

AUDIENCE TARGETING GETS EVER MORE CRITICAL  
BUT SOMETIMES THE BEST WAY APPEARS UNCONVENTIONAL:  
FOR INSTANCE, MORE PEOPLE ATTEND SYMPHONIES THAN SPORTS EVENTS

Targeted communications & opinion leaders are familiar concepts but require constant re-evaluation & research. Some current activities at AT&T -- reputedly the world's largest public relations operation, and currently embroiled in the encompassing issues of new technology & corporate dismemberment -- offer a perspective on whom it is important to reach & how to do it.

Like many others, Ma Bell supports the arts. This is usually treated as an employee or community relations gesture, at best an expression of corporate social responsibility. But in a recent Christian Science Monitor interview, Bell's vp-pr Ed Block reveals that backing arts organizations is deft audience-targeting and far from pure altruism:

"Any way we look at it, it's a good business proposition. There is a higher percentage of the kind of people we want to reach in the arts. If it's okay to take a customer to lunch or to a ball game, then why not to the symphony? You think in terms of what it costs you to reach whatever kind of person you're trying to reach, and clearly our support of orchestras is a very attractive business proposition.

"Symphonies have remarkably appealing demographics." For instance:

¶Median age: 40, slightly under the national average;

¶Median income: \$21,000, 50% above the national median;

¶Education: 70% are college grads; 30% hold advanced degrees;

¶Audience size: larger than professional sports in almost every major market.

Block concludes, "If you talk about numbers of people who pay their own good hard money to go to an event, there is a higher percentage of the kind of people we want to reach in the arts."

10 MOST IMPORTANT SHAPERS  
OF MANAGEMENT IN THE '80s

1. Middle management crunch;
2. Shrinking supply of entry-level workers;
3. Stress on productivity;
4. Shifting economies of scale, toward smaller units;
5. Vulnerability of labor-intensive organizations;
6. Redefining place of work;
7. New communications patterns;
8. Evolving participation needs of workers;
9. Diversity of values & lifestyles;
10. New perceptions of the future, placing value on judgment rather than possession of information.

-- Roy Amara, pres, Institute for the Future (Menlo Park, Calif.)



"In another seemingly iconoclastic move, AT&T has committed \$10 million to the first national hourlong newscast. But where conventional wisdom for tv use is to go by the numbers, Bell is backing PBS's "MacNeil-Lehrer Report." Tho highly regarded, the program features news analysis & discussion, attracting a select audience of the educated & politically active -- rather than huge numbers of viewers. These people are, however, the ones apt to have impact on important matters such as regulation of communication technology.

"BEHAVIORAL DEMOGRAPHICS" ADDS  
FAMILY ECONOMICS TO POPULATION DATA  
FOR TARGETING PUBLICS BY MOTIVATION

Factoring economic motivators into population statistics produces a more useful means of targeting audiences -- a sort of predictive behavioral demographics. Population profiles are well known: rise of senior citizens, increase in Hispanics, etc. Some of the most important social issues of our time center on the economic functioning of families. In a special issue of the Journal of Family Studies for June, prime influences on economic behavior & attitudes on issues are identified as:

1. Single-Parent Families: By 1990, one-fourth of all children under 18 will be living with one parent only; 45% will spend some time in a single-parent family. Such families tend to have low incomes. Their children are more likely to drop out of school than children from 2-parent homes. The negative income tax as a solution to the low income problem suggests that it could improve nutrition and increase school attendance and grades.

2. Multi-Job Couples: When families need additional income they must decide whether the husband should take a second job or the wife should work. By 1978, the traditional family, in which

only the husband worked, accounted for only 33% of all married couples.

3. Work Equity: Total time now spent on housework and employment each week is about the same for husbands and wives, 47 hours.

4. Elderly Nutrition: For those over 65, food is the largest budget item and is a greater percentage than for any other age group.

5. The Divorced: Divorced families usually suffer a significant reduction in living standards. In 1981, approximately 1.2 million marriages ended in divorce in the US.

PROMOTING INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS VEHICLE  
PAYS OFF FOR AMTRAK;  
1000 CALLS DAILY REACH "NEWSBREAK"

1-minute report of the latest Amtrak news. Promoting it is where the fun came in, Ed Meyers, Amtrak's internal comms dir, told prr.

To get information quickly to employees nationwide, Amtrak initiated Newsbreak -- a direct-dial news service. Employees dial a special number and hear a

"We launched 'Voice of Today,' a 2-week contest dedicated to the proposition that as long as we're all going to work for a living, we might as well have some fun at it." Contest involved 10 famous persons, each known for some quote or memorable utterance, all liberally rewritten to promote Newsbreak or Amtrak. Tapes were made of professional mimics reading Myers' copy with appropriate sound effects & theme music in the background. Posters & wallet cards with the Newsbreak number were also widely circulated.

"Prizes included a cordless telephone (to call Newsbreak from any location), 2 Amtrak railroad watches or one of 18-dozen glorious orange t-shirts with the Newsbreak logo and telephone number fore & aft. A summer intern has the job of awarding these prizes by lot among those who submitted correct entries."

