

### CONTENTS

Design.....1,3  
What's Trending In PR .....1,4  
Data Dive .....2  
Events Calendar .....2  
Case Study .....5,6  
Crisis Management .....7  
The Week in PR.....8



### DESIGN

## GE Digital's Creative Director Reveals How Communicators Can Change the World

Every brand communicator and marketer wants his or her message to break through the incessant clutter that plagues time-stressed consumers. In keeping with the *What's Trending In PR* article on this page (below), we decided to think creatively and consider how design can influence messaging.

We asked **GE Digital** creative director Steve Swanson, a designer by trade, what communicators should be thinking about regarding design. Research shows "90% of information

sent to the brain is visual and we know the brain processes images about 60,000 times faster than text," Swanson says. "So when you think about the maxim that 'a picture is worth a thousand words,' we now have the science to back that up. When I think about what we as communicators and designers produce, I really think design can change the world."

That's a bit lofty. Swanson counters: "Visual design and creativity evoke emotions. It's those emotions that cause

*Continued on page 3*

### WHAT'S TRENDING IN PR

BY BARBARA MORENO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COMMUNICATIONS, SAN DIEGO CONVENTION CENTER

## How the San Diego Convention Center Tells Its Brand Stories With Graphics

**[Editor's Note:** *In our regular feature we ask communicators to spot trends and tell us their reaction to them. This week we hear from Barbara Moreno, executive director, communications, San Diego Convention Center.]*

**The Trend:** How much time do you need to make an impact? It's hardly news that in today's world consumers are pressed for time and so give communicators very little of it. How little? A fun fact or maybe an annoying one: Someone with a digital device in hand now shares the same attention span as a goldfish. Let that sink in.

Everything we want is just a swipe or click away. With that expectation, consumers demand that everything from

apps to news and even videos fit within just eight seconds to earn their full concentration.

This must be considered when it comes to brands' marketing/communications/PR strategy.

**The Reaction:** How can a communicator get a message across with only seconds to make an impression? At the **San Diego Convention Center**, we embarked on a strategy where infographics became the signature piece of our storytelling. During team meetings, we agreed that the brands we follow



*Continued on page 4*



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

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



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

Client Services:  
 Phone: 888.707.5814 · Fax: 301.309.3847  
 e-mail: [clientservices@accessintel.com](mailto: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](http://www.prnewsonline.com)

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND WEBINARS

**WEBINAR: CRAFT A CRISIS PLAN FOR HIGH-SPEED NEWS CYCLES**

**MAY 17, 2017**  
 1:30-3PM ET

**THE SOCIAL SHAKE-UP**

**MAY 22-24, 2017**  
 ATLANTA, GA

**DIGITAL HOW-TO CONFERENCE & VISUAL STORYTELLING BOOT CAMP**

**JUNE 22-23, 2017**  
 CHICAGO, IL

# PETA Led Nonprofits in Facebook, Instagram Engagement in Q4 '16

It's not news that **Facebook** has made it more onerous for brands that refuse to boost their posts to be seen on users' timelines. It's little surprise then that nonprofits and government agencies are turning elsewhere to post content. This week's **Shareablee** data, provided exclusively to *PR News Pro*, illustrates this trend.

In Q4 2016 (Oct. 1 – Dec. 31), total consumer actions on Facebook by U.S. nonprofit brands decreased 1% compared to the year-ago period. Consumer action, or engagement, is defined as the sum of reactions, shares and comments to nonprofits' Facebook posts. Total consumer actions with nonprofits' video posts grew 99%, however.

As for individual brands, **PETA**, which also was in the top position in Q3 2016, held its number one spot in Q4, says Shareablee's Nathalie Nuta. Its Q4 2016 consumer engagement figure represents a 108% increase compared with the same time period last year.

As you can see, PETA's consumer engagement was more than double that of **Mercy for Animals**, the nonprofit in second place. PETA posted 426 times on Facebook during the quarter. Nearly 80% of consumer interaction with PETA posts related to videos. PETA's top post was a video depicting how alligators are killed for their skin. The post garnered more than 800,000 actions and was viewed more than 31 million times.

