Examining Social and Emerging Media Use in Public Relations Practice: A Ten-Year Longitudinal Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This article reports on a ten-year longitudinal analysis studying how social and other emerging media technologies are bringing dramatic changes to how public relations is practiced. The major finding in the 2015 study involves a very close race between Facebook and Twitter as the social or emerging media used the most in public relations practice. Although Twitter narrowly replacing Facebook for the first time in 2014 as the most frequently accessed new medium for public relations activities, Facebook narrowly regained the lead in 2015. LinkedIn and You Tube were the next most frequently used sites. Findings show those who practice public relations continue to agree strongly that social and other emerging media are changing the way public relations is practiced. This impact continues to be much more pronounced for external than internal audiences.

INTRODUCTION

This is a report on results of a ten-year longitudinal analysis studying how social and other emerging technologies are being used in public relations practice. Beginning in 2005 and continuing every year since, this research has included annually conducted surveys measuring the impact social and other emerging technologies are having on public relations (Wright & Hinson, 2006a, 2006b, 2007a, 2007b, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2008d, 2008e, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2009d, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, 2010d, 2010e, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2012a, 2012b, 2013a, 2013b, 2014, 2015a & 2015b. Also see DiStaso, McCorkindale & Wright, 2011).

As reported in greater detail elsewhere, these studies show that various new, emerging and social communication media have brought dramatic changes to many aspects of public relations practice. Results across all ten years of this study suggest that the

development of various new and emerging technologies has significantly empowered a wide variety of strategic publics by giving them dynamic ways to communicate with a variety of internal and external audiences.

This ten-year body of research follows several of our earlier research efforts that examined corporate communication policy and the internet (Wright, 1998) as well as the overall impact of the internet on public relations, journalism and the public (Wright, 2001).

IMPACT OF NEW COMMUNICATION MEDIA ON PUBLIC RELATIONS

Research conducted by the Pew Research Center (2005, 2008, 2015a and 2015b) has tracked the sources Americans use for news. Results of these studies used to report most people blended online and traditional news sources in their search for information about what's going on in the nation and the world. However, the most recent studies in this area now find dramatic increases in the role social media – especially Facebook – now play in news dissemination. While this fact is most prevalent for audiences younger than 30 (Pew Research Center 2015,a & 2015b), some studies suggest even older audiences are turning to social media for information about some news stories (American Press Institute, 2014).

This Pew Center research found only 10 percent of American adults were using the internet in 1995 compared with more than 80 percent today. Although internet use generally correlates with age, education and household income, huge increases in internet use have been reported in recent years in virtually all of these demographic categories. For example, nearly half of all Americans over the age of 65 currently use the internet and many of these users are extremely active including 86 percent of them with e-mail and 34 percent with social networks. The Pew studies continue to find younger Americans use the new technologies more than their older audiences and younger users also are considerably more likely to use the internet for things such as downloading music and movies, etc.

As indicated in previous annual reports about this longitudinal analysis research, our studies about how new technologies and emerging media are impacting public relations practice come at a significant time for traditional news media, especially newspapers. Paid circulation figures for daily newspapers in many large American cities continue to decline resulting in the death in recent years of major city dailies such at Denver's *Rocky Mountain News*, the *Baltimore Examiner*, the *Cincinnati Post*, the *Albuquerque Tribune*, the *Oakland Tribune*, the *San Juan Star* and the *Honolulu Advertiser*. Perhaps the best information source for tracking the changing landscape of the American newspaper industry is the Newspaper Death Watch website (www.newspaperdeathwatch.com) that recently reported another emerging trend with U.S. daily newspapers continuing to publish print editions but only two or three days each week. In most cases the newspapers publish online versions on the other days.

Initially this latest trend only became operational with newspapers in mid-sized communities such as Ann Arbor and Flint, Michigan; Madison, Wisconsin; Birmingham, Alabama; Syracuse, New York, etc., but the trend is now prevalent in major cities. The major city dailies that have moved in this direction include the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, *Detroit News/Free Press, Portland Oregonian, Cleveland Plain Dealer* and the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*. In spite of a century-long tradition of excellence, the *Christian Science Monitor* stopped publishing as a daily in March 2009 in order to concentrate on publishing a weekly print edition and refining its online offerings. According to *Boston Magazine* (2009) the *Monitor's* circulation had slipped 75 percent between 1969 and 2009.

