

PR News

Building the bridge between PR and the bottom line

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Taco Bell 'Blackout' Offers New Paths for Digital Marketing

Unusual PR campaign focuses on new app

With websites and social platforms now at the center of marketing communications, one of the best practices for building these channels is to make sure they are “well-lit,” where consumers can feel comfortable familiarizing themselves with brands and organizations and have little trouble navigating from one destination to the next. However, **Taco Bell** took that practice and turned it on

its head late last month—at least for a while—and, in the process, cut through the clutter.

On October 29 the fast-food chain “blacked out” its website, as well as its **Facebook**, **Tumblr** and **Twitter** pages, and replaced the channels with a single post promoting a new mobile payment app.

Call it disruptive or innovative—in the context of digital PR, the terms are relatively synonymous these days. Either way, the Taco Bell “blackout” serves as a compelling reminder that, as online communications become commoditized, PR

pros are on the hook to create unusual campaigns that grab the attention of consumers and the media alike.

Taco Bell’s PR effort produced ample media coverage, ranging from *USA Today* to several PR, marketing and advertising publications.

The campaign also generated more than 1 billion media impressions. Perhaps most important, just 24 hours after the launch, Taco Bell said that 75 percent of its 6,000 stores already had processed a mobile order.

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Courtesy: Adweek.com

TAKE A BITE? Taco Bell recently wiped out its social media channels, including its Twitter page, to promote a new app.

► Exclusive Survey

PR, Marketing and Advertising Syncing Up

All three disciplines are working more closely

Stronger alignment among PR, marketing and advertising executives is one goal shared by brands and organizations, at least on paper. Despite the best of intentions, however, many PR, marketing and advertising pros have been stymied by a siloed business approach, senior managers who are reluctant to start collaborating on their media budgets or, in many cases, corporate inertia. But that may be starting to change—and to the betterment of PR. According to an exclusive survey conducted by PR News and **PR Newswire**, 40%

of business professionals said their PR department is “very aligned” with marketing and advertising, meaning that all sides coordinate campaigns and assets and share KPIs.

Thirty percent of the respondents said they were “aligned,” in which PR strongly supports marketing campaigns, and 25% of the respondents said they were “somewhat aligned,” in which PR and marketing work together only on major initiatives. Just 5 percent of the respondents said PR and marketing are “not at all” aligned.

“The opportunity is to look at places for potential alignment [among the three media disciplines] and use that opportunity to drive better results,” said Eva Rohrmann,

director of solutions and channel marketing at PR Newswire. “As a marketer I would want to look at every piece of content produced for marketing campaigns, and then work with the PR team to evaluate whether the company

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PR Advice from the Pros

“Everyone plans for failure, but are you prepared for success?”

Read more great advice in PR News’ Best PR Advice Compendium prnewsonline.com/prpress

DID YOU KNOW

1. Social listening is a crucial element in developing new PR campaigns. (p. 1)
2. “Content Views” is the top metric for quantifying successful campaigns. (p. 2)
3. There are several ways to appeal to potential Instagram influencers. (p. 2)
4. About a third of social media users are between the ages of 25 and 34. (p. 3)
5. Nearly 40 percent of our media interactions happen via a smartphone. (p. 6)
6. Every great PR idea is borne from hundreds of bad PR ideas. (p. 8)
7. A sharper sense of urgency is key for today’s senior PR managers. (p. 10)



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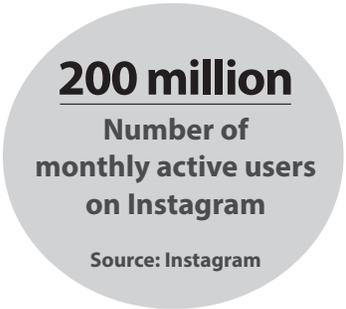
▶ How To...

Find Influencers on Instagram

By Melissa Vigue & Nicole Hall



It is becoming increasingly difficult for brands to be heard amongst the (visual) clutter on Instagram. To break through, it's important to focus on building authentic relationships. The best relationships are built on a foundation of listening and shared interests. To find common ground, start with a broad search on Instagram for brand mentions and relevant hashtags. If they are already tagging and engaging with your handle in a positive way, the process will be that much easier.



Below are a few things to consider:

▶ Judge a book by its cover. Whether you swipe left or right, first impressions are dominating social media. And Instagram is not any different—looks matter. Quality photos are essential and, remember, caption text is usually read only after the user stops to look at the photo.

