

CONTENTS

Crisis Communications1,3
Media Relations1,4,5
Data Dive2
Events Calendar2
Healthcare6
Rebranding7
The Week in PR8



CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

Newton's Law: When Communicating Bad News, Don't Let Your Response Become the Story

On some level, you can forgive **Carolina Panthers** quarterback Cam Newton for his behavior during the post-Super Bowl 50 press conference two Sundays ago. His team, which was favored to win, had just been defeated. He'd spent much of the day running for his life, the target of very large, fast men whose job it was to detach his head from his torso. And now this: Glaring lights, cameras snapping; the same questions over and over again. On top of it all, it was difficult to hear. By mistake, audio

from the winning **Denver Broncos'** celebration down the hall was being pumped into the crowded pressroom where Newton sat, sullen, with a hoodie over his head, giving monosyllabic answers and eventually walking out in the middle of a reporter's question. His departure—perhaps the only time all day he moved without being chased—became a significant story and offers lessons for PR pros about how to handle difficult news.

Continued on page 3

MEDIA RELATIONS

BY DR. KATHERINE FLECK, APR, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS, OHIO NORTHERN UNIVERSITY

6 Tips for Building and Maintaining Relationships With (Fewer) Reporters

Traditional newspaper circulation continued its subscription decline in 2015, according to the **Pew Research Center's** annual analysis of the state of the American news media. The viewership of cable news also dipped, but network news and local television news increased their audiences. In 2014 the same analysis revealed that nearly half of Web-using adults got their political and government news from **Facebook**.^[i] Given those statistics it's fair to say that American news consumption remains in flux.

As preferences for news delivery evolve, the newsroom itself also is changing. **Gannett**, the largest U.S. newspaper company, updated and standardized reporting positions, mov-

ing toward multimedia-focused reporters and producers.^[ii] **The American Society of News Editors** reported a 3,800-person decline in full-time journalists working at 1,400 U.S. daily newspapers in 2015.^[iii] **The Bureau of Labor Statistics** predicts continued decline in journalistic positions by an additional 9% between 2014-2024.^[iv]

These facts point to an evolving media landscape and increased pressure on American journalists and news organizations. But what does this kaleidoscopic reality mean for PR



Continued on page 4



Editor, Seth Arenstein, sarenstein@accessintel.com
Editorial Director, Steve Goldstein, sgoldstein@accessintel.com
Graphic Designer, Yelena Shamis, yshamis@accessintel.com
Assistant Content Manager, Mark Renfree, mrenfree@accessintel.com
Managing Editor, Guidebooks, Ian Wright, iwright@accessintel.com
Director of Marketing, Laura Snitkovskiy, lsnitkovskiy@accessintel.com
Assistant Marketing Manager, Rachel Schermann, rschermann@accessintel.com
Publisher and VP of Marketing, Amy Jefferies, ajefferies@accessintel.com
SVP/Group Publisher, Diane Schwartz, dschwartz@accessintel.com
Chief Operating Officer, Heather Farley
President & CEO, Don Pazour

Group Subscriptions — Laurie M. Hofmann, lhofmann@accessintel.com
 Additional Copies & Article Reprints — Contact Wright's Media, 877-652-5295; info@wrightsmedia.com



Published weekly by Access Intelligence, LLC
 9211 Corporate Blvd, 4th Floor
 Rockville, MD 20850

Client Services:
 Phone: 888.707.5814 • Fax: 301.309.3847
 e-mail: clientservices@accessintel.com

New York Editorial Office:
 40 Wall Street, 50th floor, New York, NY 10005
 Phone: 212.621.4890 • Fax: 212.621.4879

For subscribers only: full access to PR News article archives at www.pronewsonline.com

