
Welcome!





Presented By

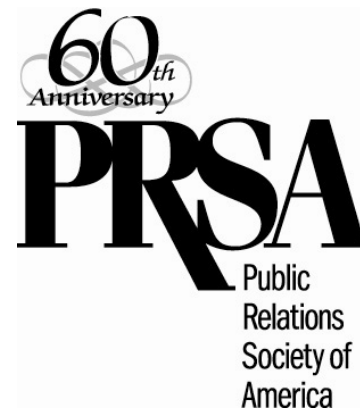
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Wired for Change

A Survey of Public Relations Professionals and Students: Attitudes, Usage and Expectations in the New Communication Technology Environment



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Agenda

- **Executive Summary**
 - *Methodology*
 - *Key Findings*
- **Detailed Findings**
 - *Today's Environment: Usage and Value*
 - *Today's Environment: Challenge and Concerns*
 - *Future Trends*
- **Additional Findings**
- **Addressing New Challenges**

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Goal:

- **Understand the current and future impact of new communication technology on the public relations professional**





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Objectives:

- **Examine the impact of new technology on the professional over the last five years**
- **Understand current usage of specific technologies**
- **Identify which technologies present the best opportunities**
- **Determine which technologies present the greatest challenge to the practice of public relations**
- **Look for future trends**

Methodology

- **Online Survey**

- **Size of Sample**

- 482 professionals

- 367 students

- **Professionals**

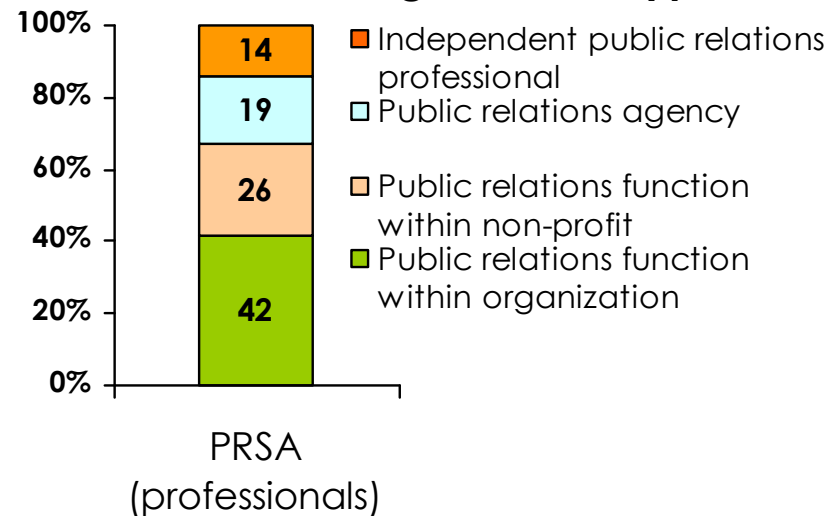
- More than half have 10+ years of experience

- More than 80% have responsibilities for entire organization

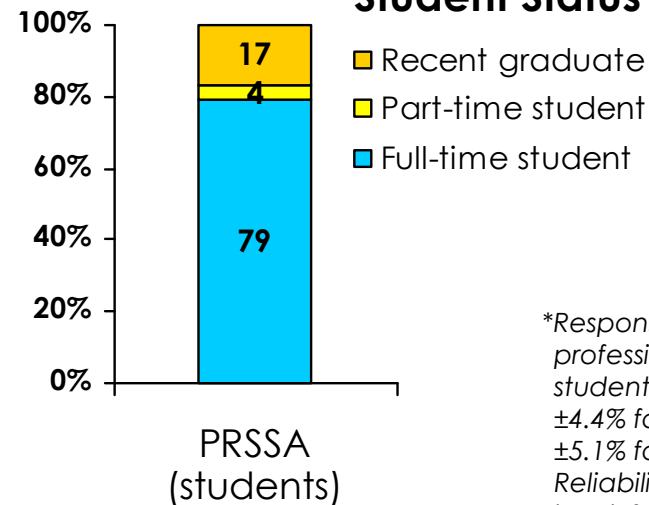
- **Students**

- 73% have work-related experience

Organization Types



Student Status



*Response rate of 5% for professionals and 2% for students. Margin of error was: $\pm 4.4\%$ for professionals and $\pm 5.1\%$ for students. Reliability at 95% confidence level. Survey conducted from November 2006 through February 2007


