How To Use Spreadsheets To Become a Digital PR God

Or at least, vaguely impress your boss
Hello! I’m bad at Photoshop

My name’s Tom Chivers.

I’ve worked in Digital Marketing for six years, across SEO, copywriting, social media, but mostly Digital PR.

I’ve worked both agency and in-house, and now currently freelance.

I’ve created some amazing campaigns, and a few woefully misunderstood ones.
I’m also an absolute spreadsheet nerd

Why?

Because if you get good at them you can turn a one-hour job into a five minute one.

If you master them you can become all powerful.
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Learning the tricks of the trade for becoming a spreadsheets whizz and all around nerd.

What formulas does a PR NEED?
FORMULAS I USE EVERY DAY
Everyday formulas

=COUNTIF
Counts the number of times something appears.

Great for finding out how many journos write about a single topic, which I’ll go into a little bit later.

=VLOOKUP
Finds data in a table, based on what you want.

If you’re working with big data sources, this is your perfect solution rather than combing through it manually.

=TRIM
Gets rid of errant spaces.

If you’re trying to make a formula work, sometimes a space that you can’t see can be your undoing.
Everyday formulas

=CONCATENATE

Combines two separate cells together.

Want to combine a journalists first and last name from an export you've pulled? Use this.

=SPLIT

The opposite of concatenate.

Split up a sentences into separate cells using spaces, commas, or whatever your heart desires.

=SUBSTITUTE

Replace something in a cell with whatever you like.

Can be used to change a massive bunch of journalist urls into just their names.
FORMULAS I USE EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE
Every once in a while formulas

- **=LEN**
  
  Tells you how many characters is in a cell.
  
  Helpful if you’re trying to weed out longer sentences using filters or even write tweets in under 280 characters.

- **=IMPORTRANGE**
  
  Imports data from another spreadsheet.
  
  Tremendous for keeping internal data secret from a client while showing them results.

- **=TRANSPOSE**
  
  Pulls in data horizontally.
  
  If you’re pulling a big set of data and you don’t want it to overlap anything, this will make sure it pulls across.
Every once in a while formulas

=PROPER
Capitalises the first word of every sentence.

It’s Really Horrible For People Who Love Sentence Case.

=IFERROR
If your formula has an error, this will write something specific.

If you get an #N/A that you can’t resolve, you can get it to write whatever you want in its place.

=IMPORTXML
Extract information from a website using a query.

Want to extract prices from a website or even a journalists name from an article? This is the formula for you.
AND FORMULAS... JUST BECAUSE

- WHAT IS IT WITH YOU?
- I JUST THINK THEY'RE NEAT.
Pretty neat formulas

=GOOGLEFINANCE
Pulls in up-to-date financial data.
Useful is you fancy yourself as Gordon Geckos can be used to check currency conversions or the stock market.

=GOOGLETRANSLATE
Translates sentences to your chosen language.
Maybe not a good idea if you want to translate your outreach emails, but good for a few phrases here and there.

=SPARKLINE
Creates custom graphs based on your data.
I'll admit to never using this in my life, but the bar charts look cool at least.
Your little black book of links

Discovering how journalists aren’t the only thing you should keep in your little black book.
Lots of PRs talk about their ‘little black book’

When they do, they’re referring to their database of journalists.

I’m here to tell you that you want to start building a database of campaigns.

Because if every time you spot a campaign and add it to your database, it’ll make you a better PR.
But Why?

Not convinced? Here’s some benefits:

- It makes your ideation brainstorming easier, being able to use a wealth of past campaigns as inspiration.
- You’ll be able to see what types of campaign work best, especially when it comes to link potential.
- You can use those campaign links to discover new journalists who don’t mind covering PR content.
What to include?

- **Campaign title** - URLs don’t often give context.
- **Campaign domain** - if you’re stalking a specific competitor, you can filter all their campaigns here.
- **Campaign type** - dream job, index, most searched?
- **Company niche** - what niche do the company sit in?
- **Campaign niche** - companies will often do campaigns across several niches.
- **Links** - how many links did this campaign get?
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<th>Domain</th>
<th>URL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Apply to be Our Official Bean Bag Reviewer</td>
<td>greatbeanbags.com</td>
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<td>towergateinsurance.co.uk</td>
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<td>Best Beach Holidays for Nudists</td>
<td>globehunters.com</td>
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<td>Best City for Each Life Stage</td>
<td>totallymoney.com</td>
<td><a href="https://www.totallymoney.com/mortgages/best-city-for-each-life-stage/">https://www.totallymoney.com/mortgages/best-city-for-each-life-stage/</a></td>
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<td>Best Investments of the 2000s</td>
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**Campaign Type** | **Campaign Niche** | **Company Niche** | **Links** | **Market** |
<table>
<thead>
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<td>Cars, Money</td>
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</table>

*Which looks a little something like this.*
You can then play around with the filters to your heart’s content.

Say you want to see what the best dream job campaigns are: all you need to do is filter by campaign type and sort by most links.
Making the most of Buzzsumo

Utilising spreadsheets to create a bulletproof seeding list for a topic you know nothing about.
Buzzsumo: a fantastic tool

But we can make it better...
How?

Say you’re building a seeding list of journalists on a topic that’s completely alien to you.

You can find a single article here and there, but how do you find out which journalists write about that topic the most?

You guessed it, Buzzsumo.
How, though?

Buzzsumo doesn’t give up this information within its dashboard.

But with some simple excel wizardry, you can turn a data heavy export into something valuable.
Basically:

You can turn this scary-looking huge set of data on a topic.
Into this list of journalists who write about that topic the most.

In 8 steps.
Step 1: Search the topic.

Go to Buzzsumo, type in your topic and click export as CSV. This will send a file to your email.
Step 2: Add a new sheet to your data.

Open up that CSV in sheets and add a separate sheet.
Step 3: Pull through all the unique author names.

In your new sheet, write the formula =UNIQUE and the highlight column M in the previous sheet where that big list of names lives.
Step 4: Count the number of articles that journalist has written.

Next to your first newly populated name, write the formula =COUNTIF highlight the previous M column like you did before, put a comma, and then go back to the new sheet and write A2… or whatever cell the name is in.
Step 5: Pull out the publication the journalist writes for.

Hop back into your sheet with all the data in and insert a new column to the right of author name, then write the following: 

```
=REGEXREPLACE(B2,"http:\/\/\https:\/\/\lwww\lblog\l\|.\*|\?.\*|\#\.*",""")
```

This extracts the domain from the article URL.

Don’t worry, I’m uploading these slides to slideshare so you can download them for reference!
Step 6: Find the publication linked to the journalist.

Hop back into your new sheet and get ready to do a VLOOKUP!

Basically, a vlookup has 3 questions you need to answer:
What you’re looking for, where you’re looking for it and in what column will you find it in.
Step 6 cont:

So basically,

1. You’re looking for the author’s name in A2 (which is Sam Carney)
2. You’re looking for it in columns M:N in the 1st sheet (where the authors name and domain appear)
3. You’re looking for it in 2 (the second column)
Step 7: Remove all the formulas from your sheet.

To find out who the best journalists are, you’re going to use a filter, which isn’t going to work with the formulas still there.

Just highlight columns A–C, click copy and then paste as values.
Step 8: Find out who the best journalists are for that topic.

Put a filter on your data and then sort Count by Z–A.

You’ve now got a ready to go list of the journalists who write about that topic the most!
Thank you!

You can reach me here if you have any questions...

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