



Public Relations Manager Annual Report for District Council – 10 October 2026

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Portfolio	PRM
For the period from July to September 2026	

Overview

I started working on the role of Public Relations Manager for District 74 in July 2026. The District serves 114 clubs across six divisions in Southern Africa, including South Africa, Namibia, Botswana and Lesotho. This report summarises public relations activity during the first quarter of the 2026–2027 Toastmasters year.

The first quarter focused on establishing BrandStorm as the foundation of a more deliberate District-wide public relations system. BrandStorm PR System priorities include strategic messaging, stronger digital visibility, consistent content, event and campaign promotion, member and club recognition, and practical support for Club Vice Presidents Public Relations (VPPRs).

During the period, PR activity has increasingly connected the District website, Facebook Page, Facebook Members Group, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, X and YouTube rather than treating each channel as a stand-alone outlet. The official District Linktree brings these channels together and also directs audiences to ConquerCon 2027, Achieving Excellence Magazine, Club Growth Academy, BrandStorm PR MasterClass, New Member Onboarding and other District resources.

The District website published multiple July and August news items covering Club Growth, membership renewal, member achievements, Super Five, the membership dues engagement session and other District initiatives. The website also surfaces longer-form resources such as Club Growth Academy Session and District video contents.

District communication remains active and is becoming increasingly coordinated and structured.

Generating Awareness of Toastmasters in the Community

Community-facing awareness was sustained through recurring content programmes and campaign-led communication:

- Monthly club anniversary posts celebrating that month's District 74 club charter anniversaries.
- “Personal Powerful Progress” (PPP) posts celebrating members completing two or more Pathways levels.
- A 30-day “Why I Renewed” testimonial campaign featuring one member per day, structured around WHY I RENEWED / WHAT TOASTMASTERS HAS DONE FOR ME / WHY SHOULD SOMEONE RENEW and closing with a call to renew before the end of September.
- Campaign and achievement communications covering the Smedley Award, Verified Complete clubs, the DCP 5 Sprint, membership renewal, new clubs, Club Growth, Pathways level completions, District learning opportunities, Heritage Day, ConquerCon 2027, and member and club recognition.

The website became a stronger part of the awareness strategy. July and August publishing included the 2026/27 Club Growth Team, Club Growth Academy, DTM achievements, renewal campaigns, the Super Five Member Sponsor Reward, member stories and practical renewal guidance. The website therefore functioned increasingly as a central content hub to which social channels could direct audiences.

Across social media, the District maintained an integrated presence through the Facebook Page, Facebook Members Group, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, X and YouTube. The roles of these channels are becoming clearer: public awareness and announcements on the Page and LinkedIn; community conversation in the Facebook Group; visual and short-form storytelling on Instagram and TikTok; rapid information distribution on X; and longer-form education and storytelling on YouTube.

LinkedIn is particularly relevant to District 74 because of its professional and corporate audience.

Beyond The Podium podcast has extended District storytelling beyond short social posts. The podcast format creates longer-form stories around leadership, growth, visibility and personal development. The current District digital ecosystem promotes Beyond The Podium alongside other District resources, creating opportunities to repurpose episodes into short clips, quotations, articles and social posts.

The Club Growth Academy has similarly created educational content with longer-term value. The first session, promoted in July and presented by Frank Tsuro, DTM, focused on club building and is now surfaced as a reusable District resource. This creates a communication pathway from awareness to education and, potentially, club-growth action.

The BrandStorm PR MasterClass extends the same principle to PR capability. Instead of the PR function depending on the PRM producing every communication, the District is creating reusable training to equip VPPRs and communication leaders to produce stronger, more consistent content themselves.

Together, the website, social channels and video resources are beginning to function as an interconnected communications funnel: social awareness → website or resource discovery → education or event information → participation, enquiry or club action. The next priority is to measure this audience journey, rather than assessing individual posts in isolation.

The hashtags #OrdinaryToExtraordinary and #D74BrandStorm have been used with distinct strategic purposes. #OrdinaryToExtraordinary is the broader District narrative around member achievement, leadership, growth and transformation. #D74BrandStorm is more specialised, identifying the PR, branding and visibility system.

The Speech Contest programme will be communicated soon as the District moves into contest season. The PR portfolio will support the programme through timely announcements, contestant recognition, educational preparation, contest information and amplification of achievements across Clubs, Areas and Divisions.

Adhering to the Toastmasters Brand

All design deliverables this quarter followed the Toastmasters brand manual v2.0 visual identity — Loyal Blue, True Maroon and Cool Gray, with Happy Yellow — and the typography standard of Montserrat for headlines and Source Sans 3 for body text. This supports the role of VPPRs as brand ambassadors and provides greater consistency across District communications.

The BrandStorm approach was developed to translate brand compliance into practical PR capability. Its framework is Strategy → Visibility → Growth, supported by strategic messaging, digital foundations, content consistency, event advertising and community outreach.

BrandStorm has therefore been positioned as a system rather than a single campaign. Templates, toolkits, practical guidance, Canva and digital communication support, analytics and recurring masterclasses are intended to help clubs communicate consistently while protecting the Toastmasters brand.

The BrandStorm PR MasterClass is designed as a recurring 90-minute learning intervention every 90 days. The purpose is to equip VPPRs and District communication leaders with practical tools and current approaches to branding, content creation and digital visibility.

The first-quarter communication approach has also placed greater emphasis on storytelling rather than announcements alone. Member achievements, club milestones, leadership journeys, educational opportunities and growth stories provide human evidence of the value Toastmasters creates.

The next stage is to strengthen consistency across the District's six divisions and ensure that local PR coordinators and clubs can apply the same principles while retaining authentic local stories and community relevance.

