

The Evolution of Management and Marketing in the Digital Era

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ABSTRACT

The article analyzes the evolution, and changes in the styles of direction of the organizations since the beginning of management in the 20th century till now, through a review of academic literature, and existing research about management. From a set of interviews to executives of European corporations, following parameters found in academic literature, a deep change in the priorities of senior management is observed. Recent changes in the managerial focus and in the new social context are analyzed. New tools of digital marketing are enumerated, and a new academic model of public relations based on persuasion is proposed, for the success of campaigns.

KEYWORDS

Changes, leadership, management, marketing, digitization, public relations.

1. Introduction

Management, in the etymological sense of handling a human group is about how managing organizations has evolved for more than a century according to the vast array of changes that have occurred in economies, and in society. In the second decade of the twenty-first century, the birth of significant changes in management encouraged by the new technologies are influencing deeply the management style of executives, and entrepreneurs.

We think that every stage of management deserves a detailed analysis, hence why we have complemented our areas of expertise and experience to compile this article. The reader will notice that we have distilled a large experience into it. Experience acquired while: learning and teaching in business schools; analyzing and managing important enterprises; assessing, and interviewing leaders of big corporations; preparing campaigns, or analyzing the success or failure of campaigns in the real and global business world, or in the loneliness of an academic office.

From a wide overview of management over the twentieth century, we will move on to a radiography of changes in business management, and marketing in the digital era, and we will conclude by presenting a new model of Public Relations (PR), that we have named “Business PR Funnel”, adapted to the characteristics of the new consumer. The experience we have gained through decades of analysis of business management must be considered always, with the premise that we knew how to adapt it to the new persuasive methods that technology sets within our reach.

Business management is at crossroads now. The unstoppable technological revolution that engulfs us forces executives to travel on the new information highway toward an unknown destination. Social changes provoked by the technological revolution have also affected the psychology and habits of consumers. This requires managers to find a new model of PR adapted to the new times, and the companies to adapt their management to such a model.

2. Review of academic literature on management practice

Analysis of management started with the economic essays of Adam Smith (18th century), and John Stuart Mill (19th century), but it is mainly a twentieth century phenomenon. Frederick Winslow Taylor's *The Principles of Scientific Management* (1911) coined the term "taylorism" to designate an organization system of the companies under rationality criteria and settled the foundations of academic management.

The end of World War II marked the beginning of the academic heritage that comprises the Classical Theory of Management, which states that all organizations are ruled by some universal principles: responsibility, authority, control scopes, unity of command, and unity of management. Two authors of the first epoch are outstanding and complement each other. On one hand, German sociologist Max Weber characterized the bureaucratic organization of factories and workshops: hierarchy, work division, rules, promotion... (Weber, 1947); on the other hand, the French Henri Fayol focused his "general management principles" on the directive centers of administration and business, which irradiated an "*esprit de corps*" to workers (Fayol, 1949). The monolithic business styles of the middle of twentieth century were a consequence of an era of big ideologies, of an era of total explanations that aimed to give a sense to all life's orders: capitalism, communism, and faith in scientific progress.

Management has since evolved accordingly with the evolution of society. Thus, in the fifties of the past century Peter Drucker already stated that, among the new seven tasks of a manager, "he should be able to relate production, and industry, with the whole environment, to find what is relevant to him, and to take it into account in his decisions, an actions" (Drucker, 1954). In the 1960s, the School of Human Relationships, Rensis Likert's Theory of Management being one of its greatest contributors, stressed individual aspects such as motivation, leadership, and values. It was about designing a model of collaborative organization according to the changes in habits that was brewing in society (Likert, 1961, 1967). Along this line, the School of Decision Making (Cyert and March, 1963) focused on individual behavior and how the flow of information and the premises were decisive in decision making. On the other hand, the Contingency Theories of authors like Alfred Chandler stated that the structure of an organization relies on its strategy, and not the other way round (Chandler, 1962).

