

COMMENTARY

# Making The Change From Old Media To New

by [Harvey Chipkin](#) , Columnist, July 17

Michaela Guzy is a one-woman reflection of what has happened in the media in the last few years. After reaching high-level positions at publishing houses like Conde Nast and American Express Publishing, she dropped it all to start a website called OhThePeopleYouMeet (OTPYM) — dedicated to travel adventures focused on, well, the people you meet when traveling.

She has touched a nerve and is now executive producer, director, lead writer and on-air host for two original editorial video series: Michaela's Map and OhThePeopleYouMeet. She is often asked to appear as an industry expert — speaking, moderating panels or conducting workshops. She recently became one of the first travel industry partners for Citizine, a global lifestyle and travel platform targeting urban global citizens. OTPYM offers video and editorial content, a network of influencers and the tools to interact with the content.

Gauzy says she changed career direction when she simply “couldn't go back to an advertising partner one more time with an ad buy disguised as an integrated package.” After a 3½-month sojourn in Africa, she informally started OTPYM, which today has over 100 contributing writers, photographers and others. “I have never touched ads again,” says Guzy, who travels nine months a year and whose business model involves sponsorships and partnerships for her multiple channels across social media platforms. Her approach to the future comes down to “throwing a lot of spaghetti against the wall and seeing what sticks.” In her ventures into new media she's learned a few things about travel marketing; among them:

- On millennials: “Loyalty and commitment are out the window. People are not attached to stuff and want to try new things. The rise of Uber and Airbnb and things like Rent the Runway Unlimited, where you can rent couture clothing, show that younger people are not committing to anything, which is frustrating to marketers. But you still have to prove your value. Sure, an influencer can post pictures of themselves somewhere in the world in a bikini, but do they convert that into bookings?”

- Travel advisors will continue to grow in influence. “If a traveler follows an influencer to a resort in Costa Rica and the flight is cancelled, the influencer will not help you get on the next flight. People now pay for a physical trainer, a life coach and a health coach; and they will pay for a travel coach.”
- Interactivity is key. “If somebody is watching a video and sees something of interest, they can’t do anything about it. But if they can click on it and find out how to book, that changes everything.”
- Marketers need to experiment. “I never had a plan. I moved to New York to be an art director and ended up selling media. It’s still like that.”
- It’s about listening and experimenting with partners. “When we partnered with Tourism Australia, they were happy to distribute our videos that had no ads because of the high-quality content.”
- The world of influencers is changing. “The new buzzword is micro-influencers. I am just now building an Instagram platform and will only do it organically to make it meaningful and geared toward conversion.”