



# North American **New Media Academic Summit**



Northwestern University, Chicago, IL June 26 - 27, 2008



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*For the second year in a row, on June 26 and 27, 2008, Edelman and PRWeek gathered some of the leading thinkers at the intersection of marketing, PR, journalism and academics for two days of discussion about the changing media landscape and its affect on business and education. More than 90 people participated in a series of panels and hallway conversations at Northwestern University's School of Law in Chicago.*

*This paper reports on actionable items that emerged during the two-day summit.*

*For more information on the event, including blog posts and videos, visit [www.edelman.com/summit08](http://www.edelman.com/summit08).*

## What To Do When **Tectonic Plates Shift**



Richard Edelman  
President & CEO



Rick Murray  
President,  
Edelman Digital

This paper reports on some of the most compelling insights derived from the summit about how the media as well as private and public companies are adopting social media to their needs. These are just some of the insights:

- **An evolution from a top-down model to an open-dialogue model is in full swing:**

Steve Grove, political director at YouTube, said, “The Hillary Clinton campaign was very much top-down communications with controlled messages. The Obama campaign moved toward a next-generation approach of innovation driven by the crowd, such as the Change video produced by Will.i.am.” Fifty million people have watched the 1,100 videos up on the Obama YouTube channel.

It’s very important to correct rumor quickly online. For instance, the Fight the Smears site created by the Obama campaign to combat rumors about the candidate illustrates just how important the Obama campaign thinks it is for any organization to combat falsehoods aggressively and quickly.

- **Mainstream media is a powerful amplifier for new media:** Grove said that “the influence of cable is critical; you get a 10-times increase in YouTube traffic if (for instance) Keith Olbermann uses a piece on MSNBC.” This same philosophy was echoed by Dan Bracken of Church & Dwight, who reflected on the Trojan Evolve campaign, an Edelman client, which had an article in *The New York Times*, then became the most blogged item on the *Times* Web site, then moved into social media.
- **News will move from being at the very core of print to a supporting element to products and services:** Dick Tofel, former associate publisher of *The Wall Street Journal*, suggested that sports sections of local newspapers could be supported by advertising from fantasy sports leagues or that the local newspapers could run those leagues. “Sports news then becomes the necessary adjunct,” he noted. “We need to stop thinking of news as the core product. In fact, newspapers will have to offer products and services supported by news.”

- **Media will become comfortable with the economics of fragmentation, not scale:** According to Troy Mastin, media analyst for William Blair & Company, “We will see hyper-local products targeted at specific suburban populations.” Mastin was bullish on community newspapers, particularly those smart enough to be open to consumer-generated content based on personal interest, passion and professional affiliation.
- **Companies are embracing the open-dialogue model, but slowly and carefully:** At the vanguard is Starbucks, an Edelman client. It hosts [www.MyStarbucksidea.com](http://www.MyStarbucksidea.com), which allows customers to not only make suggestions, but garner a response and learn if any action has been taken. It has 50 employees from across different groups in the firm called “idea partners” who contribute and respond to story threads. Drew McGowan of Clorox, another Edelman client, noted that 75,000 people have taken the pledge to stop buying water in plastic bottles through its FilterforGood.com site, which connected with its audience through a partnership with mainstream media, specifically NBC’s “The Biggest Loser.”
- **Social media requires a continuing dialogue:** Many panelists made the point that the traditional campaign approach with a start and end date is now moot because once an organization begins the social media conversation around a brand, it has to continue it to maintain and nurture the relationships the conversation initiated in the first place.
- **Blogs are not the most popular method of social media worldwide:** Popular social media forms of communications, like blogs, social networks, etc., vary by country. For instance, in China, Bulletin Board Systems (BBS) are the preferred medium, while mobile is key in communicating in lower-income neighborhoods.

The advancement of social media around the world, and the changes to business, media and communications that follow, means that PR can enable companies to more effectively engage with their stakeholders.

## Role of Communication in a **Digital World**

### **Set objectives to measure against**

After years of relying on ad equivalency and impressions to measure the impact of mainstream media placements, businesses today want a standard way to measure social media. Since no such standard yet exists, communications programs must devise a set of objectives that can be measured against so clients (and PR teams) can track and evaluate outreach to an online community and see the value of using new media.

### **Work across platforms to stay in the conversation**

Video and digital media provide an opportunity for immediate response that organizations have not had in the past, making it imperative that communicators learn how to create content daily and react to the conversation in text, video and audio with alacrity.

