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INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

BY JEREMY BOYLEN, MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER,
LEGAL SERVICES COMMISSION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

What *The Martian* Teaches Us About Employee Communications in a Crisis

With last evening's Academy Awards dominating the conversation, we thought it would be instructive to see what the heralded film *The Martian* can teach us about communications. In the film, things go badly quickly for **NASA** and the agency adds to the crisis by making some communications errors.

Few of us will confront the kind of dilemma NASA faced in the movie, yet many of us may need to manage staff communications when a crisis hits our organization. As a reader of

PR News, you'll recognize NASA's mistakes below—but what about your bosses? Do they get it?

The Martian presents an opportunity to start a discussion with managers about how to communicate with staff in a crisis. In truth, NASA's managers might have been in a no-win situation. Perhaps I am being unfair to them. Still, the film



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MEASUREMENT

BY KATIE PAINE, CEO, PAINE PUBLISHING

Why AVEs Persist as a Metric — and What To Do About It

Of late, it seems that there are more debates happening around Advertising Value Equivalents (AVE) (aka Assessment by Voodoo Economics) than about the 2016 election. The latest kerfuffle started when a monitoring company hired Robert Wynne, a California PR person, to write a white paper promoting its services and the use of AVEs (*PRN*, Feb 8).

The report selectively used data and misquoted research to justify the use of a metric that the profession rejected in 2009. I'll forego mentioning the name of the company because clearly the point of the white paper was to get it more publicity, which it doesn't deserve.

Not surprisingly, the white paper has raised the ire of virtually everyone involved in setting standards and best practices for measurement of PR. In what for the normally polite Brits was very strong language, the **PRCA**, **ICCO** and **AMEC** condemned the report. Many of my colleagues have urged me and others to simply stop even discussing AVE.

Like certain political candidates, AVEs simply haven't gone away no matter how much some of us would like them to. One reason is that traditional monitoring companies don't



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Data Shows Paid Posts Should Be Part of Your Multi-Step Social Media Effort

Those who think social media is an easy way to attract a crowd likely have never attempted to mount a digital PR campaign. As PR pros know, such efforts require several steps, including finding your audience members and deciding the platform or platforms where they live, if indeed they are social media consumers.

Then you need to determine the best time or times to speak to them on their platform of choice. You might also need to find and recruit influencers in your sector whom your audience members are following.

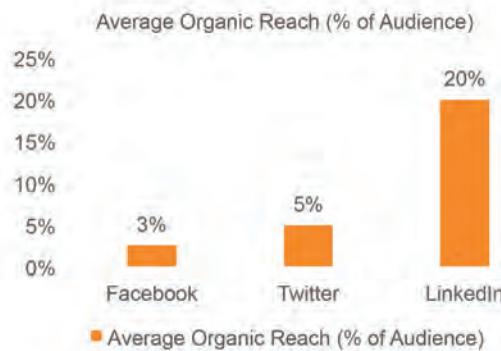
Next you need to craft an editorial plan for

your social media effort and find the corporate bandwidth to feed the beast with timely and compelling content. In addition you should monitor what is being said about your brand and, if the circumstances warrant it, respond. Monitoring the social media tendencies of your competitors also is recommended (*PRN*, Feb 22).

And after all that, you still need to boost your content, as these graphics (below) from Michael Brito, head of social marketing, **W20 Group**, demonstrate. ■

Contact: mbrito@w2ogroup.com

The challenge is that organic reach is dying, if not dead



*Sources: *Salesforce & SocialTimes*

Average Organic Results
(Assuming 100K fans)



5 posts/week: 13K impressions, 39 clicks



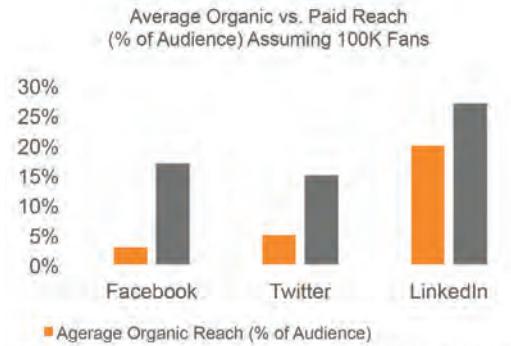
21 tweets/week: 105K impressions, 10 clicks



5 posts/week: 100K impressions, 500 clicks

Average Organic CTRs: Facebook (0.3%), LinkedIn (0.5%), Twitter (0.1%)

And paid is now a critical success factor to reach the right audiences at the right time



*Sources: *Salesforce & SocialTimes*

Average Organic vs. Paid Results
(Assuming 100K fans, \$100 Promotion/Post)



5 posts/week: 13K impressions, 39 clicks



21 tweets/week: 105K impressions, 10 clicks



5 posts/week: 100K impressions, 500 clicks
5 posts/week: 135K impressions, 1,350 clicks

Average Organic CTRs: Facebook (0.3%), LinkedIn (0.5%), Twitter (0.1%)
Average Paid CTRs: Facebook (2%), LinkedIn (1%), Twitter (2%)

Honesty and Transparency Are Critical in a Crisis

can serve as a launchpad for a discussion about employee communications during a crisis.

WE HAVE A PROBLEM

A massive storm forces NASA's crew to hastily abandon Mars, leaving behind botanist Mark Watney (played by Matt Damon), who is thought to have died. Problem is, NASA later discovers Watney is alive, but decides not to tell the remaining crew members traveling back to Earth.

NASA Director Teddy Sanders (Jeff Daniels): "If Watney is really alive, we don't want the Ares 3 crew to know. They have another 10 months on their trip home. Space travel is dangerous. They need to be alert and undistracted."

Alone on Mars, Watney is furious when informed that the crew has not been told of his survival.

Watney: "They don't know I'm alive? What the f*** is wrong with you?"

