



government
communications

Department:
Government Communication and Information System
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



THE RIGHT CONNECTION

Official GCIS Marketing and Advertising Newsletter

Issue 12 - October 2009

SURVEY

We would like to know what you think of the newsletter.

Please connect to the link <http://surveys.poll daddy.com/s/5BD4A6CC4EFDB688/> and complete the survey. Please note that your responses are anonymous.

We look forward to your participation.

THE PRESIDENTIAL HOTLINE: Call 17737 or 1PRES Fax: 086 681 0987; President@po.gov.za

The Presidential Hotline was launched officially on 7 October 2009. It extends government–citizen interaction such as izimbizo and demonstrates the Government’s willingness to listen to the concerns of the public. It is not only a complaints line. Citizens can call to share their views and provide solutions to the challenges in their community.

Members of the community should be encouraged to use the Hotline in the following cases:

- if they have failed to get a response to their queries from a government department, province, municipality or state agency
- if they have been turned away from a service office of government
- if they have already spoken to their public representative and their query is still

The Presidential Hotline is a last-resort platform that enables citizens to escalate their queries and suggestions to the President’s Office.

Government communicators should also encourage persons to send a fax or write an e-mail to the President’s Office if they cannot get through to the call centre due to the high call volume.



unresolved

- if they have already tried other government call centres without success.

FOOTBALL FRIDAYS – DON YOUR FOOTBALL SHIRT

There are less than 40 Fridays left before the long-awaited 2010 FIFA World Cup™ kicks off in South Africa. At a recent 2010 National Communication Partnership (NCP) conference, delegates were urged to encourage fellow employees and corporate South Africa to make the most of the event to promote the country and the continent.

Subsequently, the concept of Football Fridays was conjured to unite South Africa as an excellent host country – Team South Africa. By wearing a football shirt to work or socially every Friday between now and the start of the World Cup on Friday, 11 June 2010, you can share in a national initiative to show support to our team and the event.

The 2010 Organising Committee; the 2010 World Cup mascot, Zakumi; the Government Communication and Information System; the SABC; FIFA; and the International Marketing Council launched the Football Fridays initiative nationally on 4 September 2009.

The initiative aims to mobilise South Africans to learn and sing the national anthem, support our national team, Bafana Bafana, by attending games and to become good hosts for international events such as the 2010 World Cup.

Football Fridays originated as an initiative of the Southern Sun hotel group as a fun way for South Africans locally and abroad to be part of the excitement of the build-up to the biggest sporting spectacle to be held for the first time on the African continent. It is now a part of the nationwide anticipation of the kick-off date.

As part of the Football Friday initiative, fans are also encouraged to learn the Diski Dance.

It's time to show your true colours.

For more information about this and other exciting initiatives, please visit:

www.footballfriday.co.za



Advertising: the new Pied Piper?"

Odette Roper

CEO, Association for Communication and Advertising

Once upon a time when you asked a child what he or she would like to be when they grow up, you would hear something along the lines of: "an astronaut", "a fireman", "a doctor", "a nurse..." Today the response will probably be "I want to make lots of money". Why?

Psychologists worldwide suggest that advertising is impacting enormously and adversely on child development. This is because the volume of advertising has grown over the years and they believe this has caused a scourge of materialistic values among children. One psychologist calls it "narcissistic wounding of children" because in his opinion, children become convinced that they're inferior if they don't have an endless array of new products.

More than 30 years ago, cultural theorist Marshall McLuhan stated that society perceives the media's effect on us as poorly as fish perceive the water they swim in.

During the 70s it was debated that it was iniquitous to advertise to children. Consumer researchers argued that children have little understanding of the influential intent of advertising. There was even talk about banning all advertising targeted at children. That concept was soon ruled out during the 80's when new debates about program lengths, toys connected to TV programs like Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, ads for cigarettes and alcohol that appealed to children because of the use of cartoons saw the light of day.

The debate continues... I guess what we are lacking is the understanding about what children know about advertising and what they surmise from advertising messages.

A study conducted by Collins et al that

During the study, children were asked how honest they believed ads were. More than two thirds of the responses received indicated that at best, children thought that ads were only honest sometimes and, they understood that ads are based on the manufacturers' desire to sell their products. Even more interesting was the finding that the children were convinced that their parents are more affected by the TV ads they see.

That said, if the purpose of advertising is ultimately to inform potential consumers about the existence of a particular product and/or service, is it not reasonable to suggest that children use ads for its intended purpose? Collins et al argue that ads can be regarded as 'public service' because they provide the consumer with freedom of choice.

