

**Real Time Communication:** [Jamie Danziger](#) interviews Real Time expert **David Meerman Scott**

We recently had the pleasure of chatting with author of **Real-Time Marketing & PR**, blogger and Real Time Guru David Meerman Scott. We wanted to know how he thought about applying his theories on Real Time communication to your daily business life.

**Real Time means news breaks over minutes, not days. It means ideas percolate, then suddenly and unpredictably go viral to a global audience. It's when companies develop (or refine) products or services instantly, based on feedback from customers or events in the marketplace. And it's when businesses see an opportunity and are the first to act on it.**

Caught up in old, time-consuming processes, too many companies leave themselves fatally exposed by flying blind through this new media environment. You don't have to be among them.

**IQP:** *How applicable and realistic is Real Time Communication in business today?*

**DMS:** It is completely applicable, especially when it comes down to customer service. Being able to engage with a customer quickly is imperative. In this way it can be almost interactive.

**IQP:** *You state that awareness of information, speed & agility gives companies a competitive advantage. Is this indeed across all areas of a business, not just Marketing & PR? Does this apply to all types of businesses?*

**DMS:** With all aspects of an organization, Real Time has its advantages. Your organization will leave your competition in the dust because so few companies are doing this right now. Companies who use Real Time are much more likely to succeed. The job search industry especially is focusing on Real Time presently. If you are looking for a job or a change of companies the traditional approach of phone or email is often used, however much stronger and faster results can be achieved with the use of social media. Social media can help your company network. Commenting on the activity of another company on any social media platform is a great way to make new business connections.

**IQP:** *You state that in order to develop a real-time mind set, companies should cultivate individuals for whom it is second nature. What are your views on this?*

**DMS:** Real Time communication is about instant engagement and communicating and the transfer of valuable information right away. Real Time communication provides value at the precise moment when your audience wants to hear it. In the past, this has typically been the opposite. Consider a public relations press release.

**This provides your audience with your company's information when company is ready to release it and not necessarily the same time when the information is being talked about or is in high demand. Real Time communication engages your audience the moment they are ready to hear from you. You are reacting to what is presently of interest.**

**IQP:** *You believe that an immensely powerful competitive advantage flows to organizations with people who understand the power of real-time information. Does that require a different skill-set for employees? Can it be cultivated or is it innate?*

**DMS:** Your employees must understand the tools that are available are extremely important. The person responsible for your outgoing content needs to understand how these tools work in Real Time. Social media platforms can be integrated to work with one another, so one message can reach many networks at one time. The employee responsible for the company's out going information must well versed in everything digital media. I wouldn't let anyone come for an interview for this type of role without having a blog, use of twitter or who isn't on Facebook.

**The questions I would ask in an interview would be: do they have a blog? Are they on twitter? Do they engage with company in this way during the interview process? How does this person engage in real time? A company that hires in this way is a company that will succeed.**

Companies need to give employees permission and even encourage them to engage in real time. They should be given time on Facebook, to blog, use twitter and YouTube. These behaviours should be encouraged but most companies discourage this. 25% of companies block employees from Facebook. Think about what happened earlier this year in Egypt. People took to the streets because they could no longer communicate in Real Time, in the way they are used to. If a company has Real Time communication blocked good employees will leave. Why would you want to join a company that doesn't allow Facebook?

**Every company should have guidelines for Real Time communication; this should be formal and published. In order to successfully achieve this, a company should bring together its stakeholders (HR, PR, legal, etc.) have them draft guidelines.**

If you want a good example of how this is done look at IBM social computing guidelines available online. Companies should model their guidelines after other companies. Employees may violate policy. It is no problem to fire someone if they engage in inappropriate conduct with online social tools. Employers believe that employees will waste time in Real Time communication. The same fear occurred when email came out, same as phone.

**IQP:** *What are your 3-5 top points on Real Time Communication?*

**DMS:** Who is engaged with market place in the way that people communicate now-that's my top 1,2, and 3.

We are going through a time of revolution, a revolution of ways people communicate. Take a look around it is also in the recruitment talent market. Companies will see that the more quickly they engage with people where they are the more they will succeed.

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