Flight Director Mitch Henderson (Sean Bean): "The longer we wait, the worse it's gonna get...we need to tell the crew."

NASA'S MISTAKE

In the film, NASA withholds the truth from staff until it feels it has a complete plan of action to cope with the crisis it faces. This is understandable, but counterproductive. Astronauts and employees perceive withholding of information as a lack of transparency, honesty and goodwill on an employer's part. At best they feel left out, at worst deceived.

Flight Director Henderson: "I'm the one who decides what's best for the crew. They deserve to know."

NASA Director Sanders: "Once there's a real rescue plan, we'll tell them...."

A dead fish smells worse at week's end than at the start. If your brand is in a crisis, don't delay telling staff until you have a complete solution. Avoid going off half-cocked, but don't make the common mistake of unduly keeping staff in the dark up to the point where they are first told about a major problem.

Hang a lantern on your problem before someone else does. If someone else exposes the crisis, you lose control of the message—and staff feel disenfranchised.

Employees aren't in space. When there's a crisis, staff get wind of it and word gets out. If no message is sent to staff, it

leaves an information vacuum that is quickly filled with rumor and misinformation. If staff communications are poorly executed, it can be a bit like sending a signal into deep space: The message can be lost or become distorted.

Timing Counts: If possible, don't spring all the bad news on staff at the 11th hour. Employees often need some warning that an announcement is to be made about a major issue that could change their professional lives. A sudden and unexpected cascade of bad news can hit employees hard. If possible, help them prepare by giving a heads-up about a significant announcement.

Flight Director Henderson: "Mark Watney is still alive...We found out two months ago and...decided not to tell you."

Crew: "Two months? Oh my God."

Seven Words to Work By: The next seven words are important. Honesty and transparency build trust and engagement. This always is true, but especially in a crisis. There's a reason I put honesty ahead of transparency. As we see in the film, NASA can't be completely transparent since not every detail should be shared.

If you can't give staff all the information because some aspects are still being worked out, say so and explain why. If possible, outline when those details will be made available. Even if managers can't communicate hard facts or updated information, regular contact with staff will demonstrate the reassuring values of goodwill, honesty and transparency.

Don't just communicate the management decision—communicate the reasons for it too. A major announcement sometimes follows weeks of discussion at management level, but staff aren't aware of that. Be sure to provide clear and comprehensive reasons for a large change that responds to a crisis. Be clear, factual, consistent and honest when explaining the reasons for company decisions. Outline the process that's underway to respond to the problem, explain what happens next and be clear about what you need employees to do.

When it comes to staff communications in a crisis, it's better to regret what you did rather than what you didn't do. It is far better to overcommunicate than to undercommunicate. Repeat your decisions and the reasons for them. ■

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Aligning PR Metrics With Your Business Goals

make money off of **Google Analytics** and the other new, better tools and metrics that have come along to replace them.

But the even more insidious reason is the old-line culture of CMOs is steeped in an antiquated paid-media-is-all-that-matters culture. These dinosaurs simply can't get their heads around the fact that PR isn't free publicity and can't be measured by the column inch in a digital age. The good news is that the marketing and PR climate is changing, and just as with actual dinosaurs, in this new environment it will be impossible for them to survive. Here's why:

1. Big data is demonstrating the real return of PR programs: In boardrooms across the country, data scientists and marketing analysts are being brought into the PR measurement conversation. By integrating their skills and knowledge with readily available earned media data, they are showing business impact.

As far back as 2000, **Procter & Gamble**, **Miller Brewing Company** and **AT&T** conducted research that isolated the contribution of PR to the marketing mix. Today, organizations of all sizes are taking similar approaches, defining exactly where PR fits in the path to purchase, and showing accurate and meaningful returns.

One example is the **Atlantic City Alliance**, the marketing arm of Atlantic City, N.J. It replaced AVEs with a custom media quality index that assessed media coverage based on the extent to which it contained elements that research showed would persuade people to visit the city. The quality score assessed the presence of those messages as well as desirable visuals and other persuasive elements. In the end, data analysis showed that the media index was as effective, sometimes more so, in predicting potential visitors who would go to Atlantic City than paid advertising.

2. Big numbers get bigger laughs: CMOs are increasingly skeptical of the ridiculously large impression and AVE numbers routinely reported by organizations like the one that paid for Wynne's white paper. Once I was called in to validate the claims of a PR agency that informed its CMO that it had generated 3.4 trillion impressions for the brand. On further examination we discovered that it had attributed 850 million impressions for every **Facebook** post—and then used a multiplier of 3, so each and every Facebook post was credited with 2.4 million impressions...despite the fact that even Facebook admits that fewer than 3% of its content is actually read by anyone.

Another CMO asked me to comment on an agency's report that claimed:

Potential Viewership: 26.6 trillion—a number roughly 3.5 times the population of Earth, never mind that a large percentage of Earth's inhabitants lack electricity or TVs and even fewer cared about the event.

Unique Visitors: 7.9 billion—since there are only 7.4 billion people on the planet, they can't possibly be unique.

Publicity Value: \$72.8 million—A meaningless number since the organization wouldn't have paid for it and worthless since the event generated almost zero economic benefit to the city that hosted it.

For years, PR could get away with bunk like this because it was seen as free advertising. But now that data scientists are taking their place at the table and making data-informed decisions on the overall marketing mix, bogus numbers and the people presenting them are getting tossed out of the boardroom.

3. They don't find it so hot, if you ain't got the Do Re Mi: Increasingly organizations are using **Conversions** from web analytics platforms like Google Analytics or **Omniture** as a standard metric for promotional activities. It's a calculation that marketers and finance folks can agree on because it tells them that a person has taken a desired action that translates into a bottom line value. Correlating PR activity to conversions is an easy way to demonstrate PR's contribution to potential revenue. The best you can do with AVEs is show how much you would have had to spend to get the exposure, disregarding that the actual values are widely assumed to be inflated. Given a choice, most businesspeople would prefer tracking revenue generation and cost effectiveness over hypotheticals.

