

POWERTALK GLOBAL SERIES

2021: Refresh the Agenda

Digital Leadership and Communication During Turbulent Times

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INTRODUCTION

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This special PowerTalk Global Series provides boards and directors a head start on their priorities to chart a new course for the coming year. It gathers great minds from around the globe to unpack the shifting business trends and what you can do to give your companies an upswing in 2021. From oversight to foresight, boards are expected to refresh their agenda and explore new value drivers that can move their companies beyond current frontiers.

Digital leadership is impacting the evolution of directorships, their roles and responsibilities, and the way they do things. The Covid-19 pandemic has changed our lives and our way of working. Business functions and procedures changed overnight and forced organisations to pivot and innovate the way they conduct business and engage with their stakeholders. The world has accelerated forward and is becoming more digital than ever. The voice of leaders and directors has never been as important. Directors need to optimise their online presence by leveraging on the social media platforms in building networks, producing informative content, developing their own authentic voice or story that they advocate and creating consistent engagement with the stakeholders, and meeting the public expectations of openness and transparency from the organisation and its executives.

This executive summary captures the salient points presented by the speaker at the PowerTalk Global Series #2.

KEY INSIGHTS & DISCUSSIONS

- 1 As business leaders, there is no escaping the digital world. [Online presence of leaders](#) has become an [integral part of a company's business strategy and an excellent tool to connect with stakeholders](#). There really is a need to be active and have an [active voice](#) today. However, one needs to stay [authentic](#) in their communications.
- 2 Businesses these days are [open for social business](#). The organisation can no longer use the command-and-control structure type of communication during a crisis. There has been [increased expectations for openness, transparency, and actions](#) to be taken around specific issues that the corporations are facing today. There is much of a perforated wall between the corporation and the outside world.
- 3 An [online presence](#) has become [more significant now for both businesses and professionals](#). According to the [*Qnary 2020 Whitepaper: The Changing Face of the Executive Reputation*](#), the public is more likely to buy from brands or companies represented by professionals they follow on social media. [Contents shared by the executives tend to have a higher level of engagement](#) and [the executives have become part of the organisation's brand](#).
- 4 The online presence is also starting to be [part of the recruitments process to attract, evaluate and vet through executives and board of directors candidates](#). Companies are checking out the connections that the candidate has, who they are, who they are linked to and the influence they have on specific sectors or topic of expertise.
- 5 Directors as individuals need to [focus more on creating thought leadership content](#) rather than merely providing opinions. [Build a professional voice](#) and [differentiate it from your personal postings](#). Focus on providing useful information that your communities might need and be interested in.
- 6 The digital world is an iterative world. [Don't spend too much time building a perfect, one-off campaign](#), but [focus on building a consistent messaging](#). Learn and use the proper language of social media and understand how your information is picked up by the algorithms.
- 7 [Consistency of presence matters](#) for directors and organisation leaders. Leaders need to be consistent in showing their [commitment](#) towards the rising issue to ensure that they have [control](#) over the various channels of communications in a professional manner and have a strong [clear voice](#) to manage and protect reputations while dealing with the crises.
- 8 The Covid-19 pandemic has created [a digital divide](#) in the business world. Companies that do not have [strong digital strategies](#) will be highly affected meanwhile, digital-based companies will do well in steering the organisation during the uncertainties.

ACTIONABLE OUTCOMES MOVING FORWARD



1 Procure and optimise social media platforms to **build your online presence** and **professional network**.



2 **Focus on 1 to 3 topics** you would like to **champion** and build thought leaderships around.



3 Learn and use the **proper language of social media** and understand how your information is picked up by the **algorithms**.



4 Build an **active voice, share contents** at a minimum on two channels consistently, 3 times per week



5 **Engage and follow** influencers, like content associated with key topics.



6 Review and manage your privacy settings on all social/digital channels to **maintain professionalism**.



7 Audit your past posts and current online presence to shape **your true authentic voice** and story.



8 **Celebrate** and share the love by highlighting the **work of others**.

“ In today’s world, if you say something, you will probably get criticised. And if you don't say anything, you will probably get criticised too. So, whether you want to speak up or reserve the right to remain silent, do so out of conviction and not due to fear of criticism. ”

Bant Breen, Founder & Chairman of Qnary

“ As you become more active online and develop a professional presence, adding a more human side to yourself is fine obviously, if you still maintain some degree of control. ”