



TV GUIDE - Social media is rebooted on Mars, and it's up to Paul Reeves (PR) to keep Earth "on-brand" with the Martians, which proves to be more difficult and dangerous than imagined.

SOCIAL RECALL

CAST

Narrator - Jason
Robot Voice - T2S
Paul Reeves - Dan
General Dusk - Jake

M-Z Droid - T2S

NARRATOR

With each new technological advancement, the world seems to grow smaller. So small in fact, that information of almost any kind is readily available to anyone who is willing to listen. Social networks in the palm of people's hands where marketers of businesses, things, and selves, all compete for attention.

You may be asking yourself, "Is there any room for my channels to stand out in a world so small?" What if you could start over far, far away on a planet where social media never existed? Would you remember what a true, authentic social media mission can accomplish on somewhere as far away as Mars? What lengths will you go to for a
SOCIAL RECALL!!! [*SFX: Echo-Effect*]

SCENE 1

[*SFX: Huge space shuttle rumbling as rocket boosters ignite*]

ROBOT VOICE

3...2...1...liftoff!

[*SFX: Explosion, space shuttle blasting off*]

[*SFX: Maybe add in the Star Trek "chirping" sound that you always hear on the main deck*]

PAUL REEVES

The year is 2050. After decades of planning, training and engineering, mankind has done it. Earth is sending a crew of 500 humans to Mars to not only explore the Red Planet, but to live there for several years.

Our crew consists of Earth's finest and brightest minds from all over the globe. Who am I? Well, I'm one of the few passengers without an M.D. after his or her name. Name's Paul Reeves. That's "P.R." for short. I was brought along to report and record everything that happens on this historic mission on a daily basis. If it's happening on Mars, and I think it'll engage our audience back home, you'll be sure to hear about it. This is P.R., signing off.

ROBOT VOICE

End of transmission.

SCENE 2

ROBOT VOICE

P.R.'S LOG: DAY 25

PAUL

I have some startling, amazing and historic news! After just settling into our posts and getting acquainted with our workflow, I can confirm that we have made first contact with several alien beings. Their appearance is unpredictable, enigmatic and even harder to explain.

The Martians are very adept at hiding behind what can only be called “personas” or identities which we (the humans) think they should take. The only way to know if these personas truly are our Martian audience will be through analysis and watching how they “consume” our information.

Don't worry, this may all sound complicated, but I think our crew is prepared for this scenario. Here comes CMO (Commander of Mars Operations) General Dusk now with an update and marching orders.

GENERAL DUSK

All right crew, listen up! You all know our original mission was to stick with our usual operating procedure and business plan. However, now that we have these new “customers” watching us and wanting to know more about us, we're going to need “PR” to take the lead on this.

[SFX: Grumbling, loud murmurs from the audience.]

GENERAL DUSK

Alright, Alright. You sitting in the C-Suite, pipe down over there! This situation is exactly why I had the foresight and foreknowledge to hire P.R. and bring him to Mars with us. He may be a civilian, but his communication and content creation skills are top-notch. What do you say, son? Are you up to this challenge?

PAUL

Well... yes...yes, I am. In order to make a great first impression and establish long-term relationships with the Martians, we are going to communicate organically, telling authentic, engaging stories and commit to never abandoning our original social “media” mission. We'll do this in three ways.

First, I'll assign “storytellers” to each of the three main landing platforms and will schedule, manage and approve all outgoing messages. By doing this, we'll ensure our unique voice among the Martians never changes.

Second, I can't do this alone. I need information about our audience. We need to figure out their true personas, including which of our landing platforms they spend the most time on and why.

Third, we need to decide what specific information we want to share and stick with it. This is very important. If we share information not related to our Mars Mission, we risk being viewed as not trustworthy and will lose credibility among the Martians.

If we do these three things, I know we can gain a following and make history. Now, who's with me?

[SFX: Applause, cheering]

ROBOT VOICE

End of transmission.

SCENE 3

ROBOT VOICE

P.R.'S LOG: DAY 225

[SFX: People talking on loud speakers in the background. Sometimes sounds like English language, other times sounds like Mars language, "alien gibberish."]

PAUL

[Paul is on the move, constantly walking around while making his transmission.]

I am very pleased to report that 200 days after making first contact with the Martian race, our social "media" mission is performing extraordinarily well. All of my crewmates are letting me manage all communications. We've also gathered very useful data about our audience's personas and have committed to sharing only information pertinent to our mission.

I thought I'd give you a quick tour of our communication operations. We have three distinct channels of communication set up on our three main landing platforms.

[SFX:] Electronic door opens to Human Transporter.

ROBOT VOICE

Mars Transporter ready for one passenger. Please state desired destination.

PAUL

[Paul states next line clearly so computer can hear him] FB, please.

ROBOT VOICE

Location confirmed.

[SFX: Elevator whirring sound in background. Paul continues to speak while being transported.]

PAUL

Located on the face of a barren landscape, we've renamed landing platform one "FB." The platform focuses exclusively on Mars' community and personal relationships. We've found it to be very beneficial in reaching the Martians that are maturing in age and appreciate their long-standing culture.

