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CRISIS MANAGEMENT

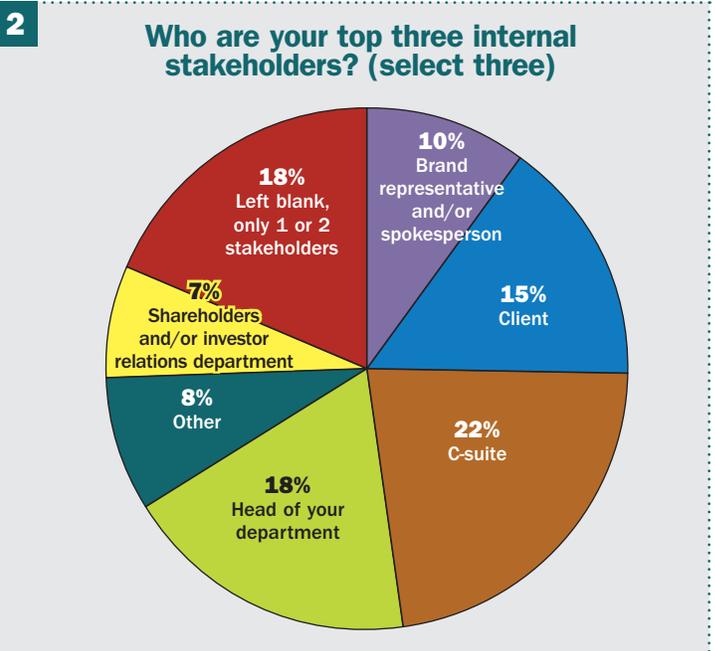
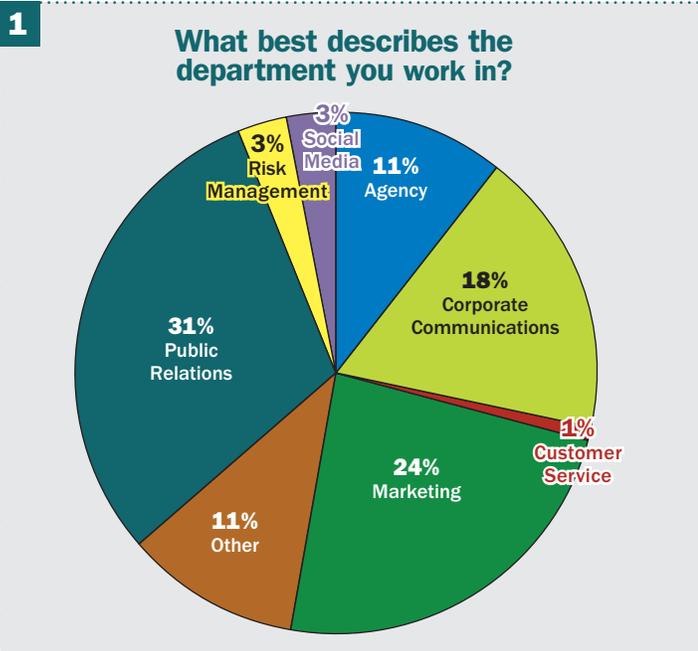
Most PR Pros Have Quick Access to News but Crisis Response Remains Slow

How often have you attended an industry event about PR crises and heard someone recite the maxim attributed to **Warren Buffett**? “It takes 20 years to build a reputation and 5 minutes to destroy it. If you think about that, you’ll do things differently.” Probably so often you’ve lost count.

And, surely you’ve heard speakers add a corollary about

how quickly digital technology can send news around the world, which means Buffett’s 5 minutes is closer to 2 or 3 minutes now and perhaps not even that long.

Certainly speed counts during a PR crisis. The ability to react quickly, before a situation becomes a crisis, is critical. Part of that quickness depends on how fast communicators



Source: PR News and Dataminr (April-May 2018)

Continued on page 2



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UPCOMING EVENTS AND WEBINARS*

WEBINAR: HOW TO MANAGE A CRISIS & PRESERVE YOUR BRAND’S REPUTATION
SEPTEMBER 20, 2018
 1:30-3:00PM ET

PLATINUM PR AND AGENCY ELITE LUNCHEON
SEPTEMBER 21, 2018
 NYC

HEALTHCARE SOCIAL MEDIA SUMMIT
OCTOBER 23, 2018
 BALTIMORE, MD

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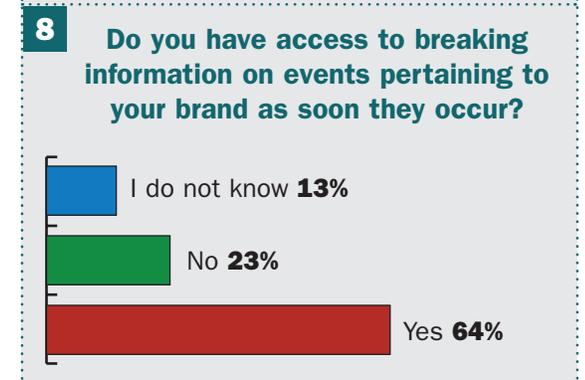
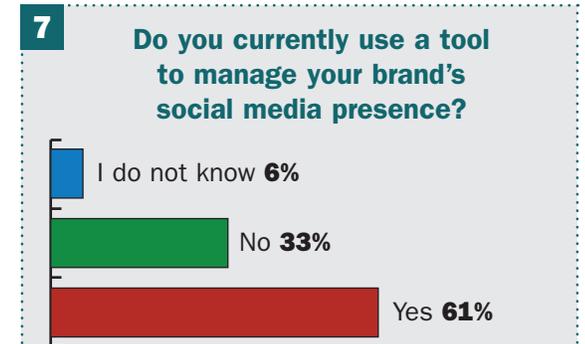
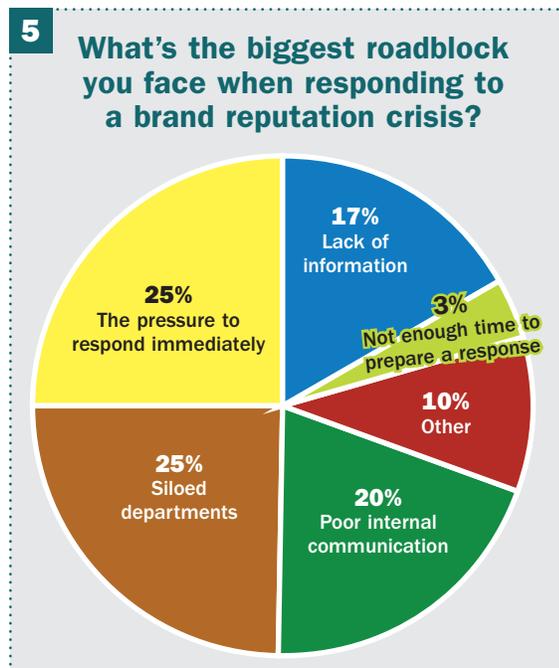
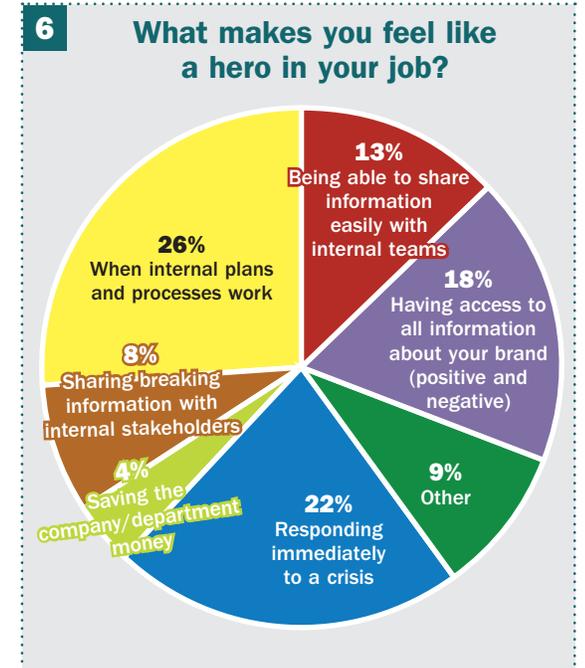
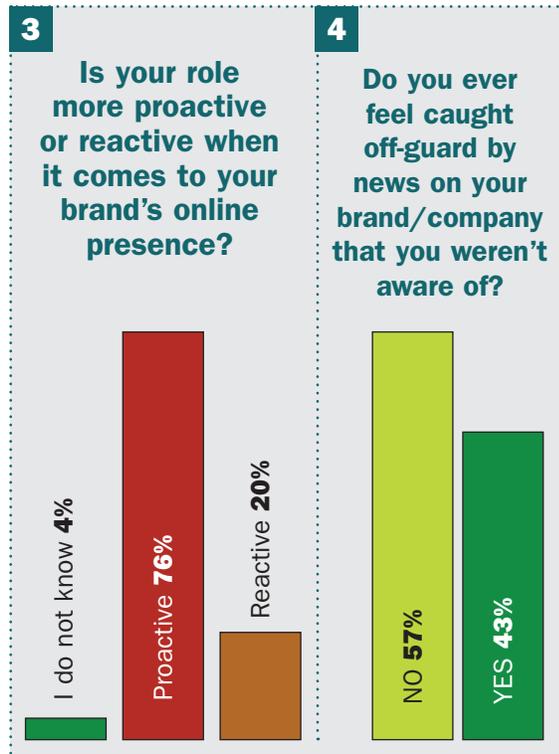
40% Lack Fast Access to Breaking Info