Experts who monitor these changes, including those at the USC Center for the Digital Future (2011), predict these trends will continue. Some of these predictions suggest there might be fewer than a dozen daily print version newspapers in the U.S. by the end of the current decade.

Similar changes also have taken place with some of the trade magazines that serve the public relations industry. In 2009, *PR Week*, considered by many to be the nation's most dominant public relations trade publication, changed its weekly print edition into an online format, although it does produce a printed magazine each month. Some other public relations trade publications appear to have been impacted recently, including *PR News,* which now offers nearly as many public relations short courses and seminars as it does publications, and *Bulldog Reporter* that has created a series of training courses it offers under the name of "PR University."

As Argenti and Barnes (2009) have pointed out, new media have "changed the rules of the game in every part" of strategic communication. They also claim that over the past decade these new communication vehicles have not only turned upside down everything people knew about communication but also have dramatically changed the business of managing relationships. Findings of the noted *Authentic Enterprise Report* of the Arthur W. Page Society (2007) give the new communication media credit for dramatically changing the ways in which stakeholders are empowered. The Page Society's most recent report – *Building Belief: A New Model for Activating Corporate Character and Authentic Advocacy* (2012) – examines how the roles and functions of chief communications officers of major companies are changing given advances in new technologies among other things.

Social media are being utilized on an ever-increasing basis by corporations and other organizations according to McCorkindale (2010), who reports more than two-thirds (69%) of the current Fortune 2000 companies are using social networking sites. Laskin (2010 & 2012) has addressed the effective use of social media in investor relations. Bortree and Seltzer (2009) have reported on how advocacy groups are advancing their public relations agendas via Facebook. Bowen (2010) has studied the importance of ethics and stakeholder management in connection with top corporate websites. DiStaso (2012) has researched the importance for organizations to make certain Wikipedia correctly portrays information about them.

Other recent studies include Liu's (2010) research about differences between how elite newspapers and A-list blogs cover crises; Coombs' (2012) work detailing the phenomenal potential new and emerging media provide for crisis communication practitioners; Gainey's (2012) research about new media use during crises in the public sector; and a study by Ruh and Magallon (2009) about the U.S. military using social media for some of its internal communication campaigns. Paine (2009a, 2009b, 2009c) was one of the first to point out many organizations now are trying to measure the effectiveness of their social media communication efforts.

As we have pointed out previously, another measure of the growth and development of social media in public relations is the level of social media activity currently displayed by various professional societies active in the field. In addition to web pages and e-mail communication, social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn and others all have pages organized by organizations such as the Institute for Public Relations (IPR), the International Public Relations Association (IPRA), the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), the Council of Public Relations Firms, the Arthur W. Page Society and the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC).

According to Kelly (2009) and Eberwein (2010), the micro-blogging site Twitter frequently is the first source to provide news seekers with information about major news events including the 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai, India; the massive 2010 earthquake in Haiti; and the US Airways flight landing in the Hudson River on January 15, 2009. This trend has continued during the past few years with disaster events such as the assassination attempt of U.S. Representative Gabrielle Giffords on January 8, 2011; the massive earthquake that devastated Japan on March 11, 2011; the series of tornadoes that swept through six states in the American south in April 2011; the January 2012 capsizing of the Italian cruise ship Costa Concordia off the Tuscan coast on January 13, 2012; and the plane crash in a crowded neighborhood of Lagos, Nigeria, that killed more than 150 people on June 3, 2012. While he was Editor of *PR Week,* Keith O'Brien (2009) pointed out, "there has been great progress in the use of social media to reach various constituencies."

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Although others have examined the huge impact new communication media are having on the practice of public relations, there are fewer studies looking at how public relations practitioners actually are using these new media. The ten-year tracking of new and emerging media use in public relations practice reported about in this article provides one of the most extensive examinations of how social media are being implemented in public relations practice. In addition to measuring how social media are being employed in the practice of public relations, this study also explores actual new communication media use by individual public relations practitioners.

This study's longitudinal analysis of a larger-than-usual number of research subjects also has the potential of enhancing the credibility of scholarly research in public

relations. As Dougall (2006) explains, the lack of a significant number of panel and trend studies in the public relations literature does not reflect positively on our field when the public relations body of knowledge is compared with research productivity in the traditional social sciences and other professions.

Also, since more than half of the survey research projects in the public relations literature contain reports about studies involving less than 350 respondents, and more than two-thirds of these studies have usable responses from fewer than 250 subjects, the larger-than-usual number of participants in the study at hand – 3,338 respondents during the past seven years – is a plus for public relations research.

