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SOCIAL MEDIA

Communicators See Strong Possibilities Through Integration of LinkedIn and Microsoft Products

You have to hand it to **Microsoft** chief executive Satya Nadella. When he goes shopping, he comes heavy. Nadella plunked down \$26 billion June 13 to acquire **LinkedIn** as a way to energize both companies. His hope, of course, is that the deal will be a win-win, with LinkedIn gaining cachet, scale and technology and Microsoft obtaining access to information about the mostly white-collar businesspeople who are LinkedIn's stock and trade.

Arriving at a stagnant Microsoft two years ago, Nadella has been pushing the brand to become friendlier to corporate customers. In this respect, LinkedIn and its 105 million monthly active users seems a good match. In all, LinkedIn claims 433 million members, or 433 million resumes, a juicy target for brand communicators.

The 433 million members also are the rub for LinkedIn, which is seen as having saturated the market. In addition, its

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BY MARGOT SAVELL, SVP, HEAD OF GLOBAL MEASUREMENT, HILL+KNOWLTON STRATEGIES' RESEARCH + DATA INSIGHTS

MEASUREMENT

How Much Influence? Tips and Tactics to Measure PR Influencer Success

There is a lot of buzz about influencers at the moment. The word has become ubiquitous in PR and marketing circles, particularly when we talk about building valuable relationships in social media.

Brands are increasing their development of influencer programs. At the same time there is a growing demand to measure PR influencer success.

But reaching out to influencers in PR is not new. PR practitioners have been pitching influencers, and measuring the success of their efforts, since our profession was established more than 100 years ago. The strategies and tactics have evolved over time, but a major tenet of media re-

lations always has been to target influential journalists, industry analysts, newsmakers, subject-matter experts, academics and other thought leaders.

The more recent trend of paying attention to online media influencers dates to 1994, when the web-hosting service **GeoCities** was created. Influence was measured by the number of page views on a website. Many sites featured counters to proudly display their traffic numbers in a transparent effort to showcase influence and attract even more views.

From a personal perspective, 1994 was also the year that



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How Team Starfish Won PR News' Crisis Team Championship in Miami

When **Volkswagen** sputtered in September with dieselgate, we had little trouble finding PR pros to opine about how VW could use the crisis to remake the brand through trust and transparency (*PRN*, 9/28/2015).

Similarly, trust and transparency were in play during a crisis management competition at *PR News'* Digital PR & Marketing Conference on June 8 in Miami Beach. Crisis pros Pia De Lima, VP, corporate communications, **Western Union**, and Allison Steinberg, communications strategist, **ACLU**, formulated a fictitious crisis scenario (below) and judged several teams' crisis plans. The teams had 30 minutes to concoct their plans in pursuit of a \$1,000 prize that **PressPage**—a sponsor of the conference, along with **Business Wire**, **Cision** and **LexisNexis**—provided.

The Scenario: "You work in corporate communications for Bull's Eye, a company that sells goods from clothing and groceries to toys and household appliances, electronics and more. Highly visible, it is one of the most affordable one-stop shops for working-class families.

"During the Q&A portion of a recent quarterly earnings call for reporters, CEO Mark Douwrite decides to weigh in on a trending social issue about transgender people. He announces Bull's Eye customers can use the restroom aligned with their gender identity and that the company is taking a stance squarely in favor of equality.

"A group that believes Bull's Eye's new policy is wrong starts a petition calling on people to boycott the store across the country. The petition garners nearly 1 million signatures and is growing. The group, One Trillion Moms, has come out swinging, publicly attacking Douwrite.

"You and your team are asked to join the CEO for a strategy session in 15 minutes and present your recommendations for communication."

The winning team, Starfish, took a proactive

route, calling for the brand to issue a statement within 24 hours that it's created a task force to focus on the larger issue of customer experience at Bull's Eye stores. "We will show the brand is invested in creating an equal, all-encompassing environment," Starfish wrote in its plan.

Creation of the task force will "shift the focus off the hot-button issue" of transgender bathrooms "to the larger topic of customer experience and how Bull's Eye listens to its customers," the team wrote. The plan called for Bull's Eye to emphasize the task force will solicit public input before the brand makes policy decisions. An additional goal is to make customers "feel safe and comfortable" and demonstrate Bull's Eye is "devoted to providing the best customer experience as well as affordable, high-quality products for working-class families." The CEO and the chief customer experience officer would be the key spokespeople.