can access critical information.

On the other hand, reacting too quickly, before communicators have had an opportunity to gather data and monitor the social conversation, can escalate what might have remained an isolated incident into something larger, even

a crisis, says **Kevin Elliott**, SVP at **Hill & Knowlton Strategies’** (PRN, Feb. 6).

The issue of speed during a crisis, impediments to successfully dealing with crisis and, for that matter, what successful crisis management looks like are a few of the questions PR



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News and **Dataminr**, a real-time information discovery company, asked PR and marketing professionals.

Some 160 executives participated in the survey during April and May.

Among the survey's goals was to gauge preparedness for handling breaking information during a crisis, explore hurdles to successful crisis resolution and get a sense of the market's crisis communications workflow and attitude.

As you can see from charts 1 and 2, responders are a mix of professionals from brands, nonprofits and agencies.

IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO NEWS FOUND LACKING

In sum, the survey found nearly 40% of PR professionals lack immediate access to breaking information (chart 8). Roughly the same percentage admits developments about their brand caught them off-guard (chart 4).

Looked at one way, chart 3 poses an interesting glass half-full/half-empty situation. Adding the 4% who say "I do not know" to the 20% who believe they are more reactive than proactive regarding their brand's online presence and you have nearly 25% of responders being in the dark a bit.

True, it's not bad for nearly 75% of communicators to say they're proactive about their brand's online presence, still it's unsettling to think nearly one-quarter of responders are more reactive than proactive.



Neil Steinberg,
VP, Dataminr

Neil Steinberg, a Dataminr VP, sees the response to question 3 differently. He considers the 20% who say they are reactive to their brand's online presence as people who were pushed into "an all-hands-on-deck situation...so the response to this [question] makes sense."

CAN PR PROS AFFORD TO BE OFF-GUARD?

The situation could be seen as more troubling in the context of the next question (chart 4), about news catching PR pros off-guard. One might have expected the ratio to be closer to the previous question. Instead it's nearer 60-40, with 40% saying they've been caught off-guard.

Again, there's room for interpretation. One could argue companies are so large and so much information is flowing at such a rapid pace it's nearly impossible for even the best communica-

“ You don't want to lose customers by rushing and responding with a knee-jerk reaction to a situation...the difference between having just a few extra minutes to consider data can make a big difference. ”

-Neil Steinberg, VP, Dataminr



Brad Ross,
Executive Director,
Corporate
Communications,
Toronto Transit
Commission

tors, those who monitor events closely using tools and other means, to never be caught off guard.

Brad Ross, executive director, corporate and customer communications in the CEO's office of the **Toronto Transit Commission**, doesn't accept this. "So much of what communications is and where it's going," he says, "is having people using data to monitor issues *before* they become crises."

Tools are critical, Ross adds, but it's far more important to have "the right people" analyzing data with the intention of seeking to avoid crises. He admits, though, some crises are inevitable, including those stemming from natural disasters.

WHAT IS NEWS?

Steinberg has a different view of question 4. "If you define news as something that runs [in a media outlet], has a byline and hits the trends" section of social media sites, he says, "then I'd think the percentage of people saying 'No' should be nearer to 100%."

He notes there are things "brands aren't necessarily looking out for," such as the possibility that a company attracts the ire of a social movement.

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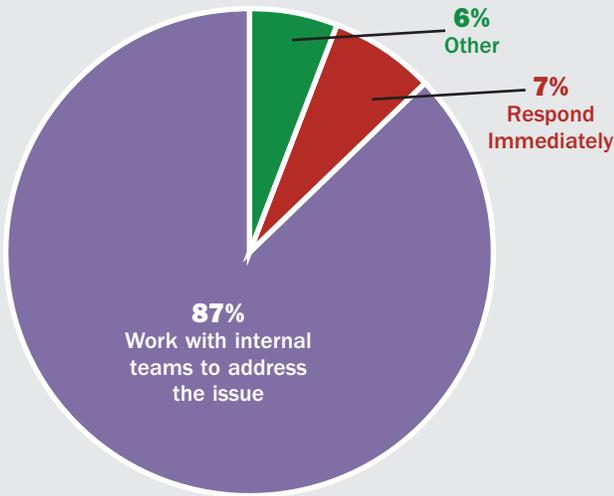
On Oct. 23 in Baltimore, MD, Healthcare communicators will focus on the communications tactics that will help healthcare brands and nonprofit organizations reach the people who matter most to them in the arena in which they spend so much of their lives—social media.



REGISTER HERE: bit.ly/HealthcareSMSummit2018

9

If you gather breaking information pertaining to your brand do you respond immediately or work with internal teams to address the issue?



For example, **Tiki Brand** torches became associated, wrongly, with white nationalists who carried them during marches in Charlottesville, VA, in August 2017.

Lamplight Farms, owner of Tiki Brand, issued a statement August 12, 2017, distancing itself from white nationalism. “We do not support their message or the use of our products in this way,” it said. “Our products are designed to enhance backyard gatherings and to help family and friends connect with each other at home in their yard.”

