

PR firms either specializing in tech or with big tech practices showed major growth in 2011 as tech companies grappled with selling and explaining complicated products to a blizzard of audiences, according to the O'Dwyer 2012 technology PR firm rankings.



Trufelman

Trylon SMR, New York

Lloyd Trufelman, president, said tech PR practitioners need to embrace digital media but as a complement to traditional media relations tools and techniques, not a replacement.

Said Trufelman: "In a rush to appear au courant, many PR pros have gone crazy over social media, often at the expense of time-honored and still relevant mainstay strategies. Some marketers are relegating the communications function entirely to Facebook and Twitter, without any PR expertise in the mix. Yet, those who rely entirely on Twitter or Facebook to advance their communications goals are drinking Kool-Aid.

As the Pew Research Center's State of the Media report notes, 'news organizations—old and new—still produce most of the content audiences consume'.

"The most viral news memes still originate and/or are amplified via mainstream media platforms, both digital and analog. There's still no single magic bullet for communicating. In fact, the increasingly fragmented audiences created as a result of the explosion of media outlets require that PR efforts be spread across multiple platforms. On one hand this may seem overwhelming, but conversely, this proliferation of outlets makes almost everything promotable. It's hard nowadays to not be able to find a media channel that is interested reporting on a particular topic, no matter how obscure. However, without good news judgment and editorial skills, it doesn't matter. You'd be surprised how many awful pitches or silly ideas can be expressed in 140 characters.

"As the first PR firm to embrace the blogosphere for media relations purposes, we see many similarities between the blogging craze of the last decade and social media today. Back then many thought that having a blog would take care of all their PR challenges, only to find out the hard way, that other existing media channels were still vital for getting the message out to key constituencies.

"Another current PR trend in the wrong direction is the rush by PR pros to get into the content creation business. Until recently, this kind of work was called an 'advertorial.' Yes, clients want it and there's lots of hours that can be billed while creating and revising corporate blog posts, Facebook pages and Twitter accounts. But in the end it doesn't truly advance communication as here's no valid third party credibility being created. It's still better to have a legitimate outside blogger or reporter write or Tweet something about one's company rather than have the company say it themselves.

"And speaking of billable hours, as Moore's Law continues to power the tech industry, the disconnect between the news cycle, which has now been digitally accelerated to a real-time dynamic and PR pros still consumed with wasting time and racking up hours via lengthy deliberations and extended approval processes, will continue to widen if not crack. In a flat-out world, delivering consistent, tangible media relations results on a flat retainer basis is the most effective way to demonstrate PR ROI."

