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SPECIAL FEATURE

Perception is Reality

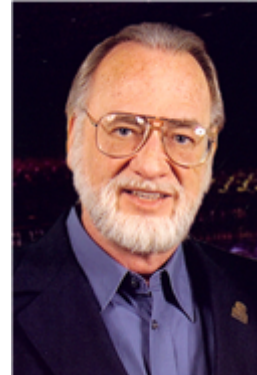
by [Kenan Doyle Branam, Media
Consultant](#)

In decades past, the term "The Media" referred to the influence, power, and credibility of the primary broadcast networks and the nationally distributed newspapers and magazines. With the ubiquity of the Internet, World Wide Web, and millions of individual e-mail gossip channels, The Media now is anything that provides a channel for communications of information or the distribution of services and products.

In the Information Age, what we see and hear through the various media is what we tend to accept whether we completely trust it or not. Whether the issue is the character of nation's leadership, the worth and value of name brand products or services, the integrity of multi-national corporations, or the guilty or innocence of the neighborhood convenience store robbery suspects, The Media has an awesome influence on our perception of reality.

Today, media plays an important role in the legal profession in the courtroom and in the public's living room. Depositions are recorded on video tape, accident and crime scenes are captured on surveillance cameras or simulated with animation, charts and graphs are designed to clarify statistical factors, evidence and arguments are tested on focus groups, mock trials are recorded and analyzed, and, despite legal controversy, public opinion is influenced by mass media communications channels.

The legal profession is challenged to use the media or lose the case. Therefore, a lawyer or staff member of a law firm becomes a "content creator." A content creator, a new media term for an entity who is the source of information, can be anyone with a computer or cell phone: the CEO of a multinational corporation, a marketing professional, an employee who spreads email gossip over the company's

[Kenan Doyle Branam, Media Consultant](#)

Media communications professionals help people communicate effectively. It's true, nearly anyone can speak sentences, print a brochure, video tape a message, or launch a Web site...but the trick comes with knowing how to do so in a way that ensures the message is clear, targeted, and doesn't get lost, distorted, or misdirected in the media channels.

In the 21st century Information Age, traditional communication protocols and paradigms are challenged with information overload, time to market, just in time production, and return on investment from the economics perspective as well as from the globalization of political and cultural environments.

What is MCA-I?

Media Communications Association-International is a global community of professional media communications experts recognized as the definitive source of current information and skills.

The association exists to promote media communications as an esteemed profession and to assist industry professionals with perfecting their work to advance the science, the art, the craft, and the business of media communications.

The association has nearly 5,000 members residing in the United States,

intranet, or your teenager's instant message buddy!

Our trust in the content of media today is dependent on our ability to be discriminating about the source of content. We should ask, "Is the content creator a knowledgeable, ethical, communications professional?" As a consumer of information, as we all are, your concern is to be effectively informed.

If your message objectives are for your business, such as marketing your services or winning a lawsuit, creating an effective, believable message and distributing it through complex electronic media can be a deceptively difficult challenge. Launching a message without the knowledge, skills, experience, and wisdom of a professional media communicator can often result in costly production mistakes, confusing or misleading messages, unbelievable testimony, and lost cases. Millions of dollars are won or lost on the "spin" of 15 seconds of video!

What Is a Media Communications Professional?

A media communications professional is not only communication expert, but also a media communications expert. A communication expert could be a mediator, a teacher, a therapist, a writer, a scholar, or a marketing consultant. What sets a media communication professional apart from others is their added knowledge and experience with a myriad of media channels—how and when to use what to maximize effective communication.

Canada, Europe, Africa, and Asia. MCA-I's uniqueness and its greatest strength, lies in its diversity of talent. Members are consultants, producers, writers, videographers, editors, web developers, actors, interactive designers, and project managers. Individual members' job titles and areas of expertise may vary, but we find common ground in our commitment to effective storytelling using an ever-changing array of media technology.

Many of the members have a lifetime of experience producing marketing and training media content for specific industries like utilities, health care, law, politics, government, higher education, and, of course, manufacturing and retail marketing. Some have media certification specific to their industries. MCA-I members are professionals who have facilitated the miracle of effective communications for over 30 years by harnessing the power of new technologies and marrying it with sound communication principles, the highest standards of professionalism, and ethical behavior.

In this new age where perception is reality, our MCA-I members recognize the power, influence, and responsibility of The Media.

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