

Content is and will remain king for most company brands

By  Miranda Lusiba

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My previous CEO at Group Africa Marketing and I always had this conversation about the importance of content. The idea that content is king is not new - there is now a greater emphasis on developing compelling content than ever.



Source: www.unsplash.com

I think that this notion applies more now in the digital age where a lot of people do not only consume their news or information from newspapers, TV and radio - but also on social media. We discussed the fact that most people are hungry for good content – it could be in the form of written word, video, audio, photo or even infographics. This is why it's so important for all PR people to be able to help their clients to tell authentic and newsworthy human-interest stories.

What we've seen over the years is how most companies or brands, especially in the private sector, tend to fall into a common trap of telling only brand or product stories as opposed to telling brand stories through human eyes. Unfortunately, these kinds of stories are seen as adverts or advertorials instead of newsworthy stories that readers want to consume. Brands tend to forget that the human element comes first and then that content can be associated with a brand.



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People are interested in people – this is a fact and a strong element of what makes a story newsworthy. Those who read, listen to and watch the news like to learn about others. Though a business story at first glance may not seem to be about people, playing up personal elements in a story will make it more interesting to viewers and readers. What I was taught by my mentor whom I regard as a media guru is that for human-interest stories to be newsworthy – they simply need to have consequence and impact.

Authentic stories are those that are told from a beneficiary's perspective. Beneficiaries can tell brand stories on behalf of companies and give testimony on how these companies have helped in making a difference in their lives. As I mentioned before in my previous columns, it is important for companies to avoid blowing their own horns - the testimony from beneficiaries give more credibility to a story of a company than when it's the brand saying how great they are. This applies in a business set-up as well – it's important to highlight how much value is added and if there's tangible return on investment (ROI) from a business perspective for customers. For instance, direct benefits to business customers could include streamlining of administrative processes, convenience and ensuring cost-savings as well as efficient running of business systems or operations.



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Consumers are drawn to brands that are associated with authentic content. The ultimate objective for any newsworthy story is not only for it to be published but to be read, absorbed and acted upon. Consumers are loyal and care only about brands that resonate with them on an emotional level - that in some way - reflect their own lives and experiences either in business or communities at large. A great example that my previous CEO always made was of Nike – how they have mastered the art of telling its brand stories.

Nike does not sell shoes – it sells stories of athletes who have inspired the world, the likes of Serena Williams to name a few – the company sells a lifestyle that consumers can buy into. Nike has not only managed to show other brands how important it is to tell stories that consumers can relate to, but it has also – over the years - demonstrated how to communicate with its captive audience in relevant ways. This column is a follow-up to my column about writing and I would like to continue to encourage young PR professionals to take the time to learn how to write; but more importantly to be able to create different types of content - because the need for great content is not going to end anytime soon.

ABOUT MIRANDA LUSIBA

Miranda Lusiba is the Founding Director of Strangé Consulting - a boutique PR Agency specialising in Communications, Freelance Writing, Media Relations, Reputation Management and Media Training.

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