

# PUBLIC RELATIONS 2012

supplement



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All the 2012 **PRISM Award** winners

BY MAGDEL FOURIE, SUPPLEMENT EDITOR

# If truth be told



In these fast moving times, overloaded with information and technological developments, it often seems there's not enough time to think, to ponder, or reflect. Our heads are constantly filled with information and news.

Click on this, click on that, look at this video, but wait... have you seen what happened on Twitter, and what about that cool link on Facebook?

There's all this access – all the time – to the digital world via your mobile, or iPad, and now even the latest TV's can access social media. And don't forget about the

radio blaring in the background as well.

So much so that in this day and age, silence really *is* golden. It just mustn't last too long though. Otherwise, one might become really uncomfortable with all the sudden empty headspace. What am I missing? What don't I know? What are they saying out there?

It's in this milieu that the last thing you'd expect is a return to good old morals and values. For one, who would've thought that now more than ever people would place such a high price on honesty. Wanting to know what's true and what's not. Who's telling

the truth, and who isn't. Who is authentic, and who isn't?

As PR exercise, this was illustrated by the Woolworths vs. Frankie's debacle, where Woolworths didn't react quickly enough to Frankie's accusations of having copied their trademarked strap line. In their silence, its customers smelt a rat.

Once Woolworths *did* eventually join in the conversation to defend itself, their reaction was greeted with much scepticism. Their customers simply didn't know if Woolworths had anything to hide or not. Because if they were in the right, they would've said so from the start, wouldn't they?

Afterwards Woolworths admitted to having handled the situation badly and came clean about their failed communications strategy. This action on the other hand was met by much approval. Why? Simply because it was truthful.

Thing is, with so much information out there, people need to be able to distinguish between what they can trust, and what they cannot. Have an 'honesty filter' as it were.

It doesn't matter how big your PR company is. Nor does it matter how big your client is. When it comes to sending out a message, it has to ring true.

Even if (it appears that) your opponent is small, failing to do so will be much like the stone hurled from David's sling. It's what brought Goliath down. <



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BY JUDITH MIDDLETON, CEO OF DUO MARKETING + COMMUNICATIONS

# Fixing PR's broken business model



**T**here's a reason I call my company a marketing and communications agency rather than a public relations agency: In all too many minds, PR is associated with pom-pom girls and parties. Perhaps there's some strategic value in that for consumer-facing brands; but it doesn't work in a business-to-business environment. How can PR push beyond this perception of frivolity?

## FOUR CONSTANTS

When I ask my long-term clients what they value most about our engagement with them, there are four constant themes: We understand their industry, we deliver unquestionable return on investment, we are always available as a sounding board and we help to push them beyond what they think they know.

The value we deliver, in other words, lies largely in our ability to act as trusted partners

**“any PR agency that still charges by the hour is undermining its own value”**

in deep collaboration, not merely to carry out client commissions and instructions.

## UPDATE THE BUSINESS MODEL

One of the things that make this relationship possible is our business model: We do not charge by the hour. I would argue, in fact, that any PR agency that still charges by the hour in 2012 is undermining its own value. When a client hesitates to pick up the phone to bounce an idea off you because he's wondering how much it will add to his bill at the end of the month, neither of you is getting a good deal.

PR works best when it's completely integrated into the client's overall business strategy and objectives. Our job should be not only to develop a marketing and communications strategy, but also to keep that strategy alive, relevant and working. Without that guidance, marketing can all too easily be sidetracked into irrelevant tangents and knee-jerk reactions.

## THE RIGHT FOCUS

Maintaining this strategic communications focus requires a certain commercial toughness on the part of the PR person. Sometimes, it's our job to point out to the client that publicising his sponsorship of his child's sports team is not going to help his bottom line. The clients who appreciate this are the clients worth having.

So, what does the PR agency need to do to achieve this relationship with its clients?

First and foremost, it needs to hire staff with commercial skill and emotional maturity, as well as knowledge of specific industries. Sending in the big guns to win the account, then turning it over to juniors to manage, is

a no-no. You can't expect to be a strategic partner to your client if you're hiring straight out of college.

Second, take a good hard look at your business model. Are you incentivising yourself and your staff to deliver value for the client, or to max out chargeable hours and seek sales commissions from other service providers? The market has been tainted by poor quality, intermediaries and overpricing – don't add to the problem.

Third, if you are confident in your expertise and your ability to add value to the client's business, be prepared to push back. Don't be the yes man. Sometimes the greatest value comes out of our disagreements: It's through the discussion that we generate new ideas and learn.

Finally, be prepared to be accountable for the client's brand: Let the buck stop with you and ensure that your client knows that. I've seen too many companies be preyed upon by armies of advisors, coaches and agencies, all of them working at cross-purposes and none of them being prepared to take ownership of the whole.

## REALISTIC DELIVERY

There's a lesson in this for clients too: Hire the best, and then make them work for you. Expect them to have brains, and to apply them on your behalf. And be realistic about what PR can deliver: No amount of fabulous PR can paper over the cracks of bad customer service.

At its very best, the client-PR relationship is one where the client knows his PR person has got his back – and the PR never stops asking 'what am I doing for my client that he couldn't do better for himself?' <

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BY GREG FORBES, MD, LION'S WING BRAND COMMUNICATIONS

# Small agencies: last man standing?

**W**hen the big fall, they fall hard. Nothing causes big companies to fall as hard as pulling the financial security out from under their feet. If nothing else, the precarious economic climate that has dominated the South African market since 2009 has taught PR agencies a few valuable lessons: diversify or die; if you are sweating, then you are probably too fat; and be nimble enough to change quickly.

## DOMINANCE

Prior to the global economic crisis that engulfed the US and Europe, the PR landscape in SA was firmly dominated by a few large PR agencies that seemed to represent the cream of the South African corporate and consumer market. Their dominance was supported by their large client base, ever-increasing staff count, and the growth of their various specialised sector or service departments.

Quite rightly, they were required to ensure their services supported the growth and development of their clients, and that their services included much of the new media being consumed by target audiences.

Unfortunately, these agencies grew too large, and with anything that grows too large, they became more expensive, and more difficult to manage. As a result, when their clients began to feel the impact of the recession and inevitably pulled back on marketing expenditure, these agencies found themselves in the difficult situation of being too large and expensive to remain competitive.

## STRAINED RELATIONSHIPS

As a result, client relationships were strained, and many players had to decrease their staff count. While these agencies navigated the treacherous waters of restructuring and retrenchments, smaller agencies found themselves in a prime position to offer

competitively priced services to both large companies looking for cheaper alternatives, and to SMME businesses that recognised the need for marketing services but who were restrained by limited budgets.

Smaller communication agencies have therefore become a flavour that is making the transition to the permanent menu. The economic recession highlighted that businesses may have grown a little too fat, and

'slim, trim, fit and flexible' became the mantra that executive committees regularly chanted at bosberaads.

It remains a fact that smaller agencies are more flexible, and can react faster to changing conditions. Furthermore, the smart smaller agencies are in a position to develop an employee base which are multi-talented – meaning that smaller agencies are able to keep overheads lower ensuring that multi-disciplined staff are able to offer the same services than larger agencies.

## DIVERSIFY

This also allows an agency to diversify. A growing trend within the broader marketing communications industry is for increased diversification of services.

