IF YOU'RE STILL BLANKETING THE MEDIA WITH PRESS RELEASES ...

This survey's for you. Of 450 newspapers, mags, tv & radio stations thruout east & west Europe (listed in *The Guide To European Business Media*), only 83 (18%) responded [indicating their disinterest?]. 63% say the info received isn't appropriate; 60% say if it is appropriate, it has no news value; 37%, it's sent too late. Info they rate *most useful & relevant* comes from the following sources (in order of priority):

1. Informal contacts
2. Interviews
3. Own research & reporting
4. News agencies
5. Press conferences
6. Press releases
7. Other media sources
8. Off the record briefings

Majority of info comes via interviews (63%); press conferences (63%); informal contacts (62%); press releases (56%). "It seems to us that there is a strong case here for better understanding of the media, so that information can be properly targeted. Getting news into the hands of just a few appropriate journalists can have a far, far greater impact than blanket mailings," commented Sue Wheeler of Grice Wheeler Business Communications. (phone 0371 830307; fax 0371 831252)

ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE TO PROFESSIONALS

¶**"NO WONDER FEW UNDERSTAND WHAT WE DO,"** comments Frank Wylie after studying pr job titles in higher ed. Selected by random numbers from the Directory of Higher Education, the first 100 yielded 57 variations. Most popular (10) was dpr, followed by vp-univ rels (8) & dpi (7). There were 25 different director titles, 16 for vp. (List from prr)

¶**DESCRIPTION OF THE IDEAL CEO** is one way to approach what a newly named university president says about his management style: a) "relies substantially on consultation & discussion, b) generates ideas for others to test out, c) looks for a sense of shared values among various groups at the university, d) and ultimately takes responsibility for making the decisions -- especially the hard ones -- and e) articulating their rationale to those affected." Thomas Jackson takes over at U Rochester July 1. His insightful statement identifies 1) participation, 2) delegation, 3) buy-in, 4) accountability & 5) transparent communication. Then -- the foremost question about all sr mgrs today: will he walk the talk?

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

CELEBRATES. Selz, Seabolt & Assocs (Chi) its 65th anniversary. It has headquartered at the same location for the past 52 yrs.

HONORS. Kathleen (Schoch) Ziprik (pr mgr, Georgia-Pacific Corp, Atlanta) is first inductee of PRSSA's nat'l Hall of Fame.

Kathy Kelly (U of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette) awarded endowed professorship: The Hubert J. Bourgeois Research Prof in Comn

ELECTED. Jim Strenski (chrm, Public Communications Inc, Tampa) '94 chair, PRSA's College of Fellows.

INDUSTRY RESTRUCTURING CREATES NEED FOR NEW NAMES

Semantics can be everything -- and the handle put on an organization, product or process is critical to communications & to understanding. That makes naming -- like other semantics & message strategy -- a pr responsibility. What's happening today creates an opportunity.

THE DRIVING FORCE	WHY IT'S VITAL TO PR
"Anticipated changes caused by the Administration's new healthcare plan & the expected breakdown of legal barriers separating the telephone & cable television industries, will motivate **new levels of mergers, alliances, collaborative arrangements & other consolidation related events.** From these actions, we anticipate a plethora of new names of every variety, including brand names, holding company names, combination names, connotative names & made-up names," says Joel Portugal whose firm, Anspach Grossman Portugal (NYC), has surveyed name changes annually since '69.	"A name must do *more* than merely designate; if only that were necessary, all consumer items may just as well be numbered. In today's ever-more-crowded, competitive world, **a name must function as a total message.** And that message must be structured as cleanly as possible. As a message, any name competes with thousands of *other* messages & signals. To get thru to the intended audience, that message has to stand out. Its name must be easy to remember; it must be subject to minimum distortion; and it must be relevant to the targeted receivers. In a phrase, *its name must have power*," writes Naseem Javed.

1993 SURVEY REVEALS...

● **121 changes in the communications industry** (up 5% from '92). **Ameritech's** move to a corporate brand strategy led it to abandon 23 names, including the use of all regional Bell operating company names. **Nynex** (NY & New England Telephone Companies) started promoting the Nynex name on signs & trucks late in '93, noting in communications that "we've outgrown the name 'telephone.'" **Bell Atlantic** will promote a unified corporate brand name, discarding the names of its 6 telephone operating companies. As the result of a merger, Centel Corp changed to **Sprint.** Communications Satellite Corp took its shorthand version, **Comsat,** as its corporate name. 15 telecommunications companies joined forces to launch **MobiLink.** Home Shopping Network became **QVC Network.**

● **82 changes in healthcare** (down 42% from '92). Humana left the business; its hospitals took on the name **Galen Health Care** and were subse-

quently acquired by **Columbia Healthcare Corp**. Doctors & Physicians Laboratory became **SmithKline Beecham** as the result of an acquisition. Damon Corp became **Corning MetPath** as the result of a tender offer. Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Virginia became **Trigon Mutual Life Insurance**. In the medical support area, name changes reveal "the need to market service more effectively with simpler, more appealing names." Albert Gallatin Visiting Nurse Ass'n became **Staff Builders**, Physician's Visiting Nurse Service became **Medical Innovations**. Merger of Boston's Brigham & Women's Hospital & Massachusetts General Hospital hasn't yet produced a new name.