4. There are better alternatives: What the Barcelona Principles encourage, and what forward-thinking companies are doing, is aligning PR metrics with business goals. I have yet to hear a CEO tell me that his or her business goal is to get lots of column inches—which is all that AVE is measuring—especially in a digital era when space is essentially unlimited. Most organizations define business goals for PR along the lines of “increased awareness, consideration or preference” or “generating qualified leads” or “improving our reputation.”

With the arrival of less-expensive (or even free) tools for survey research, like **Survata** and **Survey Monkey**, it's much easier to set up A/B and Pre/Post tests of PR's influence on messaging and perceptions.

Conversions make it easier to track leads and impact, and CRM systems make it possible to follow those leads that PR generates all the way through to a sale. So today, when management insists PR put dollar figures into its metrics, you can focus on cost efficiency instead of AVE.

Numerous PR organizations are demonstrating that their programs have a lower cost-per-message-communicated (CPMC) than other promotional efforts. I've written about calculating this.

We're probably stuck with AVEs for a while longer, but when the smartest people in the room are relying on good data, the fans of voodoo economics soon will be forced into early retirement. ■

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Ditching PPT: How to Give Great PR Presentations Without Slides

We've all seen one too many text-heavy, boring slide presentations, right? Death by PowerPoint bullets.

Most of us in PR have become accustomed to using slides for most or all of our presentations. But do we now rely on slides too much?

Next time you have to give a presentation, do something different: Create an engaging, memorable, powerful presentation without using a slide deck.

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

Just like when you're crafting a press release, stop and think about your big idea. A great talk needs a unifying theme or central message. Before you write a single word, ask yourself these questions:

1. In 20 words or fewer, what do I want the audience to know at the end?

2. Why should the audience care about what I'm saying? What's in it for them?

3. What do I want the audience to do? Do I want to inspire it to take action? To buy something? To give something? To join a cause? To better understand our mission or product? What is my call to action?

Jeff Bezos of **Amazon** is known for saying, "Think complex, speak simple." It's great advice. Know what your point is in advance, and keep it simple and focused. No meandering. Think first. Write second. Then practice, practice, practice.

Remember: Having a few memorable key points or clear, simple messages is better than trying to squeeze everything you know into one presentation. Don't try to say too much.

OUTLINE BEFORE WRITING

Make your presentation logical and easy to follow. Having a unifying theme or message that flows throughout your presentation makes it easier for the listener to follow. There are a variety of ways to do an outline; figure out which one works best for you. I like to do my outline using numbered cue cards so I can actually move the main points and sections around

as I continue to develop and practice my presentation.



COUNT IT OUT

A handy tip I learned long ago during my early years in PR and communications is to use numbers to organize your message. Here are some examples of how to package your message in an easy-to-understand way using numbers:

- ▶ "The three main things I want you to take away from this presentation are..."
- ▶ "Our marketing plan is going to have four phases...the first phase will focus on..."
- ▶ "We've got two main target audiences. Our plan for the first target audience will consist of..."
- ▶ "There are six steps to learning the new software."
- ▶ "If you remember anything about our new product, it should be these three key benefits..."
- ▶ "What you need to know about how to make a great event includes five planning steps."
- ▶ "Our new packaging is different in three main ways."

To reinforce your message, don't be afraid to repeat yourself and to summarize each section. For example, you might say something along the lines of, "So, what are our three main objectives? They are X, Y and Z."

Make It Like a Story: Stories create human connections. Quotes can also create attention and a central theme. And personal stories—stories about you, something you experienced, someone you know—can be particularly powerful. Be human and relatable. Tell the audience something about yourself to break the ice.

Think low tech. Great presentations are about human-to-human interaction. Make eye contact. One of the biggest drawbacks to a slide presentation is that it tends to make your presentation less human. You may have noticed that speakers using a slide presentation tend to turn to face their slides, sometimes

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Tips to Avoid ‘Winging It’ During a Speech

even turning their backs to the audience completely. And people tend to focus their attention on the slides, which typically have way too much text, instead of listening to the speaker.

REHEARSE AND RECORD YOURSELF

We've all heard someone say they do better when they just "wing it." And some presenters may appear to be so natural that they seem like they are just "winging it," or speaking off the top of their head. But even renowned speakers are known to spend hours and hours practicing and rehearsing.

Rehearse. Know your first minute thoroughly. Speak out loud. Don't just say it in your head. It's better to practice in front of people. Don't forget to make eye contact.

Record yourself giving the presentation. With today's smartphones, there's almost no excuse to avoid doing this. Then watch or listen to yourself. Rehearsing can make the difference between a good presentation and a great one.

What if you lose your train of thought or your place while giving a presentation? There are a few options for recovering. Having a plan in advance can help you to recover as soon as possible. You can:

- ▶ **Buy some time, take a few steps, stop and take a breath.** Then look at your audience and begin again.
- ▶ **Ask for help.** If you have no idea where you were in your presentation, you can ask your audience, "So, where was I?" The people listening to your presentation are human too and they have likely been in your shoes. They feel your pain—let them help you out.
- ▶ **Be honest.** You can say that you have lost your place and then take a moment to look at your outline or cue cards to get back on track. If you feel comfortable using humor, you can make a comment to break the tension. ("Oh man, I appear to be having a brain hiccup—give me a moment to reboot, please.") It may seem like eternity to you but not to the audience. Keep your cool.

It also is important to plan for objections and questions and to have your answers prepared in advance. It's also OK to admit to an audience that you don't know something.

USE PROPS AND PLAN TO MOVE

Sure, it might seem old school to suggest bringing visual aids. But who can forget Steve Jobs standing on stage and simply holding up the MacBook Air? What can you bring, show or demo to engage the audience?