PETA dominated the Instagram ranking too, taking the number one spot in Q3 and holding it in Q4. In Q4 2016 total actions on Instagram for U.S. nonprofits jumped 53%, maintaining steady growth since Q4 2015. For Instagram, actions, or consumer engagement, are defined as the sum of likes and comments. Consumer engagement with video was 26% of total actions. Consumer engagement with PETA posts rose 60% year over year. Its top Instagram post for Q4 was a photo of a fox. The post captured 23K likes and 24K consumer actions. ■

Shareablee SOCIAL SCORECARD  
 TOP NONPROFIT BRANDS ON FACEBOOK – Q4 2016  
 Based on Total Actions (reactions, comments and shares)  
 Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareablee. Source:

Rank	Brand	Total Actions	Total Content	Actions per Content	Total Audience
1	PETA	8,743,861	426	20,525	4,857,244
2	Mercy For Animals	3,967,901	602	6,591	2,214,622
3	Focus on the Family	3,361,949	464	7,246	2,759,384
4	ACLU Nationwide	3,318,014	612	5,422	1,146,227
5	The National Audubon Society	2,451,777	363	6,754	1,019,843
6	Wikileaks	2,279,639	375	6,079	3,641,625
7	peta2.com	2,161,941	416	5,197	1,621,144
8	Do Something	2,136,972	1,821	1,174	2,407,505
9	Human Rights Campaign	1,976,321	539	3,667	2,500,374
10	North Shore Animal League America	1,742,631	406	4,292	900,601
11	Planned Parenthood Action	1,595,183	418	3,816	912,942
12	CMA Country Music Association	1,483,598	178	8,335	2,320,194
13	NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council)	1,160,065	544	2,132	696,155
14	Wounded Warrior Project	1,080,900	180	6,005	3,276,525
15	AARP	983,546	198	4,967	1,603,016

Shareablee SOCIAL SCORECARD  
 TOP NONPROFIT BRANDS ON INSTAGRAM – Q4 2016  
 Based on Total Actions (likes and comments)  
 Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareablee. Source:

RANK	BRAND	TOTAL ACTIONS	TOTAL CONTENT	ACTIONS PER CONTENT	TOTAL AUDIENCE
1	PETA	2,221,407	323	6,877	405,071
2	Oceana	1,516,597	359	4,225	245,925
3	WWF	1,490,548	152	9,806	510,098
4	Mercy For Animals	1,170,281	256	4,571	235,138
5	Human Rights Campaign	879,581	254	3,463	273,521
6	CMA Country Music Association	771,465	147	5,248	459,894
7	San Diego Zoo	579,223	59	9,817	399,583
8	Save the Children	504,468	98	5,148	379,613
9	peta2	428,717	217	1,976	125,066
10	North Shore Animal League America	422,670	264	1,601	73,404

# How to Incorporate Design Into Brand Messaging

people to think, to do, to say, to act—and those actions can change the world.”

“What I would love communicators to realize is everything we produce visually influences decisions [consumers] make. So if we can be intentional about what we communicate visually, it can reinforce your message and create that strong, evocative emotion that can get [people] to act and change.”



**Steve Swanson,**  
Creative Director,  
GE Digital

**Mini Case Study:** Recently GE Digital updated its email templates for out-bound campaigns. The templates were “text heavy...kind of an old layout, not using responsive design,” Swanson says. Based on “what we see as consumer behavior, we decided we should rethink some of the elements on these pages to see if we can increase engagement.” The team decided to try to “visually connect with the audience by providing an industrial context.” For

people in the power industry the team inserted an image of a power plant in the email template. The goal was to make a subconscious connection with the reader.

“By creating a visual hierarchy of information that we think is valuable to communicate a high-level message quickly, we redesigned the entire template to increase engagement.”