The specialised positions of digital agencies, advertising agencies, PR agencies and media buying agencies are simply not sustainable when the shared pie starts shrinking. The only obvious choice is to ensure that your slice of the pie becomes larger by incorporating more of the services of the marketing mix into your offering.

By employing talented staff that are well versed in multiple disciplines of the market mix does just this. In addition, smaller businesses should, and are, taking in interns and training them on how the various services fit together so that they become employable professionals able to perform multiple services.

The age of large specialised service agencies is well and truly over. Smaller multi-disciplined agencies are positioned to replace the monoliths of a time when wine flowed freely. <



**“smaller agencies are more flexible, and can react faster to changing conditions”**





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BY MAGDEL FOURIE

# In the name of public relations

The reputation of the PR industry is at stake. Prof Ronel Rensburg, new president of the Public Relations Institute of South Africa (PRISA), reveals the details of her battle plan

**"A**n improved reputation management endeavour for PRISA," is what Rensburg hopes for during her term. They already have a marketing plan – including one for the regions – in place for this, she states.

But that's not all it consists of. Rensburg, who's a member of the department of marketing and communication management at the University of Pretoria, states that she also intends to get closer to the media by attempting to improve PRISA's media relations, as well as promote PRISA as professional association and communicating stories of the practitioners. "In doing this people can see and read, and become aware of the difference that communication can make in their lives, and in this way show what these remarkable public relations professionals do on a daily basis is not 'just a PR exercise'."

Furthermore, she wishes to improve the relationship between the President and PRISA's head office, with the various regions across southern Africa.

"We plan to showcase – on a continual basis – the work activities and projects of our members in the regions. The plan is to profile the work of individual practitioners and consultants in PRISA's media. I also would like the regional chairs to become more involved with the mainstream activities of PRISA, but their own individual contributions and suggestions will always be welcomed."

It's also important to her to make PRISA members aware of the dawning of pending stricter legislation and regulation in and by the profession, as it's being debated on the global stage at the moment.

Although she states that she doesn't believe in 'policing', they need to continuously 'strive towards excellence.' This they will only achieve through education, training and on-going professional development.

"And, might I add: a little 'healthy' exclusivity. PRISA is planning to request government to create a legislated council called the Council for Chartered Communication Professionals (CCCP) for the purpose of accreditation and regulation, via designations, and based on qualifications, skills and experience."

On the agenda as well is bringing

about a committee to directly lobby the Communications Portfolio Committee in Parliament on 'communication issues that affect the ambit of their business and practice,' and in doing so will forge closer ties with government and political communicators.

High on her list of priorities too is targeting students at tertiary education institutions and those that are currently studying in this area, as PRISA regards them 'as their future.'

"PRISA and universities need to constantly improve their educational programmes, as the communication skills levels of the students and practitioners that join our ranks and enter into the marketplace, often need a lot of improvement."

And lastly she plans to find out – 'and not only promise to do research' – what PRISA does right, what it does wrong and how PRISA can fix it, as well as how it can add more value to the members. In January 2012, PRISA embarked upon a needs analysis amongst its members and some non-members, she states, and now will address these findings and attempt to improve and grow its services to the members. "My hope is that PRISA will become the 'voice of visibility'."

## JOINING THE ARMY

When asked if PRISA still has relevance today, she affirms that she still regards becoming a member of and belonging to PRISA as a 'prestigious endeavour'. In her view, it still holds a lot of meaning for students, academics and practitioners to become members of PRISA. "Doors are often opened, business relationships established and cemented and careers developed through PRISA membership. There are also numerous training and professional development programmes offered by PRISA. As we are aligned to the international GA, moving across borders is also becoming easier for practitioners."

## IN THE TRENCHES

PR still has it tough though. She points out that the concept 'public relations' has had 'an unfortunate past,' and became tainted during the course of history.

"Everybody knows the name, but not everybody perceives it as a real strategic and

strong functional area of management and business – until they are themselves faced with a major communication dilemma," she points out.

She refers to the Enron-debacle in 2010 that *inter alia* presented a hard lesson to business. Apart from not always being taken seriously, unsuitable exponents that might cause danger to the practice often enter it, she explains: unqualified people, people with poor communication skills, candidates with no business acumen, and people without any knowledge of the global and local socio-political environment. "Although PRISA has to discourage these categories of people to enter into public relations and communication management, it encourages the training and continuous professional development of people with a passion for the world and work of communication. Our public relations in SA is still being seen as very technical, whereas academics and practitioners around the world urge it to become more strategic in its operation. One has to be very honest – there are still numerous problems and misinterpretations of the industry and it remains a continuous struggle to lift the reputation of public relations out of this quagmire."

## A GOOD FIGHT

An area where the local PR industry seems to be doing well though is transformation. She states that PR as a practice in SA is transforming rapidly and the profile of a significant percentage of professionals (in business and consultancies) has changed over the last couple of years.

Particularly in the government communication environment, the profession's profile is positively reflecting the country's profile, she points out. Whereas in the recent past (before 1994) the largest percentage of practitioners had been white females, this profile has also changed significantly as more men (black males) enter the profession. "However, as change is the only thing that stays constant, transformation of business and the functional areas of management (also the public relations profession) will continue. There is still much work ahead." <





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*\*The Holmes Report 2011*







# PRISM Awards give the nod to online social campaigns

In aligning the PRISM Awards with IPRA Golden World Awards, several new categories have been added that highlight the changing face of public relations and communications across the globe.

"Digital and social media have impacted communications massively in the last few years," says PRISM convenor Bridget von Holdt, "with more and more communications professionals creating holistic campaigns that integrate new and traditional media. As standards in these areas improve, the PRISM Awards recognise their vital place in public relations and communications management."

Von Holdt says that many South African communications companies are including digital and social media elements into their campaigns – but not always to good effect. "Just as activations and events are used in context alongside print and broadcasting, social media and digital must be implemented correctly to be effective. Flooding cyberspace isn't a strategy, and some brands and corporates are still being led to believe that social media sells product and that Facebook 'likes' or online ad click-throughs' equal conversions. This simply isn't true."

Jessica Kalbarczyk, social media analyst for Samsung Electronics USA, part of a small team that engages people online about electronics giant Samsung, suggests that the marketing and PR roles have become more focused on customer service, given that social media allows immediate interaction with consumers. Samsung has made great strides in integrating social media with marketing, PR and customer service, and has joined online conversations about the brand. Kalbarczyk says the company would much rather find negativity, have a chance to fix it, and change that customer's perception than pretend it doesn't exist.

"Where public relations and communications professionals have long been the gatekeepers of brand integrity and reputation management, social media offers



Bridget von Holdt

us an opportunity to do this in real time – and be seen to be doing it," says Von Holdt. "The Awards' new category, Reputation & Brand Management Online for excellence in managing online communications strategy during a crisis, will highlight benchmark cases where customer's perceptions were changed by effective social and online management."

Platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Linked-In and others allow immediate venting of frustrations, Von Holdt says, and research conducted by Sage UK and published in December 2011 reports that one in five consumers are using social media to vent their frustrations. Von Holdt says it's clear

that campaigns need to be carefully thought out – from offline initiatives through to online – and managed professionally. "While negative reaction to campaigns are plentiful, positive also abound. In the latter case, the PR professional has taken ownership of integrating traditional and new media, brand management and image, sending the right message to the right medium and having a reputation management plan in the wings to deal with any negative sentiment quickly and professionally."