Starfish emphasized social media channels to spread the message. Social platforms would push followers to a corporate blog that emphasized the message. A **Skype** town hall also was mentioned, as were regular task force updates on social, monitoring and quick response to public comments. Traditional methods included reaching out to One Trillion Moms, transgender groups and media.

"Starfish transformed the challenge into an opportunity...they dialed down the focus on the [transgender] issue and sought to create a more inclusive environment for all their customers," De Lima says. Starfish planned to "engage the public [via the task force] and be transparent," Steinberg adds.

The winning team: Kaitlin Pickerel, **Foundations Recovery Network**; Jenna Overbeck, **Abila**; Nicole Cieslak, **Tenable**; Andrea Castleman, **Pet Paradise**; Jacquelyn Webb, **McKee Foods**; Jennifer Guerrieri, **University Hospitals**; Dave Solce, **Houston First**; and Mike Wilmering, **O'Malley Hansen**. ■



PR Alchemists: Judges Allison Steinberg (far left) and Pia De Lima (far right) flank the winning team. Tom Gubbins of PressPage is second from left.

PR Pros See Benefits of LinkedIn-Microsoft

105 million active members means 328 million are inactive. These and other realities—stagnant revenue growth, competition from other job-search apps, and an inability to go mobile quickly—hurt LinkedIn's share price, which fell by 50% in March to 100, although it jumped to 200 on deal news.

A challenge LinkedIn has met, at least in part, is one that communicators know well: how to engage an audience. LinkedIn usage among Android users rose in Q1 '16, while it fell slightly on Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter and Instagram, according to data from **SimilarWeb**. The downside: Apps installed on mobile phones of the other four dwarf LinkedIn's mobile tally. People also tend to spend little time on LinkedIn when they're not in job-search mode.

The tie-up with Microsoft can help, however. "Microsoft has the potential to integrate curated news into the LinkedIn newsfeed, based on users' interests," says Missy Voronyak, director, social strategy and engagement, **WCG**. "This can make LinkedIn more appealing and stickier..." She notes LinkedIn is "the new favorite for publishing business-related thought leadership posts. There's a lot of power there [communicators] can harness."

Voronyak is anxious to see Microsoft's influence on LinkedIn's social selling. "LinkedIn's [premium product] Sales Navigator is a good tool for sales teams, but there's room for Microsoft to put more power behind it." Since Microsoft is focused on B2B, "it has an opportunity to connect (or integrate) Sales Navigator with its Dynamics CRM program. Hopefully this will result in more complete business profiles on Sales Navigator, which is something sales teams have complained about," she says.

Integration is key. "Think about things like LinkedIn's graph interwoven throughout Outlook, Calendar, Active Directory, Office, Windows, Skype, Dynamics, Cortana, Bing and more," LinkedIn chief Jeff Weiner wrote to employees.

"A seamlessness between one's LinkedIn account and Outlook profile could prove appealing to communicators and to our senior leaders, who feel [burdened by having] so many platforms to tend to," says Kevin Kautzky, communications group manager, energy and environment, **Pacific Northwest National Laboratory**, a Department of Energy research lab.

Melissa Wisehart, director, **Moore Communications Group**, says the deal means that "diversification among social platforms will remain and become increasingly important" for communicators. She urges communicators to "carefully evaluate what platforms you're on and ensure you're spreading resources amongst the avenues that are most important for your brand."

Kautzky agrees. "We will be keeping a close eye on [LinkedIn's evolution] and looking at our strategies accordingly." **Southwest Airlines'** CCO Linda Rutherford also said her brand is studying the deal's implications.

Wisehart hopes the acquisition "will provide some much-needed strategic thinking about where [LinkedIn] is going. In addition, I'm hopeful that it will increase the availability of analytics and advertising products." LinkedIn can learn from Facebook in that respect. "[Facebook] did a great job by keeping its primary target—consumers—front and center. But it also placed importance on providing an easy, sophisticated advertising platform for brands as a close second. If LinkedIn can combine that with its stake as the leader in B2B social networks given this influx of capital from Microsoft, I think we will see big things."