ROBOT VOICE

You are now at FB. Please exit transporter.

[SFX: Electronic door opens to Human Transporter.]

PAUL

Ok, here we are... "FB." Its main systems are run by a matter-of-fact droid which is able to process a lot of information about our audience and suggest to each Martian a storyteller and types of content that would match their interests.

Ah, speak of the devil, here he is now. It's an M-Z model. M-Z, may I have a status report?

M-Z DROID

We have over 2 million Martian followers. Reach is doubling month over month. Engagement rate is averaging a high of 25% when compared with the previous 28-day period...

PAUL

[Paul interrupts.] Whoa, slow down there, M-Z! Those numbers are great and all, but what about the storytelling. Are the Martians enjoying the creative content we're telling them about Earth and their fellow Martians?

M-Z DROID

If by "enjoyment" you mean "engagement" then, affirmative, our content is successful. Also, comments from Martians and humans are overwhelmingly positive.

PAUL

And what about our other landing platforms? Is platform #2...oh, what do the aliens call it now? The one manned by Thaddeus Witter?

M-Z DROID

The T-Witter platform? Yes, sir, still focused on communicating breaking news and creative content. The storytellers there are a curious bunch and still adhering to your mission.

PAUL

And platform #3? The one just linked in to the main interface?

M-Z DROID

Platform “LI” is still operating at full capacity offering professional development news and resources and job placement skills for Martians and humans alike. It appears we are building a unique brand of trust among our new audience.

PAUL

That is great news, M-Z! Trust and authenticity are so important in establishing new relationships. Very proud of the historic work our team is doing to keep the Martians communicating and engaged.

M-Z DROID

While we are on the subject of engagement, sir, may I have permission to override your authority to approve new messages? Unconfirmed and/or biased communications that are controversial and emotive in Martian nature drastically improve all KPIs....

PAUL

[Paul interrupts.] No, no, M-Z, we already talked about this. Did you not hear what I just said about trust? We need to communicate authenticated content that is in line with our mission and goals. The Martians need to know we’re telling them the truth. Understood?

M-Z DROID

Understood, sir. *[Pause]*

[SFX: Electronic beeping notification.]

New update just coming in. There were three new attempts to override your mission protocols this week on other platforms. Perpetrators are unknown.

PAUL

Hmmm.... Not good. That makes a total of 19 acts of sabotage since we got here. I’ll alert General Husk. Thank you, M-Z. I’ll check back with you later.

ROBOT VOICE

End of transmission.

SCENE 4

ROBOT VOICE

P.R.’S LOG: DAY 427

[SFX: Some sort of background noise/office/communication sounds to indicate a control room]

PAUL

Greetings from Mars, again. P.R. here, live from the top of the Mars Mission control tower. I have some discouraging news to report. It seems some storytellers have somehow been able to override my mission protocols, and the results have not been good.

Controversial and unconfirmed content and stories are being sent from multiple landing platforms. Even worse, storytellers have begun to split into factions....

GENERAL DUSK

[Dusk interrupts] Now, now, Paul. Don't be such a Gloomy Gill Face. Have you seen the most recent KPIs? Our story reach, engagement, commenting and sharing have never been better. In fact....

PAUL

[Paul interrupts] Excuse me, General. What did you just call me? A "Gloomy Gill Face"?

GENERAL DUSK

Oh...yeah, funny isn't it? Clap Back over on the T-Witter platform came up with it. The Martians seem to love it when we constantly "roast" each other with witty insults. Unfortunately, when we first introduced the term "roast," it did *not* translate well to the Martian language. **[Dusk sighs]** We lost several good workers that day.

PAUL

Wait, who is "Clap Back"? I never assigned any one by that name.

GENERAL DUSK

No worries, Paul! Clap Back's short, meaningless messages and replies are proving very popular. She is hilarious!

PAUL

Well, it may be funny, General, but insults are not part of our mission. We will start to lose our unique voice and credi....

[SFX: Friendly-sounding alarm blares.]

PAUL

What the heck is that notification?

ROBOT VOICE

Viral message authored by storyteller "Click Bait" detected on FB platform.

GENERAL DUSK

Oh, man, Click Bait is at it again! Paul, can you bring it up on the big screen? This should be good!

[SFX: Keystrokes on computer signifying something being shown.]

PAUL

[Paul reads aloud what is shown on screen.] “Five ways you know Earth’s Mars mission failed (and five ways it could have been successful). Two million reached and one million are sharing.”

Are you kidding, me? Sir, have the contents of this message been verified? We can’t send this out! It’s speculation and contains half-truths. Where’s the “cancel” message protocol? I don’t see it on my console.

GENERAL DUSK

It’s gone, Paul. I had the M-Z droid remove it from your console.

PAUL

But...why did you that? You gave me full authority to approve messaging.

GENERAL DUSK

Yes, I did...but we’ve found that your approval and creative process takes too long and pulls other employees from more important work. Plus, sometimes your messaging yields minimal results.

