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## CSR

# How Aflac, Astellas and Carnival Balance Social Action With Their Core Business Messages

Not long ago, companies were counseled to stay out of politics and social causes; “stick to business and you won’t offend customers or potential customers,” was thought to be the best route.

Things have changed, partly owing to the millennial generation’s preference to buy from and work at companies that are responsible (see table at right and on page 2). With millennials comprising 40% of the workforce by 2020, brands are correct to heed their voice.

Another part of this evolution owes its momentum to **President Trump** calling out companies on the stump or on **Twitter**, sometimes forcing them to engage in the political arena, a venue they avoided previously.

In just the last few weeks we’ve seen “brands taking stands” rise to a level unseen previously. With the ability of students trapped inside **Stoneman Douglas H.S.** in South Florida to provide real-time images of the carnage on social media, the issue of gun control has risen to the forefront of public consciousness. Recently **Dick’s Sporting Goods**, **Walmart**, **Kroger**, **L.L. Bean**, **United** and **Delta Air Lines**, among others, have taken a stand on guns, risking alienating large swaths of their customer base.

And increasingly, CEOs are being drawn in to the arena. Last year saw the CEOs of brands such as **Chobani** and **Microsoft** take strong stands on immigration. As the *NY Times* wrote just days ago, “Being a chief executive is no longer just about running a company. It means taking political stands on everything from immigration to gun rights...all while balancing short-term profits with long-term goals, dealing with activ-

### ATTITUDES ABOUT CSR

- 33%** Global shoppers who choose to buy from brands they believe are doing social or environmental good. (1)
- 78%** U.S. shoppers who say they feel better when they buy products that are sustainably produced. (2)
- 96%** British consumers who believe it is important for companies to have good social and environmental policies. (3)
- 72%** Marketers who said their company is “very supportive” (32%) or “supportive” (40%) for employees to be active in charitable causes. (4)
- 64%** Global millennials who prefer to work at a company that is having a demonstrably positive impact on the world. (5)

Sources: Unilever (1,2), May 2017; Reason Digital (3), Jan. 2017; Freedman International (4), Feb. 2018; Interact, (5), March 2016.

ist investors and attracting talented employees.”

Part of this new-look CEO derives from the pen of **Larry Fink**, CEO of **BlackRock**, the largest asset manager in the world (\$6.3 trillion). In mid-January Fink sent a letter to

Continued on page 2



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LUNCHEON  
(HONORING THE CSR  
AND NONPROFIT  
AWARDS)**  
 MARCH 20, 2018  
 WASHINGTON, D.C.

**PR MEASUREMENT  
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 PHILADELPHIA

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# CSR: Good for Business and Society

CEOs urging them to think about how their businesses influence the larger community. “Society is demanding that companies, both public and private, serve a social purpose,” he wrote. “To prosper over time, every company must not only deliver financial performance, but also show how it makes a positive contribution to society. Companies must benefit all of their stakeholders, including shareholders, employees, customers, and the communities in which they operate,” he added.

**[Note to Subscribers:** The text of Larry Fink’s letter can be found in the *For The Record* section of the *PR News Essentials* Page at: <http://www.pronewsonline.com/pr-news-pro-essentials/>]

In an effort to better understand brands’ motivation behind their CSR positions—and with *PR News’* CSR and Nonprofit Awards coming March 20 in Washington, D.C.—*PR News*, in collaboration with **3BL Media**, a CSR news distribution and content marketing firm, convened a roundtable with a number of brands to find out why some companies are moving beyond the traditional Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) positions, what’s the best way to communicate CSR efforts without overdoing it, how to measure success and other best practices.

## WHY CSR?

For **Roger Frizzell**, SVP/CCO of **Carnival Corporation**, Fink’s letter is accurate: Social responsibility is a good thing to do and good for business. “The cruise industry relies heavily on the oceans, so it is not only the right thing to do, but it is in our own self-interest to keep the oceans clean and pristine,” he says.

Carnival has partnered with **The Nature Conservancy** and others to broaden its social responsibility effort in the Caribbean and around the world. “Our investment here not only helps us achieve our environmental objectives, but also provides other important benefits to the bottom line in areas such as fuel conservation, in addition to the positive implications on our corporate brand by making this a top priority.”