The 1970s were a decade of uncertainty due to financial fluctuations, and the oil crisis. This is the era of the Evolutionary Theory of Economy (Nelson and Winter, 1982), and the School of Organizational Ecology (Hannan and Freeman, 1993). Both models guessed that the survival of an organization depended on their adaptation to environment ability. In those years, the Theory of Organizational Economics was developed, which analyzed how the entrepreneurial action weighed on the contractual relationship between bosses, and employees (Holstrom's Agency Theory) or private stakes of employees (Oliver Williamson's Transaction Cost Theory). "The 1960s, and 1970s, in stable environments, with little change, were a period when professionals, consultants, and academicians set the focus far from the top executives" (Llopis and Ricart, 2007).

Modern management, in the last two decades of the twentieth century, matches chronologically with the apotheosis of capitalism, and neoliberal thinking. Peter Drucker is the big guru of strategy, if we understand strategy as a ruling principle of every entrepreneurial action, and developed through concepts as diagnostics, vision, or strategic planning. For Drucker, there are three scopes that occupy the work of an executive. The first scope is about his responsibility about economic result (managing a business). If a company does not meet enough economic results, it will not be possible to reach another goals as customers' satisfaction, or creation of wealth for the society. The second scope of action is to allow the intellectual resources of the company to be productive (managing the managers). For that purpose, it is necessary to align the managers with the vision of the company, to teach them what is expected of them, and to motivate them to make an effort. Lastly, an important scope of action is to organize properly the employee's work, so that they can perform it efficiently (manage the employee and his work).

Within these three scopes of action, all of them are essential —if one fails, they all fail— Drucker describes the five basic tasks that configure the work of a good executive:

1. Set objectives, since these are the tools that help to manage the business.
2. Analyze and plan the activities, and decisions that must be carried out to reach the defined objectives, ensuring to provide, and organize the needed resources for every person, and at all times.

3. Gather a trustworthy team around him, so he can assign responsibilities to reach the objectives.
4. Measure performance: to evaluate the performance of employees, regarding the set objectives.
5. Manage people: Improving the performance, developing managers all the time, and also developing the employees.

In parallel, in the school of The Theory of Strategic Management, authors like Igor Ansoff, Henry Mintzberg, and Michael Porter sketched models, and tools to design strategies. Hambrick, and Finkelstein introduced the concept of “managerial discretion”, to describe the degree of control that an executive has over the company (the “latitude of executive action”). In those very same 1980s, consultants Tom Peters and Robert H. Waterman made popular the “*management by walking around*” concept, so that the style of management must be connected with the workplaces in order to get information, consolidate the vision, and improve the fulfillment of assignments, and overall productivity.

In the impact of the Theory of Excellence, the essay *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies* (Peters and Waterman, 1982) had an important role. Peters and Waterman wrote the most popular best-seller of business literature of all times, probably. From the analysis of 43 American corporations that were a flagship in their respective business, the authors established the “eight attributes of excellent companies”:

1. A bias for action
2. Close to the customer
3. Autonomy and entrepreneurship
4. Productivity through people
5. Hands-on, value-driven
6. Stick to the knitting
7. Simple form, lean staff
8. Simultaneous loose-tight properties

Around the same time, the success of the Japanese business model renewed people’s interest in the theories of Total Quality Management deployed in that country, in the

1950s and 1960s, by W. Edward Deming and Joseph Jurens (the excellence as top goal, constant improvement, trademark consolidation...). From Japan also came William Ouchi's Z Theory, which stressed the psychological motivations of employees, and organizational culture (Ouchi, 1982).

In contrast with the previous decade's fascination on company's owners, contemporary management has set its eyes on the role of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or senior manager. Henry Mintzberg (1989) described three types of roles (interpersonal, informational, decisional), and Andrall Pearson (1989) enumerated its six basic tasks:

1. Shaping the work environment
2. Crafting a strategic vision
3. Marshaling resources
4. Developing star performers
5. Building the organization
6. Monitoring operations

Juan Antonio Pérez López (1991, 1993) distinguished the three managerial tasks needed in an organization (purpose, coordination, and motivation), as well as the three types of activities (strategic, executive, and about leadership), and three criteria (efficacy, attractiveness, and unity). To this IESE professor, an executive is not just a strategist (mechanist paradigm), but he can offer motivation and learning to employees (psychosocial paradigm) and convey to them a recognition with the mission of the company (anthropological paradigm).

