

Strategic Communication, Social Media and Democracy: The challenge of the digital naturals (Routledge New Directions in Public Relations & Communication Research)

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Today almost everyone in the developed world spends time online and anyone involved in strategic communication must think digitally. The magnitude of change may be up for debate but the trend is unstoppable, dramatically reconfiguring business models, organisational structures and even the practice of democracy.

Strategic Communication, Social Media and Democracy provides a wholly new framework for understanding this reality, a reality that is transforming the way both practitioners and theoreticians navigate this fast-moving environment. Firmly rooted in empirical research, and resisting the lure of over-optimistic communication dreams, it explores both the potential that social media offers for changing the relationships between organisations and stakeholders, and critically analyses what has been achieved so far.

This innovative text will be of great interest to researchers, educators and advanced students in strategic communications, public relations, corporate communication, new media, social media and communication management.

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Review

'This thought-provoking book is a major contribution to the international body of knowledge in strategic communication. Traditional rules of the game are changed by the way digital naturals gather information, build opinion, and make decisions and organisations need to understand the new power structures. Building competencies for listening to stakeholders and participating in emerging discourses on the web is a major challenge. Readers will be inspired by this research.' - Ansgar Zerfass, Professor and Chair in Strategic Communication, University of Leipzig & Editor of the *International Journal of Strategic Communication*

'These authors help clarify the role strategic communication plays in promoting democracy through social media. That daunting undertaking requires insightful exploration of platforms as well as examination of concepts such as relationships, democracy, social change and marketing opportunities and pitfalls. Focusing attention on digital naturals, the book ponders whether people shape social media, or social media shapes how they work and live.' - Robert L. Heath, Professor Emeritus, The University of Houston, USA

'This new and exciting book, written by an international team of scholars within strategic communication, explores the changing nature of the online environment and introduces the *digital naturals*, the true citizens of the network society. Read it before your stakeholders do!' - Winni Johansen, Professor, Aarhus University, Denmark

'Finally, a book that foregoes easy generalisations for judicious evaluations around specific issues. The editors and authors are enthusiastic users who are not just consistently informed but clear-eyed, sceptical and alert to new developments, current theories, and professional challenges alongside a concern for equity. It sets standards for 21st-century social media democracy - buy this collection to become a better 21st-century citizen.' - David McKie, Professor, The University of Waikato, New Zealand

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