The study concluded that it is wrong to assume that children are "victims of advertising" because the research revealed that children are more astute than what most adults would like to believe and, that their ability to discern should not be underestimated.

When doing research for this piece, I found a special report entitled: "Marketing to Children" by Direct, a publication that provides the marketer's point of view - the opening line of the report is: "What do you call someone who makes post-purchase decisions? Answer: A parent."

I guess that says it all.

Whilst the ethics of marketing and advertising to children remains a hotly debated issue, the fact is that parents ultimately decide whether or not to purchase. Is it therefore also not the

included research from four countries, sought to determine whether or not television advertising mirrors television programming and real life, and if there is truth to the perception that audience flexibility is limited to the negative aspects of advertising.

parents' responsibility to teach their children about materialism, greed, peer pressure, discernment...or is that also the role and responsibility of advertising?

DOES WORD OF MOUTH MARKETING STILL WORK?

By Chris Moerdyk

Word of mouth advertising is not a subject bandied about much in serious marketing circles these days. It's usually just brought up in the context of small companies trying desperately to talk themselves out of spending money on advertising by insisting that they can prosper sufficiently by word-of-mouth.

When bigger clients bring up the subject, advertising agencies and marketing consultants usually cough politely and change the subject, not only because they don't consider word-of-mouth to be anything like mainstream enough, but also of course because there is absolutely no money in it.

So, I was amused and somewhat intrigued to read in the New York Times a while ago about a conference that took place in the United States organised by none other than the Word-of-Mouth Marketing Association under the theme Don't Advertise!

At first I thought this was some sort of advertising journalist's spoof but it turns out this is a dead serious organisation that attracted no less than 450 dead serious advertising and marketing professionals.

They listened to speakers telling them how to reach sizeable chunks of their target audiences by looking at alternatives to traditional advertising. "Buzz" and "viral" were words that were used in about every

And talking about the speakers, most weren't introduced as advertising executives, marketing consultants or any such mundane, old-fashioned title, but rather Marketing Medic or Manager of Influencer Marketing.

The majority of whom praised the efficiency and success rate of non-traditional strategies and just about everyone, according to The New York Times, "all but declared the 30-second TV commercial obsolete."

US marketers are apparently now reaching out to "evangelists," who are already die-hard fans of a brand and persuading them to spread the word through their existing social networks.

"A lot of our evangelists are evangelists because they simply love the product," said Laurie Weisberg, a senior vice president of Informative, a word-of-mouth marketing firm. "They don't need to be rewarded with discounts or anything like that."

Loosely borrowing from Malcolm Gladwell's best-selling book *The Tipping Point*, Weisberg lectured on the importance of using "influencers," or people who have large social networks and are good communicators, and "promoters," people who talk positively about a brand.

Which is exactly what the Obama camp did during the recent presidential election.

second sentence.

The conference was called "Word-of-Mouth Basic Training" but there were moments, said The New York Times, that the conference could have been mistaken for a religious convention. There were sessions titled Turning Customers Into Evangelists, Word-of-Mouth in Faith-Based Markets and How to Create Brand Converts. Two speakers explained how to Bring Brands Back from the Dead.

As the conference concluded, some attendees sounded almost awestruck about the possibilities of word-of-mouth marketing. "When you do word-of-mouth, you're finding out exactly what your customers are saying," said Parrish Johnson, the chief executive of Grapevine Marketing, a marketing and promotions firm in Atlanta. "That's what's scary."

Instalment 7: Social Media! What's that all about?

By Stuart Moerdyk

In this segment we're going to continue down the SMAERTO road to Brand Reputation Management. Due to the limited amount of space, I am touching very lightly on what is a subject of much debate and focus. Last month we chatted briefly about the "Search" part of SMAERTO (Search Monitor, Analyse, Engage, Report Technologist - although I like to think of the last T as Tactician...) With that covered, albeit very briefly, next we'd need to monitor the conversations where we've found reference to our brand, be it good or bad reference. The reason why we suggest monitoring is to avoid knee jerk reactions resulting in responses that are not thought out. We know that as employees, there lies an unwritten rule that you should defend the company or product at all cost. Although in most instances loyalty to the institution is appreciated, it is not always in the interests of the company – that is touching on call centre and customer relationship management a bit, but is important. Why? Well, in the Social media environment, we think it is important to appear to be on the side of the consumer, to be transparent in our intention and to take a genuine interest in getting resolution for the customer and his or her grievance. As soon as we come in fighting we're going to do more damage than good and everything we say from that point

Next week we'll get into more ways to use social media to engage your customers, promote your business, product or service or to maintain an elevated channel of communication with your target market.

