

# **Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations**

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# Contents

Introduction.....	2
Job Titles and Roles .....	2
Skills required .....	3
Definitions .....	3
Marketing .....	4
Advertising .....	5
Digital Media and Marketing .....	6
PR .....	7
Building Experience and Skills.....	8
Building your Network.....	9
Making Applications .....	10
Finding a Graduate Job.....	11
Professional Bodies .....	12
Useful Resources for vacancies, events and news.....	12

## Introduction

The Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations (PR) sector offers a vast array of opportunities for students and graduates, and is ever changing and growing, due to rapid changes in technology. The great news is that no matter what your degree background, you can forge a career in this sector, if you are willing to put in the work to gain relevant experience.

Due to a growth in digital media and marketing, and an increase in the number of communications agencies who offer their clients a mixture of services, there can lack a clear distinction between advertising, marketing and PR. Roles can incorporate many different elements, and whilst at first this may make opportunities difficult to identify and “pin down”, it can also be fantastic for graduates with an open-minded approach.

If you are creative, adaptable, and willing to learn new skills to keep up with changes in the industry, then this could be the sector for you. Resilience and proactivity are also key skills required in order to get a foot in the door, as work experience and graduate roles are not always advertised and you need to put time and effort into building your network and may have to make speculative applications for opportunities.

Alongside this guide, a useful resource is the ‘which career?’ section on our website, covering advertising, marketing, PR and sales [www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/whichcareer/advertising](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/whichcareer/advertising)

## Job Titles and Roles

Do you know your ‘Advertising Account Planner’ from your ‘Marketing Executive’? It is worth putting the time into researching the different roles to understand the distinctions between them and to see where your skills could best fit. Whilst this guide will cover the main roles briefly, it is not a comprehensive guide to every role in the sector.

Looking at role profiles on Prospects [www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/browse-sector/marketing-advertising-and-pr](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/browse-sector/marketing-advertising-and-pr) and Target Jobs <https://targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/marketing-advertising-and-pr> will help you investigate roles further.

However, you also need look past the initial job title when applying and dig deep to understand each role, as a very similar role at two different companies may be given completely different job titles. It's not always clear cut and in smaller agencies in particular multiple job roles may be merged into one.

Graduate job titles in this sector may include the term "assistant" or "executive". Although the word "executive" may suggest that the role is aimed at someone with several years of experience, it is often a title used to attract new and recent graduates.

## Skills required

- First class communication, both written and spoken
- Ability to work to tight deadlines and under pressure
- Ability to work as a member of a team
- Research skills to understand your audience and clients' needs
- To be [commercially aware](#), which is understanding what is happening in the world from a business perspective
- Creativity/ ideas and ability to 'think outside the box'
- Adaptability and willingness to learn as the technological landscape is constantly changing

## Definitions

Here are some popular acronyms you may come across when looking at job descriptions. A more extensive list can be found here

[blog.hubspot.com/marketing/inbound-marketing-glossary-list](http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/inbound-marketing-glossary-list)

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
B2B	Business to Business	Selling a product or service directly to other businesses
B2C	Business to Client/Customer	Selling a product or service directly to the customer
CRM	Customer Relationship Management	The system a company uses to track the interactions of customers with their business
CTR	Click-through Rate	The percentage of your visitors who click from one part of the website onto another
SEM	Search Engine Marketing	Increasing visibility of a website on search engines through paid searches
PPC	Pay Per Click	Increases visitors through paid advertisements and campaigns
SEO	Search Engine Optimization	Increases visitors through organic tactics, such as keywords and tags
UI	User Interface, also referred to as Usability	Design and development of the front end i.e how the website looks
UX	User Experience	Developing the easiest and best online experience for customers using a website i.e easy navigation

## **Marketing**

Marketing as a profession has grown massively in recent years and can be a varied and interesting career option for graduates. Marketing is the overall process of communicating with the consumer audience, with the aim of raising awareness of the company and its products/services. All subsequent sections in this guide including advertising, digital media and PR can be seen as facets of marketing.

Before any product or service gets promoted to the public, behind the scenes work is required to identify what the customer needs and develop a solution. Typical roles involved at this stage are 'Product and Proposition Managers' who would oversee the development of the product and help bring it to market, and 'Market Researcher' who would analyse qualitative and quantitative data, to help the company make informed decisions about their marketing strategy.