You want your influencers to be at least proficient in photography. If not, you run the risk of turning off some fans.

For example, while engaging on behalf of a casual dining chain, we have seen some pictures of what we think is a delicious bacon cheeseburger accompanied by the most complimentary caption.

However, when you enlarge the thumbnail, it instead looks like a pile of brown mush disguised by a Valencia filter.

▶ Do your research. These days, we don't go on a date without investigating everything that Google can reveal about that person. The same is true for determining whom you want to engage with on Instagram.

Once you've identified a potential target, it is critical to evaluate their level of influence. You can do this manually by noting their number of followers, post content and the engagement they have with their own followers.

▶ Give love to get it. After you have identified and evaluated your top targets for brand influencers, the next step is to get their attention.

One way to do this is to repost and attribute user content on a regular basis, showing influencers that you appreciate their brand loyalty.

This creates a symbiotic relationship where you are able to source fresh content while getting them excited about engaging with the brand and giving them more exposure to your brand's followers.

We've often found that these users will comment and repost the interaction on several of their social media sites, driving more of their friends and followers to the original source and increasing followers.

Once that initial reciprocity takes place, people are more likely to continue to engage in the future since they know the brand is listening.

You can also further engage with these influencers by tagging their handles in posts and asking their opinion when relevant.

▶ Put a ring on it. There are a few different ways to officially pop the question of whether they would like to be an official influencer for your brand. The most common way is to leave a comment on

one of their photos with a call to action. Here is one example:

"Thanks for all of the love and great photos. We'd love to talk to you further about a potential partnership opportunity. Email us at [insert email address] if you are interested."

Depending on the size of your brand and to avoid potentially getting lost in the spam on some photo comment threads, programs like instaDM and DM.Stagram can also be used to direct message a similar note to an influencer.

If they respond back with interest, then it's all logistics from there about how you would like to establish the specific terms of the influencer relationship.

You wouldn't expect to marry the person you randomly approached at a party.

And you shouldn't expect users on Instagram to agree to become an influencer for your brand just because you commented on one of their photos you liked.

To have quality influencers engage on your brand's behalf, you have to take the time to build some initial credibility and develop a foundation for the relationship. **PR*N***

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Always On

Millennials have an insatiable appetite for social media and mobile communications. But their elders are not too far behind when it comes to where they spend their time online.

US Social Network Users, by Age, 2013-2018
millions

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
0-11	3.9	4.3	4.6	4.9	5.1	5.3
12-17	20.6	20.9	21.1	21.3	21.4	21.6
18-24	27.3	27.8	28.3	28.5	28.7	28.9
25-34	33.3	34.3	35.3	36.3	37.1	38.0
35-44	28.0	29.0	29.7	30.3	30.8	31.4
45-54	24.7	25.6	26.4	26.8	27.1	27.4
55-64	18.1	18.9	19.7	20.5	21.2	21.9
65+	9.7	12.2	14.6	16.6	18.2	19.7
Total	165.7	173.2	179.7	185.1	189.7	194.1

Note: Internet users who use social networks via any device at least once per month; numbers may not add up to total due to rounding.

Source: eMarketer, August 2014

▶ **A (Dwindling) Generation Gap Online:**

In the online world you're either a "native" (someone who grew up online and is familiar with its natural habitat) or an "immigrant" (someone who arrived on the digital shores after living for many years in an analog environment) and never the twain shall meet. Don't be so sure.

For PR managers who want to segment their social media messaging, the gap between younger and older folk seems to be narrowing. Sure, a majority of social network users are now between the ages of 25 and 44. However, the engagement rates among people between the ages of 55 and 65-plus are expected to accelerate at a fairly steady clip through 2018, according to eMarketer.

Yet younger people are probably a bit more conditioned to online marketing messages than their older counterparts, and prefer a conversation to a sales pitch. **PRN**

Source: eMarketer

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PR News Announces 2014 PR People Awards Finalists

From our vantage point at PR News, we have seen the best-of-the-best in PR for years, from those in agency, corporate and nonprofit settings. And the best keeps getting better and better, which is why we hope you'll join us at PR News' PR People & Rising PR Stars Awards Luncheon on Dec. 9 at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. We'll celebrate all the finalists for the 2014 PR People Awards, the 2014 inductees into PR News' Hall of Fame and this year's outstanding Rising PR Stars 30 and Under. To register, visit prnewsonline.com; for sponsorship information please contact Diane Schwartz (dschwartz@accessintel.com).

