PR News Pro
The How-To Resource for Communicators

April 10, 2017
Issue 14
prnewsonline.com

## CONTENTS






SOCIAL MEDIA

# How the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Links Social Listening to Content Creation

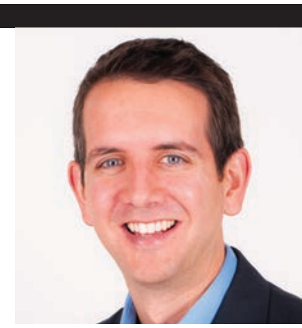
U.S. Army General Creighton Abrams (1914-1974) said the best way to eat an elephant "is one bite at a time." As we talk to communicators, we find few problems larger than PR measurement. The issues with measurement seem so elephantine that it becomes an afterthought or worse. Some 20% of PR pros shun measurement entirely, a **Nasdaq**-*PR News* survey showed (*PRN*, Aug. 3, 2015). 35% of respondents said they spend just one hour per week on measurement. Most non-measurers attribute their measurement-itis to a lack of resources and time as well as the complexity of tools. Our retort is to begin with digestible bites of the measurement elephant. Staying in the animal kingdom, we asked Danielle Brigida, national social media manager, **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** (USFWS), and a longtime measurement advocate, to get granular with us. We asked how and what she measures, and how she reports her findings.

*Continued on page 2*

MEDIA RELATIONS

BY MICHAEL SMART

# Keeping It Personal: How and When to Personalize Your Media Pitch



Recently an earnest, hardworking PR pro asked me repeatedly during a phone consultation "what not to do."

She already knows to avoid relying on generic pitches blasted to the same list. So I told her how personalizing pitches is about finding the sweet spot between being generic and being a stalker.

When you're crafting your pitch for your target journalist or blogger, you know it's a best practice to prove in the first sentence that you've researched her and her audience. It's usually best to keep this focused on her work. I say that because often you might see also something in her **Twitter** bio or an **Instagram** post that you could use to make more of a personal connection.

Don't get me wrong, it's great to make a personal connection. That's the ultimate goal of great media relations. Just not so soon—so save that thought.

### BEGIN WITH A REFERENCE

Lead off with the professional reference.

For example, "I've noticed your posts that get shared most frequently on social revolve around connecting millennials' job-hunting preferences and big-company recruiting tactics…"

*Continued on page 4*

Continued from page 1

PR News Pro
The How-To Resource for Communicators
Vol. 74 ISSN 1546-0193

**Editor**, Seth Arenstein, sarenstein@accessintel.com
**Editorial Director**, Steve Goldstein, sgoldstein@accessintel.com
**Graphic Designer,** Tara Bekman, tzaino@accessintel.com
**Senior Content Manager,** Jerry Ascierto, jascierto@accessintel.com
**Content Manager,** Sophie Maerowitz, SMaerowitz@accessintel.com
**Managing Editor, Guidebooks**, Ian Wright, iwright@accessintel.com
**Director of Marketing**, Laura Snitkovskiy, lsnitkovskiy@accessintel.com
**Marketing Manager,** Jessica Placencia, jplacencia@accessintel.com
**Manager, Business Development,** Jonathan Politte, Jpolitte@accessintel.com
**Sr. Dir., Market Development,** Laurie Hofmann, lhoffman@accessintel.com
**VP of Marketing**, Amy Jefferies, ajefferies@accessintel.com
**Publisher,** Michael Grebb mgrebb@accessintel.com
**SVP/Group Publisher**, Diane Schwartz, dschwartz@accessintel.com
**Chief Operating Officer**, Heather Farley
**President & CEO,** Don Pazour

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

Access Intelligence

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

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

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

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



# Useful Mix: USFWS' Measurement Report

Below are excerpts from a monthly social media measurement report that Danielle Brigida, national social media manager, **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** (USFWS), created last year. As the story on pages 1 and 3 indicates, the report includes a monthly comparison of platforms (top), statistics by page, top **Instagram** posts, analysis and information about and links to USFWS campaigns (bottom).