Progressing to delivering strategies, typical roles include a 'Marketing Executive,' who would research, schedule and execute marketing campaigns. A 'Brand Manager' would be responsible for ensuring a long term relationship with the general public, or a more specific target audience, by maintaining consistent messaging across all campaigns.

You can find roles either 'in-house' where you will work within the company to promote and advertise their own product/service, or in an 'agency' where you will be working with a vast range of clients who outsource their marketing to your external agency. In an agency you can get new briefs every day and be working on many different projects at the same time, whereas working in house you will focus on building one brand.

One note of caution is that many graduate roles which are advertised as a mixture of 'marketing and sales' can be predominately sales focused. Therefore if you are looking for marketing focused roles, it is important to analyse job specifications carefully and ask lots of questions at interviews to ensure the job will help you gain skills and grow experience in the area you are interested in.

## **Advertising**

Advertising is one component of all marketing activities, which focuses on sharing the product or service you are offering with the public. A core part of the business involves strategising where, when and to whom adverts should be targeted. This will involve placing ads on the internet,

TV, radio, newspapers, direct mailing amongst others and is typically the most expensive part of the marketing process. Finding new ways to engage and inspire the customer is a key part of the role.

Advertising as a stand-alone traditional offering is increasingly less common, with multi-service agencies and specialist agencies, who can offer a blend of internet advertising with other digital service such as SEO and design work, taking a large chunk of the market.

Understanding the different roles in advertising is important, as they require different skill sets. You can work with clients as an Account Manager, liaising between them and your creative team to create a brief which meets their requirements. You could focus on strategy as a Media Planner, deciding where and when to place adverts, and negotiating deals. Or you might consider more creative roles, working on the visual aspects of the campaign as an Art Director, or the text elements, as a Copywriter.

It's important if you are interested in the creative roles that you begin to build up an online portfolio of your work, through volunteering or creating your own blog or website. Do some research into online portfolio platforms to see what would suit you best, and don't forget to promote your work through your mainstream social media accounts to generate interest.

## **Digital Media and Marketing**

Digital media and marketing is a rapidly growing industry with new job roles being developed all the time. If you are interested in marketing, are willing to think outside the box and develop your skills, then digital marketing can be a very exciting place to be.

The word 'digital' can be off putting to applicants, without a technical degree or experience. You may, for instance, assume that you need to have coding skills and be capable of building a website. This is not typically the case, as many digital media jobs are essentially marketing

ones that focus on the use of social media to engage with target audiences.

However you will need to show an interest in social media and digital technologies, research the trends, and understand the basic concepts, such as how SEO works. Basic coding and SEO skills can be developed on the job, however by exploring this prior to applying for roles and undertaking free online courses, you can give your CV a real boost.

Check out Code Academy [www.codecademy.com](http://www.codecademy.com) if you would like to develop coding skills. And free online Google courses such as this Digital marketing course [www.google.com/onlinechallenge/dmc](http://www.google.com/onlinechallenge/dmc) to brush up on the basics.

It is important that you have a social media presence and are active on all key platforms; Digital media employers are particularly reliant on Twitter for promoting their opportunities. At higher levels, LinkedIn is a common means of advertising opportunities or searching for talent.

## **PR**

PR involves building a rapport with your audience by working with the media to tell your story. Similar to other marketing and advertising roles, you will find roles in both in house teams, and in specialist PR agencies and consultancies.

Essentially PR is all about building, managing and protecting the reputation of your client. Whereas advertising focuses on the direct link between the product/company and the customer, PR is more indirect, with messages reaching the customer through third party communications and endorsements. By feeding positive messages through these third parties you will seek to influence public opinion and establish a positive impression of the organisation.

Roles are very diverse and varied, but typically a PR Executive would be liaising with the media, and answering their questions, writing press

releases, organising events such as press conferences, undertaking research, and managing social media.

