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# PRIVEVS Social \* Marketing \* PR

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#### **MEDIA PITCHING**

BY MICHAEL SMART, PRINCIPAL, MICHAEL SMART PR

## **Secrets to Building Relationships With Hard-to-Reach Journalists**

The day before sitting down to write this, I was on the phone with a client at a Fortune 10 company. We were going over the agenda of the pitching boot camp I was preparing to deliver to some of his communications team.

As I ticked down the elements of cold pitching I was planning to teach, the client asked me a question, which was also kind of a suggestion based on his 30 years of experience.

"Do you have time to cover the idea of calling journalists or visiting them in person and finding out what they need and giving them that?"

The client couldn't see me, but I smiled as he went on to cite several examples of how this works for him.

#### RELATIONSHIPS: PITCHING AT THE NEXT LEVEL

That's the ultimate in media relations, isn't it? We want to move beyond "pitching" and into organic conversations where we assist influencers to help their audiences, which in turn helps us achieve our goals.

But obviously there are obstacles to doing that; otherwise we'd all be there already. Some of these include:

- You probably don't work at a Fortune 10 company that has reporters assigned to cover it. In most cases, these reporters readily will take your calls or visits.
- You may have grown so accustomed to digital communication that the thought of picking up the phone either makes you nervous or seems out of date. In addition, you might have younger team members who are unaccustomed

to working the phones with media members. To them, phoning really seems a relic of the past.



• Even if you could get a target journalist on the line, you may feel you lack anything that the reporter will be interested in covering.

#### **OVERCOMING OBSTACLES**

I'm going to help you overcome those obstacles. And I'll illustrate these how-to points with examples from my Inner Circle program's "Best Pitch of the Year" submissions.

Every year members of the program submit their best placements. I not only pick winners, but also observe the trends behind what's working and what is no longer effective.

The first key point is to remember that this is not about what interpersonal medium you choose. It's not about phone vs. email vs. social. It's a principle: You're seeking to serve the journalist first and you simply want to know how the journalist works and what she needs so you can serve her better.

That tends to require dialogue, of course, and such backand-forth happens more fluidly on the phone or in person. But it doesn't have to.

#### **GAINING COVERAGE VIA BEING A RESOURCE**

**Example #1:** One Inner Circle member was struggling to break through with a *Wall Street Journal* columnist whose interests are perfectly aligned with this PR pro's company.

Nothing was working, so she sought solely to be helpful.

Continued on page 3





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# UPCOMING EVENTS AND WEBINARS

WEBINAR: HOW TO EMPOWER EMPLOYEES AND TURN THEM INTO BRAND EVANGELISTS NOVEMBER 29, 2017

1:30-3:00 PM ET

**TOP PLACES TO WORK IN PR AWARDS DINNER** 

**NOVEMBER 29, 2017** 

NEW YORK CITY, NY

MEDIA RELATIONS CONFERENCE DECEMBER 7, 2017

WASHINGTON, D.C.

# Nearly 70% of American Adults Getting News From Social Media Platforms

In what surely is a sign of the times, the number of American adults getting at least some of their news from social media has grown to 67%, according to a **Pew Research Center** survey conducted in August with 5,000 adults.

While the jump in those getting news from social in 2016 to those doing so in 2017 is a modest 5%, other increases are notable.

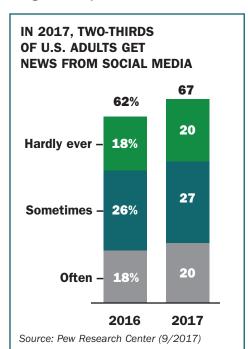
Look at the upper chart or the one listing the social platforms where Americans receive their news and note the jump in those who said they get news from **Twitter**: in 2016, 59% said they received news from the birded platform, that figure rose to 74% in 2017.

Want a shock? In the same charts look at the jump in those getting news from **YouTube** in 2017. YouTube for news? Pizza for breakfast? Even **Snapchat** can boast a healthy increase in news gatherers on its platform in 2017.

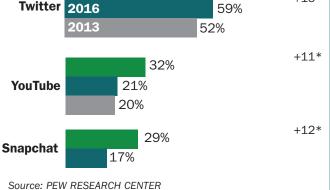
% or reconnders

Also of interest to marketers and communicators: there are "substantial increases among Americans who are older, less educated, and nonwhite," Pew says. These groups are powering the growth in social news gathering.

