ABOUT THIS REPORT

For the fourth annual New Media Academic Summit, Edelman brought together 100 professors of business, communications, journalism, marketing, and public relations from four continents to discuss how digital media and other tools are changing the way organizations develop strategies to effectively engage all audiences. The sessions were led by more than 40 influential digital and social media practitioners from various industries and leading media who are helping to drive the conversation around and the adoption of the latest digital and social engagement technologies.


Digital has reset the world in which we live, work, and play – where “new” media isn’t so new. The numerous discussions between the experts and the professors carried one common theme: digital is now a central mandate for public relations – no longer a line extension or specialty. It is what we do.

This report provides best practices and actionable insights – not for whether, but how – to communicate in an era of engagement with all stakeholders, including employees, consumers, partners, investors, regulators, and media.

For more information on the Summit, including full webcasts of the panel sessions, visit www.newmediaacademicsummit.com.

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THE THIRD WAY: Public Engagement

THE THESIS
The dispersion of authority from mainstream media and traditional sources of influence towards new, open platforms and peer reliance has changed the communications paradigm for companies. This shift demands that organizations engage with stakeholders through multiple voices across channels.

In the early 1900’s, advertising emerged as the primary mechanism to communicate with mass audiences through “paid media.” In the mid-20th century, it was augmented by public relations – where media was “earned” by securing editorial coverage in news outlets.

Today, there is a Third Way beyond paid and earned media to engagement media — a combination of new, social, and owned — that allows companies and brands to engage directly with stakeholders to deliver content and build relationships. As Randall Rothenberg, president and CEO, Interactive Advertising Bureau said, “There is now strategic equivalence for the first time between paid, earned, and owned media.” PR now has the opportunity to sit at the center as the organizing force of communications and strategy.

THE LANDSCAPE
Media consumption has increased, but it is fundamentally different. Consumption habits have evolved from “pre-defined” and “mass appeal” – where audiences made appointments to watch their favorite shows on TV – to include “pre-selected” and “long tail or niche content” — on-demand options that allow media to be consumed anytime, anywhere.

In the last decade, media consumption by 8-18 year olds increased by almost 80 minutes to 458 per day. Television viewing is up slightly, but teenagers are simultaneously texting to friends, updating their Facebook status, and tweeting. This continuous partial attention — more places, more sources, more social — is a “glocal” (global and local) phenomenon. For example, Facebook is a global brand, but local brands such as orkut, Friendster, Cyworld, and mixi are generally more important in their markets.

The proliferation of this new social aspect of media means that every kind of media has a role to play. It is no longer the story of “or” — meaning, which channel to use - but is the story of “and” — which combination of channels to use. The average person is consuming six to eight sources of information daily and needs to hear or read something three to five times in different places from various sources before believing it.

As media evolves in this context and we move from speaking at audiences to participating with them, we observe the need to:

- Complement paid and earned media strategies by embracing engagement media.
- Employ a multi-media approach that starts with the creation of compelling content that is available to people where they are — Web, magazines, mobile, or slate; providing opportunities for consumers to repurpose content and amplify the discussion on other platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook.
- Reach out to new media with the convening credibility of expert voices (there is a growing power of niche blogs – TechCrunch, Politico, The Huffington Post, and others).
- Utilize social networks as essential spaces for company digital embassies, serving as aggregators for discussion and connection points for members.
- Understand that every company can become a media company via an owned channel, driving people to substantive and visually alluring material.

THE THIRD WAY – PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
PR is going beyond communications to counsel the C-suite on strategy and policy to chart long-term relationships with all stakeholders. The change — from one-way megaphone execution to developing organizational strategy and the core creative concepts that inform and engage across multiple channels — requires a fundamental pivot. To be a management discipline, PR must also deliver measurable outcomes including increasing trust in brands and organizations; changing behaviors among stakeholders; engaging communities; and delivering commercial benefit such as increased sales and lower employee turnover.

The guiding principle for this approach is Public Engagement - advancing shared interests in a world of interdependence. It requires that PR practitioners rely upon three core skills: research, ideas, and content.

With research-based insights driving strategy and program development, PR is in a position to create the central galvanizing idea for any communications platform — one which encourages action among audiences, can evolve across multiple channels, and has the substance to extend beyond media to all stakeholders.
For example, before the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs launched its “Me Not Meth” public education campaign addressing methamphetamine use across the state, it measured audience awareness and understanding through surveys and audits of meth-related conversations online (including chat rooms and blogs) and focus groups to ensure it understood which messages the target populations would find compelling, as well as the appropriate channels for messages and distribution. The success of the iconic symbol of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games — the red mittens by Hudson Bay’s Company — was the outcome of creative PR at work, resulting not only in 800,000,000 media impressions garnered, but also 3.5 million pairs of red mittens sold — with no paid support. eBay merchandises the latest fashion bargains and trends, provides content to traditional and social media, and encourages consumer participation through its online magazine The Inside Source — complete with an editorial team and video content — as well as engaging shoppers through various mobile phone applications.

As business moves from a shareholder to a stakeholder mentality, PR must assume its proper role as the organizing principle for strategy and communications. PR should begin to move along two key dimensions: (1) encompassing a broader set of media options being equally capable in categories from Mainstream to New to Social to Owned and (2) moving to a long-term connection with stakeholders where there is a commitment to social relationships, as all communications are now public and all publics seek to be engaged.

(Disclosure: The California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, Hudson Bay’s Company, and eBay are clients.)
As recent as five years ago, it was easy to distinguish between a journalist and everyone else: the journalist wrote for a newspaper or magazine or worked for a “traditional” broadcast outlet. Today, some of the most influential “reporters” have never appeared in print or on a newscast, and many deliver news 140 characters at a time.

In this new normal, how does mainstream media maintain its voice and relevance, and what are the implications for journalism? As new phenomena emerge – whether Twitter, crowdsourcing reporting, citizen journalism, or others – the walls of traditional journalism are breaking down. The future of the news media will depend upon its ability to embrace these changes.