## **Building Experience and Skills**

- Make the most of the opportunities on your doorstep, such as promoting activities of a student society. Explore different ways to produce content, including video, and generating a following, and be sure to track what has been successful and unsuccessful. Reflecting in applications and interviews what you have learnt, and quoting statistics of increased followers and impressions is a good way to impress.
- Also look into voluntary organisations and charities as a potential way to gain experience and help an organisation in need. Smaller organisations may not have a social media strategy or any social media presence at all, and would welcome any help with open arms.
- Make speculative approaches (where no vacancies are advertised) to agencies for work experience. Don't forget start-ups and SMEs (small, medium sized enterprises), as small companies may be particularly pleased to be approached. See our Covering Letter Guide for guidance and examples demonstrating how to apply speculatively [www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/applicationsinterviews/c](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/applicationsinterviews/c)
- Become a Brand Ambassador/Manager on campus and learn how to promote brands, and increase engagement of students with the brand. Increasingly Brand Ambassadors are recruited online on platforms such as Instagram to promote the brand to their followers.
- Don't neglect the skills developed through your degree, and if possible think about how you could tailor the topic of your dissertation or final year project to link to the industry e.g. an English student may be able to research 'the language of marketing' – be creative!

## Building your Network

- If you are serious about working in this sector you will need to be active on social media and understand how the different platforms work. You can use social media to help find work experience and entry level roles, through networking and looking out for informal opportunities.
- Building a personal profile using social media might include writing for an existing blog, creating your own blog (and posting regularly!), having active Twitter and LinkedIn accounts. Remember to manage your digital footprint and make sure you set your privacy settings to the maximum on any profiles you want to maintain for purely social purposes (e.g. Facebook)
- Build your network by connecting with professionals and alumni of the University
  - Media Club runs events throughout the year and advertises opportunities on the Facebook group [www.facebook.com/groups/mcrmediacub](http://www.facebook.com/groups/mcrmediacub). Our “Meet the Professionals in Media and Marketing” usually runs in February. Here you can meet alumni and ask them questions about their role in an informal setting
  - Use LinkedIn to connect with and talk to people in the industry, including people you meet at events, during work experience, and alumni of the University.
  - The Manchester Network [www.network.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.network.manchester.ac.uk) is another fantastic way to connect with alumni, and you can ask them questions through the “Ask me About” feature. You can also apply for a mentor in the industry: to find out about how and when to apply see here [www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/experience/mentoring](http://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/experience/mentoring)
- Go to workshops and local networking events, which are often free to attend. Manchester Digital sometimes run these [www.manchesterdigital.com](http://www.manchesterdigital.com) You can also search on [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk) and [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com)

## Case Study

*I also set up a personal blog about beauty and nail art. What initially began as a creative outlet soon turned into a serious hobby, and I was lucky enough to be featured by industry giants, including Cosmopolitan UK, Models Own and elf Cosmetics. Though it never became a big money-maker, my blog helped me to succeed in different ways: I was invited to events, did plenty of networking, and was eventually offered my first full-time job as a Content Creator. My boss later told me that one of the reasons he employed me was because of my blog*

<https://manunicareersblog.com/2016/10/13/my-career-in-digital-marketing-uom-graduate-amy-tells-her-story>

## Making applications

- Look beyond the job title and check the job description. Don't be put off from applying because you don't have all the experience/skills needed. Enthusiasm and willingness to learn on the job may be taken into account.
- If you can't find advertised roles you are interested in, you will need to be proactive and apply to companies/agencies speculatively. Do your research and write bespoke cover letters to companies you are keen on.
- Employers may automatically reject CVs and covering letters where the candidate has addressed "to whom it may concern", rather than taking the time to find out who the Managing Director is.
- Under your personal details on your CV, include a personal profile to give the reader a brief outline of your motivation for applying and showcasing your unique selling points. Personal profiles should be 3-6 lines, although may not be as necessary if you are submitting a covering letter to explain your motivations. You can find CV guidance (including how to write a personal profile) and some marketing and PR example CVs here

[www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/applicationsinterviews/cv](http://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/applicationsinterviews/cv)

- Consider responding to the role type in your application. For instance, if applying for a role where you are producing video, then put forward a video application.
- Be aware that sending out a creative CV can be a gamble, as many organisations, and particularly larger ones prefer to receive standard CVs due to the number of applications they receive. Something more original and imaginative may be well received by smaller companies, but you need read what the organisation says about itself carefully to decide whether they would respond well to something quirky.