The redesign has resulted in “significant engagement” increases in open rates and drive-through from emails to web landing pages. The takeaway: By combining design trends with the frame of reference of your audience, “you can strategically create a design that will optimize engagement.”

**How to Begin:** How does a communicator with little knowledge of design begin to redesign an email template as in the case above? We asked how Swanson’s team begins. Start with the business need, he says. For example, you want to improve performance. Ask why you think design can help. From there “we brainstorm and look at what else is on the market. What are other people doing? We’ll do searches around top companies or blogs that we think are doing things well. In this case, we’ll research what are optimal email templates or landing page designs. Then we’ll see metrics to validate what we’ve found.”



M+M's: The visual language created for GE's Minds + Machine event in San Francisco connects attendees to machines, demos, presentations and the event itself. Visual and experiential design is critical in communicating an event's theme. Source: GE Digital

**A tip:** Swanson’s team often visits the **Behance** site, a community run by **Adobe** where designers share examples of their work. Its strong search functionality allows you to enter, for example, “landing page design” and you’ll see examples of landing pages. **Another tip:** Swanson says it’s important to look at companies that provide metrics platforms and see what they’re doing in terms of design. For email landing pages, for example, “look at **HubSpot** or **Adobe**, because you know they’re measuring...and optimizing their design.” ■

**[Next Week:** Tips from Swanson about how he fosters an environment of creativity.]

**Editor’s Note:** GE Digital’s Steve Swanson will be the keynote speaker at PR News’ Digital How-To Conference, June 23, Chicago: [bit.ly/2orzikl](http://bit.ly/2orzikl)

**CONTACT:** [Steve.Swanson@ge.com](mailto:Steve.Swanson@ge.com)

## VISUAL STORYTELLING GUIDEBOOK

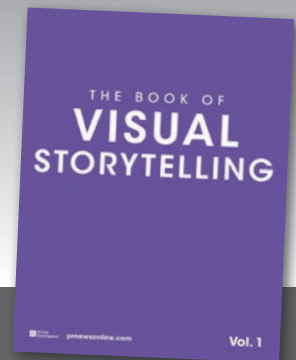
PR News’ Visual Storytelling Guidebook is packed with how-to’s and case study examples on how to use visuals to tell new stories about your brand and connect with new audiences and customers. You’ll learn how visuals can enhance and complement the stories your brand has to tell, discover what tools and resources are available to you and connect with new audiences—audiences that increasingly expect and consume visual information on digital channels.

**Chapters include:**

- Getting Started
- Creating Great Images
- Instagram
- Snapchat, Pinterest and More
- Live Streaming
- Video



Questions? Contact Laura Snitkovskiy at [laura@accessintel.com](mailto:laura@accessintel.com)  
[www.prnewsonline.com/visual-storytelling-guidebook](http://www.prnewsonline.com/visual-storytelling-guidebook)



# How a Tourism Brand Changed Its Storytelling

rely on visual storytelling to catch our eyes and hook us. Our team of talented in-house designers accepted the challenge.

The first task was to begin creating a monthly economic forecast infographic. The goal: Explain the Convention Center's economic benefit to the region by showcasing revenue generated from one month of conventions.

The visuals were designed to be bright and simple. The overall strategy relies heavily on photos and custom icons. We began developing a branding style guide and library of our preferred graphics and colors.

