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April 22, 2009

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[100 Best Twitter Feeds for College Sports Fanatics](#)

Posted By [Site Administrator](#)

If you're crazy about your college sports, you'll be glad to know there's a great tool for keeping up with your favorite teams in real time — Twitter. You can follow coaches, schools, teams, and more through the service. Here, you can find out about 100 of the best Twitter feeds for you to get your college sports fix.

Schools

These Twitter feeds cater to specific schools.

1. [@GoDucksdotCom](#): Get the latest news from the University of Oregon Ducks Athletics from this Twitter stream.
2. [@RalphieReport](#): @RalphieReport offers updates from Colorado Buffaloes athletics.
3. [@txlonghorns](#): See what's going on with the Texas Longhorns from @txlonghorns.
4. [@bighouse](#): The Michigan Wolverines discuss victories and news in The Big House here.
5. [@aggies](#): You'll be kept up to date on developments from the Texas A&M Aggies through @aggies.
6. [@UNLVathletics](#): Get official updates from UNLV Athletics here.
7. [@PUTIGERS](#): Find updates on Princeton University athletic events from @PUTIGERS.
8. [@harvardcrimson](#): @harvardcrimson is the official twitter feed of Harvard Athletics.
9. [@NunesMagician](#): Sean Keeley discusses Syracuse Orange football, basketball, and lacrosse.
10. [@WPIAthletics](#): Here you'll find athletics news, events, and score updates.
11. [@DePaulAthletics](#): Here you'll find the official Twitter feed of the DePaul Blue Demons.
12. [cubuffs](#): You'll get the latest on the Colorado Buffaloes from @cubuffs.
13. [@BUAthletics](#): Find official updates from Boston University athletics on @BUAthletics.
14. [@osucowboys](#): @osucowboys covers anything and everything about the Oklahoma State Cowboys.
15. [@USCTrojans.com](#): You'll get full coverage of the USC Trojans from this Twitter feed.
16. [@UWSportsNews](#): Here you'll get sports news from the Washington Huskies.
17. [USInsider](#): Get the inside scoop on Princeton from Michael Cross, the Executive Associate Athletic Director for Princeton University.
18. [@huskers](#): Check out @huskers to see what's going on with the Nebraska Cornhuskers.
19. [@SyracuseStats](#): Learn about news, scores, and stats from Syracuse on @SyracuseStats.
20. [@Sidelines](#): You'll find updates on the University of Kentucky from @Sidelines.
21. [@BroncoNationNOW](#): @BroncoNationNOW is the Twitter feed behind the Bronco Nation blog and podcast.
22. [@ICGael](#): Iona College Athletics offers updates on this Twitter feed.
23. [@BuckeyeKev](#): Kevin Pressler is a fervent supporter of the Ohio State Buckeyes.
24. [@UWBadgersdotcom](#): Read news about University of Wisconsin Athletics from the Wisconsin Badger mascot.
25. [@sooners](#): @sooners offers a great source on information on the Oklahoma Sooners.

26. [@PB at BON](#): Follow Longhorn Mania with Peter Bean.
27. [@GoLSUTigers](#): Follow LSU football and more when you follow this Twitter stream.

Organizations

Follow organizations like the NCAA and conferences on these Twitter feeds.

28. [@NCAA](#): You'll get scores and more from @NCAA on Twitter.
29. [@bigtenconf](#): Follow @bigtenconf to learn about the Big Ten Conference.
30. [@d3hoops](#): @d3hoops covers news from NCAA Division III basketball.
31. [@CentennialConf](#): Learn about the NCAA Division III conference from this Twitter feed.
32. [@NCAADoubleAZone](#): @NCAADoubleAZone discusses news from the official blog of the NCAA.
33. [@NCAANews](#): Read news about college sports through @NCAANews.
34. [Pac10Rivalry](#): Follow the Pac10 through this Twitter feed.
35. [NCAC](#): Keri Luchowski offers updates from the North Coast Athletic Conference.
36. [@SECSportsUpdate](#): You can find official news on the Southeastern Conference from @SECSportsUpdate.
37. [@FastTimesSEC](#): Here you'll find news and commentary about SEC football.
38. [@BigTenNetwork](#): The Big Ten Network is all about Big Ten fans talking about sports.
39. [@BehindtheNCAA](#): You can get inside info on college sports from @BehindtheNCAA.
40. [@caazone](#): Get coverage of the Colonial Athletic Association at @caazone.
41. [@BigWestMBB](#): Follow men's basketball in the Big West Conference through @BigWestMBB.
42. [@atlantic10](#): Through @atlantic10, you can follow the happenings of the Atlantic 10 conference.
43. [@BigTen_Score](#): @BigTen_Score serves up scores from the Big Ten conference.
44. [@TheMWC](#): Check out @TheMWC to get official news from the Mountain West Conference.

Coaches

These Twitter feeds feature head coaches and more.

45. [@CoachMiles](#): Tim Miles is the head coach of CSU men's basketball.
46. [@Ryan_Darcy](#): Ryan Darcy is the pitching coach for Manhattan College baseball.
47. [@CoachSark](#): Follow Coach Steve Sarisian, the head football coach at the University of Washington.
48. [@utesoccer](#): Rich Manning is the coach of the women's soccer team at University of Utah.

Events

Learn what's happening in bowls from these Twitter feeds.

49. [@ATTCottonBowl](#): This Twitter feed offers official news from the AT&T Cotton Bowl Classic.
50. [@FiestaBowl](#): @FiestaBowl is full of official news and sports musings.

Media

These Twitter feeds represent large media outlets for college sports.

51. [@espn](#): ESPN Sports News shares the latest from college football, basketball, and more.
52. [@AP_Sports](#): Follow @AP_Sports to be the first to know about sports news.

53. [@dailyorange](#): Get sports updates from The Daily Orange, the independent student paper at Syracuse.
54. [LATimesports](#): @LATimesports offers reports on what's going on in national and Southern California sports.
55. [@pretzel_logic](#): @pretzel_logic represents Philly.com's blog about college sports.
56. [@FOXSportscom](#): @FOXSportscom is the Twitter presence for FOXSports.com.
57. [@nbc_sports](#): @nbc_sports covers sports news from NBC Sports and msnbc.com.
58. [@nytimesports](#): Get news from the experts at New York Times sports.
59. [@osknights](#): The Orlando Sentinel writes about the Knights here.
60. [@BillPlaschke](#): This columnist at the LA times is also a regular panelist on ESPN's "Around the Horn."
61. [@OregonianSports](#): You'll find sports updates from The Oregonian here.
62. [@osgridiron](#): Find college football from the Orlando Sentinel on @osgridiron.
63. [@dmatter](#): Dave Matter is a college football writer for the Columbia Daily Tribune.
64. [@ESPN360](#): Check out @ESPN360 to find out which sports are streaming live.
65. [@orlandosports](#): The Orlando Sentinel reports on Central Florida sports here.
66. [@PSbasketball](#): Find coverage of Syracuse University's men's basketball from the Post Standard on @PSbasketball.
67. [@ESPN_Brackets](#): This stream follows the NCAA tournament.