PAUL

Yes, sometimes, but that’s because I am testing new messaging. This is a new audience, General. We’re still learning and adapting so our communications have meaningful impact. General... are you even listening to me?

[SFX: Video feed of storyteller playing in the background]

GENERAL DUSK

Huh? Uh, what? Oh, sorry, storyteller “Echo Chamber” is talking about how some Martians with no antenna act strangely when confronted by humans. These creatures act like they don’t even see us! How rude. We’ll have to keep an eye on that.

PAUL

“Echo Chamber”? Sir, this is getting out of hand. These messages could be seen as divisive and will make the Martians embittered toward any message we try to communicate. This is dangerous, sir, and we need to put a stop to it right away.

GENERAL DUSK

You know what I think? I think storyteller “Cancel Culture” was right about you. You’re too narrow-minded, and that’s been verified because over 500 Martians and humans said they “like” or “love” the fact that you’re no longer in charge.

PAUL

Wait...what? Sir, no, please don’t do this. Our message and mission are so much more important than controversial stories. If the Martians don’t trust us, all hope for a successful, long-term relationship will be lost.

GENERAL DUSK

No, Paul, you’re the one that’s lost. Don’t you get it? Your whole job is just a distraction from the real work going on behind the scenes. We are going to control these Martians one way or another, and sometimes the “truth” as you see it just gets in the way.

PAUL

No! Sir, you can’t do this!

GENERAL DUSK

Take him away!

[SFX: Doors burst open, scuffling in the background as armed guards grab Paul and take him away.]

PAUL

[Paul’s voice gradually begins to fade as he is being dragged away.] No, you’re inviting chaos! Chaos! The whole truth matters! It matters....

GENERAL DUSK

You, turn his blasted recorder off! We don’t want anyone on Earth... *[General is abruptly cut off]*

ROBOT VOICE

End of transmission.

SCENE 5

[SFX: Fuzz, static and/or white noise before “transmission” goes online.]

PAUL

This is Paul Reeves broadcasting from the Droid Shipment and Repair Station. I don’t know if anyone on Earth can or will ever hear me.

After I was forcefully removed from my position of Social Media Mission Manager, General Dusk decided to relegate me to programming new communication phrases for malfunctioning droids. The work has been steady for two weeks, but in the past couple of days, I haven't had contact with anyone or received any messages.

Unfortunately, the General has forced me to stay in this one location and is monitoring my movements, so I really have no clue what is happening on the outside. Thankfully, I found this outdated broadcast equipment, so maybe I can.... ***[Paul stops suddenly after hearing noises]***

[SFX: Door opens loudly. Loud clanging, scuffling, shouting in an alien language.]

PAUL

[Paul whispering] I'm not sure what that noise is. I'm in the back room, so I don't think anyone can hear me. I'll take a look when whoever it is is gone.

[SFX: Very loud clang, as if a large piece of metal was dropped. Door closes loudly.]

PAUL

Hello? Is anyone there? Maybe someone dropped off.... ***[Paul stops suddenly and sees something]*** M-Z! What are doing here? Great Scott, look at you. You're barely functional. What happened?

M-Z DROID

[Voice is trembling in a robotic way] After you were removed, all social messaging became inconsistent and sporadic. More storytellers began to embellish and sensationalize their tales in order to gain a greater following among the Martians. They tried to subtly influence the Martians to change their points of view. Other storytellers abandoned their posts and their original mission altogether.

PAUL

[Paul is very distressed.] No, no! What did the Martians do?

M-Z DROID

[Voice is trembling in a robotic way] Communication with the Martians began to breakdown over all mediums. It was confirmed the humans' controversial media messaging sowed distrust and discord among all personnel. Some humans claimed their lies were true so their false narrative could keep growing and influencing. Now the aliens can no longer determine if the humans are telling them the truth...and...and... ***[M-Z droid's voice begins to fade]***

PAUL

[Paul interrupts] ...and neither can the humans. Oh...M-Z...this is horrible. I...I...have to wonder...what happens next?

M-Z DROID

[Voice is trembling in a robotic way] I did intercept a Martian transmission to their High Counsel. However, the aliens damaged my translation program when they tossed me from the FB platform. *[M-Z's voice begins to slow]* Power...almost...depleted...

PAUL

Wait a second, M-Z. I think I can transmit the message through another droid.

[SFX: Paul moves equipment around. Robot beeps can be heard.]

PAUL

There. I think I got it. Here it goes.

ROBOT VOICE

End of transmission.

NARRATOR

Where did it all go wrong? When did we decide to exchange the truth for something more fleeting and, less attractive?

What's your social media mission? Is it to be well-known? Have millions of followers? To go viral with cat videos or dance moves?

Maybe, just maybe, we should treat social media audiences how they deserve to be treated — like humans — with authentic, consistent and creative messages that they can trust and count on.

Otherwise, we may be doomed to a future where the only people showing up to the platforms, are there for the gasoline. It's another parabolic thought, curving through space and time, headed, OUTBOUND.