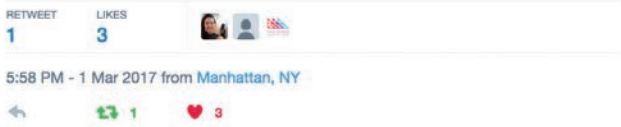
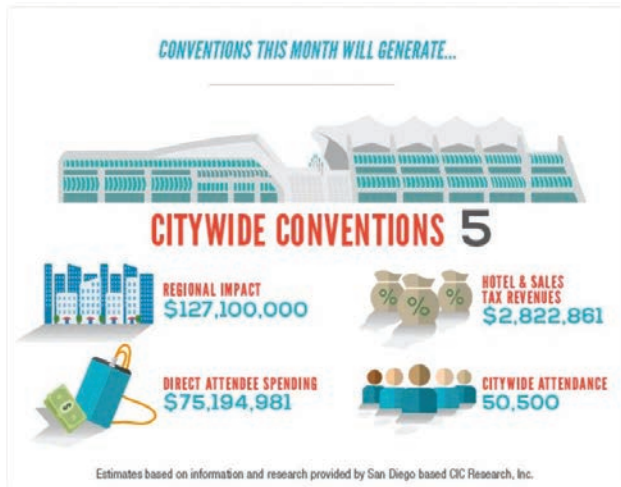
Next, we decided to post the economic forecast infographic wherever our audience was: **Twitter, Facebook, Instagram** and **YouTube**. The forecast also replaced a typical press re-



The economic engine that is SD's convention industry is going strong. More than 50K visitors in March, generating \$100M+ in regional impact.



We love this infographic from @SDConventionCtr, detailing monthly convention center activity and economic impact. #eventprofs @visitsandiego

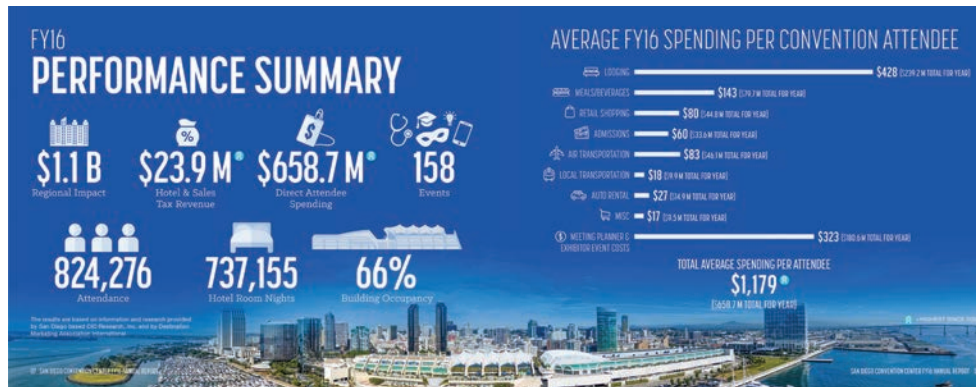


Pretty Picture: The San Diego Convention Center's infographics have been hailed by the city's mayor (above) and used to supplement journalists' stories (left). Those pressed for time can get a quick take on the Center's annual report with the graphic (below, left). Source: S.D. Convention Center

lease and was sent via email campaigns to our media partners. Our social media audience has responded to the forecast infographics. We also got an unexpected boost in March when one of our most important stakeholders shared and championed one of our infographics: City of San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer [see graphic above].

Our department also has watched media outlets utilize data from our infographics when covering news about the Convention Center. What has become evident is that infographics serve a secondary purpose: The information in them becomes an added media asset that reporters use to enhance their storytelling. Here is an example from *Facilities & Destinations Magazine* [see graphic at left].

The next step for us was to use graphics and infographics as visual hooks for engagement or as vehicles to prompt audience click-through.



Strategically, we decided to rethink the Convention Center's annual report. As you can see from the graphic [below, left], the usual text-heavy pages of financial reporting are gone. We can tell a story now with pictures, using the text as supplementary content. And the result has been award-winning.

Graphics and infographics helped create a new kind of content strategy for us, where we promoted the report

using infographics designed for the report. To track the success of our campaign strategy, our digital analyst added Google Analytics' campaign to our social media posts. That way we could track the infographics that drove readership the most. The data we collected has helped us create benchmarks and improve our visual storytelling for future campaigns.