The new categories in the 2012 PRISM Awards include:

- **Digital Media Relations** – For the successful use of digital media relations in a PR campaign
- **Integration of traditional & new media** – For an effective and successful integration of both traditional and new media in a PR campaign
- **Online Crisis Communications** – For excellence in managing online communications strategy during a crisis
- **Reputation & Brand Management Online** – For excellence in position a company's image and maintaining brand awareness through online communication channels
- **Social Media for PR** – For excellence in the use of social media as a public relations tool

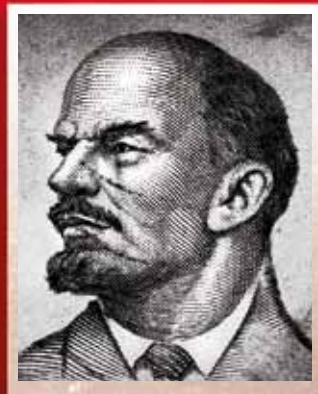
"A whole new globally public platform has been created for customers to give brickbats or bouquets," says Von Holdt. "Where in the past, customer dissatisfaction was largely between the brand and the client, it is now laid bare for millions to see. Here's where the communications professional can excel at limiting reputation damage and turning the negative into a positive. These are the 'new frontiers' of communications, and the PRISM Awards hopes to show how South African communicators are integrating mediums to ensure the best all-round exposure for their clients." <

# PRISM Awards results (Gold)

Consultancy/company	Client	Programme name	Sponsor	Name of Category	Type of Award
Splash PR & Media Consultants	Table Mountain Official Supporters Committee	Vote for Table Mountain			Overall Gold Award Winner
Ogilvy Public Relations Cape Town	CS Johnson	Kiwi Takkie Brite		Consumer PR for an Existing Product	Gold Award
Splash PR & Media Consultants	Table Mountain Official Supporters Committee	Vote for Table Mountain		Media Relations	Gold Award
Independent Electoral Commission	Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)	Atlas of Results - 2009 National Elections		Publications	Gold Award
Ogilvy Public Relations Cape Town	South African Breweries	Carling Black Label	I.C.E. - Internet Corporate Exposure	Reputation and Brand Management online	Gold Award
Retroviral Digital Communication	Nando's South Africa	Last Dictator Standing	PEAR	Digital Media Relations	Gold Award
PR Worx	Anglo American Platinum Limited	Platafrica Jewelry Design Awards 2011	DM Events	Event Management	Gold Award
Capacity Marketing (Pty) Ltd	Castle Lite - Brand of SABMiller	Castle light Feel the beat of Sub Zero feat. Drake	DSPM	Integration of Traditional and New Media	Gold Award
Tin Can Publishing cc	Frank.net	If he dies, Frank pays (Frank.net Launch)	Mobilitrix	Launch of a New Product	Gold Award
Splash PR & Media Consultants	Table Mountain Official Supporters Committee	Vote for Table Mountain		Environmental	Gold Award
Retroviral Digital Communication	Put Foot Rally Foundation	#Shoes on Feet		NGO Campaign	Gold Award
Atmosphere Communications	Daddy's deals	Launch of Daddy's Deals		PR on a Shoestring	Gold Award
Ogilvy Public Relations Cape Town	Stellenbosch University	Stellenbosch University - Thought Leadership		Public Sector	Gold Award
		Renay Tandy - Ngage	Advantage magazine	Best Public Relations Professional in Media Liaison	Gold Award Winner
Ngage		Ngage		Best Small Public Relations Consultancy	Gold Award Winner
		Kelly Webster		Best Up-and-coming Public Relations Professional	Gold Award Winner



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# Can a leopard change its spots?

Since the rise of social media and the development of mobile and digital technology, the PR industry has been in its element. But has PR really changed? Is it merely using technology to speed up communications, but not doing anything else differently? And what does the future require? We asked, and the industry answered

**KIM BROWNE, CEO AT TWISTED TOAST DIGITAL**

**“Clients can no longer ignore a social conversation with consumers”**

The role of public relations practitioners in the new world of always-on social devices such as smart phones and tablets has morphed into that of brand content officers. This doesn't replace the traditional role of PR, but adds to it.

Communication is constantly evolving and therefore the era of ubiquitous social media represents opportunities and risks.

Brands need to be forging new conversations with consumers and no longer rely on external media alone to communicate a tightly controlled message. (Brown envelope, anyone?)

With the squeeze on traditional media, there's opportunity for clients with the use of, say, brand content officers to deliver bespoke, quality editorial content (copy and art) for dissemination through owned and external media.

Brands thus have to see themselves as content creators, along with the demands of their own essence, to enable them to conduct more relevant, continuous conversations with their brand fans.

A 'real PRO' is therefore someone who can create, write and pitch stories for both owned and external media, drive the story's engagement and social traction through thought marketing and, at the same time, run a parallel brand fan conversation. This

dedication to a multitude of platforms for real time brand conversation requires an embedded approach to client work.

The payment model naturally has to adapt to allow for conversation marketing as well as for 'published' content. In reality, a topical and engaging tweet stream is as relevant as a single story published on an influential blog or in a printed magazine.

Clients can no longer ignore a social conversation with consumers, especially not if they don't like the subject matter or tone. 'Not available for comment' belongs to the controlled world of old, traditional media. The inherent risk of not engaging in conversation with consumers in real time is much more dangerous than the actual topic being discussed.

The overly cautious, corporate, controlled, top-down attitude of Woolworths during the Frankie's debacle is a case in point. Perceptually Woolworths came across as unwilling to engage with anyone in real time about the legitimate Frankie's concerns. Right to the end they were still clinging to 'we actually did nothing wrong'. They were seemingly ignoring public sentiment.

They could have entered the conversation in real time at the start of the controversy and remained part of it throughout. In my opinion, they weren't even part of this conversation



and had lost the battle on the social media platform, long before the ASA ruling.

Therefore, especially in crises, it's really valuable to voice a socially relevant brand opinion, ready and willing to converse where consumers are (Facebook and Twitter), when they are actually there. Not tomorrow. Right now. This minute. No, scrap that. This second. After all, even in a 'new' digital world the pen remains more powerful than the sword. And the pens are writing as we speak! <



**MARTIN SNOEK, PROF. RALPH HARTLEBEN, GUIDA PEREIRA-MULLER AND SIMONE WARDEN OF MARKETING SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION (MSC) GLOBAL ALLIANCE**

**A**s a consequence of social media, the portfolio of the public relations worker will continue to change dramatically. Speed to market and accuracy is everything. Crisis communication and the response time the public relations worker has to react, has decreased dramatically over the years.

From three hours 10 years ago, to zero minutes today, due to the immediacy of social media.

Proactive engagement with social media and news channels will take priority over other measures. However, the dilemma the consultant faces is the reaction time by the client on content, accuracy and approvals. This is likely to remain slow and the consultant is often challenged as the meat between a triple-decker sandwich – the client, content accuracy and the news channel. It requires a new mind-set of immediacy, as different tools will have to be developed for professional time management and prioritising of tasks.

The public relations sector may change depending on the characteristic of the client – technical, retail, commercial or other industries. The measure of sophistication of the executive management of the client will influence the application of social media in the communication mix. In the past consultants created and distributed messages as a 'push' effect. In future, these will be 'pulled' by universal audiences. While client objectives and target audiences may remain the same, those currently in the industry will have to change.