Sports

Check out these Twitter feeds for specific sports, like football, basketball, and hockey.

68. [@RUTWncaaf](#): @RUWTncaaf covers NCAA football.
69. [@clemsonfootball](#): Rob Williams offers updates on Clemson Football here.
70. [@BracketBusters](#): @BracketBusters loves college hoops.
71. [@nikebasketball](#): @nikebasketball covers anything and everything basketball.
72. [@princetontigers](#): You can find updates from Princeton basketball on this Twitter feed.
73. [@bracketdobber](#): @bracketdobber is "blogging the bracket."
74. [@umhoops](#): @umhoops offers unofficial University of Michigan basketball news.
75. [@bbstate](#): @bbstate is all about too much college basketball.
76. [@CollegeHoopsNet](#): Find loads of knowledge about college basketball through College Hoops Net.
77. [@RUWTncaab](#): This Twitter stream will keep you up to date on college basketball.
78. [@psubaseball](#): Get Penn State baseball scores and more from @psubaseball.
79. [@TheCBB](#): Follow the College Baseball Blog through @TheCBB.
80. [@rhodybaseball](#): Follow the happenings of the University of Rhode Island baseball team from @rhodybaseball.
81. [@BadgerMBBall](#): Here you'll find official news from Wisconsin Badger Men's Basketball.
82. [@BracketBuster](#): Get NCAA tournament news from @BracketBuster.
83. [@huskerhellion](#): Find Husker football updates, links, rumors and more on @huskerhellion.
84. [@usffootball](#): This Twitter stream has official news on USF Football.
85. [@GatorsNow](#): @GatorsNow follows Florida Gators football and basketball.
86. [@BadgerMHockey](#): @BadgerMHockey is your source for Wisconsin men's hockey.
87. [@chnews](#): Get updated on college hockey news through @chnews.
88. [@BadgerRowing](#): See what the Badger rowing team is up to through this Twitter feed.
89. [@BSUHockey](#): Learn about Bemidji State University hockey from @BSUHockey.
90. [@CornNation](#): This tweeter is addicted to Husker football.
91. [@cffwire](#): Get college football fever from @cffwire.
92. [@BadgerFootball](#): You can get official news about the Wisconsin football team from this Twitter

feed.

General

These Twitter feeds cover a wide variety of college sports.

93. [@colleathlete](#): Karen Weaver is a college athletic recruiting educator.
94. [@FanNation](#): @FanNation is a sports social network from Sports Illustrated.
95. [@sbncollege](#): This sports blog is written for college sports fans, by college sports fans.
96. [@LearfieldSports](#): Aaron Worsham discusses collegiate sports marketing and beyond.
97. [@BleacherReport](#): Max at BleacherReport offers an open source sports network.
98. [@GSPWINS](#): Get sports picks and predictions from @GSPWINS.
99. [@thesportsdiva](#): Diva Cherie Lampley is a big fan of sports.
100. [@idiotsonsports](#): Here, three idiots talk about sports.

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Powered by Clickability

Sports stars, announcers reach fans on Twitter

- Story Highlights
- More pro athletes are using Twitter to share their thoughts and experiences with fans
- Popular and prolific twitterers include Shaquille O'Neal and Lance Armstrong
- Sports announcers use Twitter to share behind-the-scenes details with fans
- TNT has 11 broadcasters tweeting during the current NBA playoffs

By Larry Frum
Internet Broadcasting for CNN

(CNN) -- It's Sunday night during TNT's coverage of the NBA playoffs, and announcer Kenny Smith, aka "The Jet," is doing push-ups.

Not on camera, but on Twitter.

"Hawks look hot! CWebb, my boy Fabian and I doing 30- pushups P90X style every commercial.. getting summeer [sic] ready," writes Smith to his followers on Twitter, the microblogging site where you can "tweet" brief messages of up to 140 characters.

Five hours later, Smith ([@TheJetOnTNT](#)) tweets a follow-up: "Man, i think im gonna be sore." By Monday morning, though, he seems raring to go again: "Im not sore today! the workout didnt kill me... Im back!!"

Welcome to today's intersection of sports and social networking, where college athletes, professional players and even broadcasters use tools like Facebook and Twitter to share their thoughts and experiences with fans.

"Sports personalities are tweeting now. They are giving fans a reason to tune in to see their comments," says Adam Ostrow, managing editor of Mashable, a blog devoted to online social media.

Ostrow believes social networking sites like [Twitter](#) allow athletes to connect directly with fans without the filter of the traditional media. And while many athletes and teams have blogs and Facebook profiles, Twitter allows for a more personal connection between fan and sports, he says.

NBA All-Star Shaquille O'Neal ([@THE_REAL_SHAQ](#)) is both a prolific scorer and a prolific twitterer. His more than 700,000 followers get his tweets about everything from his diet to his recent trip to Graceland.

Seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong ([@lancearmstrong](#)) has more than 650,000 Twitter followers for such updates as "Eating pizza at home w/ the family. Good test today, kids go home tomorrow (sad), and a hellacious week of training coming up."

Hockey players also are getting into the act. Washington Capitals ace Alex Ovechkin ([@ovi8](#)) was on Twitter during the NHL All-Star game in January, tweeting about the festivities and responding to fan questions and comments.

One athlete, Milwaukee Bucks forward Charlie Villanueva ([@CV31](#)), even got into hot water after tweeting during halftime of a game last month. Villanueva's entry read: "In da locker room, snuck to post my twitt. We're playing the Celtics, tie ball game at da half. Coach wants more toughness. I gotta step up."

He did. Villanueva finished with a team-high 19 points, and the Bucks won.

Now sports announcers are using Twitter to talk to fans about everything from game action to what they do when the cameras are off. Fox Sports ([@MLBonFox](#)) [baseball](#) commentators and reporters are using Twitter to share tidbits from players and behind-the-scenes moments that the normal fan may not even think about.

Fox play-by-play announcer Joe Buck, one of the network's wittier twitterers, shared this recent tender moment from the broadcast booth: "Joe Buck: Cold in the booth in STL. Tim [McCarver] and I are bundled up. And snuggling. Hard to type. I think hypothermia is starting to

set in!"

