

MASTERING THE NEW MEDIA LANDSCAPE

Embrace the Micromedia Mindset

"Reading this book is a bit like having your two smartest friends take their time and patiently catch you up on everything that you've been missing. The online world has changed the media world, and it's not too late to catch up."

—SETH GODIN, author of *Purple Cow*

BARBARA CAVE HENRICKS

RUSTY SHELTON

You are reading an excerpt from
Berrett-Koehler Publishers

Our books challenge conventional thinking,
introduce new ideas, and foster positive change.
If you sign up for an account on our website,
you may purchase our books at a discount.

www.bkconnection.com

More Praise for *Mastering the New Media Landscape*

“*Mastering the New Media Landscape* is an incredibly smart and informative work. If you are aiming to broaden your influence, start here—it will change the way you influence others for years to come!”

—Tom Rath, #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *StrengthsFinder 2.0* and *Are You Fully Charged?*

“Reading *Mastering the New Media Landscape* is a bit like having your two smartest friends take their time and patiently catch you up on everything that you’ve been missing. The online world has changed the media world, and it’s not too late to catch up.”

—Seth Godin, author of *Purple Cow*

“Rusty and Barbara offer compelling, clear advice for approaching what seems to be an increasingly complicated media world. *Mastering the New Media Landscape* is an indispensable tool for anyone with a story to tell.”

—Andy Andrews, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Noticer* and *The Traveler’s Gift*

“In the old days, the only viable way to generate attention for you or your business was to buy it (advertising) or beg for it (traditional public relations). Today, this is how most organizations still attempt to get noticed. Barbara and Rusty show you a better way—understanding the world of micromedia where everyone is a publisher.”

—David Meerman Scott, bestselling author of ten books including *The New Rules of Marketing & PR*, now in 25 languages from Arabic to Vietnamese

“The authors explain PR and media strategies to get attention you *own* rather than rent. It’s a futureproof, long-term view of how to master new media views.”

—Ryan Holiday, author of *Trust Me, I’m Lying* and *Growth Hacker Marketing*

“In a fast-changing media milieu, this book provides a sure-footed blueprint for success.”

—Julie Silver, MD, award-winning author, successful entrepreneur, and Associate Chair for Strategic Initiatives, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Harvard Medical School

“As a business practitioner, and having led an integrated communication company, I found the allocation of media budgets a major key to achieving success. The force of PR has been growing and growing. Now, PR skills play beautifully on the new media front. Social media and the new emerging micromedia have changed the communication landscape forever. I have seen Barbara Cave Henricks become a PR standout. Barbara and Rusty Shelton light up the complex, multifaceted, but oh-so-critical new media world. It’s not just about being interesting—it’s about the new way to get results.”

—Peter Georgescu, Chairman Emeritus, Young & Rubicam

“If you want to grow your platform in today’s media environment, this book is a must-read. Rusty and Barbara are truly two of the world’s best when it comes to marketing and PR. Thankfully, they’ve created a go-to guide that walks you through each step of the process. Highly recommended!”

—Robert D. Smith, artist manager and author of *20,000 Days and Counting*

“This book provides an excellent, easy-to-understand framework for building your brand using fast-changing new media platforms.”

—Jill Totenberg, CEO, The Totenberg Group

“The emergence of micromedia has changed the game for those promoting their company, products, or brand. With this brilliant new book, Barbara Cave Henricks and Rusty Shelton expertly explain how to navigate the new media rules and grow your audience from the ground up.”

—Jackie Huba, author of three books on customer loyalty, including *Monster Loyalty*

“How to create the magnetic pull that builds your business! Put this book on *top* of your business reading list to learn how to show up humanly and authentically as the value-added thought leader. The way you communicate in the media world today is part of what compels people to want to be in touch and do business with you.”

—Jeanne Bliss, author of *“I Love You More Than My Dog”* and cofounder of the Customer Experience Professionals Association

“The world of media is constantly changing, and Rusty and Barbara are on the forefront of it all. This book will help you stay relevant and knowledgeable about the future. It may help you stay in business.”

—**Rory Vaden, cofounder of Southwestern Consulting and *New York Times* bestselling author of *Take the Stairs***

“Read this book. It holds the precious gift of both context and clarity in an ever re-interpreted world of media.”

—**Charlotte Beers, former Chairman and CEO, Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide, and former Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs**

“This book is a vitamin-packed feast for anyone who’s serious about building a brand or promoting a cause. You want to be discoverable? This book shows you how. You want to create an army of engaged followers? This is your guide. You want to get maximum impact from earned media, rented media, and owned media? This is your instruction manual. *Mastering the New Media Landscape* is not just a book title. It’s what people who want to make a difference must be busy *doing*.”

