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PREDICTIONS

Data, Fake News, Mobility, Recruitment & Retention Top of Mind for PR Pros in 2017

At the end and start of the year we ask communications pros to prognosticate about the coming 12 months. In our last edition of 2016 we heard predictions from communicators about data security, authenticity and brand ambassadors.

For this first edition of 2017 we offer part II of our predictions series as our experts provide insight about regulation, crisis, mobility, data and internal communications. Happy New Year.

BRANDI BOATNER

Digital Experience Manager, IBM

2017 will be a year of live video. I feel like Facebook Live just got started in 2016. And then, of course, there's Instagram Stories and I think Periscope still has utility. Everything will be mobile this year, if it isn't already. PR people have been creating experiences forever. Now everyone wants a digital



Continued on page 3

SOCIAL MEDIA

PR News Pro/Nasdaq Survey: Influencers Abound, But Brands Still Need Help Managing Them

The tactic of using influencers to deliver messages that will drive consumer action has matured to the point that it's become an accepted practice in most of the marketplace. Yet finding and working with influencers is far more complex than it appears at first glance.

Those were some of the conclusions reached in a recent Nasdaq Corporate Solutions/PR News Pro survey of PR pros and brand communicators.

(Please turn to page 4 for an infographic containing the study's complete results.)

The widespread use of influencers is apparent in that 75% of survey respondents say influencer marketing is part of

their brand's communications strategy today.

Another sign of the tactic's maturation is that nearly 80% believe the ability to get people to take an action was the most important characteristic of an influencer. The survey asked respondents to name the top three characteristics of an influencer. After the ability to motivate people to take an action (79%), popularity of content (66%) and the reach of an influencer's network members (63%) are the most important characteristics, respondents say.

The survey was completed last month; more than 400 respondents participated.

Regarding whom brands seek as influencers, responses

Continued on page 4



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ATLANTA, GA

How to Turn Slow News Months Into PR Wins

[Editor's Note: This feature asks communicators to spot trends and discuss their reactions to them. In this edition we hear from Joseph DiBlasi, manager, corporate communications, The Conference Board.]

The Trend: It's become harder to gain media coverage. Likewise, securing coverage in down months like December and January can challenge even the most committed PR pros. Some may have little to no fresh content to pitch. But if you want your brand to remain relevant, you must be active in the public conversation.

The Reaction: Traditionally slow news months, such as December and January, are the perfect time to write about the year ahead. Along with their timeliness, blogs and op-eds that center on this theme stand a strong chance of placement due to their value. From an editor's standpoint, insights about what may occur in the year ahead will interest readers. And because editors receive fewer pitches during this period, your submission will have the added benefit of facing less competition.

While the overarching theme should focus on the year ahead, incorporating micro-themes will sharpen your message and increase possible topics. Here are some ways to do it.

New Year's Resolutions. The resolve to improve extends beyond people to the issues orga-

Continued from page 5

cal elements to building corporate reputation. As the ability to share information has been dispersed, PR pros will need to double down on creating genuine, credible and meaningful content that demonstrates they are socially responsible. Being in tune with the wants, needs and beliefs of key stakeholders will be the most effective way to engage audiences.

If we learn nothing else from the events of 2016, we know that public opinion polling does

Continued from page 6

how the health system works, its vulnerabilities and how process pitfalls impact program development, implementation and measurement.

Thinking through how messages influence public opinion has long been the expertise of PR.

nizations advocate.

As such, a Conference Board executive penned an article urging corporations to increase women in leadership. This led to **CNBC** publishing *A New Year's Resolution for Boardrooms*. A similar tactic: pledges to better innovate and position public messages.

Turbulent Events. Slow news periods include long stretches where few events allow for live, happening-now commentary. In the meantime, generate coverage with predictions about future occurrences, the consequences, twists and turns. For those involved in economics, look no further than the shot heard around the world: Brexit. While negotiations around the U.K.'s departure start months from now, that didn't stop one of our economists from taking to the op-ed page of **EurActiv**. She detailed the possible impact in *Three Trends That Will Continue Hurting the Eurozone in 2017*.