We asked **Aflac’s** director of corporate communications **Jon Sullivan** about the motivation behind his company’s CSR efforts; is it a recruiting tool, a way to build a better culture or is the company working from the assumption that good corporate citizenship brings financial rewards? “The short answer is, ‘Yes, yes and yes,’” he says.

## FOR BRANDS THERE’S NO DUCKING RESPONSIBILITY

Percentage of consumers who:

**76%** say a company can’t claim to hold values if it doesn’t defend those values for fear of controversy

**79%** consider big companies to be unethical  
**52%** consider small businesses to be unethical

**58%** think responsible companies should be donating more to programs that lose government funding

**50%** of consumers are willing to drive further and pay slightly more to shop at a store seen as responsible

**20%** of consumers would rather do long division than buy a product from a company considered irresponsible



Source: Aflac CSR Survey (Sept. 2017)

In terms of recruiting, “people are incredibly discriminating right now” about whether or not companies “serve a purpose,” particularly millennials. “We’ve seen this in our research,” he says, pointing to the latest Aflac CSR survey (see chart, above). “All of our statistics point out that younger generations are very much impacted not only by the good things a company does, but when a company does bad things they are not very forgiving.” He notes, though, “The question I have is do they want companies to take a stand or take a stand on the things they agree with? I don’t have data on that.”

**Moyra Knight**, executive director, communications and corporate citizenship at **Astellas US LLC**, the U.S. branch of a Japanese pharmaceutical company, says CSR at Astellas is a value creator and a value protector.

Through its business, Astellas says it is creating value for society by addressing social issues such as unmet medical needs. By reinvesting its profits, it strengthens its R&D, winning trust from government and business partners.

CSR at Astellas protects value when the company seeks to reduce its environmental burden and preserve biodiversity, ensures compliance,

and takes measures to prevent corruption, elevating Astellas' corporate brand and protecting its enterprise value.

Knight, who's also president of **Astellas USA Foundation**, essentially agrees with Sullivan and Frizzell, saying, "CSR helps companies become employers and partners of choice, enhances talent retention and recruitment, improves communities and serves as an innovation and value driver."

## WHY ARE WE SEEING EXTREME CSR NOW?



**Roger Frizzell**  
SVP/CCO,  
Carnival Corp

Why are brands risking alienating customers by taking stances that go beyond ESG? Knight sees this as a positive. "Now more than ever," she says, "we are seeing the intersection of societal impact, advocacy and policy, which has led to companies seeking to lead with purpose and create a dialogue to address societal needs. This has enabled companies to build trust as they demonstrate they are values-based

and mission driven."

Frizzell acknowledges the risks of alienating customers, but says, "I think it is necessary and appropriate when [the position taken by the CEO] is real and authentic... not something derived to take advantage of the moment or cave to public pressure."

Sullivan of Aflac agrees with Frizzell. While he points to research showing younger generations "want companies to take stands on controversial issues...this doesn't mean you go out there willy nilly and take a stand. If you're inauthentic you'll be found out...it has to be in line with your business objectives...it has to be relevant to your business. [Aflac] embraces childhood cancer because we started in the 1950s as a company that sold cancer policies...so we don't shy away from saying things, for example, like 'The 4% of government funding for childhood cancer isn't enough.' We certainly point that out."

## HOW MUCH TO TALK

An eternal question for companies engaged in CSR is where, when and how much to talk about it.

"It is equally important to communicate responsibly about your CSR activities as it is to conduct them," Knight argues. "There is no sustainability without transparency and honesty,

which in turn builds trust and leads to sustainable growth." She suggests setting clearly defined, actionable CSR goals using data to demonstrate progress and measure impact, and communicating that responsibly.



**Moyra Knight**  
Executive Director,  
Communications  
and Corporate  
Citizenship,  
Astellas US LLC

Frizzell acknowledges the difficulty between talking too much and too little about CSR. "I tend to lean toward more communications whenever possible since this is my background," Frizzell says, "plus I feel it is important for our key stakeholders to fully understand what the company is doing." He says a common mistake brands make with CSR "is that companies under-communicate...and the public is left largely unaware of the important progress being made as a result."

Still, he believes "we need to be careful to balance our communications and not over-hype minor milestones."

