



Countdown to IPO:
A Winning
Communications Timeline



COMMUNICATIONS

Introduction

An IPO is one of the biggest moments – if not, **THE biggest moment** – in a company’s trajectory. It’s a time to celebrate the growth and impact of your company and embark on a new chapter for your business.

Strategic communication is critical to maximizing the moment and setting your company up for public company success – creating brand awareness and favor among customers, partners and employees, as well as broad shareholder audiences. To instill confidence and enthusiasm around your brand and go-forward trajectory, IPO communications planning and programming must begin as early as 12-24 months before you ring that bell.

While specific communications strategies should align with the current media landscape and news consumption habits, there are tried-and-true best practices that marketing and communications can use as guardrails for their planning.

Based on our experience supporting brands from early venture raises, through investor roadshows, to public market debuts (and beyond), V2 has compiled a communications timeline **to keep your brand on track with your IPO journey**.

Path to IPO Timeline

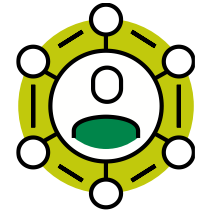


**12-24
Months Out**

Build executive branding,
media presence and
investor relationships

Elevate brand visibility,
empower employees and
engage an IR firm

**6-12
Months Out**



**3-6
Months Out**

Conduct roadshows,
refine messaging and do
a media push



**1-3
Months Out**

Finalize communications,
book media and prepare
for investor engagement

Execute interviews, ring
the bell and celebrate the
milestone!

IPO Day



Post-IPO

Maintain momentum with
earnings calls, media
engagement and
compliance

12-24 Months Before the IPO:

Building the Foundation

- **Equip executives** – Your CEO and CFO should be your go-to corporate spokespeople as IPO day approaches (and on listing day). They have the authority, strategic vision and financial expertise to best tell the company’s business story. To empower them as the company’s chief spokespeople, they should undergo media training to articulate the company’s story, growth potential and financial performance.
- **Build your corporate and executive brand** – On listing day, the company’s ultimate goal is to get people to buy its stock at a high price. To ensure a positive perception of your brand and build trust, you must earn a steady stream of media coverage driven by corporate news, product innovation and executive and corporate profiles that familiarize audiences with the depth and breadth of the business.
- Knowing journalists have only so much time to cover brands on the path to IPO, comms teams may want to consider sponsorships with key media outlets to ensure their key messages reach the right people, raising brand visibility, credibility and interest at one of the most crucial times in their company’s history. Brands should also pursue high-growth corporate awards like CNBC Disruptor 50 and the Deloitte Fast 500 to validate growth, impact and future performance.
- **Lean on investors** – Your investors want your IPO to be as successful as you do, and they have experience counseling companies’ communications strategies ahead of a public market debut. Leverage their media networks and spheres of influence and ask lead investors to serve as spokespeople. Their endorsement fosters a sense of commitment to, and validation for, your brand.
- **Start acting like a public company** – Regardless of how far away listing day is, a key part of building alignment and preparedness is acting like you’re already public. This means transparently disclosing financials and announcing news regularly (e.g., 1-2x/month).

6-12 Months Before the IPO:

Elevating the Brand

- **Ramp communications efforts** – At this stage, you want your brand to be EVERYWHERE. In addition to pursuing media campaigns and awards that build your corporate and executive brand, bolster thought leadership, share inspiring customer and partner stories and seek strategic speaking engagements to boost brand visibility among key stakeholders.
- Brands should also consider diversifying the channels that influence key audiences, including prospective shareholders. Whether it's putting more emphasis behind LinkedIn ads targeting prospective shareholders or engaging must-listen-to podcasts for investors, ensure you're engaging the channels influencing stakeholder decision-making and behavior.
- **Empower employees as brand champions** – Internal communications to employees cannot be overlooked in the lead-up to IPO. For one, open and transparent employee communication is vital to ensure workforce focus and productivity during a potentially disruptive pre-IPO period. Not only that, but internal communications can also be used to empower employees as brand amplifiers. Enlist your employees as brand champions by arming them with the communications and tools to share the company's growth story on social media (in a way that won't conflict with SEC regulations).
- **Enlist support from an IR firm** – IR firms can coach you on tools and resources that will be needed in the lead-up to your market debut, such as an investor-friendly website and financial reporting systems. They can also conduct mock audits to ensure readiness for public scrutiny and work with you to develop messaging and materials to prepare you for investor-related questions.