—**Rodger Dean Duncan, bestselling author of *Change-Friendly Leadership***

“Two of the best media minds today have created a simple, elegant model for the new micromedia world. Beyond concept, Barbara and Rusty show us how to utilize tested strategies for building and strengthening our own media platforms rather than depending on the elusive dictates of the traditional gatekeepers.”

—**Ray Bard, Publisher, Bard Press, publisher of *The One Thing***

“Having an important message means nothing if nobody notices or cares. If you want to grow your audience in today’s distracted and overcrowded world, read this book. Rusty and Barbara show you how to fascinate your audience.”

—**Sally Hogshead, *New York Times* bestselling author and creator of the Fascinate System**

“Anyone wanting to get a message out into the world will benefit enormously from reading Barbara and Rusty’s book. Fast-moving and engaging, it provides tons of insight into what’s happening today in publicity and marketing and how to take best advantage of all the possibilities available in this new media world.”

—**Erika Andersen, founder of Proteus, business thinker, and author of the new book *Be Bad First***

“The best way for businesses and individuals to learn how to successfully promote their products and ideas is to be educated by pragmatists who are engaged in the process every day. Barbara and Rusty have written a wonderful and extremely useful book on how to deal with the three dimensions of micromedia—earned, rented, and owned. They explain how to leverage each dimension to gain the best return.”

—**Bill Davidow, Silicon Valley pioneer and author of *Overconnected***

“Barbara and Rusty have written a treasure map to a bestseller. Study it. Follow it. Then watch your book soar!”

—**Jill Griffin, author at Harvard’s *Working Knowledge* and author of *Earn Your Seat on a Corporate Board***

“The challenge facing us all is this: how do we stand out and stay relevant in the mostly disruptive and massively distracting world of micromedia? *Mastering the New Media Landscape* gives you the answers.”

—**Matthew E. May, author of *The Laws of Subtraction***

“For authors, what was once coasting down a smooth path is now riding a dirt bike over thousands of rocks and around a few hundred trees to hit the right jumps. Barbara and Rusty have ridden ahead to keep you from flying over the handlebars.”

—**Rodd Wagner, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Widgets***

MASTERING THE NEW MEDIA LANDSCAPE

Embrace the Micromedia Mindset

BARBARA CAVE HENRICKS

RUSTY SHELTON



BK

Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.
a BK Business book

Mastering the New Media Landscape

Copyright © 2016 by Barbara Cave Henricks and Rusty Shelton

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permission requests, write to the publisher, addressed "Attention: Permissions Coordinator," at the address below.



Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

1333 Broadway, Suite 1000

Oakland, CA 94612-1921

Tel: (510) 817-2277, Fax: (510) 817-2278

www.bkconnection.com

BK

Ordering information for print editions

Quantity sales. Special discounts are available on quantity purchases by corporations, associations, and others. For details, contact the "Special Sales Department" at the Berrett-Koehler address above.

Individual sales. Berrett-Koehler publications are available through most bookstores. They can also be ordered directly from Berrett-Koehler: Tel: (800) 929-2929; Fax: (802) 864-7626; www.bkconnection.com

Orders for college textbook/course adoption use. Please contact Berrett-Koehler: Tel: (800) 929-2929; Fax: (802) 864-7626.

Orders by U.S. trade bookstores and wholesalers. Please contact Ingram Publisher Services, Tel: (800) 509-4887; Fax: (800) 838-1149; E-mail: customer.service@ingrampublisherservices.com; or visit www.ingrampublisherservices.com/Ordering for details about electronic ordering.

Berrett-Koehler and the BK logo are registered trademarks of Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

First Edition

Paperback print edition ISBN 978-1-62656-580-7

PDF e-book ISBN 978-1-62656-581-4

IDPF e-book ISBN 978-1-62656-582-1

2016-1

Production Management: Michael Bass Associates

Cover Design: Bradford Foltz, Image by Corbis

Author Photos: Rusty: Katrina Barber, Barbara: Ashley M. Stroud
Photography

Barbara Cave Henricks

*For my husband, Michael McDougal,
who has given me a book-worthy happy ending,
and my children, Kate, Corey, and Brady,
the communicators of tomorrow*

Rusty Shelton

*For the love of my life, my wife Paige;
our boys, Luke and Brady; and our new baby girl
for inspiring me every day.
And for my parents, Walt and Roxanne,
and sister Courtney, for the love and support
I've been so blessed to receive through the years.*

This page intentionally left blank

CONTENTS

	<i>Introduction</i>	1
1	Welcome to the Age of Micromedia	11
2	Technology Gives Rise to New Rules of Communication	23
3	Understanding the Opportunities in Micromedia	31
4	Earned, Rented, and Owned—Better Together	43
5	Discoverability and the Future of Marketing	55
6	Online Brand Audit: Getting Your Owned Media Infrastructure in Shape	63
7	Blogs, Bylines, and Killer Content: What You Can Learn from Traditional Media	77
8	The Power of Rented Media	91
9	Getting the Most Out of Rented Media	101

