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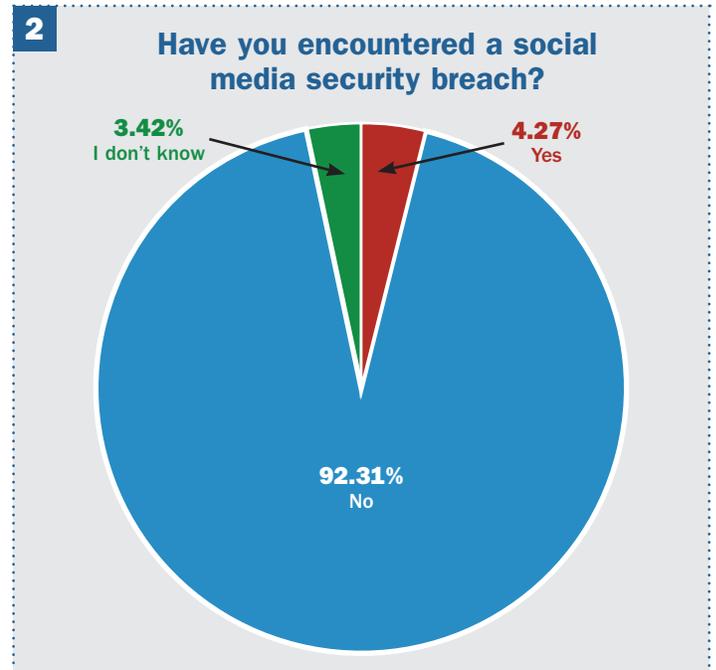
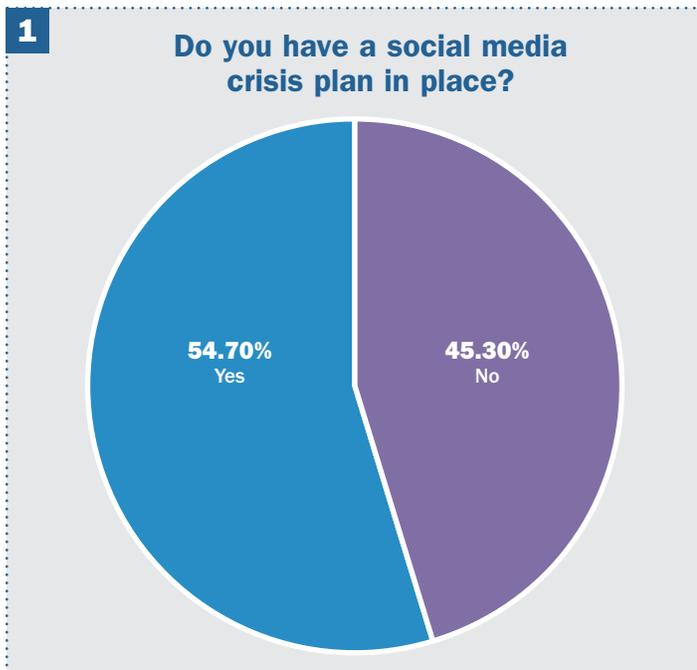
SOCIAL MEDIA

Focus on Security of Social Media Platforms Lags in Spite of Strong Upturn in Cyber Crime

Late last month, cyber crime whacked yet another large brand. On the evening of July 29, **Capital One**, the nation's largest issuer of credit cards and the 10th largest bank by assets, issued a statement detailing the hack: a former employee of **Amazon Web Services (AWS)** allegedly gained access to 100 million Capital One accounts, 140,000 Social Security numbers, 1 million Canadian Social Insurance numbers and

80,000 bank account numbers. Capital One estimates it will cost \$100 million-\$150 million to recover.

The alleged hacker actually boasted about her conquest on social media, and this led to her arrest the same day. In an effort to bolster trust, Capital One quickly made the breach public. Similar to just about every financial institution, Capital One's reputation is built on trust.



Source: PRNEWS/Proofpoint, June 2019, (120 respondents)

Continued on page 2



Editor, Seth Arenstein, sarenstein@accessintel.com
Content Director, Melissa Hoffmann, mhoffmann@accessintel.com
Graphic Designer, Yelena Shamis, yshamis@accessintel.com
Senior Content Manager, Sophie Maerowitz, SMaerowitz@accessintel.com
Senior Content Manager, Justin Joffe, jjoffe@accessintel.com
Content Manager, Nicole Schuman, nschuman@accessintel.com
Group Marketing Director, Laura Snitkovskiy, lsnitkovskiy@accessintel.com
Sales Director, Katie Sullivan, PR News, The Social Shake-Up, ksullivan@accessintel.com
SVP, Marketing Group, Dan Hanover, dhanover@accessintel.com
Divisional President, Kerry Smith, ksmith@accessintel.com
Chief Operating Officer, Heather Farley
President & CEO, Don Pazour

Group Subscriptions – Carol Brault, cbrault@accessintel.com
 Additional Copies & Article Reprints – Contact Wright’s Media, 877-652-5295; info@wrightsmedia.com



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 9211 Corporate Blvd, 4th Floor
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Client Services:
 Phone: 888.707.5814 · Fax: 301.309.3847
 e-mail: clientservices@accessintel.com

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

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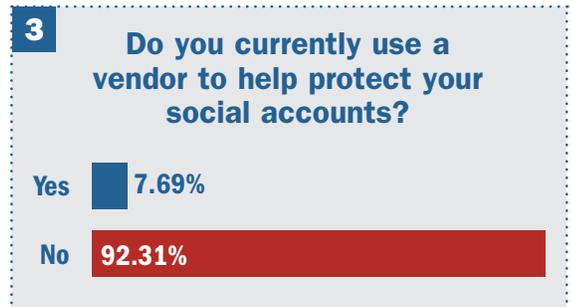
A Reliance on Manual Safety for Social

Unfortunately for Capital One, the situation is complicated. As noted, the hacker is a former AWS employee. AWS and Capital One are tight. The bank was an early AWS investor. More troubling, AWS hosts the bank’s servers, which the hacker compromised. Critics are questioning the ties between AWS and Capital One. Did the hacker’s former job help her hack Capital One?

As usual in high-profile situations, the lawsuits started within hours. One suit alleges Capital One failed to protect its data adequately. Another claims the bank ignored prior warnings that its data was vulnerable.

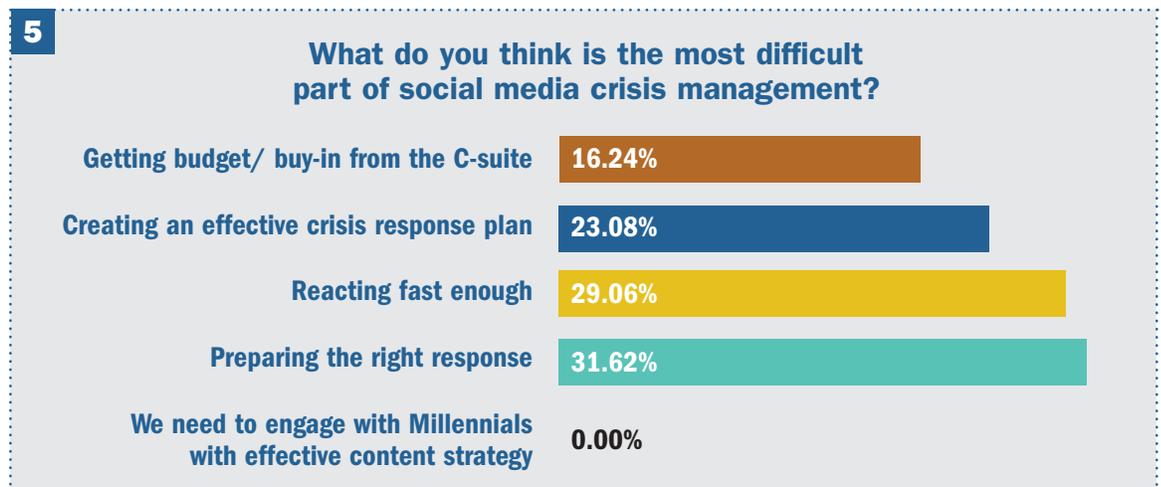
Capital One and its customers are among the latest victims of cyber crime. The ubiquitous nature of cyber attacks in the digital age means PR pros need to prepare to communicate about these kinds of situations. In fact, some are saying Capital One’s prompt communications could help its case during eventual legal proceedings.

