

COMMUNICATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE

#TALK OF THE TOWN (/ADVERTORIALS/LINK)

FRI, 02/25/2022 - 21:05

Communication expert Manuela Toteva, Ph.D., talks about the changing role of the communicator and presents her book on successful business-to-business digital marketing



Manuela Toteva

Manuela Toteva, Ph.D., is a practitioner, university lecturer, and author with more than 15 years of experience in communication. She started her career at the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and then moved to the corporate sector to manage projects and teams for large-scale companies such as METRO Cash and Carry, Aurubis, SAP. As a board member and a chairperson of the Bulgarian Public

Relations Association (2006 – 2017), she has contributed significantly to the development of the professional PR community in Bulgaria. Since 2017 she has been lecturing on Content and Digital Media Management and consulting marketing projects in Germany.

Our environment has become increasingly digital in the last two years, and communication has shifted to the virtual scene. As an expert in the field, how would you define the advantages and disadvantages of this trend?

For many businesses and even countries, the pandemic proved to be a turning point in regard to the work environment and the teams' communication and effectiveness. Certain sectors, such as the software one, were doing well in the virtual environment long before 2020. I think that work from home eliminates geographic borders and opens up countless opportunities for businesses. Speaking of time and financial resources, it is also practical and effective. On the other hand, communicating through the screen makes all participants equal, regardless of their gender, race, physical state – anyone has the chance to express opinion under equal conditions. One of the basic problems, which the pandemic brought to the communication sector, is with live events, which were heavily affected in a negative way. In response to this, however, experts are developing various hybrid formats and interactive solutions, aimed at keeping visitors' interest.

What are the successful communication strategies in such a dynamic environment and with rules continually changing?

I believe that success begins with the attitude towards employees and with internal communication, which should provide a sense of stability in the work environment. As for external communication, I can definitely say that nowadays society and communicators deal with a great amount of data, which reaches customers through countless channels and this makes our work even more important and challenging. It is hard to measure the speed at which technologies are implemented in various activities, and one of the directions for productivity is the understanding of technological processes. Communication and marketing specialists should lead the change, keeping their unique qualities and building digital skills, which will provide them with the "necessary pack" of knowledge. The successful strategy of tomorrow will be a mix of work in hybrid teams, thinking and acting a step ahead of the competition, creative and emotionally intelligent ideas.



Your first book *Effective Tools in B2B Digital Marketing* is just about to be published. What kind of audience is it aimed at and what can we look forward to?

The book is a well-timed match of academic and practical experience. It is focused on the "business-to-business" type of communication and covers a range of cases and examples from Bulgaria and Germany from the last five years. I wanted to create a useful guide for my students in both countries, as well as for B2B managers and communication experts. The central topic is the role of the modern communicator, who has to manage the vast information flows and the countless news channels, remaining loyal to audiences in a transparent environment. A basic hypothesis is that in the digital economy, the information, received by customers, makes them increasingly empowered to evaluate and even analyse each promise of a company, connected to the brand's positioning. At this point, it becomes crucial for communication leaders to adopt the new technologies, designed to change our relations with business, government, customers, and citizens. Marketing team members should also constantly build and upgrade their skills. In Bulgaria, this process is still going on at a slow pace. Germany, on the contrary, is one of the leading countries in digitalisation within the EU. That is why I have included examples and experiences from both countries in my book.

What inspires you to share your experience with students?

I take education as a personal mission and seize every opportunity to meet people from the new generation. Unfortunately, the sector was heavily hit by the pandemic, because of the shift of the education process in a virtual environment. It is much harder to grab students' attention online and this sets the bar quite high for university lecturers. In my work with students, I am trying to offer interesting and modern solutions, which make teaching exciting – presentation platforms, events, tasks, interactive content, and homework, so that we achieve a dynamic process.

What is your advice to students, who are willing to start a career in the field of communication?

First-year students start at the university quite prepared in terms of digital skills and competencies. Young people of this generation have built attitudes towards sustainable development and environmental care. I inspire them to develop more team skills, the courage to share openly their ideas, and hard discipline, which is a thing I request from them, maybe as a result of my work with German companies in the last decade. As future communicators, it is especially important for them to be literate and to learn how to keep the ethics of the profession, to oppose fake news with high-quality and valuable customer-oriented information.

[Web Exclusive \(/taxonomy/term/106\)](#)

COMMENTING RULES



o COMMENTS

Discover More



[THE LAWYER AS A BUSINESS PARTNER \(/lawyer-business-partner-3347\)](/lawyer-business-partner-3347)

Damyana Lazarova is one of the founding Partners at the leading Bulgarian law firm CasePro and also the Head of Legal for the European division of the fastest-growing worldwide POS company – SumUp.



[THE CODE OF HEALTH \(/code-health-3346\)](/code-health-3346)

For Boryana Gerasimova, founder of Re:Gena, innovation makes sense when it brings positive, sustainable change over time



[DOCTORS WITH BIG HEARTS \(/doctors-big-hearts-3345\)](/doctors-big-hearts-3345)

More than 16,000 babies have taken their first breath at Nadezhda Hospital under the delicate care of dedicated specialists. The hospital specialises in women's and reproductive health but strives to offer patients comprehensive health care under one roof.



UNICREDIT BULBANK: EXCEEDING CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS (/unicredit-bulbank-exceeding-customer-expectations-3344).

Digitalisation changed the banking environment to an extent that customers are becoming increasingly independent in the way they use bank products and services.



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT (/women-empowerment-3343).

Zlatina Ruseva-Savova is the Co-Managing Partner of Dinkov, Maximova, Ruseva-Savova Law Firm. She is also

Zlatica Ruseva-Savova is the Co-Managing Partner of Dimkov, Maximova, Ruseva-Savova Law Firm. She is also a Co-Founder of Ruseva-Savova & Partners, which is a member of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington D.C., USA.



[BEING PART OF THE IT REVOLUTION \(/being-part-it-revolution-3342\)](#)

Today Bulgaria is known as a leader in the information technology field for Southeastern Europe, and the sector is among the key ones to the Bulgarian economy.



[CARLSBERG: WHEN BEER MAKES A DIFFERENCE \(/carlsberg-when-beer-makes-difference-3341\)](#)

Drinking beer is a pleasure, but brewing it can be a challenge, especially when you have a mission.



[FINDING THE BEST SOLUTION \(/finding-best-solution-3340\)](#)

The management of human resources is not limited to the recruitment and hiring of people. For Dobromira Manasieva HR is about finding solutions through which businesses meet their goals, employees feel engaged at work and customers are satisfied



[CURE YOUR SKIN WITH THE GIFTS OF NATURE \(/cure-your-skin-gifts-nature-3339\).](#)

Cosmetic products are like food for the skin, and if we want healthy nutrition we should definitely opt for organic and natural ingredients.



[SUBCONSCIOUSNESS' HEALING POWER \(/subconsciousness-healing-power-3338\)](#)

Have you found yourself in the situation when problems suddenly start to come one after another, turning the everyday into an ordeal, a seemingly endless fight for survival?



[DAKOTA GUEST HOUSES: ENJOY NATURE IN LUXURY \(/dakota-guest-houses-enjoy-nature-luxury-3337\)](#)

Imagine a place where you can breathe crystal clean air, eat fresh homemade food or just relax while enjoying a mountain lake view and stylish accommodation.



[CREATE YOURSELF \(/create-yourself-3336\)](/create-yourself-3336)

Simonika Deneva is a psychologist, coach, therapist, author, and instructor of a series of personal development courses and trainings. She has created Seberazvitie Centre, which is an innovative part of Bal Care Dental Clinic.