We even took things one step further by creating animated videos using just graphics and infographics to promote

our calendar-year forecast. Watch it here: [bit.ly/2qGtpB9](http://bit.ly/2qGtpB9)

We are proud to have won awards for our progressive approach to visual storytelling. The one constant about PR is that the landscape always is changing. If you've not done so, think about adapting your messaging method to stay relevant. ■

**CONTACT:** [barbara.moreno@visitsandiego.com](mailto:barbara.moreno@visitsandiego.com)

## CASE STUDY

BY TERESA PALAGANO, DIRECTOR OF CLIENT BRANDED PROGRAMS, THE ECONOMIST GROUP

# The Economist Group Taps VR, 3-D, Food and Sports to Tout Porsche

As people spend more time online, brands are constantly competing to break through the barrage of digital content and ads to drive consumer engagement.

Advertising and content marketing campaigns must offer innovative solutions to get the attention of fragmented audiences so that they'll engage with an advertiser's message.

This solution was key to a marketing program **The Economist Group** (TEG) offered to luxury car manufacturer **Porsche** for its launch of the Panamera.

To reach *The Economist's* audience, the campaign would have to appeal to the intellectual curiosity of readers. After brainstorming several concepts, the team decided to create an initiative known as "Inter/Sections," which took form as a custom-built microsite with a cultural approach to interesting examples of convergence—places where ideas were merging and something new and better was emerging.

To capture the attention of busy readers TEG incorporated 3-D models, viewable in virtual reality (VR), into a microsite that included a four-part video series and essays about how intersecting ideas are changing the automotive industry, architecture, food and sports. The campaign also used interactive 3-D banner ads to drive traffic to the site, a first for TEG.

The Porsche Panamera melds the comfort and design of a four-person vehicle with the speed, power and performance of a sports car in an effort to create a bold driving experi-

ence. To convey this to the target audience, TEG created a custom content program that links the Panamera with other captivating intersections—ideas that link two entities to form something new, something disruptive.

In the culinary world, the program explored the emergence of a new way to feed the world via 3-D food printing; in sports, it looked at the rise of a new power player who combines the skills of a point guard with a basketball forward; and it explained how the fusion of architecture and engineering is transforming cityscapes.

The Panamera is described as a no-compromise vehicle, in that drivers don't sacrifice power and speed for luxury and comfort. With that in mind, the team was determined to be uncompromising as well, conceptualizing a full-on visual and editorial campaign including a video series with added 3-D and VR elements to make the reader experience appealing from front to back.

## THE GOALS

The primary goal was to create awareness of the new vehicle with the target audience. Porsche wanted to reach af-



*Continued on page 6*

**May 22-24, 2017 | Atlanta, GA**

On May 22-24, 2017, hundreds of digital, social media, marketing and PR professionals will gather for the annual Social Shake-Up conference in downtown Atlanta. PR News is hosting this event in partnership with Social Media Today.

www.socialshakeupshow.com

Questions? Contact Jessica Placencia at [jessica@accessintel.com](mailto:jessica@accessintel.com); 301-354-1641

fluent buyers with household incomes beyond \$500,000. TEG wanted an immersive experience in which this audience would learn about the Panamera and discover the detail, engineering and backstory behind this new sedan.

Knowing that the deeper audience members engaged with the various Inter/Sections content, the more likely they were to appreciate the disruptive nature of the Panamera, TEG set out to create videos that would go beyond benchmark completion rates of 30% as well as drive considerable traffic and time spent on the microsite. TEG also planned to drive substantial engagement with the 3-D models.

## THE CHALLENGES

Beyond breaking through the clutter that is the online digital environment we mentioned above, the primary challenge was to create a dynamic user experience on a very tight deadline.

In addition, this was the first time TEG used 3-D modeling, which brought its own programming, design and build challenges.

Next, the team had to consider how to implement the models into the campaign for an audience that lacked the specialized software used to create them. Long calls with the vendor, a collaborative spirit and determination led to digital solutions.

It also needed to figure out how the models would play into the overall flow of the campaign, which ended up being not only on the microsite, but on the web ads promoting the site as well. Aggressive timelines meant the team had to shoot all four videos in one week on opposite coasts of the country; source experts, nail logistics and parallel track shooting with editing.