While savvy companies protect their servers against hackers, there seems to be far less



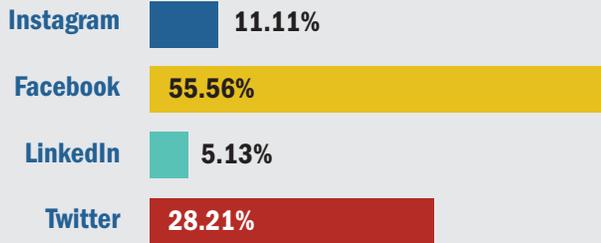
concern about brands protecting their social media accounts. It is estimated that 25 percent of social media accounts are hacked annually. And recall that the largest social media player, **Facebook**, was hacked late in September 2018. More than 50 million Facebook users’ accounts were exposed.

Since so many communicators rely on social media, PRNEWS and partner **Proofpoint**, an enterprise security company, conducted a snap survey of communicators to gauge their mood about social media safety. The survey was conducted in

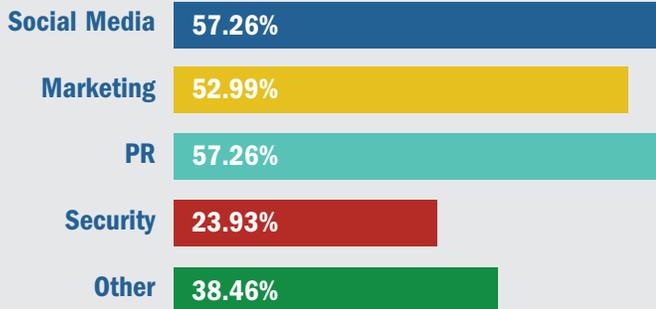


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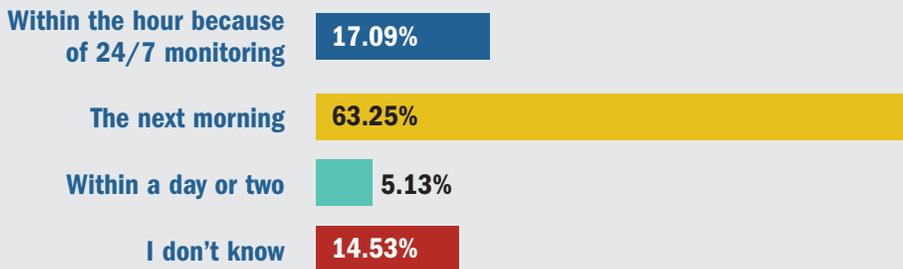
6 What social media platform(s) do you view as most risky?



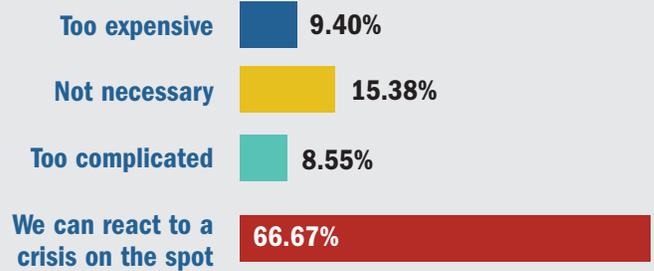
7 Which departments are involved in your social media crisis plan? (check all that apply)



8 If a breach were to occur in the middle of the night, how quickly do you think you would be notified about it?



9 If you don't have a social media crisis plan, why not?



June and some 120 communicators participated.

Results were mixed. We found few companies seem concerned about the safety of their social media accounts. For example, more than 90 percent of respondents said they handle security of social themselves, foregoing a dedicated security company (see chart 3). About one-third of respondents said it's too expensive to use an outside firm to protect social channels. Roughly the same number checked the response, "What the heck is social media protection?"

"That more than one-third of respondents don't even know social protection services exist seems to indicate people don't see this as a problem," said **Rowan Benecke**, chief growth officer at **Ruder Finn** and former global chair of technology practice at **Burson-Marsteller**.

Part of the reason could be that the overwhelming majority of respondents said they've not encountered a social media breach (see chart 2). The issue there is that cyber crime and hacking are becoming ubiquitous rapidly. Similar to PR crises, the rate of cyber crime is rising to a point where companies need to say it's *if* you'll get hacked, but *when*. Everything is OK, "until it's not," Benecke says.

Related to these issues are the responses on chart 4. Nearly 40 per-

Continued on page 4

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HEAR FROM THESE BRANDS AND MORE:



cent of those who monitor their social platforms internally do so manually. The danger there is if, or maybe when, monitoring falls on the priority list of those assigned to manual monitoring. “Social marketers are still too reliant on manual detection,” says Proofpoint marketing manager **Roman Tobe**.

Accordingly, chart 5 seems to track with chart 4, with “reacting fast enough” (29 percent) receiving nearly one-third of responses to “What’s the most difficult part of social media crisis management?” With manual security, a prompt response is a concern. Another speed-relate issue is found on chart 8. Just 17 percent said an overnight breach would be flagged quickly.

Considering Facebook’s trust issues and that it was hacked in September 2018, there’s little surprise 56 percent see it as the most risky social platform (chart 6).

On a more positive note was the finding that slightly more

than half of respondents (55 percent) said their companies have a social media crisis plan (chart 1). Another positive finding is seen in chart 7, where an integrated approach to social crisis response is indicated.

But there are also responses from those who said their company completely lacks a social media crisis plan (chart 9). Most (91 percent) said they could handle a social media crisis on the spot, but plans are too expensive or not necessary. Tobe disagrees. “Social media accounts are invaluable assets,” he said. “The right security measures are needed to protect them from attacks. A proactive approach includes adopting technologies that can prevent an attempted account takeover or block malicious links in content feeds.” ■

CONTACT: rtobe@proofpoint.com BeneckeR@ruderfinn.com

STRATEGY

New FleishmanHillard Chief Strategy Officer Urges Brands to Use Data to Align with Audiences

[Editor’s Note: Marjorie Benzkofer recently was named chief strategy officer at **FleishmanHillard**. The 20-year agency veteran will also continue to head global reputation management. We asked the one-time journalist and brand communicator about how to keep a global firm working smoothly, measuring success and why so many brands seem to stumble with reputation issues. Her edited responses are below.]

PRNEWS: Why does FleishmanHillard (FH) need a chief strategy officer now?



Marjorie Benzkofer
Chief Strategy Officer
FleishmanHillard

Marjorie Benzkofer: We have to be constantly re-inventing the client experience. That requires looking across all of the parts of our business clients depend on—whether that’s our capabilities, our geographic network, how we are growing our talent or incubating innovations. The pace of change requires our effort be more integrated; we simply can’t operate successfully in silos—either by offices or practices or any other function. We are a group of ambitious people who are attracted to difficult challenges. In my role as chief strategy officer, I’ll help connect those ambitions to ensure we’re delivering the very best short- and long-term client experience.

PRNEWS: Connecting ambitions leads to the next question. Your CEO/president John Saunders told us about a dinner he had with the conductor, Sir Simon Rattle. He asked the maestro about his then-orchestra, the Berlin Philharmonic. Is it the best orchestra in the world? “It is,” Sir Simon replied,

“when we play together.” Sir Simon wasn’t joking. FH has offices in 30 countries. How do you ensure roughly 4,200 employees work in concert? No pun intended.