METHOD

The study's methodology consists of a trend analysis combined with a fairly extensive web-based questionnaire. In light of many changes in the new or emerging technologies since we started this research in 2005, a good number of our questions have changed over the years. However, we have been asking many of the same questions annually since 2009, some every year since 2008 and a few each year since 2005. Some modifications were made in the 2015 questionnaire that included 62 questions. Most (54) of these were closed-ended questions of substance. There were three open-ended questions and four demographic measures.

The majority of the longitudinal analysis reported on in this article is based upon responses to the study's web-based questionnaire by seven different large, purposive samples of public relations practitioners who took part in this survey research study in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015. Invitations to participate by completing the study's web-based questionnaire were extended in 2009 and 2010 via e-mail messages to purposive samples collected from membership rosters of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), the Arthur W. Page Society and the International Public Relations Association (IPRA). Additional subjects were gathered from donor, task force and commission membership lists of the Institute for Public Relations (IPR). During the three years prior to 2009 we conducted annual surveys of public relations practitioners measuring their use of new technologies. However, since most of the questions we asked in 2006 required significant revision before being asked again in 2009 and beyond, the research team decided to limit the longitudinal data analysis to the last seven years. In those few cases where data exist, results covering more than seven years are reported.

Subjects in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 were selected via a random sample of PRSA members who received e-mailed invitations to participate. The first e-mail invitation in 2015 was distributed on February 8 and a reminder invitation was circulated on February 22. There were 329 usable responses in 2015 yielded from approximately 4,780 e-mailed invitations representing a return rate of about nine percent. When response rates from PRSA members started declining in 2013, it became necessary to

reach out to groups of practitioners who might not necessarily have been part of the random sample. These groups have included those named above as well as practitioners who have completed questionnaires for this study during previous years.

The longitudinal analysis reported on in this article is based upon a grand total of 3,338 respondents (n=574 in 2009, n=563 in 2010, n=479 in 2011, n=622 in 2012, n=378 in 2013, n=393 in 2014 and n=329 in 2015), an average of 477 respondents each year.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Most (more than 90 percent) of this study's subjects are from North America; other respondents have come from many different parts of the world representing a good cross-section of the public relations industry.

Of the 3,338 respondents over the seven years data were gathered for this study's longitudinal analysis, 26% were employed with public relations agencies (5% with large firms and 20% with small or mid-sized agencies), 18% worked in corporate public relations, 16% held non-teaching positions in education, 15% came from non-profit public relations, nine percent worked in government settings, five percent came from health care communications, two percent were research services providers and nine percent answered "other" or did not respond to the demographic questions.

The 2015 respondents included 13% who worked with public relations firms (18% with small or mid-sized agencies and five percent with large firms), 18% holding positions in corporate public relations, 12% in governmental public relations, 17% from the non-profit sector and another 19% holding non-teaching positions in education. Six percent of this year's respondents worked in health care communications, one percent were employed by research provider companies and 12% answered "other" or did not respond to this demographic question.

Responses were nicely distributed across various age categories in all of the years. The overall average of respondents for all seven years was 37.4 and the seven-year gender breakdown was 69% female and 31% male. The study had more male respondents in earlier years as 48% of the 2009 respondents were male compared with 22% in 2014.

RESULTS

Results displayed in Table 1 indicate our 2015 findings show public relations practitioners agree more strongly than ever that social and other emerging media are changing the way public relations is practiced. Mean scores on this item dipped slightly in 2013 but rebounded strongly in 2014. The 2015 results are even more pronounced and represent the highest mean scores in the ten years we have been asking this particular question. This result includes all three branches of this question including how new technologies have impacted the way organizations communicate, how

organizations communicate to external audiences and how they communicate to internal audiences. As has been the case in all ten years we have been asking this question, this impact continues to be much more pronounced for external than internal audiences.

As was the case last year in 2014, our major finding in 2015 involves the use of Facebook and Twitter in public relations practice. We first started asking about the use of Facebook and Twitter in 2010 and Facebook was clearly used more than Twitter each year between 2010 and 2013. Twitter use slightly exceed that of Facebook in 2014 but Facebook was found to be used more frequently for public relations purposes in 2015. Results of this analysis can be found in Tables 11 and 12.