Other similar examples include a neo-Nazi site embracing **New Balance** athletic shoes in late 2016 as its official shoe. As Tiki Brand did, New Balance pushed back against the site.

Chart 8, where nearly 65% say they have access to information as soon as it breaks, tracks with chart 7, presumably because this group is using a tool to monitor the social conversation.

THE BOTTOM LINE AND CRISIS

For **Gene Grabowski**, a veteran crisis specialist at **kglobal** in Washington, D.C., and a former brand communicator, the small percentage (4%) who answer they feel like a hero when they’ve saved the company money (chart 6) indicates a “troubling disconnect” between communicators and their relationship to the goals of business.



Gene Grabowski,
Partner, *kglobal*

Steinberg of Dataminr concurs with Grabowski’s concern. “Customer acquisition costs are a large part of a company’s spending,” he says. If a brand can reduce customer flight through proper crisis management and/or corporate reputation management “this can be an incredibly impor-

“Success in a crisis is gathering enough data to be aware of something bubbling up before a situation escalates to a crisis.”

—Brad Ross, Executive Director of Communications, Toronto Transit Commission

tant budget item...and a dollar figure can be attached to it.”

CUSTOMER FLIGHT IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Steinberg adds customer flight is more critical today than it was 10 years ago. Dissatisfied customers now can trigger “a domino effect” by describing on social their unpleasant experiences with a brand, which could influence others to abandon the brand.

“The loss of a single customer can grow exponentially [today], so there’s a much finer point you can put on customer retention through proper crisis management.”

On the upside, Steinberg was pleased to see the results in chart 2, where 22% of responders say the C-Suite is one of their top stakeholders. This, he says, shows “communications is getting a larger role at the proverbial table...and tells you communications is in more of a proactive role and is helping to drive the business, which is in stark contrast to the response [seen in chart 6, where just 4% say they feel heroic when their actions save the company money].

IS SPEED KEY?

Grabowski has concerns about the 22% who say “reacting immediately” to a crisis makes them feel like a hero (chart 6). Similarly he looks warily at the 34% in chart 10 who say success is “responding immediately” to a crisis.

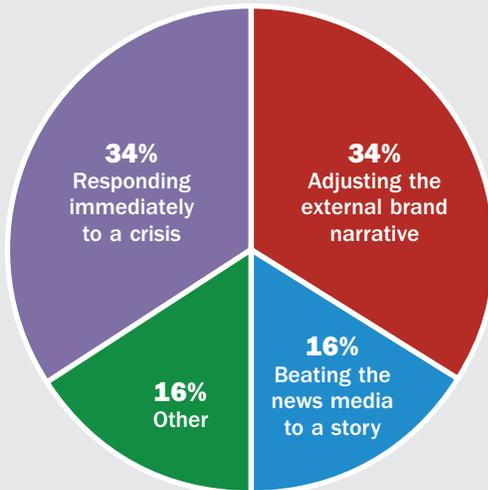
“Speed certainly is important,” Grabowski says, “but immediate reaction to a crisis” often is not the wisest path.

He’s happier with the 25% in chart 5 who believe “the pressure to respond to a crisis immediately” is a roadblock to success. “Managing the narrative is all that counts in a crisis,” he says.

THE ASSESSMENT MOMENT

Steinberg agrees with Grabowski on the question of speed in a crisis. Getting information quickly, even 10-15 minutes quicker, allows communicators to have an “assessment moment” where they can look at incoming data and information and decide whether or not a situation is isolate or

What does success in a crisis look like for your brand?



may grow to crisis proportions. “Even if it’s just a matter of minutes,” having time to assess a situation can prove critical, he says

“Ultimately it’s important for communications to be seen as proactive, but you want to react properly, assess the situation so your response is not seen as tone deaf and you’re acting intelligently,” he says.

CRISIS AVOIDANCE

Ross of the Toronto Transit Commission believes the question about success (chart 6) is missing a critical option, that is to say crisis avoidance. “Success” in a crisis, he says, “is...gathering enough data to be aware...before a situation escalates to a crisis.”

Steinberg agrees with that assessment, noting again the importance of having ample time for communicators to analyze the data and monitor the social conversation before reacting to a situation, which may or may not have the potential to become a crisis.

“You don’t want to lose customers by rushing and responding with a knee-jerk reaction to a situation...the difference between having just a few extra minutes to consider

data can make a big difference” and save or cost the company money, Steinberg adds.

Chart 9 was more heartening for Grabowski since the overwhelming majority of respondents (87%) eschewed a quick response in favor of “working with internal teams” to resolve a crisis once data is gathered. On this question just 7% of responders say they “respond immediately” after gathering breaking news and information about their brand.

Chart 5 was a surprise for Ross. “Yes, there are internal issues during normal times, but siloed departments and poor internal communication should fall away when an organization is in crisis mode.” Grabowski concurs with Ross on this point.

SILOS AND CRISIS RESPONSE

Steinberg agrees with Ross and Grabowski and adds a point about the importance of silos either being a thing of the past or at least temporarily falling away during a crisis and even before, during the assessment of a situation that might become a crisis.

Brands, Steinberg says, need to look at their response plans and see how departments are working in tandem on potential crisis events.

For example, it is important to know at what point communications is brought into a situation (if at all) after the digital team discovers something “bubbling” in the social conversation that could rise to the crisis level.

This is even more important, he says, when a brand’s digital team is separate from its communications unit.

For Ross, having more than 60% of responders say silos (25%), poor internal communications (20%) and a lack of information (17%) are major roadblocks to successful crisis response at their brands indicates a situation where a communications leader “does not have a seat at the table and is not reporting to the CEO.” ■

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SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDEBOOK

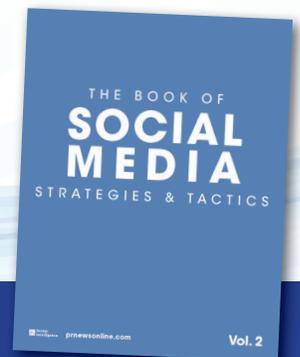
In PR News’ Social Media Guidebook, the challenges of planning, executing and measuring successful social media campaigns are met with eight chapters on everything from Snapchat to live streaming to blogging.

Chapters include:

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- Facebook
- Snapchat
- Live Streaming

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Tools to Evaluate and Enlarge Your Facebook Audience and Collaborate on Social Creative

Editor's Note: Each month we ask communicators to turn over their toolkits and tell us what falls out. In other words, What tools and technologies are most effective to have when doing your job? We also ask them to offer upsides and downsides of each tool or technology.

This month we're featuring two of the *PR News*' Social Media Luminaries honored August 10 during *PR News*' Social Media Summit in San Francisco. [**Note to Subscribers:** You are entitled to a 33% discount on *PR News* events and webinars. Please contact: cbraut@accessintel.com]

First is **Jessica McGlory**, director of paid social at digital marketer **Jellyfish**. McGlory is known for helping to create an algorithm that assists social media marketers identify and store data about influencers in particular markets. Her work has garnered wins at The Shorty Awards and OMMA Awards.

Next is **Madison Dowswell**, senior manager of global digital communications for **PepsiCo**. She and her team won a 2018 *PR News* social media award for their promotion of PepsiCo's "Performance With Purpose" initiative, which seeks to balance environmental sustainability and good health with business growth.