Michael Oreskes noted that the AP has been in the business of generating headlines of 140 characters or less for decades and observed that citizen journalism is not a new phenomenon. However, the Web has allowed it to be much more effective than in prior decades. With tools to disseminate information no longer limited to airwaves or printing presses, a higher premium is being placed on standards to define what constitutes journalism. The immediate scrutiny afforded by the Internet and 24/7 news cycles makes it critical for journalists to be increasingly transparent and for every story to stand on its own. The quality of work – not comics, recipes, or other editorial supplements – will distinguish journalism moving forward.

Creating original content that readers and viewers cannot find elsewhere is also important to build audiences and earn their loyalty. However, Gerard Baker noted that media is not exempt from the trust deficit impacting other institutions. Thus, journalists must not compromise trust in the quest to create more original and timely content.

The panel also discussed seeing a shift in trust – to the brand known as “friend.” As more of what people read, see, and hear come as recommendations through social media by friends, few media – especially networks – can nowadays claim household loyalists.

Transparency and objectivity

Mark Lukasiewicz commented on transparency as the new objectivity in journalism. At a time when some media channels are perceived as highly politicized, being transparent can help audiences understand that while journalists may have specific opinions, their views do not always prevent them from objectively reporting facts.

For The Huffington Post, transparency, openness, and allowing conversations to take place are key pillars of its approach. Greg Coleman confirmed that The Huffington Post receives more than three million comments per month from users. Its definition of “openness” means having a dialogue with people via the ways they are obtaining information. So the site, which encourages a comprehensive approach when using social tools and practicing openness, divides its content equally between original, bloggers, and aggregated.

The future bottom line

But even if quality journalism, good content, trust, and transparency can help to capture a large audience, the challenge remains: how can media outlets be profitable in this democratized environment? Ad revenues are down, but the labor-intensive work and skill required to sustain a journalistic operation are not. As more media begin considering paywalls – charging readers for access to content – Jonah Bloom encouraged the consideration of alternative revenue-generation models, such as usage-based incentive programs, to counter the notion that profits can only result from advertising or subscription revenue.

“Access to the tools of journalism is universal, but access to the storytelling skill is still more elusive...while media has become very democratized, there isn’t a lot of evidence yet that a lot of people want to do it...the editing function is still valued by audiences.”

- Mark Lukasiewicz

Key takeaways:

- Professional journalists continue to differentiate themselves by adhering to high standards and levels of quality.
- Original content is a driver that can bring new audiences to media outlets, but it must always be rooted in facts.
- Although journalism requires a specific skill-set, mainstream media still need to innovate and evolve with emerging technologies and social platforms for deeper audience engagement.
- Media outlets have an opportunity to explore alternative revenue models beyond advertising and subscriptions – including incentive-based programs.

*indicates affiliation at the time of the Summit
TRANSFORMATIONAL TECHNOLOGY:
New Tools Driving Change

New technology and revolutionary platforms drive new media, and devices and applications are being developed at a faster pace than ever. The technologies to watch are those that will help bridge the gap between online and offline activity.

Adam Broitman predicted that it is likely that in five years, we will consider the way that we “Google” things today to be as outmoded as the Dewey Decimal System. The reason? Augmented reality.

Essentially, augmented reality is the digital overlay of information on top of a live video feed (e.g., the orange down line on the field of a televised football game). While in its early phases today, augmented reality boasts the ability to recognize an object via a mobile device, query a database for the object, and return a search result. Online and mobile games are already making use of this technology, but a greater potential could be realized through applications that allow consumers to augment their offline shopping experiences.

Consumers will be able to use augmented reality to expand the store shelf. For instance, a mobile augmented reality application could help consumers see — and hear — a larger story about the product(s) they are holding. The game-changer for marketers will be that consumers will finally be documenting their offline behavior online.

Michael Slaby noted that except for online retailers, the most important metrics are offline. Breaking down the online/offline walls is simultaneously critical and challenging, but it is key for brands to ensure that the technology, platforms, and social media they use also drive offline actions.

Sean Mahoney advocated for the establishment of proper metrics for success when using new technologies and platforms — more than simply how many times a video or other piece of content has been downloaded or viewed, but more strategically, whether the right connections are being established with consumers.

Observations and trends to watch

Web Redesign for a Touch Interface: Designers and programmers have become dependent on options such as mouse-overs and mouse behaviors. However, much of that will likely fade in a touch environment. While it may not require a reimagining of whole scale interface, it will require reconsidering primary screens and ensuring that an experience is able to be translated across different types of user interfaces.

Better Integration of Technology with Business: Understand that technology is a mutable tool — not the substance. Having a grasp of the problem and knowing the right tool to achieve the business outcome is paramount to ensuring that the use of technology in business evolves from the shiny and obvious tactics to a core strategy that supports an objective.

Mobile Adoption: Although mobile has been touted as the “next big thing” for more than a decade, two elements make it more viable now — bandwidth and interfaces. Mobile bandwidth is increasing, allowing the mobile Web to be used in ways that were previously untenable. Also, touch interfaces and the screen resolution help to make the mobile experience a much more immersive, compelling one. For instance, Mahoney noted that mobile users on Facebook are twice as active as general users. Portability of products and technologies is the future — the ability to get information anytime, anywhere.

Greater Engagement through Gaming: Gaming is making a significant impact on the way people connect. Mahoney said the popular social media game Farmville now has more daily users than Twitter, and the consensus was that social or location-based games, such as FourSquare, will continue to gain traction and marketplace acceptance. As brands increasingly insert themselves in gaming, opportunities exist to create a continuous loop of engagement with the consumer — in-store “reward” purchases that drive consumers to the online game for redemption and then back to the store. Another compelling application includes using the game space for social entrepreneurship or social philanthropy, where philanthropy becomes the subject of the online/offline loop of rewards. It is the same concept as retail activation, but a different outcome.

“Falling prey to shiny object syndrome is easy, but doing something just because someone else is doing it is a setup for failure. The best uses of technology follow from the unique values and identity of each brand and business.”

