FPRA's Golden Image & Image Awards Judging Process & Rubric

Overview

Award-winning public relations programs require sound planning and measurable objectives, which are grounded in research and are evaluated for return on investment. The scoring matrix for the Golden Image Awards, a statewide competition, and the Image Awards, locally based competitions, follow these fundamental principles of public relations programming.

The judging method employed in these prestigious competitions allows the judges to concentrate on the following criteria required in each Golden Image Award and Image Award entry:

Two-page Summary Requirements:

Research/Situation Analysis	**(10 points)**	
Planning	**(20 points)**	
Implementation	**(15 points)**	→ **Two-page Summary = 70 points**
Evaluation	**(10 points)**	
Budget	**(15 points)**	
Support Material	**(30 points)**	

The following pages are a breakdown of the judging rubric used to score these noted sections.

IMPORTANT UPDATE:

FPRA has recently revamped its Image and Golden Image judge scoring process to provide more specificity. The new judging instrument requires specific criteria to be met to earn an increasing level of points.

Because additional information is being asked to be addressed by entrants, the one-inch margin rule is changing to a .75 margin and the double-spacing requirement has changed to 1.5 spacing. These changes will provide entrants with the additional space needed to cover the new criteria outlined in the provided rubric. New requirements include the following:

- Goals are asked to be identified.
- Strategies and tactics should be provided.
- Audience identification should address psychographic and demographic information.
- Communication channels used to reach target audience should be included.
- Sequencing of events (or timeline) addressed within implementation section.
- Assigned responsibilities for plan execution should be addressed within implementation phase.
- Inclusion of communication messages used to reach identified target audiences.

For specifics related to these new judging metrics, please consult the following judging rubric.

The following rubric is grounded in our profession's established body of knowledge. Sources used to develop rubric include the "Cutlip & Center's Effective Public Relations, Eleventh Edition," the "APR Study Guide from the Universal Accreditation Board" and "Public Relations and the Power of Creativity: Strategic Opportunities, Innovation and Critical Challenges."

JUDGING TEAMS:

Each entry will be scored by a team of three judges. Judging teams will be assigned to the same set of entries within any given Division and Category to ensure consistency and fairness. All appointed Image judges must have won an Image or Golden Image Award and it is strongly encouraged that they be Accredited. Judges will score each entry independently and then work as a team for final award selection/confirmation.

JUDGING SCORING PROCESS

All Image entries must be submitted via FPRA's online Image Awards platform to be considered as an official Image Award entry. Through this platform, judges will score entries by answering a series of questions that correspond with the provided rubric. Based on their answers, the system will assign a score to each section being answered. These scores and award assignments, based on the judge's answers, will then be provided to the judging teams to review and verify.

Research/Situation Analysis Section (10 Pts.)

Research is the formal and/or informal gathering of information to understand a situation, check assumptions and perceptions, define the problem and publics and determine the appropriate course of action.

DEFINING THE PROBLEM (5 points)

Poor   The purpose of the project is not stated. (0 points)

Fair   Purpose of project is stated, but background information provided is insufficient to fully understand the scope of the situation. (2 points)

Good   Purpose of the project is stated and defined. The situation's history and forces operating on it were made clear. However, the entities involved or affected were not made clear or vice versa. (3 points)

Very Good   The purpose of the project was provided and defined but should have been more concise. However, all information needed to understand the situation was provided. This includes history, forces operating on the matter and all those involved or affected were identified. (4 points)

Outstanding The purpose of the project was concise and clearly stated and defined. A collection of all that is known about the situation, its history, operating forces, and those involved or affected internally and externally were provided. (5 points)

EMPLOYED RESEARCH METHODS (5 points)

Poor   The summary did not address either primary (research you conduct yourself) or secondary (research that has already been compiled) methods used to gather information needed for effective planning. (0 points)

Fair   The summary did mention that research was conducted but did not address what type of research was done. (2 points)

Good   Either primary or secondary methods of research was identified for collecting data for planning purposes. (3 points)

Very Good   Both primary and secondary research methods were identified for data collection and planning purposes. (4 points)

Outstanding The summary demonstrated that both primary and secondary research were conducted and were properly identified. Further, the results gleaned from the research presented useful information for the planning process. (5 points)

Planning Section (20 Points)

Among the planning elements are audience identification and setting goals and objectives based on research findings. Objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time specific. The stated goals and objectives should address the identified problem or issue. The planning section should distinguish goals, objectives, strategies and tactics. In addition, the program's/project's goal(s) should align with organizational mission and goals.

GOAL-DIRECTED STRATEGIC THINKING (5 points)

Goals are longer-term, broad, global and future statements of "being."