The responses of Dowswell and McGlory have been edited for space and clarity.

JESSICA MCGLORY

The Tool: The best tool out there for social media audience analysis is **Facebook Audience Insights**.



Jessica McGlory,
Director, Paid
Social,
Jellyfish

The Upside: The tool is free, yet so robust. It's a great way to gauge how any Facebook-captured audience is interacting with the platform as well as the demographics that make up the group.

It challenges stereotypes and assumptions, quite often forcing a reevaluation of who actually is interacting with content on the social media channel.

A mini-case example: Utilizing this tool led to the development of audience units that resulted in a 30% increase in trials for a brand I collaborated with recently.

The Downside: If Facebook Audience Insights brought back the ability to analyze custom audiences it would be almost perfect; however, only interest-based targeting and Facebook page data is available due to privacy concerns.

The Tool: A tool I utilize often and find very effective also is a Facebook product, **Facebook Creative Hub**.

The Upside: This tool allows for collaboration in building the creative for ads.

The Downside: The issue here is Facebook Creative Hub

JESSICA'S CHOICES

Facebook Audience Insights

- ✓ Free
- ✓ Great for capturing audience demographics and interactions
- ✓ Challenges stereotypes and assumptions
- ↓ Privacy concerns limit it to interest-based targeting, Facebook page data



Facebook Creative Hub

- ✓ Free
- ✓ Allows colleagues to collaborate during the building of Facebook ads and creative
- ↓ Enhanced editing capabilities still to be rolled out

4C

- ✓ A social media-buying device that performs well as an audience-affinity tool
- ↓ Can be glitch-y



✓ = Good Points

↓ = Bad Points

Source: *PR News*

still doesn't actually allow you to make the edits that can make it easier for users to create custom content.

Facebook is rolling out this capability, but for small businesses it remains a struggle to keep up with Facebook's many ad formats. Still, it is a great collaborative space to see how ads will interact on screen instead of just in a wireframe or conceptually.

The Tool: **4C** is the top paid tool in my arsenal.

The Upside: **4C** focuses on media buying on social, but really shines from an audience-affinity standpoint. It allows a user to see interests traditionally thought to go together per their algorithm and deploy them quickly and smoothly.

The Downside: Just like the social platforms themselves, the tool can be glitch-y, but with its robust targeting features I find it's worth it.

MADISON DOWSWELL



Madison Dowswell,
Senior Manager,
Global Digital
Engagement,
PepsiCo

The Tool: Often overlooked, but highly effective are mobile devices with cameras. As a content creator it's important to always be thinking about how you can capture a moment for your brand. For me, an iPhone, or any mobile device with a camera, can't be overlooked. True, this is a simple and obvious tool, but it can be super-useful because social media doesn't always require high-end production or a video crew.

The Upside: The good points of this tool are straightforward: most likely, you always have it with you; and it contains built-in editing tools and many filters.

Moreover phone cameras are only getting better per model and have the ability to shoot high resolution and quality content for social media. Great social content often feels real, in the moment and authentic; shooting with a mobile device can help achieve this.

The Downside: We all aren't professional photographers and there is a fine line between authentic, real images and just poor quality. Make sure you are thinking about angles, framing, and the story you are trying to tell.

While using a mobile device is one way to capture creative for social, it's not a one-size-fits-all solution. You may require a professional designer or photographer for more complicated moments.

The Tool: Yes, **Twitter Moments and Alerts** are simple tools, but I've not found a better way to stay on trend and be in the know. A tip: include your own account when setting up alerts.

The Upside: This tool makes it easy to keep up on important conversations and world news.

Since alerts are automatic they save you time searching Twitter conversations. They also allow you to immediately react to content you may want to share or retweet.

The Downside: Too many alerts can be overwhelming and not useful, especially if you ignore them. Be selective.

Moments and alerts may not always be relevant to your brand – and you should be cautious about jumping into conversations that aren't related just to be part of a "moment." Be strategic about the trends you are jumping into.

The Tool: **Collaboration Documents**, such as **Google Docs** or **Microsoft Teams**. Collaboration tools are great for managing projects, coordinating with teams and can be a good hub to save historical content, plans and conversations.

The Upside: When working with multiple stakeholders, using collaboration tools helps to gather and track input and feedback. Version control is everything!

It's also easy to add multiple people to these tools and receive input or feedback simultaneously.

The Downside: While these tools are private within a shared group, remember sharing is being done on the Internet, so be cautious. ■

MADISON'S CHOICES

Mobile Device with a Camera

- ✓ Can be used spur-of-the-moment to capture social content that feels authentic
- ✓ Built-in editing tools and filters
- ✓ Phone cameras continue to improve and the business world accepts rough but authentic video content

↓ The line between rough, authentic content and bad content is narrow

↓ Easy to get distracted from the narrative you want to tell

Twitter Moments and Alerts



- ✓ Free
- ✓ Allows colleagues to collaborate during the building of Facebook ads and creative
- ↓ Enhanced editing capabilities still to be rolled out

4C



- ✓ Easy way to keep abreast of conversations of importance and events
- ✓ Saves you time searching for conversations
- ✓ Affords immediate reaction to events

↓ Too many alerts can overwhelm your inbox and you; best to be strategic about the type and number of conversations you wish to monitor

Collaboration Documents

- ✓ Facilitates working with multiple stakeholders
- ✓ Easy to add additional parties and receive input simultaneously



↓ Privacy must always be top of mind as sharing is done on the Internet

✓ = Good Points

↓ = Bad Points

Source: PR News

CONTACT: jessica.mcglory@jellyfish.net madison.dowswell@pepsico.com

PR Leaders Reveal Priorities and Best Practices for Budgeting in 2019's Fast-Moving Market

For many communicators, September is the traditional kick-off for budget season. With this in mind, we departed from our usual roundtable format of a single question and asked senior communicators to discuss budget priorities, best practices and how they request budgets for new programs.



Evan Kraus
President, MD of Operations
APCO Worldwide

PRN: What budget priorities are you anticipating for APCO in the upcoming budget season?

Evan Kraus: We will continue to invest heavily in digital, in addition to our heavy investment in data and targeting technology.

As a high-end advisory firm we are developing intellectual property and other approaches to help clients deal with the demand to make their organizations more resilient and adaptable to market transformation.

PRN: What about training and personal development budgets?

Kraus: This year we launched a multi-year program to get every APCO professional around the world certified in the field of digital communications and opened an experimental technology lab in Dubai focused on AI, blockchain and other emerging technologies.

We also continue to invest in partnerships with our key clients in talent and services that enable us to provide better support over time. While none of these areas is new, all of them are evolving and so the kinds of investments required are new and growing.

PRN: Will budgets be aggressive this season at APCO?

Kraus: APCO is growing fast. As a private, employee-owned company we are blessed to be able to turn that growth directly into investment capital that we deploy to improve our service for our clients and get ahead of various market trends.



Jerilan Greene
Global Chief Communications Officer
YUM! Brands

PRN: In July you issued a CSR report and accompanying online site that features colorful charts and graphs and seems to upend the impression of the staid CSR report. Was the report more expensive to produce than previous iterations, and if so, how did you argue for the additional budget necessary?

Jerilan Greene: We didn't have to fight for the budget for this

item in particular. Yes, it was incrementally more than our past reports because we invested more. Essentially we re-allocated money from other things we'd been spending money on to [the report]. That's just part of being strategic in our spending.