| AUDIENCE GROWTH METRICS | TOTALS | CHANGE |
|---|---|---|
| Total Fans | 749,569 | ▲ 1.8% |
| New Facebook Fans | 4,503 | ▼ 14.2% |
| New Twitter Followers | 2,058 | ▼ 35.8% |
| New Instagram Followers | 6,696 | ▼ 39.0% |
| Total Fans Gained | 13,257 | ▼ 31.7% |

Total fans increased by
▲ 1.8%
since previous month

**Stats by Profile/Page**

| Profile/Page | Total Fans / Followers | Fan / Follower Increase | Messages Sent | Impressions | Impressions per Post | Engagements | Engagements per Post | Link Clicks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| U.S. Fish ...life Service Facebook page | 302,734 | 1.50% | 44 | 6,378,919 | 144,975 | 99,502 | 2,261.4 | 6,111 |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlif... usfws | 282,888 | 2.42% | 33 | – | – | 185,594 | 5,624.1 | – |
| US Fish and Wildlife @USFWS | 163,947 | 1.27% | 121 | 1,818,721 | 15,031 | 87,888 | 726.3 | 4,795 |

## Instagram

Top Instagram Posts

@usfws
9919 Engagements

@usfws
8658 Engagements

@usfws
8501 Engagements

Posts:

1. Whooooo you looking at? This eastern screech owl is doing its best to blend in near Parker River National #WildlifeRefuge in Massachusetts (Credit: Peter Cristoph) #owl #owls #camouflage 9,919 likes and comments
2. Scratch that itch carefully! This northern hawk owl was photographed last week in Alaska. Link in bio for full story. 8,5658 likes and comments
3. Did you know that a group of butterflies is called a kaleidoscope? These monarchs were seen gathering in Texas on their migration to Mexico. (Crystal Stewart/Journey North) #monarchbutterfly #nature #wildlife #migration 8,501 likes and comments

**Thoughts:** Owls seemed to be some of the best received content by our audience, but it was interesting to see monarchs and the news of red wolves make our top list.

## Influence

#BatWeek: We were able to work with our excellent partners as a part of Batweek.org and we made sure to support the efforts to help bats.

- Ex. https://twitter.com/USFWS/status/790912786859692032
  https://twitter.com/USFWS/status/790358418007715840

CITES:

- Ex. https://twitter.com/USFWS/status/782242174448472064/photo/1

# One Nonprofit's View of Automated Reports

## WHY SHE MEASURES

Brigida spends much time looking at what drives people to the USFWS and what they're asking once they arrive. Is it the government agency's social media content, including its campaigns? A search of its website? "We work on a lot of issues, [many of them complex,] and when I first got here, it took me a while to figure out how we could best measure digital engagement. I didn't want to measure vanity metrics, but I wanted to measure, so that it helped strengthen our work."

Certainly she looks for posts that resonate, but she's also using data to learn "what to do next time" with content. "That's what keeps the data actionable," she says. For example, "we'll roll something out and find [in comments and response figures] that it was confusing…so we'll need to backtrack, add a table next time, maybe" or tweak the language.

## WHAT SHE PRESENTS

DANIELLE BRIGIDA, NATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER, U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Brigida insists her presentation is basic: She generates a monthly report in **Google** Docs that includes analytics from the Service's blog and social media [see a sample on page 2]. She pulls graphs from **Sprout Social**, analytics from Google Analytics and some in-platform analytics, such as **Medium**. She's an advocate of creating "your own report…even if you don't have a ton of time" to devote to measurement. You tend to learn more than just generating a purely automated report, she says.

For example, she'll pull "all the posts we've done for the month and share the top posts, so people have a baseline" about what's resonating. She'll also provide one- or two-sentence analyses about those posts, providing commentary about how each platform is working.

## CAMPAIGN METRICS, LESSONS LEARNED

As noted above, she also measures USFWS campaigns. "By measuring what resonates and applying that to what we hope to accomplish, we save ourselves from guessing too much." She also uses search analytics to help write social media posts and is trying to integrate search analytics more each month into her report as they can indicate national trends.