Causes for Celebration. Along with documenting the turbulence, consider detailing what warrants celebration. We injected a dose of optimism into the opinion section of *GreenBiz* with *Four Reasons to be Excited About Sustainability in 2017*. While every industry faces challenges, shine a light on the good—your tireless colleagues will thank you for it! ■

not effectively measure the stirrings of a society. It falls short when it comes to detecting the emotions that eventually will evolve into an enormous force of change. We must learn to identify these emotions and find ways to tell our organization's story with our audiences' truth and our corporation's values. This alignment will go a long way in helping us to win the public's trust. ■

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More than ever, increased knowledge of health systems and economics will lead to greater patient benefits and campaign success. ■

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Snapchat Influencers to Be Targeted in 2017

experience. Unfortunately we live in a three-to-five-second, swipe-right world. This makes it harder to keep people's attention. If you don't do it 3-5 seconds, they move to the next thing. You'll see a huge shift in things like Super Bowl ads. People won't fork out millions for 60-second ads, they'll deliver video experiences on the internet. And I preach data. I have fun scaring people by talking about dark data. Gone are the days when communicators can say, "Our data department handles that." You'll still have data departments, but data will continue to be an important part of our jobs as communicators. Data: learn it, live it, love it...and quickly.

ALLISON FITZPATRICK

Attorney, Partner, Davis & Gilbert

Regulators will continue to monitor influencer campaigns to ensure that influencers are disclosing their relationship with brand marketers in compliance with the **Federal Trade Commission (FTC)** Endorsement Guides. As *PR News Pro* readers undoubtedly know, in 2016 the FTC brought actions involving **Instagram** and **YouTube** influencers, while 2017 likely will result in actions involving **Snapchat** influencers as Snapchat continues to grow in popularity with marketers. Consumer advocacy groups will continue to pressure the FTC to outlaw *EvanTube* and other influencer marketing directed to children, but First Amendment protections likely will trump these attempts. One year after the FTC published its *Native Advertising Guidance*, it will increase its effort against misleading native advertisements, which the FTC believes blur the line between advertising and editorial content.

The 2016 election result means the **Trump** administration likely will try to scale back the power of the FTC, the **Federal Communications Commission**, **Consumer Financial Protection Bureau** and other federal agencies. State regulators, however, particularly in New York and California, will increase their efforts to combat deception in areas the federal government regulated, such as privacy and data security.

DEBORAH HILEMAN

President/CEO, Institute for Crisis Management



Fake news will mean PR pros will need to be increasingly vigilant monitoring company mentions on the internet and be ready to respond immediately to bogus stories. Given the lightning speed with which stories go viral, it will become increasingly difficult to debunk fake stories once they gain traction. Free monitoring, like **Google** alerts, will not suffice; PR should invest in comprehensive monitoring services. Second, we are encouraged to see communicators working with corporate risk managers to identify vulnerabilities and to plan for, prevent and mitigate smoldering issues before they become crises. We also hope PR pros will help eliminate functional silos that interfere with effective response and reputation repair in a crisis. Last, based on **Forrester** and **Identity Theft Resource Center** data, we believe criminal data breaches will grow in size and significance, especially with the Internet of Things. This will challenge PR pros to inform stakeholders quickly and protect brand equity when facts are cloudy and perpetrators hard to identify.



