

# Communications to pick up the pace

 By [Keri-Ann Stanton](#)

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What's in store for communications in 2009? The publicists at Kezi Communications collectively put together this list of nine trends for a fast-paced, quickly changing world.



1. **Regular coverage:** clients will care less about the returns or AVE on coverage - they are wanting regular pieces in the media space - not always achievable but always challenging.
2. **Clients under pressure:** as budgets tighten, clients will be under more pressure to their EXCOs (executive committees) on delivery, which inevitably trickles down to their marketing teams: everyone will want more for less.
3. **Budget cuts:** PR/publicity/marketing/advertising - WE know it is a necessity but the financial men on EXCOs always look to chop here first. If you are not delivering outstanding results in 2009 on a regular basis, heads will roll... we have seen it already in 2008.
4. **Forget timesheets:** timesheets will become a thing of the past in 2009 - if we want those retainers paid, throw them away and deliver, deliver, deliver.
5. **Strategic PR and publicity:** these will become even more vital in 2009 - for example, clients we pitched to in 2007/8 are coming back to us after they went with bigger PR agencies with more impressive credentials. However bigger credentials do not mean bigger results - big budget PR events and becoming a number kill newsworthy opportunities. Clever, newsworthy angles will remain the key to PR success in 2009.
6. **Smaller, more niche, more specialised:** Kezi ourselves will undergo some reinvention in 2009, our fourth year of business. An incredible growth spurt in 2008 gave us a taste of what it would be like to become one of the giants. We didn't like it. We will do the opposite in 2009: become smaller, more niche, more specialized... is this an industry trend?
7. **Unbelievable turnaround times:** in line with the more for less, staying small, etc, we believe another trend surfacing is the EXTREMELY fast turn-around time: faster than we have ever experienced. Everyone is stressed and under pressure so when it comes to clients or media deadlines: they want 1200 words and pics in 24 hours - we make it happen. Things are happening so fast that we have already instituted DAILY status meetings instead of our weekly internal meetings - we need to react, prioritise and be proactive.
8. **Personal one-on-one relationships with clients:** these will become even more key as the pressure mounts - clients do not want to be a number. They want to 'feel the love' as one of our clients tells us! Traditional PR structures and PR teams don't work - smaller, niche hands-on, can-do, just-did teams are necessary.
9. **Mobile office:** are we going to end up setting up offices in our clients' space? Blackberries and hotdesking will make us more mobile and effective in 2009.

## ABOUT KERI-ANN STANTON

Keri-Ann Clark is the MD of Kezi Communications [www.kezi.co.za](http://www.kezi.co.za). This contribution was a team effort from the publicists at Kezi Communications.  
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