Accordingly, Voronyak says, "Now is a great time to revisit your company's social media guidelines to see if LinkedIn is covered." In addition, "You can consider hosting a training to help employees, especially executives...optimize their profiles and learn how to best leverage [LinkedIn] as thought leaders and employee advocates."

Of course, as communicators know, the vaunted synergies that C-suite members speak of when deals are arranged can prove elusive. "All too often...promises of synergy, efficiency and new opportunities fall short..." says Larry Parnell, associate professor, **George Washington University**, who directs its master's in PR program. The issues often relate to culture and communications. "This is a key challenge for us as communicators and for senior management. Paying attention to post-merger integration and successfully meshing the cultures of two companies is critical." ■

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PRNews
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30 & Under

Entry Deadline: July 22 | Final Deadline: July 29

Who are the young PR professionals who have stood out to you this year? PR News' Rising PR Stars awards competition honors budding PR leaders and creative practitioners age 30 and under. Winners will be recognized at PR News' Rising Stars in PR Awards Luncheon on December 6, 2016 in D.C.

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How to Use Data to Adjust, Refine Your Strategy

I joined **AOL**, which offered searchable “Member Profiles” to help determine influence. At the time, this was considered a forward-thinking feature.

In 2002, social networking came into play with the launch of **Friendster**, followed by **LinkedIn** in 2003. In 2006, **Facebook** opened up to the general public and **Twitter** launched.

With each new social media milestone, the movement to cultivate relationships with influencers has grown. As we know, modern-day social influencers are prominent people, often bloggers, who have the reputation and power to sway others with their opinions. They represent opportunities to shape perceptions about your corporate and brand reputation, in addition to your products and solutions. The long-term goal is to convert them into brand advocates.

A meaningful measurement program can help get you there by:

1. uncovering influencers who have the most significant voice and are passionate about your brand and your industry;
2. analyzing what resonates with influencers; and
3. finding insights to drive future strategy.

WHERE TO BEGIN?

As with any measurement program, your first job is to define your business and communications goals. Once you've done so, choose metrics that matter, based on your goals. And make sure they are measurable.

Is your goal to increase the number of brand mentions by influencers in social media and if so, by what percentage each month? Are you trying to enhance your social footprint in specific channels that are most important to your target audiences? Do you hope to increase the engagement of influencers with your content in those channels?

Once you know your goals, key metrics and the most important channels, conduct a media analysis to find relevant online influencers.

Tools such as **Traackr** and **Simply Measured** look at three criteria to determine the foundation of influence: the people who can influence your business and hopefully bring you closer to your customers.

1. Reach: What is the size of an influencer's audience? Of note: An influencer doesn't necessarily need a large number of followers. In some cases, reaching a smaller, better-targeted audience is more valuable.

2. Resonance: How much do influencers' audiences engage with their content?

3. Relevance: How closely does an influencer's original content match the keywords that are important to you?

In addition to **Traackr** and **Simply Measured**, there are many tools that can help you find influencers: **Appinions**, **Brandwatch**, **NetBase**, **Radian6**, **Sysomos**, **Talkwalker** and

Signal, to name a few.

After you've identified influencers important to your brand, evaluate their conversations and develop insights to inform future strategy. Look to the data for the answers to the questions below:

- ▶ How many influencers mentioned your brand name in a month?
- ▶ How many mentioned your messages?
- ▶ What are they saying about your company, your brand and your products?
- ▶ Who discussed the topics most important to you?
- ▶ Who discussed those topics most frequently?
- ▶ Are influencers showing brand preference?
- ▶ Do they have strong opinions about your competitors?
- ▶ Who is most engaged with your content and social channels?
- ▶ Who generated the most engagement with followers?
- ▶ Did they share your research, infographics, fun facts, photos, videos or other creative content?
- ▶ Did they share links to your news?
- ▶ Are they using your unique URLs to drive referral traffic to your website?
- ▶ Do your influencers have followers who are influencers also, and who might not be part of your outreach program yet?

“ Reaching out to influencers is not new. PR has been pitching influencers, and measuring their efforts, since the profession was established more than 100 years ago. ”

A close examination of reviews by influencers is important, too. These days, many studies suggest that online influencer reviews and recommendations increasingly guide consumer decision making.