As if there weren't enough hurdles to overcome that week, one of the experts was denied access to the country the day of his shoot. Rushed conversations with lawyers and immigration officials helped preserve the shoot and the schedule.

## THE RESULTS

Despite the challenges, the campaign delivered impressive numbers as it racked up more than 18 million impressions and 1.8 million engagements with the 3-D models. The video completion rates for the four videos were also much higher than benchmarks, ranging from 52% to 82%.



4-Door, 3-D: A look at the 3-D model of the Porsche Panamera featured in the Inter/Sections campaign The Economist Group (TEG) created for Porsche. TEG aimed to drive engagement with the 3-D models. Source: The Economist Group



Of the four different Inter/Sections pages on the microsite, users spent the most time on the page for the Panamera itself, averaging 4 minutes, 55 seconds per user.

## LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ **It takes a village:** From web developers and graphic designers to writers, editors and filmmakers, this project wouldn't have been possible without coordinating efforts across TEG in not only the U.S., but the U.K. as well. When working with people across so many different teams and in different offices, communication has to be clear and concise to avoid confusion and slowing the workflow.
- ▶ **Be true to the brand:** One of the biggest challenges in creating a campaign like this is being true to your outlet's brand while also aligning with the advertiser's brand. The advertiser should always be the focal point, but not in a way that turns off your loyal readership. Finding this middle ground is key to launching a successful campaign.
- ▶ **Sophisticated content is critical:** Blatant marketing messaging can turn off sophisticated audiences. Finding a way to connect with them in an organic way is key. If the brand you're working with has an interesting story, find ways to showcase it, such as homing in on a certain aspect and using it to inform your audience in a broader sense that speaks to the brand, but comes off as intuitive and not like a sales pitch. Adding a deeper level of content, such as 3-D models and VR, also gets the reader more involved with the campaign. ■

**CONTACT:** [brock.thatcher@tvcgroup.com](mailto:brock.thatcher@tvcgroup.com)

# 4 Steps Brands Need to Take to Negate Product Recall Fatigue



As a communications pro (and consumer) you likely have experienced a product recall. Recalls occur with such exhausting regularity that they are becoming lost on weary consumers, creating unacceptable safety and PR risks.

Recall fatigue—when consumers are so inundated with recall notifications that they tune out—is becoming a serious problem that can severely damage a brand's reputation. In the case of certain automobile, food and drug recalls, ignoring a recall can have life-threatening consequences.

Countering recall fatigue often falls on the shoulders of PR and marketing pros tasked with getting out the word. With the plethora of recalls (2016's total was a record), it can be difficult to get consumers whose antennae are muted to take action. Automobile-related recalls, for example, are particularly problematic. *Consumer Reports* says 113 million were recalled during the past couple of years, yet up to 25% of owners don't respond, according to data from the **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration** (NHTSA).

Product Recalls (2016): 3,400+  
Daily Average: 9.4  
Source: U.S. Government

While you can strengthen your communications plan to address the problem, a more aggressive and coordinated effort between government, manufacturers and recall experts to improve recall effectiveness is critical.

So how can you step up your PR and crisis communications game when faced with a recall? As a PR pro, it is important to advise your brand to closely follow regulatory guidelines—even exceed them—to avoid the recall fatigue trap and the brand damage it can cause.

**1. Directly and swiftly contact consumers to ensure they can take the necessary actions to return or destroy products, schedule a repair or get a replacement/refund.** It is critical to describe the risk effectively in the recall announcement with messages that will motivate consumers to return or dispose of the product. Recall experts who communicate with consumers daily know special messaging techniques that will spur consumers to take action.

**2. Multiple follow-up notifications and phone calls to consumers usually are needed to satisfy regulatory compliance rules.** They also maximize return/disposal rates. Follow-ups are particularly important for products that are out of season because of consumers' out-of-sight-out-of-mind proclivities.