Remember your college professor who would actually walk around the lecture hall or classroom? Remember how it kept your attention focused on the class and on the professor when he or she did that? Case closed. By getting out from behind the podium or by moving around the room, you are keeping the attention on you and your presentation and away from email, Twitter and what's for lunch.

THINK DIALOGUE

PR pros know the days of one-way communication are a thing of the past. Think of your presentation the way you think about media: as a dialogue. You will get more out of the presentation and your audience will, too.

We realize this is the age of easy distractions: text messages, emails, tweets, Facebook, Instagram and news updates have made keeping an audience focused on you and your talk more difficult.

Combat the digital distractions by asking questions. Do a show of hands. Have audience members write down something. Consider giving a pre- or post-presentation test. It doesn't have to be complicated, but by engaging people in learning and in seeking answers to the questions in your test, you will automatically bring attention to your content.

WRAPPING IT UP

You've probably heard the statistic about people's worst fears. The second biggest fear for most people is death... and the biggest is public speaking.

But by connecting on a human level, being prepared with a central theme, planning your presentation, practicing multiple times and incorporating audience participation, you'll be able to engage your audience with your words and ideas instead of with bullets in a slide presentation. ■

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WHY YOU SHOULD HAVE HANDOUTS

- ▶ Many people actually will read them.
- ▶ Handouts are a way to reinforce your key points, facts and figures.
- ▶ Handouts help people to know how to get in touch with you.
- ▶ A handout is where you should put your charts, graphs, data, etc.

Distribute your handouts at the end—not at the beginning—of your presentation. You don't want people reading your handouts instead of listening to you.

RESOURCES

- ▶ Presentation Zen: Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Delivery by Garr Reynolds (New Riders)
- ▶ Toastmasters International – toastmasters.org
- ▶ “32 Public Speaking Tips From Some Of The World’s Best Speakers and Coaches” – speakerslife.com/public-speaking-tips/

How to Make Your Team's Brainstorming More Effective

PR and communication agencies are known for brainstorming with their employees to spark creative concepts—ideas that take shape as clever campaigns, strategies, taglines or other essential messages.

Yet some studies indicate a lot of group brainstorming may be unproductive. Brainstorming involves culling ideas from group members who advocate as many original thoughts and unique solutions as they can in a short time. Invented in 1929 by advertising agency leader Alex Osborn, the traditional method of brainstorming can unleash a torrent of creative concepts.

On the other hand, brainstorming also can result in group members talking simultaneously and fixating on a small set of ideas rather than searching for more solutions.

While PR agencies continue to engage in traditional brainstorming, researchers Nicholas Kohn and Steven Smith have written that “brainstorming is inefficient.” Fixation blocks creativity, they write in *Applied Cognitive Psychology*.

Kohn, lead researcher of the 2010 study *Collaborative Fixation: Effects of Others' Ideas on Brainstorming*, says, “Fixation to other people’s ideas can occur unconsciously and lead to suggesting ideas that mimic your brainstorming partners.” The inclination to copycat others’ concepts quickly suppresses out-of-the-box thinking.

Another drawback is groupthink, a phenomenon where individuals feel pressured to conform to the group’s consensus. They remain silent about their views, fearing these ideas may rub people the wrong way.

Irving Janis, a retired **Yale University** research psychologist and a professor emeritus at the **University of California**, notes in *Victims of Groupthink* that group members suppress personal doubts about their views to avoid being judged. In addition, they’ll often minimize to themselves the importance of their views.

But even as critics decry brainstorming, citing how exposure to others’ ideas can limit one’s creativity, Paul Paulus, a psychology professor at the **University of Texas at Arlington**, says “There’s no substitute for brainstorming if it’s done creatively.”

In the book *Group Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration*, Paulus notes, “One obvious way for groups to overcome the tendency toward uniformity is to gather a group of members with diverse expertise and backgrounds, and to ensure they share their diverse perspectives.”

He also explains that group creativity can exceed individual brainstorming both in the quantity and quality of ideas produced.

Instead of calling on group members to freewheel countless big ideas—the first that come to mind—some researchers now recommend brainstorming alone, or combining group brainstorming with solo brainstorming.

Ryan Townend, CEO of **William Joseph Communications**, of Calgary, Alberta, urges employees to brainstorm alone and as a group. In addition, every department at the agency is involved in brainstorming sessions: copywriters, artists, sales executives, web developers and finance personnel.

Townend starts by hosting a discovery meeting where he talks about successful strategies. He also describes the problem that a brand is facing. Then the group examines the brand’s market research to combine scientific findings with the art of brainstorming.

Next, brainstorming ensues. But Townend doesn’t stop the process after an initial brainstorming. He urges group members to leave the session and think alone rather than trying to present all their ideas in one meeting. “All ideas need time to nurture,” he says. “You could be taking a shower or cutting the grass and go, ‘Ah-ha. That will work perfectly.’”

Townend also says “brainstorming must have a direction and a goal.” This advice coincides with what experts say: Never brainstorm without a clear idea of what you want out of the process.

A term Townend refers to when describing his technique is elastic stretching. Group members return to the table after brainstorming alone and present a creative concept that they’ll push to extremes. Later, they’ll allow the concept to relax, like elastic, until it fits within the brand’s comfort zone.

