

Importance of new channels to modern PR complementing traditional media efforts

By [Miranda Lusiba](#)

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As old-school PR professionals, we have always relied on traditional media, which includes print and online: newspapers or magazines and broadcast: TV or radio to create publicity for our clients. These are the communication mediums that are used by most decision-makers in business because most CEO or executives in companies consume their news from these old, traditional platforms.



Source: www.pexels.com

You see, most executives always enjoy opening the Sunday newspapers and seeing their companies featured or even a thought leadership piece where they are quoted. They also watch international and local TV news channels, and they listen to talk radio shows to get breaking news or analysis on the stories for the week. This means therefore that these platforms will continue to be relevant for a long-time to come because their business or buying decisions are influenced by these mediums. This old generation and I'm counting myself there still enjoy holding a book and taking in the smell of either an old or new book – this group is referred to as the BBT – Born Before Technology.

However, the new generation which in essence are the future leaders consume their news using modern-day technology – they get their breaking news from social media in particular Twitter and other news from Facebook, LinkedIn, or even Instagram.

With most newspapers having gone the online route over the years, they prefer to subscribe to such platforms and read their news either on their computers, tablets or mostly on their mobile phones. The Covid period, which forced most people to work from home, has emphasized the importance of technology and therefore the fourth industrial revolution (4IR). This has over the years forced us, old-school PR professionals, to look at these platforms as a way to communicate to large groups of people that are targeted by our clients.

Choosing the right channel for the campaign

These days when we have to provide PR support to clients' campaigns, we have to look at our target audiences thoroughly so that we can choose the best communication channels to use for a specific campaign. As much as the modern-day communication channels cannot replace the old channels or even the principles used in generating publicity around a campaign, it is very important to make sure that the old and new complement each other.

What young PR professionals though need to understand is that the principles of PR and communication do not change just because of this new technology – this is not the answer to every PR problem. These communication platforms are just that – platforms to communicate; they are not the solution to everything.

What we've also noticed these days is that because people are busy and are always on the move, they want their news fast and to the point. They don't always want long press releases to read about a story - they want the KISS (Keep It Short and Simple) principle to be applied in how news is delivered to them.

Well, in any case, platforms like Twitter expect that from us because we are limited on the number of characters that we can put in any post. This allows people to still get news in 200 characters, instead of a 600 or 800-word news story; with the option to put the full story as a link to those that want to read the full release.

This has taught us, old-school PR professionals, the importance of social media and how different communication channels can complement each other. Time and technology advancement has made sure that we understand that no platform can live on its own and that we do a better job for our clients when we make sure that we have exhausted all the platforms that are available to us.

To young PR professionals, if you want to continue providing value to your clients then my advice to you is not to think that social media PR is your solution to everything. Traditional media platforms still have a crucial role to play in ensuring that our clients are serviced well.

ABOUT MIRANDA LUSIBA

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