PRN: How does a new effort find budgeting at YUM! ?

Greene: In my team we focus heavily on strategic planning and looking ahead. We're always identifying what will be necessary for the next phase of a project. We have, in the fall generally, a period when of time when budgets and strategic plans are being considered.

So, well in advance of working on this particular project, my team was looking forward at the next 18 months and what we would need to communicate this effectively, so we incorporated the business rationale and the request for budgets as part of that. So we incorporated this into our annual planning and budgeting cycle.

PRN: Let's look at a totally new idea at YUM! How does that find a budget? What's the process?

Greene: Every budget [item] starts with an idea, I think. So before you even begin asking for money, clearly articulating a problem and what the solution is and what the idea is to deal with that, that's part one. Making sure this is clear allows you to transition to the next step.

Part two is identifying shared interests. So if Yum! Corporate has an idea we have to look across each of our brands and see what are the shared interests for us to take action on that big idea. It's important to look for the pro's and con's here so you can be clear in part three where each of the brands and divisions is coming from. Perhaps you'll find here an external stakeholder who needs to be included.

The third piece is to look at upcoming milestones and the calendar over the next 18 months and see where you can create a conversation with the right internal stakeholders to build support for the idea. Out of those conversations you can determine what actions we will take. That's the general process we follow when we are approaching a transformation or suggesting a change.



Lisa Astor
SVP, Client Relations
PAN Communications

PRN: Does PAN have a traditional budgeting season?

Lisa Astor: When it comes to our clients, it depends...many of them have different fiscal-year calendars, so we adapt to them, but most are toward the end of the year, so, yes, we

generally are about to begin budget season [in the coming weeks].

PRN: *What will be PAN's budget priorities for the upcoming year, particularly from the client relations viewpoint?*

Astor: In terms of our spending and investment, I'm looking at the kinds of RFPs coming to the agency, and those are emphasizing influencer relations, in-depth social and paid social are priorities, as are many activities on the digital side. Nearly all the companies coming to us have some components of digital experience, but they want to go deeper. So they're asking for us to have expertise in paid social and digital creative, such as infographics and podcasting. For many companies digital activities are no longer a nice-to-have but a must-have.

PRN: *How does PAN adjust its budget to meet these demands?*

Astor: We've built out a digital department, PAN Digital, which has a lot of those skills. But what's exciting is the passion in our [general] employee base to deepen their skills in these areas. So we've budgeted and will continue to spend to get people **Google** Search certified and send people to courses and attend different events to deepen their skill set.

So for our people they might be doing a straight media relations program, but another might be a big, paid social campaign and creating influencer-relations strategies, so they get to expand their repertoire of skills as well. We're [improving our skillset] through hiring, too.

PRN: *What are your thoughts about 2019?*

Astor: We're super-excited, especially at this time of the year, because we're meeting with clients and discussing new opportunities, seeing what capabilities and programs clients want to add. This is the time of year we sit back and say, 'What can we do to raise the visibility for this client?' We think outside the box a little bit.

PRN: *Any budgeting best practices?*

Astor: The budget season is a great time to think about what you can do better or differently in the year ahead. Poke holes in what you did during the year, but also look at what went really and think about what that means from a resource perspective and going into the new year. For example, if you did something very well in 2018 it might be because you increased resources [on something], so maybe you increase resources there even more in the new year.



Michael Grant
Director, Marketing & Communications
Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science

PRN: *You've created a more robust video effort to raise public awareness about how members of the Ca-*

nadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science contribute to Canadian healthcare. How did you request the higher budget to make this happen?

Michael Grant: We kept our first ask low, essentially a shoestring budget. We asked for \$10,000 to create the first video, which we knew was not going to let us get a lot of professional help. Being in the Toronto area, where the arts are alive and well, we reached out to an independent filmmaker, so we didn't pay top dollar.

We also decided to keep a lot of things in-house if we could. Our expertise was in storytelling and we had good writers on our team. They weren't screenwriters, but we could adapt their writing for the video. We outsourced only the film-making.

PRN: *What about the budget presentation? What was your strategy?*

Grant: We culled our resources, edited down our video concept substantially and presented a budget package that was small enough for the organization to take a chance on. In our presentation we focused on definable goals (for production and distribution) and showed how we'd achieve them.

In the first year we had an ambitious social-sharing concept to distribute the video. It was sort of a contest. We said if the membership [of 14,000] shared the video with enough people in their social networks, the Society would pay for an airing of the video on a national news program here in Canada. That was the carrot to get members excited about sharing the video.

PRN: *And it worked? You reached the goal?*

Grant: Yes. A key on the budget side was keeping the request modest and presenting metrics that showed what success would look like. Each year we met our goals and our ask increased; it's been accepted each year, I think, because we proved our ideas and goals were reachable and they tied into the organization's goals.

PRN: *What is the process for presenting a budget at CSMLS?*

Grant: It's changed over the years a little, but with the video proposal we pitched the then-director of communications, doing a high-level presentation of what we wanted to create and then talked about whether or not we could actually pull this off. That was brought to the executive level of the organization. We then would have taken this to the board and presented it. That's how we got the resources to do this little video production. ■

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Note to Subscribers: To suggest a Roundtable topic/question, please contact editor Seth Arenstein at: sarenstein@accessintel.com

Two Crisis Experts Evaluate U of MD, Moonves, MoviePass, Musk and PA Grand Jury Report

There have been a slew of PR crises this summer, so we asked **Hill + Knowlton** head of crisis/risk **Kevin Elliott** and **kglobal** crisis SVP **Scott Sobel** for their take on several. While they agree on the importance of prompt responses and authentic communications, their views diverge on particulars of the crises, as you'll see in the charts below.



Scott Sobel
SVP, kglobal

The first crisis is the response to the PA grand jury report about sexual harassment of 1,000 children by 300 priests during several decades. Elliott lauds the **U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops'** quick reaction, which, he says, was textbook perfect.

Then there are **Elon Musk's** tweets and



Kevin Elliott
U.S. Director,
Risk/Crisis
Hill + Knowlton
Strategies

erratic behavior, including a tweet saying he'd take **Tesla** private.

Next is the mid-June death of **U of MD** football player **Jordan McNair**, who collapsed during a late May practice. It took the school 8 weeks to respond. Contrast Elliott's and Sobel's takes on **CBS/ Les Moonves**. Elliott believes CBS is nearly ignoring the crisis. They agree on **MoviePass**, which they say must clarify its intentions or risk its existence.