- **275 changes in the financial industry** (down 29% from '92). Shearson Lehman Brothers to **Smith Barney Shearson** (10th name change since its founding in the 60s). Primerica becomes **Travelers Corp** in an unusual move where the suitor takes on the name of the acquired corporation. Dean Witter separated from Sears, taking with it the Discover Card to form **Dean, Witter, Discover & Co**. Sears Mortgage Corp & Sears Mortgage Securities renamed **PNC Mortgage** were sold to **PNC Bank**, new name of PNC Financial Corp.

- **552 changes due to strategic corporate decisions** (down 38% from '92) -- characterized more by "modifications than totally new or fabricated names." Marriott Corp split into **Host Marriott & Marriott International**. General Cinema became **Harcourt General**, bumping its book publishing subsidiary to the parent level. Its subsidiary simplified its name to **Harcourt Brace & Co**. 215 of the changes came about because an existing name was either too limiting or too specific. Centel Federal Systems changed to **Cordant Inc**. reflecting its shift from gov't to private sector biz. Carnival Cruise Lines to **Carnival Corporation**.

- **34 changes in the retail industry** (down 27% from '92). Horn & Hardart became **Hanover Direct Inc**. **Blockbuster Entertainment Corp** bought & renamed Sound Warehouse & Music Plus. Merger of Costco Wholesales Corp & The Price Company resulted in **Price/Costco**. Supermarkets General adopted the name of its grocery store chain, **Pathmark**.

HOW TO TAKE CHARGE: BOOK ON NAMING OFFERS HELP

In his book, *Naming For Power: Creating Successful Names for the Business World*, Naseem Javed recommends committing "to a process which ensures name development as a marketing priority, and not merely a loosely-managed afterthought." (See also 6/24/91 t&t by Javed; & prr 8/1/88 on a detailed naming process)

Using cars as an example: "While millions upon millions are eagerly & legitimately spent on planning, manufacturing, introducing & promoting new models, **shockingly little is invested to insure a consistent & effective way of naming them!**" He offers this 4-stage naming process:

1. **Name development** is the most creative. However, input must include linguistic knowledge, historic naming references, & an update on current naming trends.

2. **Judging the suitability of a name to the desired positioning in the marketplace** is an analytical stage. Process must consider the name's

appropriateness; measure its advantages & competitive disadvantages; test its use & applications; & its potential longevity.

3. **Next, one investigates the name's availability.** This phase requires adherence to a strict checklist, making sure jurisdictions are not overlooked; that conflicts & similarities are noted; & detailed search reports are prepared for the legal department.

4. **To be properly registered & protected,** there must be confidence the name has been put through an exhaustive process. This requires an audit of all search results, & analysis of conflicts; assessment of the proprietary component of each name; documentation of a registration & protection strategy which ensures complete & final approval of a name's launch.

WHO SHOULD DO THE NAMING? CRITIQUE OF 3 METHODS

1. **In-house naming facility.** Organizations that introduce new products continually can benefit. He set up IBM's which in '89 was introducing 4 products daily. Today its Naming Reference Center handles 1,200 product-related naming issues each year. To do this, companies must: a) assign the responsibility to key people; b) put policies & procedures in place; c) develop a cooperative taskforce that can ensure informed input on marketing, technical & legal issues; d) regularly assess & review existing names; e) prepare naming trend profiles for specific industries & market segments.

> "A study of consumer preference for letters of the alphabet discovered that **A, B, S** and **M** produced the 'most favorable feelings' in those interviewed, while **Q, X, Z, F** and **U** produced the 'worst feelings.'"

2. **Use of contests** is debunked by Javed. UNISYS is the result of a contest. "It was a mediocre name, and remains a mediocre name within the context of its identity, standing not-quite tall-enough amongst the other giants of the computer industry." Another contest winner: Talisman for British Petroleum's Canadian operations. "Running internal naming contests within any organization is not only a time-consuming, frustrating & potentially hostile exercise, but a highly costly one, producing tedious searches through useless name entries."

3. **Focus groups.** The personal likes & dislikes encountered here aren't relevant in choosing a name. "Focus groups tend to lead to unfocused, vague, even dangerous conclusions." What's needed, instead, is a grasp of naming trends, trademark laws, psychographics, psycholinguistics, translations, phonetics, etc. "Names like Poison, Opium perfume, Xerox, Exxon, even Apple Computers, would have never, ever come out of a focus group exercise. Or even survived one." (Linkbridge Publishing, 90 Park Ave, NYC 10016; 212/876-5363; $20)