facebook to your marketing mix.”

Andrzej Sowula, PR Solutions, Poland

“Particularly in the US and UK, we see a lot of cyber brands investing heavily in Twitter to engage mid-level decision-makers. This can generate low-quality leads – especially with more senior decision-makers. If you do include Twitter in your marketing mix, be sure to closely monitor results.”

Errol Jayawardene, Red Lorry Yellow Lorry, UK

“In Italy, an effective tactic can be digital marketing collaboration with other organisations, such as universities and schools, municipalities, teachers, education associations etc.”

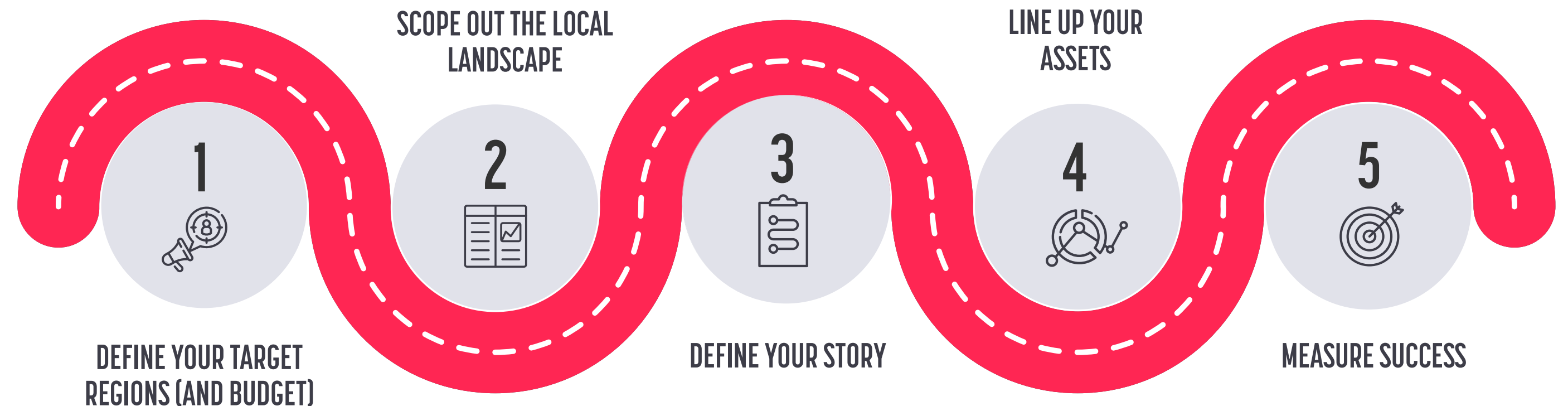
Stefania Trazzi, Imageware, Italy



So, you're thinking about launching a multi-regional b2b PR or marketing campaign for your cyber-security brand, but aren't sure where to start? Our step-by-step guide will help you on your way.

SECTION 3

Mastering the art of 'glocalisation'



"If possible, share case studies that discuss real attacks you've been involved in preventing, mitigating or clearing up. Journalists like to hear real-world stories."

Hélène Joubert, Red Lorry Yellow Lorry, France



STEP 1

Define your target regions (and budget)

“We often get feedback from local media that they don’t feel supported with advertising budget. When it comes to pitching journalists, cold approaches rarely work. Ideally, you will form a relationship before you need something. If not, it’s likely that a journalist will ask you for pay to play.”

Emilie Carver, Red Ribbon Communications, South Africa

Before you do anything, define your global brand story and messaging. Ideally, you want to craft one global story, while retaining the flexibility and freedom to localise it for individual markets.

Next, it’s time to look at budget. Chances are you don’t have unlimited resources, so make sure you’re spending what you have wisely. Ask yourself:

- What are our largest markets, and in which markets do we have the greatest growth potential?
- Where are we struggling from a lack of brand recognition or reputational issues?
- Where can we get the most bang for our buck? You might find you can achieve more for less in developing markets.
- What does success look like for us? What metrics can we use to measure success?