For Aflac, it's important to talk about its childhood cancer effort because the company wants others to join the fight. Yet Sullivan says, "We don't puff out our chest on this [in public]...we speak to it when appropriate...that should be a concern for any company...it's like when you're on the playground and a kid says how great he is...eventually you begin rolling your eyes...[as a company] you want to be judicious... but you don't want to *not* talk about it."

Aflac communicators also are aware of how important childhood cancer is to employees, "so we talk about it internally," Sullivan says. Doing so is a recruitment bonus, he adds. Millennials want to make a good living, "but they'd like to make a good living at a company that serves a social purpose as well."

## OBSTACLES: A FAILURE TO SET GOALS

Similar to many PR initiatives, setting goals at the outset of a CSR campaign is important to a successful effort. "It all begins with the critical step of establishing challenging company objectives," Frizzell says. Carnival set a goal to reach a carbon reduction of 25% per ship. This highlights to employees that corporate social responsibility is a top priority, he says. "It also allows everyone to get aligned around the

*Continued on page 4*



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program.” Once the goals are established, “our experience is that people usually jump on board to embrace it.”

Still, he notes, “This is a journey that never ends if done right. My experience is that you have success and failure in the journey, but you learn from the failures to turn them into success in the long term. Over time, it ultimately drives the corporate culture.”



**Jon Sullivan**  
Director,  
Corporate  
Communications,  
Aflac

Says Knight, “Our challenges were to ensure we had a common approach to how we described our CSR efforts and that we could demonstrate measureable impact on how we deliver value.” Astellas was able to harmonize its message and approach by unveiling its Living SMART framework in 2016, which provided much more clarity to its partners and its employees about the types of areas the company supports. The Living SMART plan concentrates the company on providing help in health and well-being, science and disaster response.

## BUDGET ISSUES

For Sullivan, a common hurdle for companies attempting to assemble a CSR effort is the lack of sufficient funding to create a sustained program as opposed to a series of one-offs. “If you’re consistently working on an issue the company has a chance to be seen as a thought leader in the space,” he says.

Another hurdle, he says, is the need for patience. “Things won’t change overnight...you must have the patience to see it through.” Sullivan also agrees with Frizzell in that many campaigns have their ups and downs.

Measure things constantly, Sullivan urges, and change what doesn’t work. Measurement, he adds, provides your program with “demonstrable data that communicators can take to the C-suite to “show why you’re doing [your CSR program] and that it has value...there’s reason to do it.” That value, he says, is when a business or a consumer is deciding where to do business, and your company and a competitor offer similar products, the fact that Aflac shows it cares about people might sway the decision.

## MEASUREMENT

The three brands interviewed measure their CSR efforts. Knight says Astellas uses several tools to evaluate impact, including **InterBrandHealth**’s brand strength analysis to measure what matters to key stakeholders, including societal impact.

Astellas also conducts a materiality analysis to provide insight into issues important to stakeholders to guide its CSR-based management. The company then reports on these issues and programs as part of its integrated annual report. In the Americas, the company communicates its progress through the Astellas CSR report card.

Astellas measures using RepTrack from the **Reputation Institute**. Carnival also works with the Reputation Institute. “This is the gold standard in my books,” Frizzell

## Aflac’s CSR Journey and a Sensitive Duck

Aflac’s CSR efforts are truly a journey and one with more than a few lessons, including the importance of data and measurement. Several years ago Aflac was a company that had donated millions to childhood cancer, but most of its activities were regional, director of corporate communications Jon Sullivan says, based in the southeast, because it sponsors the Aflac Cancer Center in Atlanta.

About three and-a-half years ago, Aflac’s then-SVP corporate communications Catherine Hernandez-Blades was perusing data about the company’s CSR effectiveness. It was fine on the east coast, people knew about Aflac’s commitment to childhood cancer. The farther you moved west, though, awareness fell, Sullivan says. Hernandez-Blades approached Sullivan and said, “We need to create a program on a national scale, while still supporting local efforts.”