After you've analyzed the data, use these findings to adjust your messages, craft content, refine your strategies and engage further with your influencers. But keep in mind that the media landscape shifts quickly—new influencers enter, existing influencers exit, and topics of interest shift.

Ongoing measurement will help you stay on top of these changes. Even more important, measurement demonstrates the success of your PR influencer programs and helps find ways to further refine your strategies and tactics. ■

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Proofreading Tips and Tricks to Help You Become Your Own Best Editor



Perhaps you've sent a pitch to Ms. Senior Editor only to remember that it's Mr. Senior Editor. Or you've invited a reporter to a press conference on Monday the 3rd and received a message back saying, "The 3rd is a Tuesday. What day is your event?" So you know great content doesn't mean anything if a document is poorly written or contains typos.

Focusing on a process for writing can set you up for success. A thorough process means you have time for planning, drafting, reviewing, quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC). Juggling multiple projects and deadlines can make it hard to set aside time for all of these steps, and the planning step often gets sacrificed. Still, taking a few minutes to plan your writing before you begin will make editing much easier.

Planning doesn't have to mean crafting an elaborate outline. As we know, the goal in the PR world is to identify key takeaways and other must-include information. A good approach, especially for a short email, is to ask, "What is the one thing I want my reader to remember?" From there, you can list bullet points of the information needed for the reader to understand your thrust and other key messages.

Drafting may be the simplest step. If you've spent time planning and have the background information you need, drafting is the time to get your thoughts on paper. Writing a draft in one uninterrupted sitting should help you arrange your thoughts. The draft need not be perfect. You will return and improve content and then QA/QC for technical errors.

This is where reviewing starts. It is the time to improve your content. Remember, during planning, you identified key takeaways. Now make sure the message you're left with after reading matches those takeaways.

A good trick to make sure what you've written reflects your intended message is to apply a reverse outline. Read each paragraph of your document and jot down the key message in the margins. If your document is long, take another step and identify key messages for sections. Review those messages to make sure they reflect your intentions.

Once your content is where you want it, it's time for QA/QC. This is the final step in your process. But if you skip it, it's the first thing the reader will notice. This step addresses

the technical aspects of your writing: spelling, grammar, missing words and punctuation.

Begin with spell-check. Never send out anything that hasn't been spell-checked. Don't, however, rely on spell-check—it won't catch "their" vs "there," "aisle" vs "isle" or "hat" when you meant "that."

It's hard to proofread your own work. You face a sort of autopilot syndrome. Think about driving to work. You take the same route every day and, after a while, you hardly have to think about it. You're on autopilot.

Reviewing your own PR writing can work the same way. Your readers, on the other hand, are looking at your writing like someone experiencing a scenic drive for the first time. They'll notice far more details than you.

The good news is that the same strategies can help you overcome both of these hurdles. Finding ways to trick your brain into thinking you're reading something for the first time can make your editing more effective and efficient.

The gist is to find a way to present information you wrote back to yourself in a new format. If you like to draft on paper, type your work and proof it as you type, and again once it's on the computer screen. If you type your work, you can rewrite your text with pen and paper. Other techniques: Read in a new environment; read out loud; start at the bottom.

Keep a short list nearby to remind you of things to check when you QA/QC. Some examples: Have you used spell-check? Manually checked for typos? Are dates, times, locations, addresses, names correct? Can you delete words or sentences? Unnecessary commas? Serial commas or comma splices? Are words capitalized that don't need to be? Have you checked apostrophes for possession versus contraction? Are you consistent in voice, tense and point of view? Is the most important information up front? Having a reminder of your common mistakes is a great way to stop making them. Before you know it, you'll be able to replace "check their/there/they're" with something else. ■

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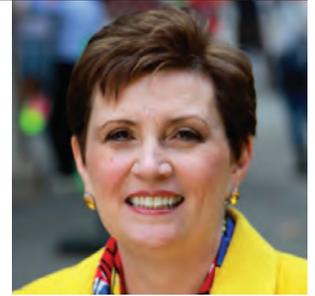
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Questions? Contact Rachel Scharmman at rscharmman@accessintel.com.