Benzkofer: It starts with putting the client at the center. Our culture is such that when we do that, all other agendas become secondary. We work in 80+ locations around the world, but John and our leadership team are very effective at creating teams that work seamlessly across those locations. That starts with the very first experience a company has with FH when they enter the firm through our Global New Business function. When they become FH clients there are core functions that focus on creating a consistent experience across our network, including how we develop and support account leaders and how we bring new capabilities to clients with our global practices.

PRNEWS: You’re going to continue to oversee the reputation management capability. We know about the Authenticity Gap that FH espouses regarding brands and values. Why do so many companies stumble trying to align actions with their values? Besides becoming a client of FH, what do you recommend companies do to make sure they don’t fall into this predicament?

Benzkofer: Too often company values are written very broadly. For example: “We take care of the community.” That means different things to different people when it comes to something like gun safety. So when companies dig deeper to decide how to act against very broadly defined values, they run into two pretty common pitfalls:

- ▶ **They forget to consider all of their audiences.** It's so important to take a 360-degree view of ALL of your stakeholders when making decisions that impact your business—not just your target customer, but your employees, your business partners, regulators and more. Companies need to look across the entire landscape and ensure they don't have any blind spots.
- ▶ **They assume they know what their stakeholders think.** It's very easy to make assumptions about how employees will or won't react to something. Today, there are tribes within all of the traditional stakeholder bases and there is no substitute for data—you can't go on gut instinct alone.

Only when companies have a hold of a realistic picture of the landscape of their audiences can they make informed decisions about how to act against their values and then manage the consequences of those who may disagree.

It's a remarkably dynamic time to be managing corporate reputation and collaborating with others in real-time. There are lessons learned and best practices emerging daily.

PRNEWS: You are responsible for “measuring the collective progress of the agency.” How is this done and how often?

Benzkofer: You have to start measurement with the end in mind. That means when we set a goal, we have to be able to define, very specifically, what success looks like. In addition, what systems we have in place to measure that success.

Of course, every business uses financial metrics, but it's more interesting to look what drives that financial outcome. I'll use a sports analogy: You can look at the final score of the game, but it's really when you look deeper into the stats and the stats by player that you understand why one team outperformed the other.

The same is true for our business. We have to look deeper into what drives our client engagement scores, how our network is performing, what the changing needs of our talent are and what capabilities clients find meaningful or not.

PRNEWS: You're known for promoting a nimble workforce. How do you do that at FH?

Benzkofer: The old question we used to get from clients was: “Where are your offices that make up your global network?”

The new question we get today is: “How is your network wired so you can turn on the right talent when I need them?”

This requires a different kind of mobility and a different way of knowing where our expertise lives within our network.

Today, our practice and sector leaders are responsible for mapping our talent by the “sweet spots” of our various capabilities so we can better find the right person within our network who has the industry and skill expertise, along with the experience a client needs.

Employees create online “passion bios” about their work experience as well as their personal passions. So when a client needs a stellar video script, written by someone with a deep knowledge of professional wrestling and passion for online sports, we have them covered.

We also have introduced the role of agency talent broker. These brokers track staff and workloads across the network with an “air traffic control” view so we can set up the right staffing mix for clients with a 3-month or 6-month view, based on what we see in our upcoming client scopes.

PRNEWS: What are your goals with your new position?

Benzkofer: While the role was only recently formalized, I think what is going to be most interesting to look at is:

- ▶ **More nimble talent.** The challenges our clients face today may look different in a month. We need to put dynamic teams into place so that we can mobilize the right expertise at the right moment for clients.
- ▶ **More sophisticated and integrated solutions.** Client functions aren't as siloed as they used to be. Neither can the recommendations we bring forward—it's never just a media program or an employee communication program. The answers have to address multiple needs—and that has to be true for clients of all sizes, not just big global companies.
- ▶ **More engagement with our business strategy.** When employees understand and are aligned with strategic priorities, they are better equipped to quickly access and leverage elements of the strategy that enhance our support of clients and their own work experience. ■

CONTACT: Chelsey.Watts@fleishman.com

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How to Make a Brand Newsroom Click With Media Even on a Small Budget



At the heart of PR is storytelling. The ability to describe the goals and purpose of an organization stems from communicating a clear narrative. Building a brand newsroom allows for a living, breathing archive, available and searchable for all sorts of audiences.

DEFINING THE BRAND NEWSROOM

At the advent of the internet and corporate websites, most included a page for “news.” Visitors could scroll chronologically through press releases to get a taste of a brand’s actions and achievements. Eventually, communicators could post downloadable PDFs for those researching the company. Advanced organizations would include a contact form and/or an address and telephone number.

The progress of technology has catalyzed the scope of the PR pro’s job description. With social media and all sorts of digital goodies available at our fingertips, a press release no longer seems a viable option to tell a company’s story with much depth. Interactive multimedia can provide a much richer experience for not only the consumer, but investors, competitors and, of course, journalists.

A NEWSROOM BY ANY OTHER NAME...

Some media professionals, communicators and journalists alike, may not be hip to the term “brand newsroom,” but they know what they’re seeking—a centralized space with a wealth of applicable information and updated stories regarding an organization’s progress. Journalists need contact information, and downloadable media assets, along with the fresh content that sustains the public’s and media’s interest.

To engage fully with media and provide reporters with the best opportunities, it’s important to make sure the existence of the brand newsroom is known. Make an effort to develop its reputation as a trusted source that journalists can depend on for the latest news and statements. Make sure the brand newsroom includes proper SEO for anyone who may be searching for your brand, making it easier to find online. Freshly updated content always is a good practice for climbing search landing pages.

MESSAGING AND EFFICIENCY: A HILTON STORY

Lou Dubois, director of content, global brand communications at **Hilton**, works with teams across 17 brands, 5,700-plus properties in 113 territories to help media, employees and consumers access timely, trend-driven and episodic storytelling and source company news and background.

The Hilton Online Newsroom focuses on stories that describe Hilton the best, featuring social-ready and shareable content including breaking news, lifestyle stories, photo slideshows and videos. Hilton updates its newsroom multiple times daily, according to Dubois.

“At Hilton, we want to create Hilton stories and not sto-

ries by Hilton,” Dubois said in an interview. “If you read a story, watch a video or see a script and say to yourself ‘Can I tell this story without Hilton? And the answer is yes, then it’s not a Hilton story.’”

Hilton took on a mammoth task, consolidating 14 brand-level media centers into a single, mobile-friendly and strategically organized site. Hilton knew it would be a massive undertaking and wanted to do it well. It conducted extensive research with those who would use the site most.

“We talked to reporters, partners, hotels and brand partners about what they needed,” Dubois said. “And the content for the site is cultivated and curated by a team of reporters with previous experience at national print, television and digital news outlets.”

Two in-house full-time staff manage Hilton’s newsroom. In addition there are multiple brand, corporate and regional partners with subsection oversight, Dubois said. Hilton also works with agency partners and freelance writers to populate narrative initiatives on the site.

The site’s goal is to provide reporters and consumers with the utmost efficiency when searching for information about the Hilton brand.

Lessons Learned



Lou Dubois, Director of Content, Global Brand Communications, Hilton

1. How to think. To run a brand newsroom that is valuable to journalists, you need people who think like journalists and aren’t afraid to ask about the why.

2. Know the audience. Pinpointing the audience members and what we’re trying to talk to them about is key before starting any story or project. As I said earlier, we’re in the business of telling Hilton stories and not “stories by Hilton.”

3. Access to great material. When you run a brand newsroom, you have access to content, assets and people that the public (and journalists) often lack. Using that access to tell truly great stories accompanied by great visuals can provide amazing perspective that people outside of your company would never be able to offer.