UPCOMING EVENTS AND WEBINARS

SOCIAL MEDIA SUMMIT & VISUAL STORYTELLING BOOT CAMP

FEBRUARY 25-26, 2016
 HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA

PR NEWS' WORKSHOP: GOOGLE FOR COMMUNICATORS

JUNE 6, 2016
 THE RITZ-CARLTON, MIAMI, FL

DIGITAL PR & MARKETING CONFERENCE

JUNE 6-8, 2016
 THE RITZ-CARLTON, MIAMI, FL

70% of Electorate Says Incivility in Messaging Has Risen to Crisis Levels

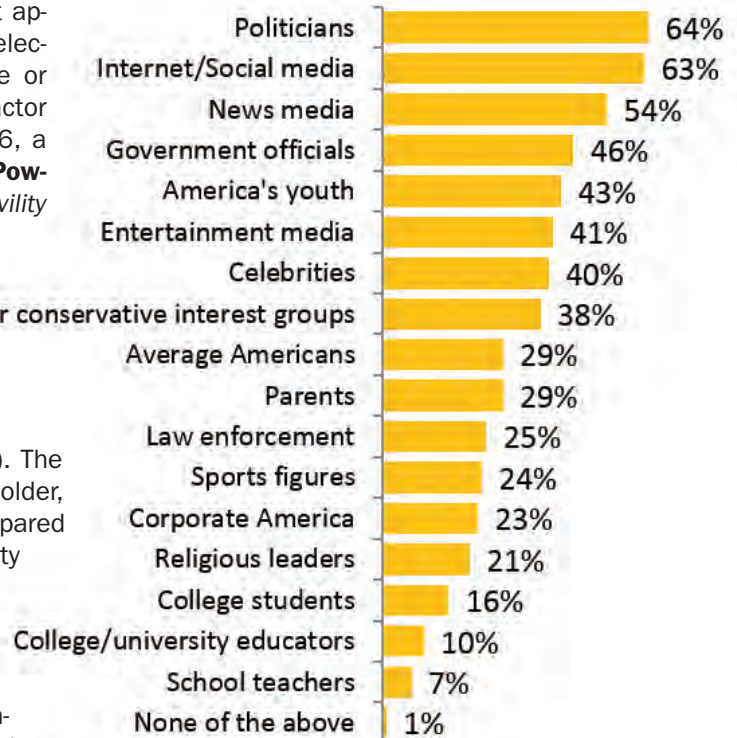
It's difficult to avoid seeing politicians taking jabs at opponents. Sometimes brands attack each other, too. Is this the right approach? Nearly all of the American electorate (93%) said a candidate's tone or level of civility will be an important factor in how they cast their votes in 2016, a new survey from **Weber Shandwick, Powell Tate** and **KRC Research** says. *Civility in America 2016* found incivility continues to be a major societal issue, especially in the presidential race. Nearly 8 of 10 likely voters cited Donald Trump as the most uncivil hopeful. Hillary Clinton was #2 (39%). The poll surveyed 1,005 adults, 18 and older, and found 58% of respondents, compared to 53% two years ago, expect civility in America to "get worse" over the next several years. Seven years ago, only 39% felt that way. The top three culprits, identified by more than half of all respondents, were politicians (64%), Internet/social media (63%) and news media (54%). College/university educators (10%) and school teachers (7%) were least likely to be blamed for making civility worse.

Nearly all respondents (95%) said incivility is a major problem, and 70% believe incivility has risen to "crisis" levels, a jump of 5% from two years ago. Respondents believe the rise in incivility will have negative consequences on society. More than 75% of likely voters felt incivility in government is preventing action on important issues, the U.S. is losing stature as civil nation, and incivility is making it difficult to discuss controversial issues.

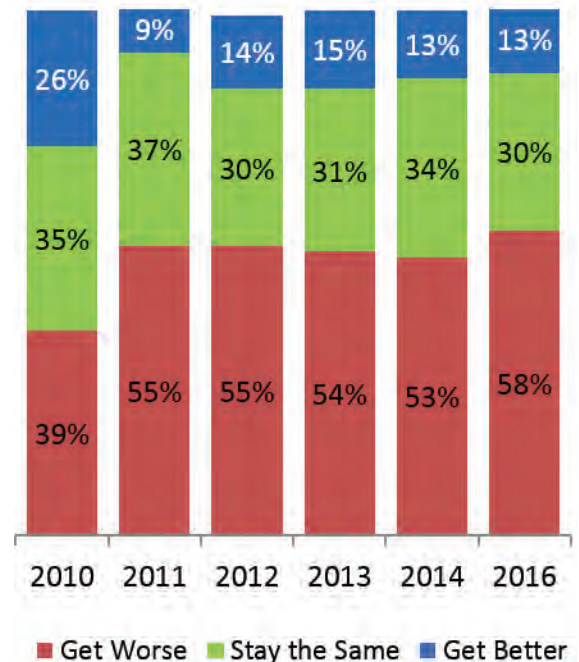
The implications for PR pros? "PR and corporate communications professionals need to think about what captures citizens' attention, the context in which they are engaging and measure how that translates into behavior over the long term," Weber Shandwick's chief reputation strategist Leslie Gaines-Ross says. ■

Editor's Note: Tina McCorkindale, PhD, APR, president/CEO, Institute for Public Relations, contributed this article. tina@instituteforpr.org

What is making civility worse?



During the next few years, civility in America will...



Be Upfront With Bad News, But Be Prepared

Newton's situation would have been difficult for an older, media-trained executive, much less for a 26-year-old athlete who's not paid primarily to parry and thrust with reporters. Still, it's part of his job—the NFL requires players to spend three minutes answering reporters' questions. “He did a disservice to his brand” with his demeanor, his one-word answers and walking out, says Andy Gilman, president & CEO, **CommCore Consulting Group**.

