



7 The Role of Communications in Public Diplomacy

- Public diplomacy relies on the use of communications techniques to reach foreign audiences both directly and through traditional diplomatic channels.
- People around the world are increasingly informed and influenced by mass communication. That's why we are using information technologies and the Internet as much as possible to promote Canada's image, and presence on the international stage.
- Thanks largely to the cyberworld, borders that once tended to create closed societies are fast disappearing. And the number of parties directly involved in international diplomacy is expanding rapidly to include public, private and other participants.
- The proliferation of issues and actors has also increased the sheer volume of information that must be tracked, analysed and responded to, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. As part of our work in public diplomacy, we must now cater to the heavy demands of a wired world.
- We have adapted our approach to diplomacy to make use of the latest developments in technology. The challenge of cyber-diplomacy will be to operate at peak efficiency in a world that is growing smaller, and at a pace that is growing faster.
- While time frames have contracted dramatically, we still must carefully select and analyse an ever-increasing amount of information when planning on an international basis. Negotiation skills, development and other sorts of support, military deployment — the traditional diplomatic "tool kit" — all these tools remain, but they must be re-calibrated for a very different world.
- In making the best use of our communications technologies, our overriding objective is to develop what we call a "smart" information-based foreign affairs and trade department.