With An Unlimited Budget

“I’d invest heavily in more content development and distribution on a global scale. It’s one thing to tell a great story. Ensuring that a great story gets seen, read, watched and shared/talked about with endless budget, well, that would be a great situation to be in.”



Space Available: An example of the Hilton brand newsroom's creativity. Here it uses the news hook of the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11 to link to the general concept of travel. Source: Hilton

"As news cycles move faster than ever and media and consumers rely on a wider variety of resources for news and information, we recognize the need for having a streamlined, easy-to-use site that delivers assets, background and inspiration for authentic and compelling stories," Dubois said.

"[We] provide a range of information that media members can access at their leisure, based on their needs." This information ranges from basic statistics about the company to stories meant to inspire. These are delivered via features, serialized content like the "Rooms With A View" series, Q&A's with Hilton subject-matter experts, and creative graphics.

Hilton publicizes and drives users to the newsroom. It mentions the newsroom in press release boilerplates and at the Hilton.com consumer booking site. Its team also conducts personal outreach, mentioning the newsroom when it hosts media familiarization trips, where it develops relationships with content creators.

TRIMMING THE FAT: CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF®

Understandably, it may feel overwhelming to peruse the variety of brand newsrooms. Large companies like Hilton, **Facebook** and **Starbucks** can assign agencies or extra employees, as well as work with high-level resources such as developers and videographers, to precisely depict stories within the brand.

Starbucks' "Stories & News" site includes not only a press center, but a section of stories about products, titled "Coffee," a section called "Community," with articles about people the brand works with, and even a section on "Social Impact." The stories are bright and easy to navigate, allowing for plenty of media follow up.

Not every company has the resources of a juggernaut like Starbucks. But there are simple steps any organization can abide by to organize and create a clear and approachable brand newsroom.

Jennifer Schertz, senior communications manager for the **Certified Angus Beef®** brand, not only serves as editor for its newsroom, but also oversees the company's corporate communications initiatives, including partner and internal communications and strategic content development. Needless to say, she's got a lot of responsibility.

Lessons Learned



Jennifer Schertz, Senior Communications Manager, Certified Angus Beef®

1. It's a journey. We started planning in earnest about 18 months ago, and contracted with a third-party vendor for our first iteration. Ultimately we brought the platform in-house after a year because we wanted more control and better alignment with our brand. In hindsight, I wouldn't have changed the path we took.

2. How to learn what you don't know. Starting with a program that was more turn-key not only got us off the ground more quickly, but really helped us see and understand all of the things we didn't anticipate going into it. (It was a classic case of not knowing what we didn't know!) Not only did it help us identify the look, functionality and structure we wanted, but also really helped us clarify our strategy, our audiences and our overall approach.

3. It's a journey. Part II. We still consider it a work in progress, and know it will evolve as our goals do, but we're proud of the progress we've made so far.

With An Unlimited Budget

"My first wish would be to hire a full-time brand journalist to join our team. We've found we have no shortage of stories to tell, but our team runs hard and fast, and it can be a challenge to make that storytelling a priority."

However, the brand newsroom can help to take off a little bit of the pressure for the outreach part of her position, as an organized collective can generate media inquiries and ignite an interest among potential partners.

"We wanted to create a newsroom to serve as a content hub not just for media, but other stakeholders and audiences interested in learning more about our brand and our partners," Schertz said. "These range from chefs, restaurateurs, retailers, butchers, processors, farmers and ranchers, influencers and media—as well as consumers who love beef. As the original brand of beef and pioneer in the industry that has linked farmers to consumers (and everyone in between) for more than 40 years, we've always had a wealth of stories to tell. Now we have a place to showcase more of them!"

PUSHING BEEF AS A SIDE GIG

The Certified Angus Beef® brand lacks full-time staffers dedicated to its newsroom, so Schertz taps into the talent of a pool of six communications staffers. They gather content, write and publish stories based on beats, as well as looking to web designers for behind-the-scenes support.

Schertz knows the importance of efficiency and notes that while the brand posts new stories a few times a week, it doesn't post solely for the sake of meeting a schedule.

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Do's and Don'ts for Brand Newsrooms

- ✓ Use social and other channels to let journalists know your brand newsroom exists
- ✓ Tout examples of your best stories to journalists via email and social
- ✓ Make sure your site features a clean, integrated design and RSS feeds for journalists to follow
- ✓ Offer creative, concise stories and don't post content until it's at its best
- ✓ Update content often, but also offer an archive
- ✓ Make sure contact information is easy to find and up to date
- ✓ Offer downloadable multimedia assets with use guidelines
- ✓ Respond promptly when journalists send queries to the newsroom

“Our newsroom includes a lot of feature stories (i.e. a brand journalism approach) with some traditional press releases and resources for media,” she said. “We try to use as much engaging photography as possible, and video where we can. When we have great content to share, we'll post it!”

And great content speaks for itself. The Certified Angus Beef® team doesn't publicize its newsroom, but takes care to strategically create shareable content.

“In addition to sharing press releases with media lists, we'll also post feature stories targeted to particular audiences on our social platforms,” Schertz said. “When appropriate, we may also share links to stories with particular contacts” (i.e. targeted pitches to media, or updates to our business partners who may have an interest in a particular piece).

TWO JOURNALISTS' PERSPECTIVES

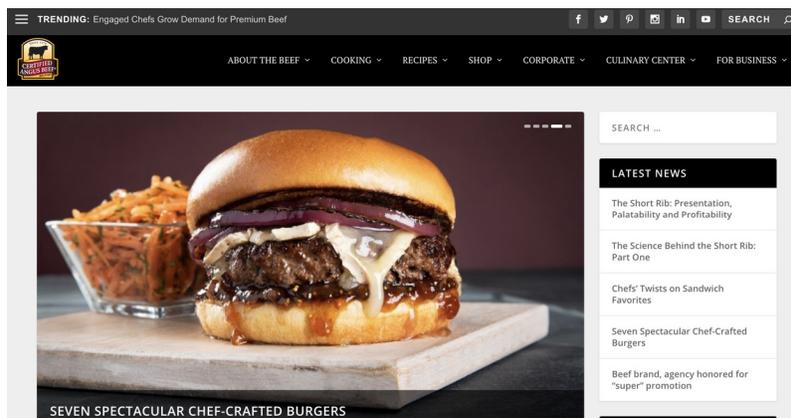
For many journalists, the bulk of their reporting involves emails or telephone calls—developing relationships with PR pros who can tip them off to new and important trends and stories. When asked if they use brand newsrooms, some reporters shrug, “That's where they put press releases, right?” Others, though, told us brand newsroom visits are a regular part of their routine.

For example **Ben Fischer**, who covers **The Olympics** and the **National Football League** at **Sports Business Journal**, appreciates brand newsrooms because they can signal an organization's priorities.

“I always take a look at brand newsrooms,” Fischer said. “Usually they're a lot more coherent than old-fashioned press releases.” News releases, he said, sometimes seem like brands write them out of obligation. “But if [organizations] do...original storytelling...around” an initiative that's covered in a brand newsroom, “then it means someone inside actually cares about it.”

USE CLEAR LANGUAGE

On the other hand, newsrooms with verbiage that “strikes me as unnatural or word smithed” are a turn off. He avoids newsrooms that feature writing and word usage “designed



Where's The (Certified Angus) Beef® ? When you have a product with so much appeal, delicious-looking visuals such as this one can lure media hungry for graphics to supplement a tasty story. Source: Certified Angus Beef.®

to appeal to internal constituencies,” as opposed to clear language that will resonate.

Lizz Schumer, staff writer for **Good Housekeeping**, **Woman's Day**, and **Prevention** magazines, checks brand newsrooms weekly, if not daily. She emphasizes the importance of clean design and ease of use when it comes to journalists on deadline dealing with brand newsrooms.

