

The Alternative Press
**The New Power of Public Relations: Integrating the Focused-Reach of Social Media with
the Long-Standing Credibility of Traditional Media**

Savvy public relations professionals and business people alike understand the significance of the one-two punch thoughtful public relations delivers when social media is used to supplement and extend a message captured in the traditional press. While both social and traditional media serve to inform their audiences, using both to deliver your message ensures that you can reach your intended audience digitally with a credibility that comes with being published in a traditional medium. This combination often produces meaningful business results.

According to Angela S. Calzone, acalzone@changeandresponse.com President, Change & Response Strategies, LLC, www.changeandresponse.com, "... All public relations still start with a plan. Our plan dictates that we leverage publicity from traditional sources to garner additional online awareness and further placements. For instance when I or one of my colleagues are quoted in a newspaper or published in a trade magazine, we announce that coverage through our social networks whether it's LinkedIn, Twitter or Facebook. We also post on our website and if appropriate, we may provide a link to the online discussion groups to which we belong. This allows for SEO (Search Engine Optimization) of our company and allows our audience to contact us directly with immediate feedback. This "marriage" of traditional public relations and social media management lends itself to heightened validation and credibility while extending the message passed the shelf life of the traditional press, and keeps the conversation going around a topic that may be important to our clients and colleagues.

How does an organization find its audience on social media to effectively engage with them? One way is to identify digital discussion groups or association sites where your customers or constituents may be engaging. Follow posts and when relevant and appropriate, offer a response. For instance, if your customers are entrepreneurs, look to platforms that specialize in this realm. Next, look to the trade and business journals that might appeal to your client base. Again, become a member or a follower, and engage by responding to a post, offering a suggestion or retweeting something of value.

Slowly, you and your company will become known in that space as a thought leader. It will give you spot on market research as to what concerns your customer might have and how your company can alleviate that pain.

Angela Calzone brings up another point about pairing traditional public relations with social media – access. Back in the day, an editor had to be approached with a story idea and he/she would decide if that story would move forward. Today, editors, reporters and journalists are active on these sites and one can instantaneously send them an idea or you can post your own content and “share” it with your constituents.

She further states, “...Traditional pitching to the editor or producer still has its place, but today through the use of social media, you can directly reach your audience and share valuable information.”

How is integrating traditional public relations with outreach through social media working for your organization? Please feel free to e-mail me at amydelmanpr@verizon.net with any comments or suggestions.