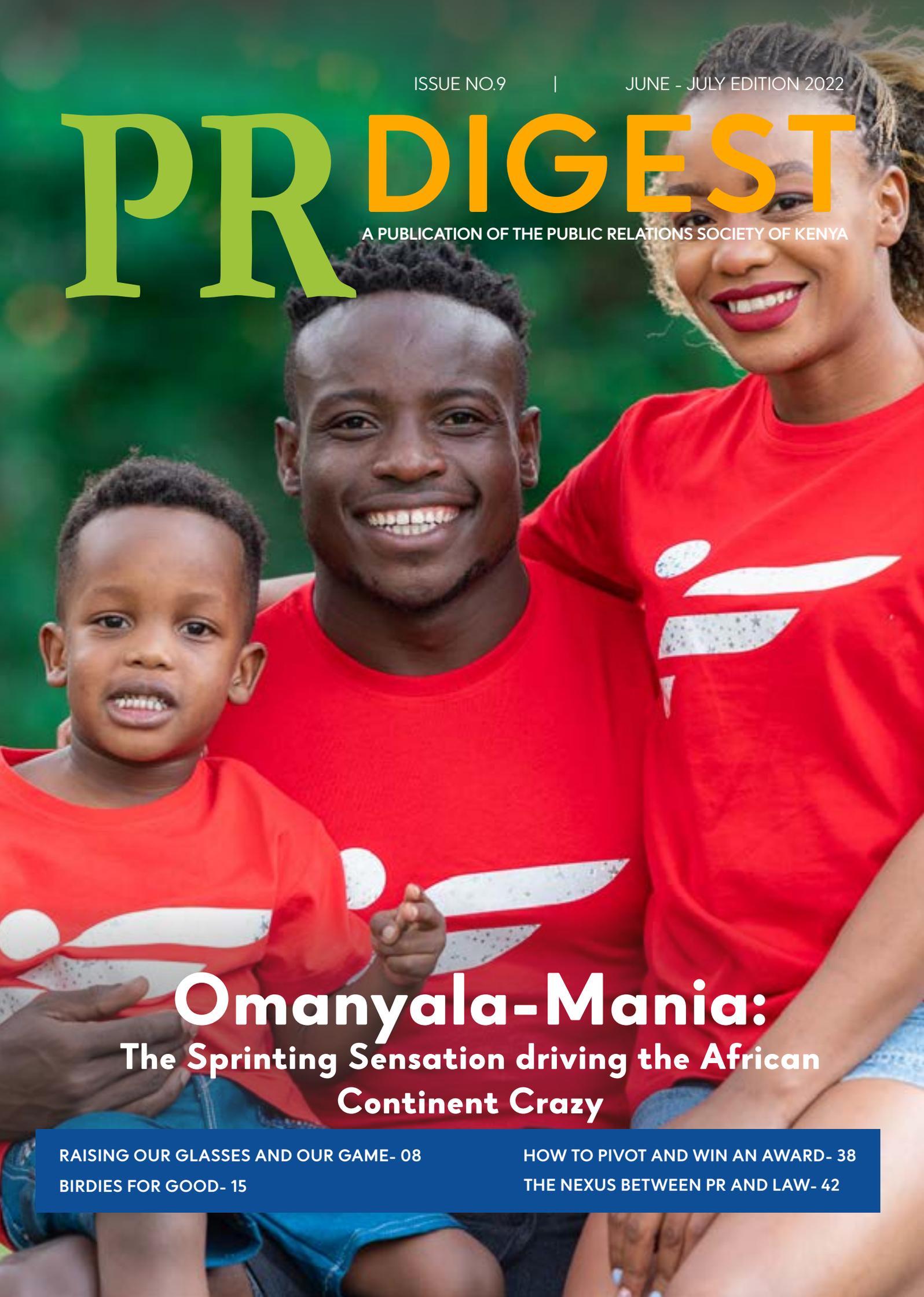


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PR DIGEST

A PUBLICATION OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY OF KENYA



Omanyala-Mania: The Sprinting Sensation driving the African Continent Crazy

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In future, and from what we have seen happening today, people will make decisions through the content that they find on their own time, not through what we push out to them.



Opinions expressed within the magazine are solely the authors' and do not reflect the opinions, beliefs of Public Relations Society of Kenya or its Editorial Board.

Editor's Note

Feels good to be back? *Aluta continua!*

It has been a long break and I am excited to welcome you all to the Writers Club. Certainly, and though unintended, the break has rejuvenated all of us and we're now back, more focused and ready to deliver quality editions to you. To paraphrase the late Dr Margaret Ogola of *The River and The Source* - yesterday is not today and today is not tomorrow so if you have the breath in you, continue struggling. *Aluta continua!*

Many thanks are due than can be conveyed to you, our ardent readers and writers, for your brevity towards the challenges thrown at you. You have kept us on toes to deliver quality and we hope we have been able to live up to your expectations.

If there is anything that the Covid crisis and the ongoing war in Ukraine have taught us, it is that human nature remains divided from nature and within itself but, around the world and in our own backyard, businesses and individuals have been trying to rectify our relationship with the environment at least by addressing climate change in practical ways, a subject PRSK will be exploring at the Sustainability Conference in October this year. We have to do better, let that be the lesson we learn when all this is over.

If you've been our reader since 2019, when we launched the inaugural edition, you know we have always featured interesting reads. From the Government Spokesperson Rtd Col Cyrus Oguna, to Machakos Governor Dr Alfred Mutua to Presidential Aspirant Prof Wajackoyah to Ivan Omondi on whom an acid attack rendered blind for life, to our very own Safari Rally Driver Pauline Sheghu and, in this edition, we have been caught by Omanyala-Mania. This sprinter will make you want to join the track tomorrow! He shares about his life as a rugby player to joining athletics with just one aim. Read his story and many other lined up for you herein.

Thank you for your continued support to the publication, we are truly indebted to you. I encourage you to continue sharing feedback on our magazine via editor@prsk.co.ke. I must caution you that the 6th wave is here so please ensure you observe government guidelines to keep you and your loved ones safe.

Happy reading!

Maureen Koech, MPRSK

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Awards as a measure of PR success

by Sharon Jerotich

In any field of work where output is intangible, it is difficult to determine the success of work done. This is especially true for the Public Relations field.

Granted, we have come up with ways to measure our ROI, for some PR functions such as Media Relations. However, even this has become particularly challenging with the explosion of television networks, satellite radio, digital advertising, email, social networks, and the other millions of modern-day platforms.

However, measuring the overall impact of a campaign is still a challenge seeing as how media relations, despite its considerable importance, is not the sole function of Public Relations. Assessing the impact of functions such as stakeholder engagement, investor relations, brand building and other major PR functions requires a level of research expertise, commitment to a longitudinal study, and allocation of resources that are typically beyond the capabilities of implementing organizations.

Considering this fact, it is important to find alternative ways to measure the success of these major PR functions. One such means is through awards. For both the client and the agency, awards such as the Public Relations Society of Kenya Awards (PRSK) and the recently concluded (Superior Achievement in Branding, Reputation and Engagement) SABRE awards are a means to measure the impact and success of a campaign. Through such awards, agencies get a peer-reviewed endorsement of their work.

Such is the case for Redhouse Group, an integrated communications agency that landed several accolades in the just concluded 2022 SABRE Awards. Key among these awards was overall winner in the Marketing to Consumers (New Product) category for its work with East African Breweries Limited (EABL) during the launch of Tanqueray Flor de Sevilla which also won a Certificate of Excellence in the

Eastern Africa category.

This victory came just after their triumph at the PRSK Awards that was held in December last year where they scooped several awards among them- Media Relations campaign of the year, Consumer Relations campaign of the year, and Not for Profit campaign of the year.

These victories are not only proof of an agency's competence but are, more importantly, a means to reassure the team that the impact of their work is felt by industry professionals within the country and regionally. Moreso, clients giving the go-ahead to take part in awards is a vote of confidence for the agency and the work they do.

The significance of awards has long been questioned in various professions. However, for Public Relations, and many other professions that are dependent on people's approval, awards are of utmost importance.



Family Bank Bond Campaign wins Tim-Sky media services top honours

For the year 2021, Tim-Sky Media Services bagged the Financial Communication Campaign of the Year at the PRSK Awards for Excellence in Nairobi. The company went on to bag the Overall PR Campaign of the Year for their work as the PR Agency of the hugely successful Family Bank bond campaign.

"We thought we stood a chance to win the Financial PR award but getting the Overall PR Campaign of the Year Award is something that we did not anticipate. It is truly an honour and we thank the judges for seeing through the great communication efforts and tactics that we put through the campaign and awarding it the top prize," said Tim-Sky Media Services PR Accounts Director Beverlyn Naliaka as she received the award at the glittering gala night held at Movenpick Hotel in Nairobi.

Typical of this kind of fundraising, it brings together several advisors to form a transaction team. There are the legal advisors, the custodians, accountants, auditors and the PR and media consultants. In the case of the Family Bank bond, the lead transaction advisors were NCBA Investment Bank and Genghis Capital, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) as the reporting accountants, MTC Trust and Corporate Services Limited as the Note Trustees, Mboya Wangong'u & Waiyaki Advocates as the legal advisors and Tim-Sky Media Services as the Media and Public Relations Advisors.

"Our job entailed coming up with a communication strategy that ensured all stakeholders are informed about the bond, each step in the bond journey and the eventual outcome. It involved a lot of internal communication, engagement with the media and

development of editorial content for dissemination to the potential investors and the general public," explains Beverlyn Naliaka. The bond was hugely successful.

It raised KES 4.42 billion, marking a subscription of 147.3%, against a KES 3 billion target with a greenshoe option of KES 1 billion in its first tranche of the corporate bond offer via public placement. Family Bank was seeking to raise KES 4 billion, with a minimum subscription of KES 100,000 or equivalent, with a five and a half years (5 and ½ year) tenure priced at 13.0% per annum. The KES 4.42 billion was raised from local fund managers, banks, retail investors, insurance companies and other institutional investors.

"On behalf of the Board of Directors and the Management at Family Bank, we would like to thank institutional and individual investors who have believed in the



Bank and its vision as we seek to increase lending to MSMEs and strengthen our capital base as we heavily invest in technology," Family Bank Chief Executive Officer Rebecca Mbithi said after the successful bond journey adding that the communication around the bond played a crucial role in its success.

The Family Bank bond was very significant to the regulator – the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) because it breathed life into the

markets after over a decade of inactivity following the collapse of Chase Bank and Imperial Bank with their bond notes.

"We are delighted with the performance of the Family Bank Medium Term Note which is instrumental in reviving our corporate bond market. We have therefore allowed the Bank to take up from the investors the KES 3 billion that was approved for the first tranche and the extra KES1 billion offered by the same

pool of investors, which is the greenshoe option," noted CMA Chief Executive Officer Wycliffe Shamiah.

"We are also truly grateful to our client Family Bank of Kenya for giving us an opportunity to serve them as the Public Relations agency and also for incorporating as the PR advisors for the bond transaction, this win is theirs too," added Beverlyn Naliaka. "



Family Bank Bond Transaction Advisors including Tim-Sky Media Services



Raising our glasses and our game

by Kengen Team



I am constantly in pursuit of two things: a story and a voice. The story always comes around in the why, stringing together bits and pieces of the seasons of our lives. The voice is to tell our individual unique stories, our authenticity, and the way we choose to share ourselves with the world, be it for our private moments or the flair of our careers. This speaks to the core idea of KenGen's #EnergyChampion campaign.

The goal of the #EnergyChampion is to get the story or the voice of the KenGen family, and if we are lucky, get both! At the close of the year 2021, we got the best of these two bagging the New Media PR Campaign of the Year award which was one of the most contested categories at #PRSKAwards2021.

If you would have told me KenGen stood a fighting chance in last year's awards, I would have been bemused, slightly annoyed but still bemused as we were just laying our foundation for this initiative amidst the twist and turns brought about by the pandemic. KenGen made its maiden entry into the PRSK Awards for Excellence in 2021. For the longest time, the annual awards were that one thing that was so futuristic and aspirational for our team, always being postponed year after year. But not in 2021.

A few years ago, digital messaging for the KenGen brand was one-sided, typical of a budding brand

online. Even with significant accomplishments and leadership, KenGen's mandate was often confused with other energy players consequently spreading misinformation and accruing negative sentiments partly due to limited brand profile visibility as a non-consumer-facing brand. Standing out from such clutter proved to be an uphill task. This presented a challenge in supporting business strategic goals of growing leaders, fostering innovation and operational excellence.

The two forces driving the #EnergyChampion campaign are the democratization of the control of a brand's image and the push to improve employee morale in a mutually beneficial relationship.

Reacting to the news of the award, KenGen Commercial Services Director Mary Maalu said KenGen is committed to transforming to a digital-first company leveraging on home-grown talent.

"KenGen's brand ambassadors involvement in building the brand comes at a particularly exciting time in KenGen's history in which the business has diversified into new geographical territories and business lines. We are very excited about what the future holds and the endless possibilities we can attain as a team."

KenGen is one of the pioneer companies to attempt to use its employees as influencers to raise the brand profile and own its narrative on new media. This strategy is informed by the fact that no one understands the brand better or can tell KenGen's story better than its own people. Beside raising brand profile, #EnergyChampion seeks to strengthen reputation and improve employee engagement and morale by positioning KenGen employees as subject matter experts and brand ambassadors for the company through their personal networks on various forums with emphasis on digital channels. The initiative leverages on KenGen's core values of team spirit and professionalism. Our story is not glamorous. It is quite simply the thing about the path from promise to promised land - it must be forged. In this case, the collective effort of the pilot cohort of internal voluntary KenGen brand ambassadors proved to be indeed a tale of energy champions.