TNT is using the same approach to connect with basketball fans during the current [NBA](#) playoffs. Eleven members of the network's broadcast team have joined Twitter to provide insight into games, offer nuggets from players and solicit fan opinions.

"TNT is an interesting experiment if they add analysis they don't give on TV," said Ostrow of Mashable. "More interesting if they give more non-basketball info."

And they are. When Kenny Smith started on Twitter, he wasn't really sure what it was or how it would work. So he just answered the default question on his page: What are you doing?

"I want to have some fun with it," Smith told CNN. "I love scavenger hunts. I might leave tickets to the conference finals somewhere and leave clues on my Twitter."

Twitter gives announcers another way to connect with sports fans, Smith said.

"You can give an attitude [on Twitter]," he said. "They can hear you on the air, but [on Twitter, they] get to hear your voice."

Smith hopes to continue revealing "behind-the-scenes" details in his tweets, because he wants his more than 1,000 followers to feel like they are there. And he plans to continue twittering beyond the NBA playoffs.

Increasingly, sports fans use social networking to talk back. For the Stanley Cup playoffs, the NHL recently organized "[tweetups](#)" where Twitter users met face-to-face to talk about whatever brought them together. Events were organized in 21 cities in the United States and Canada.

Laura Astorian, a self-described hockey blogger who follows the St. Louis Blues and Atlanta Thrashers, helped organize an NHL tweetup in Atlanta, Georgia. She said even though the city's hockey-fan base is relatively small, the fans rely on each other and use social networking sites like Twitter to communicate.

"The people who did come enjoyed the chance to sit down and talk hockey with like-minded people," Astorian said. "We did have fun, and there was mention of using the tweetup strategy for our draft party in July."

All About[Twitter.com](#) • [NBA Basketball](#) • [MLB Baseball](#)

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All-star panel tackles sports media issues

Seth Motel

Brown Daily Herald Staff Writer

Individual opinions now overshadow the true essentials of sports coverage, said Hall of Fame basketball player Bill Russell to a full Salomon 101 auditorium Tuesday night.

The Boston Celtic great was one of four members of a panel that discussed the role of the media in sports. He was joined by ESPN sportscaster Chris Berman '77 P'08 P'09, Providence Journal sports columnist Bill Reynolds '68 and HBO Sports President Ross Greenburg '77 P'10.

The event, titled "The Role of the Media in Constructing the Public Perception of Sport," was moderated by Luther Spoehr, a lecturer in education and history who studies intercollegiate athletics.

Russell, a youthful-looking 75, dominated the stage with his 6-foot-10-inch frame. The five-time Most Valuable Player and 11-time NBA Championship winner reflected on his mixed emotions regarding the media, especially their coverage of race in sports.

"The media approached me and talked to me as if I was part of a group," he said. "But they wanted me to respond to them as an individual. I didn't think that that was quite kosher."

Members of the media sometimes get preoccupied giving their opinions and don't report on the facts of the games, Russell said, adding that journalists said they knew more about professional basketball than Russell did on "at least two dozen occasions."

"That was one of the dumbest things I ever heard," he said.

The three media professionals each discussed their excitements and concerns regarding today's sports culture.

Berman, who has worked at ESPN since its inception in 1979, said today's "24/7" culture is blurring the line between immediate information and privacy.

In their haste to break stories, Berman said, some members of the sports media don't worry enough about getting the facts straight.

"Accuracy is another line that's being blurred," he said. "The possession arrow may be going in the wrong direction."

Reynolds remarked that sports coverage when he was younger only reported on "hits, runs and errors." In the age of satellite television and the Internet, fans know much more about athletes outside of the game.

"We have all types of access to people, obviously sometimes too much," he said.

One problem of overwhelming sports coverage is that it focuses heavily on professional sports and major college teams. Reynolds said coverage of Brown football games always used to be on the front of the sports section of the Providence Journal, but too many people now have a perception that "if it's not on TV, it doesn't count."

Spoehr turned the discussion to the media's increased coverage of college sports and the changing expectations colleges have of their student-athletes. Because enough people will watch, television networks now encourage schools to have their athletes play games during the school week, he said.

Berman responded that the public demand for sports continues to grow and networks can be hard-pressed not to broadcast more sporting events.

"Does that mean we need to have a quadruple-header on Wednesday night?" Berman said. "No, not necessarily."

Reynolds said schools are ignoring their athletes' educations in order to make money, but the public chooses to look the other way.

"No one wants to know how a sausage is made," he said. "This is a business. This is what we want."

Russell expressed concern that student-athletes don't get salaries and can only make \$2,000 a year working other jobs while colleges and high-paid coaches are profiting from their work.

"The student-athlete, unless he comes from a wealthy family, is compelled to live a life of poverty," Russell said.

Greenburg, of HBO, said media professionals highlight the glamour that comes with being a professional athlete but ignore the fates of the vast majority of collegiate athletes.

"For every Carmelo Anthony or LeBron James," he said, "there are hundreds of thousands of kids who are lost."

Just in the last generation, Reynolds said, too many college players assume their careers after college will involve playing professionally.

"Professional sports hangs over too many kids like it's the only option," he said.

Russell said he encourages student-athletes to finish college before attempting to become professional athletes. Even those who become professional athletes need to enjoy a full college experience, he said.

"The night before final exams — there's nothing in the real world that's going to top that," Russell said.

The panel took questions from two audience members, discussing rising ticket prices in sports and the ramifications of age restrictions in the NBA.

After the panel discussion, many audience members headed to Salomon 001 to watch a screening of HBO's 2000 documentary "Bill Russell: My Life, My Way."

Tuesday's event, sponsored by the Department of Athletics and the Student Athlete Advisory Committee, was the third recent symposium on sports.

Advertising Age®

How to Weather a Twitterstorm

Six Tips for Future Amazons and Domino's

By [Abbey Klaassen](#)

Published: April 14, 2009

NEW YORK (AdAge.com) -- Motrin Moms. "Dove Onslaught(er)." Thanks to Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, all sorts of new critics and activists are finding their voices amplified online. So what's a marketer to do when an online firestorm erupts?

The two most recent case studies are Amazon -- which spent the [better part of Sunday and Monday](#) as the target of a "Twitterstorm," as thousands of titles, many of them gay- and lesbian-themed, disappeared from its all-important sales-ranking system -- and Domino's, whose public-relations problem lies in a YouTube video showing two employees defacing a yet-to-be-delivered sandwich.