For the first time in the Pew surveys, more than half (55%) of Americans ages 50 or older said they get news on social. That's up 10% from 2016. Pew also says 74% of non-whites get news on social, up 10% from 2016. And social media use for news also rose among those with less than a bachelor's degree, up 9% from 60% in 2016. Conversely, those with at least a college degree used social slightly less in 2017 for news gathering than they did in 2016.



# TWITTER, YOUTUBE AND SNAPCHAT HAVE GROWN SINCE 2016 IN PORTION OF USERS WHO GET NEWS ON EACH SITE % of each social media site's users who get news there Sites where news usership increased since 2016 '16-'17 CHANGE 2017 74% +15\*



#### SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS FROM WHICH U.S. SOCIAL MEDIA USERS GET NEWS, 2013, 2016, 2017

% of responders								
	2013	2016	2017					
Twitter	52%	59%	74%					
reddit	62%	70%	68%					
Facebook	47%	66%	68%					
Tumblr	29%	31%	39%					
YouTube	20%	21%	32%					
Snapchat	-	17%	29%					
Instagram	13%	23%	27%					
LinkedIn	13%	19%	23%					
WhatsApp	-	-	23%					

Note: Ages 18+ among users of each platform Sources: Pew Research Center and eMarketer (9/2017)

#### **Determine What the Media Needs and Supply It**

She emailed the columnist. In the process of complimenting a recent article, she offered four sources as possible subjects for future profiles, "none of whom were affiliated with our company—I was not looking to push our firm, but instead establish the relationship," the PR pro says. "I found these folks on my own through my own network."

Several weeks later the columnist responded. She was grateful for the sources, and—this is the key part—she explained her process to the PR pro.

The two emailed back and forth a bit more and the columnist explained her needs for these types of stories. And then the columnist asked for the PR pro's help in sourcing a column, and our PR friend provided one of her executives and also a customer. Those were the lead quotes in the resulting column.

And she pulled that off without even getting on the phone.

#### **COLD CALLING WITH KNOWLEDGE**

**Example #2:** A different Inner Circle member was getting nowhere with *Business Insider*.

She studied the competitors who were showing up on the site, and noted the journalist who was authoring those articles. That information helped her zero in on the right person to contact for her pitches. Then serendipity struck: Because she had an upcoming trip to New York, she reached out cold to that writer and was able to land a meeting.

Surprised? This kind of meeting still happens when you do your research and show up as potentially valuable. "I noticed that she was doing multiple posts about the same people," this PR pro says. "When we met, I asked her how sources help her do her job and also asked about the multiple-post thing."

The writer explained how she and her colleagues approach these kinds of stories.

"That allowed us to follow up with her and pitch for that specific structure."

It also let the writer know the PR pro had done her homework and that she had read her columns.

Understanding this writer's needs allowed our PR friend to place one of her clients in *eight* separate *Business Insider* posts this past year.

The key is focusing on determining the media's needs, and only then reaching out to show you can meet those needs.

#### **RESPONDING TO MEDIA'S NEEDS**

In summary, here's what our two examples have in common with our Fortune 10 PR exec's recommendation:

Both focused on determining the media's needs, and only then finding something they had that met those needs.

One of our examples used email to pull this off. The other took the in-person meeting route. But both demonstrated potential value first.

True, there are many nuances and skills at play here:

- Knowing how to build targeted media lists.
- The subtle balance required to compliment a previous article without coming off like a suck-up.
- And the way to phrase a question around "How do you get your job done?" so you actually receive a helpful answer.

But there are plenty of PR pros who possess those skills and still are flailing around and failing. The key principle, what everything else grows from, is a sincere desire to "find out what the journalist needs and provide it to them."

