

FOREWORD BY BRIAN SOLIS

# SHARE THIS TOO

MORE SOCIAL MEDIA  
SOLUTIONS FOR  
PR PROFESSIONALS

THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS  
EDITED BY ROB BROWN AND STEPHEN WADDINGTON

CIPR

WILEY



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**Chartered Institute of  
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**Edited by  
Rob Brown and  
Stephen Waddington**

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# FOREWORD

*Brian Solis, Principal, Altimeter Group*

Do you realize just how much is changing right now? I promise you that it's bigger than you think. And your role in this is also much grander than you know or believe. See, disruptive technology, social networks, new influencers, they're levelling the media hierarchy. The art of crafting messages, pushing them upon targets, and propagating while attempting to control your story is not only the old way, it's the very thinking that's at the forefront of new communications.

This isn't about the new tools that are before you.

This isn't about social media or popular social networks.

This isn't about bloggers and blogging.

Nor is this about tablets, smartphones, and the app economy.

This is about putting the public back in public relations and social in social media and that has nothing to do with tools or technology we overly celebrate today. Slow down. Take a breath. While there's an abundance of change there isn't a wealth of innovation in processes or methodologies.

The truth is that in a time when we could change everything, we're running without clarity of direction or vision. We're not necessarily talking about a revolution as much as we're conforming revolutionary opportunities into familiar packages. We're merely taking what we know and applying it to what's new. In many ways, we're working against ourselves. But, what's happening right now is both revolutionary and evolutionary. And in the face of the unknown it is courage that carries us forward and creativity that will open new doors.

This is a time to rethink the value proposition of marketing and communications and your role within it.

Why is what you do important? Stop. Try that answer again. There's a reason that your friends and family have a hard time understanding what you do for a living. It's because the value you think you provide and the opportunity that is presenting itself to you are in fact two very different things. Essentially, your experience carried you this far but it is your vision and ambition that will carry you forward. Think again about the value you offer and the value that others say you deliver.

Allow me to share a slice of my life with you . . .

I've fond memories of surfing. I would grab my board and wetsuit, play great music, and head for the beaches of Southern California. The ocean was my sanctuary as I would surf for recreation, therapy, and also tranquillity. There was just something about the smell of the ocean, the sound of the waves, and the ability to dance with Mother Nature in a way where she *let* you lead and you appreciated the momentary gesture.

When snowboarding grew in popularity, I immediately embraced it. I did so because I saw it as an art form that was easy to categorize against something familiar. In fact I thought of it as winter surfing and I was wrong to do so. I brought to something new my previous experience and expected it to carry me forward into new territory in a very different environment. What I didn't bring along was a new and open mindset. I overconfidently got on my board, leaned back as you do in surfing and set out to surf that mountain the way I thought I should. I learned, quite painfully, that I did the very thing that you're not supposed to do. See, in surfing, and skateboarding, your back foot is essentially the rudder. You steer by leaning back and using your back foot to steer your course. In snowboarding, it's the exact opposite. You lean forward.

All it took was someone to point out that there was a different philosophy to the approach. Once they did, I was as soulful on a snowboard as I was surfing. It just took an open mind, perseverance, and several ice packs.

Today, in what is nothing less than an emergent moment for marketing and communications, I see even the best of them leaning back instead of leaning forward. It takes a different philosophy. It takes a different approach. If you take a moment to think about it, everything is different about what's taking place now and its direction and future is unwritten.

Again I ask. What is the value of what you do? What's in it for you, your business, and those with whom you engage? This time, think about it beyond

the company you represent. Think about it from the perspective of the people you're hoping to reach . . . every step of the way. People are part of everything you do now and you are also among them.

Value is not boundless. Value is in the eye of the beholder and it varies based on the context of the relationship and your desired outcomes. It is relationships, after all, that form the foundation of business. Marketing and communications are merely enablers for conveying value while also investing in and reinforcing relationships.

