

¶51% are spending more time on matters of corporate identity & perceptions than they did a few years ago; 20% are spending less time; 25%, about the same. Predictably, amount of time spent is tied to how well-defined the corporate identity is. Companies with well-defined identities spend less time on such matters than the total group (36% vs. 20%). Those with less-well defined identities spend more time on the subject (66% vs. 50%). (Copies from A.R. Katz, D-A-Y, 40 West 57 St, NYC 10019; 212/977-9400)

ITEMS PRACTITIONERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

¶New guide shows how segmented audiences are causing mass media to lose its pull. You've read that often in pr. Network tv, which reached 90% of homes tuned in during prime time in the '79-'80 season, reached only 76% in the '85-'86 season, according to Nielsen (whose numbers, of course, reveal only sets turned on, not people watching). Cable tv, video cassette recorders & independent stations have splintered the audience. What's more, there are 3,143 subscription newsletters competing for attention, says Hudson's Newsletter Directory (Newsletter Clearinghouse, Rhinebeck, NY). And 231 magazines were given birth in 1985 alone, reports "New Magazines 1986" by Samir Husni. Advertising's plight is public relations' harvest. It must be true: both NYTimes & WSJ carried stories on the shift last week. Husni will update the new mag directory annually, with funding from Meredith Corp. Also offers index & interesting statistics. (Copies from him at J-dep't UMiss, University, MS 38677; 601/232-7146)

¶Alberta's "Professional & Occupational Associations Registration Act" was proclaimed July 4th (see t&t 12/2/85). Known as Bill 57, it is a way (shy of licensing) to legally regulate professions -- particularly those who use a profession's name. A registrar -- likely to be Bob Edgar, Dep't of Consumer & Corporate Affairs -- will be officially appointed shortly. Presently the Attorney General's Dep't is working on a draft set of regulations for one professional group to be used as a model. It's up for one more revision before it will be finalized, Edgar told pr. CPRS' Calgary & Edmonton chapters are waiting for the registrar to be officially appointed, then will make application.

¶How to excite your sales force so in turn they'll excite customers. That's the reason behind the hoopla car manufacturers make each year introducing new lines of cars. For its 4000 dealers, Chrysler turned a 300,000 square foot convention center into a theater. 160 Broadway singers & dancers strutted, sang & danced on 5,280 feet of runways that criss-crossed the audience. Dinner, also an event, was as much a show stopper as the performance. It was staged & choreographed with 550 costumed waiters. Topping all this, Lee Iacocca spoke to his guests. And, yet more, country western star Willie Nelson performed. Bob Jani, of Robert F. Jani Productions, who staged the extravaganza, said "this absolutely tops anything we've ever done."

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

DIED. Crosby Kelly, internationally renowned public relations counselor to

top mgmt at Rockwell International & Litton Industries.

DON'T BOTHER TO CALL:
LAUGH WITH US

In Pat Jackson's polemic last issue on changes in the field, there was a classic typesetting gaffe. Where the word eliciting was wanted, "illiciting" was what came out. Now that's a subject we can all get into -- and a new verb long needed in our sinful era.

pr reporter

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SEC-FRANCO CASE SENDS WISE PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECS & STAFFS BACK TO THE CODE OF ETHICS, FEDERAL SECURITIES REGULATIONS

When PRSA President Tony Franco signed a consent decree last week with the SEC covering allegations of insider trading in a client's stock, financial and corporate practitioners got a mandate to dust off their to-the-second knowledge of securities regs and the ethics code.

For a long time savants have been predicting prosecution of practitioners for violation of SEC regs, or of PRSA's code as interpreted -- with assistance from the SEC -- for financial public relations. Speculation usually centered on rule 6, which admonishes practitioners to find out the truth for themselves if management gives them questionable information to disseminate. The rule states, "Where members have any reason to doubt that projections have an adequate basis in fact, they shall satisfy themselves as to the adequacy of the projections prior to disseminating them."

Instead, the shoe fell on the standard prohibition against using inside knowledge to potential advantage in the market -- which is also rule 9 of PRSA's code: "Members shall not use inside information for personal gain. However, this is not intended to prohibit members from making bona fide investments in their company's or client's securities insofar as they can make such investments without the benefit of material inside information."

"I've run across some firms who say, 'no trading, period, in the accounts.' Some say, 'you can trade in the accounts if it's not insider information & you buy when the stock is going down, never when it's going up.' But there are areas where people could still play the game & circumvent the SEC rules," Graves told pr.

"One problem is that issues like insider trading are not that well defined," says respected financial practitioner Joseph Graves of Investor Relations Associates (Glen Ellyn, Ill.). He told pr, "There's an alert factor individuals should have. You have to keep up on what the SEC is doing in specific cases."

Graves' Response:
Staff Meeting To
Review The Rules

"We had a meeting yesterday to review all those rules & regulations making sure everybody in our organization understood them. And if any individual was to violate the rules & regulations, we would not support them."

