

A man and a woman are looking at a laptop screen in a server room. The man is pointing at the screen. The background is a server room with blue lighting and server racks. The text is overlaid on the image.

BABEL

CRACKING THE CODE OF TECH ANALYST RELATIONS

How to build valuable
relationships with
industry experts

Introduction

In today's fast-paced and ever-evolving technology industry, effective communication and collaboration between technology companies and industry analysts play a crucial role in driving business success.

Analysts are the eyes and ears of enterprise IT buyers, providing industry reports that offer valuable, unbiased insights into market trends, technology developments and leading vendors. This helps companies gain a deeper understanding of their industry challenges and opportunities, and make informed purchasing decisions. According to Babel's latest [B2B Tech Comms Barometer](#), the single most influential channel for B2B tech buyers is analyst industry reports, with 58% of IT decision-makers relying on them for making purchasing decisions.

As a result, analyst relations (AR) has emerged as an important strategic function for technology companies. By building relationships with key analysts, they can create an influence that shapes market perceptions, increases a company's credibility, and supports sales.

To understand their role and how to influence them, we hosted a webinar entitled 'Cracking the Code of Tech Analyst Relations' featuring a panel of analysts and communication experts. I spoke with Camille Mendler, Chief Analyst at Omdia; Rob Pritchard, Senior Analyst at Global Data; and Jen Kelham, Senior Campaign Director and AR expert at Babel. In this whitepaper, we outline the key discussions and takeaways from the webinar.



Simon Coughlin
Director - Babel PR

If you want to learn more about Babel, visit our [website](#) or get in touch with our team.

Speakers:



Camille Mendler, Chief Analyst, Omdia

Camille has more than 25 years of multi-disciplinary experience in the digital economy and works to anticipate key shifts in B2B demand patterns. More recently, she's been focusing broadly on how 5G is disrupting enterprise ecosystems.



Rob Pritchard, Senior Analyst, Global Data

Rob is a Senior Analyst on Global Data's Enterprise Technology and Services team. He is directly responsible for competitive intelligence research and generating market advisory, specifically focusing on segmentation, enterprise networking, channel and ESG.



Jen Kelham, Senior Campaign Director, Babel

Jen is the resident analyst relations expert at Babel with nearly 10 years of experience in B2B, B2C and corporate PR and AR. Jen started her communications career at Ofcom, before joining Babel in 2014.

Market experts

The role of an analyst and how they work with businesses

Analysts are trusted IT advisors helping technology companies make informed and data-backed purchasing and business decisions that drive growth and success. However, analysts' roles can vary depending on their industry and experience.

Day to day, Camille Mendler primarily focuses on supporting her clients with their go-to-market strategies, offering real-time advisory, and occasionally creating syndicated reports. She also fits in going to conferences and various media activities. Rob Pritchard has a similar role, although he doesn't travel to conferences and most of his day is taken up with customer inquiries.

Key technology trends of interest to analysts

While many subjects excite analysts, AI was cited as the one creating the most attention. *"AI has taken over. We're getting so much information and so many questions on it, right up to a board level, I've now suggested that we include AI in everything that we do,"* Rob explained.

For Camille, it was less about AI and more about service level agreements, contractual agreements and 6G.



Many analyst jobs are split between doing syndicated research, client inquiries and consulting, and that changes depending on your level of expertise. The more expertise you have, the more likely you are to get into the consulting game.

Camille Mendler, Chief Analyst, Omdia

"Recently I've been doing some work around 6G... I've been speculating what contractual agreements would look like, where the service is something you could feel or smell. It's been very intriguing thinking about the sensory aspects and how you can monetise providing a service when it's got those sensory aspects to it... Also, what 6G might be in this multi-dimensional world is quite intriguing to me at the moment."



Syndicated industry reports

help decision-makers make purchasing choices, build strategies and identify growth opportunities. To compile them, analysts interview leading technology companies, gather data from diverse sources and use statistical models and analytical tools to identify patterns and trends. Their reports offer meaningful insights into market dynamics, customer preferences, competitor analysis and vendor profiles.