Hall of Fame Inductees

- Gil Bashe, Makovsky
- Ray Day, Ford Motor Company
- Sabrina Horn, Horn Group, Inc.
- Jody Powell (posthumous), Powell Tate
 - Frank X. Shaw, Microsoft
 - Sheila Tate, Powell Tate
- Zenia Mucha, The Walt Disney Co.

Agency Account Manager of the Year

- Sarah Chavey, ANTHEMIC Agency
- Amber Meredith, Marina Maher Communications
 - Meghan Moran, Adfero Group
 - Kate Urbach, Havas PR

Brand Marketer of the Year

- Stephen Bonsignore, Cohn & Wolfe
- Andrew Bowins, MasterCard
- Dustin Hinz, Guitar Center

Corporate Social Responsibility Leader

- Ichiro Kawasaki, KPMG LLP
- Lynn Marmer, Kroger

Crisis Manager of the Year

- Cari Brunelle, Hellerman Baretz Communications
 - Heidi Davidson, BlackBerry Ltd
- Justine Griffin, Rasky Baerlein Strategic Communications

Digital Communications Leader of the Year

- Brett Holland, Pepco Holdings, Inc.
 - Megan Levi, Ruder Finn
- Kristin Montalbano, National Geographic Channel
 - Danny Olson, Weber Shandwick
 - Jennifer Stalzer, MasterCard

Event Marketer of the Year

- Andrenna Alkhas, The Stanislaus County Fair
- Dan Hewitt, The Entertainment Software Association

Internal Communicator of the Year

- Cessie Cerrato, Palace Resorts
- Rhonda Ellis, Pepco Holdings, Inc.
 - Margo Hackel, KPMG LLP
- Amy Haran, USANA Health Sciences
 - Debbie Helvig, Bank of America
- Lori Poer, International Justice Mission

MARCOM Professional of the Year

- Judy Davies, Advantest
 - Sasah Hefler, UBIC
- Taryn Holowka, US Green Building Council
 - MaryBeth Vrees, Pepco Holdings, Inc.

Media Relations Professional of the Year

- Travis Culter, Tyler Barnett PR
- Jennifer DeGuzman, National Geographic Channel
 - Robert Nihen, KPMG LLP
 - Felix Schein, RALLY
- Ronna Waldman, Marina Maher Communications
- Tracy Zampaglione, Orange County Library System

PR Professional of Year: Agency

- Katie Blair, Vantage PR
- Nicole Dunn, Dunn Pellier Media
 - Matt Kovacs, Blaze PR
- Drisha Leggit, Drisha Leggit & Co.
- Christopher Penn, Shift Communications
 - JP Schuerman, MWW
 - Ravi Sunnak, Havas PR
 - Jenna Thomas, Nebo
- Teresa Villarreal, Newlink Group

PR Professional of Year: Corporate

- Christopher Ian Bennett, Guitar Center
- Misty Dangel, USANA Health Sciences
 - Melissa Drake, ERA Real Estate
 - Chris LaPlaca, ESPN
 - Seth Oster, KPMG LLP

Public Affairs/Government Communicator of the Year

- John Davies, Davies Public Affairs
- Jeffrey Getek, Erickson Living
- Tim Ryan, Weber Shandwick

PR Professional of Year: Nonprofit/Association

- Lora Bodmer, NAMM and the NAMM Foundation
- Lauren Lawson-Zilai, Goodwill Industries International

PR Team Leader

- Christopher Albert, National Geographic Channel
 - Ashley Collins, USANA Health Sciences
 - Allison Falkenberry, Rodale Inc.
 - Manuel Goncalves, KPMG LLP
 - Elizabeth Hillman, Discovery Communications
 - Lydia Howard, Vantage PR

Social Media Professional of Year

- Michelle Catin, Palace Resorts
- Tim Haran, USANA Health Sciences
- Ken Makovsky, Makovsky & Co.
 - Josh Martin, Arby's
 - Ying Shen, Cisco

Spokesperson of the Year

- David Daigle, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Courtney Nogas, Pepco Holdings, Inc.