Key Findings

- **Professionals and students both agree technology has had a positive impact**
 - *Online news sites, online video and PDAs have had the most impact*
 - *69% of professionals and 68% of students say technology has made jobs easier*
- **94% of professionals and 96% of students say technology will continue to have positive impact in the next five years**

Key Findings

- **Communication/media technologies drive public relations activities in a positive direction**
- **But, both groups acknowledge some significant drawbacks**

Impact of Technology on Public Relations Activities		
Strong driver of...	Moderate driver of...	Inhibitor/obstacle to...
Circulating information quickly	Providing competitive advantage	Credibility of information
Reaching a broad audience	Influence of individual opinions	Building trust in the media
Monitoring public relations trends	Planning public relations campaigns	Conducting public relations ethically
Personalizing/segmenting public relations messaging	Strengthening media relations	Defending against skepticism about public relations
Reaching mass markets	Planning/managing crises	
Spreading rumors	Managing organizations' reputations	



Key Findings:

Some communication/media technologies offer both opportunities and challenges

- **Challenges**

- *Blogs*
- *Social networking sites*
- *Online news sites*

- **Opportunities**

- *Online news sites*
- *Blogs*
- *Social networking sites*

Other Findings

- **Professionals believe personal relationships will continue to be more important factor than online relationships in conducting public relations in the next five years; students have a more balanced view**
- **Only about 20% of PRSA members feel their organizations are ahead of others in the use of technology as a public relations tool; most think they're behind**
 - *Public relations agencies are the most likely to feel “ahead”*
- **Both groups agree that print publications are the most credible information sources; blogs and social networking sites are the least credible**
- **Professionals' actual usage of public relations tools is very different from what students believe organizations “should” do to assess public relations effectiveness**

Today's Environment: Usage and Value



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Overwhelming Agreement: Technology's Positive Impact

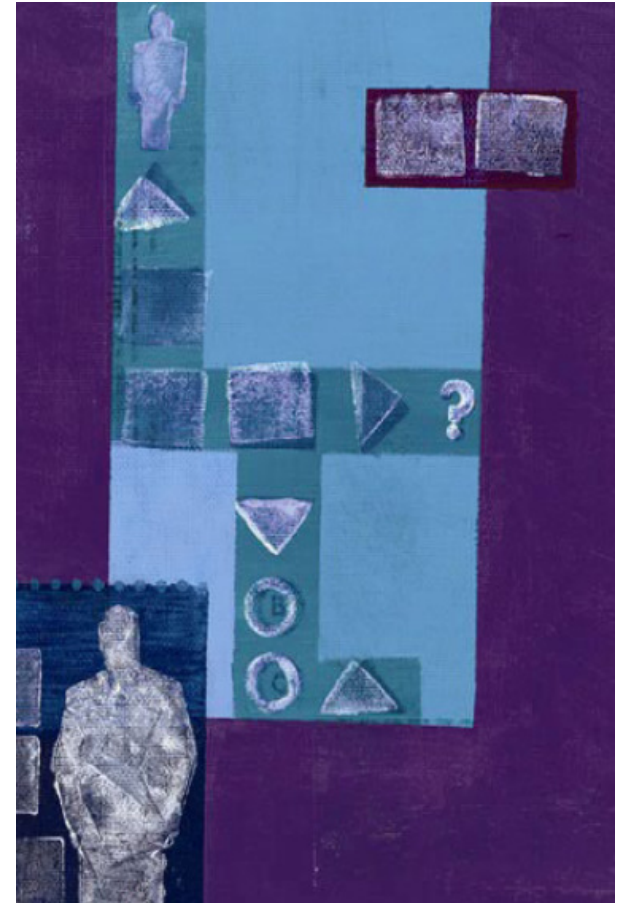
- **95% of professionals and 97% of students say communication and media technology have had a positive impact on the practice of public relations**
- **Senior management and professionals working in agencies were the most optimistic about the impact of technology**
 - *60% of senior managers said technology had a significant positive impact*
 - *66% of those in agencies said it had a significant positive impact*