BRENDAN STREICH

SVP, Group Head, Atlanta Corporate, Edelman

Strategic partnerships for communicators with CMOs and CHROs will deepen and expand. While PR's earned-centric, engagement-oriented mindset proves effective for brand leaders as they battle for customers' attention, we will continue to see greater evidence of the power that communications can bring to HR in the war for talent. Building attractive workplace cultures, instilling and embodying company core values, acquiring top talent and keeping it happy—these are critical challenges where communications can help. With the need to recruit and retain the best employees now more critical than ever, more company leaders will look to (re)define their employee value proposition and employer brand—and will partner with strategic communicators to help guide and support these efforts. ■



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PRNews' Agency Elite Awards

Entry Deadline: March 3 | Final Deadline: March 10

PR News' Agency Elite Awards honors those agencies that set benchmarks of excellence in client PR efforts. We are going to showcase the top PR agencies by practice area at an awards luncheon event in 2017, and now is the time to secure a place for your agency on this coveted list.

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Planning, Content Keys to Influencer Success

were mixed, with 61% saying industry professionals were the top choice, 57% picking industry personalities and 55% saying bloggers, while 55% choose customers to be their influencers. Just 15% say celebrities were their top choice for an influencer. Respondents were allowed to make multiple picks.

No difficulty dominates for what brands see as their biggest hurdle when working with influencers. Again, respondents were allowed to make multiple picks. 21% say getting the attention of influencers is the top issue; for 19% measurement was the main challenge; 18% say identifying influencers relevant to their business is the toughest problem. A total of 17% pick creating appropriate content for influencers as the most difficult issue and 15% say maintaining a relationship with influencers that lasts more than a single campaign is the biggest burden.



Sanjay Kulkarni,
Global Head of PR
Solutions,
Nasdaq Corporate
Solutions

One of the survey's pleasant surprises for Nasdaq Corporate Solutions' Sanjay Kulkarni, global head of PR solutions, is that "nearly 80% [of respondents] understand that at the end of the day, influencer marketing is not primarily about content or reach or the size of an influencer's network. It starts with the ability to drive action and...actual results."

Those less experienced with influencers tend to see them as a way to "perhaps just more rapidly amplify their message across social channels, which tends not to work as well as you might think," he says. A successful collaboration with influencers "requires up-front work and planning." Finding influencers who are correct for your business and who can drive results is just a preliminary step, he says. You can't just find an influencer "and then hit go."

This idea segues to the survey's final question, which asks about the most difficult influencer marketing challenges. "Ironically, that [no one problem] stands out is what stands out," he says. "What this says to me is that challenges... are equally spread across the influencer-marketing workflow, which starts with defining your goals and figuring out how you will define success, but then flows pretty seamlessly to identifying influencers and beginning to engage" with them. It then moves to the other challenges listed in the question, such as creating content that complements influencers' content. "Influencer marketing is about their content coming through you so that it's more trusted and comes across as earned media."

For Kulkarni, the survey indicates brands are "still looking for some help and a better understanding of how to fit all these pieces [listed in the last question] together," he says. "It's not enough to just look at influencer marketing as identifying influencers and then you just go...you need a set of interconnected tools and processes that help you manage across challenges, and you need to have that plan from the start." ■

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INFLUENCER MARKETING & MEASUREMENT SURVEY

Many communications professionals are looking to influencers to help build brand awareness, advocate for products and amplify content. But building strong, meaningful influencer relationships and measuring success can be challenging. Nasdaq Corporate Solutions and PR News surveyed 400+ PR and marketing pros to better understand how they are finding the right influencers to work with, and the challenges they're facing with measurement.



Is influencer marketing part of your communications strategy today?

75% Yes	15% No	10% Unsure
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What do you think are the top three characteristics of an influencer?

79% Ability to get network members to act	66% Popularity of content	63% Reach of network members	48% Size of network
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23% Participation in industry events/organizations	3% Company job title	3% Number of years of industry experience
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Which types of influencers do you engage with the most?

61% Industry professionals	57% Industry personalities	55% Bloggers
55% Customers	23% Analysts	15% Celebrities



How are you measuring the impact of your influencer marketing program?

