



Top Predictions for Leaders in 2020 and beyond

As leaders brace themselves for a decade of disruption, it is important to understand the emerging predictions and trends in order to prepare and adapt successfully.

Every year, **Worldcom Public Relations Group** draws on the knowledge of its 2000+ international consultants to predict the environment that will face its clients.

Ten predictions for 2020 and four for the decade are as follows.

Predictions for 2020



STAKEHOLDER ACTIVISM ON THE RISE

Stakeholders will expect companies to identify emerging risks from a societal perspective and then demonstrate statesmanship in delivering a more sustainable approach.



#CLIMATETOO

A clear example of the impact of stakeholder activism is the #MeToo campaign, which showed that the expectations of leaders have changed forever. People expect leaders to take an active stance on the issues they care about. Being seen to do something active about climate change will be seen as a minimum requirement for every leader. Remaining passive on the subject will be brand damaging.



“Reaching this generation of influencers will require accommodating their high expectations...”



MACRO ISSUES WILL DOMINATE THE AGENDA

Privacy and data collection, corporate sustainability and climate change will dominate the attention of leaders and the media.



CRISIS WILL BECOME COMMONPLACE

Reputation crises will occur more frequently because of the increasing inability of media and media consumers to correctly assess actual news and filter out of fake news.



THE YEAR OF INFLUENCERS AND OPINION LEADERS

Brands will take the time to build strong, transparent and mutually beneficial relationships with influencers and opinion leaders whose audience naturally aligns with theirs. In 2020, organisations must develop strategic plans to engage with influencers and opinion leaders to gain the greatest value from their marketing efforts.



CONFIDENCE WILL BECOME A BRAND ASSET

Faced by a permanent backdrop of uncertainty, consumers all over the world will be attracted to leaders and organisations that not only display confidence but inspire confidence too. This will see the rise of communications campaigns designed specifically to build a reputation for clarity of purpose and the plans to deliver it.



GEN Z WILL OVERTAKE MILLENNIALS FOR MARKETER ATTENTION

The attention of marketers and the public will quickly shift from Millennials (born 1981-1996) to the new power – Generation Z (born between 1997 - 2010), who want to be heard. Their desire for more independence will make them a unique audience to reach, and they won't rely solely on digital connections to make their point. Communicators who can speak effectively face-to-face will better connect with this new generation interested in using their command of technology and data to make what they consider to be positive social change. Reaching this generation of influencers will require accommodating their high expectations, since they already have Time-Magazine cover-worthy leaders, including climate advocate Greta Thunberg and the Parkland shooting teen survivors. They are already comfortable at a podium communicating with strong, authentic voices to the world.



A FOCUS FOR PERSONALISATION

Personalisation is going to be more refined and a key focus for brands.



“2020 and beyond will see changes to the way data is used, shared, validated and secured...”



THE BATTLE FOR TALENT

Employee training, recruitment and retention will continue to be a challenge.



TRADITIONAL MEDIA WILL MAKE A COMEBACK

With more people coming to understand the negative societal impacts of fake news permeating social media, expect to see more people returning to, or seeking out traditional media outlets for their news source. As opposed to just concentrating on speed and volume, which has been the trend over the previous decade, people will turn to traditional media for accurate and trustworthy content.



GLOBAL VILLAGE WILL DRIVE NEED FOR LOCAL INSIGHT

Although technology is bringing the world closer than ever before, challenges at the local level are increasingly diverse. This means global brands will seek out local insight and understanding (and thus confidence) of culture, politics, marketplace, economics and employee attitudes. The Worldcom Confidence Index 2019 shows that what matters to leaders can vary greatly with geography and age and that a global approach will fail without a local strategy.

A decade of disruption



THE DECADE OF THE EMPLOYEE

2020 will start the 'decade of the employee'. Five of the top six topics discussed by CEOs in 2019 (as reported in the Worldcom Confidence Index) related to employees. Business leaders will develop strategies to succeed from within by unlocking the innovative and service potential of their people. The application of neuroscience in the workplace will put people first as organisations strive to achieve their purpose.



AUTOMATION WILL SIGNIFICANTLY CHANGE WORKFORCE DYNAMICS

The automation of jobs in the workforce will have a significant impact on employee engagement and performance culture - as the workforce dynamics change. Organisations will seek to gain a competitive edge by utilising the power of automation which can significantly reduce the time employees spend on manual, repetitive tasks; resulting in increased productivity.



“As younger generations overcome the older paradigms, we will see a world focused on equality and universal access to human rights.”



THE DECADE OF DATA PRIVACY

2020 and beyond will see changes to the way data is used, shared, validated and secured, including via blockchain, big data, AI and machine learning. As a result, data privacy and protection will be more important than ever for consumers.



FOCUS ON EQUALITY AND UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO HUMAN RIGHTS

We are exiting a decade of tumultuous change as we bridge into a new era with a new normal. The information age brought the sum total of all human knowledge to the world with limitless access and as a result, we are seeing a global democratisation of society. As younger generations overcome the older paradigms, we will see a world focused on equality and universal access to human rights. Brands that are genuinely plugged into values that make the world better and that work to close the gaps between the haves and have-nots will find long-term success.

To download the full list of predictions from our global Worldcom partners, visit: <https://worldcomgroup.com/2020-communications-predictions>



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