Speaking at the 21st PRSK Awards Gala Ceremony, KenGen's Acting Marketing & Corporate Communication Manager, Frank David Ochieng' celebrated the brand ambassadors as well as the online community for their support not only for KenGen's but Kenya's energy journey. "We are working on being more inclusive in our narrative as we endeavour to keep educating and engage more with our targeted stakeholders across the world as a global energy market leader." said Mr. Ochieng.

From the numbers, the campaign reached 66 million people organically in the period under review compared to an average of 36 million impressions year on year for the comparative timeframe in eight years.

At the end of October 2021, most KenGen mentions were by KenGen employees and non-staff contributors. The campaign had 278 million impressions in the year compared to an average of three million audience reach per year for the comparative timeframe.

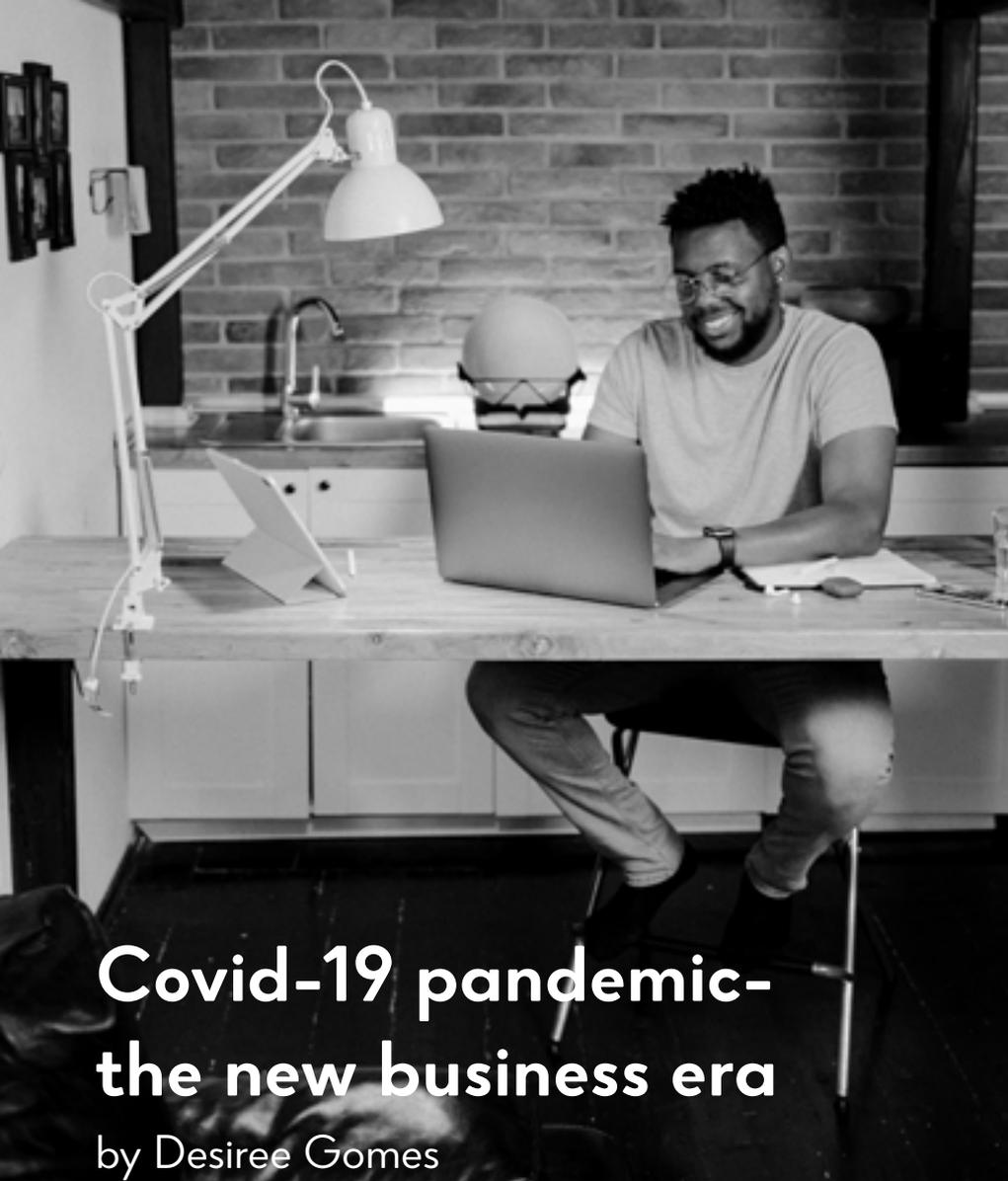
Unique to this campaign is that KenGen employees

take part in content creation and driving corporate conversations. #EnergyChampion has resulted in objective storytelling for the brand and impactful conversations led by a home-grown pool of experts and influencers. With capacity building, KenGen's brand ambassadors have been at the forefront of telling our stories on the global arena from @HellenOnchari in Sondu to @RigChiq in Ethiopia, to @AleckyJames in Naivasha to @BarniceMumbua in Mombasa, to Patrik_Ngetich in Turkwel, to @Asaria_onsoti in Djibouti and right back to @rebecca_miano at the head office in Nairobi. Above all, the ripple effect has extended to their networks and consequently many Kenyans have become part of our energy story as we seek to keep informing and educating the online publics through various channels.

What does qualitative success look like for us? Accomplishment in supporting execution of KenGen's corporate strategy through articulating our business to targeted stakeholders. Showcasing KenGen employees as industry thought leaders. Increasing our audience base for higher messaging impact. Increasing positive sentiment for goodwill among stakeholders and most importantly telling our story with our own voice. Through the #EnergyChampion campaign, the company has been able to increase its affinity and goodwill with key stakeholders in the region and across the world.

It has been such a fulfilling journey watching the brand bloom right before our eyes to a point of proud association with KenGen employees, as well as the brand ambassadors' individual growth to thought leaders.

In this period, I have learnt a lot about courage. Courage to take a path beset with great uncertainty and to trust in the strength of our team spirit. #EnergyChampion is still going strong with more employees joining the movement. We hope that their experiences and skills will enable them to showcase greatness within KenGen and beyond.



Covid-19 pandemic- the new business era

by Desiree Gomes

As industries struggle to uphold the normalcy, Covid-19 has ignited a diverse perspective for businesses. The rise of the new era stroke the business world, as industries strived to go digital. This change led to the optimization and rebranding of the business milieu. Despite the negative attributes of social distancing, consumers have develop a different perspective as they realize that physical purchase and supplies is not limited to location.

This brought rise to E-commerce. This has led to changing mindsets of industries as they should aim towards developing new and improving communication skills. Many organizations should focus on looking into rebranding

and ensuring that their level of normalcy, works together with the new digital era. Employers and employees struggle to fill the gap in skills in many organizations. Industries strive for better communication as they encourage corporate purpose such as rise of E-commerce for retail sector, enhancing soft skills (adaptability, empathy, project management, and creativity).

Organizations who uphold public relations will have to focus on storytelling, social media skills, internal communication, video, digital, writing, and technical skills. Communication and public relations industries will need to ensure that their business revivals takes new strategies such as;

people-oriented, collaboration, technology investments, co-create solutions, and multi u stakeholders approach. Organizations will have to implement not only print media, but also blend with websites, improved marketing and advertising as they grow in this new digital era. Digital normalcy has become an eye-opener to must if not all organizations to seek a different dimension in the way and manner in which they perform their daily operations. Nowadays, industries seek to make use of social media platforms such as, Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and many more.

Consumers have become knowledgeable towards their consumption levels and value of goods and services, and such change has given rise to a diverse way of communicating amongst their internal and external public. In order to solicit for change, industries seek to diversity their mindsets and strategies. Digital partnership have become a strategy for organizations to engage in the changing time and ensure that they reach out to their target audience. The outbreak of COVID-19, it created an angle of innovation in terms of the daily operations and communications for industries practicing public relations. Industries' success rate will collaborate with adapting beyond remote work and merging with the use of artificial intelligence.

**Summarized by
Sharon-Hope Abiyah.**



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Communication trends for Kenyan business

Post-COVID by Moses Kemibaro



COVID-19 Pandemic greatly affected business operations. Due to the health risks of COVID and the social distancing health regulations imposed by the government, Kenyan business had to align digitally in order to continue being profitable and effective.

As a result, several tech solutions became popular as many people spent longer hours on their phones and computers. Below are some of the major communication trends that were brought about by COVID-19:

Websites and social media became a key communication tool for businesses

Many businesses were forced to review their websites and make them more interactive and accessible to users. This is through Search Engine Optimization (SEO), quality and content, compelling visual design, live chat functions and social media integration.

In addition, the pandemic further reinforced the importance of social media as a communication tool to businesses. Over 25 million Kenyans visit the various sites for entertainment, information and conversation on a daily basis.

Rise of Direct-To Consumer (DTC) e-commerce and digital influencer marketing

With 82% of all consumer Internet COVID-19 saw a rise in DTC .

e-commerce with many brands that traditionally sold at physical stores, creating and/or partnering with e-commerce platforms to sell their goods and services. Therefore, more businesses become digitally compliant by selling their goods on e-commerce and social media. Furthermore, the popularity of social media apps, fuelled the growth of the already existing digital influencer market. Now businesses can reach millions of potential consumers through strategic digital influencers.

Social Audio and Video Conferencing frenzy

Video conferencing products such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Google Meets quickly became an important communication tool. Social audio platforms such as Clubhouse, Twitter Spaces and podcasts are now gaining popularity as they give organizations a direct means to communicate to their audiences. Through this they stay in touch with their employees and also build strong virtual communities

Rise of Short form video Content fame

With 82% of all consumer Internet traffic in 2020 being directed to videos, short form videos on apps such as TikTok, YouTube Shorts and Reels became fan favourites. The prominence of these apps have required many brands to adjust their content formats accordingly.

Digital advertising and content marketing are now a norm for many Kenyan organizations

Digital advertising through social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube is now an integral part of the advertising plan of many organizations. Multiple businesses realize how affordable and effective they are in comparison to the traditional advertising means such as TV and newspapers.

Mobile Apps on the up

Mobile apps are increasingly becoming where brands engage with consumers. This is because their unique features such as instant messaging, provide on-demand services through location sharing enable businesses to communicate better with their customers.

Digital Analytics and Social Media Crisis Management are essential in digital communications evaluation

The beauty of all the above communication trends is data. Therefore brands analyse the data from their website, apps, social media etc. for better planning as the analytics provide real numbers. Moreover, the comments, likes, views and shares provide a true feeling of publics and users at large so as to advice management better.

Summarized by
Agnes Opondo



Risk communication management

by Lizz Ntonjira

Risk communication is the interactive exchange of information about risks among risk assessors, managers, news media, interested groups, and the general public.

Risk communication involves the two-way exchange of information between interested parties in order to make decisions about how to best manage risks. It involves multiple messages about the nature of risk and other messages (not strictly about risk) that express concerns, opinions, or reactions to risk messages or to legal and institutional arrangements for the management of risk.

Risk communication, in the broad sense, in addition to consensus communication, involves care communication for providing help and intervention concerning proper procedures for people at risk.

It also covers risk communication of information exchange when critical events, like severe accidents, have occurred. It is defined as any two-way communication between stakeholders about the existence, nature, form, severity, or acceptability of risks

Core risk communication components

1. Transparency and Early Announcement of a Real or Potential Risk

Those at real risk protect themselves

2. Public Communication Coordination

Strengthened collaboration and less confusion and overlap

3. Information Dissemination Including Media Relations

Not only media but mass media (sms, toll free numbers, internet, social media, healthcare workers)

4. Listening Through Dialogue

This ensures that community perceptions of risks are understood adaptations to messages, materials

Risk communication verses emergency communication

During emergencies organizations must ensure a multifaceted



1. What is the situation?	➡	Evaluate the situation in context and time
2. Why communicate?	➡	Set objectives
3. To whom?	➡	Define target audience(s)
4. How?	➡	Outline strategy, channels and tools
5. When?	➡	Draw a timeline of action
6. Who?	➡	Identify roles and partners
7. With what?	➡	List human and economic resources
8. How is it going on?	➡	Monitor communication impact
9. How effective?	➡	Adjust the communication strategy

communication approach. Information should be shared with Intra/inter-agency, across levels and Inter-sectorial institutions to keep external stakeholders aware; operationally, information should be shared to workers and respondents. Risk communication includes a range of interventions through preparedness, response and recovery for:

- **Informed Decisions**
- **Positive behaviours interventions**
- **Maintenance of trust**

Communication during a crisis

Trust is important when communicating during a crisis. It assists to form a public perception of the motives, honesty and skills of the information relied.

Summarized by Elizabeth Mulae

Communication planning allows decision making

When conducting risk communication, follow the steps below

Communication failures that kill operational success

As we roll our different communiques, we need to be aware of some of the failures that kill its effectiveness; they include:-

- **Mixed messages from multiple experts**
- **Information released late**
- **Paternalistic attitudes**
- **Not countering rumours and myths in real time**

The 7Cs of communication

- **Public power struggles and confusion**
- **Clear**
- **Concise**
- **Concrete**
- **Correct**
- **Coherent**
- **Complete**
- **Courteous**

Risk profiling

At least once a year and as part of the annual communication planning, it's recommendable to conduct an audit of all the potential risks that may call for risk communication. All organizations should pre-empt and mitigation tactics developed to manage the situation.