## **Finding a graduate job**

- There are a small number of graduate training schemes available in the UK. The following are examples and by no means an exhaustive list:
  - Advertising agencies: AMV BBDO, Leo Burnett, M&C Saatchi, Iris Worldwide, Ogilvy and Valenstein & Fatt;
  - Media & marketing agencies: Engine, Join the Dots;
  - Many large national and international companies run their own marketing graduate schemes: Diageo, Mitchells & Butler, Sky, Unilever;
  - PR agencies: Edelman, Fleishman Hillard Fishburn, Portland, MHP Communications, Tangerine PR, Weber Shandwick.
- The majority of roles exist outside graduate schemes. You may hear them referred to as 'entry-level' roles, and we advertise these on CareersLink, and as part of Manchester Graduate Talent (paid graduate internships and permanent roles in Greater Manchester) [www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/findjobs/graduatejobs/mgt](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/findjobs/graduatejobs/mgt)
- As mentioned previously, many jobs in this industry are not advertised at all and rely on speculative applications. For example advertising and marketing agency BJL in Manchester wait for candidates to contact them, and add candidates they want to interview to their waiting list. They subsequently run separate open days for creatives and account managers/planners and offer work experience, and potentially future graduate opportunities to candidates who shine.

- Typical “entry-level” roles include the following job titles: Marketing Executive, Marketing Officer, Marketing Assistant, Marketing Internship, Graduate Marketing Assistant, Content Manager Intern, Communications Intern, Digital Content/Social Media Intern... and many more

## Professional Bodies

Professional body websites are invaluable for finding out the latest sector trends and improving your commercial awareness ahead of applications and interviews. Many offer tailored advice for graduates, and advertise graduate roles and undergraduate internships. Some professional bodies also offer workshops and events, which are often free and can help you understand the industry, and provide crucial opportunities to network with industry professionals.

- IPA – The Professional Institute for Advertising [www.theadmission.co.uk/jobs](http://www.theadmission.co.uk/jobs)
- CIPR – Chartered Institute of Public Relations [www.cipr.co.uk](http://www.cipr.co.uk)
- PRCA – Public Relations Consultants Association [www.prca.org.uk](http://www.prca.org.uk)
- Chartered Institute of Marketing [www.cim.co.uk/more/get-into-marketing](http://www.cim.co.uk/more/get-into-marketing)
- IDM -The Institute of Direct and Digital Marketing [www.theidm.com](http://www.theidm.com)

## Useful Resources for Vacancies, Events and News

**Prolific North Ltd** is an independently-owned publishing company based in Manchester – the website features news, jobs, listings of top agencies in the North of England and covers Marketing and PR, Broadcasting, Publishing and Digital: [www.prolificnorth.co.uk](http://www.prolificnorth.co.uk)

**The Hiive** describes themselves as ‘the professional network for creative people’ which is 75,000 people strong. Their opportunities section advertises competitions, mentoring schemes, giveaways, events and

webinars. You can also find vacancies here for entry and junior level roles: <https://app.hiive.co.uk/>

**Mediargh** is a go to site for media jobs and paid internships in communications, marketing, social media and more. Between 100 and 300 media jobs and internships are posted every week:  
[www.mediargh.com](http://www.mediargh.com)

**Bubble-jobs** has a digital media jobs board, and some great resources for graduates including a 'How To Find a Job' guide, a 'Get Into Digital Career Portal', and lots of blogs and videos: [www.bubble-jobs.co.uk](http://www.bubble-jobs.co.uk)

**Orchard** is one of the North of England's largest digital, creative and marketing recruitment consultancies and advertise free courses and workshops, jobs and host a blog to help you keep on top of the creative news: [www.orchard.co.uk/careerkickstart.aspx](http://www.orchard.co.uk/careerkickstart.aspx)

**The Juice Academy** offer social media training courses and have previously recruited graduates onto their social media graduate programme. Juice offer six month paid internships and work, in association with agencies. Juice provide the training, and the placement organisations provide the paid work experience:  
[www.juiceacademy.co.uk](http://www.juiceacademy.co.uk)

**PR Careers** offers advice and events, and compiles an annual list of 150 internships and graduate schemes in the sector: [prcareers.co.uk/2017-pr-internships-and-graduate-schemes/](http://prcareers.co.uk/2017-pr-internships-and-graduate-schemes/)

The University subscribes to the publications 'Marketing Week' and 'Campaign' which you can find in the Atrium in University Place, to improve your commercial awareness of the sector trends. You can also find other relevant publications we house in our careers library:  
[manchestercareerslibrary.slls.online](http://manchestercareerslibrary.slls.online)

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