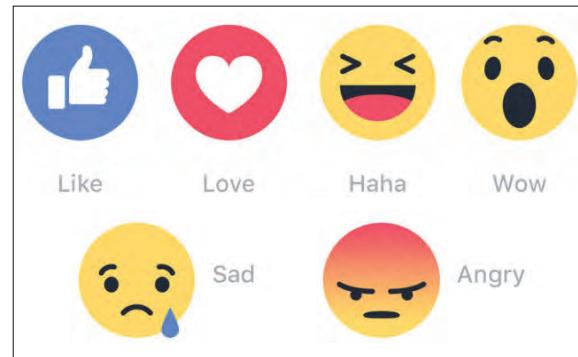
Brainstorming alone is also effective, and many experts recommend the Nominal Group Technique:

- The group leader describes a problem. But before any discussion takes place, members silently jot down possible solutions.
- Then members present their ideas to the group until every idea has been clarified by its owner and noted on a flip chart.
- Group members are allowed to ask questions to be sure they understand the idea, and new alternatives often surface as a result.
- Finally, group members silently evaluate the ideas one by one, recording their first, second, third and remaining preferences.
- The ‘winning’ idea is the one that earns the popular vote or ranking.

The advantage of the Nominal Group Technique is that it permits the group to meet formally but also encourages independent thinking. ■



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1. Forget Transparency, Start With Honesty:

We spoke with a PR pro recently who counsels companies mired in reputation crises. The pro is called in when, among other things, companies have cooked their books. "This happens a lot more than you'd think," the pro says. But is there proof? Maybe. Buried in a sidebar without a byline or headline on a recent "Heard on the Street" page of *The Wall Street Journal* is a story that seems to deserve more coverage. It reports about an article in the current edition of *Financial Analysts Journal* that notes four business-school professors surveyed nearly 400 CFOs about earnings quality. As the *Journal's* unlisted writer (it was **Charley Grant**) notes, the findings were "stark." The professors' survey says CFOs believe 20% of public companies "intentionally misrepresent" earnings, although they use techniques allowed under generally accepted accounting principles. While the companies usually overstate earnings, the CFOs believe about one-third of misrepresenting companies revise earnings downward. The magnitude of misrepresentation could be as high as 10 cents on the dollar, the survey says. "That could easily be the difference between meeting analyst expectations and missing them—between reporting growth or decline," Grant writes, adding, "this should give investors pause." It should give communicators pause, too.

2. Saintly PR: Here's something journalists don't see often: a prompt and full press release from a brand that's lost a court case. Brands that lose cases generally issue a short statement or nothing at all. But recently Catholic broadcaster **EWTN** issued a

release with the subject line and headline "Court Rules Against EWTN in HHS Mandate Case." The background: The 11th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in Atlanta ruled 2-1 against EWTN's suit, which it filed against a provision in the federal government's Affordable Care Act requiring employer-sponsored health plans to provide coverage for contraception, sterilizations and abortion-inducing drugs. As expected, the release includes statements from EWTN's chairman/CEO and one from its lead counsel indicating how upset they are about the ruling. Yet there's also a solid history of the complicated, 3-year-old case and—talk about being balanced—there's even a quote from the court's majority opinion. In short, just about everything a reporter needs to begin crafting a balanced story. Indeed, the ruling received a good bit of press coverage. More proof that reports of the well-crafted press release's demise may be premature.

3. Platform Prater: Communicators and marketers have been waiting anxiously since there were reports of **Facebook** working on a way to give its 1 billion users a fuller array of emotions beyond Like to react to posts (*PRN*, 9/21/2015). The wait is over. Facebook Wednesday launched Reactions globally in the form of emoji representing Love, Haha, Wow, Sad and Angry. "We see this as an opportunity for businesses and publishers to better understand how people are responding to their content," Facebook product manager **Sammi Krug** wrote. "We will spend time learning from this rollout and use feedback to improve," Krug added. "Over time we hope to learn how the different Reactions should be weighted

differently by News Feed to do a better job of showing everyone the stories they most want to see." — The revolving door continues to work well in Silicon Valley. Former **Apple** communications exec **Natalie Kerris** joined **Twitter** as VP for global communications, boss tweeter **Jack Dorsey** tweeted Monday. Kerris replaces **Gabriel Stricker**, who left in July weeks after **Dick Costolo** departed as Twitter chief (*PRN*, 7/20/2015). Stricker landed at **Google Fiber** as communications chief in January. Kerris joins **Leslie Berland**, the new CMO, who arrived from **American Express** in late January just as four senior Twitter execs left the shrinking microblogger (*PRN*, Feb 1).

4. People: Hill+Knowlton Strategies

named **Fleishman-Hillard** vet **Penny Mitchell** to lead its U.S. health practice. — **Porter Novelli** named **Nick Propper** global COO and upped its D.C. office managing director **Jennifer Swint** to president, N America. Propper was president of **Emanate**. — **Zoe Thorogood**, former campaign press advisor to Britain's Prime Minister **David Cameron**, is joining **APCO Worldwide's** D.C. office as a director in its public affairs practice. **Frank Majoos**, former permanent representative of the Netherlands to **NATO** and the **UN**, joined APCO's international advisory council. — **Clyde Group** named **Aubrey Quinn** VP. Quinn was VP for communications at **Children's Miracle Network Hospitals**. — **The PRSA Counselors Academy** elected **Martin Waxman** its 2016 chair. Waxman heads **Martin Waxman Communications** of Toronto. — **Rubenstein Public Relations** will move its HQ in April to a 20K-square-foot office in a 45-story tower at 1301 Avenue of the Americas in NYC. ■

• PR AGENCY ELITE 2016 •

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THE TOP PR FIRMS

Entry Deadline: March 4 | Final Deadline: March 11

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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

PR Agency Internal and Promotional Categories:

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

- Proprietary Software/Client Solutions
- Promotion of Firm (marketing, advertising, PR)
- Web site

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.