Relating this incident to PR, there's a plethora of 20-something execs in high tech who face the media, and often they're asked questions far graver than why didn't your team win the Super Bowl. They regularly take questions about products that caused sickness or death, hacked data, large layoffs, bad financials and executive misconduct. We asked several PR pros for insight about handling difficult news.

Stay the Course: At the moment, there are few brand spokespeople with a tougher assignment than **Chipotle's** Chris Arnold. Still, Arnold is earning media plaudits for his responsiveness. “Culturally, we have always tried to be accessible to media and do our best to respond to any reasonable request,” he says. Despite the volume of requests over the past few months, “We have really tried to maintain that same approach — remaining accessible and engaged with media, and transparent...”

Speak or Stay Silent? Let's get practical: When your brand has bad news do you suppress it or inform the media? “In general the advice is go out with the news, know the amount of information you want to tell, and you can at least control the message or get balanced coverage,” Gilman says. “We assume today that bad news is impossible to contain—[there are] the employee rumor mill, the Internet, the press. Someone will tell your bad news,” he says. **Discovery Communications** CCO David Leavy agrees. “A fundamental rule of PR is to get all the bad news out,” he says. “We'll take our lumps if we need to...our approach is to be completely honest, transparent, not be in a bunker and be available to reporters.” In today's media landscape, “most bad news tends to burn off pretty quickly,” he adds.

There also are situations when you have bad news that you feel nobody will care about. Do you keep quiet? “That's a judgment call,” Gilman says. If a brand decides to keep silent, though, it “better be prepared to respond fast” if the news gets out and people care, he says.

Honesty is Such a Lonely Word: Of course putting out bad news, admitting you goofed, means PR pros constantly are butting heads with lawyers, right? Gilman, a lawyer, disagrees. “This is why it's important at the outset [for PR] to have a seat at the table,” he says. “That way you can have a discussion rather than butt heads. [PR] needs to respect lawyers.” On the other hand, Gilman admits, “When in doubt, the lawyers are probably going to win.”

For Mike Paul, president of **The Reputation Doctor**, Gilman's points are spot on. “Normally we don't get to walk into the situation and talk directly to the client, we have to jump over the attorneys.” Brands have two counselors, Paul adds, the attorney and the PR person. “Sometimes you have to choose between them,” one works in law courts, the other in the court of public opinion. All the PR pros we spoke with emphasized transparency and honesty, although many said brands need to know how much of the truth to tell. As one said, “Making a statement [to the press] doesn't mean you have to tell everything you know.”

Getting Practical: OK, so you've decided to hold a press conference or do an interview. It's best to “pre-plan talking points and stay on message,” says Lisa Arledge-Powell, president of **MediaSource**. “Preparation of your talking points eliminates guesswork,” she adds. In addition, she advocates using a message map document to help navigate touch topics. “This document works like a road map, giving you a simple format to list out important points and help guide you through your interview or event.” More tips from Arledge-Powell: Give concise answers; one question, one thought; never lie or hedge; treat journalists with respect; rehearse before interviews or press conferences; learn the technology (don't figure out how to operate a microphone or pointer during the news conference); and offer facts and real life examples.

Body language and tone are critical when facing bad news, says Discovery's Leavy. “Don't be overly defensive and avoid one-word answers,” he adds. “How you respond to a bad news becomes part of the story if you do it badly.” ■

Editor's Note: For tips on communicating bad news in speeches, see prnewsonline.com's subscribers-only section.

CONTACT: @agilman @chipotlemedia david_leavy@discovery.com @reputationdr @lisaarledge@em

FEB. 25-26 | HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA

PRNews' SOCIAL MEDIA SUMMIT and Visual Storytelling Boot Camp

Register online: socialmediaconf.com

Join PR News in Southern California for the Social Media Summit and Visual Storytelling Boot Camp. Attendees will be immersed in real-world, tactical case-studies and learn how to pull and analyze social media data, share brand stories on emerging platforms and more.

Questions? Contact Jessica Placencia at jessica@accessintel.com; 301-354-1641

Prepare for a 6:1 Ratio of PR Pros to Reporters

practitioners? It means that building relationships matters more than ever.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

In our technology-driven environment, it is tempting to rely on distribution services, social media and database-generated media lists to push content out in hopes that someone will pick it up. But before you hit “send” on that global email pitch, consider these facts. In 1990, there were two PR practitioners for every one journalist. In 2011, the ratio expanded to four PR practitioners to every one working journalist, and some predict that ratio to reach 6:1 in the near future.^[v] This phenomenon requires practitioners to take a targeted, research-and-relationship-based approach to media relations.