Consulting involves providing expert advice and guidance to clients based on the analyst's expertise and knowledge. Analysts work closely with their clients to understand their specific challenges, goals and objectives and provide recommendations for improvement.



Inquiries refer to a service where clients can seek answers to their questions or receive expert opinions from analysts on particular issues or trends.

Cracking the code

Developing an integrated AR strategy to engage with analysts

While an effective AR strategy enhances brand reputation, fosters relationships with analysts and strengthens awareness among your prospects, it involves several key steps. Firstly, identify the relevant analysts and research firms that influence your industry and develop a strong understanding of their interests and focus areas. Then, establish strong relationships with these analysts through regular briefings and share valuable insights and data to position your company as a thought leader.

But, when building an AR strategy, Rob highlighted the importance of collaborating with Investor Relations (IR) and PR, to ensure a consistent message across all communications.

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It's very useful to link AR work with PR and IR to have a constructed single story, and be able to communicate consistently, avoid silos and make sure everything is pulling together.

Rob Pritchard, Senior Analyst, Global Data

AR provides valuable insights from industry experts, while IR focuses on financial performance and shareholder communication, and PR shapes public perception. Combining all three practices creates a comprehensive and coherent story that resonates across diverse audiences, fostering a positive brand image and enhancing investor and customer confidence.

Cracking the code

Engaging with analysts

Engaging with an analyst has some similarities to engaging with a journalist, as both AR and PR involve building relationships, sharing information and managing perceptions. However, analysts are interested in a far deeper level of information about a company. They want insights into your market position, product and service offerings, business strategy, customer base, financials, R&D focus and more.

However, if you're new to AR, it can be hard to know where to start. Rob advised: *"Being available is important, and being relevant is vital. Forming good relationships and communicating what's interesting is core to good analyst relations."*

As analysts are often inundated with requests for briefings, companies need to make sure the information they provide is relevant and interesting.

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Your message has to be exciting. What it boils down to, if I saw it in the FT as an article, would I read it or not?

Rob Pritchard, Senior Analyst, Global Data

Camille suggests using social media for companies who are new to AR: *"It is all about social and if you are a small firm starting out and you don't have much money...get yourself noticed on social. LinkedIn is increasingly powerful...it has won my attention over the past few years."*

She explained how LinkedIn is a great way to find people who are interested in the same topics as you. By posting comments on other people's posts, you can start a conversation and get to know an analyst. It's also a far more economical way to build relationships if you don't have the resources or budget to hire a consultancy.

But how do you ensure you're building relationships with the right analysts? *"First, determine the purpose of your engagement. Is it securing a new round of funding, getting a marquee customer or simply getting exposure?"* Camille advised.

Rob added: *"If you're small and in startup mode, it's important you find the right people who are credible and specialists for your area."*

Brilliant briefings

Preparation is key

Once you've secured an analyst briefing, doing the right preparation to make the most of the opportunity is critical. Analysts are a specialist group of influencers whose job it is to know their sector and the players within it, in as much detail as possible. As we mentioned in an earlier chapter, companies need to be prepared to discuss the challenges, opportunities and market trends as well as provide an in-depth overview of their operations and products and services.

Analysts also don't mind what level of spokesperson they speak to, although senior is preferred. The only requirement is that they're willing to have a two-way conversation and go into details about strategy.

"It can have a dramatically negative effect if companies just stick to a rigid and limiting script," Camille explained. "We don't want a hero worship briefing; a 1:1 where the spokesperson just wants to talk and doesn't want to engage in a dialogue. Where it's purely for their ego."

Rob added: *"I don't want to be drowned in non-stop nonsense. Strategy is interesting and important, fluff isn't. It has to be relevant and insightful."*

So, to make the most of your analyst briefing and ensure you come across as engaging, credible and memorable, Babel's Senior Campaign Director, Jen Kelham, provides her top tips:



Be transparent and honest:

Analysts don't want inflated information; they just want the hard facts, backed up by evidence.



