Is Elon Musk turning Twitter’s eagle into a turkey?

written by Stephen Lautens | November 20, 2022

With his takeover of Twitter, Musk has proven himself to be more of an agent of chaos than a disrupter. Disrupters have been celebrated as the innovators and drivers of the new economy, blazing new trails and finding new markets, but as Twitter users, employees and advertisers have discovered in the last few weeks there is a big difference between disruption and wholesale carnage.

Since his takeover of Twitter for $44 billion Musk has forgotten the cardinal rule of takeovers and senior management changes – don’t do anything for a few months. Unless there is an absolute crisis, the best thing new management can do is nothing at all. In a buy-out, this is the time to learn about your new toy and reassure your clients and employees that all is well. From this base of stability and knowledge, changes and innovations can be slowly introduced without destroying the company.

This is not, however, Elon Musk’s way. On day one he posted a tweet of himself walking into Twitter HQ carrying a kitchen sink, saying: “Entering Twitter HQ – let that sink in!” He immediately began making untested changes to the platform, making major policy announcements in real time via tweet and then immediately reversing himself, firing and rehiring key staff, and generally trolling Twitter users and the world from his new platform. He fired CEO Parag Agrawal, CFO Ned Segal, and policy chief Vijaya Gadde in the first couple of weeks.

The result has been a rush for the door, both in long-time users and advertisers. Twitter has (or had) roughly 450 million monthly active users. In FY 2021 advertising services generated

USD $4.5 billion for Twitter, or about 89% of its revenue. As a result of the chaos and criticism of Twitter's rudderlessness, advertisers have canceled or "put on pause" their ad buys. To date these include General Mills, the Volkswagen Group, General Motors, Pfizer, United Airlines, Audi, Farvel, and Carlsberg. Their concerns are not just about a drop in Twitter users, but also "concerns about a rise in misinformation, hate speech, and other distasteful content under his watch."

This is also a major concern for thousands of marketing specialists, investor relations professionals, journalists, media and others who support and report on the small to medium cap public markets. In a few years Twitter has become a cornerstone for companies getting their stories out to a wider audience through press releases, corporate updates, CEO interviews and presentations. Facebook and LinkedIn are also part of the social media ecosystem, but reach and serve different markets.

It is also not just about audience size. According to its public filings, Twitter:

"…creates tailored advertising opportunities by using an algorithm to make sure promoted products make it into the right users' timelines, search results, profile pages, and Tweet conversations. Advertisers have the ability to target an audience based on multiple criteria. Twitter provides ways for advertisers to build and grow an audience interested in the products or services they are offering. Advertisers also have the option to pay for ads that will appear at the top of the trending-topics list or timeline."

If Twitter crashes and burns companies and investor relations professionals will be faced with a fragmentation of their social media buys. Facebook has far more users than Twitter (with roughly 2.96 billion monthly active users as of Q3 2022) and uses its own ad targeting algorithms, but reaches a different audience than Twitter. For business, Twitter's value in the space is as an aggregator of users, particularly journalists and media outlets, and no other similar platform comes close to its audience. [Mastodon and CounterSocial] are popular destinations for people fleeing Twitter, but they are both small, ad-free, appeal to different demographics, and it will be a long while before they accumulate an audience or for companies to re-create their hard-won audience of Twitter followers.

It may well be, in the phrase often attributed to Mark Twain, that reports of Twitter's death are greatly exaggerated. The brand, the technology and the market are all valuable properties. Maybe not worth $44 billion by the time Musk is finished with his capricious vanity meddling, but a valuable property nonetheless. Musk may have put up a lot of money from the sale of his Tesla shares, but the financiers who put up the rest of the funding for the buyout will have something to say seeing their investment evaporate. Major banks, including Bank of America, Barclays, BNP Paribas, Mizuho, Morgan Stanley, MUFG, and Societe Generale committed to giving Musk $13 billion for the acquisition. Morgan Stanley alone has contributed nearly $3.5 billion for the acquisition. There will be a point when they demand that Musk stop running with scissors.

Companies and their marketers are holding their collective breath as they watch one of their most useful investment relations tools speed towards the cliff, wondering what they will replace it with.

In the words of Elon Musk [in a tweet] addressed specifically to his "Dear Twitter Advertisers" on October 27th who were jumping ship:

“Fundamentally, Twitter aspires to be the most respected advertising platform in the world that strengthens your brand and grows your enterprise… Let us build something extraordinary together.”

It may still be possible, if he can restrain himself for five minutes in his reckless campaign to tear it down.

All hands on deck – Top 10 rules for great PowerPoint presentations

written by Stephen Lautens | November 20, 2022

Presentations have been an essential business tool since Microsoft first bundled PowerPoint into its MS Office Suite in 1990. (Fun fact – PowerPoint was originally Apple Macintosh only.) So why is it that over 30 years later companies and IR teams still struggle with creating attractive and informative “decks”?

Part of the problem is the ease with which team members can create and edit presentations. Presentations are passed around for “input” from the technologists, geologists, IR professionals, compliance officers, and then the C-suite, with everyone tweaking content and making helpful suggestions. Everyone has different priorities and concepts of what information is important to convey, and the result can be a horse built by committee.

Presentations have layers built up over time through edits and additions, adding pages and new bullet points instead of being rethought and rewritten. Eventually they get bogged down with too much or old data, or lose focus. Deciding what to leave out of a presentation is as important as what to put in. **Keep it to 20 slides or less. For everything new you put in, take something old out.**

Planning a presentation begins with the message. Too few companies ask the two basic questions: **"Who is our audience and what is our message?"** The audience is very different in a technical briefing than an investor road show. A geologist or technologist may happily sit through 40 pages of data, but a high net worth prospect is already thinking about the next person waiting in the lobby looking for funding.

