

PR Digest

A PRSK PUBLICATION

SPECIAL EDITION



INNOVATION AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE PR PRACTICE

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PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY
OF KENYA

ATTENTION MEMBERS!

30th May 2024
To All Members

NOTICE TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING- 21ST JUNE 2024

NOTICE is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the members of Public Relations Society of Kenya will be held both physically and virtually (log in details to be provided later) on Friday, 21st June 2024 from 1.30pm at Sarova Panafric Hotel, Nairobi.

NOELLA MUTANDA,
SECRETARY

AGENDA

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. To note quorum, receive and record apologies for the meeting | Secretary |
| 2. To read the notice convening meeting | Secretary |
| 3. To confirm minutes of the last meeting | Secretary |
| 4. Partnership with Global Alliance | Secretary |
| 5. To receive the Treasurer's report for the year ending 31st December 2023 | Treasurer |
| 6. To receive the Society's status report for the year ending 31st December 2023 | President |
| 7. To elect duly paid up members of the Society who have indicated interest to serve as President, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer | Returning Officer |
| 8. To transact any other business whose due notice has been given | President |

Procedure at Meeting

1. At all meetings of the Society, the President or in his/her absence, the Vice-President, or in the absence of both these office bearers, a Full Member selected by the meeting shall take the Chair.
2. The President may at his/her discretion limit the number of persons permitted to speak in favor of or against any motion.
3. Except as otherwise provided for in these rules, resolutions shall be decided by simple voting by a show of hands by Full Members. In case of equality of votes, the President shall have a second or casting vote.
4. Those seeking election shall be proposed and seconded by Full Members of the Society.
5. Elections shall be by secret ballot on the basis of one member one vote by fully paid up members.
6. The conduct of elections shall be by simple majority vote.

#PRSKAGM2024

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PRSK Editorial Committee 2023-2025



Edward Wanyoyi
Chairperson



Lilian Kaivilu
Member



Miriam Kimani
Member



Paul Mwirigi
Member



Mzalendo Kemboi
Member



Pauline Akuku
Member



Kevin Ogutu
Member



Elizabeth Mulae
Member



Nelson Opany
Member



Juliana Juma
Member



Benard Aloo
Member

President's Note

Dear PRSK Members and Colleagues,

Welcome back! It fills me with immense joy to reintroduce the PR Digest after a two-year hiatus. This magazine is not merely a publication; it's a vital space for us to share our insights, exchange innovative ideas, and build a stronger, more connected PR community. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Editorial Committee, led by our dedicated Council Member Edward, for their relentless effort in reviving this publication, ensuring it returns better than ever.

Since our election to office last year, the Council and I have been passionately working towards our shared vision of fostering excellence in Public Relations and Communication management in Kenya. Here's a glimpse of what we've been up to:

Firstly, we developed a dynamic continuous professional development training calendar. These programs are tailored to address the evolving needs of our members and the industry, keeping us all at the cutting edge of PR practices.

Secondly, mentoring the next generation of communicators has been close to our hearts. Through various mentorship forums, we've provided young professionals with invaluable industry insights and guidance, helping them to carve out paths of excellence in their careers.

Most significantly, we've been advocating for the regulation of our profession through the Public Relations and Communications Bill, currently in the National Assembly. Once enacted, this Bill will set a robust framework for PR practices and ensure high standards of professional conduct, ultimately uplifting the entire industry.

This special edition of the PR Digest, themed "Innovation and Evolution in the PR Practice," symbolizes our commitment to nurturing growth and innovation within our field. As you explore the rich content within these pages, I encourage you to share your own experiences and ideas by contributing articles for our future issues. Your insights are what make this magazine a treasure trove of knowledge and inspiration for all.

Remember, technology is not here to replace us but to empower us, enabling us to exceed our own expectations. Embrace and adapt to these technological advancements to stay relevant and thrive in this Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement. I hope you enjoy reading this special edition as much as we enjoyed putting it together. Let's continue to drive innovation and evolution in our beloved profession.

Warm Regards

Arik Karani

President, Public Relations Society of Kenya



Editorial Committee Chair's Note

With immense joy, I am thrilled to introduce the PR Digest Special Edition 2024. We stand at a pivotal moment in our profession, where adaptability is key to thriving amidst change. The era of relying solely on a one-size-fits-all approach to delivering our purpose and proving our relevance is behind us. With the advent of a highly fluid digital space, segmented audience attention, and the challenge posed by constrained resources, the solution is swimming across the tide of competition. How do we embrace these shifts? How do we leverage this revolution to authentically represent our brands and organizations?

Answers to these pressing questions, and more, await you in this special edition, crafted with passion and dedication by the Editorial Committee, with invaluable support from the PRSK Secretariat through **Amos Kariuki**. This edition, themed "Innovation and Evolution in the PR Sector and Practice," features articles on the changes impacting the practice of public relations through diverse prisms be it emerging technology, storytelling, and the value public relations brings to sectors where previously it was unwelcome.

This publication builds upon the strong foundation laid by the previous PR Digest editions, overseen by the immediate past Editorial Board. We pay a special tribute to the chairperson **Gilbert Awino** who was assisted by members **Elizabeth Mulae**, **Joseph Ndegwa**, **Jonhson Duro**, **Nicholas Mureithi**, **Wangui Kabala**, and **Juliana Juma**. We appreciate the leadership of

**Council Member Edward Wanyonyi,
Chairperson, Editorial Committee**

Tim Kamuzu Banda, the editorial support of **Maureen Koech**, and the overall guidance provided by **President Arik Karani**. Their contributions paved the way for the impactful discourse you are reading.

Special appreciation goes to the PRSK Council for their support in ensuring the success of this publication.

As you enjoy reading this publication, know that our journey together continues beyond this publication. Your feedback is welcome at any time so please feel free to reach out to us through **editor@prsk.co.ke**.

We look forward to providing you with other platforms to pen your ideas and industry insights.

Enjoy reading this!



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Production Team: Andrew, **Design & Layout:** Idealink Graphics,

Secretariat Committee Representative: Amos



APRA UPDATES

African Public Relations Association (APRA) elects new executives

President of the Public Relations Society of Kenya Arik Karani was elected as the President of APRA.

The African Public Relations Association (APRA) announced its newly elected Governing Council during the APRA Conference 2024, held from May 13 to 17 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

The new leadership will steer the association toward greater unity and strategic influence within the continent.

Leading the council is Arik Karani, who was elected as the President of APRA.

Karani, is a seasoned communication specialist and the current President of the Public Relations Society of Kenya. He also serves as the Lead Communications Specialist for Community Resilience & Sustainability

at the Wikimedia Foundation.

Dr. Michele Mekeme joined him as Vice President.

Dr. Mekeme is a professor at the École Supérieure des Sciences et Techniques de l'Information et de la Communication (ASMAG) in Yaoundé, Cameroon.

Completing the team is Omoniye Ibieta, the elected Secretary-General, who is the Head of Media Relations Management at the Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC).

This dynamic team is poised to elevate APRA's mission, fostering unity among PR practitioners across Africa.

They aim to position public relations and communications as key strategic components in the realization of the African Union Agenda 2063.

2063

AFRICAN UNION AGENDA



APRA CONFERENCE

Kenya secures the 2025 APRA Conference host bid

Kenya emerged victorious, securing 18 out of the 19 country votes.

African Public Relations Association (APRA), the association for all PR Practitioners in Africa, recently hosted the 35th edition of APRA Conference in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire under the theme "One Africa, One Voice: Bridging Africa's Communication Divide." The APRA Conference brought together PR Professionals from across Africa to deliberate on emerging issues in PR and to further explore the pivotal role of public relations in unifying and amplifying Africa's unified voice on the global stage.

During the Conference, three countries, namely Rwanda, Zimbabwe, and Kenya, bid to host the APRA Conference 2025. Kenya emerged victorious with a resounding eighteen (18) out of the nineteen country votes. Rwanda received one vote. Zimbabwe received none. Having won the bid, Kenya was handed

the APRA Conference 2025 mantle.

Speaking when receiving the APRA Conference 2025 mantle, Mr. Arik Karani, President of the Public Relations Society, said, "We are honored as Kenya to host the APRA Conference 2025, and we look forward to welcoming Communication Professionals from across Africa in Mombasa. The conference will provide an opportunity for the delegates to not only learn and network but also to explore the beautiful city of Mombasa. Karibuni Mombasa!"

This is a prestigious event that will position Kenya as the economic hub of the East and Central African countries.

The event will also bring together over 1500 participants from across Africa in May 2025 to discuss matters of strategic communication and be a pillar to the realization of the African Union Agenda 2063.

The African Public Relations Association (APRA) is the successor organization to the Federation of African Public Relations Associations (FAPRA) that was inaugurated in 1975 in Nairobi, Kenya, to foster unity via interaction and exchange of ideas amongst public relations practitioners in Africa as a whole.

**18
VOTES**



FACILITATING ACCESS TO A VARIETY OF BROADCAST CONTENT

The Communications Authority of Kenya (CA) regulates the broadcasting industry, giving you and your family a variety of content to enjoy and ensuring responsible use of broadcasting platforms for national good.

For more information visit www.ca.go.ke



ENABLING ACCESS TO COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN EVERY PART OF THE COUNTRY

The Communications Authority of Kenya (CA) facilitates access to diverse communications services to every part of the country so that no one is left behind.

For more information visit www.ca.go.ke





EVENT

Multimedia University of Kenya scoops the 2023 PRSK student bootcamp

Multimedia University of Kenya emerged victorious with a compelling pitch focused on a PR campaign for the Maa Community.

Each year, the Public Relations Society of Kenya organizes a mentorship forum that brings together PR and Communication Students from across Kenya to not only learn from key industry players but also network with them and other students. The climax of the mentorship program is a competition where students are given a challenge question, and each university is given 5 minutes to make their presentation/pitch. The judges (day's speakers) then judge the presentations to determine the winner who is honored by hosting the next year's bootcamp.

OVER
600
STUDENTS FROM SEVEN UNIVERSITIES PARTICIPATED.

Last year, PRSK hosted its 6th edition of the Bootcamp at St. Paul's University (the previous edition's winners). The event brought together 600 students from 7 universities and was themed "Sustainable PR Practices in a Disrupted World." With the 4th Industrial Revolution happening and disrupting the traditional way of how we practice not only in the field of Public Relations but also in other professions, there is a need to evolve with the times.

From artificial intelligence that has enabled chatbots to draft press releases, speeches, public statements,

presentations, and much more, this revolution has truly changed how we operate. To better equip the students with the skill set they need for the future as communicators, it's necessary to make them understand where the profession is headed and how they can leverage technology to grow their career.

Seasoned professionals spoke on various topics, including Ruth Olendo Chitwa, Communications Manager, Kenya, Living Goods; Evelynne Serro, Senior Manager, Sustainability, Safaricom PLC; Maureen Mambo, Ag. Director National Brand Development Marketing & Communication,

KEPROBA; Peter Mwaura, Manager Corporate Communications, KCB PLC; and Cleophas Malala, Marketing Manager, IMAX Africa.

Multimedia University of Kenya carried the day after emerging as the top university, beating the other 6 universities. Their winning pitch focused on a PR campaign project for the Maa Community, a community-driven initiative inspired by COP 27. The aim was to help the Maa Community understand climate change and navigate towards achieving a greener society. This win made Multimedia University of Kenya the first university to win the Bootcamp two times.

Towards a more connected world

Trade flourishes when aspirations are nurtured, economies are bolstered, and global unity is fostered.

At the Port of Mombasa, we excel not only in handling your cargo efficiently but also in proactively meeting your requirements. Our dedicated team, cutting-edge infrastructure, modern equipment, e-cargo processing capabilities, and robust multi-modal transport network have solidified our position as a pivotal regional logistics hub.

Furthermore, our modern cruise terminal offers a plethora of amenities including lounges, restaurants, and gift shops, ushering in a realm of uncharted expedition for you to explore.

As the exclusive safari port along the Indian Ocean, the Port of Mombasa presents a gateway to an unparalleled cruise experience, inviting passengers to embark on a journey to discover the enchanting wonders of Kenya through the realm of cruise travel.



LEADERSHIP

Good leadership is important: More conversations, flexible rules.



In life, not everyone is a natural-born leader. Anyone can become an executive and can delegate tasks, but there is more to effective leadership than what meets the eye. Arik Karani, the current President elect of both the African Public Relations Association (APRA) and the Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK) does not grant media interviews. In fact, since 2019 when he turned around the fortunes of PRSK when serving as a treasurer, he has turned down all media requests for interviews. Today, in an exclusive two-part series, he speaks exclusively to Gilbert Awino (AG) on leadership, life, ambition, and where he draws his inspiration.

President Arik Karani at his home. He has been able to hold a firm grip of PRSK leadership by connecting with members through technology and in-person meet-ups.

Exclusive: this is the first of a two-part series on leadership. **Writer:** Gilbert Awino

When you are an elected leader, your supporters love and adore you, but those who did not vote for you will dislike you. It is the nature of democracy: the majority have their way, and the minority have their say. At the nascent stages of compiling this article, I inadvertently posted this story on a popular public relations group, and it

irked a member who did not spare me. “I don’t like this man, why are you sharing his story...,” their text read in part. This is the true nature of democracy: the majority will have their way, and the minority will surely have their say! One thing that stands out about President Arik Karani is that he has been able to hold a firm grip of his leader-



In January of 2024, the Cabinet Secretary for Information Communication and the Digital Economy, Eliud Owalo, received PRSK's Golden Honors Award. The Golden Honors award is the highest individual and lifetime award reserved for people who have significantly contributed to advancing public relations and communications profession in Kenya and beyond.

ship even though half the time he is on the plane. He creates time for members and is extremely tech-savvy.

In his tenure as the Treasurer of the Public Relations Society of Kenya, he spoke less, undertook massive budget cuts, introduced new revenue streams, and presented erudite financial statements. As the current President of the Public Relations Society of Kenya serving his first time, he is, in hushed tones, referred to as Ildi Amin, a code for his alleged silent ruthlessness. When he felt things were not going well, he told the then President that he will run against him. He ran, but against himself, because his opponent opted out!

Next week, the Public Relations Society of Kenya will be holding elections to fill the position of President, Treasurer, and Assistant Secretary. While the position of Assistant Secretary has four dynamic candidates, the man who believes in persuading power and acting with military precision, does not have a challenger. This is history repeating itself.