Key takeaways:

- Emerging technologies, such as augmented reality applications, will give consumers new experiences with products and break down the online/offline walls.
- Mobile is more viable now because of improvements in bandwidth and touch interfaces, enabling a better user experience and portability.
- New technologies are tools, not strategies, and require a thoughtful approach to determine the opportunities for a specific brand.
Digital and social media have fundamentally changed the way people build communities and interact with brands and organizations. As a result, online consumer engagement should be a proactive, not reactive, process. A brand must begin building relationships with online communities in the good times - before something goes wrong – if it expects them to come to its defense in the bad times.

Engaging influencers in a crisis, Activating your advocates

Bert DuMars used Newell Rubbermaid’s Graco Children’s Products as an example. After recognizing the erosion of the brand’s reputation a few years ago from a caring to an uncaring brand, Graco employed offline and online strategies to build meaningful relationships with its target audience of moms wherever possible (from happy hours and blogs to Twitter and Flickr). When the brand was forced to issue a recall earlier this year of 1.5 million strollers that could potentially cut a child’s fingers, it did not use a “duck-and-cover” strategy. Instead, it directly engaged its audiences via Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, and other platforms, as well as produced an online video about how to fix the strollers and where to go for help. It also established an active community of moms and dads who trusted the brand and were willing to speak on its behalf. The community’s response was so powerful and positive that it effectively delivered the brand’s message and quelled a potentially months-long story in less than 72 hours. However, the strategy would not have worked without Graco’s prior effort to connect with its community on-and-offline and build trust with its most influential – and vocal – members.

The corporate perspective

Donna Sitkiewicz finds that the social media focus is often different for corporate reputation than for brands – yet the two are interconnected. Problems with brands are no longer siloed as only “brand issues” and become corporate reputation issues as well.

Social media has shifted the power in communications. Consumers have a much louder voice to address issues than in the past – forcing corporate communications teams to react much faster. However, the proactive aspect of social media and corporate reputation can allow a company to talk about itself in its entirety and help bring value to consumers by helping them better understand lesser-known efforts, such as sustainability, community involvement, and supply chain.

Finding influencers

When identifying influencers, it is important to listen first. Know how people are talking about a brand or company, what they want to know, and how they are talking about the issues that may not be central to the organization, but are relevant to where it is and wants to go.

Some people, such as those who are passionate about a brand, are easy to find. Identifying them can be a simple process including a basic online search to determine who is talking and what they are talking about. This can include consumer-generated product reviews and feedback sections.

Others can present more of a challenge. For example, how can a brand reach consumers being courted by complementary brands? Brands should identify “by association” when possible. This means identifying someone around the primary target who is either already buying for the target influencer or determining the right product to purchase.

However, identifying influencers extends beyond external influencers and amplifiers. Brands and companies also need to identify people internally who can be influential in the broader social media community. These people may elicit a completely different response than a corporate spokesperson and may often be more credible.

“Listen before you leap.”

- Donna Sitkiewicz

Key takeaways:

- Organizations cannot wait until a crisis to create an engaged and credible influencer community. This core group should be identified and cultivated via active, close engagement on an ongoing basis.

- Once a brand or company builds a community of advocates, this group can communicate on behalf of the organization in good and bad times – most often leading to greater credibility.

- Every social media strategy should include the identification of external – and internal – influencers.
ONGOING ENGAGEMENT: Real-time, All the Time

A strategic, well-planned, and meaningful social media effort to engage consumers demands an exceptional level of commitment from companies and brands. As more organizations seek to establish sustained relationships with their stakeholders, this panel recommended a few best practices.

**Determine the value the brand brings to consumers and why they should engage with it.** Digital advertising — often in the form of interruptive advertising translated into a digital format and pushed at consumers — is not engagement. Brands must determine what meaningful, rich experience they have to offer that would prompt consumers to want to engage with them and then insert themselves into the conversation in a relevant, value-added way.

**Build relationships, not campaigns.** Once brands embark on a social media engagement strategy, there is no stopping (without negative consequences). Those who only broadcast messages when they have a new product or initiative to market — and then stop talking — risk leaving stakeholders with a sense of brand betrayal. When the decision is made to engage any stakeholder and start the conversation, organizations must be prepared to engage with them whenever and however they want. Get involved. Ask questions. Answer questions. Consistently.

**Know what you are getting into.** As communities grow, ongoing engagement can be a seemingly daunting task that can require a tremendous daily effort to maintain. Have a realistic sense from the beginning of the resources, capabilities, and dollars that will be required to sustain the effort.

**Abandon the “out with the old and in with the new” thinking.** There is a radical thinking that the “traditional” media has lost value in the wake of social media. However, the goal is not to shift entirely to social media, but to understand how brands can incorporate social media into the full marketing matrix. For example, often the best engagement a brand can deliver is a combination of offline and online efforts, giving consumers an opportunity for a “traditional” offline brand experience that is amplified via “new” digital and social media.

**Have a content pipeline.** Social media engagement dramatically increases the volume of content and conversation generated. To efficiently and strategically manage the large quantity of content necessary for ongoing conversation, brands should consider preparing a content calendar with general messages and themes to be delivered across specific platforms. These broad themes can then be tailored to fit into topical news or brand activity for deeper relevance.

**Understand that you cannot do it alone.** Most companies do not have corporate communications or community engagement teams large enough to respond to or track the thousands of conversations about a brand each day. But organizations can identify, engage, and reward the advocates who talk about the brand on its behalf. Rewards can be as simple as retweets of acknowledgment, giveaways, or hosting meet-ups and tweet-ups at events.

**Be a global citizen.** Conversations happen 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all around the world, in many different languages. Thus, a social media engagement strategy should not be focused solely on North America or Europe. Create Facebook, orkut, mixi, and other pages globally so that the content is culturally appropriate, relevant, and timely. Also, allow regional managers to communicate on the brand’s behalf and give them the tools — where they are — to do it.

**Above all, listen.** Most people begin with the “output” — asking, “What can I push across these platforms?” But, first, we should consider the “input” — asking, “How are we setting up listening posts in a social media space to hear what people are talking about?” Spending time listening to consumers before determining what to publish will help to ensure that content is appropriate, compelling, and relevant to the community.