A useful and simple trick almost no one uses is to **watch a real person flip through your deck.** Anyone who has sat down for a pitch meeting with a new prospect knows that the first thing they do is flip quickly through your printed presentation. Next time, watch carefully what slides they look for first and which ones they linger on as you talk. That is the content most important to them. Let that guide your next edit. It doesn't matter what you think is the most important part of your message. Be guided by what your audience cares about. Move up and beef up those pages.

Your message should start with a summary or "call to action" page at the front. Too many companies put it at the end. It's your elevator pitch to grab the attention of a jaded investor looking for a reason to fund or reject. Everything that follows supports the summary. It's the hook, so remember to put your best foot forward. **Order your slides to lead with your strengths**, whether it is the team, the project, recent discoveries, sales, or the market opportunity. Follow up with more detailed slides to drill down or provide background.

There are literally thousands of websites that tell you the technical rules for creating better presentations. Here are some of the most obvious but often ignored mistakes that separate good from bad presentations:

1. **Don’t use dark backgrounds with white text.** People still print presentations – whether to read offline or to circulate at trade shows or meetings (remember those?). Dark pages are hard to read and no one will thank you for using up all their ink.
2. **Keep fonts simple and only two sizes – title and text.** Turn off PowerPoint’s “automatically resize font to fit text box” feature. It is evil. It will make your slides look like ransom notes. Don’t make margins and text boxes jump around from slide to slide.
3. **White space is your friend.** Don’t feel the need to fill the space on a slide. Not only is it easier on the eye, fewer words mean greater focus and impact and the likelihood they will be read. You’ll hear about the 5/5 rule for presentations – only 5 words per bullet point and only bullets per slide.
4. **Graphics – whether charts, maps or images – should be clean, legible and sharp.** Strip away irrelevant data or layers so readers can focus on what’s important. If labels are too fuzzy or small to read, re-do them.
5. **Proofread, and then proofread again.** Check not only for spelling but consistent and accurate punctuation. Accuracy and attention to details says a lot about your professionalism.
6. **De-jargon text and labels.** Not everyone is an industry expert and no one likes to stumble over acronyms or abbreviations. Don’t make your reader feel stupid.
7. **Keep it short – 20 slides maximum.** A short deck keeps it interesting and forces you to think about your core

message and selling points. Create a second optional deck of technical or background data for those who are really interested.

8. **PowerPoint has a ton of fun animations and slide transitions. Don't use them.** They are distracting and don't translate to the printed page.
9. **Keep it up to date.** A presentation on a website that is six months old gives the impression that you haven't done anything lately or are too lazy to update. Updating also should make you rethink the presentation and make adjustments based on feedback and new developments.
10. **Have your base presentation template designed by a graphics professional.** You only need to do it once and you can use the template for years. It's a small amount of money well spent.

With a little bit of work, no one ever has to read (or write) a long, confusing, or ugly presentation again.

Oscar Jofre comments on the death of e-mail in the corporate world

written by InvestorNews | November 20, 2022

March 28, 2018 – "For the first time investors are given a tool for themselves so they have a value and a reason to come back in. So you never have to worry about email anymore. E-mail is dead, with all the new privacy rules." – says Oscar A Jofre, Co-founder, President & CEO of KoreConX, in an interview with

InvestorIntel’s Jeff Wareham.

Jeff Wareham: Oscar is the Co-founder, President and CEO of KoreConX. Oscar, from what I understand, you have a new IR platform or investor relations platform. Can you tell me a little bit about it?

Oscar Jofre: Sure. We are excited. The investor relations module that we are launching or we are in the process of launching it is really there to help companies communicate more effectively with their shareholders in a way now that it keeps the shareholders happy and engaged with the company. As well as helping the company manage that risk they are associated with. Are they receiving the information in a timely manner? Are they even receiving the message? Which is the other question that we are all dealing with, and making sure that the people that are held accountable to those activities are then able to report either to the board or senior management, to be able to view it on a dashboard and to instantly see what that shareholder engagement is. That is profound. There is no such platform today, in particular for privately held companies or junior listed issuers on the stock exchange.

Jeff Wareham: It is fairly intuitive. Is this something that, you know, because a lot of the junior companies just do not have a lot of bandwidth or manpower?

Oscar Jofre: It is funny. They all say that, but then when it comes down to it they will have an IR person that they will pay X amount of dollars. They will be sending out emails using an email marketing program. Then they will say, what was the output of that? We sent out 1,500 and we got 23% open. What does that really tell you? Nothing. Now the management or the board can log in because it is all there. They can see those 1,500 names. They can see who opened it and who did not. Not only that. They can see the engagement that they are having with their shareholders. All that time that they spent afterwards analyzing the data, the data is automatically analyzed. In many ways this will reduce the amount of time that you spend messaging and extracting the data to understand what is actually happening with your community.

Jeff Wareham: What does the revenue model look like?

Oscar Jofre: We provide it on a monthly subscription, flat rate. I will give you a comparable. We have clients with 250,000 shareholders. They pay us $150 a month. That same equivalent using MailChimp is $750 U.S. a month just to mail out to them. Now here is the other part. Now with new castle rules and privacy rules around the world people go, opt out so now that person does not even get the message anymore. In our platform it is different because now we provide a free portfolio management to the investor who is not just coming here to read the news, but they are also managing their portfolio associated with your company and other companies. For the first time investors are given a tool for themselves so they have a value and a reason to come back in. So you never have to worry about email anymore. E-mail is dead, with all the new privacy rules…to access the complete interview, click here