In the meantime here is a bit of info to keep in mind.

Advantages of engaging in social media:

- Modern version of traditional PR.
- Effective word of mouth marketing.
- World wide focus group.
- Instant answers to business or technical questions.
- Brand awareness and reputation management.
- Get on top of market news.
- Grow your circle of influence.

As far as your website is concerned, additional attention creates the opportunity for links and traffic, which drives search rankings. This increases the potential to

on will be met with resistance. Remember that the social media environment belongs to the consumer and as long as we respect that we'll be rewarded with the riches that come from listening and genuine customer service – customer loyalty and a product or service that is truly reflective of what the customer wants.

So, we've "Monitored" the thread or conversation and we've typed up our response having "Analysed" the actual issue/s and the possible effects of a response very carefully. Now STOP. Take an hour or two away from the issue before posting the response and then return and "Analyse" any new posts or comments as well as the possible effects of your response again. If you're happy that:

- it is neither aggressive or defensive,
- it reflects the company and its goals in the best way possible,
- the response will foster an air of honesty and genuine willingness to set the record straight for the benefit of the consumer, and
- the response meets the needs of the original poster (OP)

attract people who want what you have to offer.

Here are some cautions:

- Social media can spread bad news too.
- Pitch and promote approach will meet with resistance. The secret is to find a new way to bring attention to your products and services that does not appear to be pushy.



Media writing

Thousands of media releases are being written every day, only to be discarded as unusable by the journalist.

WHY?

For one simple reason! Many writers of media releases have no understanding of the nature and function of a media release. Every release that a department/organisation distributes should form an integral part of that department's communication strategy. It is not an incidental, spur-of-the-moment form of

It is important to develop a method of getting your facts in the right order. There are several methods of doing this:

- Number the facts from one, the most important, to ten, the least important
- **Ralph Cohen's NIBSS** formula:

New information (the hard news, the main point or most important facts)

Interesting facts (the most important contributing facts)

Background (useful for putting the story into perspective but not essential to the story)

communication but a well considered, carefully planned flow of information designed to:

- Promote a specific image
- Position the department/organisation by reinforcing certain predetermined perceptions about it in specific target audiences, and
- Empower the chosen target audiences to understand the department / organisation and its actions
- Publicise our programmes, inform the public and put something on record.

To achieve this, every media release, whether routine or part of a crisis initiated damage control programme, should carry one or more predetermined and strategically important messages, designed to ensure that the chosen image is consistently disseminated and reinforced.

The job of a professional government communicator is to perfect the balancing act between journalism and copy writing in order to provide the media with accurate and objective news in a way that promotes the department/organisation in the way it wants to be promoted.

To keep everybody happy you must:

- know the department/organisation and its communication objectives
- know the various publics, their needs, attitudes and perceptions, and
- know the media and their editors as well as their editorial policies.

Writing for the media is a **logical step-by-step process**:

Step 1 Getting all the facts

Step 2 Getting the facts in the right order

Step 3 Writing the story

Unfortunately, like most things that are worthwhile, it is not quite as easy in practice

Selling points (from the department's point of view)

Superfluities (discardable material with no bearing on the story)

- Gut feel: **KISS** – **K**ep **I**t **S**hort and **S**imple
- Keep your media release as simple as possible and don't assume that your readers have the necessary background to understand your story. Use short sentences and simple words. Block paragraphs containing one thought each also help to keep your story clear, clean and understandable.

Once you have finished a story, sub your own copy and attempt to:

- **Check**: Make sure all your facts are correct and that your spelling and grammar is 100%
- **Clarify**: Where possible eliminate any areas of possible misinterpretation. This includes doing away with jargon, buzzwords and vague academic terms.
- **Condense**: Do away with unnecessary padding

Once you have done this, sub it again and then give it to somebody else to sub to ensure that you provide the media with a truly professional product.

10 points to remember!

1. Your writing must be accessible, clear and direct.
2. Your first paragraph must be punchy but avoid going over the top.
3. Talk to the journalist before you fax or e-mail the statement.
4. You should seek to inform and arouse the interest of both the editor and the journalist who is going to write the story.
5. Your statements must be newsworthy. Check this with the journalist because what is newsworthy to you may not be as exciting to a journalist.
6. Give your statement a title, not a headline.
7. Your typing should allow space for editing. Statements typed in double spacing are

as it looks on paper.