**Recognize the critical need for measurement and evaluation.** Solid data shifts the conversations about the ability of social media engagement to drive business from one of conjecture and subjectivity to one of facts and proof — often serving as the impetus to effect larger strategic and cultural changes within an organization.

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**Key takeaways:**

- Don’t underestimate the level of commitment required to maintain a credible, consistent social media strategy and presence.
- “New” media does not trump traditional — the two should be combined for maximum impact.
- Identify, engage, and reward advocates who speak on a brand’s behalf.
- Create and participate in communities around the world using different platforms to be locally relevant.
BEYOND THE BOTTOM LINE: Using Social Media to Advance Partnerships

Organizations today are at an inflection point in our society: consumers are demanding that companies stand for something beyond the bottom line, and non-profits need companies to help them enhance their missions. In partnership, the two entities can perform better by helping each other “do good.” Social media is a critical tool in this mission — helping to facilitate a deeper level of engagement with stakeholders, including consumers and donors.

Case Study: American Heart Association

When the American Heart Association realized that people didn’t know much about the organization — despite its 75-year heritage and track record for funding more research than any organization in the country, except for the government — it began to evolve its brand and the way it worked with consumers. As part of its Passion Project, where each cause is designed to speak to the passion of an individual, the AHA created “Go Red for Women” — a movement around women and heart disease that became the first of four campaigns. However, the organization realized early on that it could not execute such a large endeavor alone, which led to an organizational shift in understanding that it needed partners to help. Today, funding from companies including Macy’s and Merck allows the AHA to conduct extensive heart health outreach across several of its cause campaigns.

Looking forward, the AHA has launched its 2020 goal — to reduce the death and disability of Americans from cardiovascular disease by 20 percent and to increase the cardiovascular health of Americans by 20 percent. The organization again recognizes that it will not be able to accomplish this goal by itself. This is in part because of the state of the economy, but also because its culture has shifted to look at all possible forms of innovation — whether creating partnership programs with for-profits, not-for-profits, or the government.

As part of its innovation, the AHA is also considering all forms of activity to reach its audience and views social media as a key vehicle. In the absence of large advertising budgets for television or radio campaigns, social media is vital for non-profits because they rely more on grassroots and viral efforts to reach audiences.

Social media also fosters a new level of accountability and interaction. Donors and supporters are increasingly engaging with non-profits to inquire about the impact of their donations and want to understand how organizations are executing their missions. By using social media platforms as a gathering place to build communities of the most engaged and passionate supporters, the AHA and other non-profits no longer need to rely primarily on one-way conduits such as direct mail or PSAs to share stories, images, and testimonials. They can depend on these communities to speak on their behalf. This type of engagement is immediate and encourages ongoing involvement and dialogue with all stakeholders.

Social media also allows these organizations to shift from being perceived primarily as donation-seekers to educators fostering a deeper level of engagement with people about what they are doing, how to get involved, and how they can make a difference.

"Social media is just part of the mix. It’s still using all the tools we have now and having one more to integrate as part of a campaign.”

– Anu Gandhi

Case Study: Pepsi Refresh

At PepsiCo, Performance with Purpose — delivering sustainable growth by investing in a healthier future for people and the planet — starts at the top and is the lens through which the company conducts business. This approach also extends to its brands — with the recognition that while brands need to be profitable, they also need to have a purpose.

When considering the brand opportunity to do something to make an impact under the PepsiCo Performance with Purpose platform, Pepsi created The Pepsi Refresh Project — pledging to foster innovation in social good by awarding more than $20 million this year to fund great ideas that refresh the world.

The entire project is driven by a digital engine, where people can participate by submitting, voting on, and getting advice from bloggers about ways to improve ideas. Among other activities, the brand supports the website as the primary information hub by having a Facebook and YouTube presence to ensure that the program is engaging with people where they are.

Pepsi recognized that while it has a strong brand, it would also need to engage partners to help provide credibility to the project. The brand partnered with GOOD, Global Giving, and Do Something as its not-for-profit advisors on the best way to execute the initiative. It also identified other third-party advisors and ambassadors who could speak with authority about project categories such as the environment, education, and the arts. Ensuring that the project had credible voices and faces that could live in social media and engage with people in these and other areas was essential to its success.

“We’ve tried to strike a balance between how far we go in social media while retaining the core roots that you have to as a mass brand to reach a mass audience.”

– Peter Land
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: New Lessons, New Conversations

Social media is changing the dynamic inside organizations. With recent studies indicating that at least one in five workers is giving discretionary effort inside the organization because he or she lacks a connection to the enterprise, social media can help employers foster a deeper, more consistent engagement with employees. The need is increasing for leadership and management to rediscover the workforce and ensure that the “volume” within the organization is turned on. Organizations must ensure that they are going where people are to deliver content both externally and internally.

One of the primary challenges right now for CEOs and leadership teams within organizations is around organizational clarity. From a communications point of view, this is a comprehension of strategy, a line of sight from the job to the marketplace, a trust in leadership to do what is right, and a relationship to the values of the business. As leadership teams attempt to tackle organizational clarity, they should consider one basic question — How smart do you want your employees to be?

Once organizations can answer that question on a daily basis, they can determine the content, context, interaction, and mechanisms they will use to make the right connection and build long-term relationships. To that end, organizations should consider a few key best practices when using social media to engage employees.

Listen, then tell. The primary element of engagement that social media allows organizations to build into their communications model is as much the ability to listen as it is to tell. A key benefit of social media tools within organizations is that they can facilitate a more in-depth and frequent dialogue with employees. This allows organizations to be much more agile and have conversations that solicit input into what is working, what isn’t, and how they can adjust accordingly. All engagement centers on dialogue. When employees feel engaged in this process, they are more likely to be open to the messages that the organization needs them to embrace to perform better and drive success.

Reach employees where they are. For large global enterprises in particular, social media can present an opportunity to address some of the employee engagement challenges presented by multiple country locations, languages, and functions. Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and intranets are among the tools that should be used as engagement hubs for employee feedback and discussion, broadcast vehicles for key meetings, content centers for video and other collateral, and real-time update portals across the organization. By enabling them to incorporate the use of this multi-media content during face-to-face meetings as well, intranet and social media tools can equip managers to increase communications with employees who may not work online every day. Lastly, it is critical that organizations enable online translation so that employees around the world — not only those in English-speaking countries — are able to participate and add to the dialogue in a meaningful way, in their own language.