Skills PR Pros Will Need for Success in 2020 and How to Build Them Now



Consumer demographics are shifting. Mature markets are reducing spending. Younger consumers are demanding new innovations. Mobile technology and cloud computing are changing the way employees and companies function. Disruptive technologies such as robotics, machine learning and artificial intelligence are creating better tools to help communicators more accurately predict consumer behavior.

As target audiences change, the tools for engaging them evolve, and machines enable us to do our jobs faster and more accurately. Our core function remains the same, however. PR pros still will be responsible for creating stories that educate, influence and connect people with our organizations and brands.

To thrive in 2020, communications professionals will need to become more creative, have strong cognitive flexibility, collaborate, be emotionally intelligent and develop the grit necessary to constantly challenge the status quo. Here are ways to start building these important skills now.

CREATIVITY

It is said often that being creative is the ability to connect two previously unrelated things to create greater understanding. In order to maximize the capacity to be creative, it stands to reason that the more things an individual knows, the more things they can connect. To quote Walt Disney, “We keep moving forward, opening new doors and doing new things, because we’re curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths.”

Start opening new doors by reading new magazines, watching different television shows or attending lectures. An interesting article in *Popular Science* may provide the analogy that will help explain a complex business idea to employees, or a nugget from a lecture on beekeeping could be applied to achieving greater harmony in the workplace.

If you are feeling very ambitious, then take an improvisation class. Improv requires that actors keep a scene moving by never challenging the validity of a previous statement, only building on it. This is commonly achieved by using the phrase “Yes, and....”

Here is an example of how this principle can be applied in a brainstorm session. Person 1 suggests that the type of bread found in your sandwich is an indication of your future success. Person 2 is unable to discount the idea; she can only build on it. So, person 2 might say, “Yes, but one’s true status lies in the ability to create an interesting sandwich.” These exchanges could continue until someone lands on a concept for a campaign. For example, the campaign says the brand of bread one uses not only builds better sandwiches, it lets others know that you are an interesting person.

COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY

To see things from different perspectives, it is essential

to develop an understanding of various viewpoints. Here’s one way to do this: study the same news event from several different sources. **Fox News, MS-NBC, The Wall Street Journal** and *The Daily Show* all interpret the same story from very different perspectives. Over time, immersing oneself in a variety of media sources will provide insights about how each distinct audience perceives and comprehends the same experience.

“**To thrive in 2020, communications professionals will need to become more creative, have strong cognitive flexibility, collaborate, be emotionally intelligent and develop the grit necessary to constantly challenge the status quo.**”

STRATEGIC COLLABORATION

Employees who can facilitate better communication between divisions and collaborate with other disciplines are increasingly in demand. Breaking down silos isn’t easy, though a simple place to start is by taking someone from a different department to lunch. A group of employees having a meal together can enhance the exchange of information across divisions to help build relationships that improve communication and integrate strategies that will grow the business.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The ability to understand motivation and behavior is essential to the process of crafting effective messages. Studying behavioral psychology, economics and discussing the underlying motivations of movie characters is one way to start. Human beings are best observed in the real world, however. So, seek out new experiences and maintain diverse relationships. Join a social club or professional organization, volunteer at a soup kitchen or frequent the local community center and listen to what people are saying. Building a varied network of colleagues and friends will provide a better picture of what motivates you and others around you.

Even with all these skills, sheer grit may end up being the ingredient that makes the difference between a project succeeding or falling. As the world continues to innovate and change at a staggering rate, tomorrow’s successful communicators will need to be constantly trying fresh ways to engage and educate others. They must have the courage to enthusiastically try new ideas despite an uncertain outcome. Just as important, they will need to learn to accept failure with humility to come back next time and try again. ■

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Engagement, Frequency of Nonprofits' Video on Facebook Soar in Q1; Number of Posts Fall 6%

Nonprofits may have more in common with B2B and B2C brands than one might think. This installment in our series detailing consumer engagement with U.S. brands on social platforms finds patterns similar to those seen earlier when the focus was engagement with B2C and B2B brands on **Facebook** (PRN, May 30 and June 6).

Examination of exclusive data provided to *PR News* by **Shareablee** shows the most engaged B2B, B2C and nonprofit brands seem to be emphasizing quality over quantity as the number of posts in Q1 2016 was down compared to Q1 2015. As a result, consumer actions, which is defined as the sum of likes, shares and comments, also fell.