Online News Sites, Blogs Impactful

- **Professionals and students agree that online news sites, online video and PDAs have had a strong, positive impact on public relations**
 - *Professionals also ranked podcasting among the top four*
 - *Students also named professional networking sites*
 - *Those working in agencies, senior management and students are more positive about blogs than other professionals*

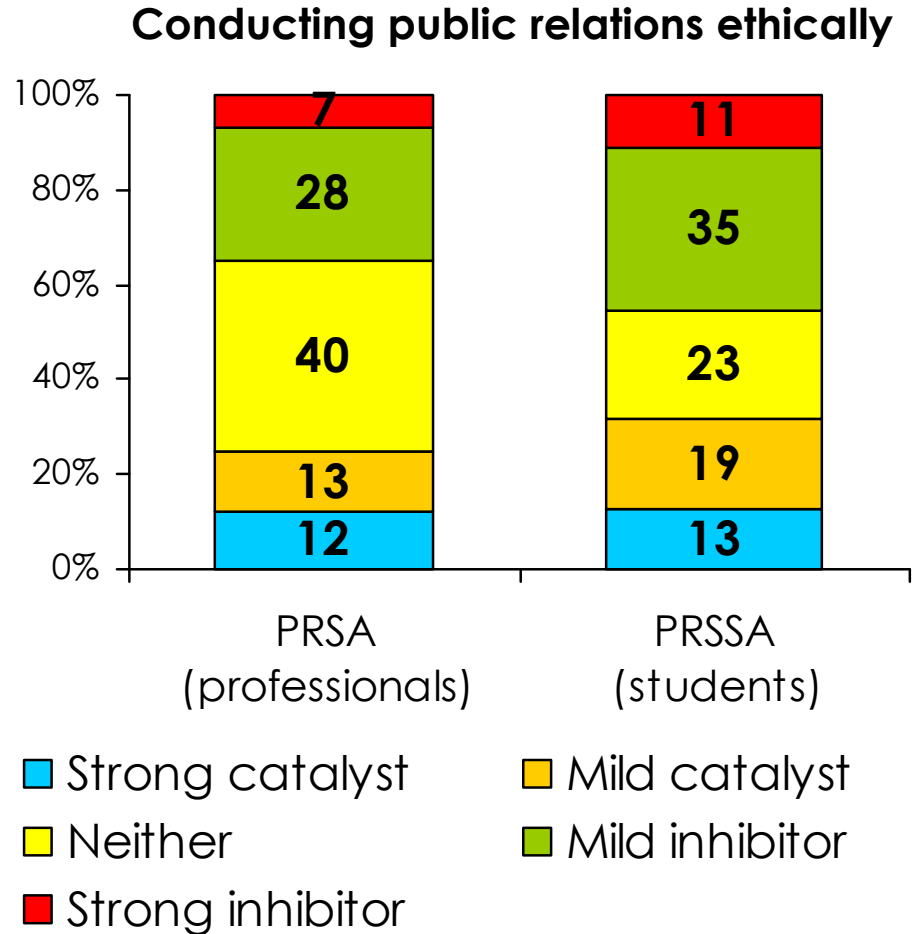
Technology Threatens Credibility of Information and Media

- **Credibility of information**
 - *Professionals and students rank this activity highest*
- **Building trust in the media**



Challenging Ethical Environment

- **Almost half of students think technology makes it hard to conduct public relations ethically**
- **41% of students feel technology makes defending against skepticism about public relations more difficult vs. 33% of professionals who don't**



New Media Credibility Lags

- **Both groups believe traditional sources are most credible**
- **Professionals ranked their peers second as credible information sources**



Future Trends



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Continuing Influence: Communication/Media Technology