Qualitative information is also included in her monthly, which is circulated internally. For example, when USFWS helps answer a follower's question about wildlife, it's tagged in a Power of Commenting folder, and sometimes is included in Brigida's report. "It shows us being a resource," she says.

For Brigida and her colleagues, deciding *what* to measure can be tricky since many people within USFWS do social media. It takes collaboration to make measurement decisions, she says. "What I've found works the best is before a campaign starts, sit down and determine what metrics matter, as a group. Set priorities. Then you regroup after… and see how you've done." She's "always tweaking the way we measure."

One of the things she's most proud of, and is a corollary of this integrative approach, is the formation of a public engagement group, which brings together "social media, media outreach" and others. The group helps spot trends.

**Mini-Case Study: "**I do a lot of listening. I use a combination of **Facebook** Lists, **TweetDeck** and **Feedly**." She noticed a lot of people were interacting about USFWS' wildlife refuges (it manages some 565 of them). "In terms of listening, I'll also look at **Instagram** and see where the refuges are that people are mentioning and I'll try to see if any trends apply."

**Mini-Case Study:** "I noticed a lot of people on Facebook were mentioning they'd rescued turtles. It was anecdotal to start, but I posted about it and there were about 30K shares." After measuring comments and photos shared, "I realized there were not only a lot of shares, but a lot of participation and engagement. So we began providing resources" to assist people who wanted to save turtles. A similar case arose with ivory. It resulted in a USFWS ivory web page. ■

**CONTACT:** *@starfocus*

***Note:*** *Brigida will speak at PRNews' Measurement Conference and Social Media Boot Camp, April 20-21, in Washington, D.C. For more information: http://bit.ly/2mytgRl*

Continued from page 1

# Pitch Helpfulness to Journalists, Not Chumminess

And then get right into your pitch that propels the connection forward.

### THE EVOLUTION IS NOT TELEVISED

There's been an evolution in the last few years among the influencers I interview about their reactions to media pitches, among them a *Today Show* producer, a *Washington Post* editor and writers for *USA Today* and the *Wall Street Journal*.

When I show them pitches, they register audible appreciation for personalization at the top, but now they become anxious and even frustrated if that personalization drags into a second point of reference. They say, "I want to know what he's offering here."

### P.S. I LOVE YOU, NOT QUITE

To recap: first professional personalization, then pitch, then call to action.

But what about that great personal tidbit you saw that could open the door to a wonderful connection? Save it for your P.S. That's where you note that you've visited her alma mater to see your best friend from high school who also went there—what a beautiful campus. Or your quick take on this season of the **Netflix** show she tweeted about binge watching. Or whatever.

Just make sure it's:

- **Sincere:** because relationships only work when founded authentically
- **Specific:** because even if you really do *love* that show, the journalist won't believe you unless you prove it with some detail;
- **Really Specific:** specificity also applies when you mention an article you liked that your journalist or a colleague wrote; with the amount of copy reporters crank out, articles tend to fade in the memory, so make sure you provide the day and date of publication and perhaps a link;
- **Not stalker-ish:** no explanation necessary

### THE RULE BREAKER

There is one exception to this rule of backing off on personal references. It comes when an influencer is very open, to the point of borderline cheerleading, about some aspect of his or her personal life.

An example is the sports columnist I follow who reviews **Showtime**'s *Homeland* episodes every week on Twitter. And the fashion magazine editor who tweets often about her cat, by name, in a self-parody style. It's sort of an inside joke.

In cases like those, you can get away with leading off with the personal reference, but make sure it is *specific* and *sincere*. That's because journalists are getting loads of faux personalized pitches where PR folks are taking one glance at their timelines and writing something like, "As a fellow Homeland fan, I wanted to let you know about (something unrelated to Homeland)…"

> **"What about that great personal tidbit you saw that could open the door to a wonderful connection? Save it for your P.S."**

A savvy pro I know followed her target, a writer for a top-tier daily, close enough to know when some news about her favorite celebrity was big enough to link to a pitch. It was a story that the writer responded to positively.

