Chapter 3
Disruptive Communication:
Challenges and Opportunities
of the 21st Century

Margareth Boarini
Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, Brazil

ABSTRACT

Challenges became more complex to organizational communication since the dissemination and the confluence of big data, artificial intelligence, and internet of things. Ubiquitous and powerful, these technologies require a specific knowledge, partnerships with different areas (data sciences), and learning how to work with a new communicational agent, the non-human. Bots should produce content e become popular as brand virtual influencer among other things. There are many and good opportunities to create and implement more assertive strategies by using data-driven and IA tools. The purpose of this chapter is to contextualize digital transformations and to highlight challenges and opportunities on what the author has defined as second disruptive wave to organizational communication. The first one happened when social media emerged as the main social arena on the contemporary society. The research was supported by a qualitative methodology with a theoretical framework and documentary research from various fields of knowledge.

INTRODUCTION

The confluence of big data, artificial intelligence and internet of things technologies should inaugurate a new phase of reconfiguration in the communication field, demanding an inter- and multidisciplinary look from industry professionals to explore opportunities and overcome challenges.

Ubiquitous, the three technologies, when combined, have their power enhanced. As explained by Gabriel (2019, p. 28): "big data without artificial intelligence is like a brain that only has memory but cannot process. Artificial intelligence without big data is like a brain that only has processing capacity, but nothing to process". The internet of things, when it joins the two, creates a driving force whose power allows it to structure semantic systems.

Simultaneously with the advent of technologies with such characteristics, the current context experienced by humanity and defended by Schwab (2016) as the Fourth Industrial Revolution has been marked by phenomena with important impacts on organizational communication, such as misinformation and fake news, digital influencers, and activism. The arrival of bots, as has already happened in the disciplines of journalism, law, or advertising, for example, also requires constant observation. In the same way that there are situations to explore a differentiated communication strategy, using a non-human digital influencer, such as those already present on the Instagram social network, possibilities may arise to replace human labor with robots to perform repetitive tasks.

As Kunsch (2016, p. 39) states, the contemporary world leaves no doubt about the relevance of communication, mainly due to its ability to cross the entire global social system, and, for this reason, in his understanding, the quality of contextual analysis, reflections and work planning are linked to the communicator's ability to know how to situate society.

Supported by a qualitative, exploratory methodology with a theoretical framework and documentary research from various fields of knowledge, this chapter presents a reflection on what the author calls the second disruptive wave in organizational communication, formed by the effects of big data (BD), artificial intelligence (AI) and internet of things (IoT) technologies within the sector.

In the author's assessment, the first wave took shape from the 2000s onwards, a period in which digital social networks and media emerged as the main social arena. The dynamics of this type of environment and the strong characteristics of scalability and immediacy forced a series of reconfigurations in narratives, relationships with audiences, in addition to contributing to the approach of marketing and public relations disciplines (Scott, 2017).

The reason for timing the first and second wave, respectively, beginning with the consolidation of digital social networks and media and the dissemination of BD, AI and IoT technologies, is justified by the strongly disruptive nature of these two moments, with deep implications for the entire life of society and, consequently, also for the profession of communicator is exercised.

The focus is on the universe of communication agencies because this kind of company operates as a hub, having clients of all profiles on one side, the most diverse audiences on the other, and characterized as a service provider which operates in all areas of communication. For these reasons, an agency can be recognized as an important thermometer of the movements experienced by the organizational communication field.

The discussion highlighted in this chapter becomes relevant to the organizational communication field by contributing to the promotion of reflections on contemporary demands and how to meet them, to ensure that the sector maintains its strategic and relevant image.

CONTEXTUALIZING THEORY INTO FACTS

The presentation of disruptive waves in communication requires a contextualized observation of the facts to translate the challenges, reveal the opportunities and the paths to follow. In the dictionary, the world "context" expresses the meaning of the interrelationship of circumstances of an act or event (Houaiss, 2009, Webster's 2003), and, in an era in which inter- and multidisciplinary has become imperative, the ability to be transversal emerges increasingly as a determining factor for the achievement of goals.

Revisiting past facts contributes to the reconstruction of structural changes that were already taking place at a certain time, but, due to the dynamics of everyday life, were not evident in such a transparent

Related Content

Online Engagement and Impact: The Case of Greek Politicians during the Financial Crisis
Savvas Papagiannidis, Teta Stamatiand Hartmut Behr (2014). *Digital Arts and Entertainment: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications (pp. 1217-1237).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/online-engagement-and-impact/115070

Aspects of Content Generation Through Narrative Communication and Simulation
Takashi Ogataand Shin Asakawa (2018). *Content Generation Through Narrative Communication and Simulation (pp. 1-47).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/aspects-of-content-generation-through-narrative-communication-and-simulation/200227

Precision Medicine, Personalized Treatment, and Network-Driven Innovations: Transforming Healthcare With AI
M. Devi, Deepa Manokaran, R. K. Sehgal, Shuaib. A. Shariffand R. Vettriselvan (2025). *AI for Large Scale Communication Networks (pp. 303-322).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/precision-medicine-personalized-treatment-and-network-driven-innovations/360618

A Critical Discourse Analysis of "Minority Women for Trump" Campaigns on Social Media
Wei Sun (2018). *Reconceptualizing New Media and Intercultural Communication in a Networked Society (pp. 303-327).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/a-critical-discourse-analysis-of-minority-women-for-trump-campaigns-on-social-media/202787

Taking "Use Case" Inventory of Available Open Shared Visuals for Teaching and Learning From Searches in the Federated Creative Commons Search (Old)
 (2022). *Practical Peer-to-Peer Teaching and Learning on the Social Web (pp. 298-314).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/taking-use-case-inventory-of-available-open-shared-visuals-for-teaching-and-learning-from-searches-in-the-federated-creative-commons-search-old/290520