Once you’ve chosen which regions you want to target, consider rolling out your campaign gradually, starting with your largest region. Don’t try to run before you can walk.



Of course, you don't want to copy your competitors. But it's important to keep an eye on the tactics they're using, and the themes they're discussing. It'll help you work out your USPs and competitive differentiators. And it might even provide some inspiration!

Start by running a social media audit to assess what conversations are happening and where. This can be helpful when it comes to setting targets for your campaign. Take a deep dive into each geography and measure your competitors' share of voice compared to your own. This can be helpful when it comes to setting targets for your campaign. Where you can, speak to key influencers and market experts. As well as your own research, use social listening tools like Brandwatch and media monitoring platforms like Cision and MuckRack.

STEP 2

Scope out the local market landscape



"Contribute meaningfully to existing narratives - don't be 'me-too' and say the same thing as everyone else in the market. Cyber is awash with vendors all offering the same solutions and talking about the same topics. Cut above the noise by being bold, contrarian or different."

**Sarah Alonze, Red Lorry
Yellow Lorry, UK**



Great PR and marketing depend on telling compelling stories – stories that connect with your target audience on an emotional level and speak to wider business and societal challenges. Avoid focusing on technical features and getting bogged down in jargon – a common mistake made by cyber-security brands.

For instance, no-one is likely to care that you've updated your product to detect threats 25% faster. They'll forget the stat within minutes of reading it. But they will remember a compelling customer story about how your improved product was central to preventing a largescale ransomware attack on a bank – which would have impacted millions of customers and businesses.

To help figure out what stories you should be telling, start by answering these questions:

- **Why does our brand exist?**
- **What differentiates us from the competition?**
- **What problems do we solve?**
- **What's the potential impact of these problems for people/businesses?**
- **Why should people care?**

Note that the same story will be received differently across regions. A successful multi-regional PR/marketing campaign depends on finding the right blend of consistency and localisation. Local PR and marketing partners can help you avoid missteps.

STEP 3

Define your story





STEP 4

Line up your assets

Make sure you hit the ground running by lining up any helpful assets and information. These might include:

- A list of spokespeople
- Canned industry commentary, which can be quickly deployed in response to a breaking news story
- Customer case studies, or a list of customers willing to speak on behalf of your brand
- Other third-party endorsements – such as analyst reports and award wins
- A list of influencers – to help tell your brand's story with maximum impact and on the right channels. A local partner can really add value in this area.
- Your own data and third-party research

“Local surveys and research work well. Just like any other IT subject, journalists want to translate the global concern of cybercrime and security into something that resonates locally. In-country data helps to add local flavour to their coverage. Staying relevant is also about remaining ahead of the pack – share your intelligence about new breaches or malware immediately. It may seem opportunistic, but today's news will be old by tomorrow. It's highly valuable for customers to investigate first and communicate later, not so much for press.”

Rafael Tirmarche, Factivity, Belgium





STEP 5

Measure success

Think of your campaign as a living organism. You should continually be measuring its success and making changes accordingly. In today's fast moving cyber-security landscape, success often depends on brands' ability to move quickly and pivot.





Achieving multi-regional marketing and PR success for your cyber-security brand hinges on finding the right partners to help you tell your story. But choosing them can be easier said than done.

Ask yourself, what sort of international agency partnership am I looking for?

When it comes to selecting the right agency partner(s), note that what works well for one brand might not be the right fit for another. Factors to consider include the size of your brand, the regions you're targeting, your budget, your working style and a myriad of others.

Though each agency is different, there are a few established partnership models at your disposal.

"A common mistake international cyber-security brands make is not taking local laws and sentiment into account. For example, Germans are extremely concerned about data privacy, and Germany has very strict data storage laws."

