

Digital PR Strategy Canvas

Strategy first, format second

One page. Fill it in before anyone pitches a survey, a map or a data study. Companion to "Digital PR Strategies for 2026" at greenflagdigital.com/digital-pr-strategy/

Green Flag Digital
Digital PR, SEO and AI
visibility

1 BUSINESS GOAL THIS SUPPORTS

Revenue, pipeline, category position, a raise, a launch. One sentence, with a number and a date.

2 WHAT THE MARKET MUST BELIEVE

Finish: "After this work, buyers and journalists will believe that ..."

3 WHO HAS TO HEAR IT

ICP and the outlets they actually read. Name three publications.

4 THEME YOU WANT TO OWN

Narrow enough to win. "AI" is not a theme. "AI security risk for mid-market finance teams" might be.

6 FORMAT CANDIDATES

Up to five vehicles that could do the job above. Survey, index, calculator, ranking, map, expert commentary, teardown, recurring report.

8 KPI AND THE 90-DAY CHECK

Links earned, placements, mentions, share of voice, assisted pipeline. What number, checked when, by whom?

9 PORTFOLIO SPLIT

Across a year of campaigns. Expect 1 in 4 to over-perform, 1 to under-perform, 2 in between.

20% testing new ideas	50% scaling what works	30% longer playbooks
--------------------------	---------------------------	-------------------------

5 PICK ONE STRATEGY (TICK ONE, NOTE A BACKUP)

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Category ownership. Be the brand attached to a topic. Own a lane. | ☐ Audience expansion. Reach people before they search for you. |
| ☐ Search authority acceleration. Links and coverage tied to pages that already matter. | ☐ Proof of expertise. Show judgment the market cannot get elsewhere. |
| ☐ Market education. Name the problem before buyers can search for it. | ☐ Competitive contrast. Make the old way look expensive, slow or risky. |
| ☐ Trust transfer. Borrow credibility from outlets buyers already believe. | ☐ Demand capture support. Put PR behind pages that already make money. |
| ☐ Narrative repositioning. Get out of the wrong mental box. Before and after. | ☐ Signal creation. Repeated evidence humans, search engines and AI systems can see. |

Why this one and not the runner-up: _____

7 VALIDATE EACH FORMAT (SCORE 1 TO 5)

Dimension	A	B	C	D	E
Format fits the strategy					
Audience cares					
Timing (why now)					
Expertise we can prove					
Authority to say it					
Trust (would a journalist cite it)					
Scale (can it repeat)					
Budget realistic					
Profit link is visible					
Expectations set internally					
Total (out of 50)					

How to fill it in (about 20 minutes)

Do it alone first, then once more with the person who owns the marketing budget. Where the two versions disagree is where the campaign will get stuck later.

1. **Boxes 1 to 3, five minutes.** Write the business goal as a number with a date. Then the belief: the sentence a buyer or journalist should repeat after seeing your work. Then the three publications your ICP reads. If you cannot name three, stop and find out.
2. **Box 4, two minutes.** The theme sits where journalists cover it, buyers care about it and you can credibly talk about it. Cut it in half if it feels comfortable.
3. **Box 5, three minutes.** Tick one strategy. Note the runner-up and why it lost. If you ticked three, you have not picked.
4. **Box 6, five minutes.** List up to five formats that could do that job. Do not evaluate yet.
5. **Box 7, five minutes.** Score each format 1 to 5 on each dimension. A total under 35 is a maybe. Under 30, drop it. The gap between your top two scores is your confidence.
6. **Boxes 8 and 9.** Pick one KPI and a date you will look at it. Decide where this campaign sits in the 20/50/30 split before you spend.

What a finished canvas looks like (hypothetical): a mid-market payroll company, goal "add 40 demo requests a month by Q2", belief "hiring is getting slower and more expensive for small employers", theme "small-business hiring friction", strategy audience expansion, top format a quarterly hiring-time index scoring 41/50, KPI 12 placements and 8 links in 90 days, sitting in the 50% scaling bucket because a prior data study already worked.

Next step when the canvas is done: the Implementation Sprint Kit (idea validator workbook, campaign brief, outreach and results tracker, decision brief, prompt pack, field guide) is available from the article at greenflagdigital.com/digital-pr-strategy/

Strategy	Best for	Watch out for
Category ownership	Competitive or emerging categories where share of voice still matters	A theme so broad nobody can own it
Search authority acceleration	Companies where organic search is already a top growth channel	Links with no topical relationship to money pages
Market education	Problems buyers feel but have not named	Writing like a white-paper committee
Trust transfer	Newer brands, high-consideration purchases, regulated categories	Vanity media the audience does not trust
Narrative repositioning	Rebrands, upmarket moves, category expansion	Expecting one campaign to change the story
Audience expansion	Expensive paid categories, crowded search, long warm-up cycles	Going so broad the brand disappears
Proof of expertise	Expert-led, technical or regulated companies	Quotes any competitor could have given
Competitive contrast	Crowded categories where vendors look alike	Cheap contrarianism
Demand capture support	Existing SEO traction and clear attribution	Clever assets that live on an island
Signal creation	Long-term category games, B2B, SaaS, marketplaces	Thinking one campaign will do it

Evidence note. The 1-in-4 pattern, the 20/50/30 split and the budget ranges are Green Flag Digital practitioner heuristics from running 30+ campaigns, not published research. The AI-visibility claim in the article (branded web mentions correlate 0.66 with AI Overview brand mentions) is Ahrefs vendor research from May 2025 across 75,000 brands; correlation, not causation. Google's AI features documentation (updated December 2025) states no special markup is required to appear in AI Overviews or AI Mode.