The journalist tweeted 30 minutes later: "I tend to find it trite when PR folks bring up my tweets in a pitch, but going out of your way to agree with me about (celebrity) is OK."

That tweet sums up what a fine line you're walking when you attempt to exercise this exemption. If it still seems unclear, just stick with the primary-professional-reference-first approach that I mentioned earlier.

### THE BOTTOM LINE: PITCH SOME HELP

And above all, remember that any of the linguistic gymnastics discussed here and in my previous columns must have a key ingredient to be effective. And that is:

Anything you write in a pitch must be designed, above all, to *help* your target journalists.

Not fool them.

Not flatter them.

Not sneak something past them.

The motivation behind personalizing pitches—and the extra nuances discussed here—is to save the journalist evaluation time by proving to him or her that you know their work and understand their needs. And that you're a smart, approachable human being who would be pleasant to do business with on this and other stories.

In general influencers are so strained by the pressures of their jobs that they deserve every effort on our part to make our outreach relevant and accessible on their terms. Helping them do their jobs is what helps us. ■

**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*

**Note to Subscribers: For tips on media relations, writing and media training, visit the PR News Pro Essentials page at: prenewsonline.com/pr-news-pr-essentials/**

BY TRACY TRULOVE, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER, REGION 3, CO DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION

# How to Apply Lessons From a Natural Disaster to Crisis Management

Media and public coordination have become more crucial to incident management. With the rise of social media and real-time traffic mapping on motorists' smart devices, it is increasingly important for public information officers (PIOs) to be proactive in sending out incident and closure messages to the media and public as rapidly as possible.

While many readers likely will never need to react to the type of crisis described below, the principles discussed can apply to a wide variety of crises. These include having crisis procedures in advance, updating and practicing them regularly and keeping emergency information handy, including third-party contacts, media and influencers.

While I concede working in an area that is prone to the kind of natural disasters described below raises the importance of crisis preparation for me, surveys show brands large and small lack plans for management of any kind of crisis (*PRN*, Mar. 28, 2016). They do so at their peril.

## THE INCIDENT

On Monday, Feb. 15, 2016, a large rock fall event closed the main east/west transportation corridor through Colorado Interstate 70. The location of the slide occurred in an area notorious for such emergencies, Glenwood Canyon, a scenic, 17-mile stretch with cliffs towering 2,000 feet above the Colorado River.

**Colorado Department of Transportation** (CDOT) crews were able to flag traffic throughout the day; the rock fall incident occurred at 2:30 a.m. A secondary slide incident in the same location followed that night at 9:03, forcing CDOT to close the interstate totally in the interest of motorist safety.

There was a semi truck caught in the slide and disabled; fortunately no one was injured. With the help of State Patrol and local law enforcement, crews cleared any remaining semi trucks and passenger vehicles that were stuck in the canyon. At daylight, crews from CDOT's geohazards team and maintenance staff initiated a unified command to evaluate the damage on the ground and via helicopter.

It took almost one week from the time of the initial slide for CDOT crews and contractors to perform rock scaling/stabilization. Once the debris was cleared, CDOT engineers began the process of evaluating the damage to the roadway surface. As a safety precaution, rock fall mitigation fencing was installed to protect crews on the ground.

As repairs progressed, CDOT reopened the interstate to one lane in each direction. Several weeks passed before the damage to the infrastructure was repaired and all four lanes of the interstate were open to regular traffic operations.

## INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

When an event has the potential to close an interstate or highway for more than one hour, the protocol for the PIO is to gather details from the incident commander and the field team to produce a "hot topic" email to alert the customer service team and executive management team of the situation. This information is labeled as Internal Only and is used to inform the customer service team as it subsequently begins receiving motorist calls through the website.

Other tools that were used for internal communications included **Google** document sharing, a situation report and internal conference calls. The incident commander conducted these calls, prior to information being released publicly.

## MEDIA RELATIONS

Rock fall is a familiar topic to media outlets residing in mountain newsrooms. When media heard I-70 was going to be closed overnight, assignment desks were actived and alerted. By the next morning, media outlets in the Front Range area had mobilized to the east end of the canyon closure point. At this point the communications team's plans were being deployed fully.