### A DUCK FOR KIDS WITH CANCER

That’s essentially what Aflac has done. While its agents continue to donate more than \$500,000/month to the Aflac Cancer Center, the company has taken on national projects connected to childhood cancer, including sponsoring CureFest, a yearly event held on the Mall in Washington, D.C. It’s also worked with **The Washington Post** and **Atlantic Media** to create customized programs where Aflac can talk about childhood cancer on a national scale.

This year’s new national push might one day become the best known of all: My Special Aflac Duck. Unveiled in January at **CES** to critical acclaim, the duck has sensors that allow it to react to a child’s emotion as he/she is undergoing cancer treatments. Either later this year or next, Sullivan says, the 16,000 children who are diagnosed with cancer each year will receive a duck. “There’s a lot of research showing kids with cancer are lonely...unlike other kids they have to go to the hospital for treatment...this duck is going to be there and be their friend.”



**Not Mock Duck:** Jon Sullivan and a live Aflac duck. Mechanized ducks soon will comfort children with cancer.

says. In addition, Carnival leverages other resources such as **JD Power** and **Harris** polls as well as brand-tracking mechanisms. ■

**Editor’s Note:** CSR campaigns of the brands that participated in this roundtable can be seen at the following links:

<https://3blmedia.com/Profiles/Astellas>

<https://3blmedia.com/Profiles/Aflac>

<https://3blmedia.com/Profiles/Carnival-Corporation-plc>

# Airbnb Dominated Travel Sites' Social Activity in '17 With 150% Growth in Consumer Engagement

We continue our examination of consumer engagement with brands' social posts during 2017, with data provided exclusively by **Shareable** to *PR News*. This week we look at the top 10 travel websites, ranked by consumer engagement, shown as total actions on this chart.

Travel sites generated 42 million consumer actions and 156 million video views across **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **Instagram** in 2017. Despite posting 4% fewer pieces of content, the category saw a 70% growth in consumer engagement, a 77% increase in actions per post and a 91% rise in consumer actions with videos year over year. Videos posted rose 28%. All this indicates a change in content strategy and an increase in quality, says Shareable's **Ron Lee**.

Travel sites generated 72% of their consumer engagement from Instagram, 25% (10 million) from Facebook and 3% (1.4 million) from Twitter, Lee says. Facebook engagement rose 18% vs 2016, while Instagram achieved a 119% increase. Twitter dropped 5%.

Regarding individual brands, **Airbnb**, which also dominated in 2016, maintained its leadership position last year with 18.2 million actions, an impressive 148% increase in engagement, along with a 99% increase in content shared. Interestingly, Airbnb bucked the trend, posting 46% fewer videos in 2017, yet video views rose 79%, Lee says.

**Lonely Planet** at #2 saw a 70% increase in consumer engagement despite a 2% drop in content posted. Video actions and video views both rose by triple digits.

**TripAdvisor** enjoyed 120% growth in engagement and a 758% rise in video views. ■

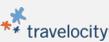
Shareable

SOCIAL SCORECARD

## TOP TRAVEL WEBSITES – 2017

Based on Total Actions (reactions, comments, shares, retweets and likes)  
Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareable.

Sources:   

Rank	Brand	Total Actions	Total Content	Actions per Content	Total Audience
1	 Airbnb	18,229,558	1,186	15,371	9,975,953
2	 Lonely Planet	10,262,358	8,451	1,214	8,675,295
3	 TripAdvisor	6,203,941	1,866	3,325	9,148,389
4	 Travelzoo	2,162,062	3,797	569	3,469,258
5	 VEGAS.COM	750,792	2,129	353	1,304,537
6	 SCOTT'S CHEAP FLIGHTS	517,407	3,714	139	119,319
7	 Skyscanner	382,458	2,348	163	328,670
8	 Expedia	348,179	2,371	147	7,013,680
9	 Travelocity	234,309	1,079	217	726,509
10	 Booking.com	213,417	701	304	7,154,820

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# More Than 70% of American Adults Over 50 Use Social Media, Signaling a 112% Jump in Usage

While most marketers put a premium on attracting younger people, the 50+ demographic is coveted for its disposable income and stability. While it's known that this demographic is less comfortable with communications technology than millennials are, a new report from **AARP** shows a majority of Americans, even those aged 50 and older, are embracing technology.