10	Why Traditional, Earned Media Still Packs a Punch	125
11	Take the Stage: Launch a Speaking Career	135
12	Futureproof Your Media Strategy	147
	<i>Notes</i>	158
	<i>Acknowledgments</i>	161
	<i>Index</i>	167
	<i>About the Authors</i>	177

INTRODUCTION

BE HONEST: What was the first thing you did when you woke up this morning? Before your feet hit the floor, did you roll over and check your smartphone? If you are like most of us, you did a quick scan within the first minutes of waking. And the habit didn't stop there. In fact, there is a fire hose of information that follows you into your day, with media hitting you from all directions. From the TV you click on at breakfast to the Periscope feed you watched as you polished off your coffee, from the radio button you hit in the car to the podcast you switched to when the commercials started, from the newspaper you scanned when you arrived at the office to the blogs you read when you opened your email, you are living in a brand-new media landscape. Although the specific media each of us consume will be different, the universal truth is we are more connected to information, and each other, than ever before.

As we sit down to write this book, we are acutely aware of just how fast the world is changing. We know that content will always exist, but how it will be consumed is anyone's guess. You may be reading this from a physical book, on an e-reader, or via an app on your smartphone. Certainly more devices and apps are just ahead. Even less clear is where you will hear about the content you consume in a media landscape that has been completely transformed in the span of two

decades. This book is our attempt to examine the sweeping changes in the media, explain their impact, offer insight, and suggest a strategy for you to not only tackle the change but conquer the new, expansive environment before us.

To many of us, the new media environment feels like the Wild West. On television, many of today's highest-rated programs are reality based and feature families who do things like procreate excessively or leap to fame when their patriarch pops into view as part of the legal team for O. J. Simpson. Even talent shows, popular since Ed Sullivan introduced the world to the Beatles, have given way to celebrity-judged singing duels where tone-deaf contestants appear to try out but, in fact, are merely being mocked. Twitter helped Paris Hilton, a descendant of the famed hotelier, become well known. After a sex tape brought her to public notice, she became a devoted user of the clever communication tool, employing it to do nothing but advance her own fame.

And let's not leave out the whole concept of going viral, such as the frenzy that erupted in 2015 over whether a particular dress was blue and black or white and gold. That gem of a story seized so much attention that real news was pushed, at least briefly, from the headlines. It's easy to be cynical. We get it.

But, let's flip the tables for a moment. Today's media environment has given us access we wouldn't otherwise have to many of the world's most influential minds. Seth Godin was a very successful book packager more than two decades ago, turning out superior books and running his startup from a tiny Manhattan apartment. After selling that company to employees and launching two technology companies, he began a career as an author, gave birth to the concept of permission marketing, and has arguably become the most iconic marketing expert of his time. With dozens of books to his credit and perennial bestsellers like *Tribes*, *Linchpin*, and *Purple Cow*, what does Godin use to remain in the public eye?

Largely, a blog that he began in 2002 and uses to dispense advice as well as road-test ideas for new books.

A blog may or may not be the right tool for you, but the lesson here is that in the new media landscape, anyone now has the ability to build an audience if they approach it in the right way.

But it wasn't always like this.

Before the enormous disruption largely created by technology, the media landscape was dominated by what we now think of as traditional or legacy media. These large national media companies were the gatekeepers who determined which stories received coverage, with an eye toward the material most relevant to their readers, listeners, or viewers. The decisions about what was newsworthy were made in newsrooms, editorial meetings, and under the watchful eye of an editor or producer who had ultimate veto power. Traditional media relied on the expertise of a large group of trained communicators.

Then, between 2000 and 2008, one in four media jobs disappeared. While that statistic came from a Forrester Research study conducted even *before* the financial crash of 2008, those of us who work with the media every day already knew it. Local media shrunk dramatically, while the big national outlets became understaffed and under pressure to create content not only for their regular beats or programs, but for their online presence as well. Meantime, we began to witness the birth of a new kind of media—digital outlets hosted by individuals and brands that feature blogs, podcasts, webinars, and other content tailored to a very specific group of readers. We call these micromedia, and collectively they are creating a new way to get attention for your platform, your message, your mission, your story, or your business.

You may be wondering: what is micromedia?

Everyone. Literally every individual, business, and organization is a micromedia outlet, whether they know it or not.

Everyone with a smartphone can be one part camera operator, one part humor columnist, one part radio host, or whatever kind of media outlet they would like to be.