When Madam Jane Gitau was the President of the Public Relations Society of Kenya, many associated public relations and communication management with the female gender. Ms. Gitau successfully completed her two terms, challenges notwithstanding. She will be fondly remembered for moving the Society from a tiny office in a suburb of Nairobi, to the leafy area of Kenya's Presidential State House. With the beauty of youth and as



...as the Treasurer of the Public Relations Society of Kenya, he spoke less, undertook massive budget cuts, introduced new revenue streams, and presented erudite financial statements.

brilliant as the sun, Jane was a natural. Then came Dr. Wilfred Marube, a thorough manager and a detailed PR Practitioner, a man with disdain for laziness and largesse.

After successfully completing his first term, he bowed out of the race for a second term thus handing Arik Karani a smooth sailing to the Public Relations Society of Kenya presidency.

But who is this Arik Karani? He is named after General Ariel Sharon, former Prime Minister of Israel who had a profound influence on Arik's military father. President Arik is the Communication Lead for Community Resilience and Sustainability at the Wikimedia Foundation. Throughout his career, he has advised governments, civil society organizations, NGOs, and private

sector entities on stakeholder engagement, digital strategy, disinformation, and crisis communication, among other areas, with experience working with organizations such as the World Bank Group, the Government of Kenya, Child Fund International, and Amref Health Africa. Apart from his work with the Wikimedia Foundation, he is the newly elected President of the African Public Relations Association, and he is vying for his second term as the President of the Public Relations Society of Kenya. Even though he doesn't grant interviews, he was gracious enough to give me an audience and had a lot to say about leadership, life, ambition, and where he draws his inspiration. This is how our conversation went:



To advance East Africa integration, PRSK launched EAPRW after discussions with Kenya's current Cabinet Secretary for Investments, Trade & Industry, Ms. Rebecca Miano. Then, she was the Cabinet Secretary in charge of the East African Community, the ASALs, and Regional Development.

What are the leadership lessons you have learnt during your journey as the President of the President of the Public Relations Society of Kenya?

The biggest lesson I have learnt is that I am leading, I am not following. I am leading PRSK, I am leading the membership, I am leading what excellence in public relations practice is, I am leading how we are seen in various spaces, I am leading in what and how a Society should be and should be run. I am leading in everything and as a leader, if you get carried away and look at what people are doing to the right and left of you, you will lose clarity of thought and mind. This will remove you from the leadership position that you have and will re-designate you to a follower. When you are a follower, you do not achieve much. This realization keeps me awake and alert in my leadership journey.

What is your leadership style?

I think my leadership style is a mix between democracy and strategy. I make my decision based on team input, PRSK operations, potential growth opportunities, and adaptability. Do not get me wrong, I still make the final call, but I like it when people around me have a say in the direction that I am taking. That said, my leadership style is driven by my heart, talent, and instinct. This means that I must remember that I'm setting the bar of what and how everyone should behave. And in leadership, you must be firm because everybody looks up to you. I listen to the voices of the members, the Council, the Fellows and our partners but, in the end, when I make my decision, it comes from who I am.

What has led to the growth we are witnessing in the Public Relations Society of Kenya today?

The clarity of thought and my firm yet empathetic leadership is what has led to the massive growth you're seeing in PRSK. Stability is important, and the President is the figure that must provide it.

You know at first glance, people normally think that because of my soft nature, I am a pushover. They are quickly dispelled of that notion when they enter the Boardroom with me because I have a set vision and goals of what I want to achieve and where I want PRSK to be and if you cannot plug into my vision and bring the excellence it deserves, then there's going to be a problem. One thing about me is that I never lose Boardroom battles because the most important direction meetings that I have are with members. I spend a considerable amount of time each year doing membership listening tours and hosting monthly Townhall meetings. In these meetings, I hear what members want, I see and feel their frustration, and as a President, when I sit in that Office and in that Boardroom my number one goal is to address all those issues with either empathy or firmness.

What is the most important part of your leadership?

The most important part of my leadership journey is understanding that there's always a time when you know you have to break the rules. Along the course of my tenure, I have broken several rules. Waking up and deciding that we are going to have a Top Women in PR series, and a Top Men in PR series that's upcoming is one of the rules that I broke. That as the President, I can look across the 47 counties of Kenya and determine who are the top men and women of the season and showcase their stories at a global level. This is important. But what is more important is the integrity of the process. That I have the ability to pick friends and colleagues, but I rise above that and search for individuals who are setting industry standards. Sometimes newcomers in the industry, and people who are rarely celebrated. That to me is always incredible.

I have also broken other rules and established the Warrior and Moran Awards. Something we never had. We always had agency/organization awards but never awards that recognized individual efforts. I decided to change that. It was turbulent at first with uproars on criteria, judges, who needs to qualify, who doesn't... but look at where we are today. For me not to have recognized that the industry needed this would have been a big misstep.



Kampala, Uganda (2023): the Katikkiro (Prime Minister of Buganda), Charles Mayiga, and the immediate past President of the Public Relations Society of Uganda (PRAU), Stephen Mwanga, share a light moment during PRAU's awards of excellence.

Who do you surround yourself with as the President of the Public Relations Society of Kenya?

I surround myself with those who can push me, and at the same time, aren't pulling me behind. I believe that it is important to empower those who are working with me because in the end, I am nothing without a good team. I surround myself with people who are not frightened of disagreeing with me, and I must listen. Even as I listen, I always keep in mind that the final decision will be mine. So, I have to make a good decision and this can only happen if you surround yourself with a team that is knowledgeable and bold.

Why are you called Idi Amin?

(Chuckles). You would have to ask our Head of Corporate Service, Leah Eshitemi, that question (Slight laugh). I went to the Nairobi office one day and heard a staff shout to the rest: "Idi Amin! Idi Amin!" I became curious and a week later I learnt it was me. I take the name in a positive sense though.



Nairobi, Kenya (May, 2024): The United Nations Civil Society Conference that brought together experts from the private sector, United Nations, academia, and governments to exchange ideas and experiences.



...I surround myself with those who can push me, and at the same time, aren't pulling me behind.....



From Left, President Arik Karani, Amb. Thomas Kwaka, Cabinet Secretary Eliud Owalo, and Kwale Deputy Governor Josephat Kombo follow proceedings at the 2023 PRSK communications summit.

Are you a hard nut to crack?

Hahahahaha! It really depends on who you ask. I credit my decision-making skills to my parents and upbringing. I'm a military child. My father had an amazing career in the military serving several presidents. Being a son of a distinguished military man meant that we sometimes had to live in the barracks. When you live in the barracks you appreciate discipline, chain of command, and the value and essence of time. You don't argue with authority, you negotiate with authority. For you to negotiate with authority you must present facts in a clear manner that persuades the authority to make a decision that is fair and logical based on the information that is present.

Based on my upbringing, I make my decisions based on the most current available information. I guess it does help that my dad named me Arik (Ariel). Even though I never joined and worked in the military like my elder brother and my father, I still use those military life lessons to run my life and PRSK.

I like structure, and I like order. Part of the structure that I have created in PRSK is that nothing, absolutely nothing gets done from the top. Everything must come from the membership, feed into the various committees, and finally land on either the Council or the Executive Committee's desk. That's the structure I operate with, and it must be executed with order. I like the fact that both the Secretariat and the Council know my mode of operation and are helping in walking towards the vision I have for PRSK.

Tell me about the PRCM Bill

The PRCM Bill is a significant milestone for the Public Relations Society of Kenya as it represents the culmination of years of hard work and advocacy to establish a regulatory framework for the public relations profession in Kenya. The Bill seeks to enhance professionalism and standardization in the public relations industry, promote best practices, and provide a legal framework for the accreditation and management of public relations practitioners.

As the President of PRSK, I am very grateful for the support the Society has received from the Ministry Information, Communication and the Digital Economy and other industry stakeholders. Without our Cabinet Secretary, Eliud Owalo, making this a priority we would never have reached where we are.



...I like structure, and I like order. Part of the structure that I have created in PRSK is that nothing, absolutely nothing gets done from the top.

Part II continues in the next issue...

Influencer marketing disrupting traditional PR strategies

In Kenya's evolving PR landscape, influencer marketing emerges as a potent force, reshaping brand engagement and challenging traditional communication strategies.

By Annette Wachira

In an era where digital media reigns supreme, the traditional Public Relations (PR) playbook is being rewritten. Influencer marketing, a rapidly growing trend, is emerging as a powerful tool in shaping public opinion and driving brand engagement.

The Rise of Influencer Marketing

Public Relations has historically relied on traditional media channels such as television, radio, and newspapers. However, the advent of digital media has revolutionized PR strategies, especially in crisis management. Influencer marketing is now a formidable force in the digital arena.

Influencers are individuals who leverage their social media following and customer-centric approach to create positive and informative content about organizations. With just one Instagram post, influencers can either build or destroy a brand, thanks to their vast followings and strategic use of key hashtags. They connect with their audience on a personal level, influencing their purchasing decisions. For instance, famous influencers like Kim Kardashian can sell out a piece of clothing with a single picture.

The Power of Influencer Relationships

Building strong relationships with influencers is now crucial for PR and communication sectors. Influencers are trusted by their target audiences and are seen as credible sources. Research indicates that influencer marketing not only impacts social media but also affects a brand's search engine results, especially during a PR crisis. Influencers with large followings can increase brand exposure and mitigate negative publicity.

While still a relatively new concept in Kenya, media and PR agencies have embraced influencers to promote and develop brands. Corporates like Safaricom and East Africa Breweries use influencers to promote their campaigns on social media.

The social marketing and behavior change campaign sector also uses influencers to promote campaigns in health, nutrition, climate change, and agriculture. In Kenya, influencers cater to diverse niches and target audiences. Choosing the right influencer who aligns with your organization and target audience is crucial for an effective campaign.

Why Adopt Influencer Marketing in PR?

Global

**US\$2.1
BILLION THIS YEAR**

spending on influencer advertising is expected to grow steadily up to US\$2.1 billion this year. This projection underscores the increasing trend of brands partnering with social media influencers to promote their products or services, and the growing influence of social

media in our daily lives.

Companies are increasingly investing in influencer marketing as part of their communication strategies. When used in PR campaigns, influencer marketing can help spread a brand's message to a wider audience. To ensure the right messaging is communicated, it is important to have immersion sessions with chosen influencers.

Authenticity and credibility are crucial for any PR campaign. Collaborating with influencers helps build trust with the target audience, as influencers are seen as trustworthy. For beauty products like Garnier and Nivea, influencers can create videos and reels using the products to show progressive results. This approach convinces the audience of the product's effectiveness and compels them to buy. Studies show that 62% of consumers value influencer recommendations more than those of celebrities.

Challenges in Influencer Marketing

Despite its potential, influencer marketing faces challenges, especially as it remains an under-researched area. In Kenya, influencers have



Annette Wachira is a Public Relations and Communication practitioner in the development space with a passion for storytelling and writing.

highlighted the lack of proper laws and recognition of influencing as a profession. When working with influencers, it's important to focus on metrics that measure the campaign's impact, such as audience engagement quality, rather than just follower count. A small influencer with a specific niche may have a more influential opinion than one with millions of followers who don't interact with their target audience. Due diligence is essential.

The key to a successful influencer mar-

keting campaign is selecting the right strategy. PR experts can collaborate with influencers to boost sales, enhance brand recognition, and establish a dedicated community of brand advocates. The most significant power of influencers lies in their genuineness. They build legitimate connections with their intended audience and are trusted sources of inspiration or suggestions for products and services.

Influencer marketing is a game-changer. By carefully selecting the right strategy

and partnering with the appropriate influencers, companies can create a buzz around their brand, grow their customer base, and boost sales.

62%

Studies show that of consumers value influencer recommendations more than those of celebrities.

INNOVATION

Navigating the dynamics of public relations evolution

Public relations innovation: from incremental changes refining strategies to transformational shifts reshaping brands. Are organizations leveraging PR's power?

By Dennis Okore



Innovation is thought to create value for all. It brings new dimensions to the way we see things in the short-term and long-term. But do companies and organizations leverage the power of public relations innovation to unlock shared value for their stakeholders? In the age of technology, the word innovation is often mistaken for something that involves technology or some type of application. The Father of Spin, the legendary Edward L. Bernays, is credited with charting the way for PR to be applied using scientific methodologies.

Today, we are not only looking at tech-

nologies like AI. Indeed, it was also Bernays who defined the public as irrational. This condition begs the question of what will happen when we change the way organizations and companies have always done PR and bring in more realistic and pragmatic methodologies and tactics to achieve PR goals. How sure will that change bring incremental or transformational change in terms of relationships and perceptions of the public toward the organization's brand values?

Incremental change happens when the application of the PR strategy involves an innovative and iterative process that

makes specific, small changes to the overall implementation. This may involve experimenting with new tactics and doing away with some practices and approaches that have been used before. The changes should be seen as providing new insights in terms of how an organization engages with its public, both through internal and external processes. Due to the constant iterative process, PR managers have a great opportunity to engage their publics and get direct feedback from their publics to further refine their strategies based on their real experiences. The challenge for PR practitioners in this

mode of innovation is how they can help organizations navigate the landscape of business in the Age of Uncertainty today, which is forever morphing. New twists, turns, and potholes are the status quo. Creative practitioners with adaptive skills

texts, which are today unfavorable with a linear mindset to the role of PR. Today, it appears to me that the role of public relations managers is like that of an orchestra leader, who must understand every component of the business and its

It is also important to think of PR innovation beyond the usual mold of highly structured organizations like companies. Practitioners need to conceive PR in terms of maximizing value for entrepreneurs and start-ups that operate in very erratic business models and who do not care so much about brand optics and awareness but are keen on how PR is driving sales and bringing money in a more rapid sense. They are keen on how PR provides insights and data points that can be used to further refine products to win more sales in an environment of continuous iteration and improvement.



...Incremental change happens when the application of the PR strategy involves an innovative and iterative process that makes specific, small changes to the overall implementation...

and insights will be the differentiators.