In the 1990s, historical events such as the fall of the Berlin Wall, the War of the Balkans, and the crisis derived from the Gulf War put at stake the firm certainties that reigned for decades. In the management area, Business Process Reengineering (Hammer and Champy, 1993) was different from other approaches, especially from Total Quality Management, in that it did not pretend to introduce changes based on continuous improvement; instead it reinvented processes. On the other hand, the concept of the Learning Organization states that "an intelligent organization is an organization or company that continuously and systematically addresses the necessary processes to get the most out of its experiences, and to learn from them" (Senge, 1990).

One of the biggest world experts in change management, Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1989), anticipated the new paradigm, remarking that there were companies that had changed the classic organizational structure altogether, buying from external suppliers or creating strategic alliances and supplier-customer partnering agreements. This author enumerated some other organizational innovations:

- Acquisitions, and divestments aimed to get combinations more focused on the activities of business
- Reductions of managerial personnel, and hierarchical levels
- Increased use of compensations bound to performance level
- Replacement of vertical relationships of superiors and subordinates for horizontal relationships between peers
- Request to the corporate and functional departments to adapt one more strategic role, and to have a better coordination within departments

Nonetheless, Moss Kanter believed that the occurring phenomenon had not yet been diagnosed, and that it was poorly explained using the coined terminology of companies' relationships ("the bosses and their people"), since it still noted as a form of control and property over the employees in which professional careers were atypical, individualist, and confusing. In the society of knowledge, that was brewing, corporations ceased to be "proprietor" of the employee, who developed his work partial time, outsourced, etc. Bureaucratic costs decreased, and employees became a kind of intermediary between product and customer.

A little earlier, Edward Bernays, whose main disciple is one of the coauthors of this article, Dr. José Daniel Barquero, had managed to include, after years of works, the PR to the corporate world (Bernays, 2010). On his behalf, John Kotter (1982) put the spotlight on how to manage the contacts and the agenda. In his opinion, directives spent most of their time to be with other people (between 70 and 90% of the time) and continuously they got questions. In fact, among the 14 points of the philosophy, or "Deming's Circles" (Deming, 1986), it was already claimed that implementing a new philosophy in the company represents a change that implies the commitment of all the actors involved. A debunking study of Henry Mintzberg (1990) would verify that almost 80% of the time of

an executive was spent in verbal communication. For this author, the work of the top executive is hugely complicated, and difficult. Executives were overworked, and they were not able to delegate easily. As a result, they were obliged to work too much, and to do many tasks superficially. Brevity, fragmentation, and spoken word characterized their work. Nonetheless, these are the very same characteristics of the work of management, the same that have hampered scientists to improve it. So, “management scientists”, and management theorist have worked in the more specialized functions of management, where it is easier to analyze procedures, and to quantify the relevant information. On the contrary, for Mintzberg, management is a kind of art rather than of a science. In the same line, the visionary Peter Drucker, who predicted the change of paradigm in management in works as *The Future of Management* (1992) and *The Post-Capitalist Society* (1993), claimed that the most important task of an executive is to “manage people.”

This new vision of management, adapted to changes in the personal relationships in society, would take long to triumph among the very same executives. Ghoshal and Bartlett, who have studied CEOs, and corporate managers of big transnationals, conclude that the biggest challenge nowadays for a senior manager is to create an energizing mission-purpose that allow employees to identify themselves with the company; a mission that gives meaning to their jobs, and with they are willing to compromise to. It is about implanting a stable culture within companies, with deep roots, based on shared values by managing, and employees.

In his 2007 year book *Yo dirijo. La dirección del siglo XXI según sus protagonistas* (updated in 2013 with the title *Qué hacen los buenos directivos. El reto del siglo XXI*), IESE professors Jaume Llopis and Joan Enric Ricart interviewed a group of successful executives working for main European companies. The study matches, basically, in its conclusions, with the evolution of “3S” to “3P”, as stated by Bartlett and Ghoshal: from Strategy to Purpose, from Structure to Processes, and from Systems to Persons.

From the survey with European executives, it is deduced also that, in the agenda of these managers, appeared three recurring priorities: to create the future, to adapt constantly the model of business, and to situate persons as the center of the organization. By “to create the future” was understood, many interviewees told, as knowing very well the

competitive environment (in a big financing holding, the competitor may be even another sector that is competing with us for resources), to anticipate the long term, and to know to focus on the customer. The second priority that was detected was the constant adaption to the business model, which means a constant search for differentiation, quality, and innovation. We are going to analyze the third point; that is, the convenience of placing people at the center of the organization; this implies to identify people who have potential, to know how to manage teams, and to face risks and challenges.