60% Engagement analytics	45% Website performance analytics	41% Website referral traffic	
40% Brand/product mentions	21% Leads/sales conversions	18% We don't have a measurement strategy	6% Unsure

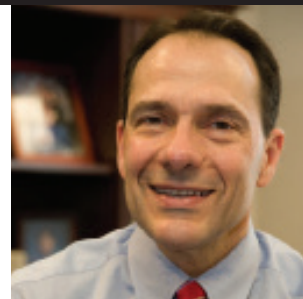


What is your biggest influencer marketing challenge?

21% Getting the attention of influencers	19% Measuring the success of our influencer marketing program	18% Identifying the influencers relevant to my business	
17% Creating content an influencer would find compelling	15% Maintaining a relationship with an influencer beyond one campaign	5% Understanding what influencers are interested in/writing about	5% None

Source: PR News Pro and Nasdaq Corporate Solutions, 410 responses, December 2016

4 Tactics Communicators Can Use in 2017 to Counter Fake News



Fake news headlines fooled American adults about 75% of the time in 2016, according to a survey by *BuzzFeed News*. **Google** and **Facebook** were faced with acknowledging what was termed a fake news epidemic and sought to enhance controls to mitigate future occurrences. The Brexit referendum vote in the U.K. and the contentious 2016 U.S. presidential election contributed to a spike in the use of the adjective post-truth in news articles, leading to *Oxford Dictionaries'* decision to select it as international word of the year. The focus on sharing fake news and a desire to believe what is said, even if it is untrue, have changed our society in ways we have yet to understand fully, but one thing is certain: PR pros and communicators need to take notice.

The existence of fake news is troubling because everyone has access to a plethora of information and the ability to share it with and circulate it among hundreds of thousands of people. All that's needed to do this is literally a mouse click. Whether the information is true or not, those who agree with the story will continue to share it. Before long, the alleged news has circulated around the net, and there is little that we can do to control how that information will spread. As the pyramid of influence continues to erode, stakeholders, the general public, activists and employees have more power to drive agendas than at any other time.

Operating in this environment requires communicators to devise ways to listen to and understand audiences.

1. Polling and Social Listening: The presidential election and the Brexit vote proved that traditional methods of surveying people are not as effective as we once thought. As professionals who analyze public opinion and help shape and determine policies, PR practitioners need to pay greater attention to what is being said and spread on social media. They also must explore more sophisticated predictive analytic models to assess what is driving the underlying beliefs and behaviors energizing the adoption of fake stories.

2. Ethos and Pathos: Understanding behavior will be critical to engaging audiences. The only way to connect with our

audiences is to deliver authentic messages that resonate with them. Perhaps we need to embrace a new set of buzzwords that comprise our vernacular in 2017: *ethos*, which stems from the Greek word for "character," and the word "ethic," which is derived from *ethos*. And don't forget about *pathos*, the Greek word underscoring the ability to form an emotional connection whereby an audience would experience feelings that the writer wanted it to feel.

3. Corporate and Value-Based Storytelling: As the public finds its voice, expresses opinions and builds communities of like-minded people, PR pros will need to engage with these influencers in ways that are relevant to their communities.

Communicators will need to tell stories that align business objectives and connect with their audiences' passions. For example, if you are committed to the environment and your stakeholders care about climate change and ecology, stories about sustainability will resonate.

Over time, value-based storytelling will help reinforce corporate character. These stories will define your values and demonstrate your commitment. While this will not eliminate people writing fake news stories, it does create cognitive dissonance, the result of which is often that a person will take the time to verify if what is being said is true or not. By building a library of stories about your organization, you will begin to build relationships and trust with your stakeholders.

Sharing stories through social media presents enormous opportunities for communicators to expand their reach. Brands that commit to telling more positive stories about themselves in social media will benefit from this increased readership. Those who can master the art of integrating shared values with corporate storytelling will be able to advance the narrative and the organization faster and with greater effect than those who rely on the mainstream media and third-party influencers to do it for them.