**Stage Door:** It's important in an emergency plan to include preparations for a media staging area to be designated and created. Although safety remained the number one priority, once permission was granted from the geohazards team to move closer to the rock fall, the incident commander iden-

*Continued on page 6*

Continued from page 5

# How a Natural Disaster Can Inform Crisis Planning

tified a staging area. Media members were then escorted to the rock fall area.

**Call Me:** It was decided to host a daily briefing call to accommodate media unable to mobilize to the scene. In addition, this provided relief to the PIO. Without the briefing, the PIO would have had to answer numerous phone calls, which was a challenge as the location of the rock fall had limited cellular coverage. A conference-call number that the communications team uses regularly was deployed. An email was sent alerting media about the briefing call.

**Briefing Buddy:** Another important component the PIO needs to manage is who will perform updates on the briefing calls. Our team utilized a member of the executive management team in the spokesperson role while the lead PIO provided details and other information. A subject-matter expert from the geohazards team often accompanied the PIO.

## EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS

It's best to have your stakeholder database updated *before* an incident such as the one described here occurs. Our state agency utilizes Google and we compile city, county and local law enforcement and media contacts there.

The Google interface was useful, as the communications team was able to assist the PIO in the field from an offsite location not only with updates for stakeholders, but also to collaborate on press release content.

Social media platforms that were utilized included **Facebook** and **Twitter**. Having compelling video and photographs of the massive boulders in the debris field went a long way toward educating the traveling public on CDOT's safety concerns and why the lengthy closure was in the interest of public safety.

It was a hardship to have I-70 closed for as long as it was, since the alternate route was far longer. The increased traffic that was being pushed onto the alternate route and through mountain towns that don't usually see that heightened daily traffic was challenging. It was later discussed that increased signage on the alternate route could have been helpful.

**Road Closure:** ***The aftermath of the Feb. 15, 2016 rock fall. Source: Colorado Department of Transportation***

## LESSONS LEARNED

- While many of our crewmembers were trained in the incident command structure, it was obvious that not everyone had the skill set or had been through an incident of this magnitude.
- We could have used additional coordination and training in heat-of-the-moment operations. The time to train, of course, is when you are not in the middle of an active emergency. Tabletop exercises can be utilized to practice the incident command structure.
- Owing to the nature of the event and its location, it's important to remember who is affected. That's where we decided to extend our outreach. For example, the state office of tourism was receiving a large volume of calls from constituents concerned about vacation plans being interrupted. Unfortunately, our team lacked an updated contact at the tourism office.
- Performing an after-action review (AAR) provides a platform for the team to discuss what went well and areas that could be improved. ■

**CONTACT:** *tracy.trulove@state.co.us*

## KEY TOOLS FOR RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY INCIDENT

While the following are specific to emergency response work, they can be adapted to a variety of crises. In addition, brand communicators may have roles responding to physical crises.

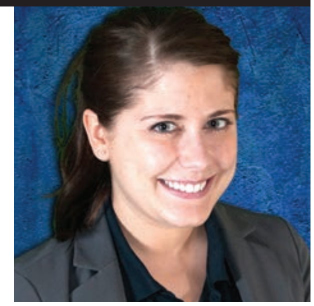
**Foster relationships and train.** We train and build relationships with PIOs. Such groups can provide onsite assistance and monitor social media platforms during a crisis. Such assistance can be particularly useful to assist small communications teams during a crisis.

**Have a Go Kit.** For us its contents include: laptop, office supplies, mobile phone, extra batteries, printed contact lists, snacks and water, personal protective equipment (PPE).

**Utilize a daily Situation Report (Sit Rep).** We deploy a sit rep, but brand communicators also should document their actions. We've found sit reps designed as a Google doc make it easy for members of the team to edit during an event.