It should be pointed out that the 2015 difference between the use of Facebook (Mean = 4.15) and Twitter (Mean = 4.13) is very close. Measuring Facebook and Twitter use also becomes complex and difficult given the reality many respondents who use both of these media tell us they frequently distribute the same messages over both of these media platforms. Additionally, it is important to note this question focuses on how frequently subjects access specific new media sites as part of their work in public relations. Respondents were specifically asked not to count personal use of these new media sites.

Ironically, as shown in Table 10, for the seventh year in a row, social network sites (such as Facebook) scored considerably higher than micro-blogs (such as Twitter) when subjects were asked how important a list of 12 categories of new media were "in the overall communications and public relations efforts of (their) organization(s)." Table 11 shows a similar result prevailed for the question asking how important each of these new media should be. LinkedIn and YouTube (in that order) were a distant third and fourth in the tally of the next most frequently accessed sites.

On the topic of which organizational function is responsible for monitoring and managing social and emerging media communication in organizations, a clear majority (65% in 2015) said this is the responsibility of communications and public relations in their organizations. When asked whose responsibility this should be, 74 percent answered public relations and communications. As Tables 4 and 5 indicate, results involving these questions have remained relatively constant over the past three years.

Subjects also were asked several questions about public relations strategy and social media communication. Results indicate while most (83%) recommend using different messages for various social media platforms, only 62% of their organizations (or their clients) actually do disseminate different messaged for different social media platforms.

We continue to ask questions about research and measurement. Results of these questions are articulated in Tables 6, 7 and 8. In 2015, more than half (52%) said their organizations (or their clients) are measuring social and emerging media use. That's the

highest percentage in the seven years we've asked this question. Of the measurement actually taking place, most of it involves content analysis but mean scores continue to rise for research focused on impact and other outcome measures.

Table 3 displays answers to the question asking "approximately what percentage of your time working in public relations and communications is spent with blogs and other social media?" Results show very few (1%) don't use social media at all and only another small number (3%-to-4%) spend 75% or more of their workday with social media. As Table 3 shows, most of the use is clustered in the 11%-to-25% category that attracted 43 percent in 2015.

Noticeably absent from our 2015 results are responses to the questions displayed in Table 2. They ask opinions of our subjects on questions if social media have enhanced public relations practice, if they have influenced traditional mainstream news media and if traditional mainstream media influence social and emerging media. After asking these questions annually since 2008, they were removed from the questionnaire in 2015 in an attempt to shorten the measuring instrument. As Table 2 indicates over the years there was strong agreement that social media had enhanced public relations and that social and emerging media had influenced mainstream news media. Although results suggested mainstream news media influenced social media, the impact of this influence was not only moderate but it also was decreasing each year.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Our tenth annual survey measuring how social and other emerging media are being used in the public relations industry found practitioners continue to agree strongly that these new media are changing the way public relations is practiced. This impact continues to be much more pronounced for external than internal audiences. Results in 2015 contain the highest mean scores in the nine years we have been asking this question.

As was the case last year in 2014, our major finding in 2015 involved the use of Facebook and Twitter in public relations practice. We first started asking about the use of Facebook and Twitter in 2010 and Facebook was clearly used more than Twitter each year between 2010 and 2013. Twitter use slightly exceed that of Facebook in 2014 but Facebook was found to be used slightly more frequently for public relations purposes in 2015. LinkedIn and YouTube wound up a distant third and fourth in this tally. Our 2015 results also suggest the percentage of time public relations practitioners spend with blogs, social and other emerging media during their workdays is leveling off.

Two of the study's items during the past seven years have been concerned with which organizational function is responsible for monitoring and managing social and emerging media communication in organizations. Results show that although a clear majority believe this should be the responsibility of communications and public relations, the emergence of digital and/or social media departments has lowered that percentage.

MEAN COMPARISON TABLES

These tables compare mean scores of various questions asked each year.

Table 1
Mean analyses of responses to the question: "Please tell us whether you agree or disagree that the emergence of social and other emerging media has changed the way your organization (or your client organizations)"

	2006 n=482	2007 n=476	2008 n=496	2009 n=574	2010 n=563	2011 n=479	2012 n=622	2013 n=378	2014 n=393	2015 **n=329**
Communicates?	3.27	3.38	3.44	3.81	4.02	4.10	4.24	4.14	4.27	4.35
Handles external communication?	3.23	3.35	3.40	3.69	3.97	4.06	4.18	4.17	4.30	4.37
Handles internal communication?	3.01	3.06	3.06	3.22	3.05	3.14	3.21	3.08	3.17	3.27

Note: *Mean scores throughout this report are based on responses to five-point Likert-type scales where "1" = "Strongly Disagree," "Very Unimportant," "Very Infrequently," etc., and "5" = "Strongly Agree," Very Important," "Very Frequently," etc.," Consequently, the higher the mean score the greater the agreement, importance, frequency, etc.*

Table 2
This Question Was Not Asked in 2015
Mean analysis of responses to these questions asking subjects if they agreed or disagreed with these statements.