Another trend seen with all 3 brand categories is that video pulls. The amount of video posts is up in all three brand categories, as is engagement with those posts.

Several differences in this installment, however. We've enlarged our chart to show the top 30 brands instead of 15. Due to space considerations, we've moved Data Dive off its usual spot on page 2.

Concerning the data below, about U.S. nonprofits, total consumer actions in Q1 2016 on Facebook declined 35% compared to Q1 2015, accompanying a 6% decrease in

posts, including a 17% decrease in photo posts.

Video posts, by contrast, rose 31% and actions from that content increased 61% in Q1'16 vs Q1'15. It's worth noting, however, that videos still represent a small portion of the content mix for nonprofits in Q1'16 at 15% of all posts. On the other hand, videos were just 6% of the content during Q1'15, for a difference of 146%.

The Rainforest Site was the top nonprofit organization on Facebook in Q1 2016 with nearly 9.4 million actions. Engagement was down 22% in Q1'16 compared with Q1'15, driven by a 14% reduction in posts. The Rainforest Site's Facebook most-engaged posts featured unique animals, including a lynx and its baby, an armored girdled lizard and a golden snub-nosed monkey.

Having topped the nonprofit ranking in Q1'15, **The Breast Cancer Site** fell to second place, generating 9.2 million actions, a 62% drop compared with Q1'15. That drop was the result of The Breast Cancer Site posting frequency decreasing by 31%.

PETA, Mercy for Animals and The National Audubon Society rounded out the top 5. ■

Shareablee SOCIAL SCORECARD
 TOP NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS ON FACEBOOK – Q1 2016
 Based on Total Actions (likes, shares and comments)
 Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareablee. Source: f

Nonprofit Organization	Total Consumer Actions	Total Content	Actions per Content	Total Audience
The Rainforest Site	9.4M	1.5K	6.3K	1.7M
The Breast Cancer Site	9.2M	1.6K	5.9K	6M
PETA	5.2M	316	16.3K	4M
Mercy For Animals	3.6M	371	9.6K	1.9M
The National Audubon Society	3.1M	344	9.1K	767K
North Shore Animal League America	1.7M	386	4.3K	650.7K
Sierra Club	970K	437	2.2K	519.9K
Wounded Warrior Project	927.2K	187	5K	3.2M
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children	852.9K	671	1.3K	345.5K
Organic Consumers Association	842.5K	349	2.4K	1.1M
World Wide Fund for Nature	807.3K	121	6.7K	2.7M
National Resources Defense Council	791.5K	508	1.6K	562.5K
Human Rights Campaign	790.7K	380	2.1K	2.3M
Girl Scouts	782.1K	327	2.4K	404.9K
Best Friends Animal Society	738.4K	152	4.9K	1.1M

Shareablee SOCIAL SCORECARD
 TOP NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS ON FACEBOOK – Q1 2016
 Based on Total Actions (likes, shares and comments)
 Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareablee. Source: f

Nonprofit Organization	Total Consumer Actions	Total Content	Actions per Content	Total Audience
Greenpeace	694.9K	324	2.1K	470.1K
peta2	665.5K	296	2.2K	1.4M
DoSomething.org	636.4K	665	957	2.2M
Make-A-Wish America	600.9K	309	1.9K	808.3K
To Write Love On Her Arms	549.2K	495	1.1K	1.4M
ASPCA	497.8K	183	2.7K	1.5M
Human Rights Watch	483.1K	429	1.1K	2.1M
UNHCR	405.5K	184	2.2K	1.1M
The Humane Society of the United States	393.2K	60	6.6K	2.5M
Save the Children	372.8K	184	2K	1.5M
American Civil Liberties Union	368.3K	341	1.1K	667.5K
The Nature Conservancy	354.3K	191	1.9K	846.7K
CARE	350.8K	324	1.1K	398.1K
Adopt a Pet	327.3K	181	1.8K	547.3K
CMA Foundation	282.581	96	2.9K	2M



Rhino PR President/CEO Susan Shelby (right) and Boston SMPS President Anna Luciano.