Customer loyalty cards are another a great way to track affected consumers, providing real-time purchase history and contact information. Manufacturers should also consider using a warranty registration database. And most important, they need to keep all databases up to date, because gaps in purchase information lead to poor participation rates. Bottom

line advice: Over-communicate. Only issuing a press release or posting one-time store notifications won't cut it.

**3. Make it easy for consumers to respond.** Even headline-making recalls won't necessarily trigger reactions if consumers feel it's too much trouble. Brands facing a recall should establish a dedicated hotline and website as well as an email address for consumer questions and responses.

Using a service to perform repairs and provide remedies in the field can also improve response rates by making things more convenient for customers.

It can be helpful for brands to offer a remedy for a recall that goes beyond consumers' expectations. Consumers want reimbursements for recalled products. While it is understandable for some executives to wish to minimize costs associated with a recall, they need to consider the repercussions. Lost customer loyalty, legal fees and regulatory fines are costlier in the long run. A single consumer scorned can do outsize reputational damage on social media.

**4. Be prepared.** If a recall catches your company unprepared, odds are it will trip up somewhere and miss critical steps. Companies should make a plan, update it regularly and hold practices.

How can you determine whether response rates are low due to recall fatigue or some other reason? These are the top indicators:

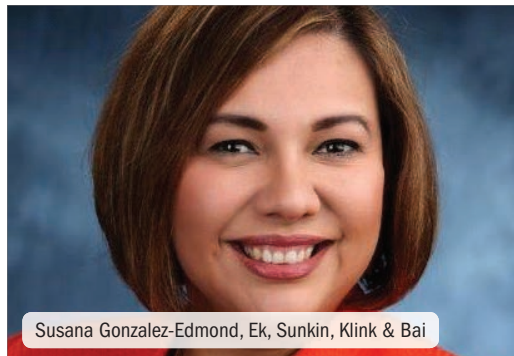
- ▶ You're not receiving remedy requests, even with a high-priced item. Low response to high-dollar recalls can be a fatigue red flag.
- ▶ You've been diligent about notification, but aren't receiving many consumer questions. If you're hearing radio silence, it may be because consumers aren't aware of your issue.
- ▶ Response rates are low, but the risk is high. It is unsurprising that a relatively low-risk recall would fail to gain attention; however, more hazardous defects should theoretically cause consumers to take notice.
- ▶ There are many other recalls in the news. While no brand wants to be inundated with negative headlines, if minimal coverage leads to low response rates, there can be negative consequences.

The good news is that recall fatigue is fixable. By applying the right mix of education, recall expertise and speed of execution, consumer behavior can be positively influenced to greatly improve participation rates and minimize harm. Done correctly, this strategy can help contain brand damage and may even retain consumers' trust and loyalty. ■

**CONTACT:** [kcooney@brodeur.com](mailto:kcooney@brodeur.com)



Chris Brody, Marketing Director, DiGiorno



Susana Gonzalez-Edmond, Ek, Sunkin, Klink &amp; Bai

Cameron Webb, Director,  
Head, Branding and Creative, Infinite Global

**1. The Jury is Out:** Debate this: Is it better to come clean quickly when your brand is under fire or resist saying and doing anything until forced? Last week brought examples of both strategies. There's **Chipotle**, which moved relatively quickly on its crisis. It's been a long road back, and there's a lot more to go, but the burrito maker was able recently to report a recovery in same-store sales (up 18%) for the first time since its crisis hit during Halloween 2016. Q1 profits were up, too, as were shares. And say what you will about **United's** initial blunder—and plenty has been said and deserved—but once it admitted its faults, the airline has moved quickly to try to extinguish its crisis. Yes, CEO **Oscar Munoz** took heat on Capitol Hill last week, yet it might have been a full-on fire had United come clean quickly. **Fox** is taking the other route. It's said and done relatively little re issues underlying the summer ouster of **Fox News Channel** founder/chief **Roger Ailes**. And the 1,000 cuts keeping happening. It's had to absorb losing top-rated talent **Bill O'Reilly** on charges similar to those that potted Ailes. And last week one of Ailes' replacements, co-president **Bill Shine**, departed under the same dark cloud. Numerous reports allege Shine reluctantly accepted Ailes' culture that allowed O'Reilly to keep his job. A few days after Shine's exit last week, word came of a lawsuit accusing Fox News of gender discrimination. And more: A woman who accused O'Reilly of harassment says she will appear in front of a British regulator looking at **21st Century Fox's** takeover of satellite TV megabrand **Sky**. The cherry on top of the cake: **The NY Times** reports a federal investigation into Fox News continues. The inquiry began in Sep-