- ▶ **1. Create a Top 10 List:** Step one to successful media relations is doing your homework. Start by developing a list of the top 10 most important reporters based on each client, organization, product or service line. Read, watch or listen to their work regularly. Remember, most journalists produce stories on multiple platforms such as blogs, podcasts, guest columns, or regular local or cable news commentaries. Follow these key reporters on all platforms and keep a running tab of the types of stories they cover and topics of personal interest that show up. Track each reporter’s topics, tone, and the sources they use, and pitch stories based on what you discover.
- ▶ **2. Study Group:** Don’t simply consume the journalists’ work—distribute it. Share relevant pieces with your clients, executives and peers. When appropriate, comment on articles, posts and blogs either directly by messaging only the reporter, or publicly on the digital platform. One of the best media relations experts I know regularly sends key reporters articles, books, blogs and other materials that match their professional and personal interest. The material may have nothing to do with the client they are representing; it is done simply as a gesture of professional courtesy. While it may seem counter-intuitive to send information not pertaining to your company, it can actually help establish you as a solid source of information or subject matter expert.

KNOWING YOUR CUSTOMER

- ▶ **3. The Journalist as Customer:** An important lesson I learned early in my career is to consider reporters some of your key customers. This concept is important because it frames your relationships and actions differently than simply viewing the media as a vehicle to get your message across, or worse, a factor to be contended with in the grand scheme of your public relations campaigns.
- ▶ **4. Time Is Money:** As a customer, any reporter’s most important consideration is time. We’ve moved beyond the concept of a 24/7 news cycle to an instantaneous

stream of news. Consider it from their point of view: Journalists work under constant demands to produce high-quality content, with expert sources, in a never-ending stream. Therefore, good customer service means responding to both positive and challenging questions as quickly as possible. This not only shows your customer the respect they deserve, it also builds respect from the other side of the equation.

“**Phone calls and one-on-one meetings may seem like a thing of the past, but they remain the best way to establish long-term working relationships with journalists.**”

- ▶ **5. I’ll Be There:** Another key customer service element is being accessible. Successful media relations professionals must be available for more hours than in a traditional work week. Those professionals willing to be reached during off-hours are often rewarded with additional opportunities for positive coverage, and also gain the ability to mitigate or prevent negative coverage by providing clarifying information or commenting on challenging questions. A final customer service consideration is providing consistent and reliable information, quotes and background material. Remember, your credibility and theirs is at stake in every story, post or broadcast.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

- ▶ **6. Got Your Back:** A 2014 BusinessWire survey showed nearly 90% of journalists surveyed used a press release within the last week (prior to responding to the survey) and almost 80% used a company’s online newsroom when researching an organization. These facts suggest a passive approach to media relations. Given the constraints mentioned earlier, however, it’s more likely reporters will seek sources, experts and organizations with which they already have established relationships. That means to be successful you will need to be more active at developing and maintaining solid relationships with key media contacts.

This approach takes time and effort. It simply can’t be done through email or social media. Phone calls and one-on-one meetings may seem like a thing of the past, but they remain the best way to establish long-term working relation-

ships. Don't waste reporters' time chatting or expect regular lunch dates, but don't miss grabbing coffee on occasion.

As PR practitioners, we are highly trained communicators. We churn out content, speak to clients, executives and reporters, and in the process tend to neglect the other side of the communication equation: listening. This skill is crucial in effective media relations. Many professionals focus on getting the media pitch just right, which is important but misses the broader objective. By doing your homework, understanding your customer and focusing on building and maintaining relationships with key reporters, the pitch becomes a natural part of a broader conversation. And in the process, your media relations success rate reflects the width and breadth of coverage your clients, executives and brand demand. ■

Citations

i Mitchell, A. (2015, April 29). State of the News Media 2015. Retrieved December 27, 2015, from <http://www.journalism.org/2015/04/29/state-of-the-news-media-2015/>

ii Doctor, K. (2014, August 25). The newsonomics of Gannett's "newsrooms of the future." Retrieved from <http://www.niemanlab.org/2014/08/the-newsonomics-of-gannetts-newsrooms-of-the-future/>

iii Association of Newsroom Editors (2015, July 28). ASNE 2015 Annual Census. Retrieved from <http://asne.org/content.asp?pl=121&sl=415&contentid=415>

iv Bureau of Labor Statistics (n/d). Occupational Outlook Handbook. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/reporters-correspondents-and-broadcast-news-analysts.htm>

v McChesney, R & Nichols, J. (2011) The Death and Life of American Journalism: The media revolution that will begin the world again. New York: Nation Books.
Basic Tips for Building a Solid Relationship With a Professional Journalist

CONTACT: k-fleck@onu.edu

BASIC TIPS FOR BUILDING A SOLID RELATIONSHIP WITH A PROFESSIONAL JOURNALIST

1. Reach out. Call your top 10 reporters. Introduce yourself and ask how they want to receive information. By asking, you show your respect for their time and professional preferences.