3-6 Months Before the IPO:

Public Company Preparedness

- **Double down on executive training** – Delivering a persuasive company story that underscores company growth, momentum and market potential must become muscle memory for your CEO and CFO. This will influence the outcome of media interviews, investor pitches and Q&As (not to mention future earnings calls). The CEO and CFO should commit to a regular media training cadence (e.g., 1-2 times per month) to hone their talk track and delivery.
- Beyond talking about the company, comms teams must ensure their brand executives stay current on market news and trends. Whether it's rapid tech advancements, evolving geopolitical dynamics, or federal flips on business programs like DEI, CEOs and CFOs must be equipped to address the latest trends and their potential impact on their business model and outlook.
- **Create investor content** – Develop investor presentations, fact sheets and FAQ documents, customer success stories, testimonials and case studies demonstrating brand impact. These will all be critical in investor conversations and financial-centric media interviews timed with the IPO.
- **Conduct pre-IPO roadshows** – Host investor and analyst briefings – both publicly and in private sessions – to create opportunities to refine messaging based on feedback.

3-6 Months Before the IPO:

Public Company Preparedness

- **Do a final media push** – Secure interviews and profiles in top business, tech and financial media outlets (e.g., Barron’s, CNBC, Financial Times, WSJ) to position your company as a market leader and must-have investment. Highlight major milestones that support the IPO narrative, such as partnerships or market expansions.
- **Ready for regulation** – Work closely with legal teams to ensure all communications comply with SEC regulations. And while you need to avoid promoting your brand in a way that could influence stock value, remember: a quiet period doesn’t mean a silent period. Communications professionals can set a robust cadence beforehand so communications (media interviews, announcements, etc.) don’t increase. You can also continue with thought leadership and lean on third parties (e.g., customers and investors) to tell your brand story.

1-3 Months Before the IPO:

The Final Push

- **Engage institutional investors** – Work with IR teams to execute the formal IPO roadshow, presenting the company to institutional investors. Securing their commitments will inform how the IPO is priced, as they typically buy most shares at launch. While roadshows have historically been conducted in person, consider digital platforms for virtual roadshows to reach a wider audience.
- **Finalize communications** – Finalize all materials, including press releases, investor presentations, Q&A documents and social media posts to prepare for the big day.
- **Maintain compliance** – Ensure all public-facing communications comply with SEC guidelines to avoid “gun-jumping.”
- **Partner with stock exchanges** – Engage the communications teams at the NYSE or NASDAQ to determine how they can provide extra brand “lift” on listing day. From promoting your IPO on banners outside the stock exchange, to managing logistics around ringing the bell, these teams can be hugely beneficial in driving awareness and excitement around your brand.
- **Book media interviews for listing day** – Identify and pitch the top media targets that you’d want to brief on the day of IPO (e.g., Bloomberg, CNBC, WSJ). Consider these goals while also being realistic about what’s possible during a very hectic day.
- **Understand how the stock is likely to perform and develop messaging accordingly** – The night before IPO, you’ll find out what the stock will list at. Work with IR to understand how the stock will likely perform in the first 24-48 hours and be perceived in the market. Have messaging ready for spokespeople’s media interviews based on whether it performs better or worse than expected – and always bridge back to key messages touting vision and growth.

The Day of IPO:

The Celebration!

- **Expect the unexpected** – The day of an IPO is full of excitement and – let’s be candid – chaos. Be mentally prepared to juggle many moving pieces as you staff media interviews – from making sure spokespeople are where they need to be (including getting their lighting, hair, and makeup TV-ready!).
- **Enjoy the day** – It’s a day that people in our professions may only experience once. Be sure to partake in celebratory events, including a bell-ringing ceremony, and take lots of pictures (and share those images on social media).



- Learn more about V2’s partnership with UiPath ahead of their IPO [here](#).