Birdies for good: Making a positive difference in society through sports

by Nicholas Mundia

We can agree Sports is one of the most powerful tools for social cohesion and economic development globally. The fact that some of the most influential people in the world today are athletes speaks volumes about the pedestal that sport has in society.

So why not use it to make a positive difference, beyond thrilling our hearts and minds from the games that we play or watch? That's exactly what Absa Bank has done through a novel idea that is making a positive impact in communities around Kenya.

Over the past 13 years, Absa Bank Kenya, in partnership with the Kenya Open Golf Limited, has invested in the Kenya Open tournament helping to transform it from a local golf event to a world-class tournament, now firmly part of the prestigious DP World Tour.

Popularly known as the Magical Kenya Open (MKO), the event attracts elite pro golfers from across the world. It not only boasts of a global broadcast to roughly 490 million avid golf fans but also doubles up as one of the most anticipated events in the lifestyle calendar.

Amidst the glam and fanfare of the MKO, one pertinent question lingered. What more can Absa do to make a difference, beyond sponsoring the success of the event, bearing in mind the ravaging effect of the Covid 19

pandemic on Kenyans?

That question birthed the Birdies for Good campaign. A prime idea executed by Absa Bank Kenya, in collaboration with strategic communications firm Apex Porter Novelli, Birdies for Good is all about leveraging the power of Sports to make positive change in different spheres of society.

The goal? Motivate amateur and pro golfers to perform well in the MKO and contribute to a worthy cause by scoring birdies.

Birdie? Allow to me explain. A "birdie" is a golf score of one stroke less than par on a hole. A player makes a birdie when he uses one fewer stroke than the par. (Par is the predetermined number of strokes that a proficient golfer should require to complete a hole, round, or tournament.)

The idea was very well-received by both partners and players. During the 2021 edition of the Magical Kenya Open, the Kenya Savannah Classic, Absa announced they would donate KES 1000 per birdie. The golfers did not disappoint and scored a total of 3824 birdies in both tournaments, raising KES 3.8 million.

Inspired by the motive of the campaign, the European Tour, the global body that oversees the competition matched the donation shilling for shilling, raising the total contribution to KES. 8.8 million.

The campaign was not over though. Prudently and democratically, Absa advertised a request to fund community-based projects on social media. Once the project proposals came in, Absa colleagues and the public were invited to choose their preferred project via a Twitter poll, an opportunity to neutrally select the worthiest amongst the pool of different life-changing projects that would receive funding.

The winning projects include Lekiji Baraka Women - a project empowering Samburu women entrepreneurs on how to make and sell cultural beads skills, Kina Green Ambassadors - a youth group championing biodiversity and protection of the natural and cultural environment in Isiolo by raising indigenous seedlings and Bright Future Foundation which provides pad banks for girls and

women facing period stigma and poverty in Samburu County.

The idea keeps gathering steam. During this year's edition of the Magical Kenya Open, the Birdies For Good campaign raised a local of 1524 birdies culminating in a total of KES 3 million. The funds will be used to purchase, plant, and maintain fruit trees in 60 primary schools across the country.

The fruit trees have a triple effect of boosting efforts to boost improve the national tree cover, providing nourishment for the pupils as well as extra income from the surplus of fruits from a harvest.

Birdies For Good, a long-term campaign of so much promise and differentiation, is enough evidence that Sports is a Force For Good and can be used to tackle various social ills that bedevil us.

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Communicating COVID-19 safety protocols at a time of information fatigue

by Engage BCW

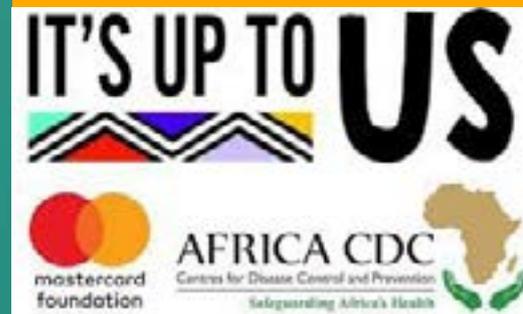
From the first interaction you get with Mastercard Foundation, one thing remains etched in your mind; the five values that drive the Foundation. Humility. Listening. Kindness and respect. Co-creation. Impact. These values embody all engagements and interactions with not only the Foundation, but also their partners from the outreach programs they support. This particular element made our work with Mastercard Foundation under their COVID-19 Public Awareness Campaign not only eye-opening, but also fulfilling, with the knowledge that our communication interventions impacted lives from different parts of the continent.

The Foundation's main goal in Africa is to enable 30 million young people, particularly young women, across Africa to access dignified work through its Young Africa Works strategy. However, just as with most other organisations where the pandemic led to revision of corporate plans, the Foundation had to re-align to this reality. The COVID-19 Public Awareness Campaign would give the Foundation an opportunity to work with the African youth despite the pandemic challenge. Engage burson cohn & wolfe (Engage BCW) received the opportunity to partner with Mastercard Foundation in the execution of the campaign across

seven African countries where the Foundation has established offices, and most importantly, the implementation of the campaign in Kenya. Apart from Kenya, Engage BCW doubled as the Lead Agency for the implementation in Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Senegal, Ghana and Nigeria.

As people started adapting to living under the 'new normal' occasioned by COVID-19, majority of young people started displaying laxity in observing the prevention protocols as laid out by the Ministry of Health. The brief from the client involved developing a campaign that would best re-emphasize on the COVID-19 prevention messaging with young people aged between 14 years and 35 years as the primary target audience, without losing them through message fatigue.

In preparing the strategy, we focused on identifying community initiatives, media organisations and digital influencers who would speak to the hearts of our target audience. Considering that at the time, COVID-19 restrictions were still in place, the messaging therefore was geared towards reminding the young people that they would only be able to enjoy some of the freedoms if we all continued observing the prevention protocols to reduce the infection rate.



The engagements we proposed had to align with the overall objective of the Foundation to be a catalyst for individuals and institutions, working with others to spur systemic change for the African young people.

This campaign was being implemented at a time many Kenyans were experiencing COVID-19 messaging fatigue. We therefore built our strategy with a major focus on story telling. Showcasing what young people in the country are adopting to the new normal by following the COVID-19 prevention measures and demonstrating the resilience of this demographic would in turn encourage more young people to try out this by themselves. Hence the campaign slogans **#ItsUpToUs - Protect yourself, Protect your family, Protect your community.**

To achieve the campaign objectives, we pegged the campaign on three pillars: community engagement, awareness through mainstream media and working with digital influencers.



The Foundation supported community leaders and initiatives to continue interacting with the community residents through the various programmes they pre-dominantly run, but then incorporate the campaign key messaging.

With community engagement, delivery of the campaign's key messaging would be more impactful by working with opinion leaders within the communities as opposed to having the message come directly from Mastercard Foundation. The Foundation supported community leaders and initiatives to continue interacting with the community residents through the various programmes they pre-dominantly run, but then incorporate the campaign key messaging.

Three community initiatives selected for this were Billian Music Family - based in Mathare, they sensitized the locals on the COVID-19 safety protocols, and distributed free water, facemasks and liquid handwashing soap; ALA Training - Boda Boda initiative - who used a USSD platform under the code *483*955#, to transform boda boda operators from Super Spreaders to Super Savers of Covid-19 through training and awareness creation by offering a COVID-19 curriculum accessed entirely via the USSD platform; and Green Card Mtaani - whose outreach activities centered on improving livelihoods by conducting capacity-building forums for young people and

women to help them recover economically by offering training in the production of face masks in Kibera.

Mainstream media assisted in amplifying the campaign messaging by sharing impactful stories from the community initiatives, such as young women who were rendered jobless due to the pandemic and had no way to support their families but now had an opportunity to learn about local production of masks and liquid handwashing soap, as a source of income.

The significance of digital media in communicating to the youth demographic cannot be overstated. **We focused on Facebook, working with Cartoon Comedian (a comedian), Twitter with Minicheps (visual artist) and Kimanzi (social commentator), Tiktok with Barbara Nyambura (comedian) and Instagram with H_art the Band (musicians).**

The measure of the campaign's success for community initiatives covered indicators such as the number of individuals reached through the various engagement methods such as community

forums, one-on-one interactions and special group visits e.g., churches etc. For instance, Billian Music Family reached out to 380,000 residents through distribution of 10,000 masks, 4,000 litres of handwashing soap, 200,000 litres of clean water, coupled by visits to schools, churches, places of business and the use of boda bodas to crisscross the Mathare villages with public service announcements via a public address system.

The resilience and impact stories from these projects were aired on 35 media organisations including Switch TV, TV47, KTN, Citizen TV, Capital FM, Ghetto Radio, Inoro TV, Kameme FM, Nam Lolwe and CGTN. On the digital space, impressions from the messaging by the five influencers managed to reach 2.1 million accounts over a two-month period.

All in all, this campaign enabled us to demonstrate co-creation between the client and agency in delivering not only communication goals, but also ensuring that the project monitoring and evaluation is aligned with the overall communication goals in running an effective behavioral change campaign.





Omanyala: My Father is my hero but I still prefer getting home at night

By PRSK special writer

He is also one of my advisors, a very good man and my hero who has been hit by many things in life but he still stood by us at home, always said not everybody is good, so I must be more careful

When Ferdinand Omanyala tried competitive event which was organised by Athletics Kenya (AK) in Mumias, Kakamega he was almost denied a chance to run because no one knew or had heard of him. He was assigned the outer lane as an afterthought. He won, but still left no impression. At the following event in Busia, he

outclassed the field, beating the runner-up by a yawning gap! He still looked like a flash in the pan, AK simply ignored him. It is against this backdrop that he says, he had to run fast and prove himself, for in life, you cannot get what you want immediately: you have to go through challenges. Challenges make you stronger, he believes.

Now he is a celebrity and has to deal with a demanding public fully aware that the glory that comes with his success has tossed many promising athletes off the course. The most memorable case in Kenya's long-distance running was Samuel Wanjiru, who at nearly Omanyala's age, could not handle stardom and it cost him his life.

Third born son

The third born in a family of four siblings, in Bungoma, where he was born, had a childhood like that of any other rural child-taking his studies seriously and doing his best to turn the family fortunes. However, today, things are different for Kenya is now in the grip of Omanyala-mania – after the young sprinter emerged from shadows of American and Jamaican short-distance runners to take the athletics world by storm.

Omanyala, whose name means 'you can' in Bukusu, has metaphorically 'split' from the legions of long distance-running that is synonymous with Kenya, shining at the tail end of what was an occasional blip in the field events where Julius Yego shone for a while before receding with sterling feats in the Olympics, world championships and Diamond League circuits.

I ran to get a car then retire

Omanyala, a Bachelor of Science (Chemistry) student at the University of Nairobi suits the description of a late-bloomer in athletics – having realised his potential when he detoured from his first love in sports – rugby – to try his luck in athletics. In his own words, his plan was to run "for six months, make money, buy a car" then return to rugby. In rugby, he brushed shoulders with some of the finest players in the world sevens circuit like Collins Injera and Humphrey Kayange, whose intimidating presence spurred him to want more. The lavish life-style of the elite rugby players intrigued and inspired him at the same time,

Omanyala,
whose name
means 'you can'





spurring him to match them. He took up athletics when he was already past his teen-years, having dazzled in rugby, a popular sport in western Kenya.

A Friends School Kamusinga alumnus says that, while he knew he was a good athlete, he did not expect his meteoric rise to stardom to come soon. The transition from rugby to athletics stardom, Omanyala admits, was unforeseen and, the 'longevity' was even more difficult for a young athlete who only wanted to make some quick buck, buy a sleek car then return to the team sport he was used to since boyhood, then complete his bachelor's degree which has taken a 'commercial break' as the world's new track sensation tangoes with the high and mighty in the sport, who he now wants to overtake to the summit of athletics. "When you do something, you always think big and you always have goals. I had a dream that I would one day be a star, but not this big.

My imagination was not how this is happening. But you know God gives you things in doubles; double blessings," the easy-going sprinter recounts. His secret? Self-belief, resilience and optimism. He leaves no doubt that he is a gifted sportsman and university student who is fast-evolving into an athletics icon adored by the young and old, and the wealthy and powerful around the world. However, growing up and going to school in a rural setting may have delayed development, never killed his dream.

Plyometric training

"Sprint takes so much from you so you have to be good. I train for 9 hours a day when we are in season. There is gym training, there is plyometric training which typically improves speed and agility, there is track training. There is so much for you do to be an athlete," he says. He did not have the kind of facilities he now has access to

in Nairobi and during his travels to Europe on the international athletics circuit.

During the 'off-season' – the time international calendar takes a break – Omanyala's schedule is spartan in character. He trains nine hours a day and this is besides attending classes and monitoring his business. However, he is coy on details of the business, which he refers to only as a "side-hustle." His in-season punishing training schedule relaxes a bit but he still has to endure long hours hopping from one end of the globe to the other to take part in the Diamond League, national championships, IAAF, continental championships. He is now preparing for World Championships which will take place in Oregon in the USA in July, which will be followed by Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, England.