4. Social Responsibility: Trust and transparency are critical

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THE SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDEBOOK

This 11-chapter guidebook focuses on communicating in a mobile and social world, winning the attention of audiences on the platforms most important to PR and marketers, social media listening strategy and technology, social media measurement and so much more.

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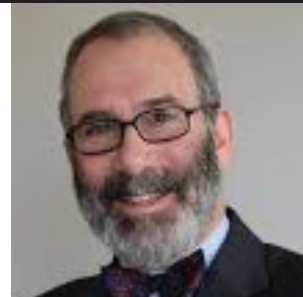
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Questions? Contact Laura Snitkovskiy at laura@accessintel.com
www.prnewsonline.com/social-media-guidebook-vol1



How Healthcare Communicators Can Provide Value in a Value-Based Sector



At a time when American policymakers are looking closely at healthcare costs and questioning the future structure of the Affordable Care Act, their checkbooks remain open to new health/tech ideas that reduce cost, improve institutional efficiency and patient care. These wild swings between saving and spending are not schizophrenic decision-making. Rather, health decision-makers are shifting from a what-something-costs to a value-based, return-on-investment framework.

This paradigm shift is deeply ingrained across all facets of health policy and communications. Once, product innovation and formulary status were sufficient to make the PR investment a smart move. Now position on the formulary, even payer rebates and co-pay card awareness, are critical parts of PR plan consideration.

In this evolving U.S. environment, companies will no longer question whether PR is a business imperative; they will question whether the communications output is a positive for their business mission, message and outcomes.

Health PR/public affairs pros will have a greater voice at the client table if they take time to learn broad economic and environmental forces—and how they influence patient care, medical service and product innovation access.

Below, three key environmental factors today's PR pros must understand to provide strong client counsel.

1. Pricing: Perhaps the most obvious economic and policy hot topics are questions about drug pricing and cost of care. The seismic administration changes, president-elect Donald Trump and his selection of Sen. Tom Price for HHS secretary, signal Affordable Care Act transformation and a reopening of the access and cost debate for all sectors of the healthcare chain, perhaps with even greater intensity. (Note most Senate inquiries on drug pricing occurred under a Republican majority.) In fact, the motivation behind attacks on pricing outliers such as **KC Pharma, Valeant, Turing** and **Mylan** is deeply rooted in two value-based questions: 1) What is the basis for this price in the first place? and 2) Is the cost worth the patient-care result?

Companies—and their communicators—must be prepared to address the imperative of communication around pricing. The culture of our messages, and our advanced planning, must mirror the emphasis on value to be effective.

2. Shifting Patient Habits: Long before the Affordable Care Act and 2016 presidential election, the American health system was undergoing shifts that influenced disease rates. Recently, the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** reported we are slipping backward in life expectancy. Death rates for heart disease—which fell nearly 70% from 1969 to 2015—rose 0.9% last year, a statistically significant increase. This is among many examples showing something amiss within the U.S. health system, often tracing back to

gaps in primary care.

Part of the challenge for public health communicators is that preventive care requires Americans to have a primary-care physician relationship. Yet consumers' relationship with a health insurance plan lasts three to five years; Americans switch primary-care physicians just as often. The emphasis on cost and convenience means that walk-in clinics, telemedicine and other forms of convenient care are on the rise. More and more, doctors lack visibility into patient needs; patients have no connection to doctors.

Consumer knowledge about disease awareness, signs, symptoms and prevention is critical to participation in their healthcare. Suddenly, the historic marketing communication of “see your doctor” or “know the signs and symptoms” fails to carry the same weight; either they must be repeated, or incorporated into a strategy for front-page search-engine optimization (and made a priority investment).

3. Challenges in Continuity of Care: The system also is undergoing a massive transformation around patient data. As soon as patients switch plans and doctors, they must either transport their medical records or recreate their health history. This is inefficient. In most cases, patients become their own health historian, recreating their medical story.