	2008 n=496	2009 n=574	2010 n=563	2011 n=479	2012 n=622	2013 n=378	2014 n=393
Social media and other emerging media have enhanced the practice of public relations?	3.69	3.94	4.09	4.06	4.24	4.21	4.27
Social media and emerging media influence the traditional mainstream media?	4.11	4.20	4.21	4.28	4.46	4.52	4.57
Traditional mainstream media influence social media and emerging media?	3.79	3.92	3.91	3.96	3.81	3.74	3.67

Table 3
Responses to these questions: "On the average, approximately what percentage of your time working in public relations and communications is spent with blogs and other social media?"

	None	1% to 10%	11% to 25%	26% to 50%	51% to 75%	More Than 75%
2009	7%	48%	30%	11%	4%	dna
2010	4%	38%	34%	17%	7%	dna
2011	3%	36%	34%	19%	7%	dna
2012	3%	29%	34%	21%	10%	4%
2013	1%	30%	34%	16%	14%	4%
2014	1%	28%	39%	21%	8%	3%
2015	1%	27%	43%	19%	6%	4%

dna = Did not ask

Table 4
Responses to the question: "Which organizational function IS PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE for monitoring and managing social and emerging media communication in your organization?"

	Comm. or PR	Human Resources	Mark-eting	Digital/ SoMedia	Legal	Techn-ology or IT	Don't Know	Not Assign-ed	Other
2009	64%	4%	20%	dna	3%	5%	2%	2%	4%
2010	81%	1%	21%	dna	2%	6%	3%	8%	7%
2011	83%	1%	23%	dna	1%	4%	2%	5%	9%
2012	85%	3%	26%	dna	1%	5%	7%	4%	6%
2013	69%	0%	10%	8%	0%	1%	2%	2%	8%
2014	64%	0%	15%	12%	0%	2%	4%	4%	4%
2015	65%	1%	16%	11%	0%	1%	2%	1%	4%

Note: Totals in years 2009 through 2012 equal more than 100% because respondents were permitted multiple responses in those years. Respondents were restricted to only one answer for this question in 2013. Additionally, the option of "Digital/ Social Media" function was listed on the 2013 questionnaire and received a response of 10%.

Table 5
Responses in 2012 to the question: "In your opinion, which of the following functions SHOULD BE PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE for monitoring and managing social and other emerging media communication in your organization?"

	Comm. or PR	Human Resources	Mark-eting	Digital/ SoMedia	Legal	Techn-ology or IT	Don't Know	No Funct-ion	Other
2009	85%	5%	22%	dna	4%	6%	3%	2%	7%
2010	94%	14%	20%	dna	4%	4%	1%	0%	3%
2011	93%	4%	19%	dna	4%	4%	0%	1%	13%
2012	92%	4%	22%	dna	4%	3%	0%	1%	6%
2013	74%	0%	4%	14%	1%	0%	0%	1%	5%
2014	77%	0%	4%	13%	0%	2%	0%	2%	4%
2015	74%	0%	6%	14%	0%	0%	0%	2%	4%

Note: Some percentages total more than 100% because subjects could select multiple responses

Table 6
Responses to the question: "*To the best of your knowledge, has your organization ever conducted research measuring what members of other strategic publics have communicated about your organization via blogs social and other emerging media?*"

	2009 n=574	2010 n=563	2011 n=479	2012 n=622	2013 n=378	2014 n=393	2015 n=329
Yes	39%	38%	42%	43%	43%	46%	52%
No	42%	46%	45%	39%	42%	41%	32%
Uncertain/ Don't Know	19%	16%	13%	17%	15%	13%	16%

Table 7
Mean analysis of responses to these questions asking subjects if they agreed or disagreed that public relations practitioners SHOULD measure:

