

After studying other orgn's efforts, Carr concluded the KISS principle (Keep It Simple Stupid) would get the brochure read & key motifs picked up by the assn's spokespersons. "I can tell you that it has worked to our advantage. I've received a handful of calls from reporters thanking the bar for providing them with a source who could knowledgeable discuss a specific topic -- and who provided not only useful quotes but important background as well. In addition, the lawyers & judges themselves have praised the simplicity & usefulness of the brochure. I guess this is another example that justifies the old adage that spending a lot of money doesn't always bring success." (Copy from Carr at 1 Elk St, Albany, NY 12207; 518/463-3200)

### USEFUL ITEMS FOR PRACTITIONERS

PR firm debuts two new ideas: 1) The P.R. Clock will list important pr dates to help avoid conflicts in the scheduling of special events, press conferences, organizational meetings, major civic activities. Published once every 2 weeks. List your event free by mailing notice 30 days in advance. Subscription, \$95/yr. 2) Videotape will be used as a business-to-business matchmaker. Like the videotapes used to match singles, pr firm is making its own film to match it with prospective clients. Viewing process doesn't require a single account person to lose time from the office. This is the "wave of the future," firm predicts. (More info on both from Norma A. Lee Company, 50 E. 41st Street, NYC 10017; 212/725-8330)

City is cleverly promoted thru humorous use of comparison. NYC is the Big Apple. Minneapolis is the Minneapple. T-shirts promoting the Minneapple sport a snow-covered red apple and come with a promo tag attached selling the city's advantages over the Big Apple: "...Here is a town where the major urban problem is dutch elm disease and the number one crime is overtime parking. We boast more theater per capita than the Big Apple. We go to see, not to be seen. We go even when we must shovel ten inches of snow from the driveway to get there...."

Some CEOs "spend so much time wringing their hands and saying, 'I'm your president, but you must not think of me as your president; think of me as your friend.' I need somebody I can think of as my boss. I've got friends."  
-- David E. Davis, former editor & publisher of Car & Driver, in Ad Age

### WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

PEOPLE. Canadian Public Relations Society (Ottawa) names Arbo Mattila exec dir.

HONORS. Jean Ludlow (mpr, Prudential, Jacksonville, Fla) appointed a trustee of the prestigious Jessie Ball duPont Religious, Charitable & Educational Fund.

ELECTED. Canadian Public Relations Society 1985-86 officers: pres, Frank Paznar (sr vp, Mediacom Industries, Toronto); pres-elect, Don Hoskins (vp, Canada News-Wire, Ottawa); vp,

B.A. (Scoop) Fredstrom (dpr & info svcs, McCain Foods, N.B.); treas, Allan Sinclair, vp gov't & pa, Council of Forest Industries (B.C.); sec'y, Jean Freeman (mktg dir, Cable Regina, Sask.).

International Ass'n of Business Communicators 1985-86 officers: chrm, Christopher Bunting (managing dir, Continental Public Relations Ltd, Ottawa); chrm-elect, Robert Berzok (ass't dir, corp comms, Union Carbide, Danbury, Ct.).

### DESIRE OF VARIOUS PUBLICS TO LEARN IS KEYSTONE OF MANY PR PROGRAMS BUT FEW AS UNLIKELY OR SUCCESSFUL AS CLASSROOM ON A COMMUTER TRAIN

To keep commuters happy and gain new riders, NJ Transit (Newark) offers an on-board lecture series. "Our original idea was a college or graduate course for credit. But before we did that we wanted to get some experience under our belt," Rose Sheridan, mgr of info svcs, told prr.

NJT's simple, effective procedures are applicable to any project using educational techniques:

Research. Survey taken to assess commuter interest showed most didn't want credit courses but did want informative lectures. First one (Jan '84) was received so enthusiastically program was expanded to run on all 8 of NJT's lines. At least 1 lecture per week is offered Sept thru June.

Drawing The Crowd. Lectures are announced thru posters hung in stations a month ahead. Week before, notices are placed on seats of all trains on that line. "We ask people to call and reserve a seat. That gives us an idea how many will come -- we usually get double the number who call." The car -- which holds 120 people -- is at the end of the train, always nonsmoking.

Getting Coverage. Press releases are also sent. "We get a lot of coverage. Reporters come to the lectures to cover them -- particularly if the topic is timely. During the water shortage we did one on how to take care of your lawn without using much water. Press people from all over the state were interested in that," spokeswoman Mona Terrell told prr.

Seeking Feedback. After each lecture, which runs about 35 minutes, attenders are asked to fill out a survey. Postage paid reply envelopes are distributed.

Protecting captive audiences from messages is as important a customer relations technique as offering them. NJT protects commuters not interested in lectures from having to listen. Many people prefer public broadcasting because there are no commercials. Airlines respect the "space" of passengers by offering smoking & non-smoking sections, and by using ear-phones for those desiring to watch the inflight movie.  
  
But what about airline passengers who use travel time to work? A darkened cabin with colors & events flashing on an overhead screen is distracting. Should there be movie and no-movie flights? Or sections? This is an especially important query now that many airlines are showing short films -- with commercials.  
  