Let employees tell the story. Organizations no longer exclusively direct their messages. This is a fundamental shift in communications driven by the reality that employees want to be active participants in the conversation and are — whether supported by employers or not. When coupled with a solid understanding of where the organization is going and a strong partnership with HR and general counsel, organizations have the opportunity to gather valuable content and engage employees for open online feedback about their jobs, lines of business, direction of the organization, and what the CEO is saying, among other areas. While these communications may have been highly scripted in the past, the sharing of information that is encouraged via social media allows organizations to use employees’ own words and stories to more credibly illustrate specific examples that support broader messages.

Focus on the need, not the tools. While social media presents a number of advantages to communicating with employees, the primary focus should not be on the tools and technology. It should be on the organization’s business need. Maintain the discipline to focus on three questions every day: What does the business need? What do employees need? What is it that we need to deliver to the company? Once those questions are answered, organizations can determine the right venue, the right tools, and the right technology to make it happen - whether Twitter, the intranet, a video webcast, or an “old-fashioned” face-to-face meeting.

Key takeaways:

• Employee productivity may be affected by the level of engagement with the organization. Less engagement can equal less proactive efforts to advance business objectives.

• Organizations develop smarter, more engaged employees via social media by listening to what they have to say, telling them what they need to hear, and having an ongoing dialogue meant to enhance learning and maintain interest.

• “Going where people are” applies to both external and internal audiences.
Global Media Perspectives

Social media is fundamentally changing how people learn about the world and how mainstream media are gathering news, enhancing their brands, and becoming international community hubs for discussion. While some media have admittedly been late to the game in participating in social media, there is consensus that it has become one of the most important and effective ways for them to attract, build, and maintain audiences. In fact, viewers who consume news via social media often go deeper, stay longer, and become more loyal to the news organization.

Rana Foroohar observed that because the commoditization of news has prompted less original reporting than in the past, global media have been forced to have a much more open way of thinking about how to cover a story. This includes where they receive their information and linking to different sites and organizations that have supporting content. Beyond Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube, social media encompasses a vast number of people with new access, tools, and bandwidth to use a range of distribution platforms to provide real-time impressions of what is happening around the world — even from places of war.

Nik Gowing referenced the more than four billion people globally who now have mobile devices — many with cameras — and noted that these “information doers, born digitals, and motivated amateurs” are not “citizen journalists,” as journalism adds another layer of value. Instead, they are bearers of witness — new eyes and ears — who are opening up areas where traditional media hasn’t been operating, or hasn’t been allowed to operate.

In fact, social media has forced mainstream media to recognize that it can be as — if not more — reliable as “traditional” sources. When the 2005 subway and bus bombings happened in London, initial reports from the government said that a power surge had occurred. However, when the enormous amount of texts, emails, filing footage, and images sent by everyday people to the BBC and other news organizations indicated that there had indeed been a bombing, the coverage shifted.

Whether in London, Burma, Tibet, or Iran, almost nothing can be hidden anymore as videos, tweets, and other social media postings appear instantly and spread swiftly. Whether they are participating as “citizen journalists” or “motivated amateurs,” most people — especially in developing nations — are not interested in being journalists or making money. They are often motivated by the opportunity social media provides to be active politically. This presents a simultaneous challenge, fascination, and excitement for media who need to be quick-to-publish to maintain a competitive advantage, but who also need to verify the accuracy of some of the information received through social media channels and put it in context both locally and globally.

Platforms such as Twitter, which many media now use as both a communications tool and a resource for coverage, have increasing global content, and trending topics are more often originating outside of the United States. Nat Ives predicted that as social media continues to evolve, audiences will see an increased international perspective and influence in local coverage — even from U.S.-focused media.

“It’s important to understand that social media is fundamentally changing the way we in the news business are getting our information and how the time-lines are being dramatically shortened.”

— Nik Gowing

Key takeaways:

• Ordinary citizens armed with mobile devices and access to social media platforms are driving a new layer of understanding and content around issues globally.

• While mindful of authenticity and accuracy issues, mainstream media around the world have changed their view of the value and role of social media in news gathering.

• As social media begins to facilitate more global content and discussion, audiences will see more international influence reflected in media coverage.
“EVERY COMPANY IS A MEDIA COMPANY”:
A Q&A with David Carey and Jonathan Miller

STEVE BARRETT: What is the future for “traditional media companies”?

JONATHAN MILLER: We have to consider what will remain premium versus what will become commoditized. We see a division growing as more commoditized and undifferentiated media get created. Media companies should primarily be in the premium business – having content with clear value propositions for consumers and advertisers.

STEVE BARRETT: How does Condé Nast migrate its business into the digital or multi-platform environment? Will print magazines continue?

DAVID CAREY: The right type of print products will continue. For example, with Wired, we have the right magazine — 750,000 circulation; Wired.com with 12-13 million monthly uniques; and the iPad application — which will probably outsell the single copy in print form. By making our content available on these platforms, it’s an additive business. As tablet penetration goes from three million to 30 or 40 million in the next four to five years, we can see robust businesses in tablet and print form, as well as our Web businesses. They all do something different for the people who consume the content.

STEVE BARRETT: What was the tipping point for News Corporation to migrate some newspaper products to a paid-for platform? How did you persuade people to pay for something they had been getting for free?

JONATHAN MILLER: First, looking at the media business, things that have dual revenue streams – advertising and subscription – are typically healthy businesses. Second, The Wall Street Journal specifically showed that it could have a Web presence with millions of monthly uniques and a healthy digital subscription business - growing both print and digital. When you realize that they aren’t mutually exclusive and you can maintain an advertising base, it’s a better business model. Regarding the value proposition, you have to show that you’re investing in the product and creating new experiences tailored to the medium and worth charging for.

STEVE BARRETT: Are you building relationships with other media owners?