Related Stories:

[Domino's Reacts Cautiously, Quietly to YouTube Gross-Out Video](#)

PR Headache as Employees Tape Themselves Shoving Cheese Up Nose

[Forget Domino's; YouTube Video Is Crime Against Working People](#)

Viewpoint: Tampering With Food Harms Much More Than Brand Reputation

"Credibility is the currency of the 'new normal,'" said Steve Cody, managing partner and co-founder of Peppercom. "Tell me what happened yourself. Don't allow me to hear it from others. If I do, I'll lose my faith and trust in you. And, in an era when faith and trust has been tested to the breaking points, brands like Amazon and Domino's need to be a whole lot smarter and a whole lot swifter."

Here, six tips for if -- or when -- it happens to your brand.

1. Listen to the what -- and to the who. Sure, the usual advice about having a social-media-monitoring infrastructure is important, but not nearly as important as knowing exactly who's doing the talking and gauging where that might lead. Who's angry -- and how angry are they? Is the uproar isolated or widespread? Are these people your customers or not?

[Recent surveys](#) confirm that few women saw or heard about the Motrin ad that got a group of Twittering moms up in arms for portraying a baby as an accessory. When women did see it at a later date, more came away feeling better about the Motrin brand than feeling worse. Priority No. 1 has to be the people who make up the majority of your brand's customers. And that will be the question for Domino's as it

plots the best plan of response: The pizza chain needs to know not only how many people saw the video but who those people are and how likely they are to be current customers.

2. It's OK to say, "We don't know." By far the biggest issue most of the angry Twitterers had was that Amazon didn't respond until late Sunday and, when it did, the vague answer it offered to CNet -- the problem was a "glitch in the system" that was being fixed -- didn't satisfy the masses who had already spent the better part of Easter getting fired up. The next response from Amazon came Monday night, when it issued a statement calling the incident an "embarrassing and ham-fisted cataloging error."

Now, it's likely Amazon didn't really know what was going on -- at one point a hacker even tried to take credit for the issue -- but most social-media experts say that wasn't the problem. "A lot of people have this idea that you can only respond when you have every I dotted and T crossed and have figured out what's going on," said Jeff Rutherford, founder of Jeff Rutherford Media Relations. "It's perfectly fine if you say, 'We're aware there's an issue; we're not ignoring it, and we're working hard to get to the bottom of it.'" Amazon has always been tight-lipped from a public-relations standpoint and, in this case, it cost them.

3. Address the crowd where it's gathered. Understandably, companies don't necessarily want to call attention to a crisis by making a big, flashy statement. After all, in many cases (and some would argue most) these firestorms don't leave the insular communities in which they start. While a small number of consumers had heard about the Motrin debacle, the brand called further attention to the issue when it issued a public apology on its website and confused consumers who ended up there for completely unrelated reasons.

Amazon would have gone a long way toward quelling the uproar by addressing it on Twitter, where it was largely taking place. And had it swallowed its pride and tagged the posts #amazonfail, it would have been rewarded with hundreds of retweets -- valuable earned media from the crowd it had previously angered.

"You don't have to bow to the Twitter torches and do everything they tell you to do," said Jackie Huba, co-author of the [Church of the Customer blog](#). "But you can't stick your head in the sand and ignore this building, growing outrage about what you're doing." A little secret about human nature: Knowing someone is listening to you is often more important than getting exactly what you want.

4. Tone matters. In the case of Amazon, what grabbed several observers was the incongruity of its cold-sounding responses ("The problem is a glitch and it's being fixed") and the friendly, easy brand persona it has cultivated over the years.

"People don't expect companies -- even Amazon -- to be infallible," said Diane Hessian, CEO of Communispace. "They do expect those companies to want to learn, to want to engage with their customers, to want to listen hard, and to show genuine commitment to fixing the problems -- with the human voice that they've become known for."

5. Explain how you'll address the future. So Amazon's issue was a mistake, a cataloging error. Most people seem to be buying that. But what if it happens again? And how should Domino's assure customers its sandwiches are safe? Marketers must communicate how they will prevent future pitfalls.

"I'd rather be open and transparent about a problem such as the ones you describe, own up to it, explain why it happened, talk about what steps have been put in place to ensure it doesn't happen again and, critically, apologize for the mistake," said Peppercom's Mr. Cody.

6. Invest now to prepare for accidents later. Strong, emotional brands that have built up years of consumer goodwill seem to be more insulated from long-term hurt. Few consumers judged much-loved Whole Foods when its CEO was caught posting comments on financial sites under a fake name. Another consumer darling, JetBlue, has recovered valiantly from its Valentine's Day massacre, which left passengers stranded on board on a runway for eight hours.

Similarly, Amazon has built up a reputation for excellent inventory selection and customer service. While it's not clear whether the episode will have a lasting effect on Amazon's brand and, more important, sales, consider that at midnight last night the Twittersphere was abuzz with the Amazon news (the company had just released the mea culpa) but by morning it was no longer a trending topic on Twitter. Simply put, if people love your brand, you can sustain yourself through debacles.

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Information Technology

<http://chronicle.com/weekly/v55/i33/33a00103.htm>

From the issue dated April 24, 2009

Colleges Weigh 'Yes We Can' Approach to Fund Raising

By MARC PARRY

Washington

Rich Mintz thinks college fund raising needs serious help.

Bureaucracies are byzantine, messages leave alumni cold, and methods of delivering them are ineffective.

"Frankly," says Mr. Mintz, a bushy-haired fund-raising consultant who once aspired to be a medieval scholar, "I think that a lot of institutions have probably simply given up on getting anything valuable out of their alumni under 40."

His attitude could come across as off-putting, but Mr. Mintz boasts a unique calling card: The company he works for built the new-media arsenal that helped catapult Barack Obama into the White House.

Now the strategic-consulting and technology firm, Blue State Digital, is courting colleges. Some are welcoming the political rainmaker inside their wrought-iron gates. The University of Florida has signed on, swayed by Blue State's promise of sharper outreach and new-media tools to motivate a broader group of donors. The Brennan Center for Justice at New York University's School of Law has also used Blue State. The Washington-based company is in talks with several universities out West, including the California Institute of Technology.

But some skeptics question whether what works in the digital war room of a political campaign can translate into the academic arena. (Try this one: A new roof for our state-college gym? *Yes we can!*)

The world of college fund raising has grappled for years with declining alumni-participation rates. As technology shifts beneath fund raisers' feet, and young alumni evade their reach, institutions are looking at new strategies beyond the old tactics of direct-mail appeals and student phone banks.