The survey of some 1,500 U.S. adults older than 50, conducted during November 2017 and released late last month, shows that 90% own a computer or laptop, 70% have a smartphone, and more than 40% own a tablet. Adults aged 70+ are more likely to have older, dated technology, such as desktops and feature phones, than those aged 50-69, the survey says.

## SOCIAL MEDIA'S POPULARITY

Across laptops, desktops and smartphones, more than 70% of adults older than 50 are on social media.

Social media usage in the demo has grown more than 112% since 2011.

This demo is equally likely to access social media on computers and mobile phones, the survey says. More than half of those in this demo who own mobile phones deploy a social media app on it.

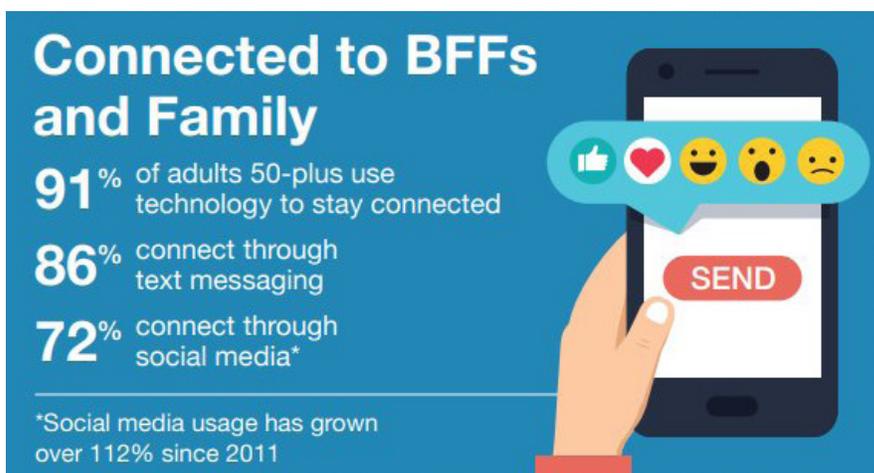
## DOING LITTLE ABOUT SECURITY

Security is an issue in this demo. Just 18% are "extremely or very confident" that their data is secure online. Most lack confidence in organizations, with the exception of financial institutions, to keep their data secure. Social media sites, membership organizations and media are not trusted to keep data safe. Still, very few 50+ do anything to proactively protect their online data, the survey says.

It's clear by looking at the chart where the older demographic is

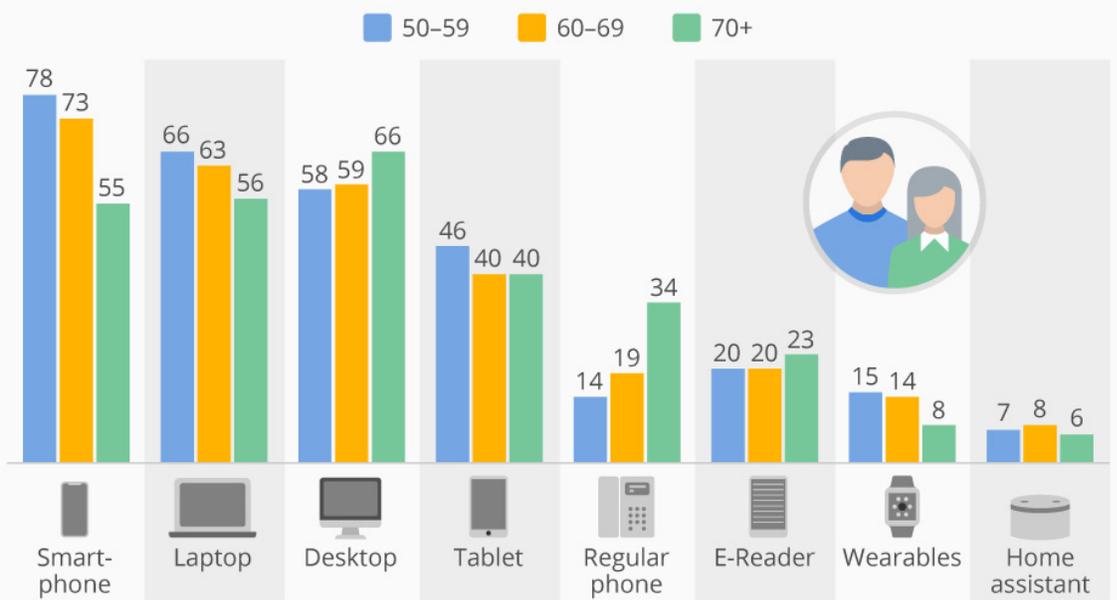
most comfortable technologically. For example, marketers aiming now at the 50+ market in wearables or home assistants will find plenty of untapped potential.