Post-IPO:

Sustaining Momentum

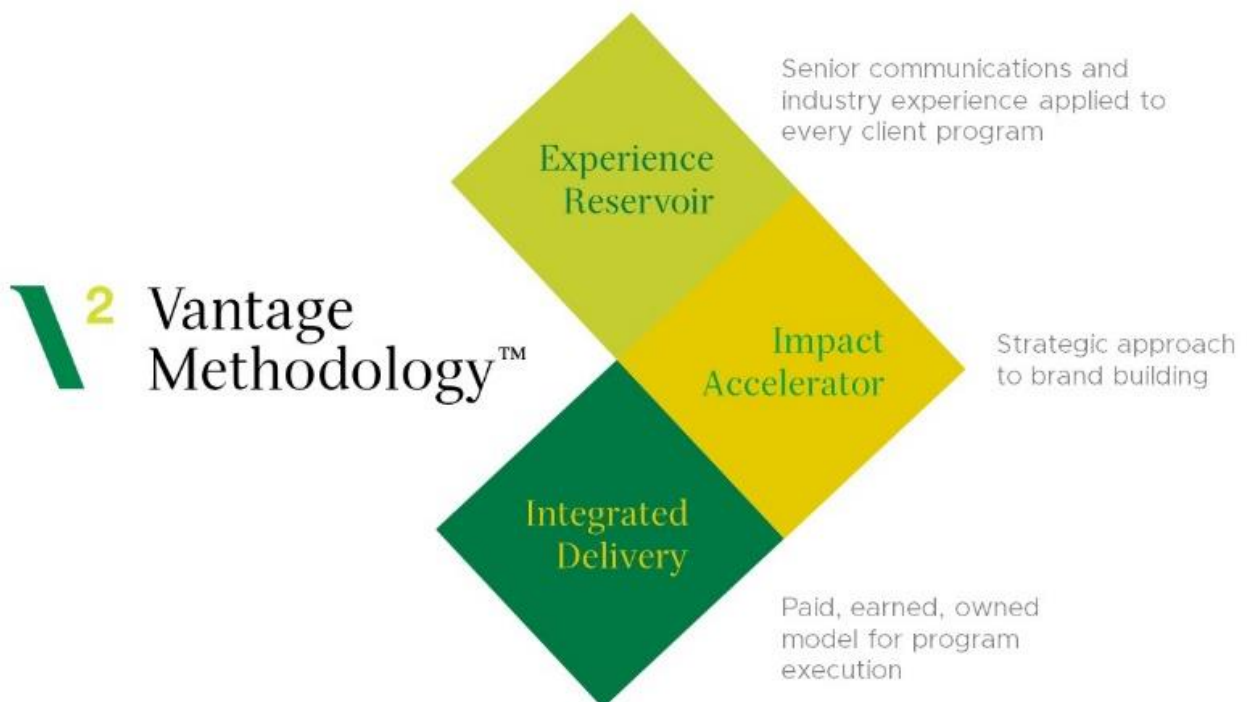
- **Maintain communications engagement** – Continue to engage business, tech and financial media with earnings calls and company milestones that showcase your company’s growth and achievements. Be consistent with media coverage around earnings; for instance, avoid scenarios where you only pursue interviews when your company has a strong performance.
- **Understand storytelling through the lens of SEC regulations** – After the IPO, communications must be viewed through several different lenses. With new regulatory and financial implications, any messaging and narrative-building needs to be kept in the context of compliance and reporting needs.
- **Work closely with IR** – Businesses need to account for the activities and expectations of a public company. With new experiences like earnings calls to account for, communications teams need to work with IR and business executives to practice running calls and prepare for a new kind of attention.

Conclusion

The road to an IPO is a long one. Still, with a solid communications plan and help from employees, investors and partners, brands can set themselves up for a solid public market debut and continued success as a prosperous business.

How V2 Can Help

For more information, read [how V2 Communications supported UiPath on its journey](#) from a Series B startup to a global company that achieved the [third-largest software IPO in history](#). If you're interested in having us help IPO pursuit, reach out to info@v2comms.com.



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V2 Communications is an integrated communications firm that works with B2B, climate, and healthcare technology companies, from startups to publicly traded companies. V2's proven process ensures clients benefit from thorough program planning, increased speed, flexibility, and efficiency of program execution, and ongoing strategic counsel to maximize market shifts and refine programs to deliver consistent high levels of business success.

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