### **Mentor “digital natives”**

#### **(and don’t forget older employees, either)**

Young staff – often called “digital natives” – need mentoring and leadership as they learn to shift their personal use of digital into strategic, professional use of digital. Because of their youth, employers may assume new employees will just “get it.” However, they may need training to understand how the tools they use to share information about their everyday lives can be used in a professional setting for business and community building. Another partnership to consider is reverse mentoring where younger employees meet with older employees once a month to share new media skills.

## Engaging Consumers **Through Social Networks**

### **Engage your consumers in conversation**

Since Church and Dwight’s Trojan brand condom commercials are typically banned from TV, it instead made its ads available online and conducted outreach to online communities. As a result, the ads secured great pick-up on blogs and the Huffington Post and even made it to conservative Fox News.



*Church and Dwight's Trojan Commercial*

### **Train your employees to be online evangelists**

When Sara Lee wanted to expand the public's perception of its product offerings around the world, it set a new vision and created a center of communications excellence. Sara Lee has focused on educating staff members about the company story and trained them to serve as ambassadors in social media networks like YouTube and Twitter and on blogs.

## Partner with your existing communities for short-term projects

When Sara Lee launched whole-grain white bread and wanted to drive trial, it turned to moms online and the social network CafeMom. There the company launched its Joy of Lunchboxes campaign and got moms to try the healthier bread. More than 28,000 moms participated in the Sara Lee polls about switching breads and the community outreach generated 650,000 impressions.



Sara Lee Joy of Lunchboxes campaign

## Create a space to listen to your customers and employees



mystarbucksidea.com

Starbucks has a history of monitoring online conversations and online engagement with the brand, so mystarbucksidea.com was an extension of the monitoring Starbucks was already doing. The site was launched in just seven weeks and includes a section for employees and customers. The site allows anyone to share ideas, vote ideas up or down and leave comments on other ideas. The public site includes 50 partners who act as idea moderators; Starbucks' communications department regularly communicates with customers about what is happening with top ideas.

## Connect your brand to a cause that makes sense and offer a variety of entry points for consumers

At a time when Brita was in decline, concerns about bottled water and its impact on the environment provided it with an opportunity to help people make a small change that could make a big difference. Its "Filter For Good" program lets people go online and pledge to reduce the amount of bottled water they drink (and, in turn, decrease the number of plastic bottles). Brita also partnered with NBC's hit show, "The Biggest Loser," and is looking to partner with the Democratic National Convention and other events that want to go bottle-free.



Brita's "Filter For Good" initiative

## All Social Media is Local, A Global Perspective

### Use local digital tools for your different audiences

Looking at social media and the digital landscape from the U.S., it is easy to fall into a trap of thinking the sites and tools used globally are blogs and social networks. Around the world social media tools differ based on access to high-speed Internet and cultural choices. For example,

- In Russia, the blogging platform of influential bloggers is Live Journal, which is often viewed in the U.S. as a journal for teenagers and not serious bloggers
- In Germany, users choose Wikipedia over blogging
- In Poland, it isn't Facebook but a local clone with Polish navigation that's used most
- And in China, forums rule

### Set expectations for country-specific programs

Since the Internet has no boundaries, at least not physical, companies face challenges of doing country-specific programs. Companies must begin to address the expectations of consumers who can participate, but can't purchase or compete based on the country they live in. In 2007, for example, Edelman in Madrid worked with Canon to promote an event in Spain. The online photography community in Argentina showed interest but also frustration because Canon wasn't offering it there.



"Smster," the Russian Twitter clone

"There will be no media consumption left in 10 years that is not delivered over an IP network. There will be no newspapers, no magazines that are delivered in paper form. Everything gets delivered in an electronic form."

Steve Ballmer, CEO, Microsoft

## Watching Traditional Media

### The changing editorial process

The walls between print and online newsrooms are breaking down, so it is becoming increasingly important for companies to pitch all outlets with video, audio, images and text. Additionally, print writers are now being asked to report on video while others are required to write up to 300 articles a year—companies must be ready to keep up with the 24-hour, nonstop news cycle.

### News weeklies in terminal decline

A catastrophic decline in advertising and circulation is in full swing: U.S. circulation of *Time*, *US News & World Report* and *Newsweek* is down 30 percent in the last five months, while two British imports, *The Week* and *The Economist*, have made inroads in the American market. Advertisers are beginning to move money from traditional print ads to working with consumers to create experiences and consumer-generated content.