Beyond social media, what is this demo doing with technology? 90% of device owners say they use technology to stay in touch with friends and family, which is a statistic marketers and communicators will want to know. Those aged 50-69 respond that text messaging has overtaken email as the tool they use most to stay connected, though most use email, social and text. ■



## Baby Boomers Embrace Technology

Device ownership among Americans aged 50+ in 2017, by age group, in %



Source: AARP (1,502 respondents, Nov 2017), Statista chart

# PR News Survey: Nonprofit Communicators Got Salary Relief in '17; Integration Down the Road

Late last month we saw a survey from **The Conference Board's Society for New Communications Research (SNCR)** that argued integration between communications and marketing departments was still a valid concept, although the pace at which it's happening might be slower than expected (*PRN*, February 27, 2018).

None of the revenue categories of companies surveyed showed a majority with a fully integrated model where both communications and marketing functions report to the same leader or integrate performance and measurement reporting.

What SNCR's survey of 102 public companies found was that most operate each function separately but with close collaboration between them on many projects.

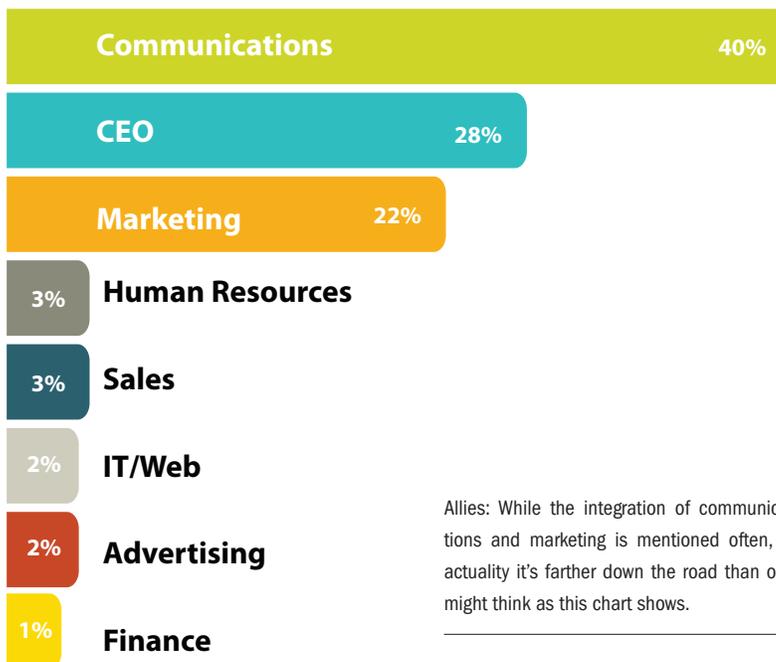
Companies in the financial sector were the most likely to integrate marketing and communications under a single leader (54%), the survey found. Similarly, financial services was the sector where communications leaders most often reported to chief marketing officers (also 54%).

As you can see from the table below, the *PR News Salary Survey* (2018) tracked with the SNCR's findings. While the percentage of communicators reporting to marketing is significant at 22%, full integration has some ways to go. On the upside, the percentage of communicators reporting to CEOs, at 28%, is encouraging.

## BETTER SALARIES AT NONPROFITS

Looking at the salary charts, it's clear agency staff are out-earning nonprofit communicators. Still, there was good news

### WHOM DO YOU REPORT TO?



Allies: While the integration of communications and marketing is mentioned often, in actuality it's farther down the road than one might think as this chart shows.