2014 PR News Rising PR Stars 30 & Under

Corporation & Association

- Michelle Agnew, Southwest Airlines
 - Jessica Bass, Beats Electronics
- Brian Bell, Dr Pepper Snapple Group
 - Raha Bouda, Ubisoft
- Lindsay Chambers, State of Hawaii Insurance Division
 - Molly Dince, CommonBond
 - Walter Fowler, Sprint
- Rita Gorenberg, The Clorox Company
 - Daniel Groce, Allstate Insurance
 - Dave Heinzinger, inMarket
- Kristen Jimenez, The Coca-Cola Company
 - Colin Jordan, Egnyte
- Bilal Kaiser, Baxter of California / L'Oreal
 - Rebecca Kaufman, MasterCard
 - Daniel Martin, Jackson National
- Maureen McCarty, Human Rights Campaign
- Emily Meredith, Animal Agriculture Alliance
 - Kim Morton, Hiring Our Heroes, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation
 - Courtney Moscovic, Pizza Hut
- Caitlin Murphy, Cruise Planners, an American

Express Travel Representative

- Robert Myers, Wyndham Hotel Group
- Sam Nathews, Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility
 - Murphy Perng, 24Hr HomeCare
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 - Erika White, Pandora

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- Louise Eich, Burson-Marsteller
 - Jessica Evans, Edelman

• Katie Fauquier, DEVENEY

- Christianna Giordano, Cohn & Wolfe
 - Nick Goodwin, Weber Shandwick
- Monica Guzman, Konnect Public Relations
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- Dan Lantowski, Waggener Edstrom
 - Stephanie Lewis, Olson
 - Allison Mead, TogoRun
- Kelsey Nason, Hellerman Baretz Communications
- Adam Novak, PAN Communications
 - Danny Olson, Weber Shandwick
 - Lauren Parker, Peppercomm
- Margarita Peker, Klick Communications
- Julie Richter, Charles Zukow Associates
 - Hartley Suter, Fahlgren Mortine
- Kate Urbach, Havas PR North America
 - Courtney Wagoner, Porter Novelli
- Naomi Zeitlin, Waggener Edstrom

Online Marketing Needs a Mobile-First Approach

Brands and organizations of all stripes have spent the last few years moving to a digital-first marketing strategy. But they shouldn't get too comfortable, as the digital-first approach is about to get eclipsed by the mobile-first approach. According to Google's Dashboard Research Insights, smartphone penetration has risen to 56 percent of the population. And these smartphone owners are becoming increasingly reliant on their devices: 67 percent access the Web every day on their smartphone. The uptick for communicators? If they want to get in front of customers and prospects, mobile messaging has to be at the center of their PR efforts, not the margins.

1 Smartphones are with us both at home and on-the-go.



38%

of our media interactions occur on a smartphone

Your audience members may be at home relaxing, but they're not sitting in front of a desktop. They're buzzing around, with their mobile device never too far from reach.

60% At home **40%** Out of home

2 Smartphone users are frequent social networkers.



visit at least once a day



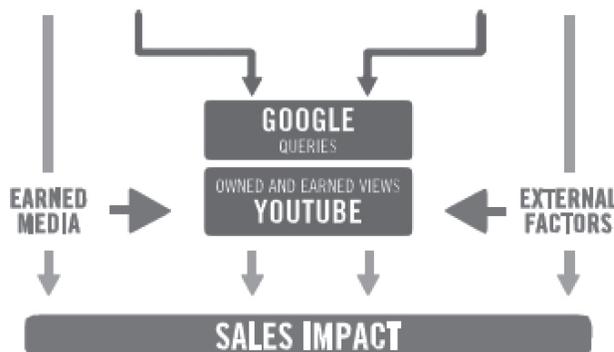
83%

visit social networks

It's arguably the most pronounced example of how to kill two birds with one stone. Online, that is. You need to meld your social media campaigns with your mobile marketing strategy. It turns out that the majority of people who are surgically attached to their mobile devices are in the habit of visiting their social networks, and fairly frequently, to boot.

3 Spike sales lift via online video.

tv | radio | print | direct mail | out of home online video | online display | paid search



THE MEDIA MIX MODEL TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE IMPACT OF EARNED AND OWNED MEDIA, IN ADDITION TO PAID MEDIA IN GENERATING SALES IMPACT

ACROSS FIVE VERTICALS, SPENDING AN AVERAGE OF 5% OF MEDIA BUDGET ON YOUTUBE HELPS ACHIEVE 1-3% SALES LIFT AT NO ADDITIONAL COST

Online video should be another important component of your mobile marketing strategy. As part of an earned/owned/paid media play, online video can have a direct impact on sales lift.

