

ADAM DOMO



THE ART OF  
PUBLIC  
TRUST

# **The Art Of Public Trust**

*Building Relationships That Transform  
Societies and Organizations*

---



# **The Art Of Public Trust**

*Building Relationships That Transform  
Societies and Organizations*

**DOMO ADAM**



First published in Nigeria  
Treasure Resource Communications Limited  
1, Pentecost Close, off Emmanuel Otio Road, Yenagoa  
Bayelsa State, Nigeria  
+234 - 706 294 7248, +234 - 704 443 3208  
nengijosef@gmail.com

Copyright © 2025  
DOMO ADAM

*The Art of Public Trust*  
ISBN: 000-000-000-1

*Cover Design*  
Josef Zico Jenewari

Printed and bound in Nigeria  
Realife Dispenser

Author's Contact:  
E-mail: domoadam07@gmail.com

Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/share/1DqTrG9HpB/>

Phone Lines: 08037432636  
08120181545  
07086188888

---

# CONTENT

Foreword	7
Acknowledgment	13
Author's Note	11
A General Overview: <i>The Role of Media and Communication in Society</i>	17
Chapter 1 The Evolution Of Public Relations And Media	29
Chapter 2 The Power Of Media In Shaping Society	35
Chapter 3 Strategic Public Relations For Organizational Success	49
Chapter 4 Ethics And Transparency: The Pillars Of Trust	75
Chapter 5 The Strategic Use Of Digital Platforms In Public Relations	95

---

Chapter 6	
Mastering Crisis Communication In The Digital Era	115
Chapter 7	
The Art Of Story Telling In Digital Public Relations	129
Chapter 8	
Ethics: At The Heart Of Digital Public Relations	153
Chapter 9	
Measuring Success In Digital Public Relations	173
Chapter 10	
The Future Of Digital Public Relations	193
Epilogue:	
Digital Public Relations & The Future:	215
Appendix 1	219
Appendix 2	221

---

## FOREWORD

**I**N AN era when trust is both a precious commodity and a pivotal challenge, *The Art of Public Trust: Harnessing Media and Public Relations for Societal and Organizational Growth* by Domo Adam arrives as an essential guide. The book meticulously navigates the intricate relationship between media, public relations, and the foundational role they play in building and sustaining trust within societies and organizations.

With profound insight derived from extensive research and analysis across different spectra of society, Adam constructs a narrative that is both enlightening and practical. The book draws upon a diverse range of sources, including a comprehensive study on the role of mass media in Nigeria's democratic dispensation, an exploration of the impact of public relations on organizational performance, and a focused look at public relations strategies within the local government setting. By weaving together these distinct yet interconnected threads, Domo Adam offers readers a panoramic view of the strategic communication landscape.

The chapters are laid out in a manner that guides the reader through the historical evolution

of public relations and media, moving into the modern challenges of digital transformation and the critical role of trust in these domains. The author does not just stop at outlining the problems; he provides a rich tapestry of solutions, strategies, and real world applications that can be adapted by government establishments, corporate businesses, academic and professional institutions, individuals, groups, faith-based organizations (FBOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) alike.

One of the core strengths of the book is its unwavering focus on ethical practices. In a world rife with misinformation, disinformation and fleeting attention spans, Adam highlights the indispensable value of ethics in public relations and media endeavours. He argues convincingly that trust, once eroded, is challenging to rebuild and re-establish, making a compelling case for integrity, transparency, the need for understanding and accountability in all communication efforts.

What sets this book apart is its practical applicability. It is not just a theoretical discourse but a hands-on manual complete with case studies, actionable strategies, and an insightful evaluation of the metrics for measuring the impact of public

relations and media initiatives. *The Art of Public Trust* serves as a beacon for public relations professionals, government officials, business leaders, students and experts of communication, offering clarity in the complex interface and interplay of factors that influence public trust.

As you embark on this enlightening journey with Adam Domo, be prepared to challenge your pre-conceptions, broaden your understanding, and equip yourself with the tools to foster a more trustful and engaging society. This illuminating volume is not just a must read; it is a clarion call to action, a mandate to elevate the art of public trust to new heights for the improvement of societies and organizations around the globe.