**Note:** For communicators who want to become familiar with incident command, **FEMA** offers a variety of independent study and hands-on training courses at: www.FEMA.gov

BY MYRANDA GRIM, PR/COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER, COTTAGE INN PIZZA



# How a Pizza Store Chain Slices Its Internal Communications Pie

Many people think of communication as a simple process, merely a series of statements and responses. They probably have never tried reaching hundreds or thousands of people. Such communication can grow cumbersome and complex.

As a corporate communicator, I find it helpful to remind myself that no matter what I'm doing, at the root of it I am having a conversation with my coworkers. I also try to remember that we're just people having a discussion.

Corporate conversations can mold internal culture. That's because in addition to to exchanging information or news, conversation can create a connection between people. In managing communication for home-office employees and a network of franchisees in Michigan, Ohio, Florida, North Carolina and China, I've tracked my most successful efforts back to the following core strategies.

## REMAIN CONSISTENT

Arguably, being consistent with communication is essential in any industry. I have found it's critical to have a system that is predictable and reliable, particularly for our franchise network. Both our franchise and corporate communities depend on consistency for updates on things such as product information, marketing, sales achievements, events and growth.

When communicating updates, we make sure messaging and accessibility are consistent. This is done by sharing them on all our communications channels: email, a newsletter, a public calendar and an internal website.

For more routine communication, I prefer a monthly newsletter. 8-12 pages, it's emailed, uploaded to the internal website and printed; our delivery trucks bring it to franchises.

The newsletter provides a platform for all corporate-office departments to display key news while offering our stores a dependable resource. Content of the newsletter changes with current events and franchise growth, but I try to stick to a consistent list of topics and features, including: a summary of our weekly PR updates, a franchise spotlight, marketing news, product development and updates, sales rankings, technology, philanthropic initiatives, customer-service tips and developments about new stores.

It's also vital to provide stakeholders with a way to share news. We have found this helps keep them involved with our brand. We make all of the communication platforms available to our stakeholders. I have found, though, that email generally is the most effective form of communication as most members of our team are constantly connected through either their computers or mobile devices.

I mentioned above the internal portal. It's called the *InnSider* and offers users immediate blog updates and an easily accessible database of information necessary to run a successful Cottage Inn. It's set up similar to a digital newsletter and can be accessed on any internet-enabled device. On the InnSider, users can find product updates, ordering forms, operation and procedure standards, newsletters, press coverage and apparel.

Franchise Newsletter 2017

Cottage Inn Gourmet Pizza

Issue XIII

In This Issue:
- Press Coverage
- Product Updates
- Mystery Shopper Recap
- Local Store Marketing

March 2017

FRANCHISE Newsletter

Cottage Inn's Franchise Sales Incentive Winner Highlight!

Cottage Inn Management takes pride in rewarding our Franchise Sales Incentive Winners. The program is a great way to show our appreciation for all of our stores while also providing incentive for striving towards a steady incline of store sales. We have made it our goal to shine a spotlight on those winners, and will feature 1-2 franchisees every month in our Franchise Newsletter. Congrats to the below winners, it looks like you had a lot of fun with your reward!

Cottage Inn Howell has placed 2nd for two consecutive quarters in our Franchise Sales Incentive Program. Great job to the Howell team! Owners Clint and Heather Rottermond chose to visit Boyne Mountain as their reward so that they could take their beautiful little girl out for a weekend on the slopes. Pictures of their adventures can be seen below and to the right.

Boyne Mountain 2017!

***Uphill/Downhill:* A page from Cottage Inn Pizza's internal newsletter shows a lucky franchisee skiing in reward for high sales.**

## BE PERSISTENT

Internal communication stakeholders often are pulled in several directions and are busy with their daily roles and responsibilities. In our network, many franchise owners are not only proprietors of a franchise, but also its day-to-day operators. It's fairly common for franchisees to be unable to attend company-wide events as they are busy at their locations. In those cases it's the communicator's role to persevere and keep franchisees included. We do so by sending full event recaps, including photos and shout-outs to our award or raffle winners as part of the monthly newsletter.

Often it is up to communications to make sure our stores are reminded of events, deadlines and other important information. While I make sure to do so with respect to their busy schedule, I stay persistent and clear on how the shared information is beneficial. The amount of detail I share with stakeholders largely depends on the information that I'm sharing and what platform I'm using. When communicating time-sensitive information or posting a blog update, it's often brief. A company-wide email will include more detail.