This isn't anything new.

We have always had the human impulse to gather and share information, making us micromedia outlets, in a sense, even before the Internet or social media came along and gave us an amplifier. Before technology gave us new tools for sharing, most of us influenced two groups of people: those in our direct physical space and the friends and family members we kept in our circle with letters, phone calls, and visits. Those who wrote for a church newsletter or sent out a yearly holiday update to their "list" might have influenced more people in that environment, but for the most part, we had to go to a lot of dinner parties to be a true influencer.

Fast-forward to today—there are still some micromedia who primarily influence in "pre-Internet" ways (physical environment/friends and family), but the vast majority of micromedia are now influencing exponentially more people than ever via the Internet. Some micromedia have grown their audience so large that they rival traditional media in terms of reach while others influence several hundred via Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter.

Both matter tremendously to anyone looking to get a message out.

Part of the reason many micromedia outlets are doing so well is that they are challenging the status quo and removing the traditional gatekeepers. They are amassing their own sizeable audiences and beginning to play a much larger role in influencing public opinion. As the power and reach of traditional media continue to erode, many of the big players are looking to these new, smaller outlets as the best option for future growth. Others are re-forming and forging alliances with one-time competitors in an effort to strengthen their

diminishing brands. The twenty-first century has already seen the creation of *Bloomberg Businessweek*, *Newsweek*/The Daily Beast (2010–2013), and Disney/ABC Television (purchased by Disney in 1996). Furthermore, AT&T acquired DirecTV; Altice, a French company, acquired Suddenlink; and Comcast made a prolonged but ultimately failed effort to acquire Time Warner Cable—all further evidence that mergers among the traditional giants, which are struggling to survive, will continue as the millennium moves on.

Consumers began to really feel the shift in the mid-1990s when online-only, general interest publications such as Salon.com (1995) and Slate.com (1996) became among the first to dip their toes into the fast-moving water. They were swiftly joined by dozens and then hundreds of other online-only publications whose combined cachet and clout now arguably comes close to commanding the attention once reserved for the evening network news or the newspapers plucked daily from the porch or newsstand. In an op-ed in the *New York Times*, author and NPR host Kurt Andersen aptly describes the 1990s as the era in which the digital age got fully underway. “At the beginning of the decade, almost none of us had heard of the web, and we didn’t have browsers, search engines, digital cellphone networks, fully 3-D games, or affordable and powerful laptops. By the end of the decade, we had them all.”¹

Although the changes in media started almost two decades ago, many marketers, branding experts, authors, small business owners, entrepreneurs, nonprofit organizations, and activists are still operating as if they remain in a media environment where top-down messaging is the only way to grow support for ideas, products, and services. As a result:

- Major companies around the world are spending billions of dollars on PR and marketing processes that are not suited for this new environment.

- Individuals looking to grow their own platform focus far too much attention and resources strictly on traditional methods, missing huge opportunities to grow their own micromedia channels or use coverage in these channels to open the doors of the large, traditional outlets that remain.
- Small businesses, authors, and speakers are increasingly aware of social media options and tools, but few can grasp how to create the right strategy to grow their own micromedia audience.
- Marketers fail to recognize that often the best way to get major media attention is to first capture the attention of micromedia.
- The power of micromedia has been and continues to be vastly underestimated by nearly everyone who desperately wants to use it for forwarding their message.
- Millions are missing the opportunities that micromedia provides as both a forum for content and also a momentum generator.

Our theory is that the fallout will continue, that the millions of micromedia outlets not only will survive but will multiply, and the very noisy world in which we live will become flat-out deafening.

The seismic shift in how content is created, where it is housed, and who can create it has resulted in both an enormous challenge *and* a huge opportunity. Millions can now get their messages heard by micromedia, starting small, gaining traction, and then growing loud and large enough to command the attention of the traditional outlets whose impact remains important. The challenge of using micromedia for this purpose demands a dedicated willingness to participate. These new outlets possess a raging appetite for highly credible, quickly produced, quality content that will appeal to the audience they were designed to serve. This appetite means

there are more outlets to run your content. This shift is enormous, given that even a decade ago being asked to contribute to an esteemed publication was a rare occurrence at best.

Micromedia offers another kind of opportunity for those eager to embrace its potential to become a thriving media outlet in their own right, growing an audience that they own the connection to. This set of brave and fledging digital journalists are aware that platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, LinkedIn, and Facebook, to name just a few, give them the power to reach their audience in a new way. However, too many who want to become micromedia outlets lack the communication skills and editorial savvy needed to create a following. They are, by and large, not professional journalists and too often create a “me-first” platform. This is a treacherous and uphill battle—something we will explain in greater depth later in this book.

