

What's Still Ahead for PR Professionals in 2020?

Valerie Christopherson, CEO and Founder of Global Results Communications

While 2020 started with blurred vision as to what was to come, agency PR professionals focused on a new decade, new ways of communicating and providing strategies to meet their clients' needs in an ever-changing digitally transforming world. Within the first quarter, the world was hit with a global pandemic, one in which every business has been affected in one way or the other. For PR agencies, the task converted from new year/new goals to that of crisis and planning for the unplanned on a global scale.

Agencies were tasked to maintain factually accurate information, especially those in the healthcare sector, while those of us in the tech industry were tasked with providing counsel as how to get the word out about that technologies available for healthcare, schooling, remote working, public safety and more. Now that we're nearly 8 months into the pandemic, we are seeing things become less of a crisis and more of an "if" what if this happens, what if that happens, what if both happen and what if neither happen? We're living in a world of real-time, minute-by-minute and day-by-day happenings and/or changes. In some cases our clients are open, then shut, then open again. It's our responsibility to ensure that communications, internal and external, remain factual. By removing the "what if" from the equation, we can communicate better and in turn provide better counsel. That doesn't mean we don't plan for the what if, in fact, planning is more important than ever.

So, what's ahead for PR professionals for the remainder of 2020? Everything we thought 2020 would be: video, tech tools

heightened, storytelling and branding merging, etc. Only now, it's accelerated. What we predicted in Dec of 2019 happened, only happened in a quarter's time frame with many curves along the way. We entered into the New Year noting that the use of video would be more prevalent than ever. Now, with Zoom-type meetings, the use of video has become part of the new norm. We also noted in the New Year that content would see an uptick. Now, we'd argue content is essential. Finally, we stated that the New Year would bring about new challenges and opportunities. And, now, we've proven that the challenges are the opportunities.

Communications professionals are transforming and adapting more than ever to the emerging world of tech across all industries. Technology has become the connected tissue keeping not only North America but the world together. And, communications has kept the world informed in a time frame where information is more than essential but rather critical. So what's really ahead for communications professionals as we navigate through the remainder of the year? Uncertainty. What we've all learned is that uncertainty is what we can plan for, what we can communicate about and what we need to incorporate into our PR programs. Uncertainty is not always a crisis and shouldn't be viewed as such, but it should be part of the strategy when looking into the future, noting that the future could be as quick as a day or even a moment in time.



About the Author: Valerie Christopherson is founder and CEO of Global Results Communications (GRC), an award-winning public relations firm trusted by both entrepreneurs on the cusp of new discoveries and multi-billion-dollar enterprises breaking new ground. Renowned for her expertise in high tech, she is the driving force behind GRC's

targeted communications strategies that dramatically enhance client market presence and performance on a global scale. Prior to founding GRC in 2005, Valerie held key positions at QUALCOMM, Porter Novelli Convergence Group and other niche agencies in the mobile, telecom and technology sectors. Over a span of 20 years, she provided unparalleled counsel and campaign management resulting in successful public relations and social media programs for Fortune 500 companies, major trade associations and start-ups.

A current board member of Golden Rule Charity, Valerie has been involved with various nonprofit organizations including Make a Wish Foundation and Mobile Giving Foundation among others. An industry thought leader, she is frequently called upon to speak at regional and national events including PR News conferences, regional PRSSA (Public Relations Student Society of America) conferences and Comm Week at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF).

A graduate of CSUF, Valerie holds a bachelor's degree in both English and communications with a public relations emphasis. She also completed a social media certification program at University of California, Irvine.