JONATHAN MILLER: We’re partners in Next Issue Media, a consortium – including News Corporation, Condé Nast, Hearst, Meredith, and Time Warner – particularly around magazines, to figure out some of these models for magazines and related publications. It’s an important joint venture driven by the need to simplify and find the right answers for consumers.

DAVID CAREY: These five companies came together to set standards for publishing and advertising and to create a robust storefront and e-commerce platform. The notion was that the size and scale of the opportunity required a new level of cooperation.

STEVE BARRETT: What are the various approaches needed to produce content for a tablet vs. a print product?

DAVID CAREY: When we closed Gourmet, the monthly magazine, it became the poster child for the challenges of the magazine business. But we had a brand that was valuable with a reservoir of good will with consumers. We needed the right way to apply it. A company came to us with an idea to reimagine Gourmet as if it was created by a technology, not a media, company. So, Gourmet Live includes every cutting-edge element imaginable. It’s fed through vast archives - 70 years of content. It will be social media enabled and location-based and will have a social gaming element that encourages consumers to go deeper, and through their actions unlock more content to earn rewards. Marrying that cutting-edge concept with a venerable brand has enormous application for the industry if it works.

STEVE BARRETT: What are you doing to build audiences?

JONATHAN MILLER: Video is becoming the gateway. You’re seeing it more in different forms – even public radio is talking about how to get more video. The Wall Street Journal is expanding that with Wall Street Journal Television. Second, different types of technologies from social features are integrating directly into a product – not separately or as an overlay. Third is rapid development and deployment. Experiment. Some things will work. Some won’t. Some will work if you iterate.

STEVE BARRETT: What is the future as brands become media owners and as your relationship with them evolves?

JONATHAN MILLER: Brands are media owners and need to embrace being media owners - which in part is a persistent presence in connection with the consumer. It’s not just, “I had a flight of ads. They ran.” From the brand side, you need to have a direct relationship with consumers. You also need to leverage and harness the consistent pools of audiences that others can aggregate and provide.

DAVID CAREY: One business that we’re really in is the content and community business. So, how do we apply that core competency to other brands? As a media company, we need to have a revenue model for helping brands meet their growing needs – including e-commerce, social media, and offline targeting, such as events. Trends are moving from brand advertising to “below the line” marketing and promotion, with public relations as part of that. Media companies have to be nimble enough to play above the line and below the line in terms of where this spend is.

*indicates affiliation at the time of the Summit; currently President, Hearst Magazines
Consistency is essential to guide the message interplay between paid, earned, social, and owned media. However, transparency is key to convey authenticity, build trust, and drive value.

While discussion of the transparency of companies — or lack thereof — has recently dominated both boardrooms and newsrooms, much less discussion has centered on the expectations of open communications from the government and the medical profession. What is the balance of advancing transparency while protecting their classified and confidential interests — and how has new media impacted how they communicate with their respective audiences of citizens and patients?

**Pushing Greater Government Transparency**

Technology has radically changed the entire notion of government transparency. According to Ellen Miller, it has also improved the information diet of Americans. Citing a Pew study from April which found that 40 percent of adults have gone online in the last year to look for data about the government, Miller noted the public’s expanding appetite for government information and the benefits of the Internet to enable direct engagement between citizens and government.

Many transparency advocates do not believe that the government is keeping up. As more organizations work to redefine what “public information” means in the age of the Internet, legislation such as the Freedom of Information Act — where citizens can proactively request information from the government in writing — could become obsolete if new legislation such as the Public Online Information Act (POIA) is passed. POIA was developed under the premise that government is transparent only when public information is available online and that government now has a responsibility to make information known.

This does not mean that transparent communications by the government should compromise issues such as national security or privacy. However, open government advocates are focusing more on how to disclose other types of information previously deemed proprietary that could enhance public knowledge — including information about corporations that receive government aid.

“Everyone is a patient at some point in their lives, and there’s just overwhelming patient demand for quality medical information online. There’s also an appetite for physicians to talk among themselves.”

— Dr. Nicholas Genes

**A Provider’s Perspective**

Like the government, doctors have an audience that is hungry for more access to information online. They desire to talk to physicians, specialists, and other patients, as well as form support groups and communal sites to exchange stories, tips, and suggestions. However, Dr. Nicholas Genes noted that this type of openness — especially online — has historically been more challenging for physicians, and they have been more skeptical of its value.

For many doctors, their only experience with transparency has been negative, marked largely by forced disclosures of patient treatment for audit compliance or iniquitous feedback by disgruntled patients on physician-review websites. The challenge for physicians is to find new, safe ways to network and openly share information online with each other — without compromising patient confidentiality or exposing themselves to lawsuits because of patient privacy.

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WHAT’S NEXT?

Much has been written about the financial crash since September 2008, but far fewer people are talking about the attention crash.

According to a Nielsen Online study, the average American visits 111 domains and 2500 websites per month. More websites. More television channels. More Twitter feeds and Facebook friends. Each of these releases vast amounts of information that compete for mindshare and focus.

Steve Rubel noted that this “crisis of attention” means that now more than ever, companies and brands need to know how to create content that will break through the noise and create more surface area across an ever-expanding number of channels, venues, and communities.

While no one can predict with certainty where social media is going next or how it will continue to change society and communications, a few common themes and trends emerged in the panel’s discussion:

Conversation: The new PR

According to Dan Gillmor, PR is becoming the new advertising, and conversation is becoming PR – a fundamental switch. As it becomes harder to distinguish between the conversations that journalism, marketing, and media are having, the boundaries of communication are disappearing. To prevent confusion, audiences will need a filter for information that can be trusted in a variety of contexts. A key opportunity exists here for consumer brands and media organizations (which have lost significant trust) to reassert their credibility by helping to surface the most important information and relieving overwhelmed audiences of the need to know everything.

From offline to online…and in between

Today, younger generations are not making a distinction between virtual, real, and offline – leading to a blending of online and offline engagement. Scott Heiferman believes that this will result in fostering a “collaboration of consumption,” where people interact with each other via communities defined simply as “people helping each other” – sharing goods, information, and services. Online platforms such as Meetup are allowing them to turn to each other offline and in-person to create co-ops, support systems, and other shared-interest groups.