**CONTACT:** Michael Smart is the media pitching coach PR pros seek when they want to boost media relations success. He advises everyone from Fortune 10 brands to nonprofits and sole proprietors. Learn more at: michaelsmartpr.com

For Subscribers: The PR News Essentials Page contains resources for media pitching, including videos by Michael Smart, as well as social media policies of brands like ESPN and Nordstrom. Find the resources you need at: http://bit.ly/2mUP2OR



### How a Vacuum Brand Used Sophisticated Data to Find Out About Its Potential Customers

[**Editor's Note:** Each week we highlight a slide from a presentation of interest to readers. This week's slide comes from Chris Albert, SVP, digital research and analytics, **Ketchum**, who spoke at *PR News*' Digital PR and Marketing Summit last month in Miami. [If you a great presentation to share, please contact: sarenstein@accessintel.com]



Chris Albert, SVP, Digital Research and Analytics, Ketchum

For decades marketers have wanted to know more about their customers. With the plethora of information available on social media, the possibilities to do this seem limitless. Everyone wants to know what people think of your brand. For Chris Albert, SVP, digital research and analytics, Ketchum, one of the keys is to understand people's attitudes beyond your brand. "Let's be real," he says, "if you're a huge fan, say, of **Coca-Cola**, you're not thinking about Coca-Cola

every minute of every day, or even every day. So what we want to understand is what else makes people tick."

The slide below details work Albert and his team did to learn about potential customers for a vacuum brand. Initially the client "rattled off nearly 60% of the population [as potential customers]...college kids, millennials...housewives," which was impractical in terms of creating messages.

Albert decided instead to dig deeper, "to see what these [potential customers] were really all about." The work included syndicated research and social media data, such as how people talk about vacuums on the internet. "You'd be shocked, but people follow vacuum brands" on social, he says.

The result, on the right side of the slide, is a cluster analysis that shows several groups of potential vacuum customers by common interests and where they reside. You can see some of the clusters are isolated, but most intersect. Through this research Albert learned there was a common mindset among the groups, even for those in the isolated clusters. The mindset, he says, is that "a tidy house equals a tidy mind."

The research allowed Albert's team to say, "Sure, a millennial mom is likely to be a vacuum cleaner buyer, but there are 10 different types of millennial moms. The reality is one [campaign] idea won't hit everybody, but if you look at the way these clusters overlap and intersect—where the urban millennial mom has interests in common with the outdoor sports enthusiast—you can develop a creative concept, or at least a brand platform, that will resonate with all these different people."

Albert's team located seven different major personas the vacuum brand should target.  $\blacksquare$ 

**CONTACT:** chris.albert@ketchum.com

# Get Granular with Persona Development Control National Personal Per

# Public Relations' Women Leaders Endure Its Largest Gender Pay Gap, Study Finds

Sadly, it's hardly news that the gender pay gap continues to be a characteristic of PR, an industry composed of two-thirds women.

Set to be unveiled Nov. 21 during the Global PR Summit in Toronto, a new study from **Women in PR Canada** and **Women in PR USA** shows that even when women make it to the top of PR's ranks, their pay is not on par with their male colleagues. In fact, the gap in the boardroom is the largest, the survey found. Among PR's highest earners, more than

double the number of men (28%) earn \$150,000 or more, compared to 12% of women. Overall, the average salary for men in PR is \$61,284, vs \$55,212 for women.

Again, not surprisingly, there are few women in PR's board-rooms compared to men. 78% of CEOs in the top 30 PR agencies globally are men; they also occupy 62% of board-room seats.

Global agency leaders are split better, with 56% male, 44% female. ■

#### PR's Gender Pay Gap - Key Survey Findings

- \* 78% of CEOs in the top 30 Global PR agencies are men, in an industry that's 2/3 women
- \* Men occupy 62% of the seats at the PR boardroom table
- \* Global agency leadership teams have a more balanced split 56% male 44% female
- \* The average salary for men in PR is **US\$61,284** (£46,156) compared to women **US\$55,212** (£41,584) revealing a gender pay gap of \$6,072 (£4,572)
- \* There is a staggering gender pay gap at the top in the PR industry, among the highest earners. 28% of men earn more than US\$150,000 compared to 12% of women.
- \* 38% of men compared to 18% of women (more than double) are working on business in the IT sector
- \* 17% of men are "very confident" asking for a promotion/pay rise compared to 11% of women
- \* 26% of women are "not very confident" asking for a promotion/pay rise, compared to 13% men
- \* 28% of men think they will "definitely" reach the top of the career ladder, but only 18% women believe this
- \* 36% of women think the PR industry is ageist, compared with 25% men
- **\*81**% of respondents thought they would be just as efficient if they could choose the hours they work
- \* More than half (56%) said they didn't need a fixed office workspace to be efficient
- \* 68% believe they have a good work-life balance



Source: The Organization of Canadian Women in Public Relations and the Organization of American Women in Public Relations (November 2017)

#### SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDEBOOK

In PR News' Social Media Guidebook, the challenges of planning, executing and measuring successful social media campaigns are met with eight chapters on everything from Snapchat to live streaming to blogging.