The rise of micromedia is stirring questions from two camps: those deeply willing and interested in using them as levers to gain coverage in traditional media, and those eager to become their own outlets. While they might not yet have the skill set to effectively use the tools that now exist, they are highly motivated to learn. Here’s what we are hearing from this group:

- How do I create an audience for my message?
- What is the one media hit—online or traditional—that will be the tipping point for me in terms of mass exposure?
- What is the best way to integrate traditional and social media for a campaign with broad depth and reach?
- How do I build my own email list?
- How should I approach social media, and is it worth my time?
- Why should I focus on online results? Isn’t national media attention the only way to move the needle?

- How do I coordinate my social media efforts and outreach with my traditional media?
- How does working on one impact the other?
- What is the relationship between traditional and micromedia?
- How do I build a platform?

The answers to many of these questions are changing daily, as the *New York Times* is no longer the single hit that matters. The media environment that brought you *Sesame Street* as a child, MTV as a teen, and *Saturday Night Live* when you arrived at college is changed forever; and the influence and growing power of micromedia are rewriting the rules on how to get noticed. The message is clear: learn the new rules or be left behind.

Micromedia is further fueled by the generation that is currently coming of age. Described interchangeably as “digital natives” (a term coined by researcher Marc Prensky) or Gen Y, this new demographic brings with it new demands. Thomas Koulopoulos and Dan Keldsen, in their book *The Gen Z Effect*, say, “These kids are not just digital natives, they are hyper-connected junkies whose expectations will radically change business forever.”²

While the new generation may lead the charge, *everyone* who consumes media will continue to demand more, regardless of age. We all want more, better, faster content that is customized to our interests and needs. We’re not married to a specific medium; instead we consume media via a multitude of devices, in a myriad of ways, and all at our own convenience. We devise our own menu of media, picking and choosing among the options and diminishing the editorial control once wielded by traditional media.

Consider the scenario in your own home. Does anyone rush to catch the 6 p.m. news? Do your teenagers fight to

control the family television? No. Because that 6 p.m. news is available 24/7 on any one of a dozen channels, and kids stream their favorite shows on their computers or smartphones, perhaps in the family den if a family binge-watching session has been scheduled, but nearly as often, alone in a personal window of free time. Just as it is time to recognize those changes, it's time to accept the fact that things have changed in how the media gets and covers stories and begin making strategic decisions about how to capitalize on the new, exciting world before us.

The game is not only afoot—it is here. Who, at the end of the day, will curate the content that we consume? And if we are trying to crack into that content, how do we figure out which social media tools make sense, what strategy can be deployed to create media momentum once generated by local media that was severely decimated in the crash of 2008, and who among those trying to gain notice and grow a personal audience have the power, skill, and capacity to become a micro-media outlet in their own right? This book will examine these questions, offering a primer of the current media landscape and a guidebook of how to navigate it for marketers, branding experts, authors, small business owners, nonprofits, and entrepreneurs. Furthermore, it is our fondest hope that we can help you understand how to leverage the three categories that matter most today—rented, earned, and owned media—and that collectively position you to master the new media landscape.

This page intentionally left blank

1

WELCOME TO THE AGE OF MICROMEDIA

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES to master the new media landscape?

Few are aware that they do have what it takes, and, in truth, we didn't either until we embraced a new approach that took us out of our comfort zone and into a brand new approach—a micromedia mindset.

In the coming pages, we're going to explore how we arrived at this new media landscape and what we can learn from lessons of the past as we plan for a future media environment none of us can possibly predict.

What's ironic is that we're not that far removed from a PR environment that, against the backdrop of Periscope and Instagram, feels like the stone age of communications.

We entered our careers in public relations a couple of decades apart. Rusty's first job out of college was with a book publicity agency in Austin, Texas, while Barbara left her editor's desk at NBC Radio in Washington to join Workman Publishing in Manhattan. Although the years we began our careers were 2004 and 1989, respectively, when we crossed paths in 2009, we quickly decided that our viewpoints, skill sets, and even the age gap contributed to making us ideal collaborators. We both had a solid foundation in public relations, but Rusty, a digital native, brought social media expertise and

a skill for helping others understand it, while Barbara brought years of New York publishing experience and a journalist's eye for shaping content suitable for both traditional media and micromedia. Since joining forces, we have teamed up on scores of projects, from working with leading brands like IBM, Chicken Soup for the Soul, and Campbell Soup Company to grow their audiences, to launching bestsellers like *Strengths-Finder 2.0*, *The Confidence Code*, and *The One Thing*. We can confidently report that rather than sticking to our core capabilities, we've each created a company of professional communicators who can work across disciplines in today's complex media world.

