

The 12 Principles of New Media

Be truthful or be exposed

Conversation video transcript

SAMANTHA MUCHMORE

DRAFTFCB

Well, I don't know how much we talk about the truth in advertising.

CHRIS PETERSON

CHAUTAUQUA COMMUNICATIONS

Marketing as a culture is really about spin. And we've spent decades thinking about key messages, proof points, and single compelling ideas. And unfortunately none of that matters anymore.

Topic: Transparency

GREG STERLING

STERLING MARKET INTELLIGENCE

The general community of end users responds to transparency.

CHRIS SHIPLEY

GUIDEWIRE GROUP

It's important to be transparent. It's critical that your interests are clear. And if you make your interests clear. Your associations clear. Your objectives clear. Then lets trust a smart public to figure out what to do with that.

CHRIS HEUER

SOCIAL MEDIA CLUB

Encouraging them to always be transparent. To never leave any phony comments on other people's blogs. Which seems to be one of the first things companies and PR departments tend to grab onto. Like, oh, we have to respond this post. We have to respond to this thing, but we can't do it as ourselves.

GARY A. BOLLES

MICROCAST

What I'm worried about is the sheer lack of journalistic process by so many people who post information that has huge impact, huge effect on others lives without understanding the responsibilities involved.

CHRIS SHIPLEY

The truth for you and the truth for me are going to be different things. I will tell you that I'm a shareholder in a company, or I am on the board of a company and I might write or talk about that company in a way that I believe is very objective. But it's up to you as the consumer of that information to say, 'Yeah, well of course she thinks that because she's got some shares in the company or she sits on the board of the company.' So that will then change your opinion. And there might be other people who would hear that same information and go, 'Aha this is great because here is an insider telling me the truth, I appreciate that.'

SAMANTHA MUCHMORE

I think where we get in a heated debate is about the difference between perception and reality. Which there is truth in that. And what do you want to portray vs. what consumers say you are.

GARY A. BOLLES

What is the context in which the information is being posted and provided to people. And what is the rigor or lack of it.

CHRIS SHIPLEY

My obligation is to be as clear and as transparent so that you're able to make that observation and make that judgment.

Topic: Successes and Failures

BRIAN POWLEY
ICROSSING

I remember when Subway put their brand up for sale...for pitch, their business up for pitch. And one of the agencies-I can't remember which one now, actually I do remember-did a whole viral video of the whole pitch process and they posted it on YouTube and it went online. And I've never seen so much reaction from the industry. Both client side, agency side. It became this huge. It was on blogs for weeks about how could they do that.

But it backfired. They didn't win the business...Was it successful or was it not successful? Well it was successful. It created a tremendous amount of awareness and buzz. And anybody who was anybody was writing about it for weeks.

And there was all this hoo-ha in the press and online about whether it was a smart thing to do. Whether it was a silly thing to do. Whether it was a thing of integrity to do. I don't know, but it was entertaining to watch it all.

CHRIS HEUER

I was totally refreshed by the fact that this person engaged with me as a human being, told me the truth, didn't tell me that 'I don't know anything' response, and was able to make me feel like I was being treated as a human.

CHRIS PETERSON

Because all of a sudden the company becomes humanized. It becomes less of a big building in the middle of nowhere and more somebody that you know that will listen to you.

CHRIS HEUER

You feel that you can more deeply rely upon that person's future responses and you feel more trusted and more engaged as a human being instead of as if I was dealing with a cold faceless corporation who doesn't care about me, doesn't care about my interests.

COLETTE VOGELE
VOGELE LAW

There was a debate going on as what was in fact happening, technically. And so there was a real fact issue. Was what my client was writing on his blog truthful or was what the other guy was writing truthful and it kind of created this hoopla on the blogosphere and people were all worked up about it. But that was really hard because what was true and what was not was very much in dispute.

CHRIS PETERSON

What we're doing is trying to get a new process put into place with clients where you push aside the concept of messages, and key messages, and single compelling ideas and you get into telling a story that makes sense coming from the company.

GREG STERLING

You want to go as far as you can go with honesty and candor. Ford is a good example I think of that with their campaign of bold moves to turn the company around. They're sort of documenting their efforts to turn the company around.

SAMANTHA MUCHMORE

Truth can have positives and negatives and you can choose what truth you say ultimately. And to be truthful doesn't mean necessarily to expose your negatives. To be truthful can be plussing up your positives and that's still the truth. So to only talk about your positives, is that truthful?

CHRIS PETERSON

I think the big surprise that companies have in general is they are pleasantly surprised by what they get back from customers when they are truthful especially if they let the customer self express.

CHRIS HEUER

The surprising think I see again and again is nothing bad happens from people telling the truth.