Team Structure & Governance

The full 27-member BrandStorm Crew, also referred to as the District 74 PR Team, was built out and named across the Strategy, Visibility and Growth framework.

The structure includes External and Internal Communications Assistant PRMs (APRMs), who form part of the "District PR Trio", together with Branding & Design, Analytics, social-media coordinators for Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, X, LinkedIn and YouTube, the Beyond The Podium podcast, and the Achieving Excellence Magazine teams with a Managing Editor and twelve team members as part of the 27-member BrandStorm Crew.

The District Facebook Members Group was brought under APRM Internal Communications, and weekly PR Trio meetings were established with both APRMs and the District Webmaster/Administration Manager.

The structure is intended to move the portfolio away from a single-person communications model and towards a service model in which the PRM enables VPPRs, APRMs, coordinators and content teams to contribute to a consistent District communication system.

The public digital ecosystem now links the main channels together. The official District Linktree connects Facebook Page, Facebook Group, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, X and YouTube, while also directing audiences to the website, ConquerCon 2027, Achieving Excellence Magazine, Club Growth Academy, BrandStorm PR MasterClass and other resources.

The podcast, magazine, social-media and analytics functions are therefore not being treated as separate projects. They form part of a wider communications ecosystem in which one story or programme can be distributed through several channels and ultimately directed towards a District resource or action.

Governance & Planning Deliverables

Governance tools now include a KPI document, strategic guidelines and a scorecard for monitoring commitments and quality. Work also continued through September on the formal District Communication Plan—an Excel workbook covering the team structure, quarterly campaign schedules, social media strategy, PR budget, compliance checklist and crisis communication protocol.

The website is increasingly being used as the District's central information and content hub.

Challenges

- Some Division and Area PR Coordinator appointments across the six divisions are still to be finalised.
- As a newly formed team, members have needed time to settle into their roles, obtain the necessary platform access and establish effective ways of working within the BrandStorm PR system for Strategic Visibility for Growth.
- The scale of District 74 creates a coordination challenge: the District spans 114 clubs, six divisions and multiple countries, and local PR capacity varies. Consistency therefore depends on clear processes, accessible resources and functioning local communication structures.
- A second challenge is moving from activity to measurable impact. It is relatively easy to count posts, campaigns and videos; it is harder to establish whether communication produced greater awareness, engagement, enquiries, attendance or membership-related action.
- A third challenge is the fragmentation of analytics across platforms. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, X, YouTube and the website each provide different metrics and definitions. Without a consolidated dashboard, it is difficult to produce a single defensible District-wide growth figure.
- Website traffic presents a similar challenge.
- Podcast and video performance has been inconsistent, with periods of both growth and decline.
- These challenges indicate the next maturity stage of the PR portfolio: establishing reliable measurement alongside consistent content production.

Leadership skills developed in the role

The scope of the role over this quarter drew on and developed the following:

- Team building and delegation — standing up and structuring a 27-member cross-functional District PR Team, with specialised responsibilities spanning communications, design, analytics, social media, podcasting and the District magazine.
- Stakeholder coordination — establishing recurring PR Trio meetings across PR, Webmaster/Administration and both APRM portfolios, while coordinating with District leadership, programme teams, club leaders and communication volunteers.
- Governance and structured reporting — translating District Director, Program Quality Director and Club Growth Director mandates into measurable role-level KPIs, guidelines and scorecards.
- Strategic thinking — developing BrandStorm as a system for Strategy, Visibility and Growth rather than treating public relations as a sequence of isolated announcements.
- Digital leadership — managing a portfolio that spans public social channels, a District website, long-form video, podcast content, online resources and campaign hashtags, each requiring different communication and measurement approaches.
- Content strategy — developing recurring content programmes and using member stories, achievements, campaigns and educational resources to create a more consistent narrative around the value of Toastmasters.
- Executive communication — preparing and delivering a structured report to District leadership and translating a broad PR mandate into specific systems, campaigns and deliverables.
- Brand stewardship — maintaining consistent adherence to Toastmasters brand standards across a high volume of design output and using BrandStorm to help extend that consistency beyond the central PR team.
- Measurement discipline — recognising that visibility alone is insufficient and that the PR portfolio needs reliable evidence of reach, engagement, traffic and action in order to improve decision-making.

Closing Remarks

Thanks to the BrandStorm Crew, also known as the District 74 PR Team, and to you as District 74 leadership for your support through the first quarter.

The first three months focused on laying the foundation for a PR system that is more strategic, consistent and useful to clubs and District leaders. The portfolio has moved beyond publishing announcements to building a connected communications ecosystem across social media, the District website, YouTube, Beyond The Podium, the Club Growth Academy, BrandStorm training and Achieving Excellence Magazine.

Quarter 2 will focus on finalising Division PR Coordinator appointments; implementing the District Communication Plan; strengthening analytics and reporting; intensifying promotion of ConquerCon 2027; recognising Ordinary Members Doing Extraordinary Things; educating clubs about Club Fitness Rewards (CFRs); celebrating Pathways level completions; supporting new-club chartering; and making practical tips and resources more visible and accessible.

I also look forward to the next Club Growth Academy and BrandStorm PR MasterClass, as well as continuing VPE, New Member Onboarding and Mentors Without Borders sessions that provide value to District 74 members.

The Speech Contest programme will be communicated soon as we move into contest season, supported by clear information, preparation opportunities, contestant recognition and timely amplification across the District's digital channels. Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI) training and other contest-season communications will also provide further opportunities to demonstrate the communication excellence taking place across District 74.

The objective of the PR portfolio remains clear: not simply more communication, but better communication—communication that increases District 74's visibility, helps prospective members find clubs, showcases member achievements, equips VPPRs to communicate effectively and, ultimately, supports sustainable growth across clubs, areas and divisions.

Strategic Visibility for Growth.