The study of Llopis and Ricart certified that a new profile of executives have been surged, partly by the influence of globalization (they were professionals with overseas experience, and, in some cases, foreigners sent by their multinationals in Europe), and with an emerging but noticeable female representation. Historically, theoretical models, and tools to develop the behavior of leaders from their personal traits have been developed (Bolton y Grover Bolton, 1996), from their trend to certain targets (Blake and McCause, 1991), from the combination of certain behaviors (Blanchard, 1985). In the Llopis and Ricart's survey, many top executives claimed that, accordingly with Kotter and Mintzberg's ideas, they spent nearly half of their time listening to their collaborators, and even some (usually foreign senior managers) tried to modify the traditional distraction of work meetings.

So, Bernard Meunier, who was responsible for managing Nestle's business in Iberian Peninsula, considered that "the active listening to my team members" was key. Nonetheless, he admitted that "this active listening was not common in all cultures (...). Cross-talks, that in a dinner with friends may be enjoyable, in work meetings made them to be very little productive. To solve this problem, I have tried to instill a new culture of meetings, where we try them to be focused, and structured, with clear points of discussion, and shorter. We were searching for meetings that end in the established time, with the decision to be made."

In the interviews, another key element of the relationship of managers with collaborators was the ability to delegate. It would have been difficult, some decades before, for the managers of big multinationals to delegate big shares of management (in fact, in Spanish family-run companies was still difficult to do), but, we were, let's do not forget it, in a

period of upheaval, in full technological revolution. Rosa María García, chairman of Microsoft Ibérica at that time (between 2008 and 2011 she would be the vice chairman of Microsoft Western Europe), explained that she refused to have a board of directors under her command, and she replaced the board for a “board of governing” with the area managers sitting at it. “Of course, they have the maximum empowerment, that is, within their areas, they do what they think it is better. I do not know when they work, and lots of times, I do not even know their short-term tactics they follow, but I do observe their results. (...) I think that If I have to take more than four big decisions a year, then that is a signal that my board of governing does not work.” From other key post in information society, Telefonica’s senior manager in Catalonia, Kim Faura, claimed to concede “absolute autonomy” to his professionals, and he referred to general Schwarzkopf who, during Gulf War, proclaimed that “a good leader is the one who decides what to do, and then he makes his team to execute it, and to decide how to do it.”

3. Changes in management styles and new marketing rules

Bertolt Brecht said “Crisis happens when the old is not yet dead, and the new has not born yet”. At the beginning of the new millennium, because of the digital revolution, many business models were rethought, and they adopted technologies whose disruptive power was greater than previous revolution’s one. Nonetheless, when advertising, journalism, and internet gurus were preaching the changes of these new technologies that brought to our lives, the dot-com bubble burst. The new information society created such economic expectations that, since they were not immediately met, they provoked the fall of dotcom companies at stock exchanges.

At that time, transcendental changes were happening: changes that affected the scope of management. We have divided them into three categories:

1. Changes in the competitive environment

The social, economic, and political changes deeply transformed the environment where companies operated. The globalization of economy, the cut in transaction, and in communication costs, the changes of the job market, and the habits, and preferences of the consumer redefined the functions, and attributions of the manager.

2. Changes in the organization and management of companies

Their indicative standards were the proliferation of disruptive businesses, knowledge as the key strategic resource, the easing of organizational structures, top orientation to customer, and the stress in transparency, accountability, and social responsibility.

3. Changes in management styles and practices

The relationship of executives with their teams were also modified. Training, organizational learning, and fostering diversity and multiculturalism were getting prioritized; and new strategies for attracting, fostering, and retaining talent were developed. The managing of multidisciplinary and autonomous teams let them adapt to changes, and to defy the status quo (the manager as promoter and manager of change), a greater attention to external relations, and assuming a new style of leadership. Strategies such as shared value, circular economy, sustainability, and respect to environment were adopted. Even if many executives did not appreciate the corporate strategy yet, and they simply ran restructurings in hard times, and they simply considered that the budget of the company is the main indicator of the well-being of the company, the truth is that many executives set a greater focus on the purpose, mission, and values of the company.

