

# PR WEEK

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## THINK PIECE

Attention class, take out your red pens and PR dictionaries – it's time to make some changes



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Over the last few months, this country has gone through some major events that are bound to change our culture. When that happens, I like to take out my public relations dictionary and make some changes. Let's look at which words should be added – and which should be erased – from the PR lexicon.

Clearly, phrases such as "Brewed the same way since 1822," "Original Rays Pizza" and "The first to offer this type of phone service" should no longer be used.

We live in an era where the Back Street Boys will enter the "oldies" category before they reach puberty, and technological advances change the world hourly. Consumers just don't care about the past. They care about the benefits for today.

Also strike "fair" and/or "fairness." Whom the media concentrates on, touts and becomes enamored with has nothing to do with who is best – or even who fairly deserves credit. It's whoever is positioned best to "fit" into the media.

Lose "homemade." The concept of food being made by Harriet Nelson, all chock full of tradition and love, is about as foreign to

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people under 40 as a vacation consisting of a long car ride in a Woody station wagon. Marketers cannot leverage an emotion that no longer exists.

"Fast" is also out. Maybe the country has had its fill of fast billionaires, "with a click of a mouse" and "in the comfort of your own home." Maybe today we want business heroes who actually turn a profit before they buy a professional sports franchise. Maybe we want to buy something in the comfort of our own shopping spree.

Here are my dictionary additions.

First, I'm re-entering the senses into our language – where you'll be able to touch something before you buy it and wear it, smell something before you purchase it and eat it. Personally, I think it's going to be a "sensuous marketing year."

Let's throw "profit" back in there, too. It was a commonly used word in the 20th century, and I look for it to make a return to a press release near you.

Finally, I'm going to re-enter the word "family." We are moving away from a presidency that not only represented a broken family structure, but one that continues to thrive in it. We have a new president who will separate himself from his predecessor's indiscretions, and we are going to see a lot of the president's father, mother and nephew. It's amazing how The White House can affect our marketing, and our dictionaries.

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