We began like thousands of other publicists charged with setting up events and getting lots of earned media for every author on our list. We were each handed what was then considered the industry bible, *Bacon's Media Directories*, a set of dark green encyclopedic directories that housed "up-to-date" listings of the media, organized in volumes—one for newspapers, one for magazines, and a third for broadcast outlets. Three categories. That was it. They arrived *annually* via standard U.S. postal delivery in a bulky package and were the center of heated exchanges between publicists, as we raced to copy pages needed for each project before relinquishing them to the next person in line. Updates? We used Wite-Out to change contact info when producers, editors, or hosts changed jobs.

It was clearly not just a different era but a different lifetime in almost every way possible for those with a story to tell (and the marketers who help them tell it). In short, everything about the way promotion and marketing are handled has changed.

There have been many causes for these changes, but the chief disruptor has been the Internet, followed by social media, which have made us much more connected to one another (at least in a technological sense) and less connected to media conglomerates that used to dominate the airwaves.

If we look back at the media world of even ten years ago, major media outlets could be described as boulders, encircling the public. These boulders made decisions to let in whatever information they deemed worthy of consumption; and if a book, product, or message wasn't covered by "traditional" media, it was very difficult for us, the general public, to hear about.

Word of mouth existed, but it took a lot longer to take hold because it happened in physical proximity—dinner parties, places of worship, and the like—instead of via social networks that transcend physical connections.

Then came the Internet, followed closely by social media, which took a collective sledgehammer to those boulders, spreading pebbles across the ground and leaving those major media outlets casting a much smaller shadow over the public. As those pebbles scattered, so did our attention, fragmenting the way we consume media.

Thanks to our newfound access to high-quality, niche information, many of us now prefer to pay attention to the more specialized pebbles, which, while small, give us exactly what we want, as opposed to the "traditional" or "legacy" media outlets that often aren't able to—because of less local coverage and an increased reliance on wire services due to shrunken newsrooms.

Stone age analogies aside, the pebbles are still scattering, and they are forming a brand-new media environment.

Welcome to the age of micromedia.

HOW CAN YOU SUCCEED IN THIS ENVIRONMENT?

Success in this new age is largely about embracing a micromedia mindset. If you are open to a new way of thinking about the media environment, you have made the first step toward participating in it. The influence economy has truly arrived, but the main problem is that most are approaching promotion

as if boulders of big media and its gatekeepers still ruled the day.

The new media landscape has three types of media—earned media, rented media, and owned media—and you must effectively leverage all three to be successful.

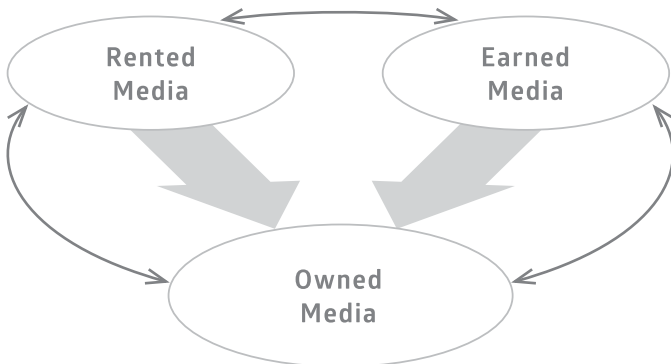
Earned media used to be the only game in town when it came to telling a story or marketing a product. We define earned media as any exposure you get by earning your way onto someone else’s platform or stage. This could range from an NPR interview to an op-ed in the *New York Times* to an interview on Dave Ramsey’s *EntreLeadership* podcast to a tweet from Guy Kawasaki. To obtain earned media, you need permission from whoever owns that platform to give you access to their stage, so to speak. When they do so, it’s powerful because not only are you reaching that audience, but you have the implied endorsement of that media outlet as well. The challenge with earned media is that it is extremely difficult to get. You must go through whoever controls the outlet, and you are at the mercy of their decision. Your fate rests in the hands of the gatekeepers who control access to earned media, and it is hard work to capture their attention and ultimately gain access to their stage.

Rented media emerged as a sizeable space with the growth of social media. We define it as a presence and content that you control but that lives on someone else’s platform or stage. Rented media includes *your* Facebook page, *your* Twitter account, *your* LinkedIn profile, *your* Instagram feed, and so forth. We overloaded that sentence with italics because you don’t ultimately “own” those channels—you’re creating and posting content on a little sliver of real estate owned by someone else. At any time, Facebook can tweak their algorithm, Twitter can shut down your account, LinkedIn can change its rules, and access to your audience on that platform can change forever. This doesn’t mean rented media isn’t

incredibly important—we'll talk plenty about why it is crucial to your success—but it means that to master the new media landscape you can't be content leaving your audience on someone else's real estate.

