

What is Happening in our Technological Society?

Deirdra Redden

Today's increasing technology is changing how we communicate with our family, friends, associates and customers.

Recent trends that are shaping our communication technologies are RSS (Real Simple Syndication), blogging, podcasting, webinars and e-Learning, and online communities such as FaceBook and MySpace.

Forward thinking organizations understand that these technologies are not just trends, but the waves of the future. These technologies are also an important aspect of our future marketing and communication tools. Let's take a quick look at some of these new trends and how they can drive our communication objectives.

Blogging:

- Blogs are no longer just for personal use and are now being used by businesses too.
 - publish media releases, manage internal job sites, share information between employees and develop relationships with customers.
- Blogs also give senior managers the ability to share their insights, experiences and business knowledge. However, use caution when offering senior management or CEOs this opportunity because it has the potential to back fire into a pretty sticky situation.

RSS:

- Makes use of an XML code that constantly scans the content of a website for updates and then broadcasts those updates to all subscribers through a feed.
- Typically used with news sites or blogs.
- In order to receive RSS feeds, you must have an aggregator, a feed reader.
- You choose what news you want to receive in RSS feed (supplier must broadcast in RSS feed)
RSS feeds can also be read on PDAs and cell phones.

PodCasting:

- Similar to the components of RSS feeds. A podcast is audio or video on the web that can be catalogued and automatically downloaded.
- Saved in MP3 format, and playable on your computer as well as your iPod.
- Used for newscasts and/or immediate company media releases (i.e. CityTV downloads an one to two minute PodCast daily for viewers who have access to downloadable technology).

Webinars (combination of "Web" and "Seminars")

- Webinars are used to conduct "live" meetings, training sessions or presentations over the Internet.
- A cost-effective and great way to reach many people without having to leave the comfort of your home or office.
- The feed is generally only one way, with no interaction with the presenter.
- Two-way communication between the presenter and the audience can take place by using telephone lines, which allows for more interaction and discussion around the seminar topic.

Online communities (FaceBook, MySpace)

- Connects people with friends and co-workers from around the world utilizing networks and groups.
- Recently banned by the Ontario Government and the City of Toronto due to employees not being productive in their jobs.

As you can see this is just a small selection of some of the technologies that are available on the web today. As technology changes these trends will become the norm. Communicators will need to incorporate it in some of these technologies into their communication plans, in order to stay on top of the trends and stay competitive.