

Self-monitor or ...

Do you follow yourself? It's not easy to do, but it's essential. You should be monitoring your external communications efforts or else, you just won't know what is going on.

I have followed my own blog (first on Google Reader, and now on Feedly, though that may change) for years. Why? Because I want to see how other people see my blog. I want to make sure it is showing up and how it appears when it does. This is how I knew there was a problem with Feedly and my blog feed (detailed in this post—read the comments please). I subscribe to my blog via email too, to make sure Feedburner is operating as it should.

When I send out email campaigns, I send it to two different emails of mine (one is Gmail and the other I monitor via Outlook). Again, I want to make sure everything looks OK. I try to check them on my smartphone too.

Although you can't monitor for every iteration (for example, I don't own an iPad or Apple anything), you need to know how your communications are showing up in different environments, as best as possible. Perhaps you can recruit some volunteers to check for you (trusted friends or colleagues who don't mind giving you a hand). Imagine that you are not optimizing your email for smartphones, and most of your audience reads it on that platform. If you don't know you aren't optimized, you can't address it.

Too many marketers (agencies included) don't bother to monitor their own communications. There's a rather prominent PR agency whose blog is a disaster, but apparently, no one has thought to check it as an outside reader, or follow it or even try to share it on social media. Then there are the countless email marketing messages that are not only not optimized for mobile

or for social sharing, but that are RIFE with mistakes (grammar, spelling, content).

You must monitor yourself or direct others to monitor on your behalf. If not, you risk not knowing how people actually see you.

Are you monitoring your communications? If so, how do you do it? If not, what are you waiting for?