	2009 n=574	2010 n=563	2011 n=479	2012 n=622	2013 n=378	2014 n=393	2015 n=329
The amount of communication that is being disseminated about their organizations (or client organizations) through blogs and other social media.	4.20	4.26	4.20	4.28	4.27	4.29	4.23
And/or analyze content of what's being communicated about their organizations (or their clients) in blogs and other social media.	4.37	4.36	4.35	4.41	4.39	4.46	4.40
The impact information disseminated about their organizations (or their clients) through blogs and other social media has on influentials, opinion leaders and members of other strategic audiences.	4.27	4.28	4.27	4.32	4.32	4.38	4.35
The impact information disseminated about their organizations (or their clients) through blogs and other social media has on the formation, change and reinforcement of attitudes, opinions and behavior.	4.25	4.28	4.27	4.36	4.32	4.38	4.32

Table 8
Percentage of respondents answering "Yes" to the question asking, "To the best of your knowledge, has your organization (or a client organization) ever measured…"

	2009 n=574	2010 n=563	2011 n=479	2012 n=622	2013 n=378	2014 n=393	2015 n=329
The amount of communication that is being disseminated about their organizations (or client organizations) through blogs and other social media.	45%	51%	52%	54%	61%	58%	61%
And/or analyze content of what's being communicated about their organizations (or their clients) in blogs and other social media.	55%	54%	56%	55%	54%	52%	59%
The impact information disseminated about their organizations (or their clients) through blogs and other social media has on influentials, opinion leaders and members of other strategic audiences.	26%	29%	30%	30%	22%	28%	30%
The impact information disseminated about their organizations (or their clients) through blogs and other social media has on the formation, change and reinforcement of attitudes, opinions and behavior.	24%	28%	29%	26%	22%	26%	28%

Table 9
Mean Analysis Comparisons between responses to the question: "How important ARE each of the following in the overall communications and public relations efforts of your organization (or your client's organizations)?"

	2009 n=574	2010 n=563	2011 n=479	2012 n=622	2013 n=378	2014 n=393	2015 n=329
Blogs	3.35	3.31	3.22	3.31	3.21	3.52	3.34
Electronic Forums or Message Boards	3.06	2.94	2.64	2.67	2.49	2.56	2.72
Podcasts	2.82	2.54	2.43	2.32	2.30	2.28	2.29
Search Engine Marketing	3.62	3.61	3.61	3.68	3.59	3.63	3.71
Social Networks (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)	3.21	3.89	4.06	4.27	4.36	4.41	4.49
Micro-Blogging Sites (Twitter, etc.)	2.81	3.56	3.75	3.90	3.99	4.16	4.17
Video Sharing (YouTube, etc.)	3.19	3.57	3.72	3.77	4.04	4.01	4.16
Photo & content sharing Sites (Pinterest, Instagram, etc.).	dna	dna	dna	dns	3.10	3.18	3.37
Social Media Management Sites (Hootsuite, etc.)	dna	dna	dna	dna	dna	3.59	3.62
Bookmarking Management Sites (SpringPro, Evernote, Google Keep, etc.)	dna	dna	dna	dna	dna	2.31	2.26
Screencast Applications (Screenr, etc.)	dna	dna	dna	dna	dna	2.11	2.06
Enterprise Social Media Sites for Private Comm. Within an Organization (Yammer, etc.)	dna	dna	dna	dna	dna	2.35	2.28

dna = Did not ask
Note: *Mean scores are based on responses to five-point Likert-type scales where "1" = "Very Unimportant" and "5" = "Very Important." Consequently, the higher the mean score the greater the perceived importance.*

Table 10
Mean Analysis Comparisons between responses to the question: "How important SHOULD each of the following in the overall communications and public relations efforts of your organization (or your client's organizations)?"

	2009 n=574	2010 n=563	2011 n=479	2012 n=622	2013 n=378	2014 n=393	2015 n=329
Blogs	4.01	4.01	4.00	3.95	4.00	4.12	4.10
Electronic Forums or Message Boards	3.77	3.60	3.41	3.26	3.28	3.23	3.46
Podcasts	3.64	3.41	3.25	3.09	3.17	3.14	3.30
Search Engine Marketing	4.10	4.20	4.17	4.16	4.23	4.16	4.29
Social Networks (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)	3.65	4.26	4.26	4.48	4.55	4.60	4.65
Micro-Blogging Sites (Twitter, etc.)	3.48	4.05	4.09	4.24	4.38	4.48	4.50
Video Sharing (YouTube, etc.)	3.67	4.10	4.25	4.26	4.46	4.52	4.58
Photo & content sharing Sites (Pinterest, Instagram, etc.).	dna	dna	dna	dns	3.90	4.00	4.02
Social Media Management Sites (Hootsuite, etc.)	dna	dna	dna	dna	dna	3.97	4.04
Bookmarking Management Sites (SpringPro, Evernote, Google Keep, etc.)	dna	dna	dna	dna	dna	2.97	2.91
Screencast Applications (Screenr, etc.)	dna	dna	dna	dna	dna	2.81	2.73
Enterprise Social Media Sites for Private Comm. Within an Organization (Yammer, etc.)	dna	dna	dna	dna	dna	3.08	3.13