The Obama campaign's mass rollout of Blue State's technology "increased the general public's comfort level with the kinds of tools that are going to benefit higher ed when it comes to engagement and giving online," says Andrew Shaindlin, executive director of the Caltech Alumni Association.

"They did us a favor," he says, "because instead of trying to explain to people what a lot of these tools

are, now we can actually talk about how to use them."

Sometimes alumni drive the conversation, says Robert A. Burdenski, an annual-giving consultant in Chicago who speaks to colleges on what the 2008 presidential e-campaign means for their yearly appeals. Many colleges have alumni who joined Mr. Obama's online community as campaign volunteers. Those alumni, Mr. Burdenski says, are asking, "If the Obama people can figure this out, why can't we figure this out in the university fund-raising office?"

The University of Florida came up with a simple answer. It hired the Obama people.

One of the country's largest universities, with more than 51,000 students, Florida signed on last year for what Mr. Mintz calls Blue State's first "full-service university relationship." The company was hired to prepare a plan that, according to Mr. Mintz, involves an e-mail and Web-based component in the annual-fund program.

The university's fund-raising foundation hired the consultants for help with its mass-appeal efforts in part because Blue State's background *wasn't* in higher education, says Carter Boydston, senior associate vice president for development. They had talked to other colleges, but none, Mr. Boydston says, seemed to know "how to replicate an Obama scenario."

The Chronicle visited Blue State's headquarters last week to hear the company's take on why the lessons of Obama can translate to academe.

The Art Deco, Depression-era office building, located around the corner from the White House, does not project an outfit pushing the frontiers of technology. The elevator opens into a waiting room where a giant TV showed President Obama giving a speech. A "creamy vanilla"-scented candle flickered on the table, and the décor along the low-ceilinged corridor mixed historical political photographs with Pop Art-style images of modern icons like the comic Stephen Colbert.

Alumni of Howard Dean's presidential bid established the company in 2004. The Obama operation came calling three years later, hiring Blue State to build a new-media department within the campaign and installing one of the founding partners in Chicago as new-media director. Blue State created the My.BarackObama.com site, the online hub where supporters created profiles, organized volunteers, set up personal fund-raising pages, and blogged.

Candidate Obama attracted lots of attention for exploiting social networks like Facebook. But the backbone of his campaign was a 13.5-million member e-mail list, says Thomas Gensemer, 32, who is Blue State's managing partner. E-mail was a gateway to other tools. And e-mail — or a special brand of e-mail — is key to what Blue State says it can offer colleges.

What Colleges Do Wrong

Here's what Mr. Mintz sees colleges trying. They'll send a message out of the blue. Often it shows a glitzy video. The message will be generic, a lofty appeal about the gifts that students got from the college when they were there, and the obligation they have to future generations.

"That kind of messaging doesn't work," Mr. Mintz says.

"I hope your sarcasm is coming across," says Mr. Gensemer, leaning forward with a laugh. "It's the ivory-tower problem."

Other things that don't work: When news coverage makes the moment right, the consultants say, you can't wait for a dozen people to approve an e-mail message capitalizing on the spotlight. You need to blast that message out *now*.

And newsletters. Blue State generally does not do newsletters. Those, Mr. Gensemer says, "are for bureaucrats."

Mr. Mintz is the firm's higher-education point person. The Harvard-educated, New York-based vice president for strategy studied relations among religious groups in medieval Iberia before giving up his pursuit of a Ph.D. at the University of California at Los Angeles. These days he speaks in the vernacular of a modern marketer. At 43, he describes himself as "old enough to be direct-mail responsive," and with glasses on he bears a slight resemblance to Al Franken. He has turned up on about a dozen campuses in the past several months.

The Blue State Pitch

Essentially, Mr. Mintz says, Blue State can help colleges reach more people and squeeze more money out of a broader share of constituents.

The strategy, in part, is to segment potential donors by their interests and by how deep a relationship they are willing to have with an institution, and to talk to groups differently if possible. If Blue State succeeds, people will feel part of an online relationship that feels more "authentic," Mr. Mintz says. When it comes time to click that "Give Now" button, the donation will come via a continuing conversation, rather than an out-of-the-blue "ask."

Say, for example, that you're in a capital campaign. The historic student union is being renovated. Yes, Mr. Mintz says, the college wants your money. But it would ask you as well to share stories about your experiences in the building.

"You never got a newsletter from the Obama campaign," Mr. Mintz says. "You might have gotten 200 e-mails over the course of a year, but each one of those was narrowly targeted, action-oriented, and situated in the context of an ongoing communications relationship. And that is what most universities, whether from the alumni-association side or the foundation side, are not doing well."

Blue State, whose retainer can range from \$10,000 to \$30,000 a month, is hardly the first to talk about building conversations or to hawk the potential of e-mail.

Colleges are "all over the map" in how they've embraced the tool, says Mr. Burdenski, the annual-giving consultant. Some are terrified of sending any e-mail, for fear of annoying donors. Others, he says, are doing "some really sexy things."

Creighton University is one of the latter. Last month the Nebraska college sent out an e-mail message asking people to cheer on the Blue Jays during March Madness. Creighton kept track of all the alumni who opened the message. Everybody who did so then got funneled into the Creighton phone-athon — and got an extra call.

Mr. Burdenski, who has consulted for Creighton, compares the strategy with how Mr. Obama revealed his vice-presidential choice: by text message to supporters, stockpiling the cellphone numbers of core activists in the process. For college fund raisers, the consultant sees it as a key lesson. They can use the Internet to sort alumni who don't want to be bothered from those who really care, and then single out the

true believers.

Two factors can add urgency to the alumni chase. First is the economy. Finance offices, looking for a sharper focus, are questioning the money that colleges spend on phone calls and paper mailings, Mr. Burdenski says. Second is the falling alumni-giving participation rate, a statistic that is used as a proxy for institutional quality. The rate has declined from 13.8 percent in 2001 to 11 percent in 2008, according to the Council for Aid to Education.

Experts cite different causes. Some say the availability of good alumni addresses is outpacing colleges' ability to cultivate new donors. Mr. Burdenski says colleges themselves have depended for too long on outdated fund-raising methods.

Mr. Boydston, the Florida fund raiser, agrees there is a need for change. He hopes to hone Florida's mass appeals, an area in which he feels colleges have lagged in comparison with nonprofit giants like the Red Cross. Blue State's recommendations for his university are expected next month.

Florida has raised \$900-million in its current capital campaign. But the vast majority of those dollars have come from about 500 people. Last year the annual fund netted about \$2-million, while the university raised some \$200-million over all.

The university tried tapping "Gator Nation" with e-mail solicitations, Mr. Boydston says, but the response rate wasn't good. What turned him to Blue State was as much what he observed at home during the presidential election as any company pitch.