The inescapable nature of social media

Rather than following the evolution of social media, Adam Ostrow is now looking at how brands, educators, non-profits, and others are actually using it. He believes that social media will be increasingly integrated into everything we do – and is already on its way, from Internet television to mobile devices to car radios to Xbox. Thus, the identity we create online will be incorporated into numerous areas of our personal and professional lives and will further stir the privacy debate.

Less talk, more action

There is a shift in social media from the mass reach and frequency model to a more precise engagement and amplification model. What was once all “talk” is now action aimed at finding something authentic and then determining how to socialize and amplify it. Rubel noted that the reach era is slowly coming to an end and that companies and brands will need to take a deliberate, surgical approach to identifying the key people whom they need to engage on a regular basis – rather than a wide-net approach.

The tablet changes the game

While tablets are a “game changer” in terms of content consumption and creation, it remains to be seen to what degree they will make people who are passive technology users adopt a more mobile lifestyle. However, the tablet’s potential for content publishers may accelerate its integration into our day-to-day lives. Ostrow shared that moving forward, publishers could likely choose to subsidize these devices – similar to what cable companies do with cable boxes – as a valuable platform that could be as big as the Internet for content distribution.

“I think there is going to be a wake-up in these next few years where, out of evolutionary necessity, you are going to want to retreat to turning off...People are more magical than the iPad, and there is going to be some sort of wake-up to the magic of people.”

– Scott Heiferman

Key takeaways:

- The crisis of attention requires that brands create more compelling content to engage their audiences.
- An offline collaborative culture will gain momentum through online social media channels with people sharing information, goods, and services.
- Traditionally, social media relied on a reach and frequency model. Today, action is key as engagement and amplification of authentic ideas are at the forefront.
- While the lure of innovations will become stronger as new devices and apps proliferate, people will eventually want to escape the clutter, “turn off” devices, and revert to more human connections.
With the revolutionary changes taking place in media today, it is easy to overlook the value some viewers still place on consistency.

Nowhere is this more pronounced than in network morning television, where the desire for familiar faces and formats can keep a viewer faithful to a single program for decades. These shows — and their casts — become a part of a viewer’s morning routine. However, there is a need to strike a balance between consistency and evolution.

Convincing viewers to change their patterns and habits regarding morning TV is difficult. So, Good Morning America has kept a successful formula that continues to work – hard news in the first half hour, then a shift to lifestyle segments later in the morning – with a concerted focus on maintaining an upbeat tone.

With a goal of painting a positive picture in morning TV, GMA tries to keep the focus on the viewer and to have some human impact in every story. To help ensure that the content of the show reflects what viewers want to see, the producers also diligently pay attention to research on the types of segments and subjects that the core audience is interested in — whether technology, healthcare/medical, career, jobs, or others.

But despite the need for consistency in morning TV, no media outlet can succeed today without expanding into social media. To that end and its benefit, GMA has invested significant resources in cross-pollinating broadcast content online. It utilizes digital journalists who hunt for stories that can be placed online and on other multi-media platforms, and incorporates user-generated media from YouTube and other social networking sites both on-air and online.

Key takeaways:

- Core morning television audiences still want to experience continuity and familiarity.
- Broadcast television is embracing digital and social media and is hiring journalists to report multi-media stories for posting on various platforms.
- User-generated media from YouTube or other social networking sites are leveraged on-air and online.
Media is at a crossroads between print and electronic distribution channels, with established outlets such as The Washington Post building Web presence and trying to develop new revenue streams without cannibalizing its print product or alienating its journalists.

Declining advertising revenue and circulation are forcing The Washington Post – and its industry peers – to closely reconsider their business models, clarify their missions, and often return to a strong focus on their core businesses in order to survive. For The Washington Post, that business is providing the best available coverage of Washington, D.C.

Operating under the principle that The Post is the indispensable guide to Washington, for and about Washington, the publication has remained national only in the sense that what it covers – the nation’s capital – is important on the national stage. The paper has put its resources behind serving local readers – with whom it maintains a tremendous amount of value – first and extending its brand from there. Consider that while 12 percent of 18-to-34 year olds in the Washington area watched American Idol last year and 30 percent drank Budweiser, 47 percent still consumed The Washington Post in any given week.

The focus now is on generating as much revenue from the print and digital businesses in the long-term as possible, while also looking to generate new revenue streams.

However, The Post does not see a favorable risk-reward to charging online and has no immediate plans to follow the example of The Wall Street Journal and Times of London in erecting a paywall. Instead, it is developing new streams of revenue, such as its iPhone app.

While these charges don’t yet translate into significant revenue, they are making readers comfortable with the idea “that for some value you will have to pay.”

Key takeaways:

- Media business models are under intense pressure in today’s multi-media content environment.
- Online revenues are not growing quickly enough to offset declines in print.
- Established media outlets are increasingly focusing on their unique offerings and high-quality content, moving away from trying to be all things to all people.
Bloomberg – which includes a news service, print publications, radio and TV stations, websites, and the newly acquired BusinessWeek – maintains 146 bureaus in 72 countries. So, how does this global, multi-platform news operation stay competitive around the world?

It utilizes multi-dimensional content and technology as a core part of its operations and news strategy. Bloomberg’s state-of-the-art infrastructure enables the organization to extend a story in one format to several different platforms. For example, consider a straightforward Bloomberg Television interview with a senior executive. Once the interview is aired, it is added to Bloomberg’s central computer system. From there, it is instantly uploaded to Bloomberg.com, Bloomberg News Service, and BusinessWeek.com. Bloomberg reporters also gain access to the interview once it is placed into the content system and are subsequently able to use it in radio, print, and Web stories.

In addition, news staff have instant access to analyst, shareholder, and stock information, as well as the ability to compare a company to its competitors for deeper analysis with a single click. Even information such as worldwide weather patterns is available in real-time.