New media channels will continue to change the user values and expectations of decision makers, especially amongst the emerging generation. Trust, reliability and honesty of the public relations worker will be under scrutiny, especially by company managements who engage the services of consultants.

The global trend is that people are turning away from passive to interest-based media consumption. The public relations professional will have to seriously embrace content, context, community and connectivity when developing the client's online strategy. It is vital that the social media strategy has clear objectives and understands the audience in question. An emphasis on speed of response is critical, as word of mouth can destroy a brand's image in a frighteningly short period of time. A social media strategy also needs to be integrated with other communications elements as it has the ability to creatively engage a company or brand's target audience

The future challenge for the consultant is to move much closer to the client's business objectives and be positioned as a strategic partner. The income model of the consultancy will need to change rapidly and diversity needs to be part of the business model. There is an increase in medium to large companies permanently engaging the services of graduates in marketing, communication and public relations. Public relations workers in consultancies therefore have to be well equipped to stand up to the knowledge of their counterparts at the client level.

Dealing with social media may not be an incidental activity during the day's work assignments, but as the digital realm grows, the skill set of the consultant should grow accordingly to accommodate this new medium. Younger consultants are helpful during a time of crisis because of the practical knowledge of social media they possess.

Consultants must possess the knowledge and insight to leverage communication in the client's favour and allow brand-building messages to spread as quickly as possible ahead of any potential complaints. Reputation management skills are more important than ever and there is no room for error. Keep it short and simple, relevant and easy to find. <



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**CHIRENE CAMPBELL, MD AT OWLHURST COMMUNICATIONS****“you’re not in control anymore”**

The basic principles of PR are still the same as they were ten years ago i.e. engaging the target market through media and influencing opinion (the focus on media, the media and the medium however, has changed).

How we get a message across has changed, and the emergence of social media tools has facilitated that change. The likes of Twitter and Facebook have also made it clear that everyone has the ability to either be a brand ambassador or a brand slayer.

If anything, social media has gripped us by the collar and shouted ‘you’re not in control anymore!’ The people who are in control include your granny, your neighbour, and the marketing director and yes the kids too.

Another thing PR practitioners must remember is that different people prefer to receive their news differently so it’s crucial that

multiple outlets are used. One journalist may prefer an e-mail, another a telephone call or perhaps a DM on Twitter is the way to go. So yes, we need to send the same piece of news over several channels BUT the message needs to fit the medium. A press release will go into more detail whereas a Twitter or Facebook post will contain salient points with a link to more information. Online platforms are where video clips and sound bytes can be included as well – let’s move away from the text only submissions. We live in a digital age – now we need to really embrace these platforms and use them to our advantage.

I think what the corporate world needs to do differently is realise that transparency has to be the accepted form of currency when dealing with all its markets – staff, the media, clients, suppliers etc. If you’ve made a mistake, say so, or you’ll find the online community at



large sharpening their knives and moving in for the kill.

It’s tough out there but to survive we do need to evolve and boldly Like; Tweet; DM, Post and Re-tweet like we never have before. <

**DANIEL MUNSLow, DIRECTOR, TALK2US****“a fundamental shift in the manner in which communication campaigns are integrated into the business strategy”**

dramatically around the world, specifically in two areas: business and strategy alignment, and measurement. The former represents a fundamental shift in the manner in which communication campaigns are integrated into the business strategy (irrespective of platform), and the latter changes the way in which communication is reported and held accountable for its actions.

Implemented strategically, social media tools can make for a more accountable approach to public relations, by creating active engagement with stakeholders as opposed to traditional one-way communication. PR in relations to social media still largely suffers from shiny object syndrome, where many companies want to use it, ‘because others are using it’, without having a detailed strategic plan to deliver specific business returns.

This is also important for effective measurement, as all online activities can be

actively monitored and reported on using a method that affords communicators the opportunity to be more proactively than in the past and engages with audiences to enhance the quality of interaction they have with a company, brand or product. Again, many organisations are playing in the social media space, without clearly defined goals and objectives.

Similarly, when it comes to communication between public relations and journalists, we still find ourselves largely in a traditional ‘send-receive’ model. Many top companies globally provide proactive media content via their interactive online press offices, to the point that journalists can even engage with the media officers online, in real-time.

Moving forward, we need closer business alignment with strategy and measurable goals and objectives for entering the social media space. <

A profession that for decades represented one way (top-down) communication has now developed into a conversation. Today, if you’re not solving your audiences’ problems, answering their questions, or providing timeous content that helps them make an educated decision, your content will remain unread, unshared and... unused.

The field of public relations is changing

**RONEL RENSBURG, PRISA PRESIDENT**

**“The current social media will soon be replaced by something more exciting”**

Everything changes, so does PR. Social media and networks have made communication omnipresent – in the personal lives of people and in the business environment. It has made communication easier and we are now always online, wired-up and connected. It has made the alignment between journalists and PR practitioners that are representing their clients stronger indeed, but filled with less substance. And (just by the way) the era of the so-called press or media release is so *passé*.

The current social media will soon be replaced by something more novel, more enticing, and more exciting (perhaps a hologram of a journalist or PR practitioner?). The implications that social media has for



communication is that individuals become the initiators, authors, editors, readers, critics and respondents of their own ideas and material – about anything.

This means that communication might be speedy and encompassing, but it also means that the connections between people and organisations become distorted to merely ‘data.’ And people (those beings through which organisations exist) become apostate to their own and the existence of others. They may also believe that through social media they ‘know everything’, but in this social network explosion, we actually come to know less.

Therefore business and people will always need professionals like journalists and PR practitioners to ‘package’ all the information for them, to provide frameworks and sense making communication. The time has come for us to put ‘relations’ back into public relations. <



With only the brightest idea’s being noticed, Taryn Fritz Public Relations has earned itself a reputation of delivering highly effective creative campaigns that generate strategic return on investment. This, combined with the light hearted yet realistic and smart approach of their management, understanding of the media through all communication platforms and strategic workshops with client to create the best possible targeted pr approach, has lead to long term relationships with blue-chip local and international clients over the years.



*Taryn Fritz*

Public Relations & Communications



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BY HAYLEY UPSON – HAYLEY UPSON COMMUNICATIONS

# PR turns social

In much the same way that the advent of the internet forever changed the face of communication, the advent of social marketing has irrevocably changed the art of public relations.

Think of it in terms of BF (Before Facebook), and AF (After Facebook).

In the case of BF, public relations relied almost exclusively upon what we then thought of as a large pool of media practitioners relaying messages to the public via traditional media. With AF, our 'pool' of networkers and influencers is as deep and wide as the internet itself. Add to that the huge (and growing) list of 'celebrities' with facebook pages, twitter profiles and the like, and the list of influencers grows exponentially.

Any PR practitioner who ignores the numbers, is ignoring the future of public relations. Today, Facebook has 4.9 million South African users, 600 000 of whom joined in the last six months alone. And the local twitter community has increased 20 fold in just one year, from 55 000 in 2010 to 1.1 million in 2011.

(And before anyone gets on his or her high horse about Facebook being lily white, recent research conducted by iKapadata reveals that Facebook is bigger than MXIT among township youth. And when you factor in the exponential growth of the mobile market – there will be 735 million mobile subscribers in Africa by the end of 2012 – you'd be foolish not to see the potential.)

