



TECH TIP
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Adopt New Tech Tools, But Stay a Little Old School

Have you tried to read your favorite news article or information site, only to be interrupted by a video you didn't ask for? Wasn't TiVo created because people don't want to be bothered by constant commercials?

Today, marketers use digital media and video technology to grab our attention. They know eye-catching visuals and a charismatic presenter increase audience engagement and generate leads. This technology is here to stay and will only get better. And if you use them in an authentic way, digital media and video technology are great PR tools too.

So, how do you use the latest tech tools to benefit your message and image? You implement a strategic plan. You assemble the right team to help you understand the big picture. You consider the pros and cons of adding in new tech tools. And you don't sacrifice your credibility and reputation in pursuit of the latest trend.

Credibility is the name of the game that wins.

Let's look at the journalism profession. Journalists are a lot like lawyers. Both must be educated in their field and work in their field, which defines true experience. Like lawyers, journalists are held to a higher standard for their writing and reporting. If they report something false, they lose credibility and put their reputations on the line.

Take a play from *USA Today*.

Let's look at standards of excellence. *USA Today* is a great example. According to the Audit Bureau of Circulations, *USA Today* continues to be the most widely read newspaper in the U.S.A. Why? Some experts claim the paper's four-color images and clear, engaging captions grab our attention. It's a quick read and it gives us the facts.

USA Today also uses simple Snapshots® and great design. At a glance, we are somewhat caught up for the day. If you think about it, *USA Today's* approach to reporting and design is a lot like an infographic. Some might argue *USA Today's* Snapshot® section was the first original infographic.

According to the *Columbia Journalism Review*, Gannett will redesign *USA Today* as a national newspaper insert and add it into local papers. David Cay Johnston, *Placing a Bet on USA Today*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, http://www.cjr.org/reports/placing_a_bet_on_usa_today.php. Speculation on timing is within the next five to six years.

It will be interesting to see if they get the medium right for the best circulation and impression standards. Advertising rates may or may not go up, depending on its value.

Marketing/Advertising vs. Journalism/PR

Marketing and advertising are completely different from journalism and PR. It's important not to blur the lines between the disciplines. Marketing and advertising are purchased for their space value. With marketing and advertising, you pay the media for the placement and

you control the message. This isn't the case with PR.

Journalism and PR are informational and educational. These professional services offer the audience information that they can use or follow. There is more credibility because there is value in being unbiased.

Tech tools can help keep the spotlight on you.

Credibility begins with well-checked facts. You want someone to be unbiased and report the facts, not the hype. If the facts about you are wrong, you want someone to correct them and communicate on your behalf. You want someone to represent you—not just someone in-house, but an independent professional that has a positive, professional track record.

To effectively communicate the facts, you need to tap all media, including digital media and video. These tools help professionals rise above the hype in the completely cluttered world of too much information.

Tech tools help you answer the tough PR questions: "Who is going to rise above the information clutter?" "Who is going to make it to the top and stay there as a thought leader?" "How are you going to stand out from your competitors?" "What's real and what's hype?"

Enter social media.

This powerful tool elevates your true news or story value. It's a technology tool that reaches many people authentically, and it's free.

Before implementing the latest tech tool, remember that it pays to be a little old school. To be impactful and truly make a difference, you also need advertising, marketing, PR professionals, and journalists who believe in you and the information or effort you're communicating. You need them all. We call it multimedia relations.

Here are ten tech tips to help you rise above the hype:

1. Follow the news within your industry across all media.
2. Follow the news, period, across all media.
3. Join social media networks, especially LinkedIn and Twitter.
4. Implement strategic video technology.
5. Only use the best technology with seamless delivery and crystal-clear quality.
6. Work with a media relations consultant to integrate your wins, goals, vision, and key messages.
7. Get the right people in the loop.
8. Develop business relations. Follow professionals on Twitter and LinkedIn. Like them. Tweet. Re-tweet. Interact.
9. Communicate your significant and timely information to a specific audience.
10. Add links, color photos, and video.

Done. It's a new day. In summary: tech tools are great. Just remember your standards.



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