Average Base Salary of Agency Communicators	
Manager, Account Management, Account Supervisor, Account Executive	\$67,871
% of those making \$50,000 or more	76%
Director	\$106,667
% of those making \$90,000 or more	62%
Chief Communication Officer, EVP, VP, GM, Corp Responsibility Officer, Chief Content Strategist	\$139,663
% of those making \$130,000 and more	46%

Source: PR News Salary Survey (900 respondents, Oct-Nov. 2017)

Average Base Salary of Nonprofit/Assoc/NGO Communicators	
Associate, Specialist & Strategist	\$59,819
% making \$70,000 or more	18%
Manager	\$79,500
% making \$70,000 or more	51%
Director	\$87,675
% making \$90,000 or more	51%
Chief Communication Officer, Corporate Responsibility Officer, EVP/VP, General Manager, Chief Content Strategist	\$119,515
% making \$110,000 or more	51%

Source: PR News Salary Survey (900 respondents, Oct-Nov. 2017)

for nonprofit communicators in that some of their base salaries showed improvement since our previous survey in 2016. For example, only 21% of the the top nonprofit communicators surveyed had a salary of less than \$70,000. In 2016 the same salary was claimed by 50% respondents. The majority of salary increases were 1%-3% and 36% were in the 4%-6% range.

For nonprofit marketers the news was good, too. The average 2017 base salary reported by marketing communications directors at nonprofits was \$87,675. Moreover 70% earned between \$50,000 and \$109,000 and 51% took home at least \$90,000; this was better than the 28% who did so in 2016. 74% of salary increases were 1%-3%.

On the agency side, the figures were similar to those reported in 2016. For example, one in five directors (17%) reported a base salary of \$170,000+. About 43% earn at least \$130,000. Directors' average salary was \$121,656. Six in 10 directors reported a 1%-3% salary increase in 2017. ■



James Levine, former Music Director, Metropolitan Opera

**1. Sour Notes: Harvey Weinstein, Kevin Spacey, Louis C.K., Matt Lauer, Charlie Rose, Garrison Keillor.** Arguably none was bigger in his field than **James Levine**, who was fired as music director emeritus and artistic director of the young artists program of the **Metropolitan Opera** at our press time. The firing followed the Met's investigation of the maestro's conduct. The specifics of the investigation were not released, although the Met said 70 people were interviewed and that it "uncovered credible evidence" of "abusive conduct toward vulnerable artists in the early stages of their careers, over whom Mr. Levine had authority." In addition, the investigation, the Met said in a statement, found evidence of abuse and harassment both before and during Levine's employment at the Met, which lasted some 40 years. We told you about this last year (*PRN*, Dec. 5, 2017), when a report in the *NY Times* about a complaint in Illinois forced the Met's hand during the height of the #MeToo movement. The Met, which essentially halted looking into the Illinois situation, opened an investigation and suspended Levine. The story received scant coverage due to its breaking in the wake of the #MeToo tale of another New Yorker with a surname beginning with the letter L: *The Today Show's* Lauer. Rumors of sexual misconduct followed Levine, 74, for years. He vehemently denied them. The Met and Levine also denied allegations in the Times' article last December about the alleged harassment incident in Illinois in the 1980s. "Unfounded," Levine said. When pressed, Met GM **Peter Gelb** admitted he'd asked the maestro about it. When Levine denied the charges that was good enough for Gelb,

who essentially closed the case. Later Gelb explained he briefed the Met's board about the incident but was awaiting further word from police. Eventually, though, the #MeToo outcry led to the Met opening its investigation. As a result of what appears to be its initial inertia regarding Levine's conduct, the Met now is in the midst of a large PR crisis as well as an existential one. As questions swirl about how much Gelb knew and when, the Met faces the daunting task of raising funds to cover the \$300 million annually needed to run the country's largest performing arts organization. Meanwhile audience members and donors question the integrity of the Met's GM and its disgraced former star conductor.