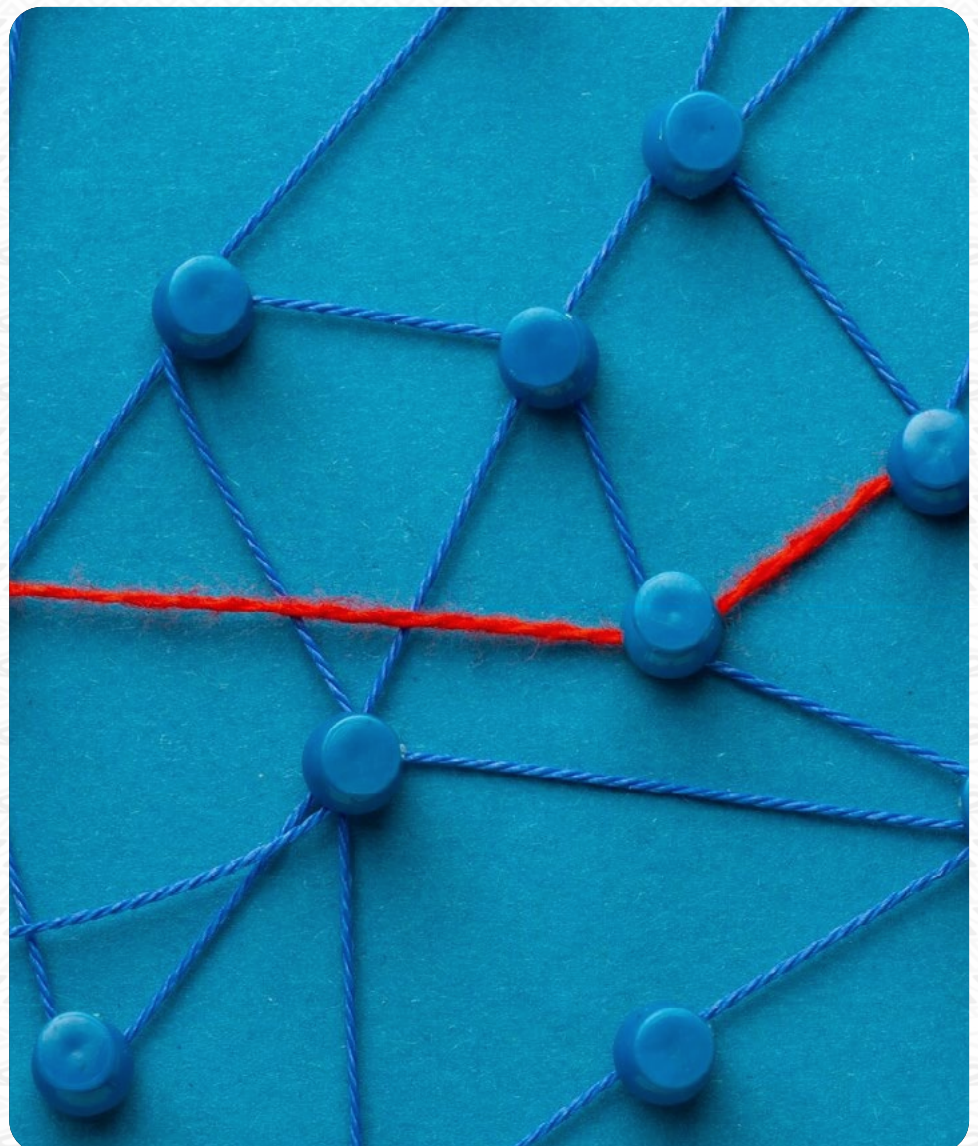
On the other hand, innovative processes that are adopted by PR managers at times are thought to be transformational. In this case, an organization may have the need to refresh its brand and bring in new alignment of its brand in line with new market or industry changes to ensure that it remains relevant. It could be brought about by internal machinations brought about by leadership changes at the apex of the organization as well as changes in the strategic focus of the business.

Transformational PR innovation says no to the old paradigm that says, "This is the way we have always done things." In essence, this is the master killer of any strategic imperative of any organization, small or large. This innovative process requires heavy lifting beyond the PR managers as it takes a holistic view of the whole organization and begins from a new slate or one that has been wiped clean. Importantly, it is important not to forget to be responsive to the needs of the organization's public and products in the PR innovation process that happens in this mode.

As we have seen with the meteoric growth and influence of technology in our lives in recent years, as practitioners, we must endeavor to have clarity of the overarching vision that PR is supporting. This helps with the understanding of how to innovate in such a way that unravels the complexities of organizations and the sophistication of the men and women who interact with them daily. We must be more agile and multi-disciplinary to match the ever-changing needs and organizational con-

value points in order to deliver specific PR strategies that unlock opportunities for organizations' priority areas in the market.

Dennis Okore is a Communications and Public Policy Consultant.



Are journalists taking over PR sector?

Journalists have been grabbing the meatiest pieces of the PR pie in government and NGOs lately.

By Ferdinand Omondi, MPRSK

I recently crossed the media Rubicon, transitioning from journalism to communication consultancy. This happened amid a global restructuring of newsrooms following the massive digital tsunami; everyone had to shape up or ship out. After 16 years behind the mic, I decided to redefine myself on my own terms, not on the terms of an entity seeking self-redefinition. I branded myself a storytelling consultant and leveraged the one skill I feel unbeatable at: storytelling. In six months, I had completed three successful consultancies. Now, I'm wondering, why didn't I start earlier?

But a gremlin has been looming ominously—whispers in WhatsApp groups of PR professionals lamenting about journalists taking the “jobs they deserve.” Indeed, journalists have been grabbing the meatiest pieces of the PR pie in government and NGOs lately. Need I name names? I don't think so. You know what I mean.

In the ever-evolving landscape of Public Relations in Kenya, a melodramatic outcry has become the chorus of the old guard: “They are taking our jobs!” The alarm bell rings amidst a backdrop where seasoned journalists are ditching the press badge for the polished sheen of corporate and



The crux of this melodrama centers on the perceived encroachment of journalists into Public Relations. This narrative isn't novel; it echoes past grievances where Kenyan journalists lamented the usurpation of radio slots by untrained comedians and musicians. Yet, this current shift is not about job theft but about enriching the PR practice with a

roles stems from a misunderstanding of the changing media landscape. In an era where content is king, journalists bring to the table an arsenal of skills that are gold dust in the PR domain. Storytelling prowess, a knack for engaging narratives, and an unerring sense for the pulse of the public. Heck, some even bring a dose of celebrity and massive social media followings—ready-made ingredients for massive engagement that will cut through the KPIs like a red-hot knife through butter. These are not just add-ons but essentials in the modern PR toolkit. The ‘invasion’ is less a hostile takeover and more a fusion cuisine in the banquet of communication.



...Blending journalistic rigor with PR strategy heralds a new era of communication that transcends the binary of ‘us vs. them.’ It's an era where the focus shifts from guarding territorial boundaries to breaking new ground.....

governmental communication roles. The transition, seen by some as a corporate coup d'état, is not merely a game of musical chairs but a vibrant testament to the industry's dynamic evolution.

splash of journalistic flair, something our PR ancestors might begrudgingly watch with raised eyebrows and a hidden smirk.

Let's demystify the fear: the notion that journalists are commandeering PR

Addressing the old school's concerns requires a blend of empathy and humor. Imagine a seasoned PR veteran, armed with press releases and media advisories, suddenly finding them-

selves elbow-to-elbow with a journalist who's covered everything from local political shenanigans to front-line international conflicts. The journalist also has an unfair head-start; direct access to hundreds of journalists via newsroom networks and WhatsApp groups. The initial reaction might be to cry foul or whisper accusations of job theft at water coolers. But here's the twist: clients and employers seek exactly what this journo offers. The influx of journalists into PR is not displacing but rather expanding the sector's capabilities.

Journalists, by their training and experience, come equipped with a unique set of skills. They understand how to craft compelling narratives that resonate with audiences, navigate the complex maze of media relations as previous consumers of hundreds of press releases, and, perhaps most importantly, understand the newsroom as insiders and outsiders. These are not just transferable skills; they are transformative ones. They inject a dose of adrenaline into the PR practice, challenging the status quo and compelling traditional PR practitioners to elevate their game.

This is where innovation in the PR sector comes into play. Blending journalistic rigor with PR strategy heralds a new era of communication that transcends the binary of 'us vs. them.' It's an era where the focus shifts from guarding territorial boundaries to breaking new ground. In this light, the journalist's entry into PR is not a hostile takeover but an invitation to collaborate, innovate, and

reimagine the possibilities of what PR can achieve.

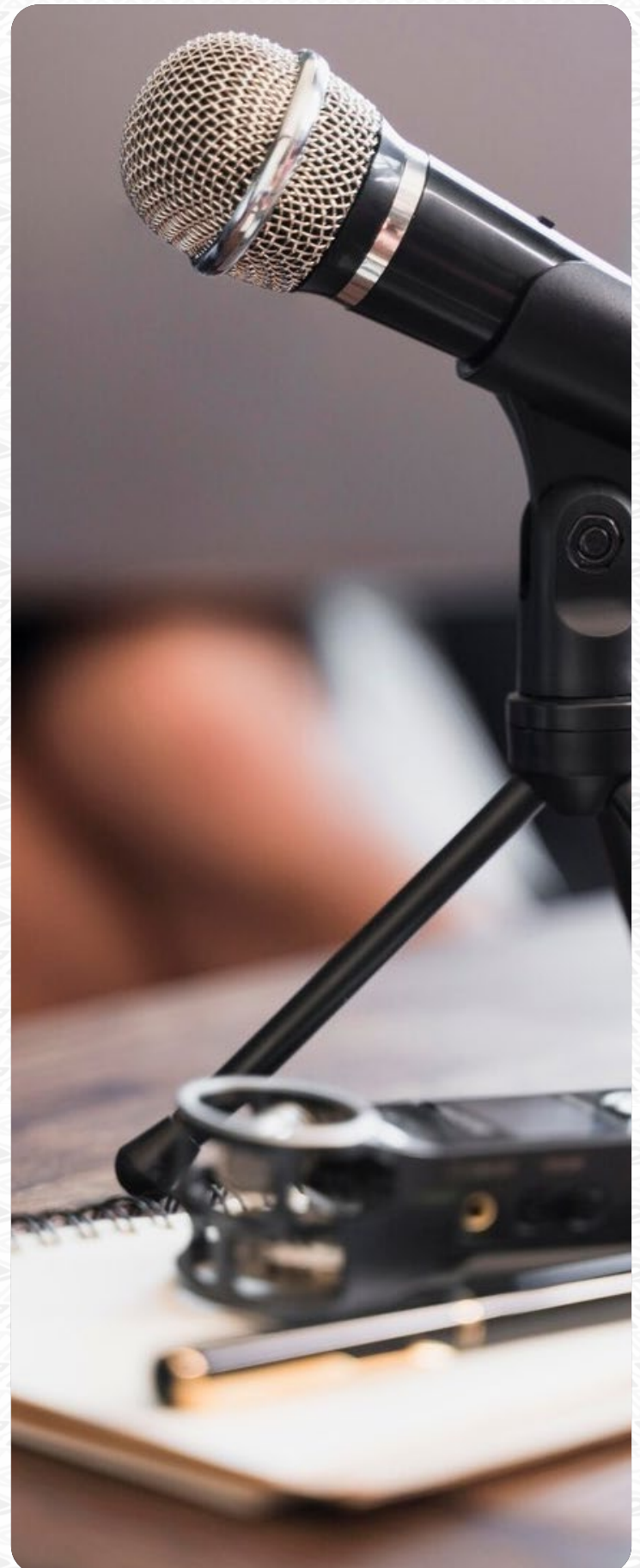
The integration of journalists into the PR sector should not be viewed through a lens of loss but as a harbinger of growth. It's a testament to the sector's vitality and capacity to adapt and thrive in the face of change. While understandable, the old school's apprehension is a knee-jerk reaction to the unfamiliar. It's a call to arms for PR practitioners to evolve, embrace the new dynamics, and leverage the diverse skill sets journalists bring to the table.

The "job theft" narrative is a misnomer that misses the bigger picture. The entry of journalists into PR underscores the importance of adaptability, the value of diverse skill sets, and the limitless potential for innovation within the PR sector. So, to the old-school practitioners fretting over their turf: fear not. The journalists are not here to take your jobs; they're here to help you transform them. In this brave new world of PR, the only real threat to your career is the failure to innovate.

Ferdinand Omondi is a Communication and Multimedia Storytelling Consultant.

16

YEARS BEHIND
THE MIC



Navigating Innovation in PR in the digital communication era

Discover PR innovation with digital strategies. Utilize multichannel engagement, user-generated content, AI insights, and transparency for authentic connections in today's communication landscape.

By Cyrille Djami

In today's world of ubiquitous information flows and multiplying interactions on digital platforms, public relations is undergoing a radical transformation. Innovation in the practice and sector of public relations is no longer just a necessity; it is imperative for companies and organizations wishing to maintain a solid and relevant reputation.

Public relations today extends far beyond sending out press releases or organizing traditional media events. It encompasses a range of creative and technological strategies to engage audiences and build authentic relationships.

In an increasingly multichannel landscape, companies must adopt a comprehensive approach to reach their audiences. Social networks, company blogs, podcasts, and streaming platforms offer unique opportunities to connect with consumers at various levels. For example, a restaurant company can use social media to share recipes, run interactive competitions, and answer customer questions in real-time.

Social media platforms also provide advanced tracking and analysis tools, allowing PR professionals to measure campaign effectiveness, identify emerging trends, and adjust their strategies accordingly. For instance, a fashion company can use social media analytics to understand customer style preferences, helping design more relevant collections and improve online engagement.



User-Generated Content

Authenticity is at the core of any effective communications strategy. Companies can capitalize on this authenticity by encouraging user-generated content. Customer testimonials, photos shared by consumers, and user videos boost engagement and create a sense of belonging to the brand.

A notable example is Airbnb, which encourages travelers to share their experiences by publishing photos and stories of their stays. This authentic content creates an engaged community and strengthens potential users' trust in the platform.

Data Analysis and AI

The rise of artificial intelligence offers unprecedented opportunities to understand and analyze consumer behavior. Companies can use algorithms to track

emerging trends, predict customer preferences, and personalize their communication strategies. For example, an e-commerce company can use AI to recommend products based on customers' buying habits and market trends.

AI also automates tedious tasks, such as customer segmentation and content personalization, allowing PR professionals to focus on higher value-added activities like creating innovative communication strategies and managing stakeholder relations.

Transparency and Accountability

In the age of transparency, consumers demand brands to be open and honest in their communications. Companies must acknowledge mistakes, respond to public concerns, and actively engage in important social causes. A transparent approach builds public trust and



the long term.

The food industry provides a concrete illustration, with many companies committing to sustainability and transparency. Brands like Ben & Jerry's have adopted responsible manufacturing practices and openly communicated their efforts to reduce environmental impact, boosting consumer confidence and strengthening brand loyalty.