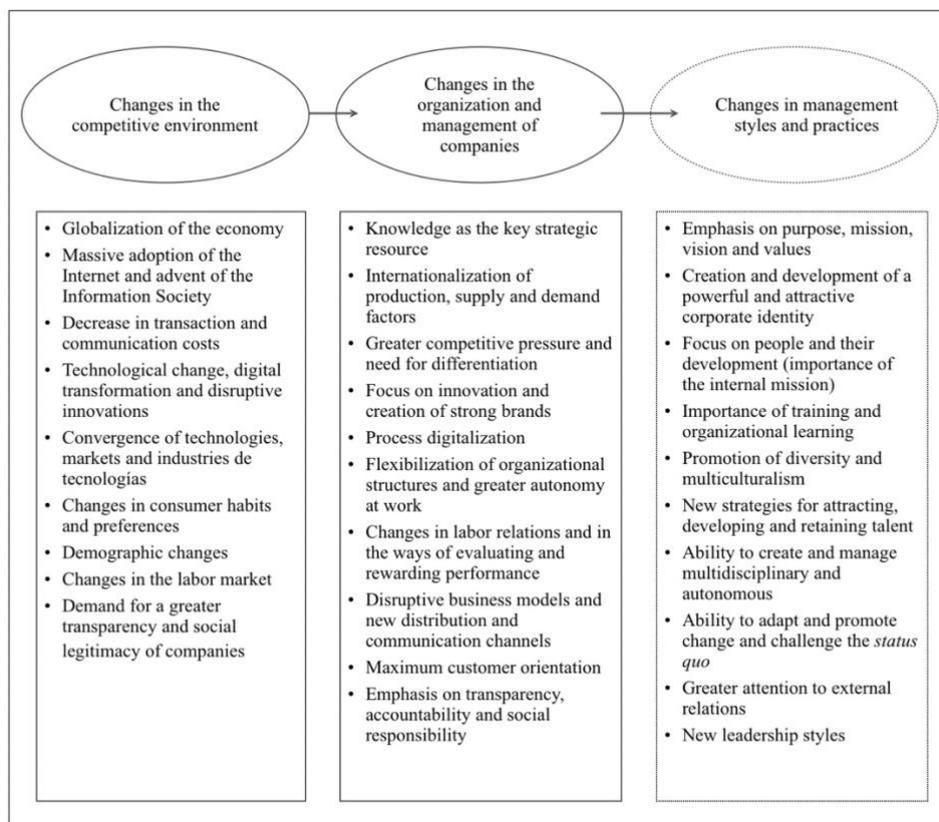


Figure 1. Summarizes some of the most important changes affecting the practice of management.

Nonetheless, the crisis of digital bubble made clear that a new organization, and management style adapted to the information society had not yet been created. Most of analyses and academic theories, yet still somewhat valid, had not foreseen the global impact of the technological changes that were quickly transforming the consumer society.

Nowadays, these changes have motivated other changes in the way that companies marshal their resources, so that new strategies, approaches, and ways of organization have arisen. According to our research, the digital revolution has reformulated business marketing to be able to compete in the Internet. Online marketing or digital marketing consists of a full arsenal, metaphorically speaking, of websites, blogs, social networks, video platforms, forums, etc. Also, a brand new type of logistics has been deployed: Evernote apps, the social bookmark site Delicious, or the website for crafting stories Storify. As if it were a real battle, the companies focus their organization, personnel, resources, and strategies toward a real digital battle. And, in the same fashion, there are military intelligence services, there is an artificial intelligence, or computational intelligence, that through the analysis of information (big data) may predict the success of a campaign, the risk of non-payment, etc. In this information arena, marketing does take into account the fact that the competitor might be infiltrating, by, for example, cookies, small files that allow to track the searches of an user, and their visited websites...

It is important that the central intelligence had a database about the population to conquer. The personality profile DISC (Dominance, Influence, Stability, and Compliance) allows one to deduce the autopilot of the user, how he/she reacts under pressure, if he/she is a negative or positive person, etc. The leads are profile of users that have provided their personal data to interact with companies (they are usually based on forms that are found in webs, blogs, Leads Ads Facebook campaigns, etc.).