Domo Adam has crafted a seminal work that will undoubtedly serve as a reference point for years to come in the fields of media, public relations, and strategic communication. *The Art of Public Trust* is a testament to the transformative power of communication when harnessed with intention, strategy, understanding, and above all, integrity and forthrightness.



## AUTHOR'S NOTE

### MY LOVE FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

**T**HE JOURNEY of a thousand miles, they say, begins with a single step forward. I developed interest in Public Relations as a career a good number of years ago when I worked as a Marketing Officer with The Atlantic Express Printing & Publishing Company Limited, publishers of *The Atlantic Express* newspaper. During that period, the company gave me additional responsibilities as a Special Correspondent and Public Relations Officer, which I did not bargain for.

While I worked assiduously to surmount the initial challenges, and as time went by, I had the haunch to develop greater interest in performing the roles of a Public Relations Officer far more than a Marketing Officer, although I was initially engaged as special correspondent earlier. My interest in public relations became even keener when the Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of the company, Chief Bomolangho Omagbemi Ereku-Hurubo held several

encouraging discussions with me, based on my satisfactory performance.

At one of such sessions, my master was succinct in making his point. He looked at me intensely and said: "You are a Public Relations Officer." He was, in short, my mentor who was principally instrumental to my developing a burning desire to render the services of a public relations officer, and he was quick to see the potential in me. From that moment onwards, my thoughts were hinged on nothing but building public relations as a career. I have no regrets for taking up the challenge.

Domo Adam

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE TASK of writing *The Art of Public Trust: Harnessing Media and Public Relations for Societal and Organizational Growth* has been both enlightening and humbling. Rooted in the conviction that strategic communication can transform societies and organizations through the building of trust, this book would not have been possible without the support, ideas, wisdom, and encouragement of many individuals.

First, I extend my deepest gratitude to my academic mentors and colleagues at the Department of Mass Communications, Faculty of Arts and Humanities. Your rigorous critique, scholarly guidance, and unwavering support have been instrumental to shaping my thoughts and perspectives on the crucial roles of media and public relations.

I am particularly thankful to the professionals and experts in the fields of public relations and media who generously shared their insights and experiences with me. Your real world perspectives have enriched this book immeasurably, providing invaluable context and

depth to the theoretical foundations laid out in these pages.

To the participants of the studies who informed this book, especially those from the local government councils, government establishments, academic and professional institutions, the various organizations, and corporate bodies in Bayelsa State, Nigeria and abroad, thank you for your openness and willingness to contribute to this research. Your experiences and responses have been pivotal in illustrating the practical applications of the concepts discussed.

My family deserves special mention for their love, patience, and encouragement throughout this process. To my partner and children, your understanding and support have been my anchor, providing me with the space and peace of mind needed to complete this work. To my elder brother, Pastor Longlife Amawei Adam, whose wisdom and guidance have always inspired me, and to my subordinates, associates, colleagues, friends and foes who remind me daily of the importance of building a better world through communication, trust and understanding.

I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of the reviewers and the editorial

team, particularly Mingi-Yai Nengi Josef Oweilagha, Pope Pen The First, for their insightful feedback and diligent efforts to refine the manuscript. Your expertise and attention to detail have greatly enhanced the quality of this book.

Finally, to the readers who embark on this journey through the pages of *The Art of Public Trust*, I hope you find inspiration, knowledge, and practical strategies to apply in your efforts to foster trust and understanding in your communities and organizations. Your engagement and application of these principles are what will ultimately drive societal and organizational growth.

Thank you all for being part of this important conversation on trust, communication, and the power of public relations.

**Domo Adam**



## **A General Overview**

### THE ROLE OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION IN SOCIETY

COMMUNICATION may be defined in diverse forms. However, in simple terms, communication is a process by which information is disseminated or exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs or behaviour. So, communication can be seen as the impartation or exchange of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium.

#### MEDIA

The word “media” is the plural form of medium. In this work, media are the different communication outlets or tools used to store and deliver information or data. Such outlets as the radio and television broadcasting, periodicals, newspapers, and magazines are ample examples of media. Thus, in modern usage when talking about the various tools of communication, they are known as “The Mass Media - both electronic & print media.”

#### HISTORY

Unarguably, mankind’s initial art of communication started in the Garden of Eden, from

when God instructed Adam and Eve on how they were supposed to live in the garden, and when they were deceived by the demonic serpent against the instructions of God.

## CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

The practice of media and communication cannot be effective and stable without the necessary backing of the Constitution of any nation. The constitution mandates the media to inform and create mass awareness among the citizenry, to monitor the activities of government in ensuring that good governance plays out in the interest of every citizen, with respect for the rule of law as well as the fundamental human rights of all citizens. However, the same Constitution of every nation creates restrictions for the media and communication in order to avoid possible media abuse.

Nigeria, like any other democratic nation, recognizes the role of the mass media and has gone to the extent of giving to it constitutional backing. Hence, the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN) as amended, did not only guarantee every Nigerian freedom of expression, freedom to own, establish and operate

any medium for the dissemination of information, but it also gave obligations to the media to monitor governance and hold the government accountable to the people.

Section 39 (1) of the 1999 Constitution states: “Every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including the freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference.” It goes further to state in 39 (2) that “Without prejudice to the generality of Subsection (1) of this Section, every person shall be entitled to own, establish and operate any medium for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinions.

“Provided that no person other than the government of the Federation or of a State or any other person or body authorized by the President on the fulfillment of the conditions laid down by an Act of the National Assembly, shall own, establish or operate a television or a wireless broadcasting station for any purpose whatsoever.”

## LIMITATIONS

While the Constitution gives a backing to media practice in Nigeria, it also restricts the mass media industry in the country. For example, the

Constitution gives the media the responsibility to monitor governance, yet it is not empowered to perform this role. Section 39 which talks about press freedom does not give freedom to the mass communication practitioner, i.e. the journalist.

The freedom given in that section is for ownership of the media. Therefore, the media has limited freedom, and cannot perform any role that is deemed to undermine the sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which is seen as seditious and defamatory in nature. Please see Sections 37, 38, 39(3), 40, 41 and 45.

## THE RELEVANCE OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

In today's world, communication has assumed a very advanced dimension. The world has found itself in a situation where information is key in every way towards making desired progress in every area of life. For that reason, there is keen competition among nations, especially in science and technology, military advancement, and other related facets. Let us briefly consider the relevance of media and communication in Nigeria, the United States of America and China.

To start with, Radio Nigeria (RN), Voice Of Nigeria (VON) and Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), are owned by the Federal Government of Nigeria, and are used as the government communication media in defending the Federal Government, especially when certain critical national situations arise. To this end, policies and programmes of government are first made public by these media before they get broadcast by other privately owned media organizations, in order to protect the sovereignty and interest of the Federal Government of Nigeria and the federating states.

#### THE MEDIA IN AMERICA

The United States of America has led the world in making tremendous advancement in media and communication. For example, the internet which the entire world enjoys today is the brain work of the American Military.

Sometime in 1969 some Americans went into serious research to break through improved communication media and that led to ARPANET (Advanced Research Project Agency Network), using the interconnectivity of computers which developed into real internet usage in 1989.

More so, the United States of America is reckoned with as the “World’s Policeman.” In spite of the technological and scientific advancements in various fields, including their awesome military might, America still harnesses the best of media and communication to lead the world. One vital weapon that America utilizes optimally is propaganda. And, come to think of it, propaganda does not exist if media and communication facilities are unavailable.

By the same token, America uses the mass media to great effect, reaching out extensively, and carrying out extraordinary feats in such a manner that directly or indirectly influences the mindset and psyche of people across the world, all in the bid to achieve her own national goals. America’s prime media include Cable News Network, CNN, and the Voice Of America (VOA), amongst others. Consequently, America has been able to maximize the mass media potential to maintain prominence in diplomatic relations and control of global affairs.

## DEVELOPMENT AND THE CHINESE MEDIA

The Peoples’ Republic of China, a giant of Asia, is a Communist State that was isolated from the outside world for years. This isolation affected the Chinese

economy very adversely, but it also enabled the Chinese to look inward. In the process of thinking outside the box, the Chinese leaders came to the conclusion that other prosperous nations of the world, like Britain and the United States of America, made meaningful progress in engineering, science and technology, commerce and industry, through persistent and purposeful use of the mass media. Accordingly, the Chinese government collaborated with their best media practitioners and consultants to build a dependable media system that would redeem the nation's image.