A Dynamic and Forward-Looking Approach

Innovation in public relations requires a dynamic and forward-looking approach. By exploring multichannel engagement strategies, user-generated content, data analytics, and artificial intelligence, along with transparency and accountability, companies can create authentic relationships with their audiences and thrive in the changing digital economy. With

an innovative approach to communication, businesses can turn challenges into opportunities and open new avenues to success in an ever-changing world.

Mr. Djami is the founder of CommsOfAfrica, a pan-African media outlet specializing in communication, media, and content creation.



TRANSFORMATION

Digital strategies redefining public relations in Kenya

Kenya's PR landscape is evolving with digital strategies, offering innovative engagement, data-driven insights, influencer collaboration, crisis management, and ethical considerations for impactful communication.

By Dan Oloo Otieno

Public relations (PR) in Kenya is undergoing a significant transformation, driven by technological advancements and changing consumer behaviors. As the digital landscape evolves, traditional PR practices are being challenged, making way for innovative strategies to take center stage. This shift presents both opportunities and challenges for practi-

tioners and the sector as a whole.

Innovative PR in Kenya begins with leveraging digital platforms to engage audiences effectively. Social media, in particular, has become a powerful communication tool, allowing brands to interact directly with their target market in real time. By crafting compelling nar-

atives and utilizing multimedia content, PR professionals can amplify brand messaging and foster meaningful connections with stakeholders.

Data-Driven Insights

The era of guesswork in PR is fading, thanks to the availability of data-driven

insights. By harnessing analytics tools, PR practitioners can gain valuable understanding of audience preferences, behaviors, and sentiments. This enables them to tailor communication strategies that resonate with their target audience, ultimately driving better outcomes for brands and organizations.

It embraces storytelling as a powerful tool for building brand identity and fostering emotional connections with audiences. By weaving narratives that evoke empathy and authenticity, PR professionals can cut through the noise and leave a lasting impression on their stakeholders.

Influencer Collaboration

Influencer marketing has emerged as a cornerstone of modern PR strategies in Kenya. Collaborating with influencers allows brands to tap into niche communities and leverage their credibility to enhance brand perception. By carefully selecting influencers whose values align with those of the brand, PR practitioners can amplify their message and reach new audiences with authenticity and trust.

Crisis Management in the Digital Age

The digital landscape has also reshaped the way PR professionals approach crisis management. With news spreading rapidly across social media platforms, organizations must be agile in their response to crises. Innovative PR involves proactive monitoring of online conversations, swift response strategies, and transparent communication to mitigate reputational damage and restore trust.

Collaboration and Partnerships

Innovation thrives in environments where collaboration and partnerships are encouraged. PR practitioners in Kenya can benefit from collaborating with other industry stakeholders, such as marketing agencies, tech startups, and media outlets. By pooling resources and expertise, they can develop innovative campaigns that drive impactful results and push the boundaries of traditional PR practices.



Investing in Talent and Skills Development

To foster a culture of innovation in the PR sector, investment in talent and skills development is essential. Continuous learning and upskilling are crucial for PR professionals to stay abreast of emerg-

conduct. As practitioners explore new avenues for engagement, they must uphold ethical standards and prioritize the best interests of their clients and stakeholders.

The future of PR in Kenya is ripe with possibilities, fueled by innovation and



...By harnessing analytics tools, PR practitioners can gain valuable understanding of audience preferences, behaviors, and sentiments...

ing trends and technologies. Training programs, workshops, and mentorship initiatives can empower practitioners to embrace innovation and drive positive change within their organizations.

Ethical Considerations

Amidst the push for innovation, ethical considerations must remain at the forefront of PR practice. Transparency, authenticity, and integrity are non-negotiable principles that guide ethical PR

creativity. Embracing digitalization, data-driven insights, storytelling, influencer collaboration, and proactive crisis management are key pillars of innovative PR practice. By staying adaptable, collaborative, and ethically grounded, PR professionals can navigate the evolving landscape with confidence and drive meaningful impact for brands and organizations in Kenya.

Dan Oloo Otieno is a third-year student at Zetech University.

How traditional PR is losing ground to digital community engagement

Innovative strategies fostering genuine connections online are transforming PR in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

By Esther Kiragu

Innovation in PR practice involves adopting fresh approaches and embracing technologies to enhance communication and relationship-building with various stakeholders, including online communities. In a world that feels more interconnected than ever, online communities have emerged as a vital means of maintaining connections among people. Online community engagement isn't just a nice-to-have—it's an absolute must. However, it requires a well-thought-out strategy for professionals in the media, communication, and public relations sectors to keep their communities informed, connected, and engaged in a rapidly developing industry. But how does one go about it?

Establishing an Online Presence

A strong online presence allows media, communication, and public relations professionals to reach a wider audience, share valuable insights, and position themselves as industry leaders. By consistently engaging with your audience on platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, or Facebook, you can foster trust and credibility within your online communities.

Maintaining consistency across multiple

social media platforms can, however, be time-consuming and overwhelming. Additionally, professionals may face challenges in navigating the ever-changing algorithms and trends on these platforms. It is wise to cherry-pick the social media platforms you want to engage in and use social media management tools to schedule content and maintain a consistent presence without sacrificing quality.

A PR practitioner who regularly shares industry updates and tips on social media and actively engages with comments and messages from his community builds a strong online presence and establishes himself as a go-to resource.

Creating Engaging Content

Engaging content attracts and retains community members, sparks meaningful conversations, and encourages interaction within the community. By embracing a multimedia approach and incorporating storytelling techniques, professionals can humanize their content and foster a deeper connection with their audience.

Generating fresh and compelling content regularly can be challenging. Consider

collaborating with industry experts and leveraging user-generated content from members of your community. Sharing real-life stories and insights in an authentic way will help you create engaging content that resonates with your audience and encourages active participation.

Fostering Two-Way Communication

Two-way communication calls for listening to your audience, gathering feedback, and responding to their needs and preferences effectively. By actively encouraging participation and soliciting feedback through direct engagements, surveys, or polls, you demonstrate that your audience's opinions are valued and respected.

Providing a platform for transparent communication and fostering a culture of collaboration and trust within the community will ultimately lead to success.

Hosting Virtual Events

People love communities where they find value. What better way to offer value than to hold virtual events and networking opportunities for members of your community to connect, learn, and collaborate with their peers? By organizing webinars, online workshops, training sessions, or networking



events, community members can expand their networks, share insights, and exchange ideas.

Recognizing and Celebrating Community Achievements

Recognizing and celebrating community achievements fosters a sense of belonging

processes for selecting and highlighting members' achievements will ensure inclusivity and fairness.

Evaluating and Adjusting

Evaluation and adjustment are essential for continuous growth and ensuring that your community engagement efforts

will provide insights into what's working well and what areas need improvement.

Based on the findings, make adjustments to your community engagement strategy. This may involve tweaking content strategies, refining communication methods, or introducing new initiatives to meet the needs

and preferences of your community members. If you notice low engagement rates on certain social media platforms, you may need to reassess your content strategy for

those platforms or consider reallocating resources to more effective channels.

Esther Kiragu is a Media and Communication Consultant and one of the four founders of Media, Communications, and Public Relations (MCPR) Jobs.



... Sharing real-life stories and insights in an authentic way will help you create engaging content that resonates with your audience and encourages active participation...

and pride among community members. By highlighting the accomplishments of your community members, you can inspire others to strive for excellence and actively participate in the community.

Balancing recognition across diverse community members and ensuring inclusivity in acknowledgment can be complex. Thoughtfully developing clear criteria and

remain relevant and impactful in the ever-changing digital landscape. Gather feedback from community members, analyze engagement metrics, and assess the overall impact of your efforts. Track metrics such as website traffic, social media engagement, participation rates in events and discussions, and feedback received from community members through surveys or direct communi-

PRSK new members corner



Elidy Wangeci
Nestle Kenya Ltd



Audrey Masitsa
Mission Inclusion



Sammy Githinji
Public Service
Commission of Kenya



Doreen Achieng
Peak and Deal
Solutions



Hellen Miseda
Management
University of Africa



Rosemary Wangai
Jacaranda Health



Mercy Wairimu
Ichiban Tax and
Business Advisory LLP



George Masila
Africa Research &
Impact Network



Thomas Mwiraria
Kenya Tea
Development Agency



Stephanie Njeri
Public Sector
Accounting Standards
Board



Gladys Kamau
Broadband Networks
Limited



Allan Otenyo
CPF Financial Service



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Fintech Associations of
Kenya



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Fransica Atieno
Usaid Boresha Jamii



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National Police Service
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Martha Marube
Kisii County
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Esperancer Wanjiku
Oxygen Marketing
Communication



Gloria Kuyoh
Law Society of Kenya



Beverly Simiyu
Grey Apple Events



Carol Karuitha
International Fertilizer
Development Center
(IFDC)

WOMEN IN PR

Women in PR: Embracing intersectionality in Kenya

In Kenya's PR landscape, women face intersecting challenges.

By Onyango Rachael

In Kenya's public relations (PR) landscape, there's a palpable energy for change and progress. As the industry evolves, there's a growing recognition of the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion. However, to truly empower women in PR, we must embrace intersectionality – the interconnected nature of social identities such as age, race, and gender. It is crucial to explore the intersectional experiences of women in PR in Kenya, considering their unique challenges, triumphs, and the path towards greater inclusivity.

According to the PRSK State of PR Report 2019, the PR industry is dominated by women. Yet, for many, the journey to success is fraught with obstacles shaped by intersecting

identities. Take, for example, Ivy, a PR professional from Nairobi. Despite her qualifications and expertise, she often finds herself overlooked for leadership opportunities, facing biases and stereotypes based on her gender and age. Similarly, Miriam, a PR executive from Mombasa, grapples with being a Muslim and veiled woman in a sector that handles showbiz and entertainment, where Western norms of dress and behavior often prevail, presenting unique challenges for her professional advancement and acceptance.

Despite progress in socio-economic development, traditional gender norms and expectations continue to influence workplace dynamics, limiting the opportunities available to

women. Additionally, disparities in access to education and economic resources further compound the challenges faced by marginalized women. Women from diverse backgrounds often find themselves navigating a complex web of barriers and biases in their professional lives.

Despite challenges, stories of resilience and success abound in the PR sector, with women emerging as trailblazing business leaders. Take Maggie Ileri, founder of a research firm; Anyiko Owoko, CEO of a boutique PR agency specializing in entertainment; and Cynthia Nyamai, CEO of a strategic PR consultancy. Their achievements exemplify the determination and innovation of women in navigating and thriving not only

in the dynamic landscape of public relations but also in curating thriving businesses. Through their leadership and contributions, they inspire and pave the way for others.

In recent years, there has been a growing momentum towards greater inclusivity and diversity. Organizations and industry leaders are increasingly recognizing the need to create a more equitable environment for women. Initiatives such as mentorship programs, networking events, and diversity training are gaining traction, offering women opportunities for professional development. Moreover, there's a growing emphasis on the importance of intersectionality in shaping organizational policies and practices, ensuring that





the voices of all women are heard and valued.

PRSK's Role in Fostering Support

In the PR space, the Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK) has taken strides to foster a supportive and equitable environment for women in the PR industry. The 2023 "Top Women in PR" campaign recognized and celebrated the achievements of women PR professionals. Its training courses, workshops, and seminars foster professional advancement. The award gala not only recognizes talent in the space but also provides a platform for exchange and

networking.

There's much work to be done to fully realize intersectional empowerment. Organizations must continue to prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion in their policies and practices. Moreover, there's a need for greater collaboration and solidarity among women in PR across nonprofit, state, and corporate sectors.

The next "State of PR in Kenya Report" should explore intersectionality more deeply in an industry famously seen as female-dominated. Beyond recognizing the high number of women in PR practice, how do their

social identities affect their experiences, practices, or advances in the field?

Areas for Focus

As a leader in the field, PRSK should focus on several key areas. Firstly, representation needs to be evaluated, considering the numbers of women and marginalized groups in leadership roles and employment rates. Additionally, the effectiveness of diversity initiatives, such as mentorship programs and networking events, should be examined to assess the scale of equality and representation within PR firms, nonprofits, corporate, and state agencies. Addressing

the gender pay gap is crucial, shedding light on disparities in salaries and compensation between male and female professionals. Lastly, leadership opportunities for women in PR, including positions on executive boards and management teams, should be assessed to ensure availability and accessibility. Such a deep dive can provide valuable insights and recommendations for fostering a more diverse, inclusive, and thriving profession.

Onyango Rachael is the Strategic Partnerships Director at Alexis Group.

Unleashing creativity in public sector PR

Public sector PR professionals are revolutionizing communication through innovative marketing, social media engagement, vibrant designs, community involvement, and in-house innovation teams.

By Dorah Nesoba



In the dynamic realm of public sector PR, professionals are facing an increasingly complex and fast-paced environment. The integration of new technologies, coupled with the ongoing challenges posed by the global pandemic, has demanded a significant shift in traditional communication strategies. However, amidst these challenges lies an opportunity for creativity to flourish and drive innovation in public sector PR.

recent years, we have witnessed a paradigm shift as public sector organizations embrace creativity as a fundamental aspect of their PR efforts. From marketing services to social media engagement, public sector PR professionals are exploring new avenues to effectively engage with their stakeholders and drive positive change.

of public sector organizations is not to sell products or services, effective marketing plays a crucial role in conveying the organization's values and impact to the community. By employing creative strategies, such as storytelling and visual branding, public sector organizations can foster trust and build strong relationships with their stakeholders.

For example, the Institute for Public Services-Kenya (IPS-Kenya) has implemented innovative marketing campaigns to highlight the impact of its initiatives on local communities. Through compelling narratives and visually appealing content, IPS-Kenya has successfully communicated its organizational values and garnered support from stakeholders across the country.

Staying Current with Social Media

In today's digital age, social media has become an indispensable tool for public sector PR professionals. From Twitter to Instagram, public sector organizations are leveraging social media platforms to reach and engage with their target audiences. By staying current with the latest trends and technologies, PR professionals can effectively communicate their messages and connect with stakeholders in real-time.

For instance, government agencies in Kenya are utilizing social media to provide timely updates and information to the public. By harnessing the power of platforms such as Facebook Live and Twitter Spaces, these organizations are able to engage with citizens on a wide range of issues, from public health to infrastructure development.



