

including public libraries.

- Ratio of counselors who use on-line resources of some type is 4:1 over those who do not.
- Most predominant use of on-line services is identifying trends & searching for info on clients' competitors.
- Counselors are much more likely to look in the daily newspapers for clients' stock price quotations than to access them on-line.
- Most common issues counselors track when working with clients (in order): education/workforce training; environmental topics; healthcare costs/reform; international trade; occupational health/safety.

(PRSA & Lexis-Nexis jointly conducted this study. More info: PRSA 212/995-2230, or Lexis-Nexis 800/227-9597, ext. 6332)

CURRENT PERCEPTIONS OF HEALTH & SAFETY RISKS LISTED

Issue Track/USA interviews nearly 5,000 people around the country yearly asking their perceptions of alleged or possible safety & health risks associated with a range of products & services (pr 8/7). Results are tracked on its I³ Index.

It "measures consumer perceptions for a range of issues on a level playing field. Each issue is measured in the same issue-neutral way for 1) awareness, 2) concern & 3) the desire for action," explains Barry Feinberg, developer of Issue Track/USA. The index with data collected April-June '95:

I ³ Index	
Aware/Concerned/Want Action	
	(73) Cigarette Smoking
	(72) Children/Guns & Violence
Alcohol Use (65)	(65) Handguns & Rifles
Cholesterol & Fat (63)	(61) Children/Auto Accidents
	(58) TV Sex & Violence
Blood Supply (55)	(47) Unsafe Auto Makes
Pesticides (51)	(45) Music, Sex & Violence
Salt & Sodium (46)	(42) Air Travel
Auto Emissions (38)	(36) Chlorine in Water
Non-Biodegradable Packaging (35)	(33) EMF/Power Lines
ATM's (24)	(22) EMF/Cellular Phones
	(16) Train Travel

Visual technique note: How much easier it is to read a "tree" like this, with items on both sides of the "trunk," than a straight list.

FUTURE OF VOLUNTEERISM: WILL NEXT GENERATION DO IT ?

Teenagers -- our future leaders -- are busier than ever with school, jobs, social life. Will they continue the volunteerism that is the backbone of corporate community relations, hospitals, schools, social & cultural agencies, activism, even politics? As gov't programs are cut back, the question is at the heart of our organizational future.

Prudential has made continuing this a major social responsibility project. Multi-year effort, "The Prudential Spirit of Community Initiative," aims to 1) build interest in volunteerism & community service among 11-18 year olds, 2) help them get involved, 3) train them to take leadership roles in their communities.

It began by surveying teens. Conducted by the Wirthlin Group, study of 933 urban, rural & suburban teens finds:

- 62% feel their communities are good or very good places to live. But more say conditions there are getting worse (30%) than better (25%).
- They favor individual responsibility (62%) over gov't programs (33%) as a means of solving community problems.
- 95% say it's important to volunteer.
- But only 67% are currently volunteering -- tho some activities turn out to be more school-related & many are involved only infrequently. Volunteering tends to increase among higher grade levels.

"Communities need more people pitching in & addressing problems that clearly are not going to be addressed by gov't at the national or the state & local levels. We feel a real change can be made by emphasizing the importance of community service among young people while they're still learning what's important & what isn't," Scott Peterson, dir issues mgmt, told prr.

BARRIERS/MOTIVATORS

- Schools place a lot of emphasis on volunteering say 49% of urban students; 42% among suburban students; 30%, small town & rural students.
- Learning the value of community service is felt to be very important by 68%; 35% somewhat important. Attitude is highest among Hispanics (71%) compared to African-Americans (62%) or whites (57%). Female teens are more likely (67%) to think it's very important than males (53%).



- **Lack of role models.** Half cannot name anyone they admire for commitment to community service. Urban & minority students are more likely to name someone than are suburban, small town or white students.
- **The most important reasons students volunteer:** 1) makes them feel good about themselves (89%); 2) have been encouraged by someone to volunteer (88%); 3) want the activity on their college application (87%).
- **Reasons they do not volunteer:** 1) don't have time (91%); 2) don't know how to get involved (74%); 3) would rather do leisure things (71%); 4) were never asked to volunteer (60%).
- **Jobs not a barrier.** "Interestingly, among students who volunteer now, about half (51%) say they also have part-time jobs. Among those who do not volunteer, 48% say they have part-time jobs."
- **Volunteer activities of most interest:** charitable (88%); educational (83%); environmental (82%); cultural (66%); political (47%).