Mr. Boydston's wife and daughter were involved in the Obama campaign. He watched them use the candidate's Web tools. He admired how easy it was to contribute, while college Web sites can impede donors with too many steps. He admired how the campaign could embed fund-raising appeals into a larger dialogue about issues.

Flaws in a Political Approach

Not everyone sees how political tactics translate easily to higher education, however.

Some university fund-raising officials and consultants point out that you can't muster the urgent passion for a college that Mr. Obama inspired in millions of supporters who saw his election as the best chance to reverse the decline of America.

The Obama campaign was a two-year dash aimed at a clear finish line. But colleges have a habit of pushing the finish line back, the skeptics argue. Alumni are asked to give again and again, in larger and larger amounts.

Colleges also need to hold on to alumni for decades, a relationship that can hit rocky patches, like when the child of a loyal alumnus gets rejected for admission. "What's the Obama system going to do about that?" asks Tony Allison, executive director of advancement-information services at Brown University. "Because you might have been a \$25,000-a-year donor. Now you're pissed. I don't want some piece of software soliciting that person. You want someone on the phone talking to them and explaining, 'Here's what happened.'"

Mr. Allison adds, "There's a lot of personalized detail that just doesn't seem to fly in a big Obama system, which is like this big giant vacuum cleaner sucking up tons of money. I guess I just don't see the

parallel with a university, or at least a Brown University."

At Florida the hope is that technology can build giving relationships.

People generally don't go to a Web site to make a gift, Mr. Boydston says. They get pushed there. The Obama campaign pushed. Florida does not have a tradition of pushing very hard.

"We want to have the vehicles out there to push people to our little button that says Give Now," Mr. Boydston says. "Which is what, ultimately, Blue State did. Millions of times."

<http://chronicle.com>

Section: Information Technology

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Scientists warn of Twitter dangers

- Story Highlights
- USC study says rapid-fire Twitter and news updates are too fast for brain
- Scans show humans respond rapidly to pain, but not compassion, admiration
- Scientists say reliance in Twitter or news snippets could harm moral compass

(CNN) -- Rapid-fire TV news bulletins or updates on Twitter or Facebook could numb our sense of morality and make us indifferent to human suffering, scientists say.

New findings show that the streams of information provided by social networking sites are too fast for the brain's "moral compass" to process and could harm young people's emotional development.

Before the brain can fully digest the anguish and suffering of a story, it is being bombarded by the next news bulletin or the latest Twitter update, according to a University of Southern California study.

"If things are happening too fast, you may not ever fully experience emotions about other people's psychological states and that would have implications for your morality," said researcher Mary Helen Immordino-Yang.

The report, published next week in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences Online Early Edition, studied how volunteers responded to real-life stories chosen to stimulate admiration for virtue or skill, or compassion for physical or social pain. **iReport.com:** [Growing pains for Twitter, Facebook?](#)

Brain scans showed humans can process and respond very quickly to signs of physical pain in others, but took longer to show admiration of compassion.

"For some kinds of thought, especially moral decision-making about other people's social and psychological situations, we need to allow for adequate time and reflection," said Immordino-Yang.

She said the study raises questions about the emotional cost, particularly for young people, of heavy reliance on a torrent of news snippets delivered via TV and online feeds such as Twitter.

She said: "We need to understand how social experience shapes interactions between the body and mind, to produce citizens with a strong moral compass."

USC sociologist Manuel Castells said the study raised more concerns over fast-moving TV than the online environment.

"In a media culture in which violence and suffering becomes an endless show, be it in fiction or in infotainment, indifference to the vision of human suffering gradually sets in."

Research leader Antonio Damasio, director of USC's Brain and Creativity Institute, said the findings stressed the need for slower delivery of the news, and highlighted the importance of slow-burn emotions like admiration.

Damasio cited the example of U.S. President Barack Obama, who says he was inspired by his father, to show how admiration can be key to cultural success.

"We actually separate the good from the bad in great part thanks to the feeling of admiration. It's a deep physiological reaction that's very important to define our humanity."

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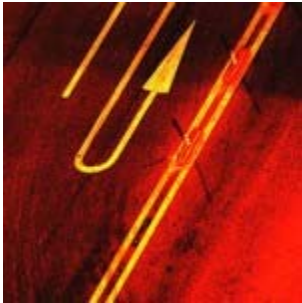
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How to Make a U-Turn on a Misdirected Idea

April 21, 2009

in [personal development](#)



No one likes a quitter, and yet few suffer fools gladly. When it comes to crusading for an idea that's not working, how do you know if you're quitting too early or hanging on foolishly for too long?

The idea you're pursuing might be an ambitious and noble initiative to change some rooted behavior among employees – for example, getting them to freely share information– or it could be a personal venture such as starting your own business now that you are unemployed.

Consider the first idea, the organization initiative. When you first proposed it, perhaps you assumed you had your boss' endorsement because he did not stop your forward motion. Consequently, you jumped headfirst into your project, formed a committee, involved the consulting firm, and assigned an intern to research vendor software.

After a month, you're baffled that your colleagues have yet to share your excitement. Attendance at meetings is spotty. And it's difficult to get time with your boss to present updates.

Switch to the new business idea. You interpreted your spouse's relative silence as positive when you detailed the rationale and benefits of working for yourself. You talked it out with – actually argued it to – your friends who vicariously cheered you on, and you laid down a thousand bucks for office equipment, subscriptions, and the like.

But, three months later, you've yet to win your first customer, your employed friends who said, sure, we can put you in touch with the right people in our organizations, haven't, and your spouse has taken a part-time teller job at the bank.

Consequently, your passion has been slowly evaporating, though you're reluctant to admit it because your determination is holding its own, mostly. Insecurity, frustration, and thoughts of possible failure are seeping in. What do you do: persevere or punt?

Backtracking is difficult. Among the reasons:

1. You're embarrassed to admit failure.

You made a public commitment of faith, and yet now you are a closet-doubter. That idea sounded so convincing, so right back then – though not so convincing or right that others joined you as co-laborers or investors. Now, flustered and feeling awkward, your earlier enthusiasm is turning to explanations and excuses. You blame circumstances and other resistors for hampering your success.

Excuses and blame are signs that it is time to make a u-turn and head back to where you started.

2. Your idea is about to turn the corner and simply needs more time.

What are the indicators that it is about to turn, and how much more time would you need? Maybe you don't know the answers because your zeal for the idea excused you from careful planning for contingencies and measurement. You admit that you should have researched the audience and market conditions, should have added more resources, should have, should have.