These immense numbers of online users, and the ease and frequency with which they interact, has changed the way in which (forward-thinking) PR practitioners operate. While traditional media will always deliver undeniable credibility and prestige, social media platforms have a crucial role to play in

terms of creating buzz and excitement, producing a viral effect that augments (and has even been known to eclipse) traditional channels.

To me, it is an entirely new form of business, a powerful combination of traditional public relations and social media marketing, which I call Social Relations.

It's at this point that too many of my colleagues in PR call 'Time Out', arguing that social media marketing is best left to the digital specialists; people who have an in-depth understanding of the digital world and its associated gigabits and bytes.

I, however, am a huge believer in the power of collaboration. Who would have thought that NASA and The National Symphony Orchestra had anything in common? But this collaboration produced some of the most haunting and evocative music that I have ever heard.

As an expert in the field of PR, I understand people. And people are what drive social networking. Combine this understanding with the necessary technical know-how, and the results could far outstrip any expectations.

Some might think this is old hat, but I'm advocating more than a campaign that has both a PR and a social marketing agenda. I'm suggesting that the two



become one – if not operationally, then at least strategically.

What this means in practical terms is that PR practitioners need to start thinking, and acting, very differently. Ultimately PR is, and always will be, about creating and fostering relationships between brands and those who hold the power to make or break them. But what we need to recognise is that the power has shifted significantly, and where BF we were in the business of controlling those relationships; AF the very best that we can do is steer them in the right direction. But if we do that correctly, the effect is magnified by at least as many people who are sitting on Facebook right now.

**“Any PR practitioner who ignores the numbers, is ignoring the future of public relations”**





# Celebrity seeding

**Add the power of celebrity to this mix and we have another heady concoction**

Celebrity seeding is not only significantly cheaper than the more overt, paid-for endorsement, but also holds greater benefits in that – if managed properly – the recommendations wield the power of authenticity.

Too many PR professionals turn up their nose at celebrity seeding, but what matters is that in today's celebrity obsessed world, consumers are influenced by them, and South Africa is not immune to this.

## A CASE IN POINT...

In August 2011, USABCO introduced the bobble in South Africa, using PR, social media and celebrity seeding as core pillars of the launch marketing strategy.

The bobble is essentially a water bottle that filters water as you drink it, negating the need to buy single-serving plastic water bottles that add to the country's pollution problems. As such, the celebrity seeding campaign targeted clean living celebrities and sports personalities, such as Vanessa Haywood, Ryan Sandes, Michael Mol, and Lwazi Mvovo.

Each celebrity was sent a bobble gift pack and over the following months replacement filters, with no expectation of a *quid pro quo*. Because they used the product and were seen to be using it, and then also 'liked' the product (and did so on Facebook), they helped create a spark that ignited a flame.

"The launch exceeded all sales expectations, and I have no doubt that the combination of a comprehensive and well executed traditional PR campaign, innovative social media, together with celebrity seeding will feature strongly in USABCO's upcoming marketing strategies", says marketing director Clive Grey. <

*\*Bobble PR was managed by Hayley Upson Communications and the social media by Domino (Machine).*



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BY ANGELA BARTER, FOUNDER OF @ COMMUNICATIONS GREEN PUBLIC RELATIONS

# 'Green' PR: On the cutting edge of the consumer revolution

A silent revolution, aptly termed 'Green Consumerism' is rapidly gaining momentum, giving rise to a new breed of consumer, 'who is mindful of environment-related issues and obligations, and is supportive of environmental causes to the extent of switching allegiance from one product or supplier to another even if it entails higher cost'.

This definition from businessdictionary.com is substantiated by the results of Ogilvy Earth South Africa's online sustainability survey, released in October 2011. Of the 800 individuals within the LSM 6-10 category in Johannesburg and Cape Town, who are aged between 26 and 45 years and are the main shoppers in their household, a convincing 76% are prepared to pay more for a product or service that was ethical in its social, environmental and general business practice. And if these consumers don't perceive a company as 'green', they won't buy its products, even if it the product is 'green'. In fact, 85% would boycott a company or brand if they suspect it is acting in an irresponsible or damaging way towards its people, its community or the environment.

## GREENWASHING

This is prompting companies and their PR agencies to promote the environmental attributes and 'green' claims of their products and services in an effort to capture the attention and loyalty of this new consumer market.

However, it is not a matter of simply 'greenwashing' PR and marketing communications. In fact, companies and PR agencies that simply 'green sheen' their communications, instead of offering their consumer market 'real green', run the risk of considerable negative publicity and irreparable brand damage when 'greenwashing' is exposed.

In addition, the risk of 'greenwashing' being exposed has increased exponentially due to social media, and the fact that consumers are far more aware and knowledgeable about sustainability issues than what was



previously assumed, as revealed by the Ogilvy Earth survey results. For these reasons, 'greenwashing' is a dangerous gamble with a company's reputation, especially for companies that have not earned their 'green' credentials.

## GREEN PR

However, even companies with excellent green credentials can suffer immense brand and reputational damage as a result of inaccurate 'green' claims or poorly organised or inexperienced PR efforts.

So how can companies effectively leverage their communication of their green credentials to tap into 'green consumerism'? The answer is authentic, holistic and well-considered 'Green PR', which transforms 'empty' environmental claims into an investment – with a measurable return on investment – in brand building and reputation enhancement.

The number one rule for 'Green PR' is authentic, genuine and honest communication. Solid, verifiable evidence that the company's ethics and culture are consistent with the 'green' claims made is the very foundation of a 'green' communications

campaign. In fact, genuine, measurable green initiatives extending throughout all operations of the business are the only way to build confidence, trust and loyalty among this new breed of consumers. The company has to 'walk the talk', keep its promises and ensure every environmental claim is true – and that it benefits consumers.

## WALK THE GREEN MILE

To achieve this, it is imperative to select a PR specialist that won't simply add a 'green' spin to media messages, but will walk the green mile with you: guiding you in terms of crystallising your green intent, providing advice regarding disclosure, and communicating your green initiatives to the right audience with passion, sincerity and integrity. This is a PR partner that not only has experience and expertise in classic and online PR, but one that also has a deep understanding of sustainability and environmental issues, reflected in the agency's own eco-initiatives. Always give preference to PR practitioners who are members of PRISA and have subscribed to a Code of Ethics, which will add credibility to your investment in Green PR. <

## 'Green' guidelines for communication success

- Measure, report and disclose your current environmental impact
- Establish achievable sustainability goals
- Embed a commitment to sustainability in everything you do
- Seek green accreditation and certification
- Be factual, honest and truthful
- Communicate your green initiatives with passion, sincerity and integrity
- Ensure all environmental claims can be substantiated scientifically
- Use clear and understandable language
- Avoid misleading eco-friendly imagery
- Be transparent – include environmental claims on your packaging, website or call centre
- The medium must match the message
- Choose your communication partners wisely



BY SAN REDDY, MD OF MARCUSBREWSTER

## Court vs. court of public opinion

One of the best things a company or individual facing a crisis can do, is call in the assistance of expert professionals – but what happens when their advice clashes?

In particular, the counsel of attorneys and those of crisis and reputation management specialists are often at odds. And the upshot for the client is disaster.

Attorneys tend to default to a 'say nothing' position, for fear of saying or doing something incriminating, or opening one up to civil litigation. In doing so, they are fulfilling their mandate: keep the client out of the courts, and thus out of trouble, as far as possible.