- **Positive impact**
 - 94% *professionals*
 - 96% *students*



Best Opportunities: Online News Sites and Blogs

- **Professionals and students believe online news sites and blogs present the best opportunities for public relations**
- **But students are more optimistic than professionals about the potential usefulness of social and professional networking sites**





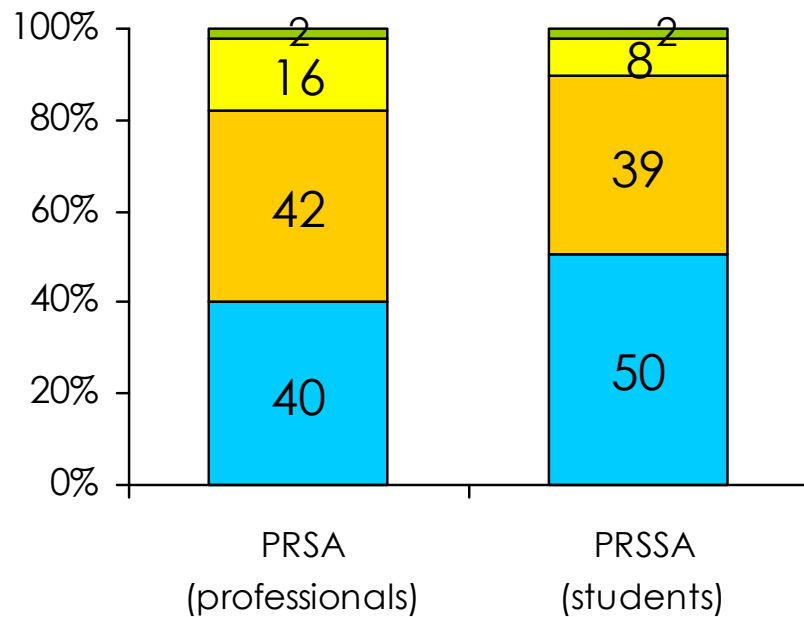
But...

Blogs Rank High as a Challenge

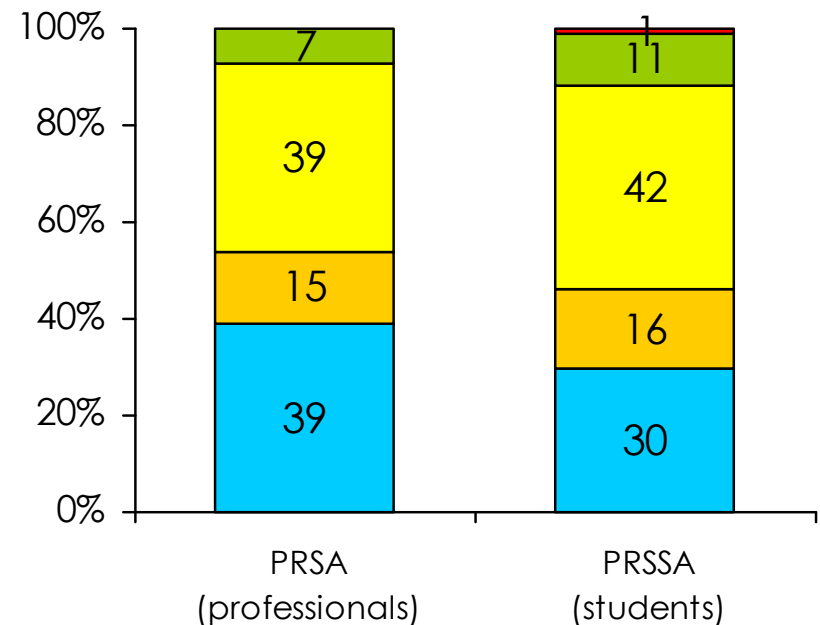
- **Professionals are more leery than students about blogs**
 - *56% professionals vs. 41% students*
 - *Experienced professionals (+10 years) and senior management are more cautious*
- **Both groups agree that social networking sites will also present challenges**
- **Students were more likely to predict public relations challenges arising from text messaging**