Billy McFarland, former founder, Fyre Music Festival

**2. News Bits:** Bad PR has consequences. A House committee investigating sexual abuse in sports said it has enlarged its remit to include all 48 national governing bodies. Initially it was to probe **USA Gymnastics**, the **U.S. Olympic Committee** (*PRN*, March 6), **USA Swimming**, **USA Taekwondo** and **MI State U**, where **Dr. Larry Nassar's** practice was located. In its March 7 letter the committee wrote, "[We are] concerned that a pervasive and systemic problem exists in Olympic sports. The safety and well-being of all athletes should be the highest priority..." – Remember the **Fyre Festival**, where famous influencers promised an exclusive music festival/vacation on a secluded island but it turned out to be an awful place with **FEMA** tents, cheese sandwiches and no big-time musical acts (*PRN*, May 15, 2017)? From a PR point of view organizer **Billy McFarland** made things worse with a poorly-worded non-apology. Last week in NY McFarland pled guilty to misleading investors. He faces up to 40 years in jail. – **President Trump** calls the news media "fail-

ing" or "fake," but brands don't see TV that way. Ad spending on TV news rose 9% in 2017 to \$4.1 billion, **Standard Media Index** says. Cable news grew the most, with **Fox News**, **CNN** and **MSNBC** each boosting audiences and ad revenue in 2017.

**3. Platform Prater: Facebook** said it halted a test program dividing News Feed into posts from brands and those from friends/family. Facebook admitted it hadn't explained the test well. The company also said it's removing the Explore tab, which offered users material from sources they didn't follow. – As part of its promise to better police its platform, **Twitter** suspended several accounts for tweetdecking (stealing posts and then mass retweeting them in hopes of getting them to go viral).

**4. Growth:** Travel PR firm **MMGY Global** acquired **Hills Balfour** of Dubai and London. **Grant Thornton** and **Cavendish Corporate Finance** advised. – **Briz Media Group** rebranded from dbray Media and touted Connectors, its group of influencers and power players.

**5. People: Scholastic** named **Stephanie Smirnov** EVP/head of global corporate communications. Smirnov's



Larry Thomas, content leader, Steinreich

background includes managing director, brand practice at **Edelman** and CEO for the U.S. region of **DeVries Global**. – **Guidemark Health** named **Michael Parisi** CEO. Previously he was managing partner at **Ogilvy Common Health Worldwide**. – **FleishmanHillard** named **Matt Groch** SVP/global lead of data analytics and innovation. His background includes 9 years at **Edelman**. – **PAN Communications** named **Racepoint Global's Adam Cormier** VP – **Agency 451** named **Erica Gatlin** and **Sarah Lapierre** leaders of its social influencer marketing group **Wildfire**. – Home furnishings specialist **Steinreich** named veteran trade journalist **Larry Thomas** its chief of content. ■

# PRNews' Platinum Awards 2018

ENTRY DEADLINE: **May 4, 2018** | LATE DEADLINE: **May 11, 2018**

## *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:**

- Activism Campaign
- Anniversary
- Annual Report
- Blog
- Branding
- Cause-Related Marketing
- Community Relations
- Content Marketing
- Crisis Management
- Customer Service Campaign
- Data Insights
- Digital Communications
- Employee Relations
- Event Marketing
- External Publication (print or online)
- Facebook Communications
- Financial/Investor Relations
- Global PR Campaign
- Healthcare Communications
- Influencer Communications
- Instagram Campaign
- Internal Publication (print or online)
- Large PR Firm of the Year
- Live Streaming
- Marketing Communications
- Measurement
- Media Event
- Media Relations
- Midsize PR Firm of the Year
- Mobile Marketing Campaign
- Multicultural Campaign
- On a Shoestring Campaign
- Online Press Room/Media Center
- Podcast
- Press Release
- Pro Bono Campaign
- Product Launch
- Product Launch – B2B
- Promotion for Professional Services Firm
- PSA
- Public Affairs
- Re-Branding/Re-positioning
- Satellite Media Tours
- Single Video
- Social Good Campaign
- Social Media Campaign
- Small PR Firm of the Year
- Snapchat Campaign
- Speech/Series of Speeches
- Trade Show/Event PR
- Tumblr Campaign
- Twitter Campaign
- University: Education
- Video Program
- Website Marketing
- Visual Storytelling Campaign
- YouTube
- Word of Mouth Marketing
- WOW! Award

### **Top People and Teams:**

- CEO of the Year
- Educator of the Year
- Marketing Team of the Year
- PR Professional of the Year
- PR Team of the Year
- Boutique Firm (5 or fewer employees)

### **Top Firm of the Year:**

- Small
- Midsize
- Large

Questions? Contact Mary-Lou French at [mfrench@accessintel.com](mailto:mfrench@accessintel.com)

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