Customer "protection" also extends to mailing lists. When organizations consider selling their lists, shouldn't they also consider the value of their customers' privacy?



Feedback sought includes: 1) Was the lecture informative? 2) Was there sufficient time? 3) Should they be longer than one day? 4) Were the handouts helpful? 5) What other subjects would you like covered? 6) Any suggestions or comments for improving the program? "Response has been good. Most say they'd like more. Negative comments are generally that there isn't enough time. As a result, we've extended some lectures to 2 days," Sheridan explains.

Controlling Speakers. Speakers -- who receive no pay -- are restricted from pitching their services/products during the lecture. Sheridan reports only once did an orgn's speaker do more selling than informing. "It was a lecture on financial services. We'll never use that organization again." (PR seminar planners take note!)

The Set Up. "We use a portable podium with a microphone and put a speaker in the rear of the car so people in the back can hear -- the car is 110 ft long. We haven't worked out ways to extend it to more than one car. Each train has 8 cars. If we hooked it into the train's public address system, then even those who don't want to go to the lecture would have to listen. We don't want to do that."

Part Of Program. On-board lectures are part of a complete educational program. Other elements include: 1) rail safety program -- slides & discussion given to elementary school students; 2) public transit educational program -- presentation on bus & rail service & safety; 3) Penn Station tours -- children tour the station and discuss careers in public transit. "We're targeting our future transit riders. We want to enlighten these children and get them transit oriented. Maybe we'll spark some interest in them to become transit professionals," says Terrell. Last year American Public Transit Ass'n named NJT number one in US & Canada.

REPOSITIONING THE LABOR MOVEMENT:  
UNIONS TO USE PUBLIC RELATIONS TECHNIQUES  
IN STRIVING FOR RESURGENCE, SAYS REPORT

Committee on the Evolution of Work issued its 2nd report earlier this year: The Changing Situation of Workers & Their Unions. Among recommendations to bring about the "period of resurgence -- of sustained growth" that the 27 union leaders & 10 eminent scholars believe is "within grasp" are these:

1. Expand use of electronic media. "We have failed to overcome the misperceptions about what unions do" and their contributions to society. Employ teleconferencing, spot ads, videocassettes, cable programming, full-length broadcast programs.

2. Use pressure of public opinion. To secure neutrality of employers during organizing campaigns. To overcome unfair laws on employees' right to organize.

3. Provide more opportunities for member participation. "In a

Like hospitals, schools & many industries, organized labor as presently oriented faces a declining market -- so must reposition itself. AFL-CIO

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Labor shares one lament with business -- & everybody: its media treatment. "Too often, only 'bad' news about organized labor gets publicized; successes are ignored, and efforts made by unions to further the interests of workers and the general public go unnoticed. Unions should be far more aggressive in publicizing their successes and their work for causes that provide benefits far beyond our membership rolls."

world filled with available diversions, attendance at monthly meetings cannot be the principal forum for membership

participation." Increase community services, expand committee structures, use into-the-home radio & tv.

4. Increase interaction between members & leaders. More, and more localized, conferences. More events like "Solidarity Day" & issue seminars.

5. Orientation programs for new members. On how union functions, goals, history. Taught by older members.

6. Better publicize labor's accomplishments. Start a "Labor in the Schools" program.

SELLING EXECS ON PR IS FINE BUT  
WE NEED TO CONVINCe MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

haven't reached their colleagues. When they submit their reports -- which are usually "by the pound," i.e., the thicker & heavier the better -- these gurus often talk about marketing solutions to organizational problems. And they will mention advertising as a solution -- which it hardly ever is by itself. Rarely do they mention public relations at all.

Reports we've seen recently from major hospital consulting firms demonstrate the problem. These folks are extremely active advising institutions how to reorganize, add new services, position themselves differently. The standard budget categories they provide for accomplishing these extremely complicated tasks -- which deeply involve all the institutions' publics -- are advertising, consulting (notice that one!), accounting, legal.

The cultural change occurring in healthcare is far more a public relations consideration than a legal one. Yes, corporate entities will change or be reshuffled, fire walls will be built. But if in the process consumers feel abused, medical & other professional staff do not adequately participate, donors & community groups are unsure what's happening, then it doesn't matter how good the legal or accounting work is.

The professional societies could easily target management consultants for an educational campaign. If they start telling senior execs the importance of public relations, that would be a major third party endorsement.

SIMPLE, LOW COST MEDIA TRAINING FLYER  
WORKS FOR BAR ASS'N, REPORTERS PLEASED

Media Contacts You." "One of our goals is to be a recognized source of news & comment for all legal & law-related stories in NY state," he told prr. But in order to prepare its various spokespeople to do this -- without antagonizing the media with legalese -- a review of media techniques was needed.

7. Train spokespersons in media techniques.

8. Better inform reporters about unions.

9. Test usefulness of advertising.

10. Organizers should use modern pr tactics. Video for small groups, electronic conferencing for the press, strategic communication campaigns, good message strategy.

(For copy of report, write prr.)

The recent spate of management-books-that-are-really-public-relations-books, tho written by management consultants,

Book/notes  
Richard

report  
pr  
Media