#### **Chapters include:**

- Measuring and Communicating Social Success
- Facebook
- Snapchat
- Live Streaming



Order your digital or print copy today: prnewsonline.com/social-media-guidebook



#### **Survey of Diabetes Community Influencers Sheds Light on How Brands Can Build Stronger Ties**

We've seen surveys of influencers about pay, working conditions, their lifestyle, the types of platforms they like to use, whether or not they use contracts, how often they post—but a new study we just saw is a bit different. It seeks to understand how brands can build better relationships with influencers.

Tonic Life Communications. a Philadelphia-based PR firm specializing in healthcare, conducted a survey of influencers in the diabetes community during the summer. Although Tonic no longer works with brands in the diabetes field, it had relationships with diabetes influencers from previous campaigns.



Kelly Kutchinsky, EVP. Global Insights & Innovation, Tonic Life

Tonic restricted survey participants to influencers in the diabetes community with significant followings, mostly on Twitter, the diabetes community's platform of choice. In fact, diabetes was chosen in part due to the community's long Communications history of social me-

dia activity compared with other disease communities, says Kelly Kutchinsky, EVP, global insights & innovation at Tonic Life. Most of those who responded to the survey are not paid influencers, she adds.

We removed findings specific to the diabetes community from the graphic you see here. We were struck, though, by how many takeaways can be applied to brands working with influencers in a variety of industries. The main takeaways include: 1. If a brand doesn't pay an influencer, it should not treat the influencer like a member of its sales force, 2. Keep influencers abreast of brand news as early as possible. 3. Working with influencers is a two-way street. Avoid interacting with influencers only when you need something from them. 4. Should a brand seek an influencer's opinion, provide evidence that the influencer's thoughts were integrated into some aspect of the company's operations. ■

#### **Major Findings From The Diabetes Online Community**

#### What are the most valuable benefits of partnering with industry?

91% Ability to share opinions to inform business decisions

82% Access to leadership/decision makers

82% Making connections with others in the community

#### What must industry better understand about working with patient advocates?

- We are not your sales force
- Value dissent and other opinions even if they conflict with your
- Get us involved earlier...we have experiences that should be taken seriously and listened to
- Many of us have "day jobs"... consider this when planning events

#### **Major Concerns**

"I am concerned about the blurred lines and gray areas that exist when advocates are enticed by free travel without a clear objective and followup to show that objectives were met and advocacy-driven changes occurred. I've seen a lot of talk and no action when companies have brought advocates together claiming to be interested in their thoughts about pricing and then raised prices anyway."

"We'd like to be involved much earlier in the process...to collaborate together, to think of solutions and ideas together and to overcome challenges together."

"I want industry to be very realistic with us about things they can and cannot do. It doesn't feel good when we come up with a bunch of collective ideas but don't see any progress."

#### **Best Practices**

- 1. Involve advocates and influencers early in campaign planning, offer access to decision-makers and leaders to create collaborative out-
- 2. Help elevate advocates' causes via company/brand social channels. enlist them as partners to share ideas and information...both yours and theirs.
- 3. Don't just engage when a company or brand campaign is underway; continue to keep advocates aware of charitable causes supported, underserved populations your company seeks to reach and services provided to people in need.

Source: Tonic Life Communications (October 2017)

# ACLU Tops List of Most-Engaged Brands on Twitter During the Third Quarter 2017

We're not encouraging actual wagering, of course, but this might be a terrific bar bet question: Of all the U.S. B2B, B2C and nonprofit brands and organizations, which one had the most consumer engagement on **Twitter** during the third quarter of this year?

