

The new role of the PR professional

 By [Chirene Campbell](#)

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If you, like me, are in the PR and communications industry, you'll know that it's virtually impossible to remain out of touch with anybody beyond an hour or two. You'll also know that you have to be just a little bit schizophrenic (ok, maybe a lot) as you go about your daily tasks in this crazy, but wonderful world of PR and communications.

It's not uncommon during a 60 minute period of being in the office for me to read a Twitter stream; check out and respond to posts on Facebook pages that we manage; research content for a media release; oh look, a Periscope broadcast about an industry announcement - let me have a quick look; respond to that WhatsApp message and pitch an idea to a journalist via email or Twitter.

During that hour I've caught up on the latest news, assessed a few opportunities for clients, learned more about a relatively new social media tool; drafted most of my media release and hopefully sparked a story idea with a journalist contact.



Image via Pxabay

Despite wanting, needing an invisibility cloak, it's a hell of a lot more difficult to stay out of touch than to be in touch these days. Yes it's necessary to have balance in your life and as part of a husband/wife team that works from home with two teenagers, I know that very, very well. But, to remain effective and relevant for ourselves and for our clients, we need to be as informed as possible, and aware of new industry trends and communication tools that impact how we communicate, motivate and distribute content.

In my view the press release is not dead, it's just been reincarnated. The basis of many communication processes starts with the humble press release - it contains the salient information that our clients wish to share and which the journalists use to evaluate whether the core message or campaign adds value to their media platform or not. From there it metamorphoses into social media posts and interview motivations, amongst others.

I think we also need to be cognisant that we're no longer dealing with just words - we all know how crazy life has become and as a result, our attention spans are getting shorter (if you're still reading this, well done) and video content and pictures are fast becoming preferred means of communication. Did you know that Facebook, Google and YouTube are our country's biggest go-to options when we're looking for information? So don't forget to include visual stimulation for your audience in the form of pictures, sound, video, infographics, etc.

The bottom line is that at our most basic level, we thrive and rely, on human communication from each other to learn, to be entertained, to be informed and to be connected. There are so many ways to communicate, but the trick is to find out where your intended audience is spending their time and to be in the same space, providing content in their preferred format, not yours, to make a real connection.

ABOUT CHIRENE CAMPBELL

Chirene Campbell is the Managing Director of Owlhurst Communications. Chirene has 19 years in the PR consultancy environment and a great love for media relations and content creation. After joining Owlhurst Communications in 2003, she took over the business in 2010 and has been running it since, together with her hubby Mark. She is a self-confessed social media addict and gym bunny. Mother, communicator and the bagpiper's wife. Connect with her on Twitter [@ChireneCampbell](#).

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