GE CCO Deidre Latour



TV One SVP, PR, Tosha Whitten-Griggs

1. Scrap the App: We seldom get a pitch like the one we received June 15. An email promised that a new study contained “qualitative and quantitative data” revealing “that women would rather forego sex AND makeup than shop via social media.” As PR pros are students of the human condition and selling on social is a hot topic, we bit. The data is from a poll of 1,000 women, 18-65 years old, by **WE Communications** and **YouGov**, the London-based research firm. 40% of the women said they’d forego sex, wearing makeup for one month *and* eating candy to avoid using retailers’ apps. (No candy? Really?) In short, the women bash retailers’ apps. A majority of the women said they had fewer than five shopping apps on their phones and most rate the apps “not at all useful.” Women “simply don’t buy via social media” owing to privacy issues and inability to compare prices, the study, *From Like to Buy*, says. Just 9% say they use retailers’ apps to make a purchase. Yet importantly for communicators, 60% say they research products on social. They make purchases on **Amazon** (44%) or a retailer’s site (38%). In addition, they spend 3.5 hours daily on social, yet 73% prefer using it to interact with friends as opposed to shopping.

2. Walk the Walk: **Cision** said June 17 its previously announced acquisition of **PR Newswire** from London-based **UBM** was finalized, except in China and Dubai, where it’s pending regulatory review. The hookup marries Cision’s analytics, database and technology with PR Newswire’s distribution platform. “The combined product roadmap and timeline will be finalized in the coming months,” the announcement

said. PR Newswire’s CEO **Bob Gray** will “transition out of the business.” Cision CEO **Peter Granat** will run PR Newswire. We especially liked the conveyance: a colorful interactive press release complete with videos, tweets, an infographic and links to six translation options, a feature in keeping with the point that Cision now will reach 170 countries. A rep at **Geben Communications** pitched the release via email, personalized it and responded *tout suite* to a follow-up email we sent. Nicely done, folks.

3. News Bits: Kudos to **Rhino PR** president/CEO **Susan Shelby**, who was named Marketing Professional of the Year by the **Boston Marketing Professionals Society**. – **PRSA Boston** said **GE’s CCO Deidre Latour** will keynote its 66th annual meeting, Nov 9. It will be her first speech in Boston since GE relocated its global headquarters there. – **The Buzz Agency** of South Florida acquired PR firm **Tradewinds Media Partners**, based in Palm Beach. **Enid Atwater** joins the firm as VP of PR to run the Palm Beach office. She was VP, corporate communications, for the **Palm Beach County Convention & Visitors Bureau**.

4. Going, Going, Gone? **The Pew Research Center** issued its 13th **State of the News Media** report, an exhaustive look at 13 sectors of the industry. In sum, the news about much of the traditional news media is grim. While these news organizations are adjusting to the realities of the internet era and their digital circulation is growing, the picture remains bleak. As the Pew report says, “There is money being made on the web, just not by news organizations.” The newspaper sector had “perhaps

the worst year since the recession and its immediate aftermath,” the report says. Average weekday newspaper circulation, print and digital, fell 7%, the biggest drop since 2010. While digital circ was up 2%, “digital subscription gains or traffic increases have still not translated into game-changing revenue solutions.” Smaller budgets continue to mean smaller newsrooms. The latest newspaper newsroom employment figures, from 2014, show a decline of 10%, greater than in any year since 2009. The workforce is 20,000 positions smaller than 20 years prior. An earlier Pew study this year said just 5% of U.S. adults who followed the presidential election responded that print newspapers were their “most helpful” source, “trailing nearly every other category by wide margins, including cable, local and national TV, radio, social media and news websites.” On a positive note, broadcast, local and cable news saw modest revenue increases.

5. People: **TV One** formally announced veteran cable PR exec **Tosha Whitten-Griggs** as the network’s SVP, PR. Whitten-Griggs joined TV One earlier this year and reports to TV One’s CEO **Brad Siegel**. Whitten-Griggs was president/CEO of **The FrontPage Firm** and was with **BET** as senior director of corporate communications. – Former Capitol Hill Republican advisor and **Ogilvy** SVP, public affairs **Dan Scandling** joined **APCO Worldwide** as senior director for public affairs, based in the D.C. office. – Congrats to our good friend **Jordyn Linsk**, the new director of media relations and communications at **Save the Children**. The veteran cable communicator worked at **Travel Channel**, **TLC** and **TV One** previously. ■

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