dna = Did not ask

Table 11
Responses to the question: "Please tell us how frequently you access each of the following social networking, micro-blogging and video sharing sites as part of your work in public relations."
Note: Subjects were asked not to count rime spend for personal use.

2015	Very Infrequently	Infrequently	Neither Frequently nor Infrequently	Frequently	Very Frequently	Mean Score
Facebook	5.9%	6.8%	6.2%	28.9%	52.2%	4.15
LinkedIn	9.7%	9.0%	18.1%	33.3%	29.9%	3.65
My Space	dna	dna	dna	dna	dna	dna
Google+	35.8%	21.5%	20.3%	14.0%	8.1%	2.38
Twitter	6.5%	5.0%	7.8%	30.2%	50.5%	4.13
Tumblr	56.1%	19.8%	19.1%	4.4%	0.6%	1.74
YouTube	6.6%	16.6%	20.9%	35.6%	20.3%	3.47
Flickr	47.6%	19.6%	19.6%	9.5%	3.8%	2.02
Pinterest	46.4%	18.1%	17.1%	14.0%	4.4%	2.12
Foursquare	67.8%	15.6%	13.1%	3.1%	0.3%	1.52
Sideshare						
Scribd						
Reddit						
Digg						
Instagram	36.4%	13.8%	16.9%	20.1%	12.9%	2.59
Hootsuite	37.9%	9.4%	13.2%	17.6%	21.9%	2.76
Screenr						
Yammer	75.2%	8.9%	12.4%	2.9%	0.6%	1.45
SpringPad						
Evernote						
Google Keep						
Social Bookmarking Sites (e.g. Delicious.com)						
prSpace						
PRnet						

2014	Very Infrequently	Infrequently	Neither Frequently nor Infrequently	Frequently	Very Frequently	Mean Score
Facebook	5.2%	6.7%	10.0%	30.5%	47.6%	4.09
LinkedIn	8.6%	13.1%	16.8%	33.2%	28.4%	3.60
My Space	88.0%	4.9%	5.6%	0.4%	1.1%	1.22
Google+	43.6%	20.3%	15.4%	16.5%	4.1%	2.17
Twitter	4.5%	4.85%	11.6%	30.2%	48.9%	4.14
Tumblr	57.2%	18.2%	18.2%	4.6%	1.9%	1.76
YouTube	6.8%	12.8%	24.4%	37.2%	18.8%	3.48
Flickr	43.2%	20.5%	20.5%	12.1%	3.8%	2.13
Pinterest	39.1%	20.3%	17.3%	17.3%	6.0%	2.31
Foursquare	63.9%	13.5%	13.9%	6.4%	2.3%	1.70
Sideshare	63.5%	12.4%	16.2%	7.5%	0.4%	1.69
Scribd	78.3%	8.0%	12.6%	1.1%	0.0%	1.37
Reddit	67.6%	11.7%	14.7%	5.3%	0.8%	1.60
Digg	72.8%	19.4%	13.6%	4.2%	0.0%	1.49
Instagram	38.4%	13.9%	15.4%	20.7%	11.7%	2.53
Hootsuite	34.6%	12.2%	12.9%	20.5%	19.8%	2.79
Screenr	81.1%	4.9%	12.5%	1.5%	0.0%	1.34
Yammer	77.2%	5.7%	11.8%	3.4%	1.9%	1.47
SpringPad	82.9%	5.7%	10.7%	0.8%	0.0%	1.29
Evernote	72.6%	6.5%	12.9%	4.2%	3.8%	1.60
Google Keep	79.9%	6.1%	12.9%	0.8%	0.4%	1.36
Social Bookmarking Sites (e.g. Delicious.com)	73.0%	8.4%	14.8%	3.42%	0.4%	1.50
prSpace	79.9%	6.1%	14.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.34
PRnet	75.0%	7.6%	15.9%	1.1%	0.4%	1.44

Note: 2014 was the first year Instagram, Hootsuite, Screenr, Yammer, SpringPad, Evernote and Google Keep were included in this question. 2012 was the first year Google+, Pinterest and Foursquare were included in this question."prSpace" and "PRnet" do not exist and were asked only in an attempt to gauge the integrity of the answers. Although Flickr was not included in this list of questions, responses to the survey-open-ended questions confirm considerable use of Flickr in public relations practice.

