



I've got the information...now how do I feel?

New technology is changing employee communications. Communication is instant. It comes at us so forcefully and in such volume that it has been compared to “drinking information from a fire hose.” But think of your last, most expressive e mail, where you were really trying to say something with nuance, with feeling. Perhaps you used exclamation marks! CAPITAL LETTERS? Smileys :-)

The proliferation of technology is allowing us to gorge on communication, but on the whole this is a diet which tends to be information-rich and emotion-lite.

IT WASN'T CALLED I.T. FOR NOTHING

The development of Social Software – blogs, Wikis – is allowing a new range of self expression. A report by Edelman and Intelliseek “Trust MEdia: How Real People are Finally Being Heard – The 1.0 Guide to the Blogosphere for marketers & Company Stakeholders” *1 charts the way that blogging may alter traditional tenets about messaging by corporations. It highlights how the availability of broadband is allowing bloggers to embed video, audio, still images and interactive media for a richer, more expressive, less-text based experience. But, though part of a powerful and influential trend, the blogosphere is just part of the landscape.

BRAND IS ABOUT EMOTION

The Stromberg Consulting study “2006 Macro-Trends in Internal Communications*2 highlights seven macro trends that are impacting on the way communicators work, and key amongst these is Employee Engagement. The existence of an emotional bond between consumer and brand promotes significantly greater brand loyalty and advocacy, and the same is true for employees. Employees who feel emotionally attached, and have a sense of belonging and pride in their organisations put in extra effort of their own accord and act as effective advocates for the organisation. A number of research reports*3 show clear and compelling evidence of the link between employee engagement and business performance. The paradox is that, as organisations become more reliant on passive, electronic channels of communication, research

is also showing that meaningful communication which promotes understanding and changes behaviour is largely dependent on interactive dialogue.

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT THE ROLE OF LIVE EVENTS?

If we want engaged employees, who are active participants and contributors to dialogue about the organisation, and who can share, express and develop an emotional bond about the brand then a live event needs to:

- Be a multi-dimensional, sensory experience which uses sight, sound, and touch to evoke ideas and feelings and encourage a re-newed understanding of the brand, what it means, and the ways that employees connect to it.
- Be information-lite and emotion-rich designed specifically to engage with people's hearts, rather than just their heads.
- Make the most of the unique potential of a live event to create a shared experience so that it brings together groups of employees who may be tapping into very separate channels of information at their desks or workplaces.
- Be participative and involving, encouraging as much interactive dialogue as possible.

References

1. *Edelman and Intelliseek "Trust MEdia: How Real People are Finally Being Heard – The 1.0 Guide to the Blogosphere for marketers & Company Stakeholders"*
2. *The Stromberg Consulting study "2006 Macro-Trends in Internal Communications"*
3. *"The Drivers of Employee Engagement" Institute of Employment Studies 2004*



egi:live operates from Windsor, UK. They specialise in live, experiential communication bringing together high value people to build high value understanding (vision, strategy, insight and empowerment) and high value relationships (networking and collaboration based around customers, talent, innovation and operational excellence).

If you would like to receive further information about this project, or egi:live generally please contact; Tony Evans – tony@egilive.com www.egilive.com t +44 (0)1753 831919