Be prepared: Prepare your answers in advance and have relevant information and supporting documents to hand, whether that's a short presentation about your company, press releases or fact sheets. It's important to make the briefing worthwhile.



Tailor your messaging for their area of expertise: You should focus your answers on the subject area of the analyst and tailor your messaging accordingly. Prepare to give a company update, and discuss financial details, your strategic direction, competitive landscape – not forgetting your company's USP – and industry highlights. Also think about growth prospects, goals, challenges and opportunities. And remember that for analysts, it's not so much about what's happening in your company, but why.



Be on time: Their time is precious so respect that, don't be late.

Brilliant briefings

Organising analyst briefings that add value to both parties

The ideal cadence for analyst briefings can vary. Rob prefers to join an annual virtual event where he can get a complete company update. Then supplement this with a series of smaller briefings to cover anything significant that could make a difference in the market.

Camille prefers highly targeted webinars rather than AR events. *“Webinars are more valuable to smaller, targeted groups, and ones that include the CEO are a great value-add as they give good insights.”*

In terms of when is a good month to contact analysts, Rob and Camille both advised that Q4 is a challenging quarter for them. From September onwards, there is just too much going on so they have less time to attend briefings.

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Analysts are the original influencers and companies want to get into their heads. They're the ones having conversations with companies in the industry and putting together reports that influence buyer decisions.

Jen Kelham, Senior Campaign Director, Babel

Expert recognition

Securing coverage in an analyst report

Camille advised that analyst reports take all sorts of shapes and sizes, depending on the analyst house. Some are shorter and only take a week to compile, some are more in-depth and take three to six months while others end up just being a blog.

However, being included in a report requires a certain level of brand visibility as well as investing the time to build relationships with the right analysts. Do your research to find out the regular reports in your sector, then work out who the analysts are that write them and cover your area of expertise. Reach out to them to set up a briefing to start the dialogue.

Promoting your inclusion in an analyst report

Participation in analyst research and reports also doesn't usually involve direct costs since it's based on the analysts' independent evaluations and assessments. However, it does require a certain number of resources to build relationships with the right analysts, make executives available for briefings and do the required preparation.

Leveraging your inclusion in an analyst report is a valuable business tool to enhance your reputation, and visibility, and help generate new business leads. To take advantage of featuring in a report, Jen recommends four steps:



Understand your audience: Make sure you know the audience that the analyst report will reach. This will enable you to tailor your messaging in the right tone and style for any PR and social content you create.



Promote the report on your social channels: Use the report as part of your marketing communications strategy to establish your company as a thought leader. Pull out quotes from the report and highlight positive mentions to share on your company blog and social media.



Write a press release: Provide context around your quotes or positive mentions and explain how a product or service addresses a particular market need or customer pain point. This can help readers understand the significance of a mention and increase their interest in your company.



Further develop and build on the relationship: Send them a thank you message and tag them on your social posts to give them recognition and ensure to keep in touch.

Your future with AR

Investing in AR is key to thriving in an increasingly competitive and data-driven world. Analysts are the original influencers, especially when it comes to tech buying decisions.

However, AR is most effective when working in tandem with PR and IR so you're communicating a single cohesive story to different audiences. This means ensuring your internal and external stakeholders who work in these areas are aligned.

Overall, by embracing AR as an integral part of your marketing strategy, and building strong relationships with analysts, companies can position themselves as thought leaders, enhancing their brand reputation and credibility among their buyer audience.

To find out more about AR programmes and how they can help your company, please contact Babel Senior Campaign Director, Jen Kelham: jennifer@babelpr.com

About Babel

Headquartered in London and with affiliates across the globe, Babel is a technology PR and integrated communications agency. Babel works with established global brands, market challengers and emerging disruptors. Clients rave about our ability to understand their business, bring strategic insights and deliver amazing results that transform their companies and personal reputations. They come to us because they know they will gain access to some of the smartest communications strategists and implementers in the business. It's why our clients consistently rank us highly in terms of overall agency satisfaction, why staff give us high job satisfaction scores, and why journalists, analysts and other influencers are happy to speak to us. For more information, visit: www.babelpr.com

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