"Despite what just happened, overwhelmingly counselors are very sensitive on insider trading. In fact, they're almost paranoid about the rules & regulations. They want to follow them to the letter. Problem is when you get a pr firm not familiar with investor relations." Some positive responses:



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¶For new members joining a department or firm, indoctrination courses in regs & ethics violations seem essential. How many corporate units do this? In a 1984 t&t, Graves warned that "far too often, the beginner is literally thrown to the wolves on the first job. He or she must 'wing it' or operate on a 'hit-or-miss' basis."

¶For working financial relations & related communication staffs, there is an opportunity for quarterly or semi-annual meetings to review specific SEC dockets & the reporting of cases by the media. In addition to its defensive value, this will allow practitioners to take the lead in assuming ethical compliance within publicly-held companies.

More information is readily available: 1) SEC, pub info ofc, 450 Fifth St. NW, Wash DC 20549; 202/272-2650; 2) Stock Exchange libraries; 3) Big 8 accounting firms; 4) financial reporting mgrs or comptrollers within companies; 5) pr counseling firms; 6) the only full-length book, Managing Investor Relations: Strategies and Techniques, written by Graves.

TASK FOR PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES: PROMOTE CODES INSIDE FIELD & OUT

How well do practitioners know their ethics codes? 14 public relations societies have them, tho only PRSA & CPRS have enforcement procedures. And a uniform code is now being negotiated, under auspices of North American Public Relations Council. But, say some, so what?

These critics point out that the ultimate punishment PRSA or CPRS can mete is to kick a member out. This overlooks a more scathing reprimand: public disclosure of the offending party's misdeeds. At PRSA's invitation-only Symposium on Demonstrating Professionalism, to be held Sept. 5-7, Ethics Board Chair Don McCammond will review the history of code cases. He will report, among other things, that practitioners fear censure sufficiently that they sometimes pay large legal fees for defense against alleged violations.

Yet like all laws & rules, the main objective of the code is not

to punish the few who violate, but to educate & support the many who abide. Frank Wylie for years urged PRSA to publish cases monthly, fictional ones of course, to illustrate what the code means in daily practice. He argued this would not only make members aware & informed -- but be a constant reminder. Perhaps this might have averted the present sad instance.

Others have been urging the various societies to send copies of their codes to officials, opinion leaders & media. (Some have gone so far as to suggest that anyone be allowed to cite a practitioner for violations.) Of all the proposals for demonstrating the professionalism of public relations, the one that must be prerequisite is public education of 1) the existence (since 1954, for heaven's sake!) of a code, and 2) that the societies mean business about enforcing them -- and, thus, about operating in the public interest.

ANOTHER INDEPENDENT SELLS TO AD AGENCY THOUGH INDIRECTLY: WEINER TO DOREMUS

Weiner, Inc., after selling the firm to Doremus & Co. the previous evening. Weiner's offices will not move, at least for now, and the firm will operate as a division of Doremus -- which in turn is the umbrella name for the public relations units of old line ad agency BBDO.

Other units include Tracy-Locke in Dallas & Denver, Quinn & Johnson in Boston. Weiner's consumer capabilities, perhaps best known for the sensational success of Cabbage Patch dolls, becomes allied with Doremus' financial & corporate capabilities.

Weiner sees only strengths from the continuing consolidation of pr firms -- because he feels "the boom in pr means the pie has gotten bigger for everyone. I don't see the little guys squeezed out, or the medium-size firms caught in the middle."

"I came to work this morning just like any other morning," is how Dick Weiner expressed the future course of Richard

"Amazingly, we still find major organizations without any formal internal or external public relations capabilities. So there's room for everyone who's good to grow. This field is in a boom."

Home Video Next Move? As one of the leading publicists, Weiner is "very very excited about the pr potential of home video. I personally believe the VCR is going to change people's lives the way tv did. As pr people get into this medium, there'll be a whole new sponsored medium -- a major communications medium. There's a video store now on every corner. One-third of the homes have it, 2 in 3 will in a year or so."

OUCH: 46% OF 78 FORTUNE 1000 CEOs SAY A CLEARLY DEFINED CORPORATE IDENTITY IS NOT ESSENTIAL, NEEDN'T BE SEEN AS "SPECIAL"

along with Reichman Research conducted the survey. It also suggests CEOs may not fully understand that identity is an asset that can be managed -- and provide returns. Other findings:

"It suggests identity may be an under-appreciated corporate asset," says Jean Way Schoonover, Dudley-Anderson-Yutzy chrm, whose firm

¶37% say their corporate identity is less than they would like it to be.

¶27% say it's not well enough defined for internal & external audiences.

¶Most important audiences for the identity message are customers (87%); employees (45%); investment community (41%); shareholders (14%); media (4%); regulators (3%); political leaders (1%); suppliers (0%). Interesting in light of the fact that 88% of those responding are publicly held.

"Executives see corporate identity in elusive, non-concrete terms. They apparently have difficulty pinning down what they want from it, and are less than pleased with it at the present" -- an opportunity for practitioners.

¶Most frequently volunteered ways to improve corporate identity include: coordinate advertising efforts (13%); standardize communication (11%); better define corporate objectives (11%); stronger corporate adv'g programs (11%).