Three days after the contest ended, 500 entries were received from Amtrak's 18,000 employees. "Special honors for enterprise went to 2 employees who tried to stuff the box with multiple entries and one poor sod was awarded a t-shirt causa honoris for having, impossibly, missed all 10 names."

Contest entertained & familiarized employees with the news service. Calls now average between 900-1000 per day. During the contest, 1300-1750 calls were received per week day, 2600 on weekends.

WORK TOWARD A STANDARD DEFINITION  
OF PUBLIC RELATIONS CONTINUES

"One of the problems we have in the profession is a misunderstanding of the meaning of public relations on the part of organizational management, journalists and some practitioners. My definition is not a short one designed for easy memory. Instead, it stresses the key elements we must get across as a profession if we are to overcome the common perception of public relations as primarily image building & media relations functions," explains Melvin Sharpe of Ball State Univ (Muncie, Ind.). His definition:

Public relations is the recognition & acceptance of the following principles:

1. The economic & social stability of an org'n is dependent upon the attitudes & opinions of its publics.
2. All people have the right to a) voice opinions on matters which directly affect them and b) receive accurate information about pending decisions relating to them or their welfare.
3. Management of communications is essential to ensure accurate & adequate feedback from internal & external publics to assure the adaptation to change necessary for longevity.

The practice of public relations involves:

1. Constant evaluation & analysis of the operational environment & its publics.
2. Review & analysis of goals, objectives, policies & procedures to identify lack of harmony between the org'n & its publics or social environment, and the potential short & long range effect.
3. Maintenance of open communications to assure a) mgmt decisions based on accurate & complete information and b) organization's ability to respond & adjust to change as required by societal & environmental conditions.
4. Planning & development of actions designed to project the org'n honestly & accurately in order to earn & maintain support & understanding from publics within its operational environment.

PRSA's project to come up with an "official" definition of public relations is progressing, project leader Elias Buchwald told prr. It has been written, reviewed by members of the advisory cmte and will be discussed at the September board meeting. As Pres. Joe Awad has pointed out, proposing any definition will be controversial. But as Philip Lesly's report on Stature & Role of Public Relations urges, a standard definition is needed.

PR WILL BE SUBJECT OF TV FILM  
...IF READERS CAN HELP FIND NEEDED FOOTAGE

feature Edward Bernays and Ivy Lee. "It's exciting because we're interviewing Bernays then linking him with historical footage of the events. These men made history and we're documenting it." Problem is finding old footage of Ivy Lee. "We've interviewed Jim Lee -- Ivy Lee's son. We're looking for movie film of Lee that we know exists -- but nobody seems to have. Public relations is very bad with its own public relations. Nobody keeps any archives."

Now half completed, film is tentatively scheduled to be released this winter. "If readers have anything of Lee or Bernays, we'd like to hear from them." (Contact him at David Grubin Productions, 251 West 92 St, Ste. 2E, NYC 10025; 212/874-7444.)

"Public relations should have a greater sense of its own history. People exist in a context. With understanding of the past you can understand the present. It's an interesting history, worthy of study. I'm astounded at how current practitioners are concerned only with the day to day. Now's the time to write it, while people who made it are still alive."

PROFESSION'S VIEWS ON POLITICAL PR  
VINDICATED BY GREENFIELD'S BOOK:  
TV CANNOT SELL CANDIDATES LIKE SOAP

& tv is what creates it. One argument is that winning candidates may advertise but also have active person-to-person operations including coffees, phone banks, local committees, etc.

Leading practitioners have spoken out against the pronouncement of "political consultants" -- who claim to do "total communications strategy" for candidates -- that image is all

In The Real Campaign, tv's own Jeff Greenfield of CBS agrees. As evidence he notes that in '80, Geo. Bush had the media, John Connally had \$12 million for ads, Jimmy Carter had the media access of incumbency -- yet none of these was elected. "Television and the media made almost no difference," his study shows. In fact, media failed to understand that ideas were being evaluated thru the traditional political process.

The author feels the reason journalists failed to recognize this is because of "the media's fascination with itself as a political force, and its fundamental view that politics is more image than substance," more mechanics than positions on issues. Must reading to understand the overstated influence of media. (\$15.95 from Summit Books, 1230 Ave of the Americas, NYC 10020)

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

PEOPLE. Ford Motor (Dearborn, Mich) names C. John Roberts dir, international pub afrs...Royal Viking Line (San Francisco) establishes new pr dep't & names George Cruys mpr...Commercial Union Insurance (Boston) names Geoffrey Mullis vp, corp comms ...Pamela Hollingworth becomes comms dir for US Committee for UNICEF (NYC).

ERRATUM

In last week's issue the conservative women's organization known as Eagle Forum was mistakenly labeled "Ego Forums." The unintentional humor notwithstanding, we regret the error. It may be helpful to practitioners to know that this error resulted when copy was transmitted verbally by telephone; it is critical to spell out even the simplest key words when they can possibly be mistaken for other words.