

Trending Topics for



- Growing need for better utilization of social media in crisis communication
- Increase in number of crises originating on social media
- A continuing trend to delay crisis planning and training until the “stuff hits the fan”

— **Larry L. Smith, President, Institute for Crisis Management**



- The “forced transparency” birthed by WikiLeaks (and likely to be copied by many others) will cause crisis management challenges for businesses everywhere.
- Social networking crisis planning will evolve from “separate addendum pages” to more fully integrated with every aspect of crisis management.
- The importance of the crisis plan was finally understood last decade; the importance of experienced crisis leaders and teams must be as widely understood in the next.

— **James Donnelly, Senior Vice President, Crisis Management, Ketchum**

Crisis Communications



- Senior leadership is increasingly becoming aware of a fundamental reality — reputations are won or lost in a crisis, and more CEOs lose their jobs when crises are mishandled.
- The compressed time frames caused by social media mean every company needs a plan that allows quick and effective response — clarity and accountability of role and process in a crisis.
- There are no more secrets (Wikileaks, iPhone videos, Twitter, etc.) — privacy and secrecy are quaint relics of another time.

— **Helio Fred Garcia, Executive Director, LOGOS INSTITUTE for Crisis Management & Executive Leadership**



- Companies who are inclusive in thought and strategy will thrive as leaders in diversity.
- More employees are driving diversity and inclusion in their companies — it’s important to recognize their voices and influence to help lead your company.
- Companies and PR practitioners who seek guidance in diversity and inclusion issues will succeed versus those who don’t.

— **Laarni Rosca Dacanay, Diversity Communications Specialist, NBC Universal Corporate**

Diversity



- Because the public is so distrustful of government and business, companies that are willing to be more transparent about their political involvement are gaining credibility.
- Well-organized grassroots campaigns and efforts to reach out to members of Congress when they’re visiting their districts are becoming more important than direct lobbying in Washington, D.C.
- More CEOs are getting personally involved in their company’s public affairs efforts.

— **Douglas Pinkham, APR, President, Public Affairs Council; President, Foundation for Public Affairs**



- Increase in awareness of a diverse America as we start to see survey results from Census 2010, leading to more diversity programs at corporations
- Expansion of the groups that are included in diversity programs to encompass people with disabilities, 50+ and American Muslims as well as LGBT, Hispanics, African-Americans, Asian Americans and women
- Alignment of diversity programs with a company’s multicultural marketing outreach efforts to maximize results as well as cost and time benefits

— **Lisa Skriloff, President, Multicultural Marketing Resources, Inc.**

Public Affairs



- Unwelcome transparency (i.e. Wikileaks, etc.) leading to increased organizational paranoia — to the detriment of advocates of (relatively) open communication
- International insularization due to the financial crisis as countries/organizations retrench to focus on core business practices
- Acceptance of aggressive public affairs as the only way to break through the clutter and polarization to communicate context and facts

— **Bryan Hilferty, APR, Colonel, US Army; Chief of Public Affairs, US Army in Europe**



- A normalization of the use of social media tools for business solutions internal to organizations
- Less emphasis on social media as a separate unit but as an integral part of organizational communication
- News organizations and journalists will find their place — the job of “gatekeeper” is no longer needed.

— **Charles J. “Jack” Holt, APR, Senior Strategist for Emerging Media, Office of the Secretary of Defense – Public Affairs**



- The burgeoning multicultural social media sector will continue to increase over the next year, with PR professionals and businesses recognizing the importance of reaching out to these audiences.
- As businesses and economies continue to globalize and as our work forces continue to age, there will be increased focus on understanding the importance of diversity and inclusion.
- It’s about engagement and relationships — diversity extends beyond an acknowledgement of race and gender and cultural norms.