But the problem is that while the client attempts to avoid being held to account legally, he or she is swiftly and mercilessly being tried in the court of public opinion. That's what the crisis communications practitioner is trying to manage. Without the ability to speak up in one's own defence, however, the communications battle is all but lost.

The first rule of effective crisis and reputation management is to defend yourself at every opportunity. The second rule is, don't waste time about it; the longer you take, the worse the drubbing for you and your reputation. And the more difficult it will become to communicate your way out of your pickle.

When media have the bit between their teeth on a story about you, they're going to publish, whether or not you use the opportunity to defend yourself. If you won't talk, they'll get someone who will – and that person won't necessarily say things you want heard in the public domain.

And in the court of public opinion, someone who won't comment is guilty. It's a less-stringent test than our courts would require, but it's potentially a lot more damaging to one's reputation (and bottom line.)

Stuck in the middle is the beleaguered client, desperate to escape with as little damage – legal or reputational – as possible. The client will accede to a crisis communications plan, only for the attorneys to reject it. The attorneys almost always win, because they usually have a deeper relationship with the client and, well, because they're attorneys.

The freaked-out client, feeling out of control of the situation and fearing terrible repercussions, invariably flip-flop between these competing recommendations. Yes, they want to defend themselves, but no, the lawyers say keep quiet. But now there's a fresh allegation ... say something, say the crisis people; say nothing, say the attorneys.

And so the communications response ends up lopsided, and falters. There's half an answer here, an unsatisfactory interview there. Those media not getting a comment turn more hostile. The client makes snap decisions (with or without advice), then has a change of heart. And perhaps another before the day is out.

The simplest solution is for a client's attorneys and crisis communicators to be included in all decision-making, and for a mutually acceptable communications plan to be drafted and strictly executed.

Attorneys and PR people also need to compromise. The former need to accept that saying nothing frequently says more than saying something, and the latter that there are often serious but not-very-obvious legal considerations at play.

Time allowing, as crisis communications by definition is urgent, basic media training should also be provided to the client and attorneys. The better they understand media, the more receptive they will be to the imperatives of crisis communications.

After all, what really is the point of trying to saving a company in the courts, when it's already been ruined in the court of public opinion? <

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# Directory

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**Date established:** 2001/04/23

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**Offices:** 2

**Company profile:** Atmosphere's campaigns deliver tangible business results by mixing creativity and a deliverables-based approach for each and every client. We are passionate about our industry, staff and clients and the proof is in our long term client and staff retention. We are a committed bunch and we focus on delivering results.



### Baird's Renaissance

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**Date established:** 01 September 1987

**Offices:** 11 Ralda Road, Cnr Susman Avenue, Blairgowrie

**Area of Expertise:** Communication strategy development and counsel • Internal communications • Market research • Public affairs and influencer communication • Reputation and issues management • Stakeholder mapping, advocacy and outreach • CSR strategy and implementation • Communication integration management • Media relations, management and optimisation • Transformation and change management • Crisis communication management • Consumer education programmes • Corporate brand communication and implementation.

**Company profile:** The tenets of strategic emphasis, innovation and expert implementation anchor all Baird's client relationships. The company is a niched full-service communication management consultancy in Southern Africa, and among the first South African agencies to successfully expand into the rest of Africa. We are the only South African Reputation Risk management and communication Agency to grow internationally under our own flag. Baird's offers services to a list of blue chip national and multi-national clients in a variety of sectors. We are renowned for strong client partnership, solving difficult problems and creating innovative, but practical strategies.



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### Catalyst Communications

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**Date established:** 2005

**Offices:** Cape Town

**Areas of expertise:** Marketing communications strategy, public relations, media liaison, events, publicity, social media, reputation management, design and copywriting of marketing materials.

**Company profile:** Catalyst Communications is a full service marketing, communications and PR agency.

We specialise in strategic, results driven communications and PR campaigns, which directly reach our clients' target audiences, engage them and ultimately build communities of loyal customers.

We have a small, highly-skilled team, committed to excellent service delivery and measureable results.

Sectors we work in include: education, environment, professional services, tourism, publishing/bookselling, food, health and wellness.

Through effective communications, we have successfully launched innovative brands, revitalized existing brands, educated and engaged consumers about products, issues and services.

Clients like our analytical, innovative approach, attention to detail, focus on deliverables, understanding of market trends, excellent service, professionalism and hard work.



CHILLIBUSH  
COMMUNICATIONS

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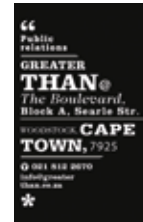
**Date established:** 1998

**Offices:** Johannesburg

**Areas of expertise:** We have specialist teams in public relations, investor relations, advertising and design, media planning, events, digital design, social media and internal communications. Particular PR focus lies in brand communications, investor relations, cause-related marketing and CSR/development communications, with experience across a range of sectors including financial services and IT.

**Company profile:** We're a through-the-line communications agency and believe in integrated delivery, without sacrificing real expertise in specific areas. A strategic approach, a clear understanding of evolving channels, strong relationships and passionate tenacity drive excellent return on investment for our clients. When we're offering a holistic service, we can effectively

streamline and leverage content across various channels to reach targeted audiences and stakeholders. Chillibush is an award winning small agency where people are solid and unpretentious, where we'd rather under-promise and over-deliver, and where we strive to have winning relationships and partner with our clients long-term.



### Greater Than

Greater Than is an award winning national full service Public Relations agency specialising in strategic communication, media liaison, publicity, event management, crisis communications and brand and reputation management for consumer, business and lifestyle brands.

The agency boasts 10 PRISM Awards and has a growing client base of top local and international accounts. Brands that have chosen Greater Than as its trusted communications partner include Harley-Davidson, Mars Africa, The Foschini Group, Pedigree and SAIL.

Companies choose Greater Than because of its hard-hitting measurable deliverables, knowledge and experience in the industry, exceptional service, strong media and celebrity relationships, local and international networks, strategic and innovative creative thinking, and most importantly, its 'Go, Go, Go' attitude.

Visit [www.greaterthan.co.za](http://www.greaterthan.co.za) or contact 021 812 2670 or [info@greaterthan.co.za](mailto:info@greaterthan.co.za) for more information. Follow the agency on Twitter, @greaterthanpr or join the Facebook group.



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**Date established:** January 2006

**Areas of expertise:** Public relations and communications

**Company profile:** Intelligent Communications (iComm) is a PR and communications company focusing exclusively on the South African ICT and business sectors.

The company is a dedicated and enthusiastic PR partner, priding itself on delivering a personalised service by becoming an extension of a client's corporate communication and marketing arm in order to meet its strategic objectives.

iComm's extensive experience has given the organisation insight into the methodologies employed to conduct business and, consequently, achieve results within this arena. This has also provided exposure to key ICT and business publications and editors.

iComm is a certified micro-enterprise level 4 BBBEE contributor.





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**Date established:** PRGN 1992

**Offices:** PRGN - 42 Offices

**Areas of expertise:** Strategic Communications, Public Relations and Crisis Communications

**Company profile:** Celebrating 20 Years of Connected Thinking. Globally. More than 1,000 clients across six continents depend on the combined resources of the Public Relations Global Network (PRGN) to deliver targeted public relations campaigns in more than 80 markets around the world. With revenues of more than \$110 million (U.S.), PRGN is among the world's top five public relations networks. PRGN harnesses the resources of 42 independent public relations firms, 50 offices and more than 900 communications professionals to connect international companies and organizations with individual and culturally diverse markets globally. Visit PRGN online at: www.prgn.com.