Today, China has been able to establish the popular CGTN (China Global Television Network), which broadcasts in all the major languages in the world. The CGTN is among the Free-To-Air television channels in most cable systems. It is aimed at projecting China and her culture to attract people of other nations to migrate to China, especially as the cheapest business hub for industrialists.

Even more interestingly, China's media appeal has considerably enhanced her economy, educational system and general social life. China's romance with the media has put the nation on the

lips of millions of people all over the world today. Not surprisingly, people from all walks of life want to go to China for business, education, and tourism. It is transparent that China is enjoying her present placement in the global economy as a result of the efficacy of its media and communication outreach in national development.

## BETWEEN PUBLIC AND MEDIA RELATIONS

There is a direct correlation between Public Relations (PR) and Media Relations (MR). Both work hand in hand to ensure the unimpeded dissemination of news and information to the primary consumers in society. Public Relations develops the story in its original form, while Media Relations broadcasts or publishes it as news. Public Relations is about helping organizations find their story. It is about helping brands figure out what they want to say, and to whom.

On the other hand, stories created by public relations are given a platform and distributed widely to consumers of news at the right time in the process known as media relations. According to the Public Relations Society of America, “Public Relations is about influencing, engaging and building relationship with key stakeholders across

a myriad of platforms in order to shape and frame the public perception of an organization.” This means that Public Relations is the practice of building relationships between brands and their audiences.

This is done through a variety of methods. Public Relations work can include anything from social media to events or internal communications and outright media relations. Placing stories in the media, therefore, is just one way that PR can help brands reach their target audiences. Consequently, it is obvious that while public relations can be done without using media relations, it is almost impossible for media relations to exist without public relations.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS AS A CHECK ON MEDIA RELATIONS

Undoubtedly, there are positive and negative impacts of communication on news consumers in every nation of the world. As stated earlier, Public Relations develops the story while Media Relations disseminates it to the general news consumers. There is a significant role Public Relations has to play in overseeing the work of Media Relations.

This aims to ensure that the original story it has developed gets to the news consuming public without being adulterated or distorted by media relations.

The original story of Public Relations is handled by media aides. By default, these media aides are expected to help in rebranding their principals and portraying them in good light before the general public, so that they can function optimally and perform creditably to public expectation.

Inevitably, there are good media aides and there are also bad media aides. Good media aides work very assiduously to achieve a goal of maintaining a credible balance in telling their principals, institutions, organizations and brands the true position of things at all times. This serves as a pivotal corrective measure in checkmating the activities of such principals, institutions and organizations.

On the contrary, bad media aides who may largely depend on gossip and unconfirmed stories, end up portraying their principals, institutions, organizations and brands in the negative frame before the news consuming public. The work of bad media aides has, invariably, tarnished the

image of a great many principals, institutions, organizations and brands. For that reason, it is more beneficial for Public Relations to scrutinize the work of Media Relations before the original story gets to the public.

In view of the foregoing, we can see that media communication is powerful and quite indispensable to society, especially as brands, governments, institutions, individuals and organizations largely depend on it to promote and protect their interests. In 1787, a British statesman and orator, Edmund Burke, categorized the media as the Fourth Estate of the Realm, after he described the Lords Spiritual as the first, the Lords Temporal as the second, and the House of Commons as the Third Estates of the Realm respectively.

In reality, media and communication are beyond broadcasting the day-to-day activities of government, individuals, organizations, institutions or brands. More so, it involves working on the psychology of people in any society. The main reason for the establishment and maintenance of both public relations and media relations in communication is the dissemination of information, in its unadulterated form, to the news consuming general public at the right time.

Not surprisingly, nations that desire to make a head way to greatness and development give premium priority to the establishment and sustenance of dependable media systems. A notable fact is that the media, which is a powerful instrument for the dissemination of relevant information, is given necessary backing by the constitution of every nation. Governments, institutions, organizations and brands depend on the mass media to protect their interests regarding enlightenment programmes, projects and good governance.

In Nigeria as in other countries, mass media practice is inestimably vital, in terms of the impact on society, such as the role of a watchdog against bad governance, and any other related ill-motivated activity against the general society. Above all, we need to acknowledge and appreciate the roles of Public and Media Relations in communication, with particular reference to Nigeria and the wider world in general, for the dissemination of information and for other related roles played by this critical sub-sector.