

Avashnee Moodley of OPPO on the importance of brand reputation

By [Emily Stander](#)

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For Avashnee Moodley, it is essential to be conscious of the impact social matters have on managing a brand reputation.



Avashnee Moodley, head of PR and Brand Communications at OPPO

Over the last few years, a number of movements such as #MeToo and #BlackLivesMatter has gained prominence which forces brands to be inclusive and aware of social issues. “Although it could be very easy to not see these as business critical, the reality is that equality, gender, and diversity are gaining a voice and momentum globally”, she said.

With over 10 years of experience in PR and brand communications, she shares some insight into how the brand reputation landscape has changed through the pandemic:

■ **What does your role entail, and what does your average day at work look like?**

As the head of PR and brand communications at OPPO, my role entails creating a presence for the brand locally, as well as growing the reputation and credibility of the brand as a new entrant in a heavily saturated market.

My typical day kicks off with me scrolling through my feed for the latest updates on all things tech and news. Thereafter, it's a quick tea session with my colleagues where we catch up on what's happened overnight and what we need to do for the day, followed by checking my emails.

Depending on the day planned, it usually entails meetings with our partners as well as our agencies. I go through my to-do list as the day progresses, and depending on the day - I either have lunch at my desk or with my colleagues in our canteen area.

■ ***Can you tell us a bit more about your career journey prior to your current role?***

I started my career at the *Sunday Times* and *The Citizen* as a journalist. I am a sports lover, and as such also worked as a sports analyst on a TV breakfast show.

I decided to move into PR and communications when I joined Fleishman Hillard in 2013. After a year at the agency, I joined Huawei, where I worked for over six years. Here I was building the brand from the foundation phase in the smartphone market to one of the leading technology brands in South Africa.

Last year I decided it was time for a new chapter and challenge. That's when I decided to join OPPO.



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■ ***What do you love most about working in the marketing space?***

I like that as a marketer I have room to get creative while also being pragmatic. What I do externally and creatively should always positively impact the bottom line. I also enjoy the innovation aspect; we tend to break boundaries in order to set the brands we represent apart from the rest.

■ ***How would you define your brand?***

OPPO is a global pioneer in technology innovation and smartphone devices. At OPPO, we work to leap into the future, rigorously build an IoT ecosystem and position ourselves to be the leader in a super connected intelligent world. We strive to be a sustainable company that contributes to a better world.

■ ***What strategy did you have to ensure longevity of a brand during the Covid-19 pandemic?***

OPPO's strategy is centred around collaboration and we strongly believe in the importance of collaboration in delivering innovative breakthroughs. We have been working with world-class partners such as Google, Microsoft, Qualcomm, Netflix and Amazon; actively working with world renowned research institutes in the fields of AI, 5G and engineering.

We have shared goals to keep pushing our technology into new and exciting areas, and deliver something meaningful with customer experience as our key motivator.

We were able to build solid relationships with our partners locally and around the world to ensure that we offer the local market cutting edge technology at affordable rates.

■ **Could you tell us more about the changes your brand has made to the smartphone landscape?**

OPPO is currently present in over 50 countries and regions across five continents, with a diversified workforce of 40,000 employees in different offices in the world. We work with 80+ top operators worldwide and have over 400,000 retail outlets across the world.

We have had some significant milestones in the last 16 years which contribute to our position as a leading tech company today.

In 2008, we launched our first mobile phone, called 'Smiley Face' which celebrates the power of playful design. In 2013, we launched ColorOS software based on Android customisation, building on our business model to integrate software and hardware. In 2019, we launched the OPPO Reno5G as a pioneer of 5G technologies; Europe's first 5G smartphone. In February 2020, we launched OPPO Find X2 with an ultrasensitive screen. We have also launched OPPO TV and OPPO watch which mean that we have entered another era of IoT.

■ **Which channels do you find are most successful for OPPO's brand communication?**

All channels work well when they are integrated and target for specific outcomes. We need to consider the message we are trying to convey, the audience and what we want to achieve. We use various platforms online and through broadcast and print, while also keeping a close eye on our digital activities.

■ **What advice would you give to brands looking to match the shift that comes with living through a pandemic?**

I'd say companies need to plan for everything, especially for potential risks to their brand reputation.

We are undoubtedly in the era of the customer - communication no longer needs to be done in one particular way. Consumers are publishers, and we need to ensure that they have positive things to say about our brands.

A good reputation is perceived to offer more value, which can result in sustained business growth. Unfortunately, this growth can be eroded if true measures of reputational risk are not in place. Recent examples have shown that most companies place effort in handling threats to reputation only once the risks have been realised.

Companies that have better control of their reputation and the risks associated with it are those that pro actively plan and create possible risk scenarios. This also helps with being adaptive and agile - a common practice during a pandemic.



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■ **What career advice would you give to aspiring marketing professionals?**

It is important to acquire knowledge about the various marketing techniques. For aspiring digital marketers who wish to start their digital marketing career today, it is essential to have the eagerness to learn - the digital marketing industry is fast growing and incredibly competitive. Surround yourself with people more talented than yourself. Ensure that you build your personal brand within the industry. If you really want to stand out in the industry, completing a certified digital marketing course will definitely help.

ABOUT EMILY STANDER

Freelancer specialising in games and entertainment | My first loves are writing, music and video games

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