There are also sensors, and radars, that is, monitoring tools such as Brandwatch (a platform for listening, and Social Intelligence with a Customer Success team to collect relevant data, and key insights for the enterprise), Google Alerts (service of supervision of contents), Hootsuite (to manage and analyze the impact of content), TweetReach (to measure the reach of the tweets...), Social mention (real time control of what is going on

about a trademark in social networks and web), Tweetdeck (to see and send tweets, and to view profiles).

The headquarters of a company is its website, it is a quality multichannel content website, that it may be viewed by computer or mobile device, and it loads fast, and the title is relevant with the content. Content will bring links, and the more the links the better the site will be. Once the target is set, the movements to position it will unroll. The SEM (Search Engine Marketing) optimizes the visibility of the search engines, for example by purchasing keywords (at public auction), that allows the companies to get high positions in the Google searches. SEO traffic describes the positioning in these searches. There are a lot of tools: advertising in searches (sponsored links), Mobile (campaigns for mobile devices), Google Adwords (blank spaces), influencers (with many followers on the Internet) or crisis social media intelligence (a search of information through Big Data to transform it in knowledge in very high value, about its public, its opinions, its products, and, as a consequence, their intentions).

The customer-oriented weapons would be, for sure, the advertising tools: Display (now by banners), advertising in searches, Video display (advertisements in videos), Text link (advertisements for websites), videos in stream, emails, SMS messages, MMS (multimedia messages with images), advertising in social networks, Advertorial (advertisement that looks like the editorial content of the publication, for people who don't read ads), the list goes on. We could talk about real weapons of mass destruction if we think about emotional communication of Facebook, or the Instagram images that strengthen the company's branding, or about Twitter, or WhatsApp messages.

To decipher the motivations of the social networks user we have at hand a good synthesis of the NORISO Cube (Bonet, Delgado and Deza, 2015). This graph, represented in figure 2, connects the three dimensions of personality following the premise that they constrain user's behavior.

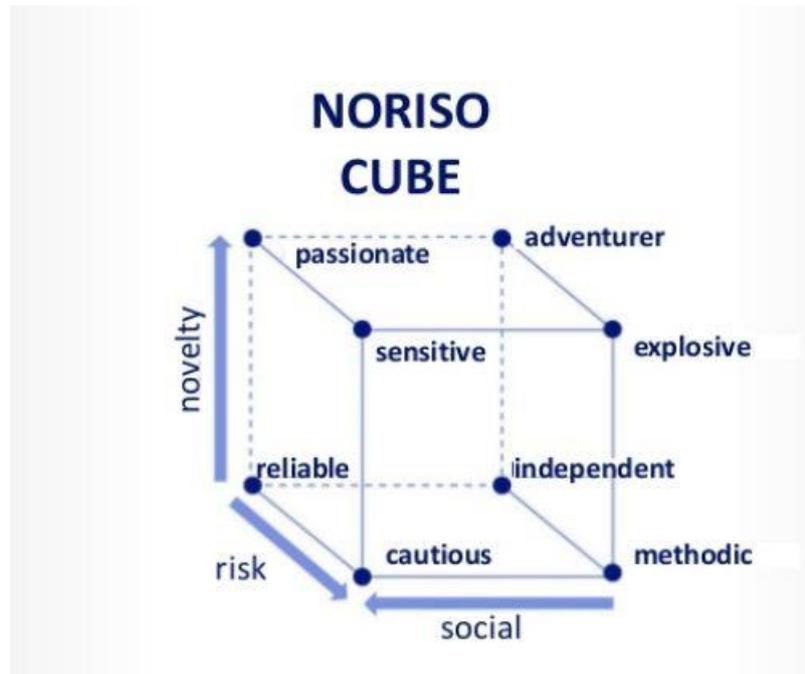


Figure 2. Noriso Cube.

- 1) A person is attracted by new things.
- 2) Every person feels risk differently (if he takes it too seriously, then it is a deterrent).
- 3) Every person needs to be socially rewarded in a different manner (which determines his permeability or indifference to mass messages).

In the ephemeral, and ever-changing battle-field of today's digital society (some of the aforementioned tools will be deprecated when you will be reading this article, and some others will be created), the key for success is to be visible, and to persuade the consumer's psyche in a long-lasting manner.