First time in Nairobi

"My first time in Nairobi was in January 2015. I was with someone who was guiding me, so it was not as bad as people always say about their first experiences. (This was before) my first time to fly, when we were going to Bahamas. I remember I wore a suit for the first time all the way to Bahamas and I found it funny," he quips. "It was interesting at the same time

because that was also my first time to fly," he adds as he recounts how his globe-trotting began. I remember I wore a suit for the first time all the way to Bahamas and I found it funny," he quips. "It was interesting at the same time because that was also my first time to fly," he adds as he recounts how his globe-trotting began.

Despite his broadened world-view, Ferdinand still looks up to his

father Fred Omurwa, whom the 26-year-old Omanyala describes as his hero and man of a 'steel heart' who has stood steadfastly with his family at all times. "He is also one of my advisors. He is a very good guy and my hero who has been hit by many things in life but he still stood by us," he says. Omanyala does not hide his desire to break the 100m world record.

Despite his broadened world-view, Ferdinand still looks up to his father Fred Omurwa





Never be intimidated, I will break Bolt's record

"I have already beaten them. I beat the American Olympic silver medallist (Gatlin) here in Nairobi. It is unfortunate the Olympic gold medallist did not take part in the event. He was my target. He is the one I want to beat when we meet in Oregon," the sportsman says. He believes that they are human just like us and that nobody goes to the petrol station to be filled up with petrol. It all starts with the mind. "We have been intimidated before. You get there and you meet the guys you have been seeing on television. Imagine competing against a legend like Usain Bolt. You can be a very fast guy but when you get intimidated on the track, it hinders your performance. That is something we need to change," he asserts. He vividly recounts how Akani Simbine (former African champion from South Africa) approached him before a race and told him not to run 'too fast'. One of his coaches told him "Don't finish our guy, the world is watching and they now know what they are coming up against."

I will make Kenyans forget politics for a while

He is good friends and keeps contact with some of the fastest

sprinters like Blake and Gatlin who he says, are 'so respectful right now'. He believes he is going to be the athlete who will break Usain Bolt's world record. "The promise I make to Kenyans this year is to break records and win championships to make Kenyans forget about politics for a while," he confidently says. Heading to the world athletics championships in Oregon, USA, in July the sprint sensation holds the world leading time of 9.85 seconds – and is determined to beat Americans in their own backyard. After setting a new African 100m record of 9.76 seconds, he says he has set his eyes on equalling the world record currently held by Usain Bolt of 9.58 seconds. He wants to lower it to 9.4 seconds.

The all-time 100m is as follows: 1. Usain Bolt (9.58), 2. Tyson Gay (9.69), 3. Yohan Blake (9.69), 4. Asafa Powell (9.72), 5. Justin Gatlin (9.74), 6. Trayvon Bromell (9.76), 7. Christian Coleman (9.76) and 8. Ferdinand Omanyala (9.77). Omanyala-mania is not restricted to athletics in Kenya, it is spreading to the rest of the world, where Kenya's dominance in the middle and long distances is legendary. What makes news – perhaps – is the occasional failure to win both men's and women's 800m, 1,500m, 3,000m dash, 3,000m steeplechase, 10,000m and the marathon. But a Kenyan reigning in the sprints in Africa, leave alone obliterating the big guns from America, Europe and Jamaica is

Omanyala-mania is spreading to the rest of the rest of the world



Pursuing wife for 6 months

The father of one who loves Afrobeats and chicken and who has publicly admitted to getting financial support from his wife when they were starting out before his fortunes changed, did not have

it easy. He pursued her for six months in 2016, before she finally gave into his advances and they finally tied the knot. Omanyala says he has to work harder to continue providing the best life for his son and wife despite many beauties who try to pursue him. "When I am not training, I am mostly in the house or attending

to personal meetings that require my personal attention," he says. home since latest win.

When he visits his rural home, he rolls up his windows up because he believes not everyone is of good intent. He actually prefers to get home at night. He is yet to go home since his latest win.



Omanyala says he has to work harder to continue providing the best life for his son and wife



From six months to six years

"When I switched from rugby to athletics, I expected to run faster because I was so fast in the field. My plan was I get into athletics for like six months, get the money and go back to rugby. It is now six years and I am still here," he says laughing. His love for fast cars drove him to athletics as he was confident he would get one in just six months and go back to Rugby. "I used to be intrigued by the likes of Collins Injera because they would pull up at the training ground in their vehicles. I wanted to live that life. So, my plan was to get into athletics, get the money and go back. I have fallen in love

with sprints and I am taking it higher and higher," he said during an interview with Citizen TV.

Aware of the risks that are laden in stardom, he says, "I thank God for giving me strong mental strength. I hear a lot but stardom has not changed me. Even the President of World Athletics (Sebastian Coe) who was in Mauritius (for 2022 Africa Championships) was wondering, 'How are you guys winning sprints?'. 'We are coming for you guys. I am coming to beat the Americans on their own home-ground' was his response.

He goes on, "There were times we used to see people run fast barefooted in the rural areas ... if only we can get good facilities, these children can go far! The problem is, we have not had a good sprinter before in Kenya. When you see your child, niece or nephew trying do sprints the perception is you can't go anywhere with this. Now the perception is changing. I am glad I am one who is changing that. I hope in the next 10 years – like you saw in the 4x100m relays – there other athletes coming up."

Association with PRSK

For someone who has never had any formal training on how to communicate or address the media, he believes that there is massive opportunity for communicators out there to help change the narrative on the eloquence which uncharacteristically identifies Kenyan athletes. "One day, I was browsing on my phone then a post by PRSK popped up on my phone. I had never heard of it before and it piqued my interest. Since then, I have seen articles and other posts on its Facebook page," he says. His trick is to wait for the question then answer the best way he can.

Sprint academy

"This the thing these guys are calling Omanyala-mania is the rowing interest is sprint. I ask the government to support it. I am coming up with a sprint academy to develop sprinters so that when I will be out of the sprints at some point (there will be somebody to succeed me). I don't want to leave a vacuum in sprints in Kenya. I want this to continue after I retire from the track. There should a sprinter being discovered in Kenya every year. If we get the sponsorship, if we get the right support, it is going to be a big thing," he says.

Grief communication

by Elizabeth Mulae

When people lose a loved one, choosing the right words to condole, sympathise and empathise with the grieving family is not an easy task. The wordings, language selection, tone and how the sad news is relayed may result in positive or negative connotations.

This also applies to social media groups created to facilitate burial planning period, obituaries published in print, radio and aired on television stations.

Recently, a death announcement run by one of the dailies attracted mixed reactions with social media platforms generating heated debates on suitability of the wordings used. The criticisms, varied comments and deliberations were based on the packaging of the content by the family with some commentators blaming editors for allowing the obituary's publication.

(An obituary of in one of the newspaper dailies recently caused an online stir with Kenyans questioning whether it was intended to be humorous or an insensitive joke.

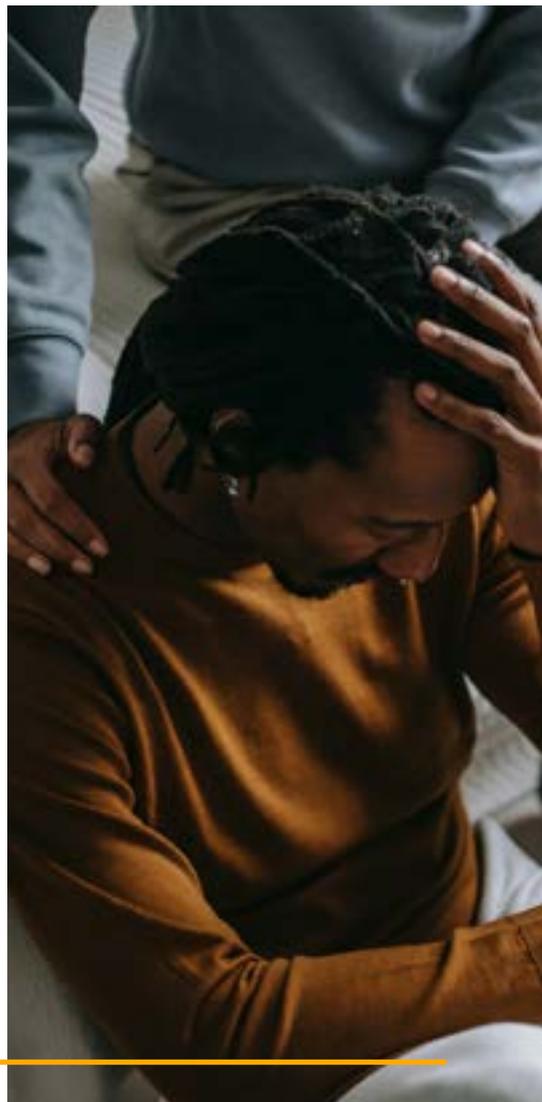
Part of the funeral announcement read, "Mueni has now reunited with her beloved father Anthony and her partner in crime Peter and they can get up to their typical mischief where they left off.")

All calmed down when information came through the same daily that the family had approved it as it were to reflect the lifestyle of their relative who had died.

Grief communication is a subject that requires preparation emotionally, physically and spiritually, whether it's done socially or in corporate entities. The communicator should respect the feelings of the bereaved person showing empathy on the intensity of the loss of a loved one. An observation of how different corporate entities communicate during the demise of a staff member indicate different approaches used to communicate the sad news; Common ones include sending a message on the corporate whatsapp groups and emails. The message is reverberated by many wishes of condolences, say, 'very sorry for our loss, May their souls rest in peace, the spiritual ones will share a bible verse or so for encouragement.' Some follow up the message with a call to the bereaved as a show of empathy. Different organisations have adopted various approaches to communicate to the bereaved families, with hope of encouraging them to bear the loss.

Some churches have also formed support groups that promote grief communication. One of them is Grieve Share which is a group that gives people an opportunity to

share and communicate more about grief. Ms. Claire Gicheru, a communication expert, has been involved in Grieve Share for several years. She says that it was created to walk grieving individuals and families through the journey of overcoming grief through sharing. The group, currently hosted by the Parklands Baptist Church, has run from season one to eight. The organisers are currently planning to begin season nine. Grieve Share is a grief recovery support group where you can find help and healing for the hurt of losing a loved one.



The communicator should respect the feelings of the bereaved person showing empathy



As we all know, losing loved ones is a life transition that none of us can run away from. Learning how to communicate about grief is a good step for all to embrace. A few suggestions on where to begin when someone is grieved include;

1. Call Them

With the digital world becoming dynamic by day, most people are losing the art of conversation, which has numerous benefits and advantages, during loss of a loved one, you find people sharing messages with the bereaved in different platforms available, whilst this is okay, calling someone to comfort them makes a big difference, hearing comforting words from someone else provides relief and emotional support.

2. Share A Message of Encouragement

The period of grief makes people withdraw as they come to terms with loss of their loved one, share encouraging messages to help them towards accepting the loss, bible verses on life transition come in handy.

3. Choose Words Carefully

Words can make or break a soul, choose carefully what you share or write to the bereaved, this is a sensitive period for them and they never forget what you said to them.

4. Listen more

Sharing the details of the loss is part of the healing process, allow the person to share what they feel comfortable to release; give

5. Plan a visit to share condolences by presence

Attending the burial planning meetings shows concern and empathy for the bereaved. If you don't make it for the meetings and funeral, commit a day to visit the family and relay your condolences. Grief is a process and does not end after the burial. Visiting the concerned family comforts and strengthens the family to accept the loss and get through the process courageously.

Death is a transition to another life and world which all must take at unknown day and time; as we live our lives, let's adopt an empathetic approach that comforts the bereaved in our circles.

Tuvuke salama barabarani

Public Sector Campaign won by Vivo Energy & National Transport and Safety Authority

Vivo energy in collaboration with the National Transport and Safety Authority bagged the Public Sector Campaign of the year award in honor of their joint road safety campaign dubbed "Tuvuke Salama Barabarani". A phrase that has so far been owned by most organizations and individuals for its effectiveness and the impact it has its target audience.

A team from PRSK met the duo and this is what they had to say as they shared their journey through the campaign, the inspiration behind it, the impact it has had since its launch, challenges encountered what made them stand out and what other plans they have.

The Voice of the voiceless

This initiative was driven from a point of concern to the school going minors in order to reduce mortality cases caused by road accidents. At least 4,000 fatalities were reported in the country in 2021 according to a report on the NTSA database, a number that is expected to rise if nothing is done,

a move that had the team from Vivo and NTSA come up with the campaign.

It's not always about branding

These two organizations coming together was a blessing in disguise. It was necessary for them to connect with the community and address their pain points. The duo challenged other organizations to identify gaps within their communities and address them without looking at the profit value.

Not even COVID could stop them

Everything happened so fast and one of the big challenges they faced during this campaign is the rise of corona virus disease. "We just launched our campaign in Mombasa and had plans for the Nakuru launch when the Cabinet Secretary for health announced a country wide lockdown", recalled Vivian.

The countrywide lock down was followed by abolishing of public gatherings, which made it hard for them to roll out their educative

fora on road safety measures. They had to quickly leverage on social media and make their campaign largely online and thanks to their massive following, this was received quite well.

Lollipop Signs!

The Lollipop Signs are the tangible product of the campaign. These are hand held road signs issued to crossing guards at the very busy roads that near schools. These signs alert road users to slow down when children are crossing the roads. So far one hundred pieces have been issued countrywide on the first round with four hundred more awaiting distribution upon identification of the most dangerous spots, a report that will be compiled by a team from NTSA. The aim is to ensure all highways nearing schools get a sign in a move to ensure zero accidents

Consultancy skills for PR Practitioners are fundamental

by Sam Karanja, Executive Director – Hill & Knowlton Strategies

It is said that change is inevitable. It is actually considered as part of life. In the world of Communications and Public Relations, change is manifested in various perspectives. We now see more PR practitioners than journalists. There are increased multimedia content and platforms than ever before. Moving from a traditional and rigid structure where there was a defined scope and set routine with a rigid and mechanical flow of activities.