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FOR QUESTIONS OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

Rachel Scharmann ▪ 301.354.1713 ▪ rscharmann@accessintel.com

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PRNews

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Register: prnewsonline.com/Spring-Luncheon

Celebrating the CSR, Nonprofit and Diversity Awards

CSR Awards Hall of Fame Inductees & Finalists:

HALL OF FAME

- Colgate-Palmolive Co. — Colgate's Bright Smiles, Bright Futures
- ESPN — The V Foundation for Cancer Research
- JetBlue Airways — Soar With Reading
- Procter & Gamble — Tide Loads of Hope
- Macy's — Believe Campaign

AGENCY CSR A-LIST

- APCO Worldwide
- Cone Communications
- Edelman
- FleishmanHillard
- G&S Business Communications
- Havas PR North America
- Nebo
- RF|Binder — Corporate & Brand Purpose
- VOX Global
- Weber Shandwick

ANNUAL REPORT

- Caesars Entertainment — Serious Play
- Cigna — CR Report
- The Lifetime Healthcare Companies
- Medtronic, Inc. — Further, Together
- Office Depot Foundation — Making a Difference: 2014 Annual Report to the Community
- Viacom — Raising Voices : Viacom 2015 Social Impact Review

CAUSE BRANDING CAMPAIGN

- Anthem Foundation — Hands Only CPR: Training 100 Million People to the beat of "Stayin' Alive"
- Aspen Dental Management Inc. — The Healthy Mouth Movement
- Bayer Corporation — Making Science Make Sense: A 20th Anniversary Celebration & Campaign to promote STEM education in the United States
- Clear Channel Outdoor Americas — Traffic Report
- DonorsChoose.org — Chevron Fuel Your School Program
- Frontier Communications — America's Best Communities
- Imprenta Communications Group — Wage Theft
- JetBlue Airways — 2015 Soar with Reading — Solving for Book Deserts
- MWV — Subaru Drives Home the Shocking Need for Pet Safety
- PJ Lhuillier Group of Companies — Cebuana Lhuillier Search for the Happiest Pinoy 2015
- Toys"R"Us, Inc. — Helps Special Olympics Young Athletes Achieve Their #MyFirstSportsMoment
- Türk Telekom — Loud Steps

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

- Anthem Foundation — Hands Only CPR — Training 100 Million People to the beat of "Stayin' Alive"
- Discovery Communications — Support of My Brother's Keeper Initiative: Changing the Narrative for Boys and Young Men of Color
- Duke Energy — Water Resources Fund
- Food Lion Feeds — Year 2: Building on Our 500 Million Meal Commitment
- Honeywell Hometown Solutions 2015
- Mylan — EpiPen4Schools Program
- PJ Lhuillier Group of Companies — Cebuana Lhuillier Advocacy Campaigns

CORPORATION

- Anthem Foundation
- Bacardi Limited — Good Spirited:Building a Sustainable Future
- ERA Real Estate
- Meltwater News US1 Inc.
- MillerCoors
- Oracle
- Pioneer Services, a Division of MidCountry Bank — CSR Program for Military Families

CORPORATE-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

- Aspen Dental Management Inc. — The Healthy Mouth Movement
- Belk and Discovery Education — Belk Service Learning Challenge
- Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health — Champions of Mental Health Awards and Mental Illness Awareness Week
- DonorsChoose.org — Chevron Fuel Your School Program
- Frontier Communications — America's Best Communities
- International Sport and Culture Association — The economic cost of physical inactivity across Europe
- JetBlue Airways — 2015 Soar with Reading: Solving for Book Deserts
- Lenovo Scholar Network — Empowering Future Tech Leaders
- MasterCard — Girls4Tech
- MWV — Building Blocks for the Future: Samsung Technology Partnership with Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- Nestle Waters North America — A Community Approach to Trash Free Waterways
- New York Life Foundation/Tiller, LLC — Addressing Grief at School
- Raytheon Company — National Engineers Week 'Girl Day' 2015
- SAIC — Give A Meal Team Challenge
- SAP — Education Initiative
- Teva Pharmaceuticals — Teva's Community Partnership Program

CSR ON A SHOESTRING

- CENTURY 21 Real Estate LLC — Delivering Josiah's Dream Day
- CIT Group — Foodportunity Contest
- Experian
- Golden State Foods Foundation — Golden State Foods Gets Rolling Across the Country with Build-A-Bike

Congratulations to all of the finalists and honorees!

Registration questions: Jessica Placencia • Jessica@accessintel.com | Advertising questions: Lindsay Silverberg • lsilverberg@accessintel.com

- Havas PR North America — Huerta Scholarship: The First Hour for the First Americans
- Havas PR North America — Educating Readers About Arizona's State of Teaching
- Lippe Taylor — Cetaphil Camp Wonder Celebrates Its 15th Anniversary
- Pepco Holdings Inc. — Pepco Edison Place Gallery
- Triumphant Communications — ABPS — physician staffing within VA Hospitals

CSR PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

- David Figliuzzi — Cigna
- Debbi Jarvis — Pepco Holdings Inc.
- Annie Longsworth — The Siren Agency

DIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

- Con Edison — #IamPOWERful
- Food Lion — Igniting Customer and Associate Engagement Around Diversity through Strategic Partnership with CIAA
- Imprenta Communications Group — Wage Theft
- Lenovo — The Lenovo Way
- Witt/Kieffer — Diversity Dialogues

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

- Bacardi Limited — Good Spirited:Building a Sustainable Future
- Bank of America — Recycle Now: Small Act, Big Impact
- Continental Resources — We've Changed the World: Embrace the Change, Make a Difference
- CVS Health and RF|Binder — CVS Health Celebrates the Spirit of Volunteerism on #GivingTuesday
- MasterCard — Girls4Tech
- Pacific Gas and Electric — LGBT Ally Program
- Singer Associates, Inc. — The New Stanford Hospital
- Viacom — Talent for Good

EVENT: CSR / GREEN FOCUS

- SAIC — Saving the California Sea Lions
- SelectHealth — Select 25

GREEN PR CAMPAIGN

- Bacardi Limited — Good Spirited:Building a Sustainable Future
- Windsor Marketing Group — We Mean Green

