

Networking can fuel your own business while encouraging collaboration amongst your client base



By [Marie Yossava](#), issued by [Grapevine Communications](#)

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This is why we've added networking as a service to augment Grapevine's existing bouquet of offerings.

Networking has long been recognised as an effective platform for professionals and business people. There are so many ways you can go about creating opportunities for interaction, from formal networking functions to invitation-only breakfasts, luncheons and cocktail parties targeting like-minded individuals with potential business synergies. And let's not forget the tried and tested platforms for cementing relationships, like hitting the golf course together or watching a big game from a corporate hospitality suite.

With the advent of the internet and social media, new ways of networking have overtaken personal interaction. Take LinkedIn, for example; a site designed specifically to connect members of the business community by allowing registered users to make contact, and share information with, trusted industry peers. It has equally become an effective platform for acquiring new business.

Despite the tools now at our disposal, helping to forge new relationships, the value of long-standing partnerships cannot be underestimated. Consider the warm welcome you receive when you pick up the phone to an old contact, even if it's been a while since you last spoke, and you'll agree that it's impossible to attach a value to associations of this nature.

This is where the PR practitioner has an important role to play. Think about those business cards (yes, even those lying at the bottom of your desk drawer), the email addresses stored in Outlook or on your iPhone, or even in the archives in your storeroom. PR agencies have literally hundreds of contacts of this nature, and their networks can add enormous value for clients.

This is why Grapevine has moved to offer networking as an option for clients. Our agency recently procured a new client active in the CSI and philanthropic arena. Their business model addresses both youth unemployment and effective B-BBEE implementation. Grapevine was appointed to oversee media relations and engagement, yet in this space, the agency has found an additional role; that of business partner, becoming an ambassador and introducing the client to our existing customer base and network.

The move has worked to mutual advantage. The client is able to expand its contact base, while Grapevine benefits from the joy of connecting parties that may be able to explore opportunities. This is one of the most rewarding accomplishments in the agency's history.

This development has thrown a fresh spotlight on Grapevine's value offering. Our established contacts, not only in the media sphere but in the business sector, means that we can offer customers a broader, more comprehensive service than newcomers to the PR scene.

ABOUT MARIE YOSSAVA

Marie Yossava, founder and owner of Grapevine Communications, embarked on a PR/communications career more than two decades ago. In the past twenty years she has built a solid media relations consultancy, which focuses exclusively on media relations.
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