Relationship-Building Strategies May Change

Online networking & communities



One-on-one/personal relationships

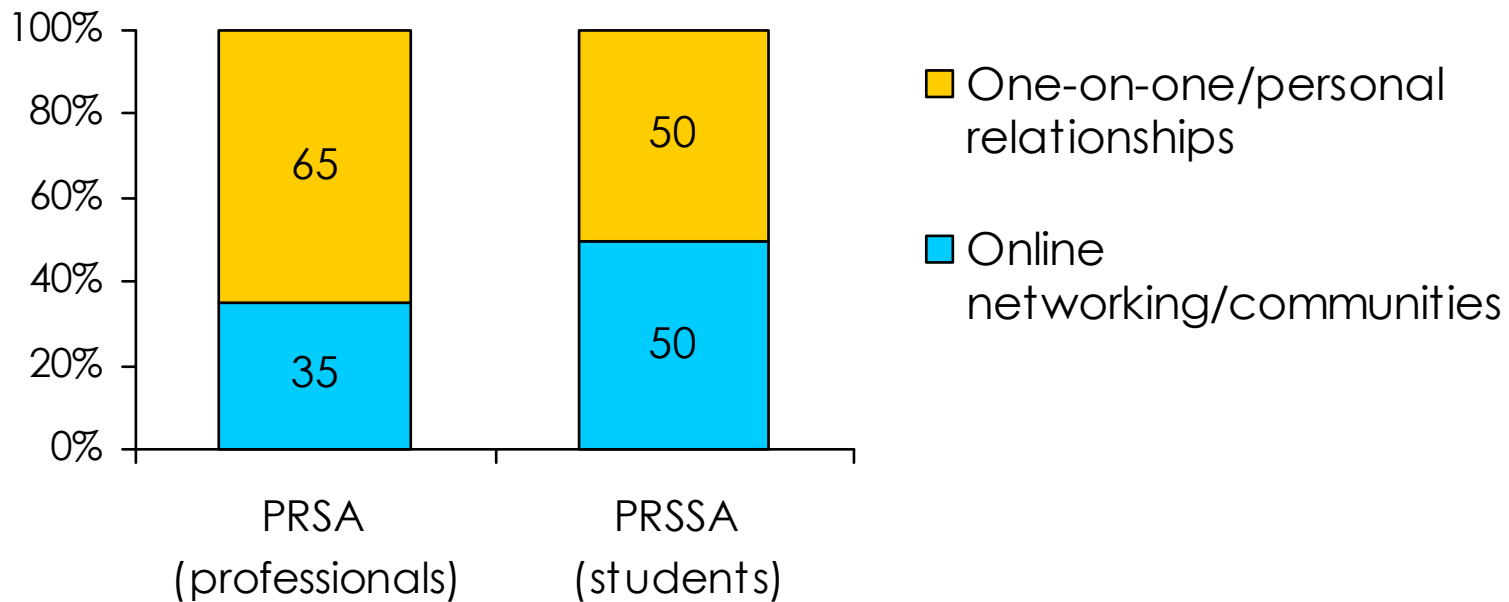


- Much more important
- Just as important
- Much less important

- Somewhat more important
- Somewhat less important

Students More Open to Online Relationships

- **Professionals say personal relationships will continue to be more important**
- **Students are split**



Additional Findings



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Plans for the Future Vary

- **Independent and agency public relations professionals have greater plans to use Wikis, podcasting and social networking sites**
- **In general, there were greater plans for podcasting for all professionals compared to other technologies**
- **Neither non-agency nor nonprofit organizations plan to use social networking sites or Wikis**
- **Students have strong plans to use a wide range of technologies in the future**

Addressing New Challenges



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Addressing New Challenges Via...

- **Professional development opportunities**
- **Increasing fluency in new technologies**
- **New professional and ethics policies**



PRSA Stories, Ideas & Best Practices

- **E-newsletters**
- ***Issues & Trends***
- ***Tactics, Strategist***
- **Professional Resource Center (PRC)**



PRSA 2007 International Conference in Philadelphia addresses many issues of the new and next media, including:

- **Innovative strategies**
- **Effective tactics and techniques**
- **Specialization and practice areas**
- **The evolving profession**

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