— **Anne K. Dean, Senior Director of Communications, Argosy University System; Chair, PRSA National Diversity Committee**

2011

We interviewed 18 experts in six different areas about the trends they see on the horizon for public relations. Here's what they had to say:



- Thanks to digital technology, there will be more ways to reach consumers, but only creative and compelling messages will capture their fragmented attention.
- With the whole world watching and talking 24/7, the future calls for seamless authenticity and transparency with brand stakeholders.
- More responding in real time — building stories rather than raw facts — to engage audiences and immerse them in the brand experience

— **Sam Harrison, Author, "Idea Selling: Successfully Pitch Your Creative Ideas to Bosses, Clients & Other Decision Makers"**

Branding

- Custom communication — it's a more personal way to communicate and share thought leadership as well as direct marketing messages.
- Leverage touch points — prospects and clients are overwhelmed by messaging so it's important to maximize each interaction with them.
- Word-of-mouth — someone people really know and have a relationship with will drive brand loyalty.

— **Johna Burke, Senior Vice President of Marketing, Burrelles Luce**



- Increase of personal branding — social networking sites have provided a powerful and convenient way to build personal brands.
- Passion — great careers are made when passion and skill intersect.
- Transparency — corporate America is in the midst of becoming more transparent, so should your brand.

— **Jerry Wilson, Senior Vice President, Chief Customer and Commercial Officer, The Coca-Cola Company; author of "Managing Brand YOU"**



- While Ad Value Equivalencies (AVEs) won't completely disappear as a standard for PR measurement in 2011, they are becoming obsolete — thanks in part to the continued refinement of the Barcelona Principles.
- In general, measuring outputs no longer cuts it; share of voice, sales, perceptions and changes in behavior are the metrics we'll need to focus upon going forward.
- Online tools for monitoring conversations and PR results will continue to grow in importance.

— **Jeff Wilson, APR, Associate Vice President, and Director, Business Development, CRT/tanaka**

Research

- Since many firms and companies are still using Advertising Value Equivalency as a primary measure, there will be discussion, debate and education about using better methods and tools.
- Using research to tie the actions of PR to business-related outcomes — this important shift from measuring output of messages to measuring impact of all PR efforts is critical to the maturation of the profession.
- To meet the expectation of measuring PR's contribution to the business case, there is a need for greater use of formative research.

— **Brad Rawlins, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Communications, Brigham Young University**



- Brands will stop building their own proprietary code for Facebook and sign up with scalable technology platforms that help them manage global content and further integrate their digital marketing efforts.
- Consumers will work together to unlock deals and e-Retailers will tap into social media in a new way and see clearer ROI.
- You will see a slew of tools that help consumers curate and clean out their often cluttered news feeds on sites like Facebook and Twitter.

— **Stephanie Agresta, Executive Vice President, Managing Director of Social Media, Weber Shandwick**

Social Technology

- More meaningful innovation will occur in gaming, not consumer apps.
- Companies will shift more content to a visual format, since 65 percent of people are visual learners and go to video search engines to learn about a brand.
- Blogs become the equivalent of websites — since they have built-in content management, they are less expensive and easier for non-techies to use.

— **Bob Pearson, Chief Technology and Media Officer, WCG; Former Vice President of Communities and Conversations, Dell**



- Social media cannot exist in isolation — companies that have already invested will begin integrating their practices with existing disciplines at a global level.
- Recent changes that make checking in on Facebook more prominent, along with a global rollout, will position it as a platform that supports geolocation functionality.
- Average participants experience social media schizophrenia — as social media adoption and usage continues to climb in 2011, even the average user will struggle to keep up with the increased activity on networks.

— **David Armano, Senior Vice President, Edelman Digital**



- The Barcelona Principles of Measurement will continue to be adopted on a global basis.
- Advanced marketing analytics used for advertising and other disciplines will become the norm for evaluating PR's performance.
- The confluence of corporate reputation and brand performance management based on a company's culture will ensure that corporate communicators are equally skilled at communications and fluent in brand marketing.

— **David B. Rockland, APR, Ph.D., Partner/CEO, Ketchum Pleon Change, Managing Director**