You can find the answer to that question by looking at the data below, which **Shareablee** provided exclusively to *PR News*. Now, if any of your bar mates answered with a B2B brand, they're out a few...er, whatever your friendly wager involves, right away. The best performers among B2B brands, such as **Hootsuite** (144K actions during the quarter on Twitter), **Amazon Web Services** (113K consumer engagement) and **Lockheed Martin** (98K actions), didn't crack the top 20, says Herman Chen of Shareablee. As you can see, with number 20 **ColourPop**, the cosmetics company, at 347,000 consumer actions, or engagements, during the quarter, B2B brands were far behind.

Turning to the top 20 most-engaged brands, **ACLU Nationwide** took the top spot. Not only did ACLU generate 3.9

million consumer actions, it also had the highest growth in actions (2317%) year over year, says Shareablee's Ron Lee In all, six nonprofit brands made the top 20 list.

Despite a 10% drop in content posted compared to Q3 2017, **Netflix** (US) took the No. 2 spot with nearly 2 million consumer actions. This represented growth of 272%. Netflix (US) also had the second-highest consumer actions per tweet in the list at 6,957 actions per tweet. **Nintendo** at No. 3 with 1.5 million actions touts 141% growth in the number of consumer actions year over year.

**PlayStation** was No. 3 during Q3 2016, but fell to 4th this quarter. Despite posting 3% fewer tweets than Q3 2016, as you can see, PlayStation also has the largest number of followers in our top 20 list.

**PETA** takes fifth, boasting 27% growth in consumer actions vs. the year-ago quarter. **Big Baller Brand**, an American manufacturer that lacked a Twitter account in 2016, was No. 8. Despite having the smallest audience of the top 20, it had the best actions per tweet at 8,597. ■

Sh	areablee				SOCIAL SCO	RECARD	S	hareablee				SOCIAL SCO	RECARD
MOST ENGAGED BRANDS ON TWITTER – Q3 2017						MOST ENGAGED BRANDS ON TWITTER – Q3 2017					017		
Based on Total Actions (reactions, comments, shares, retweets and likes) Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareablee.				iources: 🤟	Based on Total Actions (reactions, comments, shares, retweets and likes) Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareablee.					Sources: 💆			
Rank	Brand		Total Actions	Total Content	Actions per Content	Total Audience	Rank	Brand		Total Actions	Total Content	Actions per Content	Total Audience
1	ACLU STREET STREET	ACLU Nationwide	3,858,250	948	4,070	1,323,621	11	HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN.	Human Rights Campaign	595,782	1,930	309	808,442
2	NETFLIX	Netflix	1,857,448	267	6,957	3,693,672	12	MERCY FOR ANIMALS	Mercy For Animals	587,411	4,352	135	306,024
3	(Nintendo)	Nintendo	1,492,154	404	3,693	8,014,040	13	Kyw COSMETICS	Kylie Cosmetics	485,308	188	2,581	590,254
4		PlayStation	1,248,859	744	1,679	14,794,602	14	Denny's	Denny's	474,085	84	5,644	412,103
5	PETA	PETA	1,181,578	1,716	689	1,042,860	15	Arbys	Arby's	432,700	64	6,761	766,534
6		Wikileaks	1,071,062	318	3,368	5,037,343	16	T O M M Y 🝱 HILFIGER	Tommy Hilfiger	414,121	236	1,755	1,419,881
7	<b>PARTIT</b>	Pokémon	820,725	242	3,391	4,089,565	17	WWATAGUECER	Whataburger	412,782	77	5,361	1,134,563
8	NG BALLER BRAND	Big Baller Brand	756,512	88	8,597	145,393	18	GUESS	GUESS	373,577	231	1,617	394,912
9	R	Rockstar Games	747,187	106	7,049	8,818,301	19	UNHCR To UN Finlages Agency	UNHCR	367,989	2,091	176	2,226,649
10	<b>☼</b> XBOX	Xbox	670,857	388	1,729	12,298,879	20	COLOURPOP	ColourPop	347,269	478	727	700,144



