

Navigating complexities as communicators



By [Dan Mbyane](#)

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2022 has been a communication rollercoaster. It has been another tumultuous year. As the world was beginning to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, Russia invaded Ukraine. Communicators, especially news correspondents, were challenged to make sense of it all and bring us eyewitness accounts with great difficulty.



Image supplied. Dan Mbyane: "We have tough times ahead as communicators because our world is not getting any less complex"

In a world where opinion masquerades as the truth on social media platforms, in 2022 it has been a daily struggle to discern fake news from factual reports. Mainstream news media across the world has had a very difficult time regaining the trust of audiences.

Competitive and challenged

It is my opinion that the world of communication has never been as competitive and challenged for attention and veracity as it has been in 2022.

It's been tough and exciting all at once as communicators do their best to unpack, unravel, disseminate and deliver complex and controversial content in an impactful and simple manner. Writers, speakers, conversationalists, news correspondents, and storytellers have had to dig deep to grab the attention of their audiences.

Daily news agendas move at a faster pace today than before as the world grapples with significant events of all kinds, virtually every minute of the day.

To produce and distribute trusted news and information require significant resources, and therefore cannot be taken for granted. Communicators have had to be more agile than ever in a world that is beset with growing uncertainty, unpredictability, and volatility.

Fair, accurate and inclusive communication is a must, not a nice to have. It is essential to counter-spin disinformation which can destabilise civic life.

A media release must be complemented by social engagement for better reach and connection. Some of the world's biggest developments in 2022 happened on or via social media. It's all about authenticity and transparency.

Most pressing challenge

In my view, the most pressing challenge for communicators, especially in news media, in 2022 remains trustworthiness. The declining public trust in the news media and polarisation of news audiences affect all of us.

A case in point is the fact that the bulk of what we consume in mainstream news media here at home about the Russia-Ukraine conflict is predominantly from one side, the western news media. So, we are not getting a balanced picture to make up our own minds about what is really happening. It is not about taking sides. It is about hearing all sides.

Closer to home an example would be how mainstream news media will cover the leadership contest in the 55th national conference of the ruling party, the ANC, in December.

A tough time ahead

Being a highly political event, it will be critical to provide listeners, readers, and viewers with a fair, accurate, and inclusive picture so they are able to discern facts from fiction and make up their minds about what is really happening.

There is no doubt we have tough times ahead as communicators because our world is not getting any less complex. We do not know what 2023 will bring but communicators will have plenty of opportunities to put their skills, knowledge, and expertise to good use.

The main goal should remain to communicate facts as fairly and accurately as possible to afford our audience's information that will enable them to deal with all sorts of challenges.

ABOUT DAN MOYANE

My 4 decades of media and communication experience have aided me to offer in-depth training through AceCube PR to spokespeople, company executives and senior managers so that they are able to recognise and optimise opportunities for digital media interaction.

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