...key areas where creativity is thriving in public sector PR is in marketing services. While the primary goal of public sector organizations is not to sell products or services, effective marketing plays a crucial role...

Traditionally perceived as bureaucratic and rigid, the public sector has often been criticized for its lack of innovation in communication practices. Yet, in

Marketing Services

One of the key areas where creativity is thriving in public sector PR is in marketing services. While the primary goal

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Creating Vibrant Designs

Visual communication is another area where creativity is flourishing in public sector PR. By investing in vibrant designs and graphics, PR professionals can capture the attention of their audience and convey complex messages in a compelling way. Tools such as Canva and Adobe Spark have made it easier than ever for public sector organizations to create visually appealing content without the need for extensive design expertise.

For example, the Ministry of Health in Kenya has developed eye-catching posters and infographics to raise awareness about public health issues, such as vaccination campaigns and disease prevention. By incorporating vibrant colors and engaging imagery, these visuals have effectively communicated important messages to the public and encouraged positive behavior change.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IN KENYA ARE UTILIZING SOCIAL MEDIA TO PROVIDE TIMELY UPDATES AND INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC.

Asking Communities for Creative Input

Involving communities in the PR process is another effective way to unleash creativity in the public sector. By soliciting input from stakeholders, PR professionals can gain valuable insights and perspectives that can inform their communication strategies. Whether through focus groups, surveys, or community meetings, engaging with the public can lead to innovative solutions and more effective communication campaigns.

For example, local governments in Kenya are partnering with community organizations and stakeholders to co-create communication initiatives that address the unique needs of their constituents. By involving community members in the planning and execution of PR campaigns, these organizations are able to develop more relevant and impactful messaging that resonates with their audience.

Launching an In-House Innovation Team

Finally, establishing an in-house innovation team can be a powerful way to foster creativity in public sector PR. By bringing together cross-functional teams of experts, organizations can collaborate on brainstorming sessions, pilot projects, and creative initiatives that push the boundaries of traditional PR practices. These teams can serve as incubators for new ideas and innovations, driving positive change and transformation within the organization.

For instance, IPS-Kenya has established an innovation team tasked with exploring new technologies and communication strategies to better serve the public. By leveraging the diverse expertise of team members, IPS-Kenya is able to develop innovative solutions to complex PR challenges and stay ahead of the curve in an ever-evolving landscape.

Dorah Nesoba is the Director of Communications at the Institute for Public Services-Kenya (IPS-Kenya).

HEALTH

The new frontier of innovative PR strategies transforming healthcare

Traditional PR approaches might struggle to keep pace with evolving sector now riven by advancements in technology, shifting patient expectations, and a dynamic regulatory landscape.

By Emmanuel Koros, MPRSK

Public Relations (PR) practitioners play a crucial role in the healthcare industry by acting as a bridge between healthcare organizations and the public. Their diverse skills allow them to contribute in several key areas such as building and maintaining reputation, public education, and advocacy, as well as managing internal communication by developing appropriate strategies to ensure effective communication within healthcare organizations.

The healthcare sector is constantly evolving, driven by advancements in technology, shifting patient expectations,

healthcare institutions and the diverse audiences they serve, ultimately contributing to the success of healthcare organiza-

proaches might struggle to keep pace with this rapid change. To thrive in this environment, PR professionals in the healthcare



...PR strategies need to cater to this shift by offering tailored information, fostering two-way communication, and empowering individuals to make informed healthcare decisions.....

and a dynamic regulatory landscape. PR professionals help navigate this complexity by bridging the gap between

tions and the well-being of the community.

However, traditional PR ap-

space must embrace innovation and adapt their strategies to meet emerging needs and trends in the industry.

Evolving Trends in Healthcare Communication

01 Digital Transformation: The rise of telehealth, health information technology (HIT), and digital marketing necessitates embracing new communication channels and content formats to reach and engage audiences effectively.

02 Data-Driven Decision Making: Utilizing data analytics provides valuable insights into audience behavior, message effectiveness, and campaign performance, allowing for more targeted and impactful PR strategies.

03 Transparency and Credibility: In an age of misinformation, building trust with the public is crucial. Healthcare organizations need to be transparent, provide accurate information, and actively engage in open conversations with their audiences.

04 Empowered Patients: Patients are increasingly taking a proactive role in their health and demanding personalized communication. PR strategies need to cater to this shift by offering tailored information, fostering two-way communication, and empowering individuals to make informed healthcare decisions.



Innovative PR Strategies for Healthcare

To capitalize on these trends, PR professionals in the healthcare sector can employ the following innovative strategies.

01 **Storytelling through Human-Centered Narratives**

Sharing patient stories, highlighting healthcare professionals' journeys, and showcasing the impact of research and innovation can connect with audiences on an emotional level.

02 **Interactive Storytelling**

Utilizing immersive technologies like virtual reality (VR) or augmented reality (AR) to offer patients and the public unique experiences and a deeper understanding of health issues or treatments.

03 **Embracing New Content Formats**

Engaging and informative podcasts and videos can reach diverse audiences on their preferred platforms, providing valuable health information in an accessible format.

04 **Social Media Engagement**

Using social media platforms strategically to share educational content, foster two-way communication with patients and communities, and build relationships with key influencers.

05 **Interactive Infographics and Data Visualizations**

Transforming complicated health information into visually appealing formats makes it easier for audiences to comprehend complex topics.

Building Trust and Collaboration

PR practitioners can build trust through transparency and collaboration by providing timely and accurate information about healthcare issues, research developments, and organizational initiatives.

They can also actively engage patients, communities, and media outlets to address concerns, answer questions, and build trust through open communication.

Additionally, they can work with patient advocacy groups, healthcare professionals, and public health organizations

to amplify messaging, reach wider audiences, and create a unified voice on critical health issues.

Harnessing the Power of Data

PR practitioners can maximize their impact by leveraging data and measurement through insights from data analytics to inform message development, identify target audiences, and measure the success of PR campaigns.

Further, they can track social media conversations and public perception to understand audience sentiment and adjust communication strategies



accordingly.

Importantly, analyzing website traffic, social media interactions, and media mentions to gauge the effectiveness of communication efforts and identify areas for improvement.

By adopting these innovative approaches, PR professionals can remain relevant and effective in the rapidly evolving healthcare landscape. This requires a commitment to continuous learning, exploring new technologies, and fostering a culture of creativity and collaboration. Those in the healthcare space should be highly innovative and adap-

tive to the changing needs of the sector, in their quest to promote health literacy and contribute to positive change in an industry that directly impacts the lives of millions.

The writer is a Principal Communications Officer at the Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital.

2024 Edelman Trust Barometer Kenya Edition

TOP 10 FINDINGS

01 **NGOs Most Trusted On Innovation Integration**
76% of Kenyans trust NGOs to integrate innovation into society – putting them ahead of government (47% trust), business (70% trust), and media (66% trust).

02 **Peers On Par With Scientists**
76% of Kenyans say they trust their peers to tell them the truth about new innovations and technologies, compared to scientists (74%), journalists (63%), business leaders (61%) and government leaders (37%).

03 **GMOs Rejected**
65% of Kenyans reject the growing use of GMO based foods.

04 **Science Is Politicized In Kenya**
50% of Kenyans believe that science has become politicized in this country.

05 **Concern That Science Is Losing Its Independence**
63% of Kenyans say government and organizations that fund research have too much influence on how science is done.

06 **Experts To Play A Big Role**
Kenyans say technical experts (85%) and scientists (84%) should have a big role in managing the introduction of innovation in the country.

07 **Social Media Is Go-To Source For Tech Information**
Social media is the leading source of information about new technologies and innovations for Kenyans, ahead of online searches, national media and local media.

08 **Demand For Public-Private Partnerships**
72% of Kenyans say if business partners with the government, they will trust it more with technology-led changes.

09 **Transparency On Benefits & Risks Is Key**
To earn or keep their trust as good managers of change, most Kenyans say business and government should give them a voice to raise their concerns, while business, government, and media should be transparent about both the benefits and risks.

10 **Lack of Faith in Regulators' Understanding**
55% of Kenyans believe that government regulators lack adequate understanding of emerging technologies to regulate them effectively.



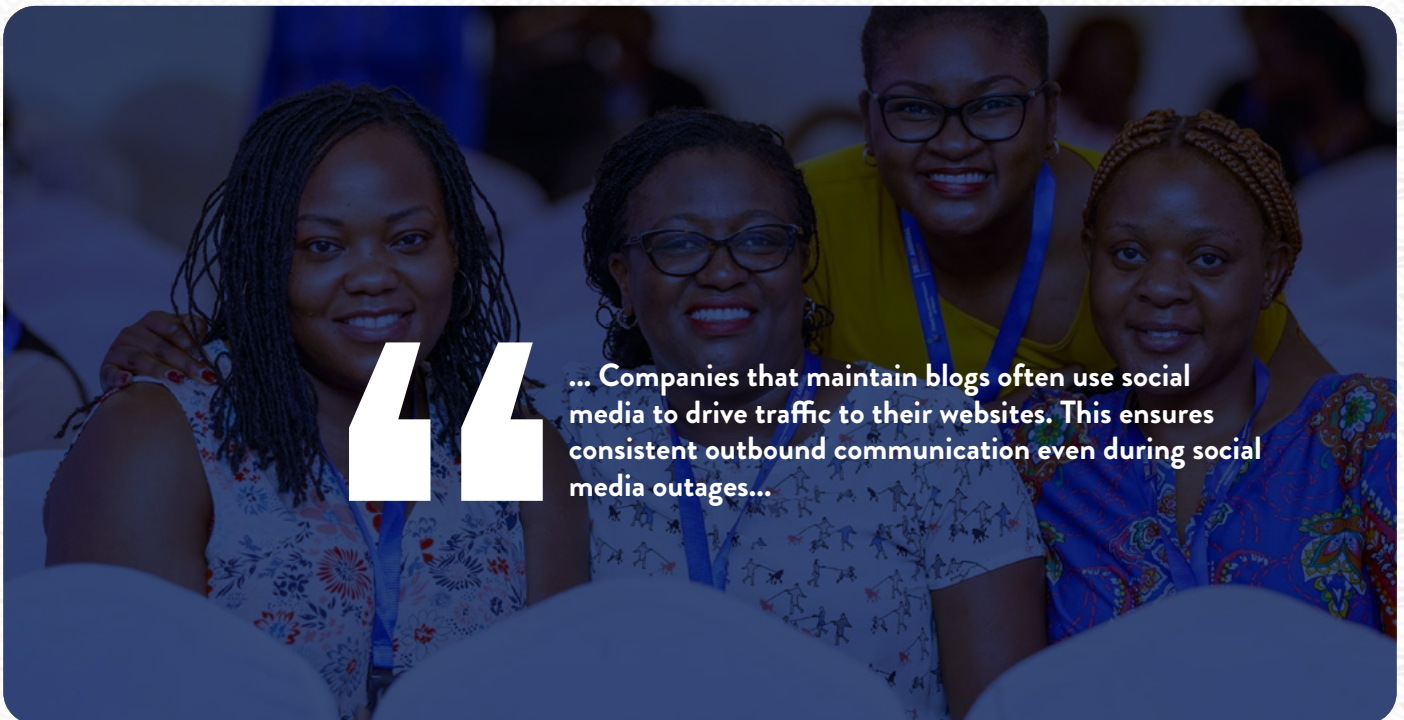
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for the full report.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Is Piggyback branding on social media a blessing or a curse for companies?

The high-stakes world of social media branding: where one misstep can tarnish reputations and viral sensations can make or break brands.

By Ernest Nyamasyo



Social media is essential for companies to build their brands and make meaningful connections with their audience online. Companies that use social media to engage with their consumers often receive more positive responses about their brand. However, missteps can occur, such as a tweet that is out of sync with the rest of a brand's content or a Facebook update that doesn't match the accompanying photo or video.

A recent online frenzy over a murder case involving a media personality highlighted how social media can work against

a brand, quickly destroying professional credibility even before the courts have made a ruling. Past posts and pictures were pulled up from the Internet and scrutinized by the public, much to the chagrin of the legal defense team.

Colleagues of the accused from the media industry were hesitant to comment on the case, fearing their observations might be taken as credible news. Meanwhile, others were eager to deliver new twists to the story but restrained themselves to avoid potential libel or defamation

cases.

Online marketers and bloggers quickly capitalized on the sensational nature of the story, using clickbait headlines and social media posts to drive traffic to their websites and gain more likes or sales. They even used memes created from courtroom photos to maintain their online relevance, often disregarding professional communication standards.

This incident exposed the underhanded techniques some unethical social media administrators use to keep

their posts trending. It also revealed how piggybacking on trending content can either benefit or backfire on an established brand.

Given the rising influence and importance of social media in the corporate world, it is crucial for communications teams to establish guidelines and rules for online engagement and information sharing. Social media practitioners must adhere to communication guidelines, professional ethics, and internal company policies to prevent discord, disorganization, or worse—damage to reputation.



Traditionally, a corporate communications team's primary objective was to create timeless content. While covering current events in the company or industry remains important, this must be balanced with fresh, original content to meet the target audience's social media needs.

Modern corporate communications teams, drawing from journalism standards, are adept at producing original content such as articles, graphic designs, photos, and videos for their target audience. This approach helps

avoid the temptation to piggyback on unrelated content and ensures that the company's message, image, and stance on industry matters are consistent with its overall business strategy.

While there is a need to be flexible in publishing newsworthy content, organizations must take precautions when piggybacking on relevant hashtags and memes. Stolen or foreign content can be misleading and detrimental to the brand's image. Proper attribution of content is crucial, especially in partnerships, to

maintain credibility.

Companies that maintain blogs often use social media to drive traffic to their websites. This ensures consistent outbound communication even during social media outages. During such incidents, social media users typically seek information directly from news sites, company blogs, and other online publishers.

Although piggybacking on foreign content is common, it is frowned upon in professional circles. The effect of using

another brand's features for one's benefit can be positive or negative. When done right, it shows the business is topical and relevant, highlighting its personality and sense of humor. However, when done wrong, it can be damaging.

It is advantageous for organizations to strive for original content on social media to direct traffic to their websites or blogs and ensure consistent messaging.

Ernest Nyamasyo is a Communication Officer at KenGen Foundation.

Rethinking PR strategies for finance in the digital era

In the digital age, finance PR must harness tech advancements, prioritize data privacy, master crisis management, engage stakeholders, and embrace sustainability for lasting impact.