Too many should-haves probably means taking the u-turn and either regrouping or starting over.

3 You don't have a Plan B.

You staked your claim on the original idea because it seemed solid and workable – at least to you. It got you so excited that you lost perspective and flexibility. You thought that your enthusiasm would be contagious and that logic would prevail. So, you put aside your other projects or your job search, and now getting back to normal is unappetizing. Discouragement has weakened you.

Congratulations: You were willing to take a risk, and you learned its definition first-hand: risk means failure – but maybe there's a slim chance it won't. Make the u-turn, then disassemble and reassemble the idea.

What to do with an idea that's not working

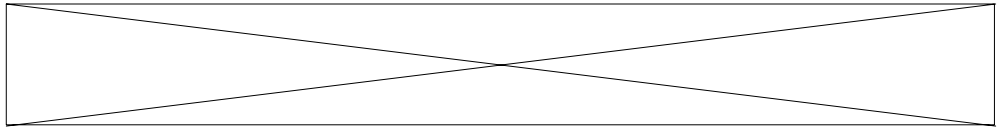
1. Rethink, don't abandon it. Credit yourself with having a good idea that could succeed if seen from a different angle, executed in another way, repackaged, or postponed to a time when the environment is more conducive.
2. Admit to yourself and others that it was a good idea but you could not get it airborne. Hold yourself accountable. Make no excuses. Accept blame but not shame.
3. Ask others to teach you. What did they hear when you evangelized the idea that they didn't tell you because you wouldn't listen? What would they have done differently if they were you?
4. On a 3×5 card you carry in your pocket or purse, record your random thoughts over time on what motives, both professional and personal, prompted you to veer off in the direction you did, and what changes you need to make over time to ensure that, when you venture out again – and you likely will – you are better prepared to succeed.
5. Or ... don't quit on the idea. Believe that you can recoup, resist the naysayers, make personal sacrifices, and possibly be the exception who succeeds.

Richard Skaare 04.21.09

Photo credit: [SiGMan](#)

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Los Angeles Times



<http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-twitter20-2009apr20,0,2701874.story>

From the Los Angeles Times

INTERNET

Ignore Twitter? Major brands learn they'd better respond -- and quick

Separate incidents involving CNN, Amazon and Domino's Pizza reveal that fluency in the evolving language of digital public relations comes easier to some companies than others. By David Sarno and Alana Semuels

April 20, 2009

Amazon.com Inc. shut like a book.

Domino's Pizza Inc. was late but eventually delivered.

And CNN focused on the good news.

When the three major brands engaged with their Web-savvy fans and critics in separate incidents last week, their responses demonstrated how corporations are still learning how to control their messages -- and reputations -- in a fast-twitch online world.

The mixed track record so far shows that fluency in the evolving language of digital public relations comes easier to some companies than others.

First, CNN: As Ashton Kutcher edged out the cable TV network last week to become the first to attract 1 million followers to his Twitter account, an odd quirk of the much-hyped race was overshadowed: CNN hadn't actually owned its account until a few days earlier.

For more than two years, the CNNbrk account (for breaking news) had been created, maintained and run by a 25-year-old British Web developer who just wanted a way to beam short news alerts to his cellphone.

But when CNN found out that James Cox had appropriated its name and content, it took a direction that might seem a bit surprising for a major media company. Instead of suing Cox or trying to shut down the account, CNN quietly hired him to run it -- and then acquired it last week when Cox was visiting the company's Atlanta headquarters.

"We've been managing the feed through him," said KC Estenson, the head of CNN's online operation, noting the huge increase in the number of Twitter followers since the November election. "As Twitter took off and became more prominent, we decided it was time to take our engagement and make it a marriage."

Other companies may find that unexpected uses of their brand have a less than fairy-tale quality.

Last week, Domino's was handed a PR nightmare when a video showed up online showing two employees laughing as they prepared food in a deliberately unsanitary way.

The video quickly garnered hundreds of thousands of views.

Domino's initial instinct was to try to dispose of the situation quietly by responding only to concerned consumers who had already seen the video, rather than risk broadening its exposure by making a public statement.

But chatter about the problem spilled over into Twitter, whose expansive micro-messaging network is becoming an online circulatory system for news, pumping information between media organs, consumers and businesses themselves.

The Ann Arbor, Mich., company posted a YouTube response of its own and even established a Twitter account to answer direct questions from customers.

"What we've learned is if something happens in this medium, it's going to automatically jump to the next," Domino's spokesman Tim McIntyre said. "So we might as well talk to everybody at the same time."

When Amazon was faced with its own consumer outcry last week, it decided to forgo the social media route.

Without warning, many gay- and lesbian-themed books began disappearing from the site's search results and sales rankings. The Twittersphere instantly saw red, accusing the Seattle company of discrimination and censorship and demanding a response.

But Amazon stayed mostly mum. It waited most of a day only to cite an unspecified "glitch," and when that vagueness only fomented the outrage, it released a second clipped statement blaming a "cataloging error."

But Twitter abhors a vacuum, and commenters rapidly filled Amazon's silence with boycott threats, petitions and caustic accusations -- an outcome that suggests that the growth of social media may be driving up the cost of inaction.

Yet engaging with consumers can be dangerous too. Skittles learned that last month when it invited users to post Twitter-like comments on a page that prominently displayed its logo. Among the positive comments were a variety of colorful ones as well.

By giving users the freedom to post their own messages alongside its advertising, Skittles had opened itself up to a kind of online vandalism that seems hard to get away from.

"There's a mob mentality to social tools where people quickly try to put fuel on the fire, really encouraging brand damage and damage to individuals," said Jeremiah Owyang, a senior analyst at Forrester Research.

Every brand misstep can spur social-media denizens these days, he said, which affects even those companies that don't actively participate.

To stay safe in the social media minefield, he said, brands need to make sure to secure their own domain names in the various online environments -- before any squatters do -- and then start to build a community there. Then when a crisis happens, online or off, brands can then use that community to their advantage.

That's the opposite of how Hasbro Inc. reacted last year when it sued the India-based creators of Scrabble-like game on Facebook -- and forced them to shut it down. Fans of the game formed "Save Scrabble" pages on Facebook and posted angry messages about Hasbro. When a company-sanctioned version of the game appeared sometime later, fewer returned to play.

Sending in the legal posse is an old-fashioned response in the new media age, Owyang said.

"It creates so much more buzz -- people wonder why you would beat up your most passionate customers," he said.

That's why Coca-Cola Co. decided to let its users dominate discussion about the soft drink on Facebook.

