

4 PR business trends you can expect in 2020

By [Mimi Kalinda](#)

16 Jan 2020

It's the start of a new decade, and 2020 is certain to mark a shift in focus when it comes to the public relations (PR) and communication landscape. Based on recent observations, this year won't be business as usual - especially as the significance of PR activities is growing across all industry sectors. These are 4 PR business trends that you can expect to see dominating the industry this year:



Mimi Kalinda is the Group CEO and co-founder of Africa Communications Media Group.

1. A rising interest in crisis management systems

More and more businesses are realising that crisis management systems are not just for risqué or controversial brands. Virtually any brand is at risk of being on the receiving end of negative public sentiment or even an all-out crisis. To minimise the occurrence and/or the adverse effects of a crisis, preparation is key.

This involves both prevention plans, as well as implementation plans in the unfortunate event that a crisis does break out. PR specialists play a pivotal role when it comes to minimising public fall-out and brand reputational damage, and companies will be tapping into their expertise as a means to protect their image and boost positive brand perceptions.

2. Data and insight-driven communication strategies

There has already been a definite shift towards more data-driven and user-insight based content. This comes as consumer markets are becoming ever more discerning when it comes to the content they consume – demanding relevant and relatable material from both private companies and public institutes.

Brands are increasingly recognising the need to use research methods such as audience perception audits and industry insight reports as blueprints to creating effective, result-focused PR and communication campaigns.

3. Authentic and user-centric PR communication

The customer experience (CX) element of communication can no longer be ignored, and this year user-centric approaches will take the fore. Again, this is in response to consumer behaviour research showing that audiences want authentic, personalised content that resonates with them and adds value to their lives in some form or another.

Communicators need to have a deep understanding of the environment a brand operates within – its industry, audiences, competitors and socio-political landscape. Global brands, in particular, will be partnering more with in-country PR teams to ensure that communication is customised and localised to suit each specific geographic and demographic market segment.

4. PR specialists as full-scope content creators

Until now, brands have been using multiple suppliers per campaign for various communication activities (such as video production, written content, event planning and marketing collateral). However, moving forward, more companies will be opting to use a single, full-scope PR and communication service provider to manage all campaign and marketing needs.

Both clients and the PR agencies themselves are moving towards a single-supplier model that embraces an integrated approach to communication. This is because such an approach promotes consistency of messaging, effective integrated distribution across all consumer channels and the convenience of a single point of contact.

While these are just a few developments you can expect to see in the coming year, an overall trend for 2020 will be a growing number of companies partnering with PR specialists as business consultants that positively contribute to a brand's visibility, standing and bottom-line objectives.

Leading PR agencies will be moving away from simply being suppliers of basic services, and instead, will serve as research-driven, informed and business-savvy advisors who work closely with brands to provide result-based, personalised service offerings.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Miri Kalinda, originally from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda and raised in South Africa, is the Group CEO and co-founder of Africa Communications Media Group, a Pan African public relations and communications agency based in Johannesburg, South Africa.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>