THE 5-MINUTE RULE

“If I can't find your PR contact in fewer than five minutes, that's a problem. And it may mean I will look elsewhere for a source,” Schumer said. “[Brand newsrooms] don't need to be flashy and sleek, but they need to be informative. Press releases about initiatives your company has going on are great, but a quick, easy fact-sheet with all of the essential background is awesome.”

Schumer adds that content creators with multimedia responsibilities appreciate downloadable high-res photos. A tip: include credits and usage guidelines with photos. “Basically [a brand newsroom that] anticipates what journalists are going to ask for and provides it before we have to ask will always endear a brand or source to me,” she says. “It will also make me more likely to consult them in the future.” ■

CONTACT: @dubois jschertz@certifiedangusbeef.com @ben-fischerSBJ @Eschumer nschuman@prnewsonline.com

Editor's Note: For more from Hilton's Dubois and Certified Angus Beef® brand's Schertz, attend the webinar “Boost Coverage with Your Own Brand Newsroom” on August 22 at 1:30pm ET. As a PRNEWS paid subscriber, you can receive a 33 percent discount on all webinars and events. Contact cbault@accessintel.com to obtain your discount.

PR Pros, Academics Say Grads Need Business Acumen, Tech, Refined Writing to Succeed

[Editor's Note: Pardon the interruption of your summer vacation, but the start of the school year is near. For PRNEWS that means our annual survey of education. For our Roundtable this month, we asked PR educators, nearly all of whom are or were professional communicators, “**In what areas of PR/communications do colleges/universities need to increase training of students? And why?**” Next, we asked PR pros, “**What areas do incoming PR pros need the most help? How do they get it?**” Their edited responses are below.

THE EDUCATORS



Lawrence J. Parnell
Associate Professor, Strategic PR
The George Washington University

PRNEWS: “*In what areas of PR/communications do colleges/universities need to increase training of students? And why?*”

PARNELL: While the basics—writing, research and media relations etc.—remain critical, the tenor of the times and expectations of management demand more. We’re emphasizing ethics, specifically applied or situational ethics. Students need to be prepared to navigate complex ethical situations. Achieving meaningful results for your company should not require you to compromise your values or take ethical short cuts—but managing your way forward can be tricky.

Second, students must have a foundation in business and finance—with an emphasis on budget management and the ability to read a financial statement or annual report. To be taken seriously you must master business and finance, if you want to participate in high-level strategy discussions.



Dr. Laura H. Marshall
Assistant Professor, Strategic Communication
High Point University

Marshall: Colleges don’t focus enough on research. More and more, market research, focus groups, and surveys are key to creating strategic communications plans. Many undergraduate programs touch on research only lightly. One general research course isn’t enough to understand the nuances of how to word survey questions or conduct focus groups so that participants respond authentically and avoid social desirability bias.

Everybody needs to understand the complexities of social media, but the analytics of it isn’t an area with which most undergrads are all that familiar. Knowing how to parse audiences, response rates, the importance (or not) of shares, RTs and the like matters greatly to companies and corporate bosses. It can tell you what’s working and what’s not.



Jonathan Rick
Adjunct Professor, U of Maryland
Principal, The Jonathan Rick Group

Rick: If you graduate from college without the ability to write well, you should ask for your money back. Too many graduates struggle to craft copy that doesn’t sound like a book report.

It’s a shame more colleges don’t teach courses on **Wikipedia**. Writing for Wikipedia teaches you how to separate fact from opinion and teaches you HTML.

When it comes to the most common tool in corporate communications—**Microsoft PowerPoint**—few students have had any formal education, training or professional development. Most of us opened the program one late night in college, cobbled together a deck, and have been learning on the job ever since. That’s unfortunate. Companies are launched on the basis of their pitch deck. If you can master PowerPoint—not only how to create stunning slides, but how to make them flow—you can market your skills far and wide.



Shelley Spector
Adjunct Professor, NY University
Founder, Museum of Public Relations
President, Spector & Associates

Spector: While social media and digital marketing may seem to be all the rage, too many students are coming out of school lacking the fundamentals of PR. That means more journalism classes for training in writing. All types of writing: human-interest stories, op-eds, speeches, and analytical reports—should be taught, and practiced.

Similarly, students need more instruction in media relations. What makes something newsworthy? How do you create story angles for different mediums? Just as important is following the news. Many top job candidates are news junkies. There is also a direct correlation between how much you read news, and how well you write news.

Students need more training in handling PR crises, which requires the communicator to know their businesses thoroughly: financials, management, products, investors and customers. As a result, PR students should take at least one or two classes in business fundamentals.



Dr. Dustin York
Director, Undergraduate and Graduate
Communication, Maryville University

York: Colleges should require students to acquire certifications as a part of the curriculum. Ultimately, this sets up students for lifelong learning.

Students also need classes where they are forced to interact with industry pros. This helps develop the soft skills of interpersonal relationships.

Continued on page 10



Deborah Brown
Adjunct Professor at a NY-area university

Brown: I would like to see PR students receive more training in communications writing and presentation skills/storytelling. I'm always impressed with students' writing skills. While those skills are excellent for English composition classes, they do not work as well in communications, which requires succinct writing. In addition, I would also like to see more emphasis on presentation skills and storytelling. I combine these two because in every presentation, whether it's presenting an idea to the boss or a large audience, it's critical to shape the narrative and tell a story versus reading slides (if they are using slides). In addition, being a good presenter gives a new graduate more confidence when going on an interview, whether it's for an internship or a first job.

THE PR PROS RESPOND



Nicole Dye-Anderson
AVP, Media Relations-Partnership
Barclaycard

PRNEWS: What areas do incoming PR pros need the most help? How do they get it?

Dye-Anderson: Writing is crucial, but good writing is expected. Where new PR pros are lacking is in their knowledge of company vision and corporate culture. Often you see young communicators with a deer-in-the-headlights look at meetings. They don't know who's talking, so they can't understand nuances. That leads to a fear of speaking up.

Young PR pros need to take initiative. If they're unsure who's speaking, then they should pull the organization chart and find out when they get back to their desk. Write down names for the next meeting. Another part of taking the initiative is learning to volunteer for work. It's different from school, where you're given assignments. In the corporate world it's important to volunteer. You want to build a reputation where people trust that you'll get things done. And get a mentor. They'll help you learn corporate culture.



Michael Lamp
SVP, Social and Digital Media
Hunter PR

Lamp: The ability to write with focus and confidence is a skill that remains most vital to a young PR pro's career development. There are many recent grads with great writing instincts, but little experience harnessing them in the context of what's needed. The savviest seek continuing education resources to better marry their classroom experience with real-world scenarios.

A second, more nuanced area where young communicators struggle is balancing their experience as consumers of news and products/services with a professional need to craft client stories that earn media and attention. An example of how senior leaders can coach them through this growing pain is to have them look at PR/marketing initiatives from some of their personal favorite brands. Then work backward to unpack how these efforts influenced their experience as a consumer and made *them* a fan.



Brooke Traister
President, PRSA, Dallas Chapter

Traister: Many entry-level communicators understand PR fundamentals, such as building a communications strategy, writing press releases, and using digital video and social media. They are less familiar with how to write an effective email pitch or build relationships with the media. Another area where they need support is in business literacy and how to work with sales, finance, and marketing. They lack understanding of PR's impact on those areas of the business.

Fortunately there are myriad programs to bolster media relations' skills. Encourage new hires to attend those programs. Go with them, if possible. It demonstrates your support of their development and is a great way to show them how to network. For business literacy: Help them learn the questions to ask to get the type of information they need from sales, finance and marketing. Also, make sure to help them understand the larger business landscape and the objectives they're trying to influence. That context is crucial.



Morry Smulevitz
VP, Business and Operations Communications
Walgreens

Smulevitz: The ability to position and promote brands concisely and clearly, in writing, is among the most critical skills in the modern communications world. While many young PR pros are masters at posting pithy quotes on **Twitter**, the art of persuasive writing has suffered. To gain this skill requires them to soak in good writing...and practice.