**1. FX-IT:** There are many things to say about the #MeToo phenomenon, now entering its fifth week. We'll confine ourselves to some PR aspects. The biggest new Hollywood name in the story as we write, of course, is comedian, television series creator, actor and filmmaker Louis C.K. Unlike actor and director **Kevin Spacey**, whose initial statement was inconclusive and roundly criticized (PRN, Oct. 31), C.K. quickly confirmed he'd sexually harassed women, issuing an 11-paragraph, 493-word statement, nearly all of it written in first-person format. Five female comedy writers and performers, four on the record, accused C.K. in a Nov. 9 article in the NY Times of masturbating in front of them or asking if he could. Issued the following day, C.K.'s statement of confirmation is far superior to Spacey's somewhat nonchalant initial response [Note to Subscribers: The statements of Spacey and C.K. can be found at the PR News Essentials page: http://bit. ly/2mUP2OR] C.K.'s second sentence sets the tone for the rest of his statement as he addresses the allegations in the NY Times. He writes clearly and simply: "These stories are true." The PR lesson is obvious: Admit wrongdoing quickly and directly. While it is true C.K. acted authentically only after he was accused in the NY Times' story, from a PR perspective you could argue he took the correct course of action, and did so swiftly, after listening to the social conversation. Of course, if you said allegations have followed C.K. for several years, so he really didn't need too much time to assess the situation, you'd be correct. Another PR lesson: When addressing something you did, write in a personal manner and avoid corporate-speak. C.K. writes, "I have been remorseful of :

my actions...There is nothing about this that I forgive myself for...The hardest regret to live with is what you've done to hurt someone else. And I can hardly wrap my head around the scope of hurt I brought on them." C.K. correctly offers no excuses and blames no one but himself. As you might recall, Spacey wrote that if he behaved badly 30 years ago it was due to too much alcohol. C.K. hurts his case, though, when he writes several times that the women he mistreated "admired" him. This ego-boosting was a mistake. Where C.K. commits a major miscue, though, is that he fails to use the words "I'm sorry" or "I apologize." He should have. That might have prevented some of what happened next: **FX**, which carries three of his hit series, the critically acclaimed Louie and Baskets as well as Better Things, ended its associations with C.K. Earlier, before he released his statement. FX said C.K.'s situation was "under review." FX parent 21st Century Fox remains embroiled in scandal over its handling of former Fox News star Bill O'Reilly, who lost his job in April due to a series of sexual scandals. Roughly one year earlier, Fox News founder Roger Ailes was forced to resign owing to an accusation of sexual misconduct. Back to C.K., HBO, Netflix and C.K.'s PR pro, Lewis Kay, dropped him.



**2.** Growth: The M&A and exit planning firm Tobin Group added Scott **Leff** as partner and rebranded itself TobinLeff, LLC. We asked Leff about tips for PR firm owners regarding exit planning and monetization stakes. "PR firm owners need to fo-

cus on enhancing their value drivers," Leff says, "qualitative and quantitative characteristics that can significantly impact the money you'll receive in a sale." These include profit margin, industry expertise and a diverse business base, or not relying on a few large clients. One issue that often depresses value is de-

pendency on the owner, Leff adds. "The less dependent the agency is on [the owner] for developing business and servicing clients, the better the sales terms."

3. News Bits: Chipotle shares fell badly in early trading Nov. 13 on weekend reports that Supergirl actor Jeremy Jordan ate at a Chipotle and later was hospitalized. "I almost died," the actor said on Instagram. Chipotle communicator Chris Arnold told CNBC the brand found no other cases of sickness at the outlet where Jordan dined. Shares recovered later in the day to close down \$1.95 at \$277.50. – At our press time Volvo joined Keurig and realtor.com in pulling ads from Sean Hannity's Fox News show. While not saying so directly, the ad pulls are related to Hannity's reporting about sexual misconduct allegations against Senate hopeful Judge Roy Moore of AL. A fifth woman accused Moore of sexual misconduct Nov. 13. Consumers still judge brands "by the company they keep," Michael Priem, CEO, at ad agency Modern Impact, tells us in an interview. "Having a crystal clear understanding of your brand values...makes it much easier to reach media-related decisions and know when it's time to part ways with programs, networks or audiences."

4. People: Jaguar Land Rover named Felix Bräutigam chief marketing officer. He'll report to CEO Ralf Speth. He replaces retiring Gerd Mäuser. Bräutigam joins from Porsche AG, where he was VP, Europe. – Karen Reynolds was named VP, corporate communications, at Centrify. She was chief communications officer at Good Technology.