PRUDENTIAL'S PROGRAM USES MANY PARTNERS

- **Youth awards** -- identifying role models in every community & state, & on the national level, in partnership with the *Nat'l Ass'n of Secondary School Principals*.

- **Training in volunteer involvement**, being developed by the *Center for Creative Leadership* & will be implemented by *Youth Service America*.
- **Oct. 28 will be designated national volunteer day** thruout Prudential. Its 100,000 employees will organize team projects to help improve their communities -- & will involve their children in the experience.
- **Awards to recognize** outstanding in-depth reporting & writing, editorials or signed columns of opinion, personality profiles, & photography/photo layouts by high school journalists on student-community involvement, in partnership with *Northwestern's Medill School of Journalism*.
- **Forums** for teens, community leaders & gov't reps in major cities to address significant social issues. Will be action oriented, ending with recommendations on how the community can respond.
- **Booklet**, "Catch the Spirit," offering info on how to get involved.
- **Site on the World Wide Web.**

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS BENEFIT

"All companies want to be viewed positively by all their constituencies, including employees. We certainly have those motivations as well. We want employees to feel they're working for a company that's socially responsible, that cares about the communities where our people live & work. That's already starting to take place. Since we announced this program [Sept. 6], we've received a lot of feedback. Employees are saying it's a great idea & they're happy to see the company making this move."

(More info from Prudential, 201/802-4149)

PERFORMANCE PRICING NOT SAME AS GUARANTEEING RESULTS

Does GCI Groups' performance pricing (pr 8/28) "square with Article 9 of PRSA's Code of Standards?" asks a reader. Article 9 states: "A member shall **not guarantee the achievement** of specified results beyond the member's direct control."

For example, you can't ethically guarantee a story in the Wall Street Journal or attendance figures at an event, explains Jim Little, chair of PRSA's Board of Ethics & Professional Standards.

"The Code does not prohibit setting measurable goals. Public relations programs frequently set objectives, & there are many ways of measuring (& attaining) results within the scope of the code."

The Board frequently has looked at fee-for-performance arrangements & "has concluded the code doesn't prohibit most of these agreements & that PRSA cannot (& should not) seek to prohibit foolish business practices ... only unethical ones." (More from Jim Little, 419/422-3646)

ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE TO PRACTITIONERS

• **Products Linked to a Worthy Cause Are Influencing Consumers' Purchasing Decisions**, finds a study by Frankel & Co. 682 primary grocery shoppers were polled. 69% report purchasing certain brands primarily because of their link to a worthy cause. (Contact: 312/938-1900)

• **New Directory for Accessing the Internet** is published by Gale Research. Focuses on major gov't, academic, research & educational databases -- 2,000 of 'em. Written in nontechnical language, *Gale Guide to Internet Databases* includes both domestic & international resources. Entries include: database name & acronym; how to access info; how to retrieve info; data providers; main file names; database scope & content; geographic coverage; fees; language; related listservs; database type; updating frequency; special instructions/limitations; search routines & searchable elements; info provider's name, full contact info & e-mail address. (\$95; 1-800-877-GALE)

COUNSELORS PRAGMATIC, OLD FASHIONED IN USE OF DATABASES

PRSA's Counselors Academy members were asked to rank the relative importance of info they need to serve clients, solicit new business, work with the news media & develop skills. Results indicate:

- Counselors seek **info that is already interpreted for them** (by trade pub'ns & daily newspapers, for example) rather than raw info they can interpret themselves.
- Clients' background info is most often supplied by clients. When seeking info independently, they **most frequently turn to traditional print media** (mags & newspapers).
- But on-line services affect how they access these media. The more timely the info needed, the more likely on-line services are used. If time is not of the essence, counselors still turn to paper resources,