

Re-evaluating the way we work, communicate

 By [Lisa Dawson Biggs](#)

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2012 will be a year in which we will be forced to re-evaluate the way we work and the way we convey our clients' messages to the market. Here are my tips and predictions for the months ahead.



1. Count your pennies

The global recession is going to continue to impact on consumer behaviour, which will have an effect how we as PR professionals work.

2. Behaviour

Consumers' lives are stressful and busy. They have been inundated with conflicting messages and have become cynical. The advent of technology means that consumers do not take breaks from work. Emails accessed from cellphones means that work is taken on holiday.

We need to understand our consumers better and adapt messages, taking into account their state of mind.

3. Messages

As a result of the recession, consumers are doing more research before they make a purchase or believe a story. Value has become an important driver for purchase.

4. Costing

As the global recession continues, consumers and business will be watching their spending. This will continue to put pressure on PR companies to cost campaigns properly and appropriately. Key to this is also putting in place measurement criteria that show a ROI.

Sadly, while we would all like AVE measurement to be ruled out, the cost of measuring a campaign's credibility remains very high and often outweighs the cost of implementing the campaign in the first place.

5. Consumer Protection Act

Consumers are more aware of what they want and of their rights. Now, more than ever before, PR is about honest communication.

You cannot proactively promote a poor product or service. Consumers expect truth from the creators of information

6. Strategic thinking

PR will continue to become more of a strategic tool, with senior management coming to rely on PR professionals for everyday advice and direction. We are no longer media specialists but public relations specialists - we are returning to our roots.

In an age where consumers are embracing credibility and authenticity, rather than official brand campaigns, the

impact of PR is going to continue to be felt.

7. What about the workers?

The quality of PR practitioners entering the market will continue to be poor. The ability of young interns to write, communicate in full sentences and spell remains one of my biggest concerns.

There is no excuse for poor grammar and spelling; communicating a message effectively and properly in 140 characters is a specialist skill not to be sneezed at.

8. If you have nothing important to say - don't

Many businesses rushed into the social media and online space and helped created pages upon pages of useless information. The content was less important than being seen to be embracing the technology.

I believe that this trend is no longer the case. It is now more about providing relevant content, easy to find and navigate, that adds value and engages with the consumer in their personal space.

9. Give them the good news

Consumers are looking for the good news. It breaks through the clutter.

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