2013	Very Infrequently	Infrequently	Neither Frequently nor Infrequently	Frequently	Very Frequently	Mean Score
Facebook	7%	6%	7%	32%	49%	4.09
LinkedIn	12%	17%	14%	40%	16%	3.31
My Space	94%	2%	3%	1%	0%	1.11
Twitter	8%	6%	8%	33%	46%	4.05
YouTube	6%	16%	23%	39%	16%	3.44
Google+	56%	19%	8%	11%	6%	1.92
Tumblr	66%	14%	13%	5%	2%	1.62
Pinterest	54%	12%	13%	16%	5%	2.06
Foursquare	66%	12%	8%	11%	4%	1.74
prSpace	90%	6%	4%	1%	0%	1.16
Prnet	80%	7%	6%	3%	1%	1.39

2012	Never	Infrequently	Neither Frequently nor Infrequently	Frequently	Very Frequently	Mean Score
Facebook	5%	8%	7%	26%	54%	4.16
LinkedIn	10%	18%	18%	34%	19%	3.34
My Space	92%	6%	2%	1%	0%	1.12
Twitter	8%	8%	11%	28%	45%	3.92
YouTube	6%	17%	25%	36%	16%	3.39
Google+	42%	28%	11%	11%	8%	2.15
Tumblr	68%	17%	9%	4%	2%	1.57
Pinterest	54%	15%	11%	12%	8%	2.06
Foursquare	70%	11%	7%	7%	5%	1.65
prSpace	92%	3%	3%	1%	0%	1.15
Prnet	83%	7%	6%	3%	1%	1.31

2011						
	Never	**Infrequently**	**Neither Frequently nor Infrequently**	**Frequently**	**Very Frequently**	**Mean Score**
Facebook	3%	8%	7%	21%	61%	4.30
LinkedIn	4%	12%	23%	39%	22%	3.63
My Space	84%	13%	2%	0%	0%	1.19
Twitter	12%	18%	13%	22%	36%	3.52
YouTube	3%	18%	29%	40%	10%	3.36

2010						
	Never	**Infrequently**	**Neither Frequently nor Infrequently**	**Frequently**	**Very Frequently**	**Mean Score**
Facebook	4%	6%	7%	21%	62%	4.31
LinkedIn	8%	15%	22%	37%	18%	3.44
My Space	72%	21%	15%	1%	1%	1.38
Twitter	12%	15%	12%	23%	38%	3.58
YouTube	4%	18%	28%	38%	12%	3.35

Table 12
Mean Analysis Comparisons between responses to the question: "Please tell us how frequently you access each of the following social networking, micro-blogging and video sharing sites as part of your work in public relations."
Note: Subjects were asked not to count rime spend for personal use.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Facebook	4.31	4.30	4.13	4.09	4.09	4.15
LinkedIn	3.44	3.63	3.34	3.31	3.60	3.65
My Space	1.38	1.19	1.12	1.11	1.22	
Google+			2.15	1.92	2.17	2.38
Twitter	3.58	3.52	3.92	4.05	4.14	4.13
Tumblr			1.57	1.62	1.76	1.74
YouTube	3.35	3.36	3.39	3.44	3.48	3.47
Flickr					2.13	2.02
Pinterest			2.06	2.06	2.31	2.12
Foursquare			1.65	1.74	1.70	1.52
Sideshare					1.69	
Scribd					1.37	
Reddit					1.60	
Digg					1.49	
Instagram					2.53	2.59
Hootsuite					2.79	2.76
Screenr					1.34	
Yammer					1.47	1.45
SpringPad					1.29	
Evernote					1.60	
Google Keep					1.36	
Social Bookmarking Sites (e.g.Delicious.com)					1.40	
prSpace			1.15	1.16	1.34	
PRnet			1.31	1.39	1.44	

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