This level of connectivity ensures that a story never has to sit idle overnight. In fact, to ensure that Bloomberg functions seamlessly as a 24-hour news operation, late-breaking news is often handed from one team to another in different parts of the world.

But despite having such an advanced infrastructure, Bloomberg news staff recognize that technology and tools cannot do everything. So, they still put significant efforts and time into determining how to tell a good story, how to reach out, and how to get the information across in a clear and concise manner.

Key takeaways:

- To better meet the content needs of today's media companies, PR strategy should consider stories and angles that can be developed in a three-dimensional way – playing out equally across print, broadcast, and online.

- Today’s news never turns “off,” with journalists in different parts of the world able to pick up stories and move them forward 24 hours a day.

- While technology and tools help deliver information, a good story – well told – cannot be substituted.
As companies and brands have more of their conversations online and increasingly shift to the digital space, the range of communications skills required of recent graduates is increasing – as are the opportunities open to them in public relations. In general, this next generation of PR practitioners is among the most connected in terms of social media. However, there is a fundamental difference in knowing the tools and understanding how to strategically incorporate them into communications programs.

Here are a few key insights from this panel’s young professionals, noting their experiences in how PR is being taught in the classroom and practiced in the workplace, and what can be done to bridge the gaps:

**Introducing business to PR**
Most institutions separate the PR and communications disciplines from the business discipline. Therefore, many students graduate with a solid foundation in industry basics, but an underdeveloped understanding of PR’s impact on business and the role it plays in business strategy. In addition to identifying opportunities to tie business into a communications curriculum, educators may also look to place a stronger emphasis on coursework supplements. This could include more frequent engagement of practitioners to serve as adjunct professors, helping to incorporate real-time examples and learnings into curriculum lessons.

**Understanding the not-so-new media**
Many journalism, PR, and communications courses still focus largely on media kits, headlines, press releases, and other traditional trade tools. But this can create a disconnect regarding the importance of social media – influential blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube – as a necessary component of the broader media, engagement, and marketing mix.

Today, every company is a media company. So, students need an even firmer grasp of the strategic advantage that social media brings and how the various tools can support different business objectives. They should understand that not all tools are applicable to every client and that the most impactful programs often utilize both traditional and social media strategies.

**Back to basics**
While the media landscape is ever-changing and it is important to understand how to navigate within the digital space, fundamentals such as writing and research should not be neglected – in the classroom or in the workplace. The ability to adapt to different styles of writing is important – whether writing a press release, pitching to bloggers, or posting a tweet. However, it is critical to have a solid writing foundation from which to start. Similarly, having a strong grasp on research in the traditional sense and in the online space is necessary to help organizations determine which tools should be used that align with their objectives, as well as to gather data that is vital to informing strategy during program development.
APPENDIX

LIST OF PANEL PARTICIPANTS AND SESSIONS

The Third Way: Public Engagement
Richard Edelman, Edelman

The Democratization of Media: Succeeding in the New World
Jonah Bloom, Breaking Media*
Greg Coleman, The Huffington Post
Mark Lukasiewicz, NBC News
Michael Oreskes, The Associated Press
Matthew Harrington, Edelman

Transformational Technology: New Tools Driving Change
Adam Broitman, Circ.us
Sean Mahoney, Facebook
Michael Slaby, Edelman Digital
Kevin King, Edelman Digital

Learning to Listen: Understanding New Influencers and Measuring Conversations for Meaningful Insights
Bert DuMars, Newell Rubbermaid
Donna Silikiewicz, Kraft
Natasha Fogel, StrategyOne

Ongoing Engagement: Real-time, All the Time
Venky Balakrishnan, Diageo
Kay Madati, CNN Worldwide
Cheryl Williams, Research in Motion
Christina Smedley, Edelman

Beyond the Bottom Line: Using Social Media to Advance Partnerships
Anu Gandhi, American Heart Association
Peter Land, PepsiCo Beverages Americas
Carol Cone, Edelman

Employee Engagement: New Lessons, New Conversations
Tony Cervone, United Airlines
Eric Rubin, Pfizer Global Manufacturing
Bernadette Wade, PepsiCo
Gary Grates, Edelman

Global Media Perspectives
Rana Foroohar, Newsweek
Nik Gowing, BBC
Nat Ives, Advertising Age
Michael Morley, Edelman

“Every Company is a Media Company”: A Q&A with David Carey and Jonathan Miller
David Carey, Condé Nast**
Jonathan Miller, News Corporation
Steve Barrett, PRWeek

Public Affairs: Communicating Openly and Transparently
Nicholas Genes, MD, PhD, Mount Sinai Hospital
Ellen Miller, Sunlight Foundation
Ben Boyd, Edelman

What’s Next?
Dan Gillmor, Arizona State University
Scott Heiferman, Meetup
Adam Ostrow, Mashable
Steve Rubel, Edelman Digital
Russell Dubner, Edelman

Media Keynotes
Tom Cibrowski, Good Morning America, ABC News
Raju Narisetti, The Washington Post
Karen Toulon, Bloomberg

Conversations with Young Professionals
Nick Lucido, Edelman
Chi-Chi Millaway, New York University
Jonathan Woods, Edelman
John Edelman, Edelman

*Indicates affiliation at the time of the Summit
**Indicates affiliation at the time of the Summit; currently President, Hearst Magazines

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Edelman Trust Barometer
The firm’s annual trust and credibility survey released each January at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.
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The firm’s annual global health study examining the dynamics of engaging with health stakeholders.
www.edelman.com/healthengagement/

TweetLevel
Edelman’s free public tool that ranks twitterers by influence, engagement, trustworthiness, and popularity.
tweetlevel.edelman.com

The Edelman Widget
Video and mobile platform showcasing recent examples of the firm’s client campaigns and programs.
www.edelman.com/widget/widget.html

Running In Place…Why organizational change is still stuck in neutral and how to move forward
Edelman Change and Employee Engagement paper explaining Change 3.0 and the communications implications inherent in major change efforts.
www.edelman.com/insights/special/Change3.0.pdf

Consumer 8095
Edelman’s inaugural global study of the Millennial influence dynamic.
www.edelman.com/insights (after October 1, 2010)
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