By May Odhiambo

The finance sector is a broad umbrella encompassing institutions that manage money, including banks, insurance companies, and investment firms. It facilitates investments, savings, and the smooth flow of capital, playing a pivotal role in pushing the development agenda by mobilizing resources, facilitating transactions, managing risk, providing liquidity, and supporting international trade.

Public Relations (PR) is crucial in the context of the finance sector's role in development. It helps build trust among consumers and investors, manage reputations, communicate value and contributions to economic development, handle crisis

communication, promote financial literacy, and engage with relevant stakeholders. Innovating PR practices is paramount due to the ever-changing dynamics in communication. This article delves into how PR can proactively shape narratives and contribute to the overall success of organizations in the finance sector.

Digital Transformation

Advancements in technology, particularly in Artificial Intelligence (AI), data analytics, and digital platforms, offer significant opportunities to enhance PR efforts in the financial sector. Institutions can streamline communication, personalize interactions, and improve customer engagement using AI tools

that analyze public sentiment across various platforms. Understanding public sentiment allows PR teams to tailor their strategies and messages more effectively, addressing concerns and capitalizing on positive trends.

Another advantage is the ability to analyze customer data, creating insights into customer preferences, behaviors, and trends. Data analytics enable fast segmentation of clients, leading to the creation of targeted and relevant PR campaigns. Tailored content resonates better with each customer segment, improving engagement rates.

Data Privacy

Data privacy in the financial sector is critical due to

the sensitive nature of the information these institutions handle and growing public concerns. PR professionals play an essential role in building and maintaining customer trust by implementing strategic communication practices such as transparent communication about data security measures, educating the public on data privacy, providing regular updates on compliance and regulations, and publishing reports and audits.

Educational campaigns can help clients understand their role in maintaining their data privacy, such as recognizing phishing attempts, securing personal devices, and using strong, unique passwords. Financial institutions can



address concerns around data privacy effectively, aiming to reassure stakeholders about the institution's commitment to data security.

Crisis Management

The evolving landscape of crisis management has significantly altered how financial institutions prepare for, respond to, and recover from crises. The prompt nature of digital communication and the widespread use of social media have heightened the importance of real-time responses, continuous monitoring of social media, and proactive crisis management strategies to safeguard an institution's reputation and minimize damage.

AI tools can predict potential PR crises by analyzing trends in data and online sentiment. This predictive capability allows institutions to prepare or even tactically address issues

before they escalate. Additionally, AI can aid in crafting responses to crises, ensuring they are data-driven and tailored to address the concerns of stakeholders effectively. Financial institutions' PR need to adopt dynamic, real-time, and proactive crisis management strategies, such as regular staff training.

Stakeholder Engagement

Innovative approaches to stakeholder engagement in the financial sector are pivotal for maintaining and enhancing relationships with a diverse range of audiences, including investors, regulators, customers, and the general public. The dynamic nature of the finan-

cial industry, coupled with the rapid evolution of digital communication technologies, offers ample opportunities to engage these groups in meaningful ways. Tools for engagement include polls, Q&A sessions, webinars, virtual conferences, tailored email communications,

investor education, feedback mechanisms, and mobile engagement. Financial institutions can deepen their relationships with existing audiences and attract new ones by adopting these methods.

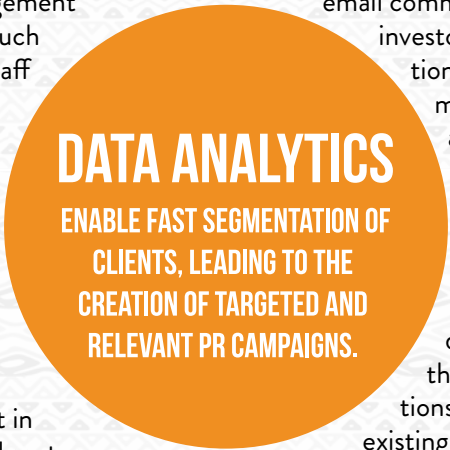
Sustainability

Integrating sustainability into PR practices is increasingly becoming a strategic imper-

ative for financial institutions amid growing environmental consciousness among governments, consumers, investors, and regulators. PR efforts aligned with sustainable practices enable financial institutions to enhance their image, build trust with stakeholders, and demonstrate leadership in corporate responsibility. Initiatives can include highlighting their ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) investments, sustainability initiatives like tree planting, and community engagement.

These practices offer financial institutions a powerful way to align with the values of an increasingly environmentally conscious public, differentiate themselves in a competitive market, and contribute positively to global sustainability goals.

May Odhiambo is a public relations and marketing professional.



DATA ANALYTICS
ENABLE FAST SEGMENTATION OF CLIENTS, LEADING TO THE CREATION OF TARGETED AND RELEVANT PR CAMPAIGNS.

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FLY TO
Zanzibar

FROM MOMBASA

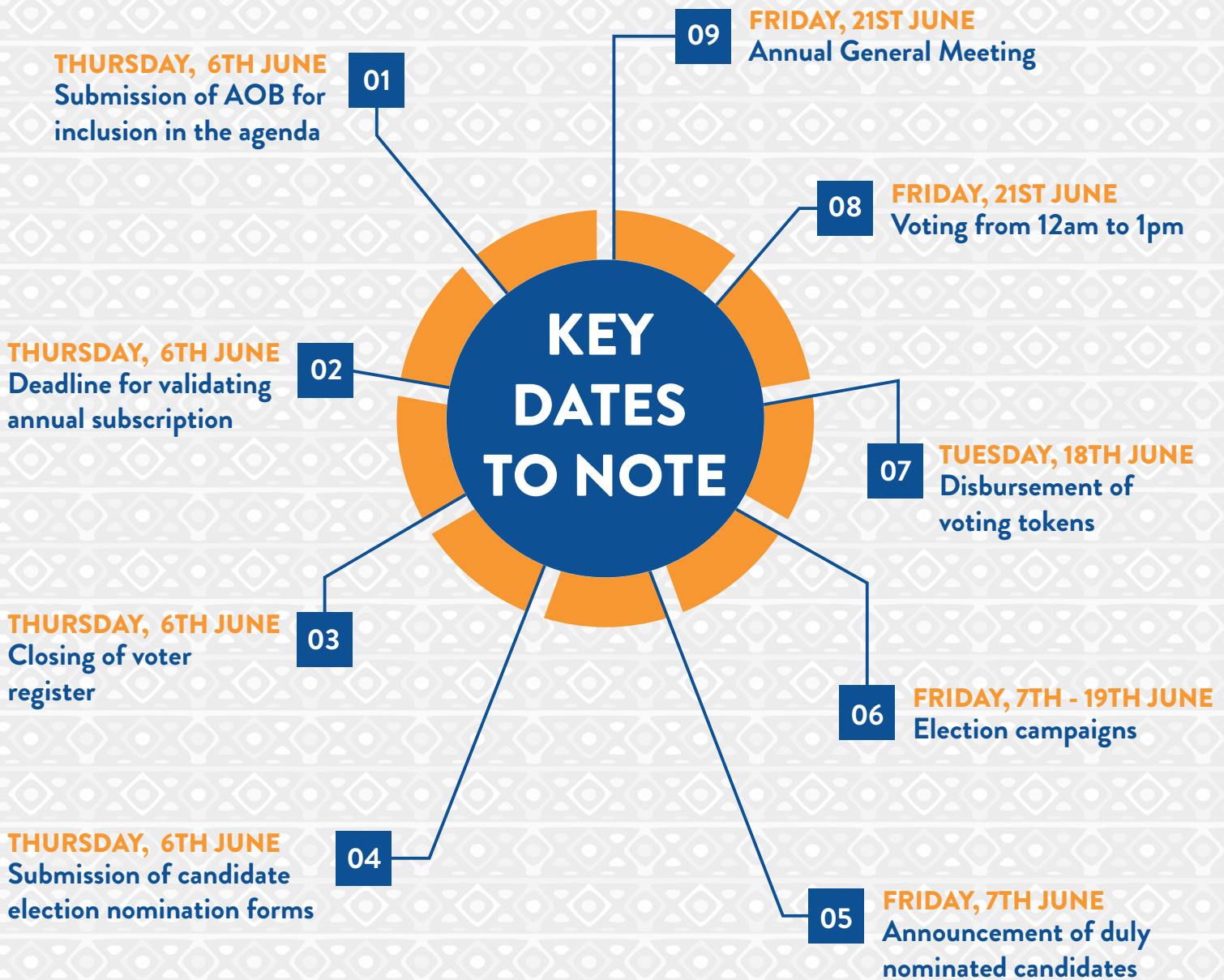
— **STARTING JULY 2024** —

RETURN
FROM KES **28,420**



PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY
OF KENYA

THE 2024 PRSK ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING





EDUCATION

The role of digital PR in Kenya's educational revolution

Cutting-edge PR techniques drive policy adoption and stakeholder engagement in Kenya's educational landscape.

By Omboki Monayo

In a rapidly changing educational landscape, effective communication has never been more crucial. As new policies sweep through Kenya's schools and universities, a fresh approach to public relations is essential to engage digitally savvy learners like Purity Moraa.

For Moraa, the promise of a brighter future seemed within reach when she completed her Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) exams. But as the Kenya Kwanza administration took power, the education sector was thrown into upheaval. The Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) stirred primary education, while a new funding model was introduced at the tertiary level.

The Kenya National Examination Council rolled out a new subject ranking criterion, and the Ministry and Parliament reviewed the recommendations from the Presidential Working Party on Education Sector Reforms. Amidst these sweeping changes, strategic communication through stakeholder engagement often takes a backseat to the legislative onslaught of new policies.

However, engaging learners like Moraa requires a unique messaging approach. In the ever-evolving educational landscape, effective communication is key to driving meaningful change and assuring stakeholders—including parents, teachers, learners, and financiers—that their

concerns are being addressed.

Traditionally, stakeholder engagement in the education sector has relied on press conferences led by Ministry officials, union leaders, and educational chiefs. Other methods include annual headteacher conferences, consultative forums, and official notices to learners and parents. Many educational bodies struggle with the complexity of these engagements, often lacking the expertise to craft compelling, evidence-driven public relations campaigns.

Faced with the challenge of informing Moraa about the new funding model, Camerafrica Consultants supported the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB)



in launching the “Tutakusort: Leaving No Student Behind” campaign. This multimedia campaign combined television adverts, a digital campaign, and radio activations to demystify the New Funding Model, integrating change management principles into its PR strategies.

The campaign’s success was evident from the outset, with portal traffic increasing by 95% and over 300,000 students applying for and securing funding for their undergraduate and TVET courses. This campaign highlights key insights into innovating public relations practices for education sector agencies.

Firstly, any new policy uptake campaign must recognize that change requires a

structured approach. This means mapping various publics, understanding their vulnerabilities in adopting new policies, and ensuring they receive accurate information. In the education sector, this involves tackling fake news, stereotypes, and myths that can distort government messaging.

Secondly, agencies must move away from below-the-line initiatives that reach limited audiences. Above-the-line campaigns can drive mass engagement, capture key influencers, and quickly counter misinformation.

Camerafrica’s phraseology lab effectively tracked negative narratives on social media and ran digital campaigns with accurate information, linking to the New Higher Education Financing Portal’s website. This was complemented by the HELB Contact

Centre and Huduma Centre frontline staff, resulting in successful message uptake among university and TVET administrators, parents, and students.

Thirdly, agencies should expand their PR offerings to include robust feedback channels, combining customer experience surveys to better understand their audience.

As more education sector agencies consider shifting from in-house to agency-supported campaigns, it’s crucial to leverage emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and deep learning.

These technologies can shape messaging, enhance policy uptake initiatives, and address career choices, placement, and the disbursement of bursaries, scholarships, and grants.

The writer is an editorial associate at Camerafrica Consultants Limited



...Agencies should expand their PR offerings to include robust feedback channels, combining customer experience surveys to better understand their audience...



BUSINESS

Kenya Airways's journey to revitalization

By Anne Bosibori (Anisa), MPRSK, MCIPR

On October 29th, 2018, a Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, adorned with the Kenyan flag and a regal lion, made a historic touchdown at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport. This proud moment marked Kenya Airways (KQ) as the first East African airline and the seventh in Africa to offer non-stop flights to the United States.

Since its establishment in 1977, Kenya Airways has been a symbol of Kenya's pride, connecting over 56 destinations, promoting tourism, and enriching business opportunities. The airline's journey is decorated with numerous accolades, including being

recognized as Africa's Leading Airline consistently since 2011 by the World Travel Awards (WTA).

Setbacks

Despite its achievements, KQ faced significant setbacks, including operational losses in the fiscal years of 2015 and 2016. These challenges were further compounded by the tragic crash of Boeing 737 flight 507 in Cameroon, which profoundly impacted the airline.

Project Mawingu

Although this initiative aimed to address critical issues and position KQ as a global leader, Project Mawingu unfortu-

nately led the airline deeper into financial struggles. The goal to establish Nairobi as a hub of international connections faced obstacles, contributing to the company's increasing debt.

Project Kifaru

In response to these challenges, KQ initiated Project Kifaru, seeking strategic investors to facilitate a turnaround. The company's focus on acquiring support and reshaping its business strategy is vital to overcoming the obstacles in its path.

Insight on Operations and Service Quality

Quality Assessment

Industry experts have highlighted areas of concern, including operational delays and inconsistent onboard experiences. KQ, once a standout, now faces challenges in maintaining service and comfort in line with global standards.

Competitive Landscape

Competition is intense, with airlines like Ethiopian Airlines and South African Airways emerging as preferred choices due to their commitment to safety, cost-effectiveness, and personalized services.

1977

KQ A SYMBOL OF KENYA'S PRIDE



CEO's Vision

In various interviews, Allan Kilavuka, KQ's Chief Executive Officer, reaffirms the airline's potential and contribution to the continent's aviation industry. His optimism serves as a beacon of hope for KQ's resurgence. *Insight on Operations and Service Quality*

01

KQ's Strategic Partnerships

Efforts to collaborate with the tourism sector and individuals deeply connected to Kenya, could spur exceptional growth and increased market appeal.

02

Focus on Corporate Social Responsibility

Embracing impactful CSR initiatives can fortify KQ's brand, strengthen relationships, and drive sustainable business practices.

03

Government Support

A balanced approach from regulatory bodies and the government is essential to enable strategic autonomy and affirm KQ's potential for revival.



