

Brand Management for the 21st Century

Most of us can think of a company we admire.

Whether for its products, services, links to a charity or even just low prices - there are some brands we like, admire and buy time and time again.

In the 21st century, thanks partly to new media and social networking sites, the development of individuals as 'brands' has transformed the public relations', communications' and media industries.

In a recent pr recruitment process for a junior post, candidates were asked who they admired most in the public eye. The majority named Katie Price – or Jordan - saying they admired her control and manipulation of the media in creating a celebrity 'brand'.

Therein lies the challenge for us all: how to use the media - including new media - to contribute to the management of an existing brand or the creation of a new brand.

This can only be successful if the communication is informed by strategy. If the communications' strategy is only about new media and social networking, then it is a case of the tail wagging the dog.

While many companies and individuals have signed up to facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn to name a few, the use of new media and social networking must be carefully managed and have real purpose in order to be effective.

Often it is too easy to send a text message, or tweet a comment with little regard for the consequences.

Individuals have lost jobs, reputations have been ruined and secrets divulged through the inappropriate or badly managed use of new media and social networking sites.

Public relations' professionals, as brand managers, are often tasked with advising clients on the use of new media and social networking in campaigns.

Our advice remains the same – unless it's part of a communications' strategy and has purpose, think twice!

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