Electronic health records (EHR) are just coming online. Fewer than 10% of hospitals used EHRs in 2008; now, almost 98% use some form of basic EHR system. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), though, inhibits physicians from sending a patient's record to a new physician without signed patient consent.

Sharing patient health history across doctors' offices and institutions is a maze. Protecting patient medical record security is a black hole. Many hospitals fail to see IT patient information management as part of their core mission, instead viewing it as a federal mandate forced upon them. Often, they deploy EHR systems without corresponding security to guard against hackers. Without trusting their data are safe and confidential, patients will be reluctant to participate. Institutions and health insurance plans must convince patients their data are safe as a reputation management priority.

What does this mean for healthcare PR? The value of PR remains constant: non-paid media reaffirming innovation value. Brands are producing groundbreaking innovations to improve the human condition. They must be equally innovative in using PR and policy to reach audiences that help close the sale or deploy investment dollars.

These questions around value of care—from how much a physician can charge to whether an innovative therapy should be readily accessible—already are reaching beyond the realm of health policy, and influencing PR's role in brands' business. For PR pros to provide value, they will need to understand

Continued on page 2

PETA Uses Black-and-White Photo to Edge Oceana & Top Nonprofits on Instagram in Q3 '16

While overconfidence has ruined the best of brands, teams and people, sometimes you just have to admit: When you've got it, you've got it. That's the case with **PETA's** prowess on social media.

In our Nov. 21 edition we told you about the animal rights group's chart-topping performance in Q3 on **Facebook**. Now PETA also has claimed the No. 1 spot for **Instagram** engagement in Q3 2016 among nonprofits, according to **Shareable** data supplied exclusively to *PR News Pro*.

The news was good for more than just PETA, though. Sector-wide total consumer actions, the sum of likes and comments, rose 34% during the quarter year over year. Also rising was the nonprofit sector's number of posts, up 14%. As we've seen many times, video entries grew markedly. Video posts from nonprofits jumped a whopping 90% vs. the year-ago quarter.

Explaining PETA's social media philosophy, associate director of online and social media Helena Soh told us the group aims to post content that "otherwise people would not see." To be fair, PETA barely topped the No. 2 nonprofit on

the list, **Oceana**. PETA tallied some 1.5 consumer actions, up 20% over Q3 in 2015. Video was responsible for 25% of consumer actions taken on PETA posts, Shareable's Nathalie Nuta says. Its top post was an image from the tattoo artist Kat Von D, promoting veganism. Often we've heard Instagram users put a premium on high-quality pictures. Not this time. The black-and-white image, half dog face, half cow face, seems fairly crude, probably intentionally so, and it garnered more than 14,000 actions, Nuta says.

In some ways, Oceana's performance was even more impressive than PETA's. The 1.4 million consumer actions its Instagram posts generated in the quarter was almost 500% better than it did during Q3 one year ago. Clearly its tactics centered on imagery as opposed to video. Consumer action with its video posts comprised just 4% of engagement. Its top post was an image featuring Pacific Northwest Orca whales. Other top posts included pictures of seals and baby turtles.

The Humane Society, 19 on the list, deserves kudos. Its year-over-year growth in consumer engagement rose 517%, more than any other brand on this list. ■

Shareable SOCIAL SCORECARD
 TOP NONPROFIT BRANDS ON INSTAGRAM – Q3 2016
 Based on Total Actions (likes and comments)
 Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareable. Source: [icon]

