

Millstead concludes: "Since we in public relations are generally the guardians of proper word usage when dealing with clients and executives within the companies that employ us, we have a greater than average responsibility to be correct in what we write."

Words put into the mouths of clients concern Jim Cummings, dpr, Y&R/Buchen, Reincke (Chi.). We quoted this sentence from materials issued by a trade assn in name of its pres.: "The realignment of responsibilities reflects an increasing industry need to broaden and strengthen overall communications efforts designed to inform the American public of the greater availability and comparative efficiency" etc., etc.

"The three-and-four-syllable syndrome of bad writing," Cummings calls this, with its "deadly dull overuse of trite words" which become "even more unrealistic when surrounded by quotation marks." He feels "Nobody ever says such a sentence. When an executive has such a comment placed under his nose for approval, it's a shame that he doesn't tell his pr staffer to go back to his desk and make it a bit more down to earth and readable."

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO PROFESSIONALS

Public relations must be subjected to cost/benefit test, Harold Burson writes in support of chargeback system (pr 2/12, 2/19). "Increasing trend to hold profit center management responsible for their operations" means they must justify cost effectiveness of all services, whether legal, accounting or public relations. Confusion results from not separating pr program into corporate & divisional segments. Divisional activities are direct chargeback and, "as such, should have approval of divisional management." Burson-Marsteller chief feels "Properly managed, the chargeback system can be highly effective. Results are related to cost and, equally important, those within the public relations function become aware of the true cost of their services."

Jimmy Carter is apparently interested in improving his press relations. Wife Rosalyn will be guest speaker April 26 at Matrix Awards luncheon of Women in Communications, NYC Chap. Nominations are now open for top NYC women communicators in pr, adv., publishing, print & broadcast media. For information, contact Fabianne Gershon, Blyth Eastman Dillon, 1221 Avenue of the Americas, NYC 10020; 212/730-4880.

New (2nd) edition of Metro California Media covers 19 market areas housing 19 million people. In addition to usual listings of media data, personnel & where to contact, radio & tv talk shows and resident columnists are also given. Format identical to NY Publicity Outlets makes referencing easy for those accustomed to original area media directory. 224 pages, \$49.50 incl. semi-annual revision. P.O. Box 327, Washington Depot, Conn. 06794.

First Canadian shareholder resolution by church groups filed with Falconbridge Nickel Mines over operations in Africa. Lutherans & United Church are requesting report on wages, working conditions, recruitment, training, promotion, family housing for black workers in Namibia. Interfaith Ctr on Corp Resp. reports 450 black workers allegedly not permitted to live with their families while white workers may.

Product Hazard Alert Service reports public concern about safety of food products has jumped sharply. For artificial sweeteners, it doubled in year. Meat rose similarly. Sodium nitrite is new concern. Info on survey or service from Consumer Response Corp, 360 Lexington Ave., NYC 10017, 212/867-9333.

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FIGHTING BACK: HOW ONE INDUSTRY IS USING VARIED OUTREACH & PERSUASION METHODS TO GET ITS IDEAS OUT IN FACE OF FULL GOV'T ONSLAUGHT

Public interest groups say they feel powerless against well-financed business campaigns. Business, in turn, starts with major disadvantages against tax-supported gov't campaigns. HEW, FDA, FTC, key lawmakers, some states avidly promote generic drug substitution thru publications, news media, speeches, conferences. Enacting drug reform bill is another target. Some techniques Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Assn. (D.C.) is using to respond:

1. Attend opposition's press conferences. Do on-the-spot interviews, distribute rebuttal. Call key editors day before to let know will be there seeking balanced coverage. PMA media rels mgr Dick Hamilton told pr that at recent HEW-FTC release of model generic drug law he got "at least a mention of our side of the story in every major broadcast and newspaper story."
2. "Gatekeeper program" of media visits by drug CEOs, PMA senior staff. Three objectives: provide access to industry policy makers; "no-holds-barred forum" where press can ask any questions about industry; convince CEOs that editors & reporters are basically "fair-minded individuals who will accurately report industry's story if the facts are accurate and accessible."
3. Mini-gatekeeper program sends second team of execs to less accessible media around country. In both programs drug CEOs and PMA execs go to media offices. Discussion is not directed at generic issue, unless editors ask. Goal is to open communications.
4. Interview schedule for trade assn pres. with trade & consumer press, specialized media. Also by-lined articles. Professional journals, publications for audiences related to drug industry get emphasis.
5. Quarterly roundup of newly approved drugs, widely disseminated, to dramatize fact it is drug companies that perform costly research & testing that produces new curatives. (Complete product labeling is attached for medical editors.) Major issue in generic debate: If brand names can by law or public policy no longer command premium price, pharmaceutical houses say funds for research will be lost, gov't will have to take over R&D.
6. Direct response to negative or inaccurate coverage. After Jack Anderson did unfavorable column, PMA got list of his subscribing papers, wrote piece defending its position with cover letter from pres. Nearly 100 papers used it. Op-ed article, lead letter-to-editor resulted from direct response to unfavorable editorials in Wash. Post, NYTimes.

(See related item in purview this week.)