What you do and how you do it now serves a higher purpose. This is why I believe that your role in this is much grander than you may realize or believe. Lean forward.

*Brian Solis, digital analyst and author of What's the Future of Business (WTF)*

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# INTRODUCTION

This isn't a book about a specialist area of PR, it is about how current practice is evolving and where industry as a whole will be in the immediate future.

*Share This: The Social Media Handbook for PR Professionals* published by Wiley in 2012 was conceived as a practical handbook for PR people interested in changes taking place in the media and the impact that this was having on the practice of PR. It was written by 24 public relations practitioners, receiving critical acclaim and quickly establishing itself as a number one bestseller in the PR book chart.

*Share This Too* is even more ambitious. It is a pragmatic guide for anyone that works in communication or public relations. It is a larger book than the original with more than 30 contributors, each of whom is acknowledged as an expert in their field.

The group has been assembled from the CIPR Social Media Panel and associates, many of whom contributed to *Share This*. It includes academic, in-house, and agency practitioners from a mix of business, public sector, and third-sector.

Six of the contributors are published authors in their own right.

This isn't by any means a second edition. The content complements the first book by probing deeply into what is current in the theory, delivery, and evaluation of 21st century public relations and organizational communication.

The editorial process for *Share This Too* followed that developed for *Share This*. Contributors worked to rigorous editorial guidelines, submitting their

draft text to a Google Document. Each chapter was peer reviewed by the other contributors.

Our thanks go to each of the authors for investing their time and energy in this project and the team at the CIPR for supporting this project, in particular Phil Morgan, Kim Roberts and Andrew Ross.

Rob Brown and Stephen Waddington

2013

# Part I

## The Future of Public Relations



# Chapter 1

## DIGITAL PR IS DEAD: SOCIAL GOES MAINSTREAM

*Rob Brown*

*The distinction between digital and “mainstream” or “conventional” channels is at best unhelpful. The term “new media” is archaic and the line between new and old is impossible to draw.*

Audiences are changing: every graduate entering the workplace now and forever was born after the arrival of the web. Print won't disappear in a single generation, whilst there is an aging population more at home with dead wood and ink, but it will be consumed by an ever decreasing demographic. The binary idea that something is digital or not is no longer very useful. Are radio and TV digital or analogue? The answer is that they are both, or possibly neither.

It appears likely that social networks passed the 50% adoption threshold in the middle of 2011. They are no longer niche channels accessed primarily by young people. According to website monitoring company Pingdom, the average age of Facebook users is now over forty.

It is often argued by those that decry social networks that they are somehow marginal channels simply because they don't like them or manage perfectly well without them. Universal adoption is seldom achieved by any technology. It doesn't matter that some people, perhaps even a significant proportion, will never use Twitter; some people don't own a television. The fact is that social channels now play a significant part in communications and for many they have become their first preference for news consumption. We must call time on the notion that digital or online PR is somehow a specialization or a separate discipline. Digital PR is dead.

## The continuing evolution of the media

There was a time, not so very long ago, when our concept of the media was a simple one. Printed newspapers were divided neatly into national, regional and local. There were trade and consumer magazines. We had national and local radio stations and television channels that you could count using your fingers. There was also a time, a bit further back, when we just had cave paintings.

Newspapers have re-invented themselves as multi-platform media brands operating across lots of different delivery systems. Print newspapers exist primarily for the convenience of their older readers. Never mind the quality of the papers, feel the width. Not quite as bulky as they used to be are they? Every print newspaper has an online edition and for most there are apps for phones and tablets. We now expect online newspapers to carry video.

Recognizing the trend towards tablet computers, the *Financial Times* launched a promotion at the end of 2012 offering a Google Nexus 7 tablet free to any subscriber in the US taking out a one-year subscription to the digital edition. That's more than just a promotion given that the Nexus 7 retails at \$199, which is almost half the value of an annual subscription. Barnes & Noble have also heavily discounted the Nook Colour tablet along with a yearly digital subscription to the *New York Times*.