Communication Consultancy

Communication Consultancy involves providing advice and suggesting strategic communications and marketing solutions tailored to customers' requirements and needs. It also involves assisting in the packaging of both internal and external communications. A strategic communications consultant gives recommendations and guides the entity on how to effectively implement communications strategies.

As a communication consultant, it would be important to develop your breadth of expertise to win the convergence war and extend your depth of knowledge to position yourself as trusted advisor with your client/organisation. Take into account the key features of a classic communications consultant which include being responsive and creative. The breadth of knowledge and skills comprise

various strategic areas such as stakeholder engagement, behavioural science, digital planning and optimisation, public affairs and litigation communication.

Another focal component for communication consultancy is data analytics for computational analysis and use of statistics to represent information. The approach involves applying data patterns geared towards attainment of effective decision-making processes in organisations. Other crucial areas include crisis communication and creative studio skills. The bottom-line is that there is a need for enhanced training and capacity building programmes in relation to communication related topics.

Communication strategies informed by behavioural science

This involves a process of applying the science of human behaviour to the art of communications. The latest insights from behavioural science help us understand how people actually think and act in real life – and how we can influence this. People often behave in ways that are surprising and seem irrational:

- **consumers do not always switch to better or cheaper products**
- **our colleagues do not always switch to more effective working practices**

- **most of us do not save, exercise or eat as healthily as we know we should**

Behavioural insights reveal that most human behaviour is driven by automatic, instinctive and intuitive thought processes. Even decisions we believe people make rationally are often automatic, influenced more by context than by consciously thinking something through. A consequence is that communications strategies based on appeals to people's rational thought processes are insufficient. Take for instance tax compliance. Evidence has demonstrated that communication strategies based on stressing the legal consequences of not paying tax is not effective.

It is important to consider enhancing skills in emerging areas such as coding and web development, digital and social media laws and ethics, data driven digital PR and insights optimisation, paid social media management among other emerging issues and trends.

The Communications and PR industry has certainly evolved and it is necessary for practitioners in this profession to equally sharpen their skills. It is imperative for them to be aware of the ever-changing trends in PR and through this, it will be possible to provide skilful consultancy services that resonate with the expectation of the client organisations.

Diversifying public relations in universities

by Sharon-Hope Abiyah

Public Relations as a profession is experiencing tremendous growth globally and regionally. The need for the profession in organizations has become critical. The dynamism of emerging communication gaps in organizations necessitates the need for strategic Public Relations practitioner's skills to address such kind of needs. Public Relations in definition clearly states its core mandate of being a management function whose goal is to build strong stakeholder relationships geared towards establishing mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its public. In a highly competitive business environment, it is Public Relations that set the base and momentum for marketing to thrive. Ignore Public Relations at one's own peril. Institutions of higher learning are not exempted in this discourse. Today, universities are working round the clock to develop messages and communicate in such a manner that connects with the market. Lack of strategic and clear communication is prerogative to failure.

The emergence of competition and struggle for numbers amongst universities birthed the need to adopt creative and innovative ways of communication to tap

into the shrinking market. These saw universities place advertisement in print and mass media hoping to influence attitudes, behavior and decision making. A blended approach in developing communication strategy is also growing each single day and its impact cannot be ignored. It is common to find universities on Tik-Tok, You tube, Instagram apart from other conventional digital platforms.

As a public relations practitioner at St. Paul's University attest; institutions are working round the clock daily to study the market and come up with cutting edge public relations strategies and mechanisms that are able to penetrate the market and ignite interest towards the university among the public. In his words, "One of the key platforms we are utilizing fully is the social media. This is where our market is and we must ensure we align our strategies to tap into this space", he said. The digital platform has become a useful segment of the market that the university is committed to tap. This is where majority of the teens and youth congregate to socialize and find information. Therefore it is crucial market no institution can ignore.

Today, universities are working round the clock to develop messages and communicate in such a manner that connects with the market.



Another key feature in public relations emerging trends is mentorship and training of future public relations practitioners. Without doubt, the classroom experience is fantastic, but if not aligned with practice, it ends up not achieving its intended purpose. The university is keen to ensure public relations grow beyond theory. The practical component of the profession is what makes it stand out. The world is looking for highly practical public relations talent. The market does not have the luxury of time for practitioners who have not mastered their craft. The competition is real; a proof that only the best will have their say.

At St. Paul's University, the need to nurture and train competent public relations practitioners is a matter taken with a lot of seriousness. The concept of mentorship has been inculcated across departments and offices. Students are attached to departments strategic to the program to learn and utilize skills from a practical point of view. The Public Relations and Marketing department has multiple platforms for learning and growth. Through the Public Relations and Marketing Club, students are acquainted with event organizing skills; a critical component of the profession. Through annual and quarterly publications such as

"The Voice Magazine" and SPU Connect Magazine", students are able to learn and apply key interviewing, writing and editing skills. Notably, public relations in its dynamic nature are growing to greater dimensions. The public sector, corporate organizations and humanitarian bodies have also embraced the role the profession plays in harnessing clear and effective communication to its public. This is an indication that public relations play an important role and its impact is being felt across all sectors, universities included.

Enhancing performance and competitiveness in government communication

Summarised By Elizabeth Mulae

The last year's PRSK summit enlightened many of the PR practitioners in regards to milestones achieved in the communication sector in the last 50 years, This made possible through the various presentation shared by experts attending the sessions, among them was this presentation by Atieno Atieno summarised in this article

i. The public has a right to information and communication; actively sharing information is therefore one of Government's most important task

ii. The public is entitled to communicate with Government

iii. Communicate information of policies, projects and programme

through various events and periods such as the scramble and partition of Africa, The role of the state broadcaster as the Governments Mouth piece, Liberation of the airwaves which formed a new democratic system and the new communication formula.

Other events include the Promulgation of the new constitution, County Government Act part 9 on public communication and access to information in all the 47 counties and digital progression growth.

Some of the key Principles guiding Government Information include:-

Notable events on Government Communication Growth

In the last 50 years, Government communication has transition

The counties have also created public information and communication offices who are charged with creating public awareness on the mandate of the counties using assets like the websites, social media pages, telephone switchboards, USSD codes and customer care reception desks.

Challenges experienced in government communication

The Government communication growth has faced various challenges such as recognition of communications as a valuable strategic tool, declining public interest and diminishing communication standards.

The rapidly changing media landscape has also come with its share of challenges among them

emerging issues on citizenry reporting and social media. Allocation of budgets for communication activities have also continued to shrink causing low to zero implementation of planned activities.

Enhancing government communication

Improvement of Government communication can be done through the

Development of robust policies and strategic plans, equipping newsrooms with modern equipment to promote effective dissemination of information, recruitment of qualified personnel and continuous capacity building. In promoting a listening organizational culture, the government can activate feedback mechanism channels to enhance two way communication with the publics.

To continuously safeguard achievements gained in the last 50 years towards enhancing communication in Government, more focus on developing the sector is required. Adequate resource allocation will ensure implementation of plans and strategies which will be made possible through recruitment of a competent team to support the processes.

The winning game will be packaging of Government content in a persuasive, strong, concise and clear manner.

This way, the information will remain as the 'King' and 'queen'!

The winning game will be packaging of Government content in a persuasive, strong, concise and clear manner.





Enhancing reputation management in the next 50 years: Role of PR

By Judith Sidi Odhiambo, KCB Bank Head of Corporate Affairs

Public Relations is a careful art that is concerned with a myriad of activities revolving around reputation. Public Relations is the discipline which is focused on reputation, with the aim of earning understanding, trust and support and influencing opinion and behaviour. It is a planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics.

The Opportunity

It is understandable that PR remains a critical area for businesses that want to succeed. PR is seen as a cross-cutting management function since time immemorial and it will continue to remain so. The need for incorporating PR into a business will not go away, as it is an important pillar for profitable operations. PR is concerned with value addition, elevated brand awareness as well as maintaining a positive image.

Today, more people understand

the importance of PR and appreciate its value. In this digitally driven world, we are at a transition phase into modern PR. With modern PR, our touchpoints are shifting from what they used to be years ago. We certainly cannot wish away the evolution process brought about by this transition. How we relate to our publics & stakeholders is evolving from e.g. developing press articles and being satisfied to utilizing social media as well.

Power of Social Media

Social media has increasingly become a barometer of stakeholder perceptions. Social media provides a direct connection with your audience. It is a very important medium, measure and mirror of public officers and general stakeholders' sentiments on various issues.

It is therefore a very important tool and medium in the practice of public relations since it focuses on building and maintaining relationships and is not just

about brands connecting with their stakeholders. Social media impacts relationship building in positive and negative ways.

Typically, social media has a mix of the informed, the uninformed and the cheerleaders who follow both ends of the spectrum. Social media therefore is not always a very credible tool. Informed positions sometimes can suffer from the wider commentary advanced by the uninformed who particularly hide under the veil of identity hidden accounts. Many a times, festering issues on social media if unattended tend to grow to real crisis matters.

Social media can similarly be used to build trust with key stakeholders and publics largely through the provision of information and issues management. However, where social media is actively utilized as a barometer on trust, interventions can be deployed to mitigate greater risks.

One-on-one engagements

Generalization of messages is part of traditional PR, not modern PR. The future entails more personalized engagements to achieve a communication goal. Personalised interactions breed more trust and confidence. An example is as opposed to sending a statement to launch a product, modern PR entails teams visiting publics in their spaces to explain the launch and make the specific audience why they need to care.

Public Affairs

Public Affairs is a strategic effort geared at first analysing public stakeholder needs and moving to design and provide solutions that facilitate effective engagements. It involves the day to day management of the relations with stakeholders using a range of

platforms, tools and approaches.

Typically, it involves the unpacking of the organisational needs to enhance understanding by the stakeholders. Public affairs also involves guiding stakeholders such as Legislators to formulate favourable policies that support the organisational missions including favourable taxes, regulations and even incentives. Public Affairs largely focuses on public interest.

It is way beyond just the institutional commercial interests and focuses on policy and regulatory aspect. Ideally public affairs acts as the cementing agent between an organisation and its public stakeholders who are majorly in government decision-making processes or who influence position.

Sustainability

Sustainability has shifted from being a buzzword on environmental matters to a keyword in corporate matters. More corporates will be paying attention on key matters which include; inclusivity, climate related concerns, society needs and so on. The world is rapidly deteriorating, and it is up to us to preserve it for generations to come.

In conclusion, it is important to remember that PR undoubtedly remains to be a cross-functional touch point in the business environment. Audiences are more likely to trust messages that are packaged in a manner that builds trust and credibility. As the industry evolves, so should our mind-sets if we are to effectively achieve our objectives.



PR undoubtedly remains to be a cross-functional touch point in the business environment.



How to pivot and win an award

What did you learn in 2020 and 2021?

What did you achieve?

What did you discover about yourself, your capabilities, your alternatives?

Did you find unexpected success?

In a season of fearful moments, low cash flow and the lurking threat of death by asphyxiation, did you find anything that lights your inner fire and stokes your passions?

The bizarre year of a once-a-century pandemic taught many of us truths about ourselves and others that would not have been possible in ordinary times.

Did you find new ways to access stimulation and novelty? Music, dance, painting, crafts, baking, cooking or gardening? It is possible that these new pursuits provided new avenues for keeping our minds and spirits vibrant and energized.

Well, we, **the Game Changers**, seem to have discovered our talent for hosting experiential virtual events. Not your typical run of the mill, switch-on-the-platform

and bore-people-to-death zoom meetings. We took those new human interests and added them to a repertoire of interactive fun that could be executed in virtual conferences and events.

We created a series of collaborative live experiences in the virtual world, mastered the art of engagement in the online space and even got an industry award for our efforts. Perhaps it was the landscape that made the idea of any type of interactivity so appealing that no barrier was high enough to stop us humans from connecting. Maybe the pandemic gave each of us an extraordinary encounter with discomfort that heightened our need for excitement and new experiences.

We had such fun getting our client teams to **MASTER THE MAZE**. The maze was a metaphoric challenge created around the changing environment; a puzzle to be solved and a terrain to be navigated. The participants that could work together as a team were able to find a way out of the maze with the precision of an

army unit. The victory was in both the journey and the destination.

Theming the virtual events may seem like a genius idea but it's actually the tried and tested method for any event. A theme always captures the imagination of the audience and creates a whole new world of experience across all aspects of the event including look and feel, branding, scripting and gaming.

We set out to make the event as lively as the usual face-to-face conferences by stimulating all the senses. Basic experiential 101. No matter the forum, touch as many senses as you can in any live or virtual experience and you will always win.

Our 2021 Best Internal Communications Campaign of the Year Award by the Public Relations Society of Kenya was a welcome addition to our war-chest and was based on just that simple premise; people remember how you make them feel and when you touch them across all their senses you must feel something amazing. Makes for an award-winning production.

Internal communication as a catalyst of high-productivity

by Ruth Musembi

During the PRSK Annual Summit, Dr. Marube posed three questions to delegates: How much impact have we made in our organizations? How many solutions have we provided? How much value have we added? His conclusion and advise to everyone was simple: let's move from informing to persuading and creating impact.