The popular Coke fan page on the social networking site wasn't created by the company, but rather by Los Angeles actor Dusty Sorg and writer Michael Jedrzejewski. It had more than a million fans when Facebook called Coca-Cola to alert them that the page violated the social network's terms of service because it wasn't operated by the trademark owner. Take over the site, Facebook told Coke, or we'll take it down.

Instead, the beverage maker flew the pair to its Atlanta headquarters in January, took them to a hockey game, gave them a VIP tour of the Coke museum and let them play Eric Clapton's guitar, then proposed that they officially run the page for the company. The two agreed. It now has more than 3 million users.

"Our social media marketing approach is that we want to be everywhere our consumers are," said Michael Donnelly, Coke's director of global interactive marketing. "There's

significant risk in being perceived the wrong way."

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MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2009

Online Branding with Ning

Four days ago, [Ning](#) celebrated the [one millionth](#) social network created on its platform. The site, which allows individuals to create their own social networking sites, has amassed 22 million users (six million active users) in just two years, and yet few online brand managers even seem to know it exists.



How has this little-publicized startup reached so many people so quickly? CEO Gina Bianchini [contends](#) that no one else is thinking about people with a focus on passions. Ning, however, is all about encouraging users to congregate around their interests. Because of this highly-niche grouping, Ning is an ideal tool for online brand managers to create conversations or add to discussions.

There are a number of cases that brand managers should look at for best practices.

Adidas, for example, created a human resources [site](#) on Ning



just a couple of months ago. Already, the site is an

enormous success: 3,600 members from across the globe,

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more than 50 blogs, forums, and discussion about how to make adidas a better place to work.

Pat Coyle, online sports marketer extraordinaire, built a Ning [site](#) to help industry members network. Sports businesspeople assemble themselves into subgroups (team marketing, sponsorship, collegiate marketing & NCAA, among others) to share ideas, discuss events, and talk about industry trends.

Ning is simple to set up, but also allows network administrators to customize their offerings. [Kicks on Fire](#) is

currently running a contest, for example, where members who reTweet their message can win a pair of Nike Air Yeezys. UFC

fighter [BJ Penn](#) has a shop

to sell apparel to his 81,000 members and fans, while [Veloist](#) lets users map and share bike routes.



Ning is far from a perfect solution. Here are a few of the issues brand managers face when considering whether to start a site.

1. Spammers. Many sites quickly get bombarded by users trying to push a product or service that has no place on your site. Ning doesn't offer flagging or similarly helpful anti-spamming measures, so administrators often spend too much time cleaning forums and blocking offenders.

2. Brand control. Ning is a great way to offer a voice to niche fans, but online brand managers should carefully consider whether the goals of the organization could be better met through a company Web site. A brand gives up a certain amount of control in exchange for the ease-of-use Ning provides.



TWITTER UPDATES

1:38 left. Blazers' ball. 90 - 96. Roy has 39... GO BLAZERS!
[about 9 hours ago](#)

Anyone know good freeware to record Skype calls for a podcast? [about 16 hours ago](#)

Chilling with Mike Bellotti in Managing Sports Properties class. He's taking notes, not teaching. Warsaw MBA program rocks! [1 day ago](#)

[follow me on Twitter](#)

3. Generic features. While Ning lets administrators create their own features or choose from preset forms, the look and feel of a Ning site is as generic as a MySpace page. Sure, you can upload a unique background, but Ning sites generally have few feature distinctions that brands might want to set themselves apart.

POSTED BY SAM AT 10:01 AM

LABELS: [BRANDING](#), [EMARKETING](#), [NING](#), [TWITTER](#), [WEB 2.0](#)

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Social Media and What Is Really Important

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Posted by [gbaron](#) in April 17th 2009

The emergence of social media in public relations strikes me as being like a lot of crises. First, it has the capacity to change our world profoundly — for good or ill. Second, it looked like it snuck up on us, bursting onto the scene with an urgency and impact that could be considered explosive. But the truth is, like most crises, it was there smoldering for a long time before it erupted into the single most compelling issue in public relations today. Third, while we're in the thick of this "social media crisis," it looks like it will never end. But like all crises, it too shall pass. The only question is, what will the future look like when it is superceded with some new form of normalcy?

At the recent [Ragan Communications/PRSA Conference on Social Media](#) in Las Vegas, I had the opportunity to speak on social media and crisis communication. It was one of the most engaging discussions I've ever had with a large group. Essentially what we discussed was the fact that social media is changing our world forever, and that social media changes nothing of importance.

Social media, as exemplified by three of the hot topics of the day — Facebook, YouTube and Twitter — is accelerating and emphasizing trends that have been in play ever since the Internet became part of our lives. These trends are the ever-increasing speed of news, the ability and expectation of audiences to get information directly from sources rather than from the media, the exponential phenomenon of word of mouth and the high levels of interactivity. These changes are profound for those involved in daily public affairs, issues management and crisis management. In this sense, it changes everything. Our work is faster, more direct, more interactive — let alone how styles and modes have changed.

But in a deeper sense social media changes nothing. Business, like life, is all about relationships and character. It is critical to remember that in a crisis, the trust that is built or lost will be based on the perception of the character of the leaders as seen in their actions. An Oxford study showed clearly that the long-term impact on share price of a company following a crisis is most directly related to the public's perception of the character of their leaders during the crisis as evidenced by their actions. The relationships of trust that you build with those people most important to your future are your best protection during a crisis and your best defense. Like I used to tell my children when they were teenagers: trust is a terrible thing to waste.

Trust doesn't depend on social media; character has nothing to do with social media; relationships have existed since the earliest days without social media. However, social media, and whatever forms of communication we rely on today, are critical in communicating the actions that demonstrate character and build trust. While it may be Twitter today, it will be something new tomorrow. But trust, character and relationships will remain the bedrock of what we as communicators are all about.



By [Gerald Baron](#), founder, former CEO and now Director of Strategic Services for [PIER Systems](#), a provider of crisis communication management technology. He is also founder and president of Baron & Company, and has served as spokesperson during the early stages of the 1999 Olympic Pipeline explosion. Gerald designed a crisis communication technology, which is currently being used by the U.S. Coast Guard, leading oil companies, academic institutions and industry leaders such as Boeing and Allstate, and state and regional Departments of Emergency Management. Baron has written several books, including "Now Is Too Late2", and has maintained the crisis management and communications blog, [Crisisblogger](#).

Join Baron for his co-presentation with Kami Watson Huyse, titled [Integrating Social Media Into Crisis Planning: Prepare Your Company and Brand in Times of Trouble](#), on Tuesday, April 21, 2009, at 3 p.m. EDT!



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