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[Mike](#)

## [The Tiger Beat Blog: A macroscopic view](#)

[Last time](#), I discussed word choice in the catch phrase of this blog's theme, Behind the scenes of RIT University News.

This time, a broader perspective on the theme.

Following a recent University News staff meeting, Karen Black, NTID director of media relations, wrote to say that it seems our new-media ventures—including this blog—are taking off.

Knowing that Karen's a blog skeptic, I responded by saying that while the blog is gaining momentum, we're still trying to convince more people to become regular contributors—but only through *meaningful* blogging (not blogging for the sake of blogging).

My response gave Karen an opening to share additional thoughts about the purpose of this blog (I suspect she had been holding back out of politeness). Because our dialogue would've been ideal for this forum, here's an edited transcript:

### **Karen:**

*I'm not against meaningful blogging. My sticking point is this: Why do we think the rest of the RIT community is interested in behind the scenes of RIT public relations? I just don't get it. I would look into things that are more relevant: behind the scenes at graduation or some of the technology we do here. I think it would be valuable for us to invite behind-the-scenes perspective and open it up for ideas (for me, it could be behind the scenes of interpreting). Then, we all get a sneak peek into the colleges, jobs and functions at RIT. Sure, public relations can be one aspect, but I don't see the appeal. How much can we talk about our own business? It feels silly. My three cents.*

### **Mike:**

*You make good points, Karen—and we could possibly broaden the scope somewhat. However, my concern is consistency. We need to have a unique selling proposition—which, at least for now, includes a PR focus. My thinking: If we broaden out too much, giving behind the scenes of this, that and the other thing, we would run the risk offering something for everyone . . . and, consequently, nothing to anyone (by offering too much of a mishmash).*

*A radio analogy (it all comes back to radio for me :-~): Have you heard any of these new 'Jack' radio formats? (Rochester's version is "Fickle.") They're trying to please everyone, and in the process pleasing no one (or scant few, as reflected in ratings). Having said all that, I understand your point—and it remains to be seen if anyone (primarily outsiders) has any interest in reading our musings. (If you haven't read it, [Paul's post on the Saunders' gift](#) is a good example of a broader issue that ties into public relations.) Come to think of it, this conversation would be a great one on the blog!*

[Next time](#): This conversation continues. (In the meantime, you're welcome to join this discussion—and help shape the role of this blog—by adding your comments.)

### 1. [Silandara](#)

Aug21

I like behind the scenes of graduation and interpreting! Or behind the scenes of move-in. :) (Since that's coming up very soon.) I think we could do that with a PR perspective. Because it doesn't all have to be about how the story gets in the news, the PR scope is a pretty big one and involves any and all of the things that we deal with or encounter - interpreting, graduation, move-in, talking to a professor about new technology, etc. being included in that.

### 2. [John](#)

Aug21

I think the key is using our PR lens to focus on these other topics/events that Karen mentions: interpreting, graduation, technology, etc. For example, I'll be on campus during 'Move-in Day' on Sunday. I'll be there for a PR purpose—there may be some members of the media who will be on campus—and that will afford me the opportunity to learn a ton about everything that goes into getting our students moved in and settled. Blogging about my experiences would not only fit into our theme "Behind the scenes of RIT University News", but would allow blog readers to gain some of the same insight into 'Move-in Day' that I did.

### 3. [Justin Thorp](#)

Aug23

I think it is important for the Tiger Beat blog to go behind the scenes of University News. A member of the RIT community needs to have a relationship with University News. Some basic questions about Univ. News would come up in my mind: Who are you? What do you do? Why should I care? How will you help me? How do you help RIT? Are you good at what you do? What are the different services that you offer or publications that you publish? Why should I trust you? I was a student leader for 4 years at RIT and I didn't fully understand Univ. News and how it could benefit me as a student leader till my senior year. By talking about life inside University News, you will gain a relationship with the members of the RIT community. I would assume having that trust is essential to doing your jobs successfully. It will raise public awareness of who you are and how you can help people fulfill their goals and the goals of the institute. That my 2 cents. -justin thorp (brand new RIT Alumnus)

4. [The Tiger Beat](#)

Aug25

[...] Aug25 Mike The Tiger Beat Blog: A macroscopic view, part 2Last time, I reprinted a portion of an e-mail conversation between Karen Black, NTID director of media relations, and me about the role of this blog. Our conversation continues: Karen: Your radio analogy is a good one. To that point, have we asked our audience what they want? Do we know what they want, or are we making assumptions? Have we surveyed them to get their feedback on what they want, or are we forcing them to want what we think they should want? Why not put together a survey that offers a wide variety of choices, as well as write-in options, to see what our audience would like, instead of force-feeding them? [...]

5. [Confessions of](#)

Aug25

[...] Over the last few months, I have had the distinct pleasure of getting to know the staff over at RIT University News. In their blog, they are going through the process of thinking out why they should blog. Why would people want to know about a public relations team? These are the types of questions they are starting to ask and answer. I put in my 2 cents in a comment. [...]

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## About us

The Tiger Beat takes you behind the scenes with the members of [RIT University News](#)—the news and public relations division of [Rochester Institute of Technology](#). Get the "story behind the story" and an insider's look at who we are and what we do to publicize RIT news.

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