Potential for Growth and Revitalization

The Road Ahead

KQ's journey towards revitalization bears significance not only for the aviation industry but also for Kenya's reputation on the global stage. As the airline tackles its challenges head-on, its resurgence promises to reshape the narrative of African aviation and propel Kenya's legacy to new heights.

Rising to New Horizons

Acknowledging Legacy reflecting on KQ's rich heritage and achievements, underpinning a legacy that commands acknowledgment and respect.

Facing Adversity Confronting the adversities with resilience and determination, signaling a steadfast commitment to embracing the Future.

Overcome the hurdles encountered. Embracing a vision of empowerment,

the "Pride of Africa" emerges as a symbol of resilience and optimism.

Through strategic alliances, renewed focus on service excellence, and unwavering commitment, KQ is poised to carve a triumphant trajectory towards reclaim-



...On October 29th, 2018, a Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, adorned with the Kenyan flag and a regal lion, made a historic touchdown at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport...

growth, and redefinition, symbolizing a new era of promise for Kenya Airways.

A Vision for the Future

As KQ navigates the complexities of its path, the reinvigoration of its legacy as

ing its stature and making a pronounced impact on the aviation industry.

Bosibori is a Corporate Communication Officer at the Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Corporation (REREC)



TOURISM

Revitalizing Kenya’s tourism: The county PR challenge

With untapped county treasures, strategic PR can unveil hidden gems, empowering local economies and enriching traveler experiences.

By Wachira Njenge, MPRSK

Kenya, renowned for its breathtaking beauty, diverse landscapes, and vibrant cultures, holds untapped potential in its tourism sector, particularly at the county level. Despite its many attractions, county tourism hasn’t fully flourished.

The adage “the person who has not traveled widely thinks his or her mother is the only good cook” resonates deeply within Kenya’s tourism context. There is a pressing need to enhance public relations practices within Kenya’s tourism sector, especially across our counties.

Tourists often stick to well-known destinations in Kenya, missing out on the hidden gems scattered throughout its counties. Each county offers something unique—from the vast lowlands of Barin-go County to the pristine beaches along the coast and the majestic peaks of Mount Kenya. By showcasing these diverse attractions, counties

can draw a wider range of tourists, distributing economic benefits more evenly across the country.

On World Tourism Day 2023, the then Cabinet Secretary for Tourism, Wildlife, and Heritage, Hon. Peninah Malonza, emphasized the crucial role of counties in Kenya’s tourism industry. She underscored the need to empower counties to fully utilize their potential and contribute to the nation’s overall growth. This empowerment transcends infrastructure development; it involves strategic communication and public relations efforts to promote each county’s unique identity and attractions.

Improving public relations practices within Kenya’s tourism sector, especially at the county level, is essential for unlocking new opportunities and supporting sustainable development. Counties must leverage digital technologies, engage with local commu-

nities, and promote responsible tourism. These efforts can help showcase the true essence of Kenya, ensuring every traveler experiences its magic.

By tapping into digital platforms, counties can create targeted marketing campaigns, share captivating stories, and highlight unique

The transformation of county-level public relations in Kenya’s tourism sector is vital for creating a brighter future for the industry. By working together, counties can enhance their visibility, attract more tourists, and contribute to the nation’s sustainable development goals. The combined efforts of strategic



...Improving public relations practices within Kenya’s tourism sector, especially at the county level, is essential for unlocking new opportunities...

experiences that each county offers. Engaging with communities fosters a sense of ownership and pride among locals, encouraging them to participate actively in tourism initiatives. Promoting responsible tourism ensures that attractions are preserved for future generations while providing authentic experiences for visitors.

communication, community engagement, and responsible tourism practices will unlock Kenya’s full tourism potential, benefiting all stakeholders involved.

Wachira Njenge works at the Media Council of Kenya in the Corporate Communications and Public Affairs department as a Social Media Assistant.



Benefits of AI for marketers, PR professionals

AI is transforming marketing and PR, making campaigns smarter and more efficient.

By Vilton M Franklin

PR is Public Relations, but Marketing is Public Relations. Troubled understanding this? They FUSE. Have you ever felt like your phone knows you better than your best friend? Well, blame it on the AI revolution in marketing!

Picture this: You're scrolling through your social media feed, innocently admiring cat videos, when suddenly, an ad pops up for the exact brand of cat food your feline friend loves. Coincidence? Not quite. This is just the world of AI-driven marketing, where algorithms are the new mind readers.

In today's digital landscape, AI is not just changing marketing—it's revolutionizing it. From personalized product recommendations to predictive analytics, AI is the secret sauce behind those accurate targeted ads that seem to know what you are looking for. But fear not! While AI may seem like a digital overlord bent on infiltrating our every click, it's also a marketer's best friend, making digital campaigns smarter, faster, and more efficient than ever before.

What About Public Relations?

With AI-powered sentiment analysis, PR professionals can gauge public opinion in real-time, nip potential crises in the bud, and craft messaging that resonates with target audiences. Gone are the days of shooting in the dark.

So, how can PR benefit from this AI-powered revolution? Well, imagine being able to anticipate your audience's needs before they even know they have them. Alawaad (2021) admits that with AI's predictive analytics, PR pros can stay one step ahead of the game, anticipating trends and identifying potential crises before they spiral out of control. An

additional tip here: AI-driven chatbots can handle customer inquiries and complaints with grace and efficiency, leaving PR professionals free to focus on more strategic endeavors.

Benefits of AI for PR Professionals

01 AI tools can analyze social media posts, news articles, and other online content to gauge public sentiment about a brand or a specific issue. This real-time feedback allows PR professionals to adjust their strategies on the fly and address any negative trends before they escalate.

02 Predictive analytics can help identify potential crises before they happen. By analyzing patterns and trends, AI can alert PR teams to potential issues, allowing them to prepare and respond proactively.

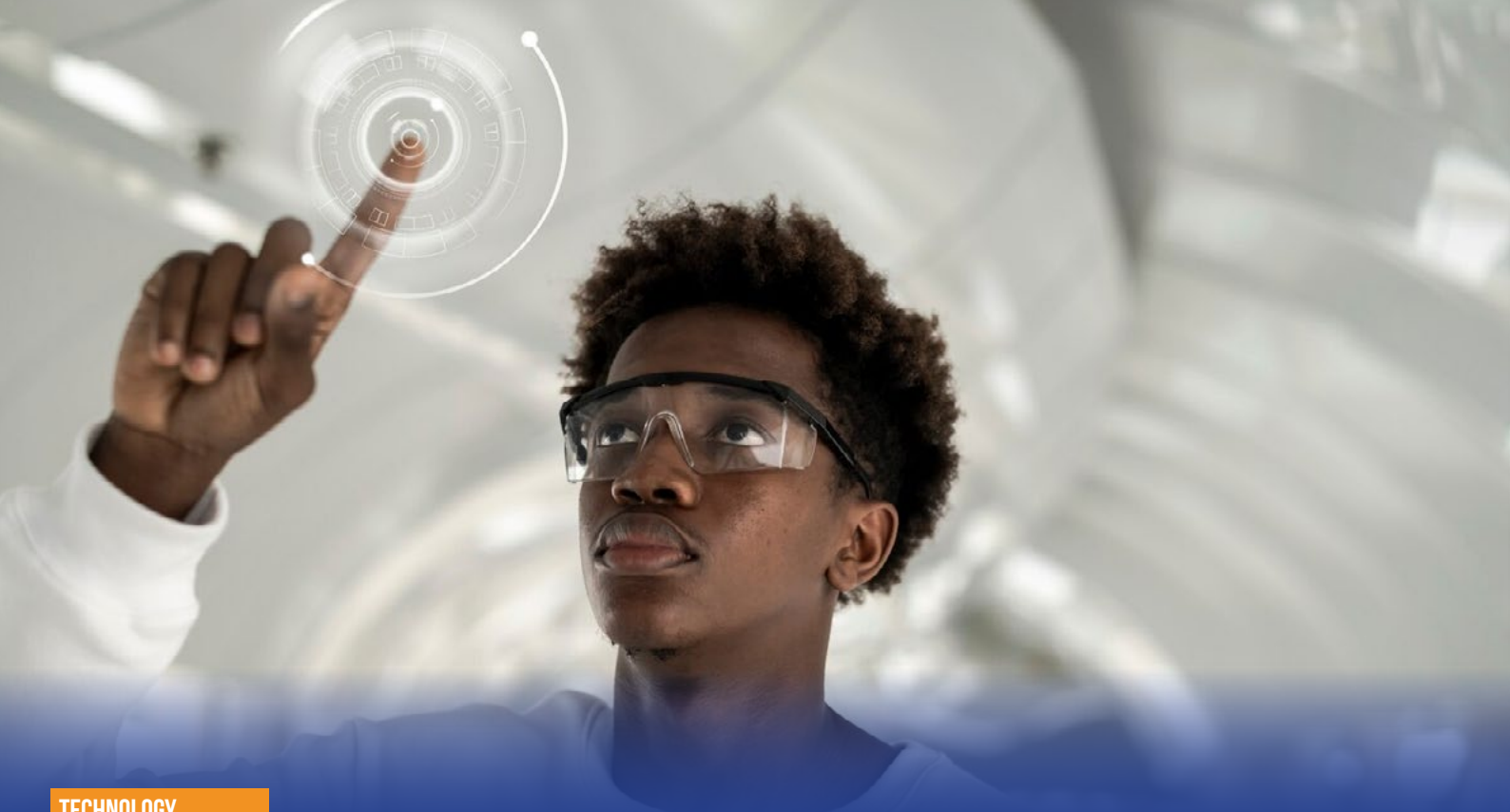
03 AI can assist in content creation by analyzing what types of content resonate most with target audiences. It can suggest topics, headlines, and even entire articles that are likely to engage readers.

04 AI-powered tools can monitor media coverage 24/7, providing PR teams with timely updates on how their brand is being discussed. This helps in quickly addressing any misinformation or negative coverage.

05 Just like in marketing, AI can help PR professionals tailor their messages to specific segments of their audience, ensuring that communication is relevant and engaging.

06 By automating routine tasks such as media monitoring and sentiment analysis, AI frees up PR professionals to focus on strategic planning and creative work.

So, the next time you feel like someone's watching your every move online, remember—it's not Big Brother; it's just AI making marketing magic happen. Embrace the future, because in the wild world of digital marketing, the only constant is change—and AI is leading the charge.



TECHNOLOGY

10 AI Tools for streamlined PR and communications

By Vincent Kipyegon

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly becoming a formidable force reshaping our daily work. Generative AI, computer programs that mimic human-level intelligence to reason, learn, and interpret tasks, became popular in 2022 when OpenAI unveiled ChatGPT to the public. These AI programs are accessible to users as chatbots on web and mobile platforms, taking prompts in the form of text, images, and audio as input and outputting textual responses. While the evolution of AI is quick, it has drawbacks, such as hallucination, which involves providing incorrect, biased, inaccurate, out-of-date, or non-existent information. The safety tools attached to these programs can also sometimes make it difficult to interact effectively with AI.

In public relations (PR) and communications, AI can be used as an innovation tool by incorporating it into the most important component of the profession—the art of writing. According to a 2023 report by OpenAI, PR was among the group of professions most exposed to generative AI. The following AI tools can be integrated to boost productivity, creativity, and drive results in a PR and communications workplace.

ChatGPT

01

ChatGPT is an AI chatbot that excels in content creation and communication management. It has been extensively trained with vast knowledge in public relations and continually collaborates with users, particularly during brainstorming sessions. Suitable for both technical and non-technical writing, it is continually updated on knowledge and reasoning.

Google Gemini

02

Google Gemini (formerly Google Bard) is an intelligent AI chatbot created by Google. According to Google CEO Sundar Pichai, Gemini offers a new wave of innovation, knowledge, learning, creativity, and productivity. In PR, Gemini thrives in creating up-to-date marketing and communication management due to real-time access to data from Google servers. It also suggests and autocompletes sentences in Gmail and processes images to text.

Claude AI

03

Claude, named after communication researcher Claude Shannon, is a powerful generative AI tool. It can condense a 20-page document into a single page or instantly generate a news article. Claude is multi-modal, accepting multiple modes of input such as text, long documents, and images. Its simple, intuitive interface allows users to create threads, copy, and regenerate responses, making it convenient for light and intensive tasks.

Quillbot

04

Quillbot is a simple yet agile AI tool for rewriting and paraphrasing. It outputs three distinct and customizable paraphrased versions of the original text. Additionally, it checks grammar, summarizes text, and fixes sentence structure, making it ideal for writers looking to improve tone, style, and engagement.

Grammarly

05

Grammarly is a popular writing assistant powered by AI. It checks grammar, spelling, and suggests corrections for sentence structure, punctuation, and conciseness. It is a powerful tool for any form of writing where a draft message is already in place.

Wordtune

06

Wordtune is a versatile writing assistant that improves grammar, spelling, sentence structure, tone, and style. Its strength lies in creatively suggesting synonyms and sentence construction.

Hugging Chat

07

Hugging Chat is a conversation chatbot powered by generative AI large language models (LLMs). It is an alternative to ChatGPT and Google Gemini, generating quick responses with less restriction and excellent responses on conversations.

Jasper AI

08

Jasper AI is an ultimate tool for marketing-related tasks such as copywriting, email marketing, and social media content. It empowers marketing teams to achieve business results with tailored strategic solutions.

Text-to-Image Generators (Stable Diffusion, DALL-E)

09

These tools convert text descriptions to images and art. OpenAI's DALL-E generates high-quality images based on text descriptions, giving users the ability to fully describe and regenerate their desired images. Stable Diffusion also transforms text descriptions into sharp images and artwork, handling issues around copyrights and context.

Tome AI

10

Tome is a web-based presentation AI tool that simplifies the creation of impressive presentations and documents. It uses AI to generate outlines, text, images, and animations, offering features like AI-powered writing assistance and image editing to transform existing documents into concise, eye-catching presentations.

Vincent Kipyegon is a Public Relations practitioner based in Nairobi.

Health nuggets: Tips on managing back pain

By Elizabeth Mulae

As PR professionals, we often spend long hours sitting and editing documents or running around coordinating events. Both scenarios can lead to back pain, affecting our overall health. Here are some tips and nuggets for managing back pain effectively.

01 Most Common Causes of Back Pain

- Sitting for long periods, especially in the same position, can cause the hip flexors to shorten, overworking the hamstrings and resulting in painful anterior pelvic tilting.
- Lifting with your back instead of your legs and hips can strain back muscles. Bending over to lift rather than squatting down can aggravate lower back pain due to stiffened muscles.
- Contorting your body into seemingly comfortable positions during sleep can strain the spine and lead to back pain.