## KEEP THEM IN THE LOOP

My primary goal in communicating across an internal network is to keep everyone in the loop as much as possible. In some industries, that might mean making sure a CEO's message is effectively shared, or ensuring big news is disseminated internally before it goes public. In our case, it means keeping franchisees up to date on corporate happenings, such as grand openings, sales achievements and records, press coverage, philanthropic initiatives or product changes.

Our corporate office shares a building with our product warehouse, which gives us the opportunity to receive real-time product updates. For example, when a new product reaches our warehouse it is communications' responsibility to make sure that news is distributed with speed and accuracy to the field. We work directly with warehouse management by meeting often and communicating frequently. We want to make sure all stores are given the exact same information. Our franchised stores sometimes are located states away, so this communication is vital. ■

**CONTACT:** *glosh@allpointspr.com*

Nicole Cardillo, VP, Communications, Social Media, Consumer Relations, Shiseido

Julie Hooper, VP, Public Affairs, Randle Communications

Stacey Gandler, EVP, Managing Director, PR, Centron

**1. Bill O'Reilly Drinks Pepsi?** It was a momentous week for brands. It started with a Sunday **NY Times** page 1 item about **Fox News Channel** allegedly paying millions to keep sexual harassment charges against its top-rated host, **Bill O'Reilly**, from going to court. Combined with other alleged sexual harassment incidents at Fox, including one that led to the ouster of founder **Roger Ailes** over the summer, the O'Reilly story led more than 30 brands to drop ad deals of the nightly show. At our press time, Fox continued to stand behind O'Reilly. A pair of brands that reacted to internet heat were **Nivea** and **Pepsi**. Nivea dropped its "White Is Purity" ad for antiperspirant due to charges of racial insensitivity and after white supremacist groups touted the ad on social. Nivea, you might recall, in 2011 dropped an ad that showed a black man throwing away a dummy's head that sported an Afro. The insensitive tagline: "Re-Civilize Yourself." Accounts of the Pepsi-**Kendall Jenner** ad blunder were covered to death last week, nearly eclipsing Nivea (how lucky for Nivea). Could communicators have helped these two brands? Yes, says the **PR Council**, addressing the Pepsi situation. "PR professionals work to take a nuanced view of a brand's audiences, and this is where our counsel is so critical," it said in a statement April 5. "PR professionals are often criticized for getting in front of Creative's 'bold' ideas, but sometimes helping a client avoid a disaster can be an invaluable contribution. All ads and storytelling should be thoroughly vetted; asking and answering the scenarios that may play out when taking a risk, should a crisis arise." Adds **Solomon McCown** president **Ashley McCown**, in an interview with us about Nivea, Pepsi and O'Reilly, "The bottom line for communicators: remember what your customers and stakeholders value when evaluating language, messages and images in your communications—and make sure your messages align with these values."

**2. M&A and Growth: Rasky Partners** launched a codes & regulations consulting service within its public affairs team. SVP **Jeff Terrey** will be its leader. – **Finn Partners** took its first step into the Asia-Pacific region by acquiring B2B/tech specialist **Ying Communications** of Singapore and its sister agency **True Worth Consultants**. – **L.C. Williams & Associates** of Chicago acquired **JSH&A**. Terms were not released. – **Caliber Corporate Advisers** of NY acquired **Leverage PR**, a Texas marketing and PR specializing in financial services, real estate and technology. – **InkHouse** launched an office in NY. Former **Spark PR** exec **Nicole Bestard** will head the office as EVP/GM.

