

3 things for PR pros to weigh when evaluating new commtech tools

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PR-focused SaaS technology needs to bring real value to the table for teams tasked to do more with less.

Communication and marketing professionals have seen their worlds upended in the past two years. As the pandemic set in, oftentimes the first teams on the budget chopping block were in these categories. Those that made it through the pandemic found themselves on the other side with smaller teams and thinner budgets, with everyone tasked to do more with less.

At the same time, the drive towards remote work and an increasing [reliance on digital tools](#) made more options available for teams looking to supplement their manpower with automation and other time-saving SaaS products. If you're reading this, odds are you yourself have been flooded with targeted ads from various commtech companies aimed at streamlining your operations.

In this competitive landscape, it can be difficult to choose a commtech solution. There are some key considerations every communications pro should bear in mind when selecting software providers. Running through this checklist will help comms, marketing, and PR teams land on tech that will not only help in the short term, but can become a meaningful partner helping comms pros to [succeed into the future](#).

1. Find what adds value to your daily activities and current business objectives

Odds are, if you're looking for a software provider, you're looking to meet an immediate need. Before choosing a service, it's best to evaluate what your current pain points and business objectives are and determine the most important features that will solve the greatest number of them.

For many commtech products, their features won't be monolithic. When evaluating different services, weigh the needs you have or problems to solve then begin identifying services that have the right features to address those needs. For example, you might need software with heightened cybersecurity features if it's used by individuals or team members working remotely. Handling a company's financial information is a particularly sensitive task in a remote environment, so finding solutions with robust encryption measures in addition to other key features can separate the pretty good from the great.

2. New software needs to be forward-thinking and innovative

While meeting immediate pain points is an obvious must for any software you bring into your work ecosystem, it's a dual imperative that the software have long-term value for your organization. Any SaaS technology that you onboard needs to be able to evolve with your needs, and continue to provide value over time.

As an example, news distribution workflow and features offered from many wire services are outdated. When looking to distribute a press release, ask yourself what can streamline the process to make it easier and more cost-effective for your company or your clients. News distribution should offer flexibility in content format and distribution options to meet the needs of the modern media landscape. Your distribution service needs to do more than simply send press releases; it needs the capacity to send digital assets directly to reporters and target audiences for maximum engagement and efficacy.

Additionally, selecting a distribution platform that has a more transparent and predictable pricing model could wind up saving costs in the long run as well as provide better control over budgets and planning.

3. Understand that not all PR tech provides the same relative value

When evaluating service providers, it's also important to look beyond the service itself, and evaluate the company producing it. Too often a SaaS provider will simply be filling a need in a market, but lack the knowledge of the market itself to adapt services to a changing industry. Additionally, if the company you're choosing as a tech service provider doesn't demonstrate an understanding of the industry, getting necessary support can be an added headache.

Do your research. Don't just look into what the service is, but who is providing that service and, more importantly, why they're providing it. When you find a service provider that not only has a good

There is [no shortage of technology options](#) in the industry today. Whether you're on the agency or corporate communications side, the digital transformation that has revolutionized countless industries in the past several years has opened the door to improved efficiency, flexibility and security. Wading through the options is always a challenge, but taking into consideration both short-term needs and long-term goals can help you identify the perfect partner to take your operations to the next level.

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