tember, the Times says. Of course, Fox is far from alone in terms of remaining relatively tacet in a transparent era. Last Monday, **AXA**, the French parent of asset manager **AllianceBernstein**, fired AllianceBernstein's CEO and ousted nine board members. Thing is, it did so via the small print of a securities filing. The financial media's response, needless to say, was a collective "Huh?" Just days earlier, on Apr. 27, the firm and subsequently ousted CEO **Peter Kraus** met media to announce quarterly financials; they mentioned nothing about imminent leadership changes. Oh, AXA agreed to buy \$99 million in stock from Kraus. Guess that's an incentive to stay quiet. Still, at a time when investors dislike having the wool pulled over their eyes, was AXA's a prudent course? Consider unwell health-tech firm **Theranos**. Last week it settled out of court 2 suits with hedge fund **Partner Fund Management**. Partner alleged Theranos duped it into investing some \$96 million. And these are far from the only suits Theranos has had to settle recently. You might recall Theranos' centerpiece blood-testing tech turned out to be a bust. Yet Theranos admitted this was the case agonizingly slowly.

**2. Anticipation:** Does the smell of pizza trigger something in you? Relax. A brand has the science to prove you're normal, at least if you live in NY. **DiGiorno** used 40 high-res cameras and emotion-reading software to measure the effect pizza had on the moods of 3 groups of partygoers in NY. **Chris Brody**, DiGiorno's marketing director, tells us, "Camera footage was analyzed to identify patterns in emotion at 5-second intervals... patterns were calculated using **Google's** Vision API on a 0-4 interval." The find-

ings show changes in emotions were at their highest, ie, people were happiest, when they *smelled* pizza baking (not when they were eating it). DiGiorno is using the findings to inform messaging in its *Rise to the Occasion* marketing platform, Brody says. What will the next experiment be? "DiGiorno always is looking for interesting new ways to connect with consumers and pizza lovers," he says..."and...we'd consider expanding on [this] or executing [it] in a similar fashion again." *PRNews Pro* staff hopes to be part of future experiments.

**3. CCO Headaches:** Institute for PR is planning a report on challenges facing CCOs, including: the CCO's expanding role into marketing; the "chaotic communications-marketing structure;" how to draw insight from digital data; how to lead a brand on culture; and dealing with shrinking budgets as responsibilities increase.

**4. People:** **CommCore** added former **Department of Homeland Security** advisor **Gregory Michaelidis** to its roster as a cybersecurity communications specialist. He'll focus on assessing the communications readiness of brands to anticipate and respond to cybersecurity attacks, data breaches and other security incidents. – **Infinite Global** named **Cameron Webb** a director and head of branding and creative. Previous stops included head of brand for **KPMG UK**. – **Phil Riggins** joined **Leidar** as a partner to strengthen its brand and reputation insight practice. He joins from **Brunswick** where advised on reputation, brand and issues management. – **Susana Gonzalez Edmond** joined **Ek, Sunkin, Klink & Bail**. She's a former aide to Long Beach, CA mayor **Robert Garcia**. ■



# 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](mailto:mfrench@accessintel.com)

ENTER ONLINE: [prnewsonline.com/platinum2017](http://prnewsonline.com/platinum2017)