New practitioners must understand that we are not press release people. We are business people with an expertise in communications. If your new job includes developing stories that journalists should care about, first learn the business. Walk the trade show floor. Spend time in the call center and in the field with sales reps. Work in the store. Sit in on focus groups. If you expect to engineer an integrated, outcomes-driven media plan to advance business priorities, enhance reputation and tell a meaningful brand story, first learn the business.



Cari Brunelle
Co-Founder
Baretz+Brunelle

Brunelle: Generally, our new associates are good writers. Even so, long-form writing styles learned in college often need to be refined, particularly when dealing with companies in extremely complex markets, where subjects need to be simplified and explained quickly.

New communicators also need training in serving clients. For most, it is not something they've considered. We have a formal training process that stresses empathy and real-world examples from corporate luxury brands. ■

Extending PR for Anniversaries with Lights, Locals and Creative Thinking



Brands too often fall short of getting the most out of major milestones and anniversaries. Most organizations settle for a celebratory news post on their site and social media channels. Perhaps there's a party for employees and families.

There is so much more that integrated strategic communications can accomplish, however. One idea is to go the extra mile with a comprehensive campaign centered around the celebration that combines PR, social and creative thinking.

Thinking creatively about brand milestones can open a wealth of opportunities to increase organizational awareness and raise employee morale. One key is to mobilize every level of an organization. In addition, consider how PR opportunities can be leveraged for every activity celebrating a milestone.

Below are examples of tactics that brands can explore as potential building blocks for a successful strategic campaign celebrating an organizational milestone or anniversary.

SHOW YOUR COLORS

Most areas have landmarks and structures that are lit up with specific colors at night in honor of special occasions. Organizations celebrating an anniversary can generate media by lighting landmarks in their brand colors or other images.

For example, last month **Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum** and the **Department of the Interior** projected a picture of the Saturn V rocket onto the 363-foot-tall Washington Monument to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11's lunar landing.

Another example comes from **Easterseals**, the nation's largest healthcare nonprofit. It lit landmarks in the brand's signature orange to celebrate the organization's 100th anniversary. Nearly 50 iconic landmarks participated in the celebration, including the **Empire State Building**, **Niagara Falls** and Cleveland's **Rock & Roll Hall of Fame**.

Both the Easterseals and Apollo examples benefitted from outreach to local and national media, which ran stories alerting readers and viewers to the purpose behind the special lighting.

In the case of Easterseals the comprehensive campaign also provided the group's local affiliates with opportunities to participate. Several affiliates leveraged their relationships

to secure more local landmark lightings, which in turn spurred greater media coverage.

PUT PEOPLE FRONT AND CENTER

Organizations would not be able to celebrate major milestones without the hard work and dedication of employees. As such, any celebration would do well to share the spotlight with the entire team.

For example, a publicly traded national firm that plans to ring the opening bell of the **New York Stock Exchange** could have a C-suite executive do the honors. It also could invite top-performing employees to ring the bell as a team.

The former approach may generate a national headline and a tweet or two. The latter complements that national exposure with local media eager to cover how a resident had the opportunity to ring the opening bell. Sharing a photo and a well-written caption with the editor at the local news outlet is simple and will extend the PR value of the event.

MOBILIZE YOUR MARKETS

National organizations can significantly amplify the success of brand milestone PR campaigns by tapping into local markets. **Publishers Clearing House** employed this strategy years ago when the decision was made to divide its trademark \$1million SuperPrize into multiple \$10,000 prizes. Those prizes were awarded in 100 different markets.

Instead of one or two national news stories within a single local market featuring a resident receiving the million-dollar prize, Publishers multiplied the story 100 times in local affiliates.

MAKE IT INTERACTIVE

Augmented reality and interactive technology offer ways for organizations to celebrate major milestones. Some brands have taken a proactive approach, installing interactive technology in their buildings that can be updated to align with product launches.

At a **Mercedes-Benz** plant in Alabama, the brand's visitor center offers the public an opportunity to look into milestones of the historic company while learning what the future may hold. In the center there's a room that surrounds visitors with LED screens along the walls that they can touch to view content about new concept cars. As the brand moves toward new technologies for mobility, this room will be at the heart of how it shows milestones to visitors and media.

These tactics are the tip of the iceberg in how the power of creative thinking can maximize the value of a campaign. My hope is that communicators and marketers will keep this in mind as they start planning how to celebrate their brand's upcoming milestones. ■



Orange Is the New: Easterseals lights the Empire State building.

CONTACT: smerritt@daltonagency.com

Raising Awareness is Comfortable, But Won't be Effective in Today's Markets



In a few weeks eight types of cancers will inhabit the month of September. All of them are using the 30-day span to raise awareness through the propagation of fundraising events and ubiquitous ribbons.

September is far from unique, though. Earlier in the year a grey ribbon marked May as Brain Cancer Awareness Month. May also was Bladder Cancer Awareness Month, which uses a yellow ribbon, as does Sarcoma/Bone Cancer. In addition May was Melanoma and Skin Cancer Awareness Month—marigold, blue, and/or purple ribbons. In April, we were supposed to be aware of testicular, esophageal, and head and neck cancers. That's orchid, periwinkle, and burgundy or ivory ribbons, respectively.

Just about everyone supports the concept of cancer research, though the rainbow palette of colored ribbons is beyond confusing. How did testicular cancer get stuck with orchid? Sorry, boys. In all, there are 24 cancers that promote awareness via ribbons.

GOING BEYOND AWARENESS

But if the research foundations dedicated to fighting these horrible diseases are going to move toward tangible goals, they must move beyond awareness.

Awareness-based campaigns aren't bad, they're just outdated; they're outdated because they're successful. The goal is awareness; in the case of cancer, we're aware. Are the awareness campaigns of your brand or organization similarly outdated?

Our mothers and grandmothers wore pink ribbons, and while we like cheeky 'think-pink' slogans like 'Save the Ta-Tas,' this kind of marketing won't cut it with digital-native millennials, and the Americans who come after us. Besides, you don't want your brand to be a joke.

DANGER: STICKING WITH WHAT'S NOT BROKEN

It's not the cancer foundations' fault; they're stuck in the rut that many brands find themselves. From politicians to multinational corporations, sticking with what works year after year is natural. Why fix what's not broken, right? Well, while it might not be broken, it's also not moving you forward.

Take **Kodak** for example. Despite developing the first digital camera—way back in 1975—the ubiquitous company shied away from investing in digital camera technology for fear that it would hurt its traditional film and camera business. It filed for bankruptcy in 2012 and never made cameras again.

Kodak's problem was that it didn't think it could afford to move away from its traditional camera business, despite earning less and less from it annually.

FAMILIAR IS NOT ALWAYS EFFECTIVE

Cancer research foundations, and perhaps your brand, face a similar problem. The more accustomed people are to a message, the less effective it becomes. It's a tough Catch-22 that penalizes the success of a marketing campaign. The more 'aware' people become, the less impactful awareness campaigns are.

Think about it. Remember the **Budweiser** frogs? Launched with a hugely memorable Super Bowl ad, they grew into a hilarious barroom routine that was effectively a meme before there were memes. Why would Budweiser abandon the frogs if everyone in America was doing his/her best baritone rendition of "Bud-weis-er"?

HYPER-COMPETITIVE MARKETS

The answer is that in a hyper-competitive market brands need to keep their messaging foremost in consumers' minds. If not, the competition is going to occupy that vital headspace—and the coveted place in a consumer's shopping cart.

Let's return to the cancer example. The 'market' for research donations is, in a word, competitive. Americans' disposable income for 2019 is estimated to remain flat, or grow slightly, vs. 2018. And with millions of millennials facing mountainous student loan debts and delayed earnings potential, spare funds for donations are going to be tight for the foreseeable future.