MEDIA RELATIONS

- Anthem Foundation — Hands Only CPR — Training 100 Million People to the beat of "Stayin' Alive"
- Aspen Dental Management Inc. — The Healthy Mouth Movement
- Cigna Foundation and University of Maryland's Center for Health Equity's Media Campaign to Promote the Health Advocates In-Reach and Research (HAIR) Initiative
- Golden State Foods Gets Rolling Across the Country with Build-A-Bike
- Havas PR Global Collective — A Global Collaboration Wins the Day for Climate Science
- Havas PR North America — Moving Mountains to Draw Attention to Sacred Navajo Land
- Imprenta Communications Group — SoCalGas Media Roundtables
- JetBlue Airways — Soar with Reading
- Johnson & Johnson Consumer Inc. — Neutrogena Naturals Wipe For Water Campaign
- MWW — Subaru Drives Home the Shocking Need for Pet Safety

NONPROFIT/CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP

- Anthem Foundation — Triple Play: Combating Childhood Obesity with the Mind, Body and Soul
- BJ's Wholesale Club/BJ's Charitable Foundation — BJ's Provides Fresh Way to Fight Hunger
- CENTURY 21 Real Estate LLC — Delivering
- Josiah's Dream Day
- GE Lighting — MC2 STEM High School / GE Lighting Partnership
- McDonald's B-Boy Royale — Ronald McDonald House Charities of the New York Tri-State Area Partnership
- JetBlue Airways — Dream Project and JetBlue: An Education Partnership
- Lenovo Scholar Network — Empowering Future Tech Leaders
- MWW — Subaru Drives Home the Shocking Need for Pet Safety
- Pepco Holdings Inc. — STEM Initiative
- SAP — AdVenture Capital Digital Platform
- Teva Pharmaceuticals — National Corporate Partner of Volunteers in Medicine
- Türk Telekom — Life is Simple with Internet

PRODUCT DESIGN / REDESIGN

- Food Lion — 2015 Food Lion Feeds Reusable Bag
- Türk Telekom — Books on the Phone
- United States Postal Service — USPS PR & Social Plan for Consumer Electronics Show

RECYCLING PROGRAM

- Bank of America — Recycle Now: Small Act, Big Impact
- Mattress Recycling Council — Bye Bye Mattress
- Weber Shandwick — Rinse. Recycle. Reimagine.

SOCIAL GOOD

- AT&T — Aspire Accelerator
- Frontier Communications — America's Best Communities
- JetBlue Airways — Airport Farm at T5
- Kosovo Energy & Distribution Company (KEDS) — A Positive Outcome for Privatization
- PJ Lhuillier Group of Companies — Cebuana Lhuillier Advocacy Campaigns
- Teva Pharmaceuticals — National Corporate Partner of Volunteers in Medicine
- Türk Telekom — Life is Simple with Internet
- Windsor Marketing Group — We Mean Green

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

- 92nd Street Y, United Nations Foundation, Coyne PR, Edelman, Fenton, FleishmanHillard, Havas PR North America, Sunshine Sachs, Turner 4d, Weber Shandwick — #GivingTuesday: The Day the World Gave Back
- The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention — The Fight to Stop Suicide
- Chevron Richmond Refinery with Singer Associates, Inc. — The Richmond Standard
- Con Edison — Gas Safety Awareness
- Experian — Improving Financial Literacy One Chat at a Time
- JetBlue Airways — Soar with Reading
- Prudential — #20StoriesOfStrength
- The Home Depot Foundation — Team Depot Celebrates #GivingTuesday

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Cambia Health Solutions — 2015 Employee Giving Campaign: Can you dig it?
- Fiserv — National Walking Day
- Pacific Gas and Electric Company — 811 Call Before You Dig
- Viacom — Talent for Good

SUSTAINABILITY/CSR REPORT

- AMD — Enabling Today. Inspiring Tomorrow.
- ATB Financial
- Biogen Corporate Citizenship Report 2014 — Committed to What Counts
- Domtar
- G&S Business Communications — Coeur Corporate Responsibility Highlights
- Medtronic, Inc. — Further, Together 2015 Integrated Performance Report
- Merck & Co., Inc.
- Nestlé in the United States — Creating Shared Value Report 2014
- Pacific Gas and Electric
- Raytheon Company
- Viacom — Raising Voices : Viacom 2015 Social Impact Review

VIDEO INITIATIVES

- Imprenta Communications Group — Hospital of HOPE Viacom: The Road to College
- USC Shoah Foundation and Discovery Education — Auschwitz 70: The Past is Present

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

- Astellas — Changing Tomorrow Day: The Power of 10
- Cigna — Feeding Children Everywhere
- CSAA Insurance Group, a AAA Insurer
- Fannie Mae's 7 Days to SERVE — Giving Back to the Communities Where We Live & Work
- JetBlue Airways — Community Connection through JetBlue
- K&H Bank & Well PR Agency — K&H MediMagic Story-Telling Doctors
- MasterCard — Girls4Tech
- Oracle — Volunteers
- Türk Telekom — Life is Simple with Internet

WORKPLACE INNOVATION

- AT&T — Aspire Accelerator
- JetBlue Airways — Community Connection through JetBlue
- Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide — Water Story

Congratulations to all of the finalists and honorees!