Poor   No goal(s) was provided, or goal(s) was provided but did not provide a clearly defined outcome. (0 points)

Good   Goal(s) was stated and provided clear direction to address the identified problem/issue/opportunity. Unable to determine, though, if the stated goal(s) makes sense within the context of the organization's broader vision, mission and operational goals, as this information was not provided. (3 points)

Outstanding   Goal(s) was stated and provided clear direction to addressing the identified problem/issue/opportunity. The goal(s) makes sense within the context of the organization's broader vision, its mission and its operational goals. (5 points)

S.M.A.R.T. OBJECTIVES PROVIDED (5 points)

*S.M.A.R.T. objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable (or Attainable), Relevant and Time Specific.

Poor   Objectives contain only one or no elements* outlined above. (0 points)

Fair   Objectives contain two elements* outlined above. (2 points)

Good   Objectives contain three elements* outlined above. (3 points)

Very Good   Objectives contain four elements* outlined above. (4 points)

Outstanding   Objectives contain all the elements* outlined above. (5 points)

STRATEGIES & TACTICS DISTINGUISHED (5 points)

Poor   Neither strategies nor tactics were distinguished for accomplishing the stated objectives. (0 points)

Fair   Strategies and tactics were stated, but either the stated strategies and/or tactics were incorrectly identified (submitter did not demonstrate an understanding of strategies and/or tactics). (2 points)

Good   Strategies were correctly distinguished for accomplishing the stated objectives, but not tactics or vice versa. (3 points)

Very Good   Strategies and tactics were correctly distinguished for accomplishing the stated goal(s) and objectives. (4 points)

Outstanding   Strategies and tactics were correctly distinguished for accomplishing the stated goal(s) and objectives. Strategies and/or tactics demonstrated a high level of creativity and/or innovation. (5 points)

AUDIENCE IDENTIFICATION (5 Points)

Poor   Audience identification was not addressed. (0 points)

Fair   Audience(s) was identified, and either psychographic (opinions, beliefs, attitudes, values, etc.) or demographic information was provided to give a better understanding of the identified audience(s). (2 points)

Good   Audience(s) was identified. Both psychographic and demographic information were given to better understand the varying needs of these groups. (3 points)

Very Good   Audience(s) was identified. Both psychographic and demographic information were given to better understand the varying needs of these groups. Appropriate communication channels/vehicles for reaching the target audience(s) were identified. (4 points)

Outstanding   Audience(s) was identified. Both psychographic and demographic information were given to better understand the varying needs of these groups. Interests of influential institutions, groups and individuals were assessed, as needed. Appropriate communication channels/vehicles for reaching the target audience(s) were identified. (5 points)

Implementation Section (15 Points)

The implementation section outlines the action and communication employed for achieving the stated goal(s) and objectives. How and when the plan's key message(s) were communicated should be addressed. These message(s) should work to motivate the receiver's (identified target audience) interest, as determined by research, and cause a response (goal directed). Within this section, judges should be given enough information to understand the sequence of events (timeline) and assigned responsibilities for plan execution.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS/TIMELINE (5 points)

Poor   Sequencing of events (a timeline of activities) employed during the implementation phase was not identified. (0 points)

Good   Plan addressed the sequence of events (a timeline of the activities) employed during the implementation phase. (3 points)

Outstanding Plan addressed the sequence of events (a timeline of the activities) employed during the implementation phase and outlined assigned responsibilities for plan execution. (5 points)

EFFECTIVENESS OF PLAN MESSAGING (5 points)

Poor   No communication message(s) was provided for the situation, time, place and audience(s). (0 points)

Fair   Communication message(s) for one of the identified target audience, not all, was provided. (2 points)

Good   Communication message(s) for all identified target audiences was provided. (3 points)

Very Good   Communication message(s) for all identified target audiences was provided and it was demonstrated that the message(s) was disseminated via channels used by the target audiences. (4 points)

Outstanding Communication message(s) for all identified target audiences was provided. It was demonstrated that the message(s) was disseminated via channels used by the target audiences and motivated the reciever to act/respond to the message(s). (5 points)

PROGRAM/PLAN CREATIVITY (5 points)

Demonstration of creativity in public relations may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Program/project messaging is original and adaptive, new and functional
- Demonstration of originality and effectiveness
- Innovative ways of sending messages whose content is unconventional yet adaptable
- Sensitivity to problems (recognizing that several problems exist where it may appear to some that only one problem exits)
- Succeeded in earning trust, adding value changing the attitude, behavior and/or beliefs of the company's/organization's publics
- Use of visual storytelling vehicles
- Use of unexpected and unconventional strategies, tactics and/or tools
- Making everyday life more meaningful, simple, joyful and/or easier
- Conceptual blending – a campaign that aims to create a new space where the target group is very much aware of the fact that the campaign is for the good of the company/organization, but still aims to create a difference for the target group as well.

Point Value = 5   Did the project demonstrate creativity?

No (0 points)

Yes, there was demonstration of some level of creativity. (2 points).

I was impressed with the demonstrated level of creativity. (3 points).

I was very impressed with the demonstrated level of creativity (5 points).