Rank	Brand	Total Actions	Total Content	Actions per Content	Total Audience
1	PETA PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals)	1,479,608	255	5,802	360,916
2	OCEANA Oceana	1,403,207	362	3,876	218,178
3	MERCY FOR ANIMALS Mercy For Animals	1,155,653	249	4,641	209,561
4	HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN Human Rights Campaign	717,138	241	2,976	253,784
5	SAN DIEGO ZOO San Diego Zoo	632,385	61	10,367	392,609
6	Elevation CHURCH Elevation Church	571,570	269	2,125	141,332
7	WWF WWF	519,792	49	10,608	428,955
8	CMA COUNTRY MUSIC ASSOCIATION CMA Country Music Association	426,451	130	3,280	385,352
9	peta2 peta2.com	384,415	232	1,657	114,753
10	Save the Children Save the Children	379,811	104	3,652	290,279
11	TO WRITE LOVE ON HER ARMS. To Write Love On Her Arms.	338,341	132	2,563	132,760
12	Best Friends Best Friends Animal Society	322,434	71	4,541	205,175
13	animalleague North Shore Animal League America	320,344	217	1,476	68,576
14	The Nature Conservancy The Nature Conservancy	295,020	118	2,500	198,019
15	charity: water charity: water	249,487	95	2,626	310,253

Shareable SOCIAL SCORECARD
 TOP NONPROFIT BRANDS ON INSTAGRAM – Q3 2016
 Based on Total Actions (likes and comments)
 Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareable. Source: [icon]

Rank	Brand	Total Actions	Total Content	Actions per Content	Total Audience
16	MAKE-A-WISH Make-A-Wish America	246,947	89	2,775	133,998
17	NBA Cares NBA Cares	245,679	113	2,174	498,160
18	DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS/ MEDICINS SANS FRONTIERES Doctors Without Borders/ Médecins Sans Frontières	222,544	75	2,967	296,436
19	THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES The Humane Society of the United States	219,108	72	3,043	139,142
20	Adopt a Pet Adopt-a-Pet.com	206,975	116	1,784	428,435
21	ASPCA ASPCA	197,649	48	4,118	180,671
22	CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL Conservation International	190,991	113	1,690	95,221
23	UNICEF UNICEF	190,954	137	1,394	170,262
24	UNHCR UNHCR	123,969	56	2,214	150,554
25	Planned Parenthood Planned Parenthood	103,462	36	2,874	96,363
26	TREVOR The Trevor Project	84,428	134	630	50,274
27	World Vision World Vision	71,903	94	765	34,551
28	SIERRA CLUB Sierra Club	70,845	88	805	60,306
29	Planned Parenthood Action Planned Parenthood Action	69,326	103	673	37,193
30	STAND UP TO CANCER Stand Up To Cancer	65,658	89	738	72,253



Ann Barkelew, Founding GM,
Senior Partner, FleishmanHillard

1. Fake News: It took time to finalize, but the **Arthur W. Page Center** has named its initial Icons of Integrity, the Center's counter to fake news (*PRNP*, Dec. 12, 2016). **Alan Murray**, *Fortune* magazine editor; **Ann Barkelew**, founding GM, senior partner, **FleishmanHillard**; and **Dick Martin**, former EVP, PR, **AT&T**, will be feted Feb. 22 in NYC. "We see it as a night to celebrate the value of integrity in what many are calling a post-truth society," **Denise Bortree**, Center director and associate professor of advertising/PR at **Penn State**, tells us. Adds Center advisor and former **Johnson & Johnson** communications head **Bill Nielsen**, it will be a "time to stand up for the importance of truth and integrity in public communication." Amen.

2. News Bits: So much for the long tail of PR crises. Well, sort of. Since the early 1960s, the top-selling auto in Sweden has been, predictably, a model from the country's hometown hero, **Volvo**. No longer. Despite the diesel emissions mess, a **Volkswagen** vehicle, Golf, overtook Volvo entries to become Sweden's top-selling model in 2016. In 1962, the last time a non-Volvo model topped the chart in Sweden, it was VW's Beetle. Still, Volvo led overall car sales in Sweden in '16; VW was second. Another brand supposedly in trouble is **Samsung**, whose messy recall of its Galaxy Note 7 mobile phone late last year cost at least \$5 billion. Even the replacement phone Samsung issued, like the original Note 7, literally caught fire (*PRNP*, Oct. 10, 2016). Still Samsung predicted Jan. 6 that Q4 profits would be their best in the past three years. The explanation, *The Wall St Journal* says, is that Samsung, years ago,