Sharing Stories Is Job One

Oscar Suris
Exec. VP / Head of
Corporate Communications
Wells Fargo

What's job one right now? As always, it's telling Wells Fargo's story. Our number-one focus as a corporate communications team—and the most important value-add we offer as a function—is to share our story with stakeholders and people we seek to influence. Storytelling takes on a number of forms. There's good old-fashioned, media relations, but, increasingly, we're creating more original content because we have the opportunity to be publishers—and social media is a big part of that. We like to say, we don't practice 'PR'—we practice 'P + R,' which is publishing + relations. The best example of that is Wells Fargo Stories (stories.wellsfargobank.com), which launched in March.

What's the big picture for your PR team right now? Reputation is always front and center in the role we play in helping to promote and protect the brand. Six years after the global financial crisis, we still believe there's a need to shore up the reputation of the financial services industry.

What are the most important PR disciplines that you try to instill in your team? We want to be credible business partners at the table—knowledge of industry is important, client management skills are important and our understanding of the external world is important. We also need to know not just what the press is saying about us, but what's being said about Wells Fargo in the broader environment.

How has living in a post-banking crisis world affected your company's PR? It forced us to focus our energies and to think strategically about the things that really matter to reputation. That has involved third-party research to get good insights into whether the stories that we're sharing really matter to stakeholders. Look, in the wake of the economic crisis the reputations of financial services companies were negatively impacted. We have needed to be aware of that, respect it and bake that into how we think about our work as communicators.

Who has had the biggest influence on your PR career and why? My wife, Shana. Ours is a true partnership; she has been instrumental in my success as a communications counselor. Jim Donahue, my first boss at AutoNation, taught me how to think strategically about PR. Charlie Halloran (former CCO at Ford Motor Co.) taught me that every communicator has the opportunity to be a leader if he or she chooses to take that opportunity. And Jim Vella, Charlie's predecessor, was the first person to believe I could lead a team.

What's the biggest misconception about PR? That PR is dead. It has never been a better time to practice PR because there have never been so many opportunities to add value through PR work. But it does require being comfortable with a messy media landscape. Social media sits in the middle of PR and marketing and you have to be OK with that in



order to take advantage of this great era we're practicing in. A lot of people worry about who owns social media, but that's a distraction from the opportunity to tap the power of social to enhance PR's work. Don't focus on org charts, focus on the value that the work is creating.

What do you do outside of work to help you to focus at work? Reading. I read about leaders and industries in which I've worked. I read about PR, social media and marketing, which are the ways I remind myself to keep learning. Off the clock, reading is relaxing and allows me to recharge my batteries. We have to be good thinkers and our clients look to us to be problem-solvers. At the end of the day, reading is how you develop critical thinking skills. When you are in the bunker with senior management, they expect you to be capable of critical thinking. PRN

(This is the first of a new feature profiling top PR and communication execs.)

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PR Movers

DeVries Global taps **Heidi Hovland** as its Global CEO. Hovland previously served as Deputy General Manager of **FleishmanHillard** New York, where she led the agency's Consumer Products Sector globally and co-founded its Marketing to Moms practice group. She will be based out of DeVries Global's New York headquarters. Hovland succeeds **Stepanie Smirnov**, who left the agency in July 2013 to become managing director of consumer marketing at **Edelman**... Speaking of Edelman, the world's largest independent PR agency has named three global sector chairs: **Tish Van Dyke** for Food and Beverage, **Deidre H. Campbell** for Financial Services and **Amy Hemingway** for Energy. ... **Ruder Finn Inc.** names **Robin Kim** as Executive Vice President, Managing Director, to head its Global Technology & Innovation Practice. Kim will be based out of the agency's San Francisco office, Ruder Finn West, and will report to CEO **Kathy Bloomgarden**. Prior to joining Ruder Finn, Kim was a senior executive at Edelman in Silicon Valley, where she led the agency's enterprise and B2B portfolio and served as global client leader for several technology companies... Content marketing software company **Brand.com** has tapped **Dave Armon**, previously president of **Critical Mention**, to serve as president-CEO. Armon succeeds **Michael Zammuto**, who was president-COO and left the company last month.

To extend the campaign, which lasted three days, Taco Bell augmented its blackout with Promoted tweets, social ads on Facebook and 30-second TV spots. For the duration of the campaign, Taco Bell limited the amount of content on its social platforms to keep the focus on the new app.

Each of the company's social media platforms, as well as tacobell.com, provided a link to download the new app.