Lena Grün, Red Lorry Yellow Lorry, Germany

SECTION 4

Finding the right local partners



Option 1: Work with multiple small or medium-sized local agencies

With this option, you'll be able to keep costs relatively low, while benefiting from genuine on-the-ground expertise.

However, for this to work effectively, you'll need to be prepared to dedicate a sizeable chunk of your in-house team's time to campaign coordination. This might be tough, given that 86% of marketers already report that internal resourcing hampers the delivery of campaigns. In many cases, internal teams simply can't dedicate the necessary time to ensuring multi-regional campaigns are localised, yet consistent – and that agency partners aren't duplicating their efforts.

Option 2: Hire a single agency with a global presence

The upside of this approach is that you're effectively outsourcing global campaign coordination. It's a one-stop-shop.

The downside? This approach is expensive – particularly for smaller or challenger brands. Hiring a large global agency can mean sacrificing on deliverables, while competing for attention with the agency's larger clients.

Option 3: Partner with an independent agency group

Increasingly, regional agencies are joining forces to deliver truly global campaigns for cyber-security brands – combining local expertise with global reach, while centralising campaign management. So, you can be sure brand consistency is never compromised and extract maximum value from your budget.



Making the client agency relationship work



Once you've found the right agency partner(s), it's important to ensure the relationship works long-term.

Remember to **communicate with your agency partners**. First and foremost, make sure you're aligned on global and local strategies and how you're going to measure success.

In addition, let them know well in advance of any announcements and keep them abreast of developments – whether it's a new area you're investing in, or a new executive hire. Your PR team is of course monitoring the news (almost constantly), but you're the one with the inside scoop on your company. **Internal stakeholder perspectives are always valuable in brainstorming sessions.**

"Cyber-security brands should avoid ambulance chasing or playing into fear and doubt. It's important for stakeholders to understand that generating ROI through PR takes time. It's not an overnight process. Be patient and have the right success metrics in place from the get-go."

Sarah Alonze, Red Lorry Yellow Lorry, UK



Next, work together **to refine messaging**. Streamlining the story that you're telling, while remaining consistent, will help you establish a meaningful brand presence. As time goes on, you'll find that some stories work better than others in particular geographies. Equally, you can trial a tactic in one geography and roll it out gradually to the rest of your target markets.

A top tip is to **listen to your global PR and marketing experts**. For example, if they tell you a particular angle isn't resonating with the media in their market, let it go – or work together to reframe it.

Linked to this, remember that it's important to **demonstrate commitment to local markets**. This can be through investment, research or tailored products. But it can also be as simple as offering journalists a spokesperson that speaks the local language.



"My top piece of advice for international cyber-security brands looking to launch a PR campaign in our region would be to offer more personal contact to journalists, to prioritise networking and gain a better understanding of local hierarchies."

Evgeniia Mamicheva, IT COMMS, Uzbekistan

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Founded in 2010 by global b2b tech PR agency, Red Lorry Yellow Lorry, Convoy is a handpicked group of independent PR agencies that share a common approach to business, quality and client servicing excellence. The global PR group now comprises more than 35 agency partners, covering over 75 countries and six continents - and gives clients access to over 600 PR consultants worldwide. Clients benefit from full-service PR consultancy delivered by regional experts with sector expertise, all feeding into a unified global strategy with centralised messaging, management and reporting.

Visit the Convoy website to find out more.



Headquartered in London with offices in Berlin, Paris, Boston, Austin and Los Angeles, Red Lorry Yellow Lorry delivers public relations, marketing and customer experience services to b2b tech brands.

Our client list features b2b companies spanning the AI, blockchain, cyber-security, enterprise IT, M&E and MarTech sectors. We offer support with brand strategy and messaging, influencer relations, content marketing, social media, digital and more, to help disruptive brands gain awareness and influence in competitive markets.

For more information, visit www.rlyl.com, drop us a note at hello@rlyl.com, or find us on Twitter and LinkedIn.