2. Communicate regularly but don't overdo it. Suggest stories based on the reporter's professional interests (based on the information you obtain after doing your homework). If a story a key media contact writes isn't complete or doesn't square with your organization's knowledge, share your information with the writer. Suggest a different approach or provide specific information to consider in a follow-up story.

3. When you pitch, get to the point quickly and keep the reporter's audience in mind. Minimize your urge to pitch stories that are tangential to the reporter's interests. When applicable, offer to supply visuals to help enhance a final product. By going overboard to provide excellent customer service, you help make the journalist's job easier, and in return you strengthen that important relationship.

4. Follow up. When you find something a key journalist has written or covered to be particularly well done, let that person know. And if the reporter moves to a different beat, media outlet or platform, stay in touch. Maintaining relationships is as important as building new ones, and you never know when that journalist will need you as a source for future stories.



March 15, 2016 • 12-2:30 p.m.
National Press Club, D.C.

PR News will honor the winners and honorable mentions of its annual CSR, Nonprofit and Diversity Awards programs at a Spring Awards Luncheon on March 15, 2016 in D.C. Last year this event sold out so you'll want to book your ticket soon!

Register: prnewsonline.com/Spring-Luncheon | **Questions?** Contact Mary-Lou French at mfrench@accessintel.com.
Interested in sponsoring? Contact Lindsay Silverberg at lsilverberg@accessintel.com.

27470

5 Tips for Working With Startups in the Healthcare Tech Space



Smart technologies—from iPhones to wearables to electronic health record and scheduling systems, to the use of 3D printing—are changing the way health professionals and consumers imagine accessing and applying health innovation. While the age of biomedical innovation was matched with the rise of health PR, health-tech requires very different thinking and skills—both cultural and tactical.

Biomedical PR is a long-range positioning effort. From concept to commercialization—particularly with specialty drugs—moving a therapy from bench to bedside can take years and years. Those who build careers as pharma-focused PR pros understand this arduous journey of drug approval. Upon regulatory approval, the payoff can be dramatic economically and world-altering for patients and their families. Healthcare innovation saves lives. There is no better purpose to one's work.

In many ways high tech PR is a short-term game. With health apps introduced daily, the timeline from concept to commercially available product is far shorter than that of pharma—perhaps the shortest of all PR disciplines. While there has been much written about the “second-mover advantage,” no brand actually chooses to be second-to-market in the tech world, so companies work quickly.

Given the high stakes of winning this short game, technology PR can sometimes be an exercise in shouting loudly from the rooftops and hoping for the best exit strategy to appear. Of course, mature technology brands are more sophisticated in their approaches, and can build momentum methodically. For the world of high tech startups, however, it is often a matter of holding on tight, blitzing the media and seeing what happens.

DIFFERENT APPROACHES AND CULTURES: HEALTHCARE PR VS HIGH TECH PR

Healthcare PR and high tech PR represent significantly different approaches to our craft: slow and steady versus quick and loud. What happens when you put them together? When you have a company that is a technology innovator focused on the healthcare market?

There is a cultural nuance that drives expectations and approach. Agencies must move quickly (as this is the tech world) and also understand how the world of healthcare involves drawing upon data and patient experience to convey the delicate nature of developing a product that can save lives.

To that end, here are five recommendations to keep in mind when working with fast-moving startups in the health-tech space:

1. If venture-backed, the name of the game is the exit. For some, helping a company build a strong case for exit-orient-

ed value is sufficient reward. For others, seeing the product actually help people is key to their satisfaction.

2. As PR pros, we must determine a comfortable level—and patience—working with a company, knowing we may not see things through to commercialization. Given how high the stakes are, the blitz concept that works so well with high tech startups is not as straightforward with health-tech startups. **The Food and Drug Administration** and other regulatory bodies frown upon promises that are not proven clinically and part of the use label. While hyping a high tech startup is seen as a plus, hyping a healthcare startup can result in a regulatory delay from which the company might never recover.

3. The trades are still the trades, but many influential publications may not be attainable, and certainly not on a tight timeline. Key health journals often demand peer-reviewed content, even concerning technology. It's best for PR people to simply sidestep these outlets and focus on hospital-, nursing- and pharmacy-focused trade media. At the very least, such coverage will be valuable for the company's website, digital footprint, social media feeds and sales/partnership development efforts.

