How To Choose the Right PR Agency in Malaysia

PR Agency Evaluation Checklist

This checklist helps you evaluate PR agencies objectively before proposals, pitches, or long-term commitments.

Section 1: Business Alignment

☐ Agency understands our business model
☐ Agency asks about revenue, growth stage, and constraints
☐ Agency links PR outcomes to business goals
☐ Agency challenges vague or unrealistic objectives
☐ Agency advises restraint when publicity is risky

Pass Criteria (Callout Box):
If the agency jumps straight into tactics, pause the evaluation.

Section 2: Industry Relevance

☐ Demonstrated experience in our industry or adjacent sectors
☐ Understands regulatory or compliance considerations
☐ Familiar with our customer decision journey
☐ Can name relevant journalists without prompting
☐ Shares lessons from underperforming campaigns

Red Flag Callout:
Only lifestyle or unrelated case studies.

Section 3: Media Relationships

☐ Explains how journalists decide what to publish
☐ Recent placements in relevant Malaysian outlets
☐ Distinguishes national, business, and niche media
☐ Does not guarantee coverage
☐ Explains exclusives versus syndicated pitching

Section 4: Strategic Thinking

☐ Presents a narrative framework
☐ Explores competitors and positioning
☐ Accounts for timing and market context
☐ Advises restraint when appropriate
☐ Plans campaigns beyond announcements

Maturity Indicator:
Comfortable saying “this is not the right moment.”

Section 5: Digital PR & Influencer Capability

☐ Integrates SEO with earned media
☐ Monitors digital sentiment
☐ Selects influencers based on credibility
☐ Explains disclosure practices
☐ Measures digital impact beyond impressions

Section 6: Cultural & Linguistic Fluency

☐ Strong English writing quality
☐ Accurate Bahasa Malaysia messaging
☐ Mandarin or Chinese media capability if required
☐ Cultural awareness in examples
☐ Avoids literal translation errors

Section 7: Measurement & Reporting

☐ Defines KPIs before execution
☐ Tracks sentiment and share of voice
☐ Links PR activity to business indicators
☐ Provides insights, not just clippings
☐ Recommends next steps

Section 8: Team & Execution

☐ Clear account lead identified
☐ Senior involvement beyond sales pitch
☐ Defined response times
☐ Clear escalation process
☐ Realistic workload allocation

Section 9: Commercial Transparency

☐ Clear scope of work
☐ Itemised deliverables
☐ Defined exclusions
☐ Reasonable contract length
☐ Exit clauses included

Deal Breaker Callout:
Vague retainers without measurable outputs.

Section 10: Pilot Readiness

☐ Willing to run a pilot
☐ Accepts KPI-based evaluation
☐ Open to iteration
☐ Provides pilot reporting framework

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Evaluation Summary

Overall Impression:

☐ Strong Fit ☐ Moderate Fit ☐ Poor Fit

Key Strengths:

Key Concerns:

Decision:

☐ Proceed ☐ Pilot ☐ Decline

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