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RESPONSE TO PA GRAND JURY REPORT

Scott Sobel, kglobal

The Good	Though Pope Francis waited several days before acting, he issued the first worldwide apology letter in the wake of a PA grand jury's revelation about 70 years of crimes against 1,000+ children by 300 priests.
The Bad	Rome lists no specifics about what preventative steps will be taken to insure such things don't recur. In addition, there were no details about follow-through.
Future	The Vatican has condemned the pedophile priest epidemic before but there is only a shallow grass roots plan for prevention at the parish level, where it really counts. Little progress will be made until all levels of the church can show generations of good works and support for prevention and prosecution of offenders, with the church not being forced into revelations and actions.
Grade	C-

Kevin Elliott, Hill + Knowlton Strategies

The Good	I'm adding the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) reaction. Its response was textbook perfect despite having to deal with bad facts. The Vatican, whose response was a bit slow, and USCCB expressed regret/empathy and responsibility. I'm always looking for regret/empathy and responsibility in initial statements. Both the Vatican and the USCCB had a good list of behaviors and vetting procedures in their statements. While many of the incidents in the PA report were old, I think the Vatican and USCCB did a good job of taking events from the past and applying them to the present. They have thought about how to get ahead of problems that we can see now with the clarity of hindsight.
The Bad	It's true the Vatican didn't move too quickly to issue a response, but the USCCB did. The Pope followed a few days later.
Future	The messaging of what I'll call Catholic partisan groups, which have been speaking about the Pope and the bishops, has been pretty consistent and they've made very good use of their owned channels. We know from watching brands that endure and recover from a crisis about the importance of getting out fast, even when the fact set is bad. These institutions will recover because the USCCB and Vatican protected the brand despite bad, even terrible facts.
Grade	A-, mostly for the substance of their initial response, which is authentic regret and a good list of responsible behaviors that we can all look at to see if they're doing them and if they're helping.

ELON MUSK'S TWEETS AND ERRATIC ACTIONS

Scott Sobel, kglobal

The Good	Musk's beautiful mind and explosive ego figured out a way to get investors' attention by tweeting he was going to buy-up Tesla stocks. The volatility Musk's tweet unleashed helped short-sellers and big money investors make billions.
The Bad	Musk has yet to follow through. There's nothing worse for the market and reputations than promises not kept. The SEC is rumored to be investigating Tesla.
Future	Musk has pulled off some of his boasts, but not always. Investors have long memories and you can cry wolf only so many times. The market will be skeptical and his stock likely will lose value until he comes through on at least some of his promises for more closely held control of his company. In light of recent news that Tesla will remain a public company, one wonders if Musk might exit at some point, a la Steve Jobs. Many entrepreneurs are ill suited to run their companies long term. Investors should strap in for a bumpy, but maybe very profitable ride.
Grade	C+

Kevin Elliott, Hill + Knowlton Strategies

The Bad	That interview with the NY Times where Musk was described as tearful, well, I hope that's the truth because it's an important part of the story. You don't want to see a CEO being described as tearful in a newspaper interview. As I said above, I want to see regret and responsibility, and I haven't seen this yet. I see blame [of his girlfriend and the medication he's taking]. I'd like to hear Musk say 'I was wrong...it was ill considered and I'd like to have it back. What I was trying to do was express confidence in my company. And here's what I'm going to do going forward.' Since we're talking about an individual, it's difficult for the company to address it. In some ways, it's easier to handle process things, such as an issue with manufacturing. You can look at that and re-make the process. It's more difficult sometimes when you're dealing with an individual, unless the person's self-awareness is very high.
Future	When the public hears you blame external factors for a situation you have caused drives trust down. I think he has a real problem.
Grade	C He could have done better. There's a lot of room for improvement. The share price is likely to lag, though that doesn't mean Tesla won't do great things eventually and be well received.

U OF MD AND THE DEATH OF JORDAN MCNAIR

Scott Sobel, kglobal

The Good	A fairly slow but then decisive mea culpa to football player Jordan McNair's surviving family; along with steps to punish the appropriate coaches and compassion for teammates who want to honor McNair. The University of MD (UMD) also enlisted outside advisors to investigate practices and potentially prevent future tragedies.
The Bad	It appears UMD's investigative commission is focusing on the football program and ignoring the culture of athletics, which may not be putting students' concerns and even safety as top priorities. There were several weeks between the time of the athlete's death and decisive action; this period of delay could have been filled with proactive news and statements.
Future	The news and damage to reputation because of this tragedy will take years to dissipate but maybe not more than 3-5 years ... the cycle of a student graduation and average football player's college career. UMD's ability to attract quality players won't be hampered as much as other schools might have been owing to the state school recruitment model. Unfortunately, the fact-pattern at UMD that led to the tragic death of the young athlete is not unusual for high-powered athletic programs.
Grade	B

Kevin Elliott, Hill + Knowlton Strategies

The Bad	What struck me about this is the amount of time that elapsed between Jordan McNair's death and when we began to hear something from the University of Maryland (UMD) . With the PA grand jury report, we heard from the Vatican in a few days and the Pope a few days later. With this incident at UMD, it was weeks. That's unacceptable. Forget for the moment the morality of not speaking clearly when you're involved with something like this. When you're the steward of a brand you can't leave space for others to craft the narrative about you. That's what happened here. The advice we give brands is 'Get up, stand up and put on your big boy pants and express empathy, if you can find victims, and get there fast; tell them what you know and be transparent and accept responsibility, not necessarily liability, and be part of the fix.' That it took UMD months to speak is a big fail. The other problem is how information dripped out during the silence. UMD finally came out weeks later and accepted full moral and legal responsibility for McNair's death. This was not something it needed to do right after McNair died in mid June, but waiting for weeks was way too long.
Future	I'm not sure they'll ever get their reputation back as being the amazing place it once was. This school has such a great legacy and it's an old school, founded in 1856. I can't believe more heads haven't rolled. Yes, the head coach is on leave and the head trainer is gone, but how is the athletic director still there? If this were a corporation the CEO would have to go. Then the board has to decide how to rebuild the program. After that the court of public opinion makes a judgment as to whether or not that's enough.
Grade	D+ It was a terrible set of circumstances and they've just not done the right thing. I give them the plus with the D because eventually they accepted full responsibility, but it was so late.

CBS AND LES MOONVES

Scott Sobel, kglobal

The Good	The CBS board reportedly declined to vote on Moonves' suspension after reports of his sexual misconduct years ago. Moonves reportedly was in on the discussion. The CBS chief quickly apologized for his past behavior and tempered accusations by saying "no always means no" to him. His star wife Julie Chen also wrote statements and had heartfelt statements on TV and in print that she backed him up.
The Bad	Moonves is not as recognized by the general public as movie producer Harvey Weinstein and Moonves' reported violations didn't seem to be as sensational and weird as the allegations against Weinstein. The alleged victims were also not as high profile. The initial #MeToo public interest also seems to be dwindling somewhat. So, to a degree, the actions CBS took to move on past Moonves issues were relatively effective. The CBS board did nothing dynamic to downplay allegations of Moonves being part of a good-old-boy culture, especially for executives, which encourages workplace harassment. The public and the news and entertainment industry are well aware of the different way CBS on-air "talent" Charlie Rose was handled and quickly dismissed after revelations and accusations.
Future	No doubt, CBS employees past and present, activists and #MeToo movement participants will be lying in wait with sharpened knives for more revelations or indiscretions by network executives because the perception is that CBS treated Moonves with kid gloves.
Grade	B

Kevin Elliott, Hill + Knowlton Strategies	
The Bad	This one is terrible and not only because the allegations are awful. If the USCCB response to the Vatican situation was textbook great, this crisis response is textbook horrible. I've never been in a boardroom and had a CEO tell me to give him a duck-and-cover strategy for because this crisis is going to blow over. I'm sure some of them wanted that, but nobody has asked me for it. This situation appears to be that, ie, CBS believes it can wait it out and it will blow over. I don't know why it's going this way. CBS had an internal conversation instead of an open, public conversation. The sound and feel of what's been shared publically is that CBS thinks this is going to blow over. The strategy seems like they want to wait it out.
Future	The confidence in media is low, so maybe CBS feels 'Nobody will believe us anyway,' but I could see CBS getting into some quicksand over this. In time what seems like an unserious response will catch up with them, but I'm unsure we'll know until we have the benefit of hindsight. The flip side of the country's low confidence in media is that I think we have a lot of patience with media in what I'd describe as a media culture. They can turn this around, though I don't see the markers that they are doing that. It's not good.
Grade	D They get a lower mark than UMD because I've never heard them take full legal and moral responsibility as UMD did eventually.