4. It's still all about the message. What often grabs the attention of the key audiences is a sharp, compelling message. That's the same with healthcare startups. Avoid simply relying on the “gee, whiz” element of technology to win the day. The impact must be spelled out and emphasized repeatedly.

5. The budget is a startup budget, not a healthcare budget. One day, MedTech Company X may be worth billions, but for now, the budget is, shall we say, conservative. So you have to ask yourself those key questions that we all ask about every client:

- Do I believe this product can change/impact the world?
- Can I get the company the results it expects within the budget it's giving me?

If the answer to either of these is no, it's probably best to stay away. For those who enjoy working with health-tech startups, keep in mind these companies have the life-changing ability to improve care, compliance and medical-discipline cooperation. For PR pros who like the steady, thoughtful pace of pharma PR, or the blinding pace of high tech PR, and aren't able to synthesize the two, it may be best to think twice before jumping ahead. ■

CONTACT: goel.jasper@finnpartners.com

When Change Is Necessary: 5 Things to Consider Prior to Rebranding



Ten years ago, you headed an initiative at your organization to define and build the brand. It took a fair amount of work to make your case for an investment you knew wasn't going to pay off immediately. In time you convinced your colleagues that having what you mean, and what you promise out there ahead of your more tactical efforts would ensure a better reception for those efforts. Any "push" marketing and sales initiatives also would be more effective, within the "pull" context a stronger brand would afford.

Working with a consultant, you assembled a cross-functional team, conducted a small online customer survey, received input from your colleagues, defined brand attributes you wanted to be known for, and developed a convincing positioning statement and some topline messages. Your consultants tuned up the logo your founder/CEO originally had drawn on a napkin, developed directions for the use of type and color, and provided guidelines for you to make some print pieces in house. You launched a website.

For 10 years you've been reinforcing that work. Lately, however, people are starting to stick their heads in your office and suggest it's time to rebrand. You're getting comments about your brand like, "it's tired," "out of date," "time for a change," "have you seen what the competition is doing?" Clearly these comments express dissatisfaction, but they're too fuzzy to act on. You want to make sure that if you're going to embark on another branding initiative, you're clear on the problem you're solving.

Fortunately, there are some parameters by which you can measure your need for a rebrand. They're ordered below by the amount of effort (least to most) you'll need to effect change. Drivers for rebranding can be external or come from within your organization: Do any of these sound like you? If not, then perhaps your brand is not the problem...even if your CEO thinks it is. *[If you need to explain why not to rebrand, see part II of this series in a future PR News.—Ed.]*

1. Your Communications—Print and Digital—Don't Look and Sound Like You: Your offerings are solid and relevant—you get good feedback from customers once they're on board—but connecting with prospects is getting harder. The messages you're putting out fail to tell your story effectively and you must apologize every time you slide a brochure across a table or give someone your URL. Your print and digital materials—perhaps even your logo—are underselling, or even subtracting value from, your offerings. Updating how you express yourself verbally and visually is in order.

2. You've Evolved But Your Brand Hasn't: Your organization is in the forefront. You've continued to innovate, but how you're understood lags, and those out-of-date perceptions are dragging down mindshare and market share. The good news: you have a vision, model, and value that can inform evolved messages, visual expression and a refreshed brand. Do it. Rebrand.

3. Your Customers' Expectations of How a Brand Should Look, Mean and Behave Have Changed:

The environment you operate in is not what it was, and worse, your competition is aggressively managing its brand to better connect with your customers. What you're offering is still of value, but how customers and prospects think of you (and talk about you) is not what it needs to be for you to succeed. Your brand is out of sync with the direction your industry is taking and with what your customers are wanting—issues that are deeper than those that can be addressed through re-invigorating the look and feel of communications. You need to look at your underlying brand promise, position and meaning—and then reflect this new thinking across communications. To not catch up with your competitors—or, better, leap over them—will take a toll.

4. You're Transforming Your Organization: The change you're undergoing is more revolution than evolution. You've identified new lines of business, a new model, and new markets to serve, so your brand, down to its fundamentals—perhaps even its name—needs to be rethought and rebuilt. While you're not remotely a startup, in some respects you are. You need to carefully articulate who your constituents are—and what they care about—so you can develop new messages; your new visual system (and name and tagline) can be reinvented to be exactly in sync with your transformation; and new print and digital communications can telegraph and bring excitement to your transformation.

5. You've Grown Through Mergers and Acquisitions, But Does Anyone Understand Who You Are Now? You've assembled a great organization with the capabilities and people you need. In assembling a more robust set of offerings, you've also piled up a raft of logos, taglines, brand promises, and competing visual approaches. It takes five floors to get across your elevator message. Time to look at your brand architecture, decide which accumulated brands will live or die, develop messages that will communicate and connect, and craft a visual system that will hold things together. Your almost-new-from-the-ground-up brand will present an organization that people will get and value.