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**Company profile:** Inzalo Communication is an established, award-winning public relations agency led by Bridget von Holdt. In 2010, it was rated among the top 20 public relations and event management consultancies in South Africa and Bridget was voted one of the top 10 most influential public relations practitioners by the Annual 2009/10, in the nomination category, Corporate Communications, Investor Relations, & Public Relations. To top this, Inzalo consistently rates among the best South African public relations and event management consultancies in Finweeks' yearly AdReview. The agency's highly skilled team of proactive communication experts are accomplished in the art of strategic planning and implementation of high-impact communication campaigns for clients. The wide range of services includes public relations, event management, media relations, stakeholder relation programmes, investor and financial communication, marketing, advertising/advertorial resources and writing. It is with this in mind that Inzalo is committed to service excellence while offering tailor-made communication solutions geared to embrace the needs of a diverse sector of industries.



### Irvine Bartlett

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**Date established:** 2010

**Offices:** Cape Town and Johannesburg

**Areas of expertise:** Full service Public Relations agency with specialist practice areas in Digital Commerce, Financial Services and the built environment

**Company profile:** The driving principle of Irvine Bartlett is to ensure that our clients grow their business as a direct result of our efforts to increase brand credibility and profile. The names Irvine and Bartlett are above our door because we believe in accountability.

While we have talented executives working at Irvine Bartlett we ensure that clients have access to us at all times and across every project and campaign. Simply put, with Irvine Bartlett you get what you pay for.

We offer a broad spectrum of service from traditional Public Relations and publicity to effective digital and social media engagement and Online Reputation Management



### Lange 360

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**Areas of expertise:** Corporate, financial and consumer communications, brand and reputation management and crisis communications

**Unique selling point:** Ability to distil key brand and corporate messages and amplify these via all channels in a fully integrated 360 degree communications approach that best links brands with target markets.

**Company profile:** Lange 360 is a fully empowered, AAA rated BEE company, which offers full-service communications for corporate, financial, property and consumer brands as well as investor relations, crisis communications, media liaison and a wide range of marketing services. Lange has a blue chip client base and represents some of the most established, prestigious and admired local and global brands including SA's favourite petroleum brand, BP, top private asset management group, BoE Private Clients, investor relations for retail giant Foschini and

leading generics pharmaceutical provider Pharma Dynamics. It is the only Southern Africa partner invited to join the global WorldCom PR group of top independent consultancies in the world, offering representation for its clients across Africa, Europe Middle East and Asia and the US.



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**Date established:** 1996

**Offices:** Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth

**Areas of expertise:** Public Relations and Communications

**Company profile:** Meropa is the industry leader of South African PR and has been servicing blue-chip clients for over 20 years. It is the only South African PR agency ranked in the Top 200 global communications firms by The Holmes Report.

With the best people, clients and systems; Meropa is the only national PR consultancy with wholly-owned offices in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth.

Global connections are via Hill & Knowlton Strategies and Chime Communications and our own African network, Africa One, which reaches 13 sub-Saharan countries.

Meropa's 50+ staff includes 14 former journalists and editors.

We are a full-service agency spanning strategic reputation management; crisis and issues management; brand PR; environmental communications; investor relations; public affairs; technology, motoring and healthcare communications; media relations and stakeholder management; media training; internal communications; events management; publications; and digital strategy.



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**Date established:** 24 March 1994

**Offices:** Johannesburg, Cape Town & An African Network Of 14 Countries

**Areas of expertise:** Pr & Comms Strategy, Media Liaison, Stakeholder Communications, Issue & Crisis Management, Brand & Social Marketing Activations

**Company profile:** Magna Carta is one of South Africa's leading public relations agency's with an 18 year history of working with South Africa's and Africa's top brands in the corporate,

government and consumer sectors.

We take an integrated and strategic approach to PR which comes from truly understanding our clients' business and the environments in which they operate. Off this basis we deliver 'corner office thinking', developing PR strategies that are implemented and measured against our clients business and marketing objectives.

Our clients include Standard Bank, Deloitte, Engen, Medscheme, Eskom, General Electric, Starwood Hotels, and Distell.

We are a level three accredited BBBEE contributor.



### MANGO-OMC

**Contact person:** Nicole Capper

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**Email:** nicole@mango-omc.com

**Website:** www.mango-omc.com

**Physical address:** 9 Queenspark Avenue, Woodstock, Cape Town

**Postal address:** PO Box 12677, Mill Street, Cape Town, 8010

**Date established:** 2005

**Offices:** Cape Town

**Areas of expertise:** Integrated communication strategies and implementation (traditional, mobile, social and digital media integration). Extensive experience in Afrikaans, arts, music, festivals, events, awards, digital and emerging markets amongst others.

**Company profile:** MANGO-OMC is a boutique public relations and communications consultancy with offices based in Cape Town. However, we are not limited to The Mother City as you can see from our national footprint of clients and their widespread campaigns.

Our dynamic and cutting edge team ensure an integrated skill base that encompasses web, mobile and conventional offline PR.

We combine tried and tested methods with unconventional concepts to create exceptional strategies. Our diverse list of past and present clients, from a wide range of industries, includes RedBull, TFG(CSI), Aardklop, 24.com, Infecting the City Public Art Festival, Green Point and the Oranje-Kloof City Improvement Districts, to name a few.

South Africa – marcusbrewster is a communications industry leader. The agency's dynamic staff boast backgrounds in business, journalism, publishing and marketing, bringing out-of-the-box strategic thinking and expertise to any PR execution. The firm's proprietary, output-based billing system ensures clients get what they pay for, and concretises measurement and delivery.

Over the past two decades, marcusbrewster has successfully represented everyone from African heads of state to FMCG brands. Its blue-chip client roster includes major players in the banking, telecommunications, health, aviation, publishing, appliance, leisure and travel industries.



### Networx public relations

**Contact person:** Karey Evett

**Tel:** +27 21 464 1144

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**Email:** info@wiredcommunications.co.za

**Website:** http://www.wiredcommunications.co.za

**Physical Address:** 20 Wandel Street, Gardens, 8001, South Africa

**Postal Address:** P.O Box 928, Green Point, 8051, South Africa

**Date Established:** 2000

**Offices:** Cape Town and Johannesburg

**Area of expertise:** Consumer, Corporate, B2B in South Africa

**Company profile:** Wired Communications is a small, effective and hard-working PR agency based in Cape Town and Johannesburg. We implement traditional PR campaigns and online and digital PR functions. We believe our core strength is in developing cost-effective solutions that deliver results against set objectives. Driven by a desire to succeed, we are proactive, enthusiastic and creative. Wired Communications is the first South African PR agency to offset its carbon footprint. Each year, we measure our impact on the environment and buy trees from Food & Trees for Africa, which are planted in areas that need either shade or fruit trees.

combines a strategic, creative and opportunistic approach, with the setting of measurable objectives that assess, refine and improve on communication results to directly support business objectives.

Clients appoint us because they benefit from a cross-fertilisation approach and 360° view, serviced by bespoke PR or social media teams tailored to their specific retainer or campaign needs.