"We see mobile apps as biggest thing in our industry since the drive-thru," said Rob Poetsch, director of communications at Taco Bell. "We think this is the way for us to unlock our kitchen and create an experience that is really unprecedented when it comes to customization." About 70 percent of Taco Bell's orders are customized.

Taco Bell's original idea was to "black out" all the menus in its restaurants and replace them with an image promoting the new app. But that presented operational challenges.

"We realized that the best experience and the best way

to convey the message was through social and digital channels," Poetsch said. "We wanted to jar and jolt people, but also provide several ways that we could casually direct them to the app."

He added that the campaign was rooted in "social listening," which more and more brands have started to embrace.

"If you never do, you'll never know and we take that very seriously," Poetsch said, referring to the unorthodox approach of Taco Bell's campaign. "What you've never done creates a lot of excitement, but it needs to be authentic to the brand. It's all about listening."

Lisa Astor, VP of **PAN Communications**, said the Taco Bell blackout campaign marks the continuing evolution of social media.

First, she said, companies had to simply populate their social channels; second, they had to engage their customers and prospects via social media; now, brands need to disrupt their social platforms or face diminishing returns.

"It's a matter of shaking

things up and not doing what's expected of you," she said. "At some point social media is going to get overloaded and will become passé. Companies are going to have to figure out what Taco Bell did and try and create that opportunity in their own way—not necessarily by copying it."

The Taco Bell campaign was distributed in a "way that made people feel that they were automatically 'in the know,'" Astor said. "They were then able to direct people to the new app and monetize users. But it's getting harder to make that conversion."

Another way to distinguish the brand from the pack is to play into people's skepticism about a product or service—and demonstrate why that skepticism is unfounded.

To wit, for the last several months **Thermos LLC** has been periodically running a contest on its Facebook page to promote its vacuum-insulated 40-ounce Stainless King beverage bottle. Baristas throughout the country grind and brew up fresh, hot coffee,

pour it into the bottle and overnight it by plane across the country, where it's delivered to contest winners, still hot and steamy up to 24 hours later.

Through three separate rounds of the Overnight Coffee Challenge, there have been roughly 10,000 contest entries, while 91 bottles have been shipped to 64 cities throughout the country.

"It's been fun to see how people react," said Courtney Fehrenbacher, associate marketing manager at Genuine Thermos Brand. "A lot of people didn't believe we could really get it to them overnight because they lived in remote locations. So when it showed up hot at their doorstep, they shared their excitement with us through social and emails." **PRN**

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5 Ways to Disrupt Your Brand's Digital and Social Presence

As more brands flock online, consumers are skeptical of marketing messages, forcing companies to take a disruptive approach. Here are my top tips to being a disruptive digital marketer.

- **Innovate every day.** Innovation is at the core of any disruptive marketing strategy. The beauty of a digital community is that you are sitting on top of all this rich data, providing valuable customer insights. What do they care about? What motivates them to share? Why do they enjoy your product? What is the lifestyle they live? What technology do they use? Leveraging this information and bringing it into planning sessions to innovate and create new programs is a must.
- **Be patient.** Good ideas take time to cultivate. Every great idea is born from hundreds of bad ideas. You can't stop ide-

ating. Create an open brainstorm culture, in which everyone from the intern to the developer to the VP of marketing can toss in an idea and be heard. You never know where your next big idea will come from.

- **Think big and think bold.** Start with big thinking. Be fearless to mention the far-fetched if it's intriguing and aligned with the strategy. It is easy to scale down, but the worst thing you can do is stifle your thinking. In today's market, you have to be different, and being different requires you doing something that catches attention and breaks the mold. If an idea feels uncomfortable or you feel afraid, that's a good sign that you have something original.
- **Failure is a possibility.** There are no guarantees in disruptive marketing. You can use research and insights to support ideas and

you can calculate risk, but nothing is certain. Testing and learning is at the heart of a disruptive mindset.

- **Engage multiple stakeholders.** The ideas out there that create sensation are seldom a one-team act. Execution requires buy-in from other stakeholders; the earlier you can bring them in the development of the idea the more excitement you will generate. If everyone can own the idea together you know everyone is driving toward a successful program collectively.