For corporates, it is worth exploring the nexus between communication and better productivity at work, because productivity thrives on effective communication. We can design & implement a high-productivity culture through Results-Oriented Communication (ROC) and behavioral science.

There are three ways communication adds value to organizations: one, by increasing visibility of issues; two, by engaging the key internal stakeholders and three, by acting as a catalyst for high productivity. As communication experts, we must use communication as a catalyst and an enabler of high productivity in organizations, and this is done by partnering with various departments.

The art of publicity and relationship building has more or less been mastered by organizations when it comes to external stakeholders. We create publicity, the brand gets known, but unfortunately the customer experience is sub-par, due to a poor organizational

culture that leads to low productivity and inefficiency.

Fortunately, communication be a catalyst for a high productivity culture, which leads to a better customer experience, which in turn affects an organization's bottom line. However, how we communicate determines if audiences will take action. Often, when leaders say they have communicated, all that have done is to disseminate information.

There are two tools organisations can employ in order to ensure effective internal communication. The first is the Results-Oriented Communication (ROC) Triangle, as illustrated below. (Include illustration of the triangle)

The ROC triangle rests on three pillars: Sense-giving, which is sharing of information to capture hearts and minds; Sense-making, which is using an organizational listening, response and input framework (such as the NICE framework, to be discussed next) and finally behaviours and practices which should now align with the shared messages.

The second tool is the **NICE framework**, an acronym that allows an organization to assess the employees by asking a series of questions: what information do employees **N**eed? What **I**nterests do they have? What **C**oncerns do they want addressed, and, overall, what are their **E**xpectations?

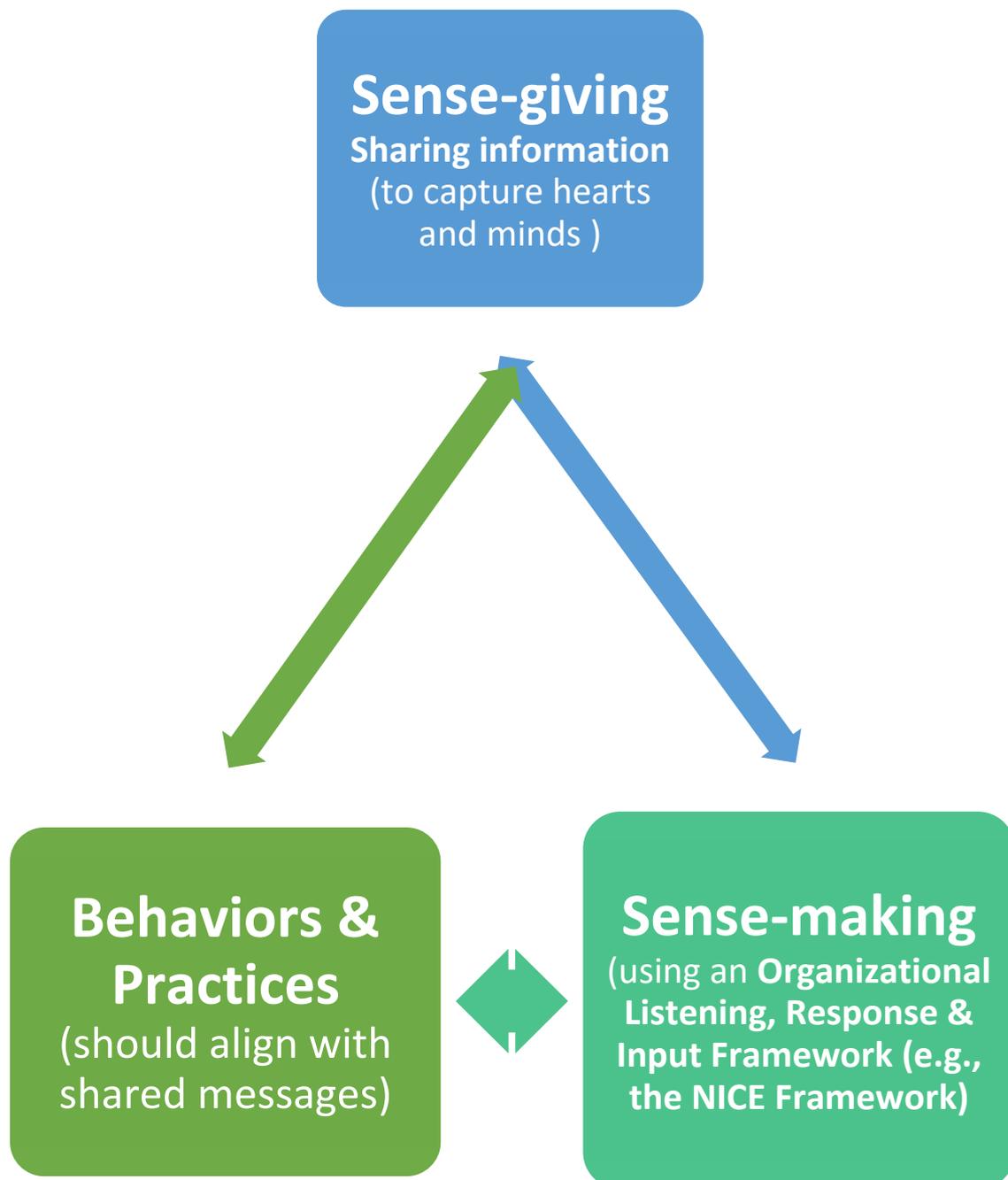


Finally, organisations can use the ComCAT survey, which has ten powerful questions. The first three provide a qualitative measure of behaviours and practices at corporate and team level, while the rest measure the communication effectiveness score, the trust score, satisfaction score, employees' net promoter score and engagement score. Measured regularly, these will influence productivity. That way, communicators working in tandem with other departments can help move the needle.

Employees at various hierarchies within the organization all have a role to play by being catalysts for better productivity. The CEO, as the owner and executor of organizational strategy, can help employees re-define communication through the ROC triangle, by encompassing information sharing, listening and complementary behaviours and practices.

They can also help develop a listening, response and input framework that is the bedrock for improved productivity. Additionally, they can facilitate training for the top executives on storytelling, compile strategy frequently asked questions (FAQs) and suitable "head and heart" answers (and do the same for any new information that needs to be communicated) and finally run regular ComCAT surveys.

The Human Resource team, whose end goal is employee engagement, can help team leaders effectively interpret corporate strategy to their teams. The team leaders themselves, towards employee productivity and satisfaction, can help HR with regular pulse surveys and crafting of compelling messages. All employees should be trained on communication skills, which then makes implementing the above that much easier





Uplift your spirit

MultiChoice Kenya in the third quarter of FY21 (Jan - Mar 2021) had to implement price increases to manage rising operational costs during a time when customers were facing increased financial pressure due to the economic effects of COVID-19. The price increments resulted to an increase in negative sentiment on traditional and social media. In response, MultiChoice Kenya had to come up with a creative way to counter the rising negative sentiments from customers and counter attrition of subscribers who felt the move was unfair. MultiChoice Kenya therefore organized a content showcase to sell the story of value to reduce churn and shift brand sentiments from negative to positive. The result was a brand PR campaign packaged under the theme "Uplift Your Spirit" whose main goal was to package all the premium content on our platforms and showcase it to our customers to create top of mind awareness on the quality and variety of entertainment available for them, at an affordable price point. The showcase was also organized to appreciate our DStv and GOtv customers and inform them of upcoming content that they can look forward to create dialogue and reinforce value for money.

The nexus between PR and law: A stradler's perspective

Presentation by George Mucee

In this presentation, Mucee, a lawyer and a communications professional, paints a mental picture about who he is professionally and generally: a curious writer with an insatiable appetite for thought provoking debates, it is not by accident that the straddler in this presentation is also Mucee himself - wearing the hat of lawyer and a communicator, professionally. He offers his perspectives into why PR-must be anchored into Law, why PR is boxed under Corporate Affairs and why historically PR and Law are pulling in in different directions.

Conflict

When a crisis arises, there is always a conflict on what to say, how to say it & who should say what, how much to say, how much to keep. However according to Edward Bennett Williams (American Litigator "Nothing is always a good thing to do, and almost always a brilliant thing to say. Care should be taken when communicating during active litigation as this amounts to sub-judice rule. One therefore has to balance speed and accuracy of communicating in a crisis: Lawyers want facts before speaking and are hired to ensure practices are legal & to protect the organization from claims or litigation and may understand the need to build mutually beneficial relationships with publics but will always err on the side of protecting the business

want, on the other hand, to speak out soonest because the court of public opinion moves much faster than the law as postulated by scholar T.E. Carter. PR aims to build mutually beneficial relationships between the org & its public and may understand the importance of legal but would rather err on the side of building relationships

Evidence

Lawyers opine that law should always take the lead because they cannot fathom a crisis when PR leads. PR people opine that lawyers are generally not good at reaching decisions too quickly, they want evidence and certainty yet crises do not allow that luxury. For PR & Law to achieve results, the best option is for both PR & Law to develop a better understanding of each other's role in a crisis. The orientation of these two professions is best defined through the 1984 California, San Isidoro tragedy: A 41-year-old James Huberty stormed a Mac Donald outlet, shot & killed 21 Customers and injured 19 others: worst one gunman mass shooting in the US history by then. The PR team was fielding 1000 calls a day. Don Horwitz, Macdonald's General Counsel told the PR Team: "I don't want you people to worry or care about legal implications of what you might say, we are going to do what is right for the survivors and families of the victims and we will worry about the law suits later

Theoretical underpinnings

Capability model argues that PR & Law are independent of each other with no connection. Coincidental model argues that the two disciplines relate and have areas of overlap. They include legal issues arising from crises; legal issues and non compliance; reliance of PR when dealing with legal issues.

Exclusive roles

Yet some things remain exclusive to the two disciplines. For instance, Congruent Model argues that since the corporate is a legal person, then PR function is subordinate to the legal function. Everything is done within the law. Law is thus superior to PR. Law is objective and quantifiable as opposed to PR that is subjective and not easily quantifiable.

Stradler and straddler

In conclusion, he stands for PR & being at par under corporate and the head must be someone with both legal & communications training. The two must work together not just in crisis but must be present at all times and be listened to keenly. There is no need for a fight because the employer is one. The best outcomes are when PR professional and lawyer respect each other's role, there is no ego in terms of who leads and both advisors are solely focused on their clients- Stradler

Exploring the power of PR and legal collaboration

by Judith Sidi Odhiambo, Head of Corporate Affairs, KCB



In her presentation, Joan posited that an organization that places PR far from the management table hardly enjoys public relations benefits. PR establishes and maintains mutual beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics.

She opined that over the years, PR has corroborated closely with Marketing & Sales functions, Human Resource, Finance, Corporate strategy, Legal and even Information technology divisions. Frequent professional interactions between PR practitioners and legal counsel have been reported to positively benefit their working relationship.

She advocated for a close and efficient collaboration between crisis professionals to ensure that selected crisis communication messages that are both public and media friendly. Crisis communicative strategies have been shown to affect publics' perceptions of an organization's credibility and trustworthiness.

Stakeholder Engagement Framework
Including Research and profiling. Includes not only

identifying the "Who" but also a deep dive into any connectors, understanding likely external and internal factors impacting on decision making. Another framework is engagement. It involves undertaking a cost-benefit analysis based on influence and interest levels. It is an important stage to make use of appropriate medium of engagement that connects with the needs of the stakeholders identified/targeted. This should also include an advocacy plan especially with regards to public policy engagement process.

How does one execute a plan ?
This includes the establishment of a purposeful channel of engagement that aligns with the target audience's preference. It includes scenario formulation and ranking outcomes to inform "go/no-go" decisions. The next step is evaluation. At the end of the engagement, putting in place evaluation tools to monitor performance and changes is critical. For example, to evaluate engagement by bespoke media monitoring to gauge outreach, get a sense of the sentiments etc.

Stakeholder engagement principles employed

There are various approaches one can use in engagement with stakeholders. One of them is two-way. The company and its partners in the projects being implemented in addition to sharing the project information with the stakeholders seek to actively listen and as much as possible incorporate stakeholder views into the project decision making and risk management planning.

Broad-based approach

One can also employ broad-based approach. This means that the company and its partners seek to create alignment with as wide a range of stakeholders as possible for example, engagements with MPs and regulators either at industry level or corporate level.

Stakeholder engagement focus areas

Results: Meaning that they are planned, executed

and measured for their tangible impact on the delivery of the project(s) being implemented e.g. engagements on excise duty issues.

One can also focus on risk based focus. This means that engagements are prioritized according to the potential for associated issues to impact on the project(s) One can also focus on issue-focused. This means that stakeholders are engaged with a view to resolving issues associated with the corporate objectives.

Conclusion

She concluded that it is important to ensure Legal teams have sufficient familiarity on what the PR function can deliver and cannot deliver. PR is a function that relies heavily on winning trust through persuasion and not coercion and has no one size fits all but remains grounded on relationship building. A PR practitioner with poor interpersonal relations will always find the going very rough.

Approaching the future 2021: Trends in reputation and intangible asset management

“Purpose, Brand, Culture, Reputation, Communication and Connected Intelligence”

Summarized by Julie Juma

The 6 basic building blocks of Global Public Relations and Communication Models the world over. They make up the foundations on which Approaching the Future 2021: Trends in Reputation and Intangible Asset Management, a Survey conducted by Corporate Excellence Centre for Reputation Leadership was based. The Survey sought to assist corporates and professional understand how the most impactful trends marking the current and future of corporates are steadily evolving that will feed into decisions in these unprecedented and uncertain times where the world is evolving therefore requiring out-of-the box transformation.