MOVIEPASS

Scott Sobel, kglobal	
The Good	The company attempted to be more transparent with subscribers about what happened and what will be done to correct mistakes that led to its services being cut-off when it couldn't pay its bills.
The Bad	Still, it allowed its cash flow issues to kill subscriber services without giving subs a heads-up as to what was about to happen and then not having customer service representatives immediately available to take irate calls. Then, bouncing back and forth between setting subscription fees and creating an even greater perception of instability.
Future	Instability, instability, instability. MoviePass has had a rollercoaster ride of mistakes and indecision. Its initial business model of providing unlimited movies for a set fee was obviously a winner but the devil is in the details and in the execution of its concept. If the all-you-can-watch-for-a-set-fee idea didn't work, then the company needed to warn customers off the sales promise with adequate warnings. If MoviePass wants to recoup confidence it must give subs a concrete and money-saving reason to hang-on and, simultaneously, carefully and deliberately provide constant communications about what will happen in the future and then keep those promises. Stability, stability, stability. Don't miss a deadline. No more missteps. Or, another operator with more cash, better planners and businesspersons will take the original idea, execute better and eat MoviePass' popcorn.
Grade	C-

Kevin Elliott, Hill + Knowlton Strategies	
The Good	They tried to apologize and did, eventually, but they didn't do it very well and tried to clean up their apology. There's an instinct here that MoviePass has about being part of the conversation. I applaud them for that. But they need to be super-clear about what they're going to be in the future.
The Bad	This company appears to have no crisis management counsel at all. This is a case where communications can't help too much because other factors are so awful. How do you run a company when your business model is changing so much? It's like you have a company that's in the trucking business one day and the next day says, 'No, we're now making high-speed railroads.' What are they doing? What's their offer? Consumers are unsure of what MoviePass is going to be eventually.
Future	Back to the elements I mentioned above, regret/empathy and responsibility. You have to show empathy right out of the box. And remember, even if you feel your customers aren't victims of a crisis, they feel as if they are. They need to be treated as such, at least today. So say that you feel sorry for them because of what we as a brand have done to them. You must get a regret piece in there. And then you have to see some clarity about responsible behavior going forward. They need to reassure people they're going to get this right. They need someone big in the movie industry, someone with credibility, to help them sort out things. What it looks like now is that MoviePass is just trying to make money and doesn't care about the consumer. Someone has to be caring about the public and present the message objectively to the company. Often this is part of what an outside crisis consultant will do. It doesn't look like anyone's doing this at MoviePass. As a company they're too young to be making these kinds of mistakes. They need to focus on the customer and their business. Their future for MoviePass is being measured right now.
Grade	C- A caveat: MoviePass is not CBS or the UMD, it is young and has almost no past credibility to lean on, so its stumbles might cost the company its business.

How an Association on a Tight Budget Used Video to Inform the Public of Its Existence

It's rarely easy to get your message heard. Imagine communicating about something most people don't know exists. That's the setup for this case study.



Michael Grant
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<p>The Issue</p>	<p>Laboratory workers are the unseen people of healthcare. “The public has no idea what we do,” says Michael Grant, director, marketing & communications, at the Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS). “When you look at healthcare you see doctors and nurses and you assume everyone is one of those two things,” he adds. “Our [members] contribute to healthcare, but they do it behind closed doors. As a patient you’re really unlikely to see a lab professional.” You don’t need to be a communications professional to know that out-of-sight often is out-of-mind.</p> <p>“We’re always surveying our members and we found this lack of awareness was negatively impacting their working conditions.” Comments in surveys suggested low morale and feelings of patients not appreciating their work. For example, labs get blamed for delays but never credit for their work. There also were feelings that other healthcare professions failed to appreciate laboratory workers.</p> <p>As a result, part of CSMLS’ mandate became to “promote an understanding and awareness of what [our members] do and their role in Canadian healthcare.” Still, how to break through the clutter?</p>
<p>Tactics</p>	<p>CSMLS decided video would be “a rich medium” to be tell “more of the story” of the lab. Of course, this meant telling a story about people and venues unknown to most of the public.</p> <p>Since 1985, the Society promoted itself by celebrating National Medical Laboratory Week. Early video efforts were “low-fidelity” productions, Grant says, with “stock footage, stock photos and a voiceover.” The Society, at the time, was a risk-averse organization.</p> <p>What was missing, Grant and his team felt, was exploitation of the use of storytelling using video.</p> <p>Initial steps were small. “We were going to move slowly, but push the envelope” with better production values and a greater emphasis on stories, he says.</p>
<p>Execution</p>	<p>The team received buy-in to do one, large-scale video production, although it was large-scale relative to the much smaller efforts that preceded it.</p> <p>Budgets for the production and distribution were tight. “We couldn’t afford to do media buys,” so being able to distribute the video on social and have CSMLS members share it with their social networks were important parts of the pitch. The first pitch was made to the then-director of communications and eventually to the executive team and last the board.</p> <p>Presenting “tangible goals” for distribution and showing “we could achieve them,” were important parts of the presentation, Grant says.</p> <p>To work within a small budget, CSMLS communicators outsourced only what they couldn’t do in-house. In addition, a plan to distribute the video was crafted. Society members were challenged to share the video with friends and family via social. If the goal of enough shares was reached, then CSMLS would pay for the 30-second video to be shown during a televised national news program.</p> <p>To publicize the video to members, communicators discussed it in the Society’s quarterly publication, sent email notices in the bi-weekly newsletter and did email marketing with a call to action (CTA). “We noticed views for the video spiked when we did that,” Grant says. A social campaign also was mounted, though it was unpaid.</p>