The executive and enterprise that scores more impacts is the winner of the battle. But this battle, the victory in this online or digital marketing does not mean that the war is won.

4. A persuasion model for the digital era

In the digital era, the "mother of all battles" consists of persuading, through scientific persuasion, the digital natives (people who have grown up with the new technologies: Z generation, T generation, and the coming ones). These new technologies will allow the professionals of persuasion (advertising, marketing, and PR departments) a permanent

link with the person, who on his behalf will be able to respond to stimuli in a very fast fashion. Consumers have large possibilities to get information and to choose, so traditional advertisements have become outdated. The perfect symbiosis happens when the brand or product persuade the public, and the public reacts through social media, thus it becomes the best propagandist. Among the receivers of the messages, one must always count the opinion leaders, since if we persuade one leader, then their followers just will follow. All these elements must be taken into account.

The scientific knowledge in PR begun with the studies of Edward L. Bernays, who in his canonical volume *Propaganda* (1928) said things that could have been written yesterday: “The public relations assessor is the agent who transfer one idea to the public’s conscience, by using modern communication media and the groups that compose society.” We do not pretend to formulate a theory of an individual’s behavior or the alterations of public opinion. We just propose a new model of scientific persuasion: “Business PR Funnel” (Persuading public opinion by public relations). The model, represented in figure 3, comprises a funnel of conversion that consist of six sequential states, that go down directly to the target, that is, to persuade the public.

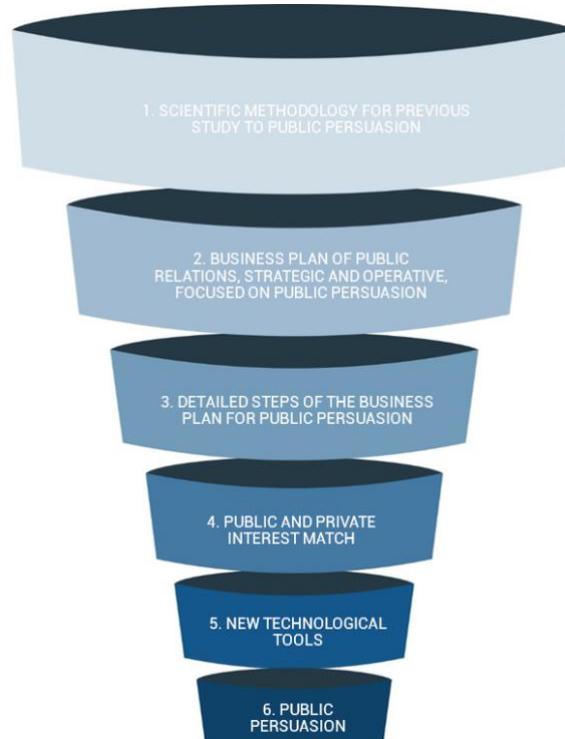


Figure 3. The Model.

1. Scientific methodology for previous study to public persuasion

There is no unique scientific method renowned by all, so using complementary methods (qualitative, empirical, historical, comparative, and critical rational) will allow us to maintain some scientific rigor. To provide clear targets, operative design, validity, and reliability in the data sampling, the serious analysis of them, and constraint conclusions (previously tested) will conform our methodology.

2. Business plan of public relations, strategic and operative, focused on public persuasion

We precise a situation analysis, and an objective diagnosis of the problems through elaborate marketing research. This will allow us to analyze the position of the company in market, to evaluate its leadership, its ratings of financial soundness, and, of course, its visibility on the Internet. If they do not find us, then we do not exist, and, therefore, we cannot buy our products, vote for us, or believe in us. That's why SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is so important to know our visibility in the searchers. Even if we already had, as a working basis, a previous idea of the message we want to release, we need to identify our potential public, and customers, and we need to decide what our objectives are. We will make a first selection of the channels to use in the campaign and we will set up a trial test in the laboratory, to contrast, to begin outlining the target.

3. Detailed steps of the business plan for public persuasion

In the third level of the funnel, we must set what is the precise target of the campaign, and the human team that will carry it out, what inputs and outputs will allow for tracking, and controlling the work, and what person will do that job.