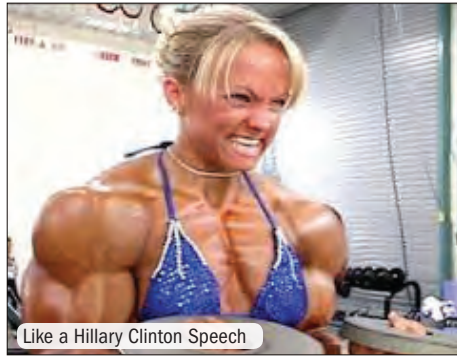
Conditions, goals and trajectories demand different amounts of work on your brand. But before you embark on a process to redefine and re-articulate your brand, you first need to know where your organization is and where it's going, the branding environment in which you operate, and what your competitors are doing. And to marshal appropriate resources, make good decisions, and ensure that the effort and time spent will make a positive difference, it's important to understand why rebranding is necessary.■

CONTACT: @rogersametz



1. Gas Pains: While daily headlines about the **Volkswagen** (VW) diesel scandal have abated, media coverage continues. At our press time two Fridays ago, the automaker said it was delaying its March 10 annual earnings report and shareholders' meeting set for April 21 due to uncertainty about the cost of fixing the diesel emissions problem. Months ago VW set aside some \$7.3 billion to make fixes to software in the 11 million cars in question. In addition it likely will need to pay fines and lawsuits in the billions if not tens of billions, *The NY Times* said, adding that analysts are unable to predict the exact amount. While it's not always a bad sign when brands delay earnings reports, it often is. For the most part, VW has been tight-lipped about the scandal. It took the brand months before it held a press conference in Germany to address the issue. Another PR blunder: Last month VW boss **Matthias Müller** told *NPR* "We didn't lie." He later recanted.

2. Muscle Bound: Who says you can't shape the message? In fact, it can be made muscular. *Gawker's* investigative unit found a **State Department** official negotiated with *The Atlantic's* **Marc Ambinder** for an early copy of a 2009 foreign policy speech that then-Sec of State **Hillary Clinton** was to deliver. In return the State Department's **Philippe Reines** insisted Ambinder adhere to several conditions. First, he wanted Ambinder to characterize the speech as "muscular." Check. He also wanted *The Atlantic's* then-politics editor to note those in attendance included envoys **Richard Holbrooke** and **George Mitchell**, and National Security Council senior director **Dennis Ross**. Check. Last condition: "You don't say



you were blackmailed!" Well, at least Reines and Ambinder had a sense of humor. You could argue this is a systemic issue; the Internet's pressure has conditioned the press pool to find scoops at all costs, including journalistic emasculation—although can you recall the last time a foreign policy speech made news? Another sad note: **Chris Lehmann** in *The Baffler* notes at least two other outlets, *Politico* and *New York Magazine* online, contained references to muscularity and the day's seating chart. As Lehmann writes, "I'll leave it to advanced statistical savants to work out the odds of such themes surfacing in the daily churn of State Department news...." Journalism and PR look bad on this one, as does the Clinton camp by association. Yet with Ambinder's dispatch passing for political coverage the American public is the biggest loser.

3. A Thousand Cuts: More trouble for blood-testing startup **Theranos**. Earlier this month its main retail partner **Walgreens** suspended some ties to Theranos, whose finger-pricking test and low prices were perceived as a threat to disrupt the industry (*PRN*, Feb 1). Now, after media reports that questioned the efficacy of Theranos' technology, two unsatisfactory visits from federal agencies and poor PR work—basically the company has refused to make CEO **Elizabeth Holmes** available to answer the charges (*PRN*, Dec 21, 2015)—Walgreens has given Theranos 30 days to fix its problems or the entire relationship will be kaput, according to *The Wall St Journal*. Theranos' relationship with **The Cleveland Clinic** also appears shaky. The clinic claims Theranos has failed to properly demonstrate to it how its technology works. Despite its board