This means that brand

A Look at U.S. Giving

- U.S. Charitable Giving in 2018: \$435 billion (adjusted for inflation)
- U.S. Charitable Giving in 2017: \$428 billion (adjusted for inflation)
- Revenue from gifts of at least \$1,000: up 2.6 percent
- Revenue from gifts less than \$250: down 4.4 percent
- Revenue from gifts of \$250 to \$999: down 4.4 percent
- 47% of Millennials gave through an organization's website (2016)
- 49% of Gen X donors are enrolled in a monthly giving program
- Email prompted 31% of Gen Xers' online donations
- 59% of Gen Zs are inspired to donate via social media
- 88% of Millennials find their job more fulfilling when they have opportunities to make a positive impact on society and the environment.
- Employees who engaged in corporate giving programs tended to have 75% longer tenures with the company.

SOURCES: *Graham-Pelton's 2019 USA Giving; Nonprofits Source; Fundraising Effectiveness Project 2019*

awareness is going to be at a premium as cancer research competes for charity dollars with other, equally worthy causes. This is not very different from myriad brands and groups targeting your audience members.

And, please, don't count on federal funding. Sources like sin taxes on tobacco or alcohol aren't going to get the job done. They face the same problem of diminishing returns. The fewer smokers paying the sin tax, the fewer dollars the tax generates. And let's not even begin to count on Congress. This is the same organization that almost defaulted on the national debt a few years ago and shut the government just last year. They won't be your saviors.

Neither will the same 501c3-pedigreed 'development' professional you've been hiring. Sure, a decade of experience shepherding a foundation through the minefields of the media looks great on a resume, but will this kind of experience help you reach tomorrow's donors? No.

LOOK OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Cancer foundations—and any other organization that relies on 'awareness' campaigns—need to look outside the friendly confines. In cancer's case, look beyond the charity world.

A partner that's agile, digitally-native, and battle-tested in the media marketplace is ideal. These partners will be able to successfully transition from general awareness to reaching potential donors where they are with messaging campaigns that are modern and personal. It's not enough to get athletes to wear pink cleats or sell colored rubber bracelets.

As economic reality shrinks the pool of potential donor dollars, the race for a cure is going to take place as much in the media marketplace as it is in the laboratory. You have won this part of the fight. We really are aware. Now let's win the future, too. ■

CONTACT: brittany@mairstrategies.com

MEASUREMENT

BY JULIE C. LELLIS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS/DIRECTOR, CORE CURRICULUM, SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS, ELON UNIVERSITY AND MARY BETH WEST, FELLOW, PRSA

5 Powerful Data Integration Approaches for Strategic PR Campaigns

Since the dawn of PR as a profession, the sector has been fighting for the right to exist. Amid competing budgets and short executive attention spans for the next bright, shiny thing, there is a higher degree than most disciplines of the 'What-have-you-done-for-me-lately?' mentality. This includes many CEOs, companies and organizations.

If you've been considering how to reframe PR functions as part of a broader business strategy, here are five ways to stay focused:

ALIGNMENT WITH PURPOSE AND VALUES



Julie C. Lellis

1. Align Tactical Data Needs and Decisions With Purpose and Values

Content strategy should reflect corporate identity. In turn, a clear set of core values should define corporate identity. Values set the tone for business goals and objectives.

Your job is to make sure PR tactics fit these values. Be sure to take advantage of access to executives who can confirm how well a program fits with the organization's larger vision.

Strategies that include influencers or brand ambassadors, for example, are particularly important to assess for appropriate synergy.

"Whether you are selecting an influencer based on reach and engagement, or evaluating the influencer's storytelling opportunity for your brand, it's critical that the influencer aligns with the brand's value, tone, and equity," said **Lauren Ludlow**, associate director, digital + influencer marketing at **Small Girls PR**.

She recommends vetting and background research that includes scrubbing digital platforms and a full background check. Make sure your digital team tracks influencer behavior on current and previous social media posts, checks for **FTC** disclosures, and employs **Google** or other searches to understand an influencer's social history. Searching an influencer's fan sites and private groups also can help avoid surprises.

BRING ON THE GEEK-OUT



Mary Beth West

2. Invest in Analytics

Digital media's abundance of metrics has created a veritable geek-out by the profession, and for good reason. It's powerful to have real data reflect the impact of your strategies and tactics.

At the same time, you can't view the science of data as its own means to an end. It exists within PR, not exclusive of it. While you employ data and analytics to gain insights about your target market and how best to approach it, be sure to avoid losing sight of the artful, substantive, human relationship-building that should be at the core of your work as a communicator.

Olay, in partnership with influencer **Sarah Hyland** and its PR agency, created a waterproof bath book of photographs. Its goal was to encourage women to slow down, unplug, and reclaim bath time. The book featured essays on transformation from Hyland and other influencers to inspire women to have the confidence to be unapologetically bold and true to themselves.

The campaign resulted in influencer coverage, consumer engagement, and top tier press results in outlets such as *Refinery29*, *PopSugar*, and *Allure*. What made the team believe the campaign for a transforming bodywash would be shareworthy? Analytics. Its research indicated its audience would respond to the message and that it could gain media coverage in top target outlets.

Another example of analytics helping to craft relationship strategies with heartstrings comes from **Omni Vision** of Nashville, TN. Data from Omni's PR partner, **Fletcher Marketing PR**, Data showed an industry need for stronger diversity recruitment. This resulted in Omni Visions' campaign to recruit more foster parents for abused and neglected children. The campaign featured emotionally powerful videos of diverse foster families, including the LGBTQ community. It resulted in explosive growth in lead-development in geographically targeted areas. Data also informed the effort about targeting.

AVOID LIMITS ON DATA

3. Use Data Before, During and After Campaigns

A data-driven program helps craft accurate audience segmentation and geographic targeting for the brand's call-to-action—especially if generating a documented lead-development funnel is the main expectation. Audience and media-use data also help inform a mix of paid, earned and owned media that's right-sized and managed to the available budget.

Don't shy away from collaborating closely with marketing or IT and any necessary digital-development service providers. Collaboration can help determine the necessary back-end tools that will help capture inbound prospect- and customer-information databases. This investment can help you course-correct shortfalls in your strategy mid-stream and may later prove the effectiveness of your strategy.

Stuck without a budget for a sophisticated analytics plan? **Google Analytics** offers plenty of free tools to get you started.

USE DATA BUT...

4. Leverage Industry Insights to Shape Objectives, but Think Critically and Use Caution

You don't always need to spend a lot on research programs. Much of the work may already be done for you. Published industry trends can bolster your argument if you're trying to get senior leadership on board.

Nonprofit organizations that rely on donor dollars might make use of something like **Graham-Pelton's** *Giving USA 2019* report, which offers insights on trends in U.S. giving and makes recommendations to those who plan donor relations programs.

Trying to figure out the optimal number of hashtags to use on **Instagram** or understand how **Facebook's** new News Feed algorithm will change what Facebook users see? Don't forget about **Hubspot**—the holy grail of free marketing insights that could shape decisions big and small.

Or if you're a PR pro working on internal communication, you might benefit from a perusing of the latest **Edelman** "Trust Barometer." With a focus on quality of the employer-employee relationship, Edelman's latest report suggests that employees expect CEOs to take a stand on social issues,

trust in social media as a source of information continues to be lower than traditional media, and women are less likely to trust businesses than men.

ORIGINAL RESEARCH

But it's also important to discern when proprietary research is warranted to avoid PR mistakes that could cost even bigger bucks.

For example, although studies speak to the upsides of social-purpose marketing, **Weber Shandwick's** "The Purposeful CEO" 2018 study says that 89 percent of Americans believe "CEOs speaking out on hotly debated current issues" poses a risk of negative outcomes. These range from customer criticism on social media to negative media coverage and boycotts. It may be lower risk to stay silent.