Continued on page 14

Hurdles	<p>While the challenge to membership was a clever marketing move, the video had to be strong enough for members to want to share it with friends and family. Budgets were so tight, “we could only afford one day of shooting; so it was either shots inside labs or shots of patients” who’d benefitted from work done in labs, Grant says. For its first video, CSMLS opted to tell a story entirely from a patient’s perspective. An unseen lab professional was narrating, playing off the idea that laboratory staff are heard but not seen.</p> <p>The story shifted between three patients who were unsure of the state of their health. Having their back, a lab worker helped explain their health issues after scoring their tests.</p> <p>“We always tried to make a very clear connection between the patient experience, which the audience might have seen or experienced itself, and what’s going on behind the scenes in the lab, which relates to the patient experience,” Grant says. The videos’ stories, he says, “connect the dots between the familiar [perspective] of the patient with the unfamiliar [in the lab], which the patient never sees.”</p>
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Results	<p>The video was created on budget and members helped achieve the shares goal. CSMLS paid for that first video to be shown as a commercial during a nationally telecast TV news program.</p> <p>To measure its results CSMLS surveyed members and non-member video viewers, querying about positive and negative sentiment. Engagement was measured in terms of how many members took part in National Medical Laboratory Week. Traditional vanity metrics such as views also were tracked.</p> <p>As a result of the videos, CSMLS, which had about 100 Facebook followers when it began the revamped video effort in 2011, has more than 14,000 today. Grant credits the videos for that bump.</p> <p>In addition, with the larger social following, the organization has more robust marketing platforms at its disposal to tout conferences and other educational programs.</p> <p>“There are also non-member lab professionals who follow us [on social] because they like our videos. That gives us a chance to recruit them to become members,” Grant says. The organization “still need to be more robust” in setting up metrics to track conversion, ie, how many non-member social followers become members or sign up for educational programs. “We’re taking steps to do that,” he says.</p>
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Lessons Learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While members reacted positively to the first video and shared it with friends and family, they criticized the fact that lab workers were unseen in it and labs were not visually depicted. After the first video was a success, resources were increased, which allowed CSMLS in subsequent videos to show patients, lab workers and labs. The additional lesson here, of course, “is listen to your audience [via surveys and other research.] In the case of CSMLS, its audience “is helping us to drive distribution of the videos,” so it’s important the audience members are happy, Grant says. • Since working within a budget is important, brands creating videos need to understand what drives costs in live video production. A major cost driver is shooting, so you need to write stories and design concepts that will work with the budget you have, he says. Other cost drivers include the size of the video crew, equipment needs and whether or not you are recording audio live. • Video creation is “an iterative process.” One of the latest videos CSMLS crafted was almost all imagery, with music and few words. “It was almost a music video,” Grant says, adding, “We would never have gotten that off the ground during year one...the budget was too big, the concept was too abstract...[and] we hadn’t proved anything yet.” It was important that the early videos were “not unfamiliar to the organization” and then “push the creative boundaries from that point on” was how we got to the later videos “that we’re really proud of.” • “It was important to demonstrate success to the organization.” Make sure you have goals, measure what success looks like and show you’ve achieved goals that add to the organization. “That success led to more creative freedom.” Continuing to prove that success and earning that trust within the organization was important for us in that we showed “these just weren’t crazy ideas,” but that they “were sound and then we’d move on to the next project.”
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How Spreading SEO Across Departments Can Help Make Data and Analytics Higher Priorities

A few years ago it seemed breaking down silos between sales and marketing was the hot topic in PR. In a way reducing silos also can be used to build an SEO team.

That's the thrust of a presentation by **Randy Hui**, director, digital strategy, **Pancreatic Cancer Action Network** (see picture 3, page 1).

"Ultimately for SEO you need strategy, education, training, somebody to be an executive-level champion and then you get to the content level," Hui says. "We've spread all those components" between four departments. As you can see on the top slide, the digital strategy team is responsible for education, training, leadership and, of course, strategy. Digital strategy also handles technical implementation, such as running the web site and updates.

Marketing oversees the site's ever-green content and communications is responsible for news and stories. The program team reviews content to make sure it aligns with the organization's programs.

Besides dividing the workload, having SEO duties split between departments "makes [SEO] a bigger priority in the organization." When you have several groups working on SEO, it raises the profile [of SEO] and the accountability...so SEO isn't the responsibility of one or two people in the organization," Hui says.

While Hui didn't encounter pushback when he proposed the inter-departmental SEO org chart, he concedes it can occur. The remedy, he says, is education, which, Hui admits, "won't be finished overnight." This is why education is second on his to-do list. "All of this will fall on deaf ears" unless colleagues understand SEO and the part it plays in marketing and communications strategy. SEO, he says, "is not a be-all, end-all. It works with social media. It works with online and offline advertising and content amplification. It works with sales."

Plan SEO education carefully. SEO "is complex...and can be daunting," he says. Use understandable language and avoid "overcomplicating" the lessons.

After you've educated colleagues "make the case" for using SEO and data and analytics. Be sure to "translate [data concepts] into a story executives and leadership can understand and buy into," he advises.

Setting Up Your SEO Team

Allow Other Teams to Share Ownership & Be Accountable



Source: Pancreatic Cancer Action Network



To-Do List

- Identify SEO lead + other internal champions
- Begin educating colleagues
- Audit and assess current websites, content and rankings
- Create an action plan
- Measure and review results frequently
- Stay on top of SEO news
- Refine strategy



The most important point, though, is to make sure data and analytics are tied to organizational goals. For example, if sales or other conversions are your brand's goals for communications and marketing, you need to focus your case on how you can drive sales.

Turning to the to-do list, Hui estimates under the best conditions brands and organizations will take about 3 months to complete activities one through four. Usually it's 6 months, with conservative brands taking as long as 12 months. ■

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TAKEAWAYS

Takeaways From Crisis Survey, Budget Roundtable and New to the Subscriber Resources Center

In each edition of *PR News* we highlight takeaways from select articles as well as additions to the *PR News* Resources Center, available to subscribers only at:
<http://www.prnewsonline.com/subscriber-resources/>

You can also access the Center by clicking “Resource Center” at the top, middle of the [prnewsonline.com](http://www.prnewsonline.com) home page.

SELECT TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ **64% (pp 1-5):** In a survey from *PR News* and **Dataminr**, PR pros were fairly evenly divided regarding the roadblocks preventing them from responding properly to crisis. 25% said the pressure to respond immediately was the top roadblock; 25% said siloed departments were; 20% pointed to poor internal communications; and 17% felt a lack of information was the main culprit.
- ▶ Brands and organizations can tie successful crisis management to the bottom line by estimating how many customers might have been lost from a poor crisis response and using customer acquisition costs to come up with a figure.
- ▶ Just 4% of those surveyed said saving the company money made them feel like a hero in their job. Analysts believe this response illustrates the divide between business goals and some communicators.
- ▶ **Tools (pp 6-7): Facebook Audience Insights** is a robust tool that challenges stereotypes and assumptions, often forcing a reevaluation of who is interacting with your content on Facebook. And it's free.
- ▶ **Roundtable (pp 8-9):** As expected, PR firms will continue

to invest in digital technology, including developing digital tools for clients. In addition they'll be investing in digital training for personnel.

- ▶ **YUM! Brands** corporate communicators follow a three-step process before a budget request is submitted for a new idea. Step one is matching the idea with a problem(s) it solves. Step two is looking for brands and divisions that can and should deploy the solution; and step three calls for locating those who will be advocates. After that, a budget figure will be proposed.
- ▶ **Crisis (pp 10-12): Elon Musk's** erratic behavior illustrates the difficulty brands can have making things right when an individual's actions are at the center of a crisis. It can be easier for a brand to correct, for example, a process error as opposed to changing a person's behavior.
- ▶ **Spreading (p. 15):** It's critical to make sure SEO education is presented clearly, since SEO can be complex.
- ▶ When introducing SEO and data and analytics make certain to tie them to business goals. And emphasize SEO does not stand alone but works with advertising, marketing and content creation, for example.

NEW TO THE RESOURCE CENTER

Coca-Cola Company Sustainability Report (2017): At just 21 pages, this just-released report seems slim, considering the size of this iconic brand (700K employees). In fact its pages serve largely as placeholders for numerous links leading to additional stories, graphs and interactive charts. It's a textbook on how far brands can run with a CSR report. ■