Registration questions: Jessica Placencia • Jessica@accessintel.com | Advertising questions: Lindsay Silverberg • lsilverberg@accessintel.com

Nonprofit Awards Finalists:

ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN AND LOBBYING EFFORTS

- American Heart Association — Step Up to the Plate for School Meals
- APCO Worldwide — Protecting North Carolina Nonprofit Tax Exemption
- The Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health — ACT!ON Mental Health
- Havas PR Global Collective — A Global Collaboration Wins the Day for Climate Science
- Illinois Policy Action — Chicago food-cart legalization
- National Association of Convenience Stores — NACS In Store
- United Nations Foundation — Public Affairs Team

BRANDING/RE-BRANDING

- Corporation for Public Broadcasting — Nine Network of Public Media: American Graduate
- Right Hat — A New Way of Thinking
- Right Hat — Growing Excellence

CORPORATE/NONPROFIT PARTNERSHIP

- American Lung Association & CVS Health, Edelman — LUNG FORCE
- The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children — KidSmartz
- Samsung Electronics Canada — Samsung Canada's The Look At Me Project
- U.S. Green Building Council — Green Apple Day of Service 2015

DIGITAL PR AND MARKETING

- Consumer Technology Association — 2014 CTA Holiday Research Campaign
- Taco Bell Foundation — "Potential" Campaign
- United Nations Foundation
- Weber Shandwick on behalf of UNICEF — Real-Time Content Studio at the UN General Assembly

EVENT PR

- Children's Miracle Network Hospitals — Champions for Children's Hospitals
- Girl Scouts of the USA — Girl Scouts Adds a 'Byte' to Its Iconic Cookie Program
- Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board — Home Away from Rome Campaign

EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OR REPORT (ONLINE OR PRINT)

- American Cleaning Institute — 2015 ACI Sustainability Report
- The Case Foundation — A Short Guide to Impact Investing
- The Garden Conservancy — Silver Anniversary Report
- National Disability Institute — 25@25
- SHIFT Communications — The Power of Wonder: Celebrating Five Years with Wonderopolis

FUNDRAISING

- 92nd Street Y, United Nations Foundation, Coyne PR, Edelman, Fenton, FleishmanHillard, Havas PR North America, Sunshine Sachs, Turner 4d, Weber Shandwick — #GivingTuesday: The Day the World Gave Back
- American Lung Association & Edelman — LUNG FORCE
- Johanniterhjälpen — Challenge Ebola
- Taco Bell Foundation — Raising Money for Teen Potential

MARKETING

- American Lung Association & Edelman — LUNG FORCE
- American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery — WE ARE AESTHETICS
- Taco Bell Foundation — "Potential" Campaign

MEDIA RELATIONS

- American Lung Association & Edelman — LUNG FORCE
- Compassion International — Rebuilding Haiti
- Girl Scouts of the USA — Girl Scouts Adds a 'Byte' to Its Iconic Cookie Program
- Humane Society Silicon Valley — Eddie the Terrible
- U.S. Green Building Council — Top 10 LEED States
- United Nations Foundation — Public Affairs Team

PR ON A SHOESTRING BUDGET

- Canadian Public Libraries for Fair Ebook Pricing — Fair Pricing for Libraries
- Girl Scouts of the USA — Girl Scouts Adds a 'Byte' to Its Iconic Cookie Program
- Havas PR North America — Huerta Scholarship: The First Hour for the First Americans
- Imprenta Communications Group — I Can Afford College
- Johanniterhjälpen — Challenge Ebola
- Lymphoma Research Foundation — Light it Red for Lymphoma
- National Association of Insurance Commissioners — Small Business
- United Nations Foundation — Girl Up

PUBLIC AFFAIRS/ISSUES MANAGEMENT

- Havas PR North America — Moving Mountains to Draw Attention to Sacred Navajo Land
- U.S. Green Building Council — Booz Allen Economic Impact Study

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

- AICR/Williams Whittle — CANcer PREVENTION: Together We Can
- Imprenta Communications Group (United States of America) — North East Medical Services
- NSBC and Paul Werth Associates — Love the Life — Wear It! PSA Campaign

PUBLICATIONS

- CA Technologies
- MedTech Association — Bio/Med Breakthroughs — 2015 Bio/Med Industry Report: Navigating Today's Healthcare Landscape
- MVP Health Care — MVPnews Employee Newsletter
- Office Depot Foundation — 2014 Annual Report to the Community
- US Postal Service — little blue book

SOCIAL MEDIA

- American Hospital Association — Advancing Health in America
- Hospital for Special Surgery — HSS Back in the Game
- Weber Shandwick on behalf of UNICEF — Real-Time Content Studio at the UN General Assembly

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Girl Scouts of the USA — Girl Scouts Adds a 'Byte' to Its Iconic Cookie Program
- Imprenta Communications Group — Wage Theft
- National Association of Insurance Commissioners — Teen Driving Reboot
- National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization — Moments of Life: Made Possible by Hospice
- Taco Bell Foundation — "Potential" Campaign

VIDEO AND/OR PODCAST PROGRAM

- CAF America — Radio Network
- The Case Foundation — Are You Ready to Change the World?
- National Hemophilia Foundation — Making Your Clot Work for You

WEBSITE

- Georgia Aquarium — 2015 Website Redesign
- National Beer Wholesalers Association — NBWA Website

Diversity in PR Awards Honorees:

ORGANIZATIONS OF YEAR

- Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate
- C+C
- Concepts, Inc.
- Consumer Reports
- Covered California
- Dallas Fort Worth International Airport
- Etched Communication
- Food Lion
- Hill+Knowlton Strategies
- Institute for Multicultural Counseling and Education Service
- Medical University of South Carolina
- Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
- MillerCoors
- MWPPR
- The California Endowment
- The Entertainment Software Association
- The LAGRANT Foundation
- Weber Shandwick
- White Martins

INDIVIDUALS OF THE YEAR

- Catherine Hernandez-Blades, Aflac
- Jan Jones Blackhurst, Caesars Entertainment
- Elena Chavez, Consumer Reports
- Donna Allen, VisitNorfolk
- Gail L. Moaney, APR, Finn Partners
- Angela Carrasco, Havas PR North America
- Rebecca Ballard, Hill+Knowlton Strategies
- Ronald W. Wong, Imprenta Communications Groups
- Kim L. Hunter, LAGRANT COMMUNICATIONS
- Kelli Watson, MillerCoors
- Judith Harrison, Weber Shandwick

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