## Lessons from the 2008 U.S. Presidential Election

# 46

percent of Americans have used the Internet for politics so far this election season

*sympatico-msn-ca.com*

### Don't alienate your volunteers or unpaid evangelists

An Obama fan created a MySpace page after Obama's 2004 speech at the Democratic National Convention. Over the next few years the fan curated the page and began working with the campaign after Obama announced his candidacy. As the campaign began to demand more of the creator, the volunteer asked to be a paid staff member. The Obama campaign then told MySpace it was being blackmailed and MySpace shut down the page with 130,000 friends. This is an example of how not to work with an online community and a savvy volunteer. Obama lost an important online community and soiled a relationship with a dedicated volunteer.

### Integrate your media plans and create a working archive

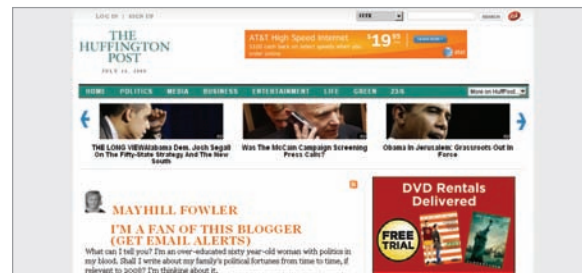
The ABC/Facebook debates had great potential but the execution was lacking. People watching the debate on TV couldn't tell that there was a running commentary online. People involved online couldn't keep up with the amount of content scrolling from online participants. The two media did not complement each other. Today when people go to the Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/politics>, they can't find an archive of how the debate and comments fit together, leaving thousands of comments out of context and unusable. On the other hand, the CNN/YouTube debates were praised as a great combination of traditional media and online communities and for finally getting the candidates to start addressing real issues. When users visit the site today, <http://www.youtube.com/youchoose>, they find rich archives where they can review the debate and continue to add commentary.

### Keep your programs simple

Rudy Giuliani took a page from George Bush's 2004 playbook and tried to create levels of funders at the individual, small-fund level. The structure was so confusing that it failed to capture the grassroots movement that the Obama campaign has been able to with small donations. Simplicity has a place with online communities.

### Remember that nothing is off the record any more

It was Huffington Post blogger Mayhill Fowler, who spent her own money to go on the road with the Obama campaign, who reported the candidate's remarks at a San Francisco fundraising event about working-class voters who "cling to guns and religion." His comment, via Fowler's reporting, triggered a national debate and impacted the Democratic primaries and continues to reverberate. It also highlighted how important YouTube has become to elections for elevating issues and creating news items.



*The Huffington Post's blogger Mayhill Fowler spent her own money to go on the road with the Obama campaign*

### Be prepared for the narrative to change

An unnamed Obama supporter created and released a video using Apple's legendary 1984 commercial as a way to start the debate about the "inevitability" of Hillary Clinton's candidacy. Viewed over 10 million times, it changed the narrative in mainstream media coverage of the democratic primaries. Companies shouldn't automatically disregard videos or content created by consumers, but be aware that this content might change the narrative without any company input. Companies should be monitoring online conversations to avoid being taken by surprise.

## Using New Media to **Advance Issues**

### **Don't limit your company's thinking to one official Web site**

Given the way the Web works, don't waste time trying to limit where exposure to your content appears. The World Economic Forum (WEF), most known for its Davos Summit, is a great case in point. Yes, it has an official Web site. But its online footprint also includes Flickr, where it posted 800 branded photos; Wikipedia, to which 150 of those photos were uploaded; and YouTube, which contains roughly 640 videos uploaded from Davos that have been viewed 1 million times. The WEF is on Facebook, too, where its group has 819 members and several subgroups, and even on Twitter and BlogTV, where all of its press conferences are shown live.



The World Economic Forum's Davos Summit

## Health Industry **Gets Social**

**84** percent of adults have looked online for health information at least once, **66** percent of adults search for health information often or sometimes

*[harrisinteractive.com](http://harrisinteractive.com)*

### **Experiment with new media channels**

While the health care industry and its stakeholders may feel limited in their ability to use new media, some organizations are showing the way. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), for instance, may be still using traditional channels for dispersing press releases, public service announcements and newsletters, but it's also using an island in Second Life, short videos on YouTube, blogging, MySpace and mobile to get important messages to the public where they are and with the tools they're already using.

### **Use new media tools for your internal communications**

Pfizer started building a blog network community

and, in an effort to educate its workers, began to invite outside speakers to talk about social media, blogging, and social networks. It's found the internal communications market is the perfect testing ground for building better external communications. The company now has an employee wiki available that serves to bridge the communication gaps between all levels and divisions of employees.

### **Gear up for speed**

Once a company starts engaging with online communities, it needs to make sure to stay a part of the conversation or it can backfire. Johnson & Johnson, for instance, showed leadership by adding a blog to its media mix, but has been urged to respond more quickly to issues online. Companies must empower people to make decisions quickly.