SHOULD PACs BACK WINNERS REGARDLESS OF PARTY BECAUSE THEY WILL THEN LISTEN TO DONOR'S VIEWS?

Corporate PACs sharply shifted their financial support to Republican congressional candidates as

November's election drew near. Recently published Federal Election Commission (FEC) figures show that between Oct. 1 - 23, 71% of contributions (\$2.9 million) went to Republicans. Prior to Oct. 1, only 53% went to them. Republicans ended up receiving 61% (\$5.4 million) of total business backing.

Shift seems to follow Ronald Reagan's admonition (at Public Affairs Council conference): "Why does half of the business PAC money go to candidates who may not be friends of business?" He disagreed with those who hold that PACs should support winners, regardless of party, because those who receive contributions will then listen to your point of view. That policy favors incumbents -- of which there are more Democrats than Republicans. (Incumbents did receive 61% of corporate PAC dollars.)

812 corporate PACs that raised funds in '78 have not offset traditional advantage enjoyed by Democrats in receiving special interest money. Democrats got \$18.2 million total; Republicans \$13.7. Labor accounts for Democratic edge, contributing \$8.8 million to them, only \$500,000 to GOP. Of trade assns' total of \$10.7 million, Republicans received \$6 million, Democrats \$4.7. Of other special interest groups, GOP got \$1.8 million to Dems' \$1.3.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF 10 LARGEST CORPORATE PACs IN 1978

Corporation	Total (to both parties)	Percent to Republicans
1. International Paper	\$168,880	72.1
2. Standard Oil of Indiana	167,800	75.2
3. Dart Industries	134,150	86.2
4. American Family	116,650	26.2
5. General Electric	112,895	49.9
6. General Motors	101,725	67.3
7. Eaton	101,450	76.9
8. Union Camp	100,700	62.2
9. United Technologies	97,175	73.1
10. Union Oil	95,560	85.5

Figures compiled by National Journal from FEC records. Donations to independent candidates not included.

SOCAP NEARS 1,000 MEMBERS, HAS NEW EXEC & OFFICE, BECOMING CORP. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY UMBRELLA

New, fulltime SOCAP exec dir Moylan Brown says group is becoming umbrella for corp. so-

cial responsibility officers, including corp. giving, community affairs, urban affairs, even some internal communications. Reason, he feels, is that techniques for dealing with consumers are transferable to community, urban, internal audiences. Another trend: companies are starting to look at employees as consumers.

Society of Consumer Affairs Professionals, now in its 6th year, "is open to any individual who has responsibility for consumer matters in a business, business-sponsored or quasi-business organization or assn." Others -- like hospital patient relations

officers, university ombudsmen, consumer activists -- can become associate members without voting privileges. Variety of job descriptions is indicated by titles of '79 officers:

- Pres: Spencer Boise, vp, corporate affairs, Mattel (Hawthorne, Calif.)
- LVP: Nell Stewart, dir., consumer relations, Texize Chemicals (Greenville, S.C.)
- VP: Andrew Armstrong, vp & dir. cons.affairs, Armstrong Cork (Lancaster, Pa.)
- Sec'y: Douglas Robinson, dir. cons.services, Campbell Soup (Camden, N.J.)
- Treas: Helen Goldsmith, vp cons. & gov't affairs, AMFAC, (San Francisco)
- Past Pres: Judy Gorman, vp corporate responsibility, NYLife Ins. Co. (NYC)

Among directors titles are: urban/rural prgm mgr; mgr, cons. response; mgr, customer service; dir, cons. & professional srvs; cons. advocate.

Boise told prr organization will reach 1,000 members this year. Like nearly all other practitioners' groups, SOCAP is emphasizing professional development. Managerial requirements of consumer affairs in '80s is one topic.

Group's philosophy is evident in recent meeting themes:

"Without consumer participation, neither a democratic society nor a free marketplace can function as it should."

"Consumerism doesn't have to mean boycotts, court battles and Ralph Nader. It can be a lot quieter and a lot more efficient."

"Consumer complaint handling is emerging into a profession."

New offices are at 777 14th St., NW, Wash., D.C. 20005; 202/393-3270.

QUOTE

Business exists only with the public's consent, and the more executives shy away from radio microphones and TV cameras, the more they stand to lose to special interest groups which have learned to use the media to promote their messages and viewpoints. The viewing public, hearing only one side of the story year and year again, has no choice but to begin believing it. No wonder business has such low credibility with the public today.

Ketchum, MacLeod & Grove letter to pr reporter

READERS RAISE TWO QUESTIONS ABOUT PRACTITIONERS' WRITING, ROLE IN LANGUAGE CHANGE

Is 'til a word? People are holding off buying tickets to big events "practically 'til last minute," we reported 2/5. "There is no such word as 'til," writes Thomas Millstead, mgr. ind'l comms, CNA Insurance (Chi.). "It is until or it is till." Some dictionaries condone 'til -- but point is whether practitioners should, or want to, participate in growth & changing of language.

As a/v media reduce time for & interest in reading, and even ability to read, shorter word forms will arise. In this case, apostrophe logically replaces "un," resulting in 'til. Public relations has more invested in language than most groups, but dare we take lead in reshaping it to meet new conditions?