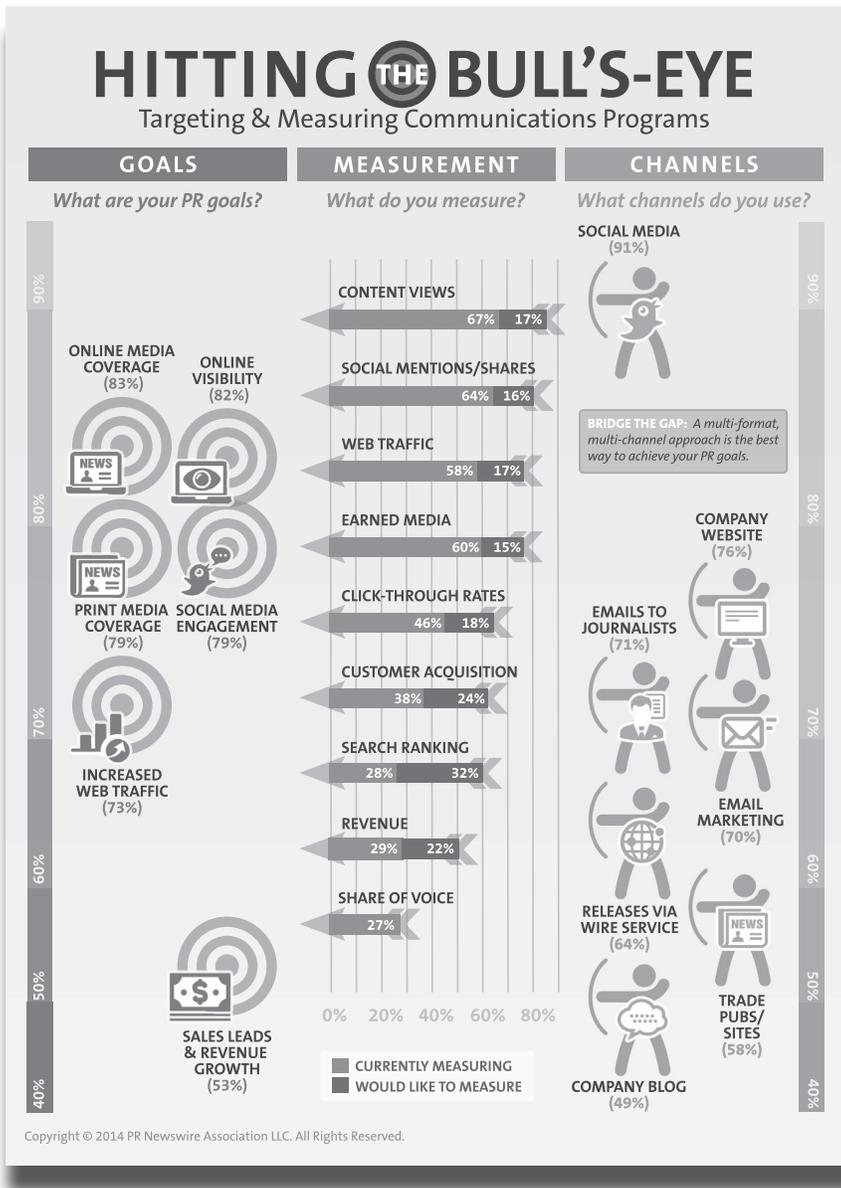
This sidebar was written by Sahana Jayaraman, head of digital and content marketing at Eastwick. She can be reached at sahana@eastwick.com.



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Professional Development

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needs to invest in, say, press coverage or engaging with influencers on social channels.”

The online survey, titled “How are Your Business Communications Evolving?” produced nearly 380 responses, with more than half of the respondents from medium-size and large organizations.

The survey took a granular approach to the many issues PR pros are grappling with on a day-to-day basis, ranging

from overall PR goals to the indices that communicators now deploy in order to gauge a campaign’s success.

While debate rages in PR precincts about communications goals—and how to distribute finite budgets—the survey found that PR goals are fairly disparate. For instance, 83 percent of the respondents said online media coverage was a primary goal. But almost the same percentage of respondents

(79 percent) cited both social media engagement and print media coverage as primary goals, an indication that the death of print has been greatly exaggerated (again).

“While the choices reflect that multi-channel programs are growing, their adoption rate is not consistent with the daily emergence of new channels,” Rohrmann said. “Communications professionals must differentiate, vary and expand their channel strategies to take their message further and reach their target audience.”

Unlike even a few years ago—when share of voice and media clippings were the two main metrics to quantify PR—the survey found a growing number of metrics that communicators are now embracing, including content views (67 percent) earned media (60 percent) and, perhaps most important to PR managers who want to exert their value, revenue (29 percent).