"Very impressed" is defined by answering the following question. "Did the entry's level of creativity have the 'big idea' factor?" *Note: Creativity is still a vague concept for the public relations field. However, findings show that creative campaigns need to send messages that are original and adaptive, new and functional and potentially useful. The noted list above attempts to identify some, and is not considered all inclusive, of the characteristics that help to define creativity in the public relations profession.*

Evaluation Section (10 Pts.)

The evaluation section determines if goals and objectives of the entrant's program or project were met and the extent to which the results or outcomes of the program's/project's have been accomplished. This section is meant to answer the question "How well did the entrant do?"

OBJECTIVES MET (5 pts.)

Poor The evaluation of the program/project did not meet any of the stated objectives. or no objectives were provided to evaluate against. (0 points)

Fair The evaluation of the program/project met some of the stated objectives. (2 points)

Good The evaluation of the program/project met all the stated objectives. (3 points)

Very Good The evaluation of the program/project met all the stated objectives and the results were well documented. (4 points)

Outstanding The evaluation of the program/project exceeded the stated objectives and the results were well documented. (5 points)

GOALS MET (5 points)

Poor The entry did not meet the stated goal(s) or goals were not provided (0 points)

Good The evaluation of the program/project demonstrated that inroads were made to meeting the stated goal(s). (3 points)

Outstanding The evaluation of the program/project demonstrated that the stated goal(s) was achieved, or the problem solved. (5 points)

Budget (15 pts.)

To properly assess an award-winning program, all costs associated with the project/entry must be identified, either in dollar figures or the percentage/ratio of cost to the department's or organization's overall budget. This includes staff time and in-kind contributions, if applicable. The primary purpose for budget documentation, is to demonstrate why the submitted program/project equates to a worthwhile investment.

BUDGET DOCUMENTATION (5 points)

Poor No budget information was included. (0 points)

Fair Budget numbers (dollar figures or percentages/ratios) were included but no additional information or explanation of how budget was utilized was provided. (2 points)

Good Budget numbers (dollar figures or percentages/ratios) were included and itemized, per utilization, but did not include staff time or vice versa. (3 points)

Very Good Detailed budget information (presented in dollar figures or percentages/ratios) and staff time were included. The program/project did not exceed budget. (4 points)

Outstanding Detailed budget information (presented in dollar figures or percentages/ratios) and staff time were included. The program/project did not exceed budget. Or it came under budget and/or utilized funds in an exceedingly creative way. (5 points)

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 points)
Demonstrated Return on Investment (ROI) = 10 Point Scale
A return on investment was demonstrated (a comparison of the program's/project's overall cost to the return received as a result of the implemented program or executed project)

ROI demonstration methods may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Increased sales or usage of service achieved
- Comparing baseline analytics (web and social media) with analytics following program/project completion
- Increase in social media engagement and following increase
- Sentiment analysis of media mentions, before, during and after program program/project completion
- Survey result comparisons (benchmark data vs. follow-up survey data)
- Donated services quantified (if applicable)
- Costs comparisons to industry standards were made (if able and appropriate)
- Higher ranking for keywords achieved through comparison of benchmark data
- Increased website traffic using baseline data for comparison
- Increase in subscriptions (newsletters, email signups, etc.)
- Industry or local award given to business or professional associated with project

Did the project demonstrate an impressive ROI?
No (0 points)

I believe the noted return on investment was reasonable and justified the cost (time, money and other resources) employed to achieving the end outcome(s). (4 points)

I was impressed with the demonstrated ROI. (7 points)

I was very impressed with the demonstrated ROI*. (10 points)

Triggers Judges' Award Consideration

- "Impressive" is defined by answering the following question. "Did the entry's ROI have the 'wow factor'?" Only entries that exceed their stated objectives by what the judge considers to be a wide margin should be considered for a "yes" level response. Judges have the latitude to determine what they believe to be considered an "impressive" ROI.
- "Reasonable" is defined as what should be considered an expected gain for resources exchanged to achieve a desired goal/outcome.

Support Material (30 pts.)

This section should contain the materials that support or substantiate information provided in the two-page summary. An effective support material section works to quickly summarize the program/project entry for the reviewing judges.

3 points can be earned for a "yes" response for questions 2-11.

1. No support material was provided.
2. The support material section included a table of contents. (3 points)
3. The support material was presented in an easy to follow format. (3 points)
4. Research documentation (i.e. findings) were included with support material. (3 points)
5. Support material reflected the implementation of the program's/project's strategies. (3 points)
6. Support material reflected the implementation of the program's/project's tactics. (3 points)
7. Representations of the program's/project's printed and/or digital content (tools) was included with the support material. (3 points)
8. The support material reflected noted budgetary items. (3 points)
9. The support material was professional looking. (3 points)
10. The support material's graphics supported the program's/project's key messaging. (3 points) OR, if graphics are not applicable, the answer the following: The support material's tools supported the program's/project's key messaging.
11. The support material was creative and/or innovative. (3 points)