The final category of media is owned media. Understanding and growing owned media is, in our minds, the crux of embracing the micromedia mindset and the key to mastering the new media landscape. We define owned media as any channel where you fully own the connection to your audience, including your website (assuming it lives on a domain you own), your blog (again, assuming it lives on a domain you own) and your email list. Growing an audience that you own gives you leverage when you have a story to tell, a product to sell, or a message that the world needs to hear. It also gives you the ability to shine a spotlight on others who don't yet have a platform but could benefit your audience.

Put simply, owned media equals ongoing value in this new environment, but utilizing all three kinds of media is a must for a fully integrated strategy. As the figure below shows, each category organically feeds the other but the key to growing your owned media audience is making sure you create a



magnet (a call to action) to intentionally and consistently push audiences from earned and rented to owned space.

Each of these three, collectively, add up to define your platform or personal brand. Like nearly everything else in today's world, your platform will be customized based on your goals, passions, message, and audience.

Are you thinking across each of these buckets?

To succeed, a different approach is needed from both marketers, who should be working with their clients to help them grow their own micromedia platform, and individuals, businesses, and other entities who must embrace the opportunity in front of them to grow an audience that they own the connection to.

Some of you will say, "We have already changed; we're building meaningful relationships with bloggers and getting excellent coverage. We have a Twitter account and a Facebook page, and we're getting more active."

Those are good first steps, but it's not enough. It's time to stop chasing access to other people's platforms and take center stage on your own platform.

THINK LIKE A MEDIA OUTLET

We want you to think of your digital platform as if it is your personal media brand—your newspaper. We judge a media outlet by the value of its content and pay attention to those that entertain and inform us. We increasingly put our social media connections through the same filter we use for media based on the options we have (block, unfollow, mute, etc.). We all have friends, family, and other connections that we gloss over when scrolling our Twitter stream or Facebook newsfeed because we don't value their content. We lose interest for an infinite number of reasons that range from constant promotion to an endless stream of baby pictures or political diatribes.

At the same time, we pay particular attention to certain individuals or brands because their content informs and entertains us. We get value from their updates, and, in exchange, we give them something that truly matters in today's environment: our attention.

In this age of micromedia, it doesn't take much for us to change the channel. Because we have more options, we expect more than ever from those we pay attention to. One bad post, one off-target tweet, or one too many promotions and attention wanes or, worse, disappears—often forever. The challenge before you in today's largely democratized space isn't getting attention—it's keeping it.

Think about what kind of newspaper you would value subscribing to. You almost certainly wouldn't subscribe to a newspaper filled with ads, selfies, or me-first content (okay, unless it was really funny or self-deprecating). You also likely wouldn't subscribe to a newspaper that is delivered without any consistency—once or twice a month just wouldn't cut it. We subscribe to newspapers that provide interesting and entertaining content on a consistent, predictable basis. Those that feature interviews, reviews, and other news we can use—the kind of information we can put into practice that day-to-day make our lives better. You are going to be judged by the same standard we apply to broader media.

FILL YOUR AUDITORIUM

If you are reading this book and want to grow your audience moving forward, it is time to take center stage.

As you get started growing your platform, imagine yourself taking the stage in a huge auditorium. Unless you are already famous or in some way well-known, you are going to be looking out from the stage at a very sparse crowd. Your initial audience will be gathered in the front couple of rows and will

likely consist of friends and family there to support you as you launch your blog, podcast, or other content channel.

Before you say anything from the stage, it is important to remember that everything you do in this public arena will either help or hurt you in terms of growing the audience in your auditorium. In the digital environment, which is largely anonymous, people can get up and walk out as quickly as they came in, and they have zero qualms about doing so. If your blog doesn't cut it or you spend too much time "selling" from the stage, the only people left will be those who *can't* leave—good friends and family (and they're dozing off, rolling their eyes, or muting you).

On the other hand, if you are dynamic with your content and provide entertaining and informative information, you give your initial audience content they can share with their audiences (as micromedia outlets themselves, each of them have their own stage—even if they're just speaking to Facebook friends). When they share your blog post, they stand out in the hall with a big sign and point their audience into your auditorium.