“If we had conducted the survey a few years ago, I am sure that percentage would have been lower,” Rohrmann said. “And I expect over the next few years that PR and marketing will align themselves more closely on

tracking metrics like conversions and revenue.”

But some of those same metrics are not being deployed to gauge PR campaigns. Asked what metrics they would like to measure but currently are not, respondents cited improved search ranking (32 percent), customer acquisition (23 percent) and revenue (22 percent).

According to the survey, communicators are also using multiple digital media channels to get their messages out, whether that’s social media (91 percent), company website (76 percent) or email marketing (70 percent).

Despite the gravitational pull of social channels, press releases still hold tremendous value. About 64 percent of the respondents said they use press release wire services to get their messages out.

However, when it comes to distribution, PR managers are being more selective and moving away from mass mailings.

“News releases used to be a ‘core function’ of my job because you could send out news releases far and wide and newspapers would put a little something in their next issue,” said Teresa Veazey, public relations manager at **Wichita Art Museum**.

She added: “Now, if I want to see a story in my local newspaper about a new art exhibition we have opening, I pick up the phone and call the editor or reporter directly and make the pitch. Then, after they’ve committed to the story, I follow up with a news release that gives more information.” **PRN**

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Creating a Sense of Urgency for Communicators

Your company is at a crucial inflection point. Change is disrupting your industry, but your current operation, processes and culture aren't responding nimbly. Jump-starting a sense of urgency is vital, whether you want to initiate change or weather it. But urgency isn't about speed. It's about propulsion. When you establish clarity, efficiency and trust, everyone pulls together, and speed is the natural result. To navigate change, start with a clear look at organizational attitudes today and where you want them to be in the future. Here are a few tips on how to get there.

► **Identify the higher purpose, and market it internally.** Being clear about where you're headed—and why—and then setting a

specific goal that advances that purpose can have a galvanizing effect on an organization. It may be elevating patient or customer satisfaction or getting new, safer products to market faster. Once you have that purpose, don't just communicate it. Market it as aggressively internally as you might externally.

This will demonstrate what the most important things to do are and help people eliminate distractions.

► **Communicate relentlessly.** If you want the buzz of urgency to permeate the company, have that buzz greet employees when they come in every morning. Make the atmosphere unexpected, interesting and warm. Make it so they never know what to expect next. That can mean something as large and permanent as establishing a "fish-bowl" conference room smack in the center of the lobby.

► **Bring the outside in.** Complacency is the enemy of urgency. It's easy for people at all levels to get lulled into a false sense of security when they aren't reminded of the outside factors that drive the need for change.

Change will go on with or without you. Your choice is whether to accept the challenge. Those companies that act with a sense of urgency will find themselves on the positive side of change and ready for the next turn. **PRN**

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► **Get the right people activated, then empower them.** If you have a team whose executives thrive on urgency, those people should become your models. Getting the right people activated can begin at the top, with the executive team, for example. How is your executive leadership group structured? Is there an opportunity to realign responsibilities? More than any communiqué, a change like that can convey that you're serious.

► **Shed the distractions.** The only thing more ineffectual than a lack of urgency is false urgency. Some people confuse being busy with having a sense of urgency, yet they are busy doing the wrong things.

To help employees understand the difference between true and false urgency, ask everyone in key leadership positions to make two lists every week: a "To Do" list and a "Not to Do" list.

Distribute the CEO's "Not to Do" list for comparison.

Today	The Future
We are accustomed to ample resources and timelines.	We know we have to do more with less, so we have to be smarter.
The world seems turned upside down, and it throws us off our game.	Change doesn't faze us, because we know it's always happening.
Our company no longer can rely on brand strength to achieve growth. New competition, disruptive technology and an empowered consumer are barging in.	The company's vision is multifocal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-5 year aspirations • Current-year achievements • Daily adversity adeptly handled
We are running faster than ever, and it's not fast enough. It's frustrating.	We happily embrace all levels of this vision. Disruptive change is part of the job description.
We react.	We anticipate.
We don't have direction from leadership. We don't have the information we need. Who's in charge?	Leadership has clear objectives and authority. We have the information we need. We can implement within 48 hours.
Our future is not assured, but we've done OK so far.	We must create our own future with the right vision and relentless adaptation as a way of life.



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- Determine if Pinterest, Instagram and Snapchat are right for your organization

Questions? Contact PR News' Laura Snitkovskiy at laura@accessintel.com.

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