Teresa Henderson, Burson-Marsteller SW Market Leader, Managing Director, U.S. Corporate and Financial Practice

being loaded with D.C. heavies like **Henry Kissinger** and **George Shultz**, Theranos' biggest immediate challenge is the federal government. **The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services** found Theranos out of compliance and gave it until last Friday to fix things or face daily fines that could cripple the company. – **Nasdaq** and its **GlobeNewsWire** distribution unit entered into a definitive agreement to acquire **Marketwired**, a distribution and analytics provider. The deal is expected to close in Q1 2016. Nasdaq said its "corporate services clients will benefit from an enhanced experience by gaining access to Marketwired's...social media targeting tools." – Was it effective for **Chipotle** to close its doors last Monday to explain new food safety procedures to employees? Yes, says **Bill Jasso**, PR professor at **Syracuse University**. Chipotle "demonstrated to its loyal customer base that it is taking this situation seriously...[and] communicated clearly why it closed its stores." Unfortunately, there also was a lot of coverage about **Hank Levine**, the MD man whose mobile number was similar to one Chipotle urged followers to text to receive a free burrito when outlets reopened Tuesday. After receiving hundreds of texts, he texted the correct number to get his free burrito and went to his local Chipotle for solace. Finding none, he opened a Twitter account to get Chipotle's attention. His story spread. He received law questions (he's a lawyer) and date proposals (he's happily married). Chipotle corporate resolved the situation and gave Levine 4 free burritos. – **Teresa Henderson** joined **Burson-Marsteller** as SW market leader and a managing director in the U.S. corporate and financial practice. ■

PRNews' Business Leadership BOOT CAMP

March 14, 2016 | 9 a.m. – 3:45 p.m. | Washington, D.C.

Join PR News for the Business Leadership for Communicators Boot Camp, where you'll learn what it takes to run a profitable agency or in-house PR department. Gain insight from experienced trainers and build an understanding of the business management techniques necessary to make your PR efforts a successful venture.

YOU'LL BECOME AN EXPERT IN:

- Building your brand, finding followers and attracting fans on social media
- Identifying, managing and resolving a crisis as well as what to do in the first 24 hours
- Building relationships with reporters, editors and bloggers
- Revising, reviewing and editing: How to make sure your copy is as good as it can be
- PR writing for print and the Web
- Managing PR success through measurement and metrics
- Training your eyes and ears to “think like a journalist” and discover stories within your organization or client
- Setting measurable PR objectives that are aligned with corporate objectives
- Identifying the social media dashboards and measurement tools to effectively measure your communications campaigns

IF YOU SPEND AT LEAST A QUARTER OF YOUR TIME IN ANY OF THESE AREAS, YOU SHOULD ATTEND:

- Audience Development
- Brand Marketing
- Business Development
- Community Relations
- Corporate Communications
- Crisis Management
- Digital and Social Media
- Employee Communications
- Fundraising
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Lead Generation
- Marketing
- Marketing Communications
- Measurement
- Media Relations
- PR Budget Creation/Management
- Public Relations
- Public Affairs/Issues Management
- Publicity
- Research & Analysis
- SEM/SEO Management
- Social Media
- Video Production
- Web Marketing
- Word of Mouth Marketing

Register Online:

www.prnewsonline.com/Business-Leadership-Boot-Camp-2016

Questions? Contact Jessica Placencia at jessica@accessintel.com



Entry Deadline: March 4 | Final Deadline: March 11
 Enter Today at: www.prnewsonline.com/Agency-Elite-Awards

One of the most important—if not the most important—signifiers of the success of a PR agency is a client saying, “Thanks for the great work, let’s do it again next year and here’s an increase in your budget.” That’s great news for you and your team members, but what you really need to spread the news is amplification and peer validation. That’s where PR News’ newly launched PR Agency Elite Awards come in. We are going to showcase the top PR agencies by practice area at an awards luncheon event in fall 2016, and now is the time to secure a place for your agency on this elite list.

CATEGORIES

By Practice Area:

- Advocacy
- Branding
- Business to Business
- Cause/CSR
- Community Relations
- Consumer Marketing
- Content Marketing
- Crisis Management
- Digital/Social Media
- Financial Communications
- Integrated Communications
- Marketing Communications
- Marketing to Youth
- Marketing to Women
- Measurement/Evaluation
- Media Relations
- Media Training
- Multicultural Marketing
- Nonprofit/Association
- Public Affairs
- Product Launch
- Publicity
- Reputation Management
- Search Engine Optimization
- Word of Mouth/Viral
- Writing/Editing
- Proprietary Software/Client Solutions
- Promotion of Firm (marketing, advertising, PR)
- Web site

PR Agency Internal and Promotional Categories:

- Best Training/Education Program
- Community Relations/Volunteer Programs
- Diversity Initiatives
- Internal Communications

Agency “Awe”

Professional Award:

Please write a synopsis explaining how this person has raised the bar on creativity, strategy and execution for his or her agency, or how this person has gone above and beyond for their agency or for clients.

Agency Team of the Year Award:

Share with us what makes your agency or team shine. Please provide five examples of outstanding initiatives that moved the needle for your agency, both internally and externally with clients.

Enter Today!

FOR QUESTIONS OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT
 Rachel Scharmann ■ 301.354.1713 ■ rscharmann@accessintel.com
www.prnewsonline.com/Agency-Elite-Awards