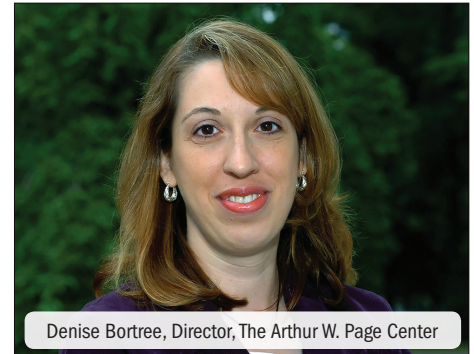


Jean Medina, VP, Corporate Communications, Exelon

wisely invested in display screens and semiconductors. Samsung parts now are must-haves for rival phone makers, such as **Apple**. Still, not all is rosy for these brands. The Galaxy Note 7 fiasco hurt Samsung's otherwise strong profits. As for VW, dieselgate is far from over. For example, a court in S. Korea Jan. 6 sentenced a local VW exec to 18 months in prison for falsifying emissions documents.

3. Early Warning? When news of **Wells Fargo's** crisis hit early in September 2016, we quoted a source who told us "everyone" in retail banking does a version of phony accounts. Maybe. A new report from the **Comptroller of the Currency** says it's looking at other (unidentified) banks for making like Wells Fargo. "We are basically at this stage assessing how the banks that we've identified are dealing with similar issues that occurred with Wells Fargo," says **Thomas Curry**, comptroller of the currency. Let's hope bank communicators have prepared their crisis plans.

4. People: Remaining on the culture circuit, **Ken Weine** is departing the **NY Public Library** after four years as chief communicator to join the **Metropolitan Museum of Art** as CCO. A lawyer, Weine will report to the Met's president. He replaces **Elyse Topalian**, a 30-year Met veteran who will take a buyout. – Who says taxes aren't fun? The audit, tax and advisory firm **KPMG** named **Samsung's** former communications chief in N. America **Andrew Bowins** executive director, corporate reputation and digital engagement, a newly created post. Reporting to the CCO, Bowins will integrate "digital and social media with traditional" media to tout "KPMG's culture



Denise Bortree, Director, The Arthur W. Page Center

and reputation as an innovator, a great place to work and a corporate citizen," the firm says. Attached to the Bowins release was a photo of his team, casually dressed, with the caption: "The newly formed and fun-loving corporate reputation and digital engagement team." – Hold the music. **Country Music Association's** VP, corporate communications **Wendy Pearl** is leaving after 17 years to start **Wendy Pearl Public Relations**, the *Nashville Business Journal* reports. – We're always happy when good people do well. That's the case with **Fox Network Group's** SVP, communications **Scott Grogin**, a class act who's been named communications chief at **CBS Television Distribution (TVD)**. He will report to **Paul Franklin**, president of CBS TVD. Grogin is well known to TV press for his 15 years of service at Fox. He succeeds another TV good guy, **John Wentworth**, who announced his retirement in September. – Energy heavyweight **Exelon** named **Jean Medina** VP, corporate communications. She'll report to **Maggie FitzPatrick**, SVP, corporate affairs & philanthropy. Medina replaces **Judy Rader**, who becomes VP, communications, Exelon Generation. – Sad news from SF where longtime political PR pro **Donald Solem** has passed at 74 from lung cancer. Among his many PR contributions were his listening skills and use of voter data, well before the computer age. He advised clients, including **George Lucas**, from his firm **Solem and Associates**, founded in 1976. – **Disney** PR legend **Charlie Ridgway**, former media chief at Disney's theme parks, died Christmas Eve, aged 93. A beloved figure who maintained a childlike curiosity and enthusiasm, Ridgway anchored media relations at the parks for some 40 years. ■