Johnson & Johnson's blog



## Monitoring **Online Conversations**

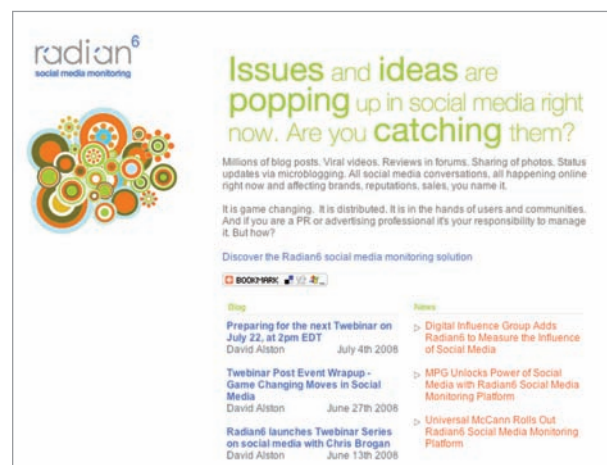
# 81

**percent of people** say blogs, online rating systems and discussion forums can give consumers a greater voice regarding customer care, but less than **33 percent** say they believe that businesses take customers' opinions seriously.  
*marketingcharts.com*

### Monitor these 10 conversations

Companies are already monitoring blogs and online conversation for mentions of brand names, the company URL and the CEO's name, but companies should also be looking for specific types of conversations, such as:

- 1. The Point of Need:** If you can meet people at their point of need, you are not interrupting or pitching, you are helping and responding to an expressed need
- 2. The Influencer:** Listen to the industry influencers and strong online voices
- 3. The Crowd:** Monitor and participate in the broader industry conversation to identify which related topics garner the most attention and engagement
- 4. The Competitors:** Listen to conversations about your competitors brand, including all conversation types
- 5. The Crisis:** Catch issues before they go viral or mainstream, when possible
- 6. The Campaign Effect:** Measure the conversation effect caused by your social media (or other) campaign
- 7. The Inquiry/Question:** Answering questions online is an opportunity to gain valuable insight and also promote your strengths, product benefits, customer service, personality, etc. (and you are not pitching, you are answering a question)
- 8. The Customer Problem:** Listen for known or potential customer issues so you can respond prior to "the complaint"
- 9. The Compliment:** Say thank you and show genuine appreciation of compliments; these online references and testimonials can prove valuable
- 10. The Complaint:** Listen for posts complaining about your company, product, service or staff and then respond quickly and transparently



Radian6's homepage

## Trends That Will Help Define the Future



Steve Rubel  
Edelman Digital

The best way to think about new media, I have learned, is to look at the recent past and at the trends that are here now and seemingly have staying power. Apple CEO Steve Jobs once famously said “you can’t connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards.” He’s right.

With that in mind, there are three trends that are likely to shape things over the next four years.

### The Attention Crash

Though the current global financial crisis grabs all the headlines, there’s another storm quietly brewing - a crisis of attention scarcity. The inputs we have into our lives - that which we allow and those that are forced upon us - are exceeding what we are capable of managing.

The Attention Crash is here and it will only get worse.

There will always be more content vying for consideration.

In fact, Google CEO Eric Schmidt said “By the year 2019, it’s going to be possible to have an iPod-like device that will have 85 years of video on it. So you will be dead before you watch the whole [thing].”

Generation Y seems to be able to better manage this new environment, having grown up with a mouse in hand. But marketers who are a little more gray will need to adapt by creating and earning media that can break through the clutter and “stick.” This requires they keep things short, simple and visual.

Brands, media and individuals will have a role in mitigating the Attention Crash. Every high-interest niche will be met by digital curators who can separate art from junk online and present it in a very digestible form.

Already, some are jumping in. Intel partnered with PopURLs.com to create a news tracker for IT professionals (<http://blue.popurls.com>). The site also features Intel white papers and blogs. *The New York Times* too is transforming into a digital curator. On the newspaper’s technology site (<http://nytimes.com/tech>) reporters cull through blog conversations that have bubbled up during the day and highlight and link to the most notable posts.

### Social Networks Become “Like Air”

Social networking is here to stay - but it’s changing. As my fellow panelist Charlene Li says, it’s becoming “like air” on the Web.

In essence, social networking is nothing new, really. It’s simply a digital, global and scalable manifestation of our desire to communicate with other humans. The technology makes it easy for like-minded individuals to connect and collaborate around the topics they care about. This can range from personal to professional interests. A lot of it revolves around social causes.

