

BULLDOG REPORTER'S  
THE FUTURE OF PR: 2010 EDITION

# HOW PR CAN SEIZE THE SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE

TOP TRENDS, OBSTACLES AND SOLUTIONS:  
A ROADMAP TO SUCCESS FOR PR AND  
CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONALS  
IN CHANGING TIMES

Sally Falkow, APR

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## FORWARD . . . INTO THE SCARY AND PROMISING FUTURE

In order to predict the future, it helps to understand the present. That, of course, is the bane of the soothsayer. After all, we are in the midst of it—we have little perspective. We're so close to the present—and the future—it's difficult to know exactly what we're looking at, whether backward or forward.

Is Twitter a short-lived fad, like those once-thrilling Pong games of yesteryear? Or will the 140-character message be the coin of the realm for our grandchildren?

The good news for those who would understand the future of PR from the current vantage point is that changes to our business and to our craft have been so dramatic recently that we can see distinct mountain peaks, even as they tower so close above us.

What is clear to most of us—though there are still some who mock or deny it—is that what we call social media is *transforming* public relations. It's a revolution.

Detractors assert that while the tools may have changed, the fundamental duty and craft of PR remains the same.

Not so, in our opinion.

First, the ability to publish or broadcast our own messages transforms our role from that of supplicants at the gates of traditional media to being "owners" of our own media outlets. We, like publishers and broadcast companies before us, now have to market our information directly to our publics.

Nobody ever taught us to do these things, and the attendant skills to do so have nothing to do with cranking out press releases and pitching harried journalists.