

THE PUBLICS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

public, n. - 3: a group of people having common interests or characteristics;
specif: the group at which a particular activity or enterprise aims.--
Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary

While the term "the public" is often used, there are, in fact, many publics or specific audiences within the general public. These publics respond in different ways so they must be considered separately and, often, communicated to differently and through differing media. Publics often overlap, and they can be identified and sub-divided in many different ways.

Listed below are some of publics for an organization which could be a private or publicly held business, a not-for-profit organization, government agency, educational or religious institution or other activity.

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Employee

Management
Hourly
Prospective employees
Families
Salaried
Union members
Retirees

Community

Where employees live
Plant locations
Neighborhood coalitions
Chambers of Commerce
Community organizations

Customer

Geographical
Local
Regional
National
International
Functional
Distributors
Jobbers
Wholesalers
Retailers
Consumers

Industry/Business

Suppliers
Teaming partners
Competitors
Professional societies
Subcontractors
Joint ventures
Trade associations

Media

General
Foreign
Trade, specialized

Academia

Trustees, regents, directors - Administration
Financial supporters - Faculty & staff
Students, prospects - Alumni

Investment/Financial

Analysts - buy & sell side - Stock brokers
Institutional holders - Portfolio managers
Shareholders - Potential investors
Bankers - commercial and investment

Governmental

Geographical

Local

State

Regional

National

International

Functional

Legislative

Regulatory

Executive

Judicial

Special Interest

Environmental

Safety

Handicapped/disabled

Minority

Think Tanks

Consumer

Health

Senior citizens

Religious