Today we have three big social network hubs - LinkedIn, Facebook and MySpace (an Edelman client). In addition, we have an expanding constellation of smaller social networks such as Beebo, Twitter, YouTube and the hundreds of thousands of vertical communities that comprise Ning - a do-it-yourself platform. There will be room for all of them to thrive, but consumers soon won’t need to visit these destinations to connect with their network.

Social circles are becoming portable so they can follow the consumer to any site they want to visit. Facebook and Google, for example, each have competing technology platforms that Web site owners can integrate to allow consumers and their social circle to connect in new experiences without having to sign up for another network.

Brand marketers that may be tempted to build their own social networks need to consider that there may not be room in people’s lives for more than one or two. They will need to plug into the social “air” supply that the large networks are building across the Web so that consumers can stay connected to their existing networks.

### Google: The Reputation Engine

The third trend that also will continue its current trajectory is the rising influence of search, particularly Google. The search engine, as of this writing, has 70 percent market share in the U.S. and is even higher in other countries - but not all.

Google is much more than a search engine. It’s media.

Every day people make purchasing and life decisions based on what they find on the Web. Patients visit their doctor’s office armed with reams of information they found on Google, some of it right, some wrong. Consumers are accessing Google from their cell phones to compare prices when shopping. And Wikipedia, a site that no one controls, tends to dominate many high-profile search results.

Google, Yahoo, Microsoft and others are increasingly tweaking their algorithms to stop spammers and other “black-hat” types. Today most search engine result pages tend to favor high-quality content produced by media, brands and individuals.

Communicators will need to know how to create and earn content that is not only findable, but worthy of discussion so that it earns and maintains visibility in Google - which often makes judgments based on quality.

What the future looks like in four years know one knows. However, if businesses follow these trends, at least directionally, they will be prepared to navigate the new environment.

## List of Participants

### The Role of Communications

**Julia Hood**, *Publishing Director, PRWeek*  
**Lauren Fine**, *Kent State University*  
**Steve Grove**, *Head, News and Politics, YouTube*  
**Rick Murray**, *Edelman*

### Engaging Consumers Through Social Networks

**Dan Bracken**, *Church & Dwight*  
**Jon Harris**, *Sara Lee*  
**Alexandra Wheeler**, *Starbucks Corporation*  
**Drew McGowan**, *Brita, Clorox Company*  
**Janet Cabot**, *Edelman*

### The Media Industry

**Richard J. Tofel**, *ProPublica*  
**Troy Mastin**, *William Blair & Co.*  
**Jim Kirk**, *Chicago Tribune*  
**Bryan Gruley**, *The Wall Street Journal*  
**Cheryl Cook**, *Edelman*

### Global Perspective

**Neville Hobson**, *Blogger, United Kingdom*  
**Michael Maier**, *Fellow at Harvard University*  
**Wolfgang Luenenbuerger**, *Edelman*  
**Marshall Manson**, *Edelman*  
**Michael Morley**, *Edelman*

### Elections 2008

**Michael Bassik**, *MSHC Partners*  
**Michael Cornfield**, *George Washington University*  
**Mindy Finn**, *George Washington University's Institute for Politics*  
**Mike Krempasky**, *Edelman*

### Heath Industry

**Jay Bernhardt**, *U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*  
**Marc Monseau**, *Johnson & Johnson*  
**Huw Gilbert**, *Pfizer Inc*  
**Gary Goldhammer**, *Edelman*

### Leveraging New Media to Advance Brands and Corporate Reputation

**Matt Anchin**, *American Express*  
**David Rubin**, *Unilever*  
**Nancy Ruscheinski**, *Edelman*

### NGOs - Using New Media to Advance Issues

**Paul Smyke**, *World Economic Forum*  
**John S. Bracken**, *The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation*  
**Keith O'Brien**, *PRWeek*

### Monitoring and Measuring Conversations

**Marcel LeBrun**, *Radian6*  
**Sean Moffitt**, *Agent Wildfire*  
**Natasha Fogel**, *StrategyOne*

### Teaching Social Media

**Walter Carl**, *Northeastern University*  
**Robert Pritchard**, *Ball State University*  
**Clark Caywood**, *Northwestern University*  
**John Edelman**, *Edelman*

### New Media in 2012

**Steve Rubel**, *Edelman*  
**Charlene Li**, *Forrester Research*  
**Keith O'Brien**, *PRWeek*



Rev. Jesse Jackson addresses Summit guests at reception hosted by Dan & Ruth Edelman



looksmart

zigtag

Jambo  
NETWORKS

simplyhired

myspace.com  
a place for friends

Allmydata.com

Pandora

newsgator

vSocial

niya  
Visual Search

Gcast