The way we watch television has changed. Sky+, BBC iPlayer, YouView and a plethora of other systems have handed the schedule to the viewer. Commuters watch their favourite programmes on their phones on the way to work. Content from broadcasters and from other sources including brands is converging. Does it matter whether we listen to radio on a dedicated box in the car or kitchen or through the headphones of a laptop? The line between digital and analogue has faded to the point where it is barely identifiable.

## The blurring of channels

Is the *Huffington Post* a newspaper? The title undoubtedly owes something to the history of print. Most of the content, however, is produced by non-journalists. That is not intended to be pejorative. It is a simple fact that the majority of contributors do not meet the commonly understood definition of journal-

ism as a paid job or profession. The other obvious observation is that the *Huffington Post* isn't printed on paper.

If you listen to both BBC Radio 4's media show and the *Guardian's* Media Talk on your iPod, is one a radio show and the other a podcast?

If you compare the websites of *USA Today* – the biggest selling newspaper in America – and CNN – the main all news channel on US television – they are pretty similar. In fact the video content is more prominent on the newspaper site than on the TV site. Google has been a news aggregator for more than a decade and Twitter now links to news stories via its “top news” feature.

Talking to friends and colleagues, most of us often don't register where we get our breaking news; it may be via a link on Twitter or the car radio. What really matters is the story.

## The impact of social media and networks

Social networks at their inception didn't have much to do with news. As the name implies they were largely social, helping us to connect with old or current school friends. Now many of these social channels are at the core of both the gathering and dissemination of news.

The world woke up to Twitter's capacity to deliver news almost instantly, during the Mumbai terrorist attacks of November 2008. Since then its role has become far more pervasive. Twitter delivers news but it can also influence the agenda. Debates often take place in the social space before they are elevated to the pages of newspapers or broadcast channels. Journalists recognize the importance of building their follower numbers in order to promote traffic to their stories.

In 2012 Google made some significant changes to its news search which included greater integration with Google+. Google+ comments appear on news search pages and in real-time coverage pages. Google+ members are also able to see comments from people in their circles on the news pages. Scott Zuccarino, the Google News product manager, said at launch: “many news stories inspire vibrant discussions on Google+, and today we're starting to add this content to both the news homepage and the real-time coverage pages.”

## The growth of social media adoption

In recent years delivering communications programmes using social networks as delivery channels was a specialist activity. When the networks were new, adoption was low and they were niche channels. Social networks are now a mainstream phenomenon. Facebook claimed in October 2012 that it had passed the billion user mark with more than 50% of the US population signed up, and Australasia, Latin America and Europe all have similar adoption levels.<sup>1</sup>

NM Incite, a joint venture between research firm Nielsen and management consultants McKinsey, took a comprehensive look at social media adoption in 2012. They found that the total time spent on PCs and mobile devices grew by 21% over the previous year, with time spent on mobile apps more than doubling.<sup>2</sup>

According to a Pew report published in December 2012 people in developing countries are joining social networks at a higher rate than the populations of Europe, North America and Australasia. The global report looked at 21 nations and found that the majority of internet users in Brazil, Mexico, Tunisia, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, India and Russia use social media.<sup>3</sup>

The report also indicates that the adoption of mobile phones has led growth. In fact the way people access the internet is perhaps a more important question for PR people than whether they access the news via digital or analogue platforms.

## Digital is part of every programme

The most powerful argument for the absence of a division between traditional and digital PR is that it is difficult to conceive of a PR campaign that is entirely without a digital dimension.

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<sup>1</sup>Report: Social network demographics in 2012: <http://cipr.co/Wsb2vE>

<sup>2</sup>The Social Media Report 2012: <http://cipr.co/XiuBpJ>

<sup>3</sup>Social Networking Popular Across Globe: <http://cipr.co/WrWaPH>