

PRSA Conference Highlights:

NEW PSYCHOGRAPHIC STUDY COVERS 1.5 B PEOPLE WORLDWIDE

Most useful plenary at PRSA's 40th national conference, by Tom Miller, Roper Starch Worldwide, was a review of "Common Ground Values -- A 30-Country Research Study." In the massive study, Roper interviewed 35,000 people ages 13-65; in 35 nations on all continents; using 1-hour, 1,000 answer face-to-face interviews; about 56 "guiding principles" in their lives. Findings represent the views of 1.5 billion people worldwide.

TOP 10 GLOBAL VALUES (from list of 58) -- "guiding principles in my life":

- 1) Protecting family;
- 2) Honesty;
- 3) Respecting ancestors;
- 4) Authenticity;
- 5) Self esteem;
- 6) Friendships;
- 7) Freedom;
- 8) Health & fitness;
- 9) Stable personal relationships;
- 10) Material security.

THE SIX VALUE SEGMENTS

Altruists: slightly older, slightly more women than men

Strivers: more male, median age

Fun-seekers: more men than women, younger

Creatives: evenly split between men & women

Devouts: older, more women than men; anchored in religion, faith, tradition

Intimates: slightly more women than men, younger, focused on personal relationships

Generally, we move between groups as we age. In our teens, we're generally Fun-seekers. In our 20s, more are Creatives & Strivers. In our 30s & 40s we become more concerned with personal relationships & move into the Intimates group. In our 40s & 50s we move into the Altruist or Devout groups.

- Examples: Asia has a high number of Strivers; developed Asia, a large number of Fun-seekers; whereas developing Asia has more Devouts.

A CLOSER LOOK AT VALUES SEGMENTS

Devouts:

- Primary values: respect for ancestors, also protecting the family, honesty, faith & duty. Neither faith nor duty are among global top 10
- Lowest weekly tv viewership & listenership of radio
- Lowest media involvement, excepting religious media
- High concentration of Devouts in Middle East, Africa, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, India & China



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Altruists:

- Protecting family, honesty & justice are among their primary values; justice not in global top 10
- Average overall media involvement
- High concentration in Latin America, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Spain, Argentina, Mexico & Japan

Intimates:

- Primary values: family, honesty, stable personal relationships, friendship & self esteem
- Higher than average media involvement & they are most interested in media that can be shared with others, ie music, television
- High concentration in Judeo-Christian based societies like Western Europe, Eastern Europe, the US & the UK (4 in 10 Britons are Intimates)

Strivers:

- Top values are family, material security, health & fitness, wealth, respecting ancestors
- Next to the devout group, are the lowest users of media. They're too busy working for leisure time & social pursuit
- Print media is important to them
- Highest concentrations in Asia/Pacific, Hong Kong, Korea, China, Malaysia, Thailand

Creatives:

- Most important values are honesty, freedom, authenticity, self esteem & learning
- Personal improvement is important to this group
- This is the group most engaged in media, especially print media, personal computers
- Highest concentrations in Latin America, Western Europe, US, Chile, Australia, Columbia

Fun-seekers:

- Key values are enjoying life, having fun, friendship, freedom, protecting the family
- Heaviest users of video & recorded music, average overall media usage
- Highest concentrations of this group are in the developed world, ie those with the economic ability to be fun seekers -- Malaysia, Thailand, Japan, Germany, Italy

MEDIA USE:

- Across cultures & values segments, consumers say they watch between 2 1/2 & 3 hours of tv everyday
- All groups describe the kind of shows they like as "interesting"
- Intimates average 2 1/2 hours of radio everyday
- Creatives are most interested in new media & books & are the most technologically advanced
- Newspapers are not an efficient way to reach Fun-seekers or Intimates, but Devouts & Creatives love newspapers

CONCERNS:

- The # 1 concern in the US & worldwide is crime & lawlessness
- For Creatives, greatest concerns are environment & quality of education
- For Devouts, the greatest concern is government corruption

SOME CHARACTERISTICS:

- *Sports & leisure*; while soccer is still #1 sport in the world, basketball is quickly catching up -- & is more gender balanced. Michael Jordan is the most recognizable person globally
- *Music*: "MTV generation" is real. "Music transcends cultural, national & even personal values of people worldwide." It's a universal language
- *Technology*: people in the US, France & other places as diverse as Kazakhstan & Paraguay use new media (computers, WWW, etc)

3 INTRINSIC FACTORS DRIVE GLOBAL MARKETS

To understand people in a personal way, pr pros must take into account:

- personal values
- lifestage (where you are in your life, age-wise & lifestyle-wise)
- nationality

The old adage "Think Global, Act Local" still holds true.

WOLF BLITZER'S WORDS OF WISDOM TO PRACTITIONERS (yawn)

- Be honest with journalists. Doesn't mean you have to tell them everything you know, just don't outright lie or your credibility will be shot
- Don't hype
- Be available to the press
- Anticipate bad news & beat your adversaries to it
- Develop personal relationships with reporters, build trust
- Don't unilaterally disarm -- ie, don't be intimidated by people in authority who can impact your career. They're not always right.