Clients remain with us because we deliver consistent meaningful results, consultation, and collaboration delivered with exceptional service.

Clients include amongst others, Electrolux, Spitz, Shimansky, Avondale Wine, Allan Gray Orbis Foundation and Expo 18.



### PLATINUM PR

**Contact person:** Adelaide Ncube

**Account Executive:** Platinum Public Relations

**Tel:** 011 706 1755/ 011 706 1744

**Cell:** 072 184 5306

**Email:** adele@platinumpr.co.za

**Website:** www.platinumpr.co.za

**Our address:** Number 3 Quorn Place, Bryanston East, Sandton

**Who We Are:** Platinum Public Relations was established in 2003 and is 100% black female owned. Driven by an overwhelming passion for excellence, Platinum PR's vision is to establish itself as a pre-eminent black economic empowerment public relations consultancy in South Africa.

**Services We Offer:** Platinum Public Relations offers a diverse range of services tailored to suit your organisations' needs, which makes us a one stop communication shop.

Some of the dynamic services offered include:

- Public relations
- Marketing
- Strategic event management
- Advertising
- Training and development

Platinum Public Relations also designs, develops and implements corporate social responsibility programmes.



### marcusbrewster

**Contact person:** Marcus Brewster (CT office), San Reddy (Jhb office)

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**Johannesburg office: Physical address:** Block B, 40 Wessels Rd, Rivonia 2128

**Postal address:** PO Box 650942, Benmore 2010

**Tel:** 011 022 9711

**Email:** info@marcusbrewster.com

**Website:** www.marcusbrewster.com

**Date established:** 1991

**Areas of expertise:** PR and commercial strategy, media and investor relations, crisis and reputation management, event and sponsorship management, social media, public affairs, internal communications.

**Company profile:** With an unparalleled track record for innovation and delivery – it is the most-awarded PR firm in



### Positive Dialogue Communications

**Contact person:** Tracy Jones – Managing Director

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**Website:** www.positivedialogue.co.za

**Physical address:** 3 Woodlands Road, Woodstock, Cape Town, 8000

**Postal address:** PO Box 315, Cape Gate, 7562

**Date established:** 2005

**Offices:** Cape Town

**Areas of expertise:** Social Media (web & mobile), Strategy, Media Relations, Publicity, Event Management,

**Company profile:** Positive Dialogue Communications is a Cape Town based traditional PR and social media agency that



### PR Powerhouse

**Contact person:** Lebo Madiba

**Tel:** +27 82 392 5339

**Fax:** 086 612 5331

**Email:** lebo@prpowerhouse.co.za

**Website:** www.prpowerhouse.co.za

**Company profile:**

PR Powerhouse is a boutique agency with the skills, experience and client base of a global agency, and we pride ourselves on being able to offer a personal, professional and in-depth approach to our clients' needs. We don't do jargon, our goal is simple: to help our clients achieve their business objectives. We

do this by offering a highly personalised service, by focusing on the messaging, and by forging strong relationships with both the traditional and new media throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Our customised, comprehensive approach puts client companies in the spotlight by leveraging media coverage, brand PR, reputation management, event marketing, community outreach, government relations, social media, business and financial communications, and internal communications.



#### **PR Worx**

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**Fax:** 011 913 4966

**Email:** info@prworx.co.za

**Website:** www.prworx.co.za

**Physical address:** 1 Sirius Street, Sunward Park, 1459

**Postal address:** As above

**Date established:** 2001

**Offices:** Johannesburg, South Africa

**Areas of expertise:** Media relations, internal and external integrated communications, event and sponsorship management, crisis communications, social media, corporate social investment and sustainability

**Company profile:** Having recently been independently voted as the City of Johannesburg and South Africa's best Public Relations company (small category), it is evident that PR Worx is the market leader in innovation, strategic ability, and execution linked to demonstrable results.

We are a full-service communications firm with a ten-year success record among South Africa's blue chip clients. We believe that our combined successes are as a result of strategic ability, close working relationships, and a team of specialists that understand our clients' needs and objectives. PR Worx has no intention of becoming the largest communications agency in the country, but rather to retain our position as a boutique firm that delivers exceptional value and personalised service to our clients.



#### **SIMONSAYS communications**

**Contact person:** Melanie Stevens

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**Fax:** 011 465 7553

**Email:** mel@simonsayscom.co.za

**Website:** www.simonsayscom.co.za

**Physical address:** Delta House, 39A Kingfisher Drive, Fourways, 2191

**Postal address:** PO Box 385; Fourways North, 2086

**Date established:** 2003

**Areas of expertise:** Traditional media publicity campaigns  
Social media campaigns • Internal communication strategies  
Development of creative and marketing collateral • Events

**Unique selling point:** SIMONSAYS will stop at nothing to get the job done in the most creative and efficient manner; nothing is too big nor too small and the same level of energy and commitment is pumped into every campaign it is appointed to

manage. This is a team that becomes fully immersed in its projects and quickly becomes an extension of its client's marketing and communications departments

**Company profile:** SIMONSAYS communications specialises in consumer, pharmaceutical and B2B public relations campaigns. Its core competencies encompass reputation management, brand building, strategic consultancy, crisis communication, as well as the origination and implementation of internal communication initiatives. The development of creative and marketing materials also falls within its scope of services, as do small-scale events.

Its client base comprises a range of companies from several industries, including the marketing, pharmaceutical/health, insurance, furniture and environmental sectors. In addition to this it has years of experience in the realm of CSI communication and personality profiling.

SIMONSAYS communications is as hot on creativity as it is on strategy and this forward thinking agency has a distinct culture that is attracting the cream of the industry's talent pool.



#### **Taryn Fritz Public Relations**

Managing Partner

Taryn Fritz Public Relations and Communications

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**Cell:** (+27) (0) 82 8228 737

**Address:** Greenacres Office Park, Cnr Victory and Rustenberg Road, Victory Park, Sherwood House, Ground Floor  
Post: P O Box 769, Parkland, 2121

**Company profile:** Taryn Fritz Public Relations and Communications is a fully-fledged PR agency, specialising in tailor-made communications for clients within the retail, FMCG, consumer and lifestyle sectors.

Our service offering is based on providing clients professional, accurate and honest advice in conceptualising the most effective campaigns possible, that not only maximise their media coverage, but also that successfully drive overall communications and sales.

We've earned ourselves a reputation for delivering highly effective creative campaigns that generate massive ROI. This, combined with the light hearted yet realistic and smart approach of our management, has seen us secure a number of blue-chip local and international clients over the years. These currently include The Walt Disney Company South Africa, L'Oreal South Africa (including the brands L'Oreal Paris, Maybelline, Garnier, SoftSheen Carson, Lancôme, YSL, Vichy and Dark & Lovely, Redken, L'Oreal Professional...); Steers, Hi Fi Corporation, Absa, At Source Handmade Foods plus the Doppio Group and Orion Group to name a few.

While our core offering remains competitive PR campaigns, we also handle publicity, events and strategic communications, and now also provide professional writing and below-the-line design services. With an accumulative of 40 years experience..



#### **Wired Communications**

**Contact person:** Karey Evett

**Tel:** +27 21 464 1144

**Fax:** +27 21 464 1124

**Email:** info@wiredcommunications.co.za

**Website:** http://www.wiredcommunications.co.za

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