**3. People: CLS Strategies** named former **Obama National Security Council** hand **Mark Feierstein** a senior advisor. – **Nicole Lynn Cardillo** was promoted to VP, communications, social media and consumer relations for **Shiseido** of the Beauty Prestige Group. – **Centron PR** named **Stacey Gandler** EVP, managing director, PR. – **Randle Communications** promoted **Julie Hooper** to VP, public affairs. – **BerlinRosen** named **Sara Joseph** SVP of hospitality & lifestyle. She joins after seven years at **Current Marketing**. – *PR News* CSR Professional of the Year (2017) **Aaron Sherinian**, who's CCO/CMO, the **U.N. Foundation**, is leaving June 1 after eight years to join the **Aga Khan Development Network**. – **Terry Hines & Associates** rebranded its multicultural division to THE MRKT. **Marcos Barron** will serve as president, with **Bree Bosselmann** as SVP.

**4. Page vs. FakeNews:** The issue of truth dominated the early moments of **The Arthur W. Page Society**'s spring summit in NY April 7. Early that morning its 36-member board of trustees broke with tradition, speaking out on an issue of the day. In a lenghty statement, Page reiterates its commitment to truth in PR and journalism and a free, fair press. "All of us must share a commitment to the facts and the pursuit of the truth," it says. "Distorting information, withholding the truth or promulgating falsehoods violates the public's trust and denies its rightful opportunity to be engaged and informed. This is precisely why democratic societies require a free and fair press. In this respect, our profession is intertwined with journalism." Page also will form a subcommittee "focused on these issues." Appropriately, the summit's first panel was a chat with *Wall St Journal* editor **Gerard Baker**. Politicians long have been telling untruths, he tells attendess, but **President Trump** "probably does this more" than others. "That's a challenge for us," he admits. – On the same day Page talks truth, **Google** debuts a fact-checking tool in its search and news results as a strike against fakenews. Google began testing the feature in Oct. *PolitiFact* and *Snopes* will be the fact checkers initially, Google says. The feature will be available for select searches only, though. It's a start. – Speaking of Page, **Aflac** CCO **Catherine Blades** joins **The Home Depot** CCO **Stacey Tank** on Page's *New CCO* podcast, available at Page's site late this week (*PRNP*, March 27). ■

# PRNews' Platinum Awards 2017

**ENTRY DEADLINE: MAY 5, 2017 | LATE DEADLINE: MAY 12, 2017**

## *Prove Your Weight in Platinum*

PR News' Platinum PR Awards salute the year's most outstanding communications initiatives and programs in the highly competitive and dynamic PR arena. The coveted awards set the industry benchmark for excellence across all areas of PR. The winners of the Platinum PR Awards are from corporations, agencies and nonprofits large and small that took chances, made tremendous strides and understand the power of public relations. Your hard work is done – now it's time for you and your team to get recognized for it!

### Campaign Categories:

- Anniversary
- Annual Report
- Blog
- Branding
- Cause-Related Marketing
- Community Relations
- Content Marketing
- Crisis Management
- CSR
- Digital Communications
- Education Program
- Employee Relations
- Event Marketing
- External Publication (print or online)
- Facebook Communications
- Financial/Investor Relations
- Global PR Campaign
- Influencer Communications
- Instagram Campaign
- Internal Publication (print or online)
- Large PR Firm of the Year
- Live Streaming
- Marketing Communications
- Media Event
- Media Relations
- Midsize PR Firm of the Year
- Multicultural Campaign
- On a Shoestring Campaign
- Online Press Room/Media Center
- Podcast
- Press Release
- Pro Bono Campaign
- Product Launch
- PSA
- Public Affairs
- Re-Branding/Re-positioning
- Research & Measurement
- Satellite Media Tours
- Social Media Campaign
- Small PR Firm of the Year
- Snapchat Campaign
- Speechwriting Campaign
- Trade Show/Event PR
- Tumblr Campaign
- Twitter Campaign
- Video Program
- Website Marketing
- Visual Storytelling Campaign
- YouTube
- Word of Mouth Marketing
- WOW! Award

### Top People and Teams:

- CEO of the Year
- Marketing Team of the Year
- PR Professional of the Year
- PR Team of the Year
- Sole Practitioner/Consultant of the Year

### Top Firm of the Year:

- Small
- Midsize
- Large

Questions? Contact Mary-Lou French at mfrench@accessintel.com

**ENTER ONLINE: prnewsonline.com/platinum2017**

29455