Approaching the Future, which is currently in its 6th year is perceived as an essential instrument for

comprehending and successfully navigating our new normal, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The report has categorized the 15 most relevant topics for the present and the future as well as the measures that organizations are employing to mitigate challenges that arise out of these situations

The Report also delves into how the pandemic has pivoted the priorities of most organizations, with a primary focus on how they are managing the most urgent arising from the pandemic. In 2020, the 2030 Agenda and Climate Emergency took pole position as an urgency that most organizations were committed to. However, the 2021 Survey showed a marked shift in priorities to responsible leadership and its long term impact beyond the organization.

IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON THE BUSINESS AGENDA

**2020
FROM PRIORITISING SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS
AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT...**



**2021
TO A NEED TO RESPOND TO AND MANAGE A
NEW BUSINESS REALITY**



The Report also gives an in-depth analysis of digital ecosystems and categorize the topics that generate the most impact as far as responses, conversation as well as interactions go. The Report observes that most pertinent societal issues gravitate around digitalization, championing new ways as well as sustainable investment.

The Survey was developed through the assistance of about 500 professionals as well as thorough interviews with eight well-known experts in the field of reputation, ethics, sustainability brand and transparency.

Methodology of the Survey

The Report was developed in collaboration with a consulting firm and analyzed 400 secondary sources which also included consultations with over 500 professionals, through an international network.

Interviews with eight seasoned experts in fields revolving around brand and reputation as well as the use of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) algorithms to increase the analysis of online engagements on various digital platforms also fed into the findings of the Report.

Global data that has also had data specific to Spain and Latin America was also analyzed during the Survey. The qualitative analysis driven by social studies was managed by a consulting firm specializing in various forms of research.

The categories that were seen as the most relevant by the 500 professionals include some critical areas that will help organizations to adapt and develop responses to the New Normal within the pandemic.

LEVELS OF RELEVANCE

The first level of relevance is where responsible leadership came first, as a priority to organizations, followed by adapting to the context of Covid-19, after which managing reputation and reputational risk, followed closely by new ways of working followed by corporate purpose and digitalization.

The level two relevance included categories that revolve around the driving of innovative and responsible corporate as well as cyber security new communication models and corporate governance

The level 3 relevance issues gravitate around the management of organizations in the face of impactful global challenges such as climate change and social inequalities so brand activism Climate emergency and the green economy diversity and inclusion the 2030 agenda for sustainable investment and non-financial reporting.

The report observed 80.3% of surveyed organizations are actually championing the adaptation to the context of a world pandemic and ultimately this seems to be the most relevant trend for most corporates which is unsurprising given the disruptive nature of the

RELEVANT TRENDS FOR PROFESSIONALS

- RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP
- ADAPTING TO COVID-19
- REPUTATION
- NEW WAYS OF WORKING
- PURPOSE
- DIGITALISATION

GLOBAL TREND RELEVANCE RANKING FOR ORGANISATIONS



current pandemic. Professionals also are taking into consideration the development of areas related to the digitalization of their organizations as well as new communication models where the management of intangible assets are concerned many notable trends consist of corporate purpose managing reputation and reputational risk cyber security and new ways of working.

Organizations are steadily moving toward a lesser degree in areas that include diversity and inclusion climate change and green economy and responsible leadership. Other areas that have the least Focus include Corporate Governance brand activism non-

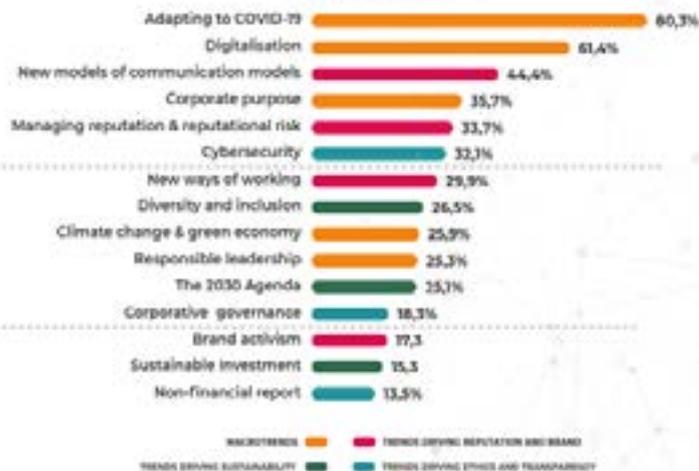
financial reporting and sustainable investment.

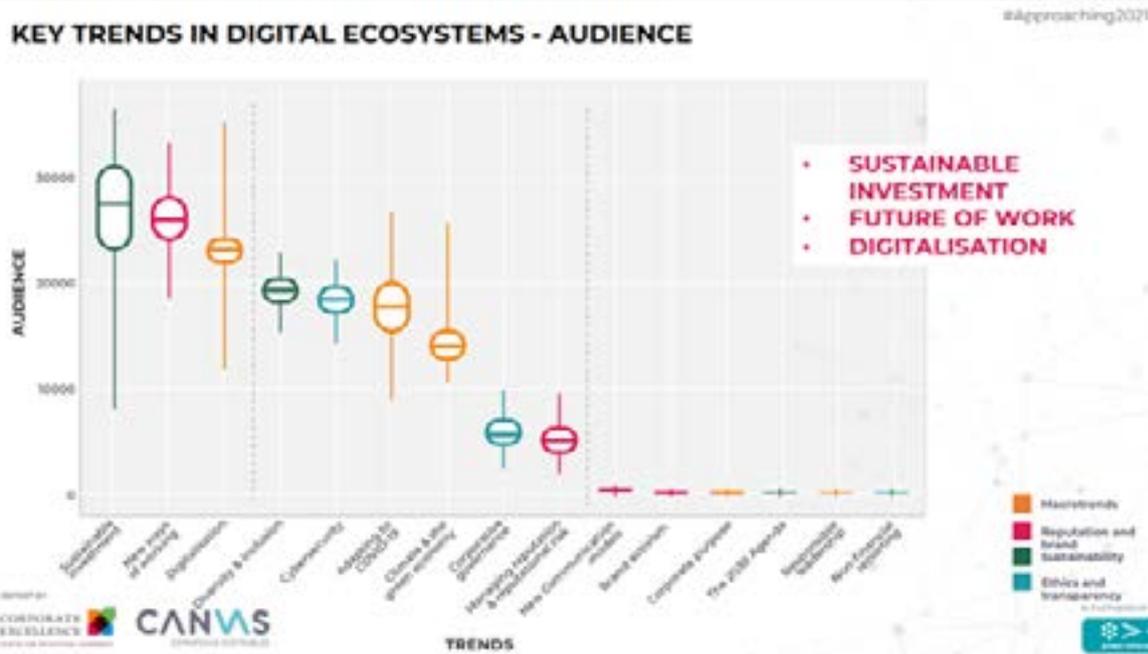
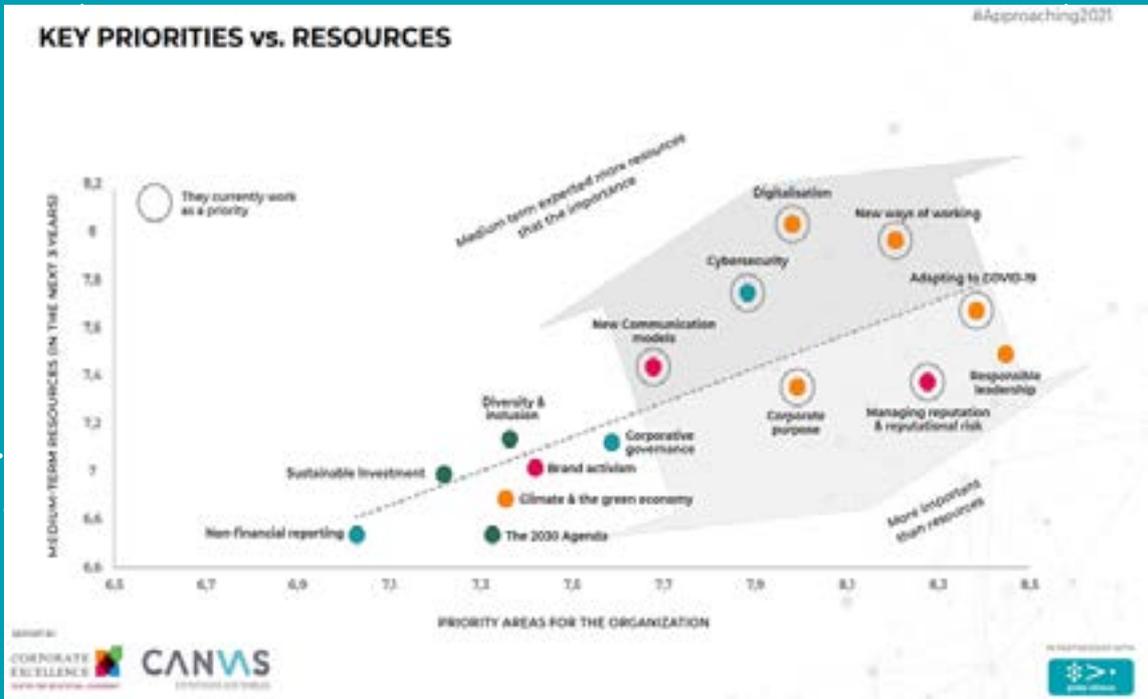
Many organizations are foreseeing digitalization adapting to post-pandemic normal as well as new ways of working as the priorities to look out in the future of the business agenda. Two areas that businesses will be focusing the least on will be climate change and the 2030 agenda as aforementioned. It is worth noting that although responsible leadership came at the top as the most relevant the most important trend for business management organizations are not placing significant investment in this particular area no are they seeing long-term Investments on the same.

TRENDS BEING WORKED ON THE MOST

- ADAPTING TO COVID-19
- DIGITALISATION
- COMMUNICATION
- PURPOSE
- REPUTATION
- CYBERSECURITY

AREAS IN WHICH ORGANISATIONS ARE WORKING ON THE MOST





MACROTRENDS

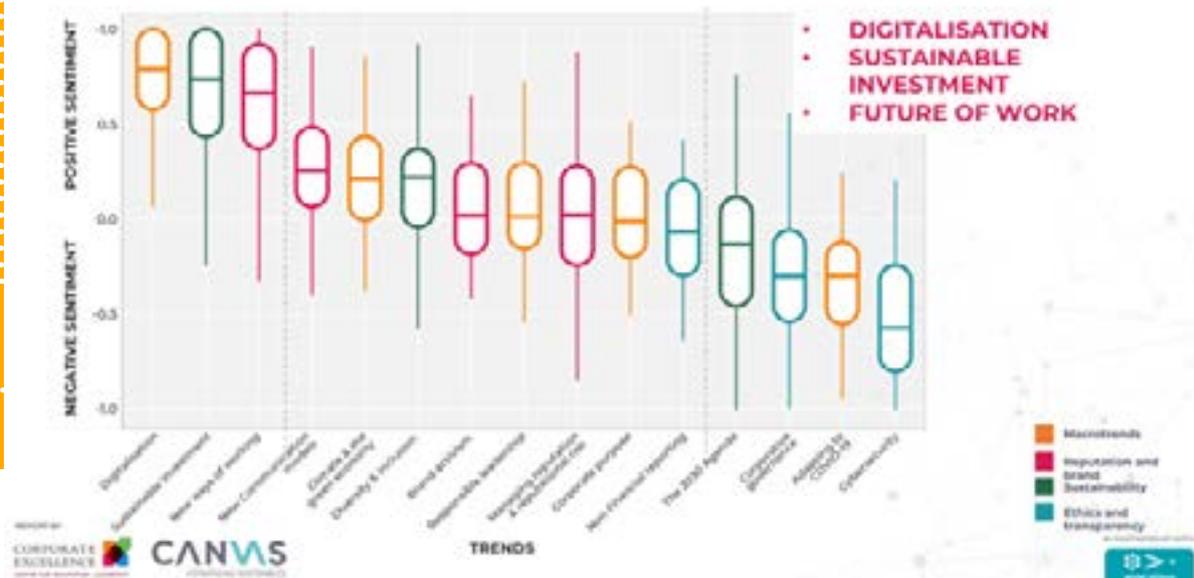
For the surveyed professionals strengthening responsible leadership is the most relevant tenet with the relevant score of 8.4 out of 10 during the covid-19 pandemic. Leaders of various organizations have had to enforce difficult decisions that have had an impact on various aspects of its operations that include people and economic results. As a result 69.9% professionals indicated the pandemic has inevitably altered the leadership within their organization regardless of size. Companies must ensure that they respond to these changes with a transformed style of leadership based on values, purpose and environmental impact

among other factors to consider. The respondents also revealed that the most critical leadership skills for the next 10 years were empathy 74.1% transparency 69.6% and long-term vision as 69.6%.

The pandemic has instituted various impacts in the workplace at 86.8% in communications 64% as well as in products and services at 52.9%. Most professional interviewees indicated that to understand the new reality and promote successful decision-making they undertake work sessions internally and follow trends while analyze reports and studies.

KEY TRENDS IN DIGITAL ECOSYSTEMS – SENTIMENT

#Approaching2021



Purpose is one of the most relevant trends and is also a driver of profitability risk mitigation and long-term organizational transformation many professionals believe that organizations should focus on key factors including the integration of purpose within the business environment 64.7% brand positioning 57.5% as well as the communication of purpose to stakeholder groups 56.9% .