Media releases take on the form of normal, day to day interpersonal communications. Just as most conversations begin with a statement – DID YOU KNOW – media releases should also begin with the most important facts and work down to the least important contributing information in the form of an inverted triangle.

This is the way in which we would normally tell a story in the course of a conversation. For that reason it is also the most effective style of news reporting. Unfortunately, due to years of being taught to write essays in a completely different style at school, it is not easy to break old habits and switch to a news report style of writing.

preferred.

8. Never print on both sides of the page.

9. Provide all your contact details and where additional information can be obtained, e.g. website address.

10. In terms of lay-out, try to put all the information on one page and any variation of the following structure:

- Subject
- Name of the department
- The information you are communicating
- In the case of events, state the venue or place
- give the date
- indicate the benefits of your programme or project
- identify the beneficiaries
- Contact person.

Sources: **GCIS Government Communicators Handbook** and **PRISA – media writing by Peter van der Schyff CPRP**

Want to learn more? Attend PRISA's popular Writing Weekend with Peter van der Schyff from 23 to 25 October 2009. Contact naledi@prisa.co.za for more information.

YFM discusses youth issues

YFM, in conjunction with Mercury, hosted an Outside Broadcast (OB) on 23 September 2008 at the Mercury offices. Two YFM shows broadcast live, from 12:00 to 15:00 saw the lunch time show with Mpho Maboi and 15:00 to 18:00 with Dineo live on drive.

After every hour, representatives of various media houses and government departments were interviewed during the six-hour live broadcast. They addressed issues that face the youth today as well as future plans they might have in addressing these issues.

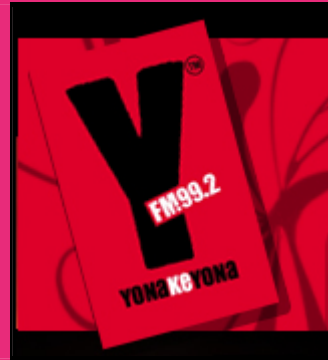
The objective of this project was to create a better understanding of the influence of media on the youth.

The Department of Defence, GCIS, the Department of Social Administration, the Department of Human Settlements as well as the Department of Sports and Recreation attended the OB.

Various entertainment journalist and editors from magazines and newspapers attended and have covered this event. Watch out for pictures of the event in AdVantage, Marketing Mix, The Journal, The Media, City Press, Sunday World, BizCommunity, MarketingWeb, Totally Mad/Publicity Update, You/Huisgenoot, People and The Afropolitan.

Guests who were interviewed were:

- Department of Water Affairs
- City of Johannesburg
- Johannesburg Tourism
- Soweto festival
- Dzinge productions



Government Communicators' Awards 2009

All government communicators are reminded about the the seventh annual Government Communicators' Awards to be held on 04 December 2009 in Sandton. These awards celebrate and recognise improvement in service delivery, innovation and excellence in government communication in all three spheres of government.

Nominations are open until October 2009.



IN BRIEF



Virtual 2010 stadiums will breathe life into five more township communities – Mhluzi in Middleburg, Makushane in Phalaborwa, Kathlehong and Kwa Thema in Ekurhuleni and Etafeni in Tembisa. The TV sites deliver football, education and entertainment free to township communities on giant television screens in family friendly environments. This brings the excitement of local and international live big screen football to a total of 15 township park sites around the country. The aim is to encourage community togetherness and bring social upliftment to those underserved areas.



The MOST (**Media Owner and Sales Team**) Awards recognises the top media owner marketing and sales teams in South Africa. Three hundred media planners, strategists, clients and media sales teams came together at the recently held MOST Awards. Ken Varajes, CEO of Primedia Unlimited, walked away with the Sales Legend of the Year award.

As promised in the last edition, we bring you a few pictures of last month's **GCIS Golf Day** which bade farewell to Babs Naidoo, former Chief Director of the GCIS Communication Service Agency.

The golf day was hosted at the Woodhill Country Club in Pretoria by the GCIS CEO, Themba Maseko.

Generous sponsorships by Mercury Media, Primedia@home, Formeset Printers, Media 24, Paarl Media, Shereno Printers Crossroads Distribution and Avusa made the successful golf day possible.



Mr Babs Naidoo at his last GCIS golf day.



A few words from GCIS CEO Themba Maseko to end off a successful day on the course.



Mr Tamoledi Selani, CEO of Mercury, at the prizegiving ceremony.



Nicolette "Hacker" Prinsloo



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