So don't wade blindly into high-stakes messaging campaigns based entirely on someone else's work that's not tailored to your cause and diverse stakeholders. Make the case for original market research when merited, especially if you are considering high-risk messaging.

BEST PRACTICES

5. Connect Your Program to Best Practices

Every PR professional should be a voracious reader of case studies and data-based trend reports about large-scale audience behaviors, such as generation-driven media adoption and use. In addition, seek out articles and reports that provide insights on micro-trends. These change with greater regularity, for example market shifts and digital platform use.

Before developing a campaign, don't forget to closely study your direct competitors' recent campaigns. A detailed analysis of competitors' social media presence and the numbers underpinning their respective online audiences may tell you quite a bit about the effectiveness of their public-facing strategies (or, if they even have a strategy).

VANILLA COPYCATS

It's remarkable how, in some industries, nearly every competitor has simply played "copycat" with branding and promotional communications. The result: pure vanilla, with no brand saying much of anything. In such cases, seize the opportunity to overtake competitive share-of-voice with stronger creativity, visual presence and thought leadership.

Compare your own past earned-media performance with that of competitors through a keyword-search content analysis. This work can yield fresh insight about story angles. Those campaigns that have been successful might merit a new twist for this year's pitch calendar, and you're more likely to notice ideas that would be stale retreads. Content analysis is also vital to examine when, why and how past crisis incidents have occurred that might underpin negative legacy reputational impact.

In sum, research and data in all their forms—whether quantitative or equally rich perspectives of qualitative insight—prove essential to all strategic public relations campaigns. ■

CONTACT: jlellis@elon.edu mb@marybethwest.com

Overwhelming Majority of Travel Journalists Let Personal Interests Dictate Story Choices

We assume journalists decide what to cover based on what their readers want to know about, right? Maybe media relations pros are looking in the wrong direction when pitching.

A new study of 160 U.S. and 130 Canadian travel journalists from **Development Counsellors International** (DCI) finds this niche group of content producers is fairly different from many other journalists.

First, they overwhelmingly allow their personal preferences to dictate coverage. “Personal interest” dominated in determining story choices: 78 percent for U.S. travel media and

83 percent for their Canadian counterparts. “Assignments” determined coverage for 63 percent (U.S.) and 59 percent (Canadian), followed by “trends” (49 and 51 percent, respectively) and “pitches” (47 and 53 percent, respectively). DCI says these four sources have changed little since 2014.

It’s clear that PR pros pitching to U.S. and Canadian travel journalists need to concentrate on their targets’ interests. Learning such information can come from building personal relationships with journalists. Pitchers also can gain insight by following what the content provider has produced.

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DATA DIVE

Universities Grow 2019 Social Engagement 12%, Video Engagement Rises Just 1%, Harvard Leads

Shareablee

TOP UNIVERSITIES in the U.S. : January – June 2019

Based on Total Actions

Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareablee

Sources:   

RANK	UNIVERSITY	TOTAL ACTIONS	TOTAL CONTENT	ACTIONS PER CONTENT	TOTAL AUDIENCE
1	 Harvard University	3,378,111	1,545	2,186	7,417,470
2	 Texas A&M University	1,543,115	1,074	1,437	1,106,956
3	 University of Michigan	1,316,057	1,288	1,022	1,219,003
4	 University of Virginia	1,307,774	1,853	706	348,814
5	 Baylor University	1,192,169	1,437	830	420,822
6	 The Ohio State University	1,103,892	1,003	1,101	1,227,045
7	 Clemson University	1,026,116	748	1,372	499,966
8	 Penn State	987,520	2,175	454	747,193
9	 University of Iowa	971,118	1,084	896	336,051
10	 Yale University	965,946	940	1,028	2,074,510

Even with something as relatively new as social media, it’s good to have a brand with years of name recognition. In addition, size can be beneficial.

Since this edition of PRNEWS looks at education and PR, partner **Shareablee** provided us with exclusive data about the most active US colleges/universities on social (Jan-June 2019). **Harvard** led with 3.4 million consumer engagements (likes, retweets, comments and shares). They’re called “actions” on this chart.

Harvard also was the most efficient. Its 1,500 pieces of content averaged 2,200 consumer actions each. Rival Ivy **Yale** also was efficient, averaging 1,000 actions per content, though that was not even half of Harvard’s figure. **Penn State** posted the most, though it averaged just 450 actions/post.

Overall, actions with college content rose 12 percent year over year, says Shareablee marketing director **Herman Chen**. Yet actions with colleges’ videos rose just one percent year over year, Chen says. This despite video actions growth at **University of Virginia** up 177 percent, **Iowa** with a 112 percent increase and Penn State up 63 percent. ■

CONTACT: herman@shareablee.com

Continued from page 15

Other findings: **Facebook** is the dominant social platform for story generation with this group of content creators (**Instagram** is second). In addition, more than 60 percent of U.S. and Canadian travel journalists say they use social to generate story ideas.

In terms of outreach, 90 percent of both U.S. and Canadian travel media prefer email pitches (two paragraphs tops). And the ideal press trip is four days or more, with 75 percent of U.S. travel writers and 89 percent of Canadians supporting that length.

PODCASTING: A GROWTH INDUSTRY

We continue to follow the statistics about podcasting from **Nieman Lab's** HotPod newsletter with interest.

At the 6-month point of 2019, podcasts had 90 million U.S. monthly listeners. That's 32 percent of the U.S. population, 12 and older, according to the **Infinite Dial** report from **Edison** and **Triton Digital**. Last year at this time the figure was 57 million.

Podcast ad revenue was \$480 million in 2018, per an **IAB/PwC** study. The 2017 estimate was \$314 million. Revenue is expected to top \$1 billion in 2021.

KEEP YOUR ADS OFF MY DATA

Even though communicators know targeting consumers is a significant part of spreading the narrative, they realize ad fatigue is a reality. A new study from **Visual Objects** provides more evidence.

A survey of some 500 people who use ad-blocking tools finds nearly half (45 percent) say they would avoid a company's website if that company targeted them with ads.

The study also finds baby boomers dislike highly targeted advertising most. A total of 72 percent say data collection from ads seems like an invasion of privacy. The younger generations also dislike such data collection, but less so: 58

percent of millennials and 64 percent of Generation X feel their privacy is violated when ads collect information about them. The thinking is younger people are accustomed to on-line life and have long known companies are capturing data.

Interestingly, the study finds gen Xers (47 percent) and millennials (41 percent) are most likely to pay for ad-free browsing. Only 29 percent of baby boomers will do so.

In the U.S., 25 percent of internet users will deploy ad-blocking technology on at least one of their one of their internet-connected devices, says **eMarketer**. For the second year in a row eMarketer downgraded its forecast for growth in ad-blocking in the U.S.

SLOWER FEDERAL ELECTION SPENDING

Money in U.S. politics is rampant, correct? Maybe, but even that has its limits, says **Kantar Media**. It's predicting \$6 billion will be spent on political campaign ads for election to federal offices during the 2019-2020 cycle.

That represents 14 percent growth vs 2018, but it's also a downer. The growth in 2018 spending was 21 percent, Kantar says.

It's not a surprise, though, that a greater share of campaign ad spending will flow toward digital channels this time. Of the \$6 billion in political campaign spending, Kantar expects 20 percent, or \$1.2 billion, to go to digital.

TV remains the dominant beneficiary of campaign ad spending. Cable and broadcast television split some 75 percent of the ad spending on federal election campaigns. ■

Editor's Note: The DCI report on travel journalists and the survey from Visual Objects about ad-blocking are available at the PRNEWS Resources Center. In addition, a reminder. As a paid subscriber to PRNEWS you are entitled to 33 percent discounts on PRNEWS webinars and events. Contact **Carol Brault** (cbrault@accessintel.com) for information.