The current pandemic has driven the development of various digital solutions in all personal and professional fields. This report finds that digitalization is amongst the five most relevant trends for executives and the second-most prioritized trend for corporates. Towards this end companies are prioritizing the development of internal measures for work planning as well as the improvement and efficacy of their processes.

In a situational context beguiled by health and economic issues it is no surprise that the pandemic is linked to global environmental issues. However, only 25.9% of the respondents confirmed that their organizations are working towards prioritizing green economy and climate emergency. This was seen majorly due to lack of resources or specialized teams and budgets. Most common measures being put in place by many companies is waste management and reduction policies, while other companies are going ahead and implementing measures towards reducing emissions and quantifiable targets thereby scaling their carbon footprint in line with international standards.

REPUTATION AND BRAND TRENDS

Managing reputation alongside other risks that come along with it is the third most relevant topic in organizational management getting a score of 8.3 out of 10. 33.7% of professionals and experts state that their organizations are working within this area, and of these, 69.7% state that reputation is seen as being more critical in many organizations than it was before the covid-19 pandemic.

Along with the pandemic new dynamic ways of handling the business environment has emerged such as meeting new stakeholder expectations in line with the pandemic.

The challenge of measuring the impact of intangible metrics and translate them into tangible business indicators is also another factor that most respondents gave as a major issue in determining business trajectory.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought with it a new normal as far as work-life was concerned. The work-from-home directive meant that radical new ways of doing business instantly became a priority. 29.9% of organizations are making new ways of working a priority and it is currently second most critical trend

69.7% state that reputation is seen as being more critical in many organizations than it was before the covid-19 pandemic.

as far as investment is concerned. The biggest challenge being faced by many professionals as far as adapting to the future of work gravitate around obtaining additional resources for digitalization (46.7%), adaption and integration of advanced technologies (43.3%). The respondents also noted that lack of long-term remote work strategies and the resistance of senior management to change were seen as challenges to adapting the future of work. Going forward, most professionals indicate that they would like flexi-working hours to be a key consideration within their business environments.

44.4% of executives stated that they are creating new communication models that embrace factors such as contextual intelligence, the environment and dialogue with stakeholders which will be critical to adapting to audience demands within the context of the post-Covid-19 environment and the future of work.

The expectation of most audiences is that brands connect with their reality, and to ensure the success of this though, those pushing the brand must understand the brand and not just a logo. There also must be consideration of employees' attitudes towards the brand building process, including brand management that is stakeholder-inclusive not just for the brand consumers.

SUSTAINABILITY TRENDS

Among the processes underscored for the promotion of diversity in the workplace according to the Survey were commitment to company equality and diversity by company leadership (61.7), development and execution of equality plans (56.7%) training for employees in equality and diversity (55.8%) and development of work-life balance policies (43.3%). 40% of executives indicate that the main hindrance to better equality, diversity and inclusion is in the corporate culture of the organization.

63.7% of executives interviewed responded that the prominence of sustainability within their organizations has risen significantly since the pandemic. However, the actual action to promote this within most organizations has dropped to 25.1% compared to the previous year. This notwithstanding, most organizations have defined sustainable goals that

are quantifiable as their contribution to the 2030 Agenda.

Apart from including the Sustainable Development Goals into their business strategies and investments, organizations are working on identifying priority SDGs (57.5%) as well as developing sustainability investment strategies in line with the 2030 Agenda (47.8%).

63.7% of executives interviewed responded that the prominence of sustainability within their organizations has risen significantly since the pandemic.



ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY TRENDS

Due to the increase in dependence on new normal strategies such as online interactions, this paradigm shift has led to challenges in preserving security on these platforms across audiences. 32.1% of the respondents state that cybersecurity is one of the main challenges within their work environments. This is also the third most critical issue especially in light of future investment and resources.

Within organizations, corporate governance is currently facing shifts that need urgent redress that includes effective adaption in order to respond to global challenges, an issue that only 18.3% of corporates are working towards mitigating. However most respondents state that they are advancing in the development of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) commitments that include; adoption of new regulations, creation of ESG committees, fostering organizational transparency and accountability, contribution to the society and stakeholder dialogue.

70.7% of those interviewed hold the view that companies wishing to be successful need to equip their management with skills in managing values, corporate culture, purpose and reputational risks. A further 56.5% state the management of organizations should promote ethics and anti-corruption.

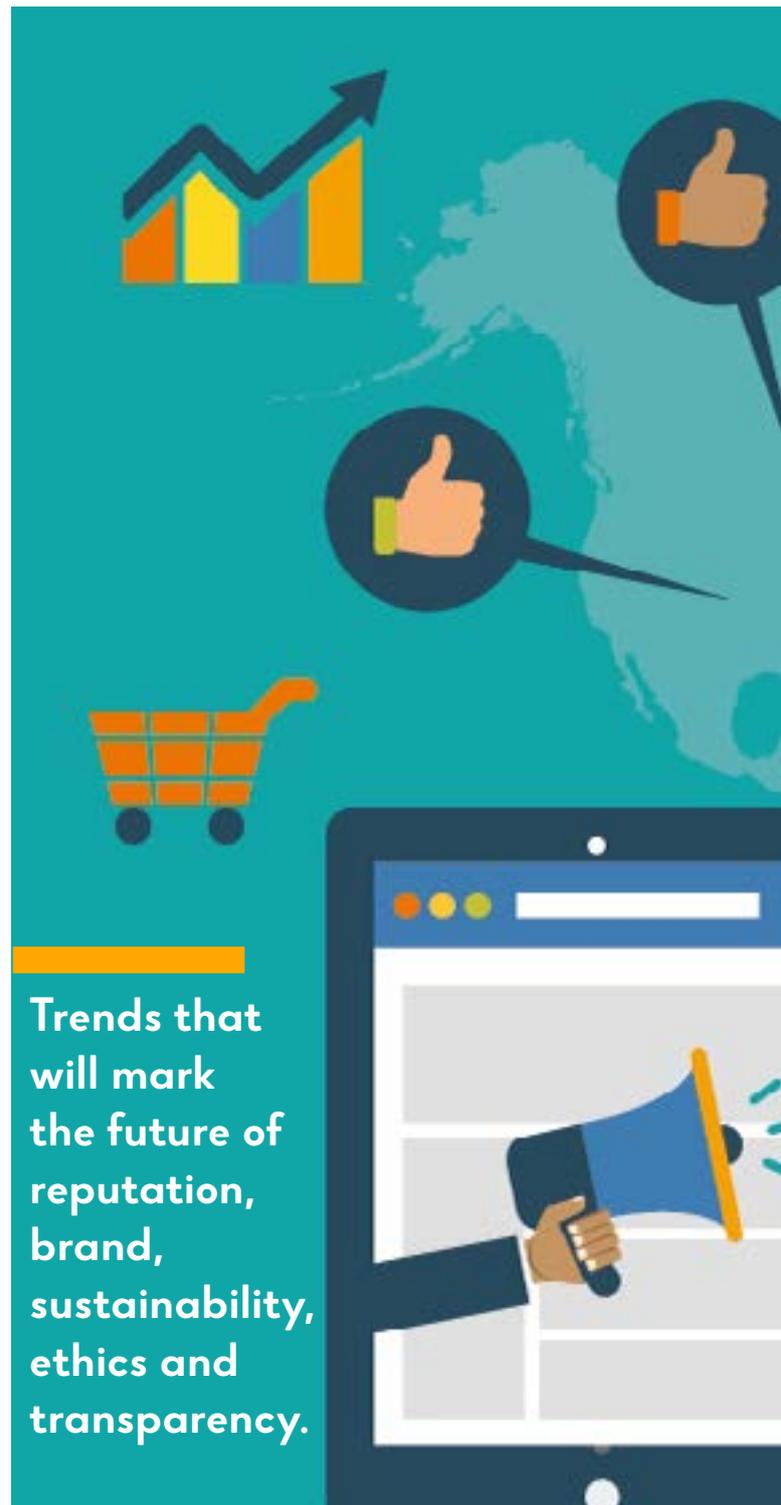
66.7% of the respondents are in agreement with the idea of standardizing or moving towards a common taxonomy or framework for non-financial reporting which responds to major issues in this particular area.

Data collection and business coordination (50%), lack of non-financial metrics (44.1%) and the lack of a standardized methodology for qualitatively defining indicators (42.6%) are seen as the major challenges facing non-financial reporting.

Report has been done across 126 countries worldwide and Global Alliance through our partners and universities across the world are excited to participate in the report.

Approaching the Future 2021: Trends in Reputation and Intangible Asset Management

strongly highlighted trends that will mark the future of reputation, brand, sustainability, ethics and transparency. The Report also presents the results of approaching the future and was primarily targeted at enabling PR professionals understand the new paradigm shifts within our new normal working environments.





Repositioning agencies for the next 50 years

In October 2020, McKinsey and Global conducted a survey of executives, intended to unearth the overall impact brought on by the Covid 19 pandemic, which had turned the world on its head months prior. The study revealed that the companies had “accelerated the digitization of their customer and supply chain interactions and of their internal operations by three to four years.”

Nearly all respondents surveyed said that they had to come up with at least temporary solutions to meet the new demands, and fast. This was a crisis that was unprecedented in living history, and adaptation was critical to survival.

As the McKinsey study further revealed, companies were forced to cover a decade of technological advancement in a matter of days; technology is now an integral part of corporate business.

The Covid 19 pandemic and its aftermath pushed businesses over the technology tipping point, and changed how business is conducted henceforth. From government offices that had never considered work from home programmes embracing flexi-time, to schools adopting e-learning and forcing parents to invest in the relevant gadgets. Even the most tech-averse had no choice but to embrace what the world collectively regarded as “the new normal.”

To quote the McKinsey study. “digital adoption has taken a quantum leap at both the organizational and industry levels.”

The current business environment is both drifting and disruptive, and is characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. Businesses are required to react quickly to ongoing changes that are unpredictable and out of their control, and to take action without certainty. The environment has also become unfamiliar, outside the realm of expertise and with many interdependencies. The future, it seems, is tech-driven, and strategies for surviving beyond the pandemic must be hinged on the same.

Public relations as a field is just as affected as many other professions, and will need to adapt not just from a technological perspective, but by also becoming more strategic, interactive, and data driven.

The world is already giving us a taste of the future. In April 2021, hundreds of drones illuminated the sky in Shanghai, China, giving residents a light show that culminated in a giant QR code, which was effectively a billboard by Chinese video-streaming Bilibili, promoting the first anniversary of the China release of a Japanese role playing game called Princess Connect! Re:Dive. It was certainly an attention grabbing spectacle, which elicited mixed reactions, but in a country that relies on QR codes for everything from paying for groceries to ordering in restaurants, it had the desired impact.

This, of course, leads us to a necessary conversation on the future of advertising, including giant billboards projected in the sky. The PR agency of the future must be able leverage on technological tools that are increasing day by day. Consider this: currently, there are over a hundred social media platforms, not counting those are available only in specific countries or regions. We’ve come a long way from My Space and Hi-Five.

Competitive PR firms will also need to employ efficient, competent and confident use of data. If you want to survive in the future as a communication professional, you will have to learn how to deal with numbers and data. Otherwise, you won’t be able to advise and act strategically to make the biggest impact. Informed decisions are those that are based on real data, numbers and trends that tell you what’s working and what’s not.

Strategic means thinking about outcomes, not outputs. The PR agency of the future will have to dig deep and buttress the client’s needs and corporate goals. That way, the agencies will act as trusted advisors who can help their client get to where they need to be.



In future, and from what we have seen happening today, people will make decisions through the content that they find on their own time, not through what we push out to them. Technology has moved us away from consuming pure text into interactive content platforms, such as Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram and other forms of social media.

The PR agency of the future has no choice but to keep up with these developments, which depict the changing nature of consumer behavior, demanding interactivity on multiple channels and in multiple formats. The agency must master all trends before clients start demanding them.

So which strategies should the PR agencies of the future employ in order to not just survive, but thrive? First, they must diversify. The Covid-19 pandemic destroyed agencies with singular business models. One of the biggest lessons of the pandemic has been the importance of creating multiple business streams, and diversification will allow for the survival of the agencies of the future. In addition, forward thinking agencies must also moult; that is shed off their old exoskeletons, and adapting to new environments where necessary. Rigidity and inflexibility is also the kiss of death in the post pandemic era.

Another survival strategy is co-ompetition, which is cooperating while competing. Basically, don't put all

your eggs in one basket, pursue joint ventures and other win-win business engagements that help spread risk. Then, think 'glocal': this means you need to think globally even when providing services at a local level. This allows clients to access global services at a local level, which when mastered provides a major competitive advantage.

Of course, we can't all operate in the same market at the same level, and identifying and efficiently serving a niche is an important strategy of both survival and growth. PR agencies of the future should identify a unique edge and run with it.

Pricing has long been touted as one of the key principles of marketing, and in the era of diverse choices and disrupted supply chains, your agility and affordability will either make or break you. You don't want to undercut as it is not sustainable, or overprice because you will lose clientele; pricing remains a delicate balance between the two.

Lastly, focus all your resources on excelling at what you do, and focus on continual improvement. Look at Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton. Years of practicing and perfecting his tyre changes, critical to ensuring he clocks a timely win, means that his team can change all four tyres in 1.82 seconds. Now that is dedication to your craft.



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