02 Best Sitting Positions for Lower Back Pain

Prolonged sitting can significantly impact your back. Proper sitting posture is one of the first steps to correcting back pain:

- Sit upright with your feet flat on the ground and your knees slightly higher than your hips.
- Stand with your back straight, shoulders back, and head up.
- Switch between sitting and standing to release strain and keep muscles moving. Sitting for extended periods causes muscles to stretch and conform to the position, leading to stiffness and pain when changing positions.

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- Switch between sitting and standing to release strain and keep muscles moving. Sitting for extended periods causes muscles to stretch and conform to the position, leading to stiffness and pain when changing positions.

04 Fixing Middle Back Pain

Regular stretching can help loosen and strengthen middle back muscles, improving posture and reducing pain. Useful stretches and yoga poses include:

- Seated Twists
- Child's Pose
- Cat-Cow Pose
- Downward-Facing Dog
- Thread the Needle
- Cobra Pose
- Bridge Pose
- Passive Backbends

Consult a Professional

Always consult a doctor or physician if you experience back pain for professional advice and treatment.

Edited article from PentHouse Gymnasium Platform

05 Best Way to Bend Over With Lower Back Pain

To avoid aggravating back pain when bending over, use your hips and thighs instead of your back muscles. This method, known as the hip hinge, involves:

- Rather than leaning over with your back parallel to the floor, keep it perpendicular while bending with your hips and thighs, similar to a squat.
- The hips are better equipped to handle the strain of bending, relaxing the back muscles instead of tightening them. This method helps prevent back pain from flaring up.



PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY
OF KENYA

PRSK 2024 CPD TRAINING CALENDAR

JUNE

CRISIS AND ISSUES COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

3RD – 7TH
JUNE, 2024 | MOMBASA, (KENYA)

POINTS 50CPD
MEMBER 80,000/-
NON-MEMBER 85,000/-
MID CAREER

CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

17TH – 21ST
JUNE, 2024 | NAKURU, (KENYA)

POINTS 50CPD
MEMBER 80,000/-
NON-MEMBER 85,000/-
EARLY CAREER

DATA ANALYTICS FOR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

13TH – 14TH
JUNE, 2024 | NAIROBI, (KENYA)

POINTS 20CPD
MEMBER 15,000/-
NON-MEMBER 25,000/-
ADVANCED CAREER

REPUTATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR LEADERSHIP

26TH – 28TH
JUNE, 2024 | NAIVASHA, (KENYA)

POINTS 30CPD
MEMBER 35,000/-
NON-MEMBER 45,000/-
ADVANCED CAREER

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BOOK REVIEW

Book Review: “Who Moved My Cheese” by Dr. Spencer Johnson

Mulae shows us that to enjoy these desires and be happy and content, we must operate with the understanding that change is constant.

By Elizabeth Mulae

“Who Moved My Cheese,” written by Dr. Spencer Johnson is a short book packed with valuable life lessons that can be revisited multiple times, offering fresh insights from different perspectives. Here are some highlights and takeaways from my second reading of the book.

Here are some highlights and takeaways from my second reading of the book.

The book starts by illustrating how having “cheese” makes us happy. From my perspective, “cheese” symbolizes the things we most desire, such as a job, family,

home, children, car, or nice clothes. The “maze” represents where we spend our time searching for these desires. It’s important to integrate the concepts of “cheese” and “maze.”

To enjoy these desires and be happy and



content, we must operate with the understanding that change is constant. Embracing and managing the emotions that come with each phase of life is crucial.

Are we going to get stuck doing the same things because they're comfortable, despite no results, like Hem and Haw? Or are we going to adapt to change and strategize new ways to achieve our goals, like Sniff and Scurry?

Change often comes without warning, causing disbelief, disappointment, and uncertainty. If you don't change, you become extinct. Get up and move with the cheese sooner, and have the courage to venture into unfamiliar territory. Ask yourself: If you were not afraid, what would you do?

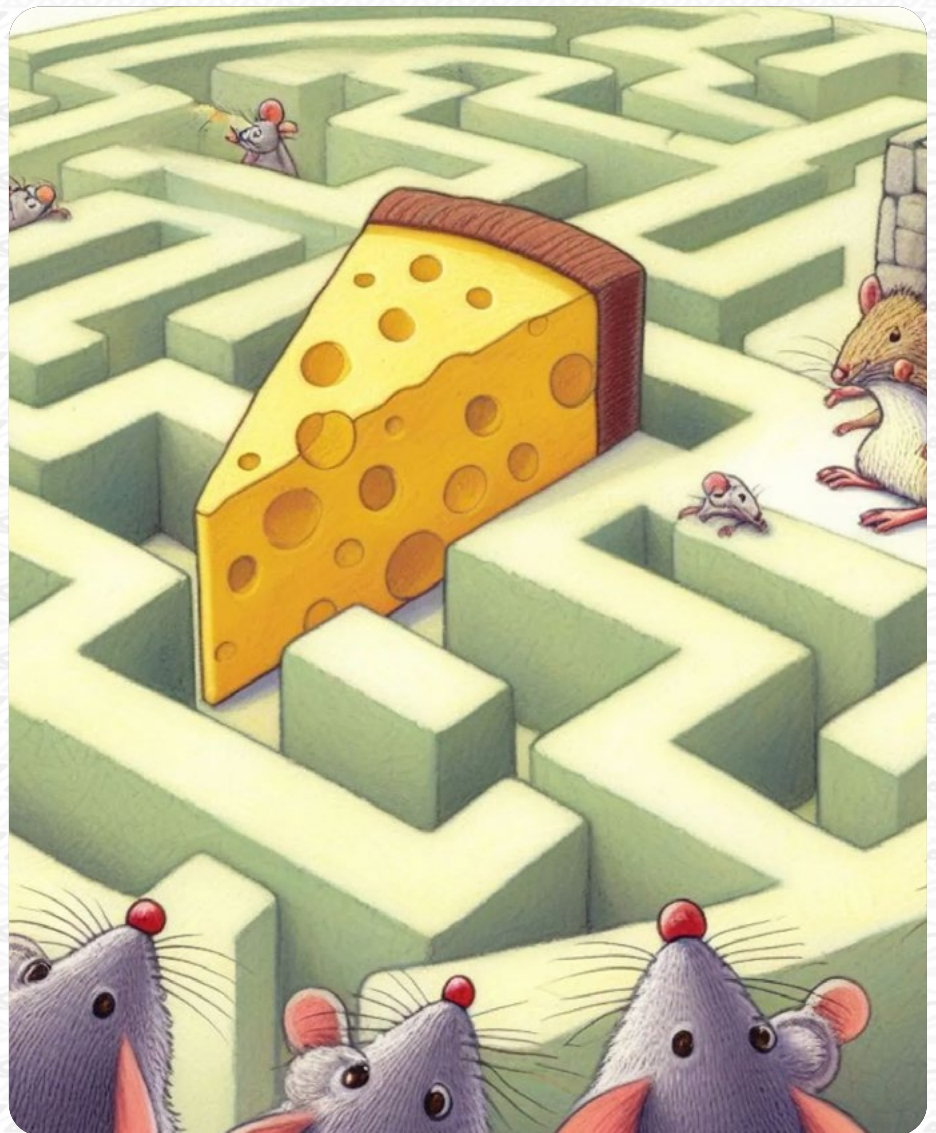
Regularly monitor change, adapt quickly, and move with the cheese. Don't get too comfortable in any situation; shift situations regularly to remain flexible and adaptable.

Since change is inevitable, enjoy the little things that matter most in life. Even when the cheese is plentiful, remain consistent. A comfort zone is dangerous, and a routine without regular renewal and reflection can kill dreams.

Change teaches us not to take anything for granted. Despite our best efforts, many dependencies make things happen. Stay humble and grateful for the small and big things in life. Gratitude changes our outlook.

Fear kills confidence and makes you feel lost. When fear sets in, it affects your courage to move on or change. Identify your fears, develop coping mechanisms, strategize, and get a new plan. The fear in your mind is often worse than the actual situation. Focus on the good in new experiences and invite positive energy.

Situations and circumstances will change, so stay observant and monitor trends in areas of interest. For investors, for example, monitoring portfolios is essential to avoid losses. Smell the cheese often, staying alert and aware of your surround-



ings to notice any small changes.

Realizing that nothing lasts forever ensures you keep your eyes open for approaching changes. Always be ready to find new cheese. Stay connected to support systems, build and diversify networks, and look to the future rather than focusing on what you are leaving behind. Set new goals and envision yourself achieving them.

We all experience change in various aspects of our lives—jobs, careers, families, relationships, finances, and health. The secret is to accept, be ready, adapt, and move with change positively.

Old beliefs do not lead to new cheese. You can only find new cheese by changing course and adopting new perspectives.

Elizabeth Mulae is a member of a leading book club.



...Change often comes without warning, causing disbelief, disappointment, and uncertainty....

SHAIRI

TUKUZANE

Kumekucha kulichele, Ya kweli tusemezane,
Tujitume tusilale, Tufaane sifanane,
Tunapopigwa mishale, Sisi ngao tuingane,
Wananembo nawasihi, Wenyewe tukuzane.

Taaluma yatukuka, Tena kuvutia wengi,
Faida kiajirika, Nchi safi paka rangi,
Urembo kutofichika, Unyonge sijaze tangi,
Wananembo nawasihi, Wenyewe tukuzane.

Kazi hii ya bidii, Juhudi zituzwe vyema,
Ujira bora watii, Waajiriwa mapema,
Wanafunzi watafiti, Kuboresha taaluma,
Wananembo nawasihi, Wenyewe tukuzane.

Tusipigane situsi, Mwenzako ni tunu kwako,
Mitandaoni siasi, Kujenga kwa neno lako,
Sheria yetu risasi, Ipitishwe na upako,
Wananembo nawasihi, Wenyewe tukuzane.

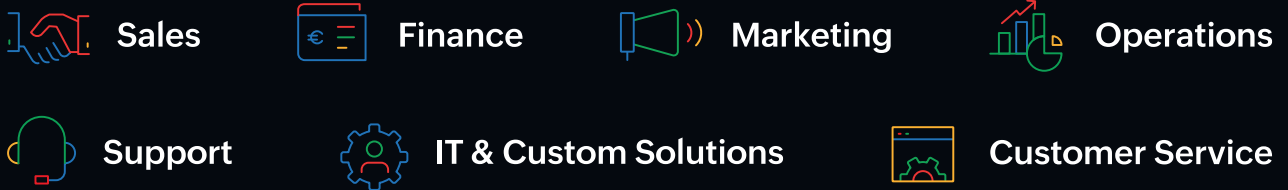
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EVENT

Top Public Relations Campaigns of 2023 honored at PRSK Awards

The award program has had over 4600 entries since its inception.

Avid Public Relations emerged as the winner of the Overall PR Campaign of the Year award for their “Project Sustaining Isuzu East Africa Market Share and Profile Campaign” at the 23rd edition of the Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK) Awards for Excellence.

The Overall PR Campaign of the Year award recognizes an entry from all the winning categories that exhibited outstanding creativity in public relations and the campaign’s measurable outcomes and impact.

Speaking during the awards ceremony, Public Relations Society of Kenya President Mr. Arik Karani said the awards showcased the power of communication in having

real-life impact.

“We’re thrilled to see such exemplary work, and it’s truly inspiring to witness the positive societal impact PR can have. Each participating individual and organization deserves our heartfelt congratulations for their contributions, for they have undoubtedly demonstrated the immense value that PR brings to the table,” said Mr. Karani.

The award program – which has had over 4600 entries since its inception – is judged by a panel of 15 industry experts and communicators from government agencies, world-renowned PR agencies, media, and academic institutions.



The list of all the winners and their respective categories are as follows:



Consumer Relations Campaign of the Year

Winner: Avid Public Relations

Campaign Title: Project Sustaining Isuzu East Africa Market Share and Profile Campaign



Corporate Publication of the Year

Winner: Hill and Knowlton East Africa Limited

Campaign Title: Lake Turkana Wind Power 2022 Sustainability Report



Internal Communication Campaign of the Year

Winner: Avid Public Relations

Campaign Title: Project Sustaining Isuzu East Africa Market Share and Profile Campaign



Media Relations Campaign of the Year

Winner: Profit and Loss Consulting Limited

Campaign Title: Airtel Kenya Turnaround Narrative



New Media PR Campaign of the Year

Winner: Engage Burson Cohn and Wolfe

Campaign Title: #CFAOMotorsDrivesKenya Influencer Campaign



Public Sector Campaign of the Year

Winner: National Transport and Safety Authority

Campaign Title: Usalama Barabarani



PR Event of the Year

Winner: Inter Management Group (IMG) Kenya Ltd
Campaign Title: Walker Town Nairobi Edition



Social Investment Campaign of the Year

Winner: Inter Management Group (IMG) Kenya Ltd
Campaign Title: Shikisha Form na Senator



Young PR Professional of the Year (In-House)

Winner: Mr. Jesse Mwitwa of Nyandarua County Government
Jesse showcased exceptional skills in executing PR strategies within an organizational setting, contributing significantly to his company's success.



Young PR Professional of the Year (Agency)

Winner: Mr. Chrispine Onyango of Irvine Partners
Chrispine demonstrated remarkable prowess in managing diverse PR campaigns for clients, showcasing creativity and strategic thinking.



PRSK Golden Honours Award

The highest individual and lifetime award, The Golden Honours Award, a non-competitive accolade presented by PRSK, is reserved for members who have significantly contributed to advancing the society's objectives.

Recipients



Cabinet Secretary for Information, Communication, and the Digital Economy Eliud Owalo



Ms. Mary Kizito (posthumously), Daystar University Lecturer



Mrs. Eunice Muthamia, former Acting Director of the Department of Public Communications in the Ministry of Information, Communications, and Technology

PRSK Moran Award

This award honors and celebrates outstanding achievements, leadership, and contributions of PRSK members in public relations and communication.

PRSK Moran Awards – Agencies



Mercy **RANDA**



Kamuzu **BANDA**



Alfred **NGANGA**

PRSK Moran Awards – Public Sector



Sylvia **MWICHULI**



Maureen **MAMBO**



Wageni **KIMANI**



Samwel **KUMBA**



Ruth **DERO**



Catherine **BUTAKI**

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Rest in peace



Hajj Masemo



Washington Akumu

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