

So many channels. So much information. How do you compete?

 By [Marie Yossava](#), issued by [Grapevine Communications](#)

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Social media has changed the PR landscape irrevocably. The challenge now facing practitioners is this: how do you effectively convey your clients' message in an environment where audiences are distracted and fragmented?

The answer: everything you say needs to be short, vibrant and visual. Today's audiences are more influenced by what they see than what they read or hear – just think of the number of video clips and photographs that go viral if you need proof.

Are there advantages to this new way of communicating? Yes, especially when you consider that you have far more options for engaging with consumers than ever before. For instance, you're no longer restricted to sending releases that have been planned far in advance. How about sending a spontaneous snap of your client's product or services over Twitter, Facebook or Instagram? This is an approach I've employed as PR for a renowned lifestyle estate, and it's proved very effective. After all, a picture of the sun setting over the 18th hole says far more about the lifestyle than a wordy release could convey.

This style of communication is less formal and more interactive, so consumers find it easier to relate. It forces brands to be more human. We start engaging in the first person, as if we have known our captive audience our whole lives.

The caveat, though, is that clients have to adopt a new mindset, and must be ready to allow a third party freedom of expression, so long as they have committed to the client's media guidelines.

There's still ample room to engage with consumers and business on a formal (or, if you prefer the term, professional) level in traditional media, but you can leverage the content, and expand its reach, by repurposing it for other platforms.

Remember you have split seconds to engage with target groups, grab their attention and say it succinctly. But used correctly, a split second is all you need.

ABOUT MARIE YOSSAVA

Marie Yossava, founder and owner of Grapevine Communications, embarked on a PR/communications career more than two decades ago. In the past twenty years she has built a solid media relations consultancy, which focuses exclusively on media relations.
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