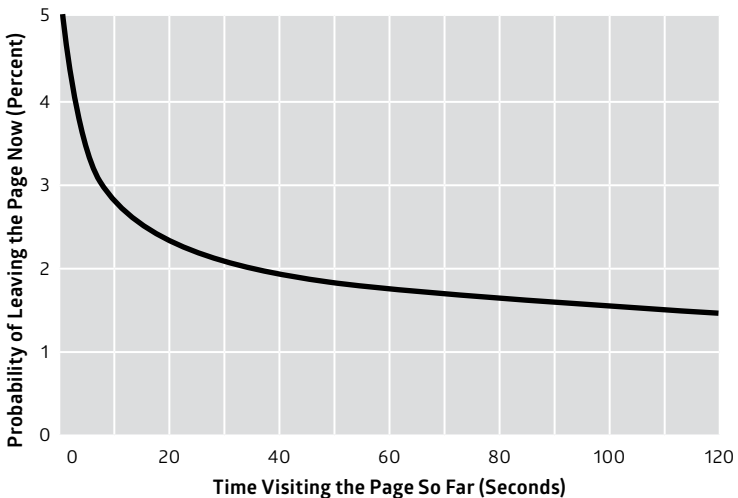
Once their friends arrive, they will make a very quick decision on whether they want to sit down (by subscribing), stand in the back (just reading the post), or head on back out the door. Much of what they do will depend on a combination of the look and feel of the stage, which is the content on your website. Is it professional? Does it provide a clear overview of the value you will provide? Are you giving people a reason to sit down and subscribe via a quiz, free download, or other value proposition? Are you popular right now with the people sitting in the audience? Do they see a lot of commenting and sharing? The quality of the content you are providing from the stage of your website needs to engage, as most will want you to hook them quickly or they will be gone.

Although the audience is judging you on a number of things, they are also doing so very quickly. According to a

study done by the Nielsen Norman Group, the longer you can keep someone in your auditorium (your website), the better chance you have that they will sit down:

It's clear from the figure below that the *first 10 seconds of the page visit are critical* for users' decision to stay or leave. The probability of leaving is very high during these first few seconds because users are extremely skeptical, having suffered countless poorly designed Web pages in the past. People know that most Web pages are useless, and they behave accordingly to avoid wasting more time than absolutely necessary on bad pages.

If the web page survives this first—extremely harsh—ten-second judgment, users will look around a bit. However, they're still highly likely to leave during the subsequent twenty seconds of their visit. Only after people have stayed on a page for about thirty seconds does the curve become relatively flat. People continue to leave every second, but at a



much slower rate than during the first thirty seconds. So, if you can convince users to stay on your page for half a minute, there's a fair chance that they'll stay much longer—often two minutes or more, which is an eternity on the Web.

The question you need to ask yourself is this: “Am I giving someone a good, clear reason to stay on my website/blog?” If not, the doors to your auditorium are revolving—you may get a number of people in, but they aren't sticking around.

We'll be discussing ways to fix that problem so you can own the connection to your audience. We will also explore at length how to get people through the doors of your auditorium by building relationships with individual influencers and groups, and effectively using rented and earned media.

Although traditional or earned media, as we will be calling it, is changing, based on syndication, influence, and scarcity, we believe it is more powerful than ever in terms of getting a message out. So while we want you spending plenty of time in your auditorium creating content, interacting with others, and building an audience, we're also going to challenge you to devote more effort to acquire earned media coverage as well by getting on larger stages that you don't own.

The key change we want to encourage you to make is to think of reaching an audience via earned or rented media, not just as the end goal but rather as crucial components of driving people to your owned media space, be it your website or email list, where you can extend that interaction for a much longer period of time. In the age of micromedia, every interview, speech, guest post, and other public event is not only an opportunity to reach those people during that short interaction, but also an opportunity to then give them a reason to head to your website and convert to your platform.

In the coming pages, we will explore numerous case studies of how to do this, ranging from the authors of the runaway bestseller *The Confidence Code*, Katty Kay and Claire Shipman,

who grew a huge email list by pairing a clear call to action with a national media campaign to drive more than 150,000 people to their website to take their free confidence quiz; to bestselling author and speaker Jon Acuff, who leveraged in-person meet-ups in cities where he was already traveling to build relationships that gave him the ability to make the most important career transition of his life. You will also hear from experts such as Fred Allen of *Forbes* and Patricia O'Connell, a former editor at *BusinessWeek*, on how to craft great content and what it takes to be a contributor.

Even though we will discuss it at length, this is not a book about social media.

Despite the amount of time we'll spend looking at how to get great media attention, this is not a book about PR.

Although we'll walk through case studies of speakers who have built massive audiences through in-person events, this is not a book about driving attention via events.

Rather, this is a book about a new kind of mindset that all who have a story to tell in today's modern media environment need to embrace—before the window of opportunity disappears.

Not only does growing a large, owned media audience give you leverage to share your own ideas, but it also allows you to grow meaningful relationships that can change lives. The key is to think more like a media executive than a marketer. The most important opportunity is not the short-term sale; it's getting someone to take a seat in your auditorium.

Let's get started.

Thank You For Reading

Did you like this excerpt? Tell us your thoughts:
bkcommunity@bkpub.com

Berrett-Koehler Publishers

Copyright © 2014, All Rights Reserved.