4. Public and private interest match

In the fourth level, we reach a decisive moment. Again, we cite Bernays: "Leaders only pay attention to an advertising campaign if it benefits his own interests. Nonetheless, the activities of the marketer must have an uninterested shape. In other words, one of the functions of the public relations advisor is to find what interest points of his customer meet the points of other individuals or groups" (Bernays, 2010). Now, more than ever, due to the libertarian character of the digital society (consumers have empowerment, and the level of awareness has been raised, and the compromise with the impact that

consumption has on people and the planet), we must detect the common interest of public, and ours. We must determine whether customers, the electorate, or public opinion has a need we can satisfy with our product. Likewise, we must sort out what areas of the public have that need, as well as intensity and permanence of that need in the collective psychology. In function of the previous study about brand image and business positioning, we already knew what kind of public we were focusing on, but with the current campaign we will be able to get closer or move to other sectors.

5. New technological tools

In the previous chapter ("Changes in management styles and new marketing rules"), we described the large toolbox, even arsenal, for online, or digital marketing available to us. Now is the time to decide what the content of our messages is, although we must not forget our brand image as we need to adapt it to the characteristics of the public. A high-end product aimed to a young and urban public with high purchasing power must combine some mature features as well as some juvenile traits. A breaking flow of opinion that impacts with traditional positions must avoid conflict to avoid the outright rejection of our ideas, and so on. A common element of persuasion in the digital era is that the imposing form of traditional advertising, almost admonishing tone has faded away. We have turned our mothers and bosses who scolded us for our best to the middle age trusted friend or the millennial leader (sometimes a previously persuaded influencer) that suggests people follow his/her example, so you don't stay behind or become outdated.

6. Public persuasion

The success of our campaign will be swiftly materially and morally quantified swiftly. Persuasion will soon be legitimized with sales, links, or "likes", that will fly over our heads. In the medium term, commercial, electoral, and reputation results will translate into gaining trust, keeping customer loyalty, and the generation of trust. This will lead the customer to go on consuming, voting, or supporting the cause we are interested in, but, on the other hand, the customer benefits too. The result of the campaign will be complete with an objective valuation of it, and with proposals to the customer for continuous improvement.

5. Conclusions

In this article, after mixing academic, scientific, entrepreneurial, and cultural background, we intended to get closer to the evolution of management styles in our new society of communication. In the first part of the text, the primary models of the 20th century management studies were reviewed, remarking that each one relies on its time frame. Products, ideologies or the flow of opinion do not surge isolated from a context, but they respond to the concerns of each epoch.

Thus, a field study published in 2013 by professors Jaume Llopis, and Joan E. Ricart interviewed a group of senior managers of big European companies demonstrating to them that an evolution in the style of business management was going on at the turn of new millennium. Even if “to know to listen” and “to delegate functions” have always been among the duties of good managers, it was clear to the authors that such duties were recurring concepts for their interviewees. “In the era of information and knowledge, only through knowledge, abilities, and motivation of the employees, it will be possible to be competitive steadily. Having in mind the human factor of the organization gets to the forefront of management”, they wrote. Our article does not intend to suggest that the manager or senior manager of an enterprise must assume the functions of the old marketing manager, but we consider that the management must gravitate around digital marketing and persuasive techniques, such the ones we offer in the model “Business PR Funnel” that we detail in the last section of this article.

As John Kotter says in his book *The General Managers* (1986), the manager only has two big functions: set goals and communicate to your net of internal and external relationship, so that they help him to achieve his goal. That is where communication, PR, and the connection with all stakeholders comes into play. In the interview with the Communication Director of Amazon, Adam Sedó told us that Amazon does not have a marketing department, but an important communication department, to the point that the communication director always accompanies to Jeff Bezos.

Technology has produced a neck-breaking paced revolution that affects the habits and preferences of consumers. A huge population of digital natives organize their work, leisure, and consumption by being part of the cyber population. That obliges enterprises, politicians, and opinion leaders to be especially receptive to the values of the Internet

community, in order to be able to introduce messages into it with efficacy. The excessive speed of the development of the digital communication sector, with no solid entrepreneurial culture played an important role in the serious crisis of the dotcom companies, at the beginning of the 21st. century. We definitely believe that traditional marketing, interlinked with the new technologies, and adapting to these new times will help set limits on the excesses of the digital era.

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