PLENARIES ADD LITTLE

Altho this session & other plenaries were entertaining, there was nothing new & little pertinent to the field to take away from them. A promising Socratic dialogue, with members of the press, CEOs & practitioners discussing a hypothetical sexual harassment case against a sr level exec by a female employee, was another rehashing of the same old media relations strategy. The panel completely neglected any discussion of internal communication.

The value of the conference is now primarily in the professional development sessions. Plenaries & social events are for entertainment.

PR RESEARCH: WHEN QUALITATIVE? WHEN QUANTITATIVE?

Phil Lesly's model (see below; also pr 5/5) -- showing where "the sampling universe" stands on an issue -- is a tool that can lead you to decide what type of research you need to do, Ellen Boisvert, research dir at The Hale Group (Danvers, Mass) told the research workshop. Question to ask is: "where are the lines drawn on your issue?"

Typical Breakout Of Public Opinion On Any Given Topic

5%	40%	10%	40%	5%
Extreme Negative	Leaning Negative	Opinion Leaders -- Can influence the undecided	Leaning Positive	Extreme Positive

USE QUALITATIVE

- When you already can estimate, with some degree of confidence, where the public stands on your issue according to the model
- Then you can apply qualitative techniques to the segments of the group
- Or, you can use qualitative to help your initial estimates

USE QUANTITATIVE

- When you cannot estimate where your public stands on the model
- For benchmarking & tracking
- When you have the time & resources for a comprehensive research study

ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE TO PRACTITIONERS

¶ **In celebration of its 50th anniversary**, PRSA is joining forces with The Partnership for a Drug-Free America to change attitudes -- children's & parents' -- about drug abuse. Research shows the drug problem is extremely info-sensitive: drug use rises & falls based on key attitudes held by consumers. Plan is to encourage PRSA chapters to implement local pr campaigns designed to increase communication between parents & their children about drug abuse. Parents' involvement is key. A study of 90,000 students finds children who report close emotional ties with their parents are significantly less likely to engage in a variety of risky behaviors -- like sex, smoking, drugs & alcohol. Asked to list what they believe are the most significant risks associated with drugs, kids rank "disappointing mom & dad" at the top. (More from Steve Dnistrian, svp & dpa, Partnership for a Drug-Free America, 405 Lexington Ave, 16th Floor, NYC 10174; 212/922-1560; e-mail, steve_Dnistrian@drugfree.org; Web site, <http://www.drugfreeamerica.org>)

¶ **PRSA's first virtual chapter is chartered.** Covers N.Dak, S.Dak & Wyo. Meetings will be by computer interlink. Is the 113th chapter.

¶ **Uniform Accreditation Beyond PRSA was approved.** Other org'ns may join compact, initially including Fla PR Ass'n, Southern PR Fed. & Agri. Rels Council, to offer single APR exam with 3-yr maintenance requirement.

SOCIODRAMA TECHNIQUE TAKES FOCUS GROUPS A STEP FURTHER

It's "a way to understand the language we use when we interact with each other," Tom Mickey (Bridgewater State) & Mark Popovich (Ball State) told attenders. This understanding is critical to effective public relations.

One approach is to use Q Methodology (see pr 5/30/83) -- a qualitative research technique used to identify images or themes based on consensus around value statements. The key: *statements come from the target audiences themselves, not researchers.*

Concept was developed by William Stevenson, founder of psychographic ad research in the 30s. Now used in political campaigns, adv'g research -- & starting to be used in public relations.

"The Q Method gives you an opportunity to pinpoint perceptions, using the language of your audience. Instead of just asking them questions, you're letting them talk about what's important to them. **It takes focus group research one step further,**" Mickey explains.

HOW IT WORKS: A CASE STUDY

Swift Water Girl Scout Council (Manchester, NH) wanted to understand the imagery of Scout leaders, & identify reasons why they serve -- as a framework for attracting potential leaders. The process:

1. **Conducted 2 focus groups** with 18 current Girl Scout leaders, representing different ages, number of years involved, etc.
2. **48 statements were developed from focus group feedback.** This becomes the "concourse," or sociodrama matrix.
3. **Asked a separate group of 20 Girl Scout leaders to sort statements on an agreement scale,** thereby identifying the 3 statements Scout leaders most & least agree with. Resulted in identification of 3 major groups.
4. **Labeled 3 groups with terms that best reflect Scout leaders' feelings** about what motivated them to become leaders. These are:
 - supportive environment
 - personal enrichment
 - service
5. **Themes are used as key messages in** recruitment materials (slideshow, brochures, etc). "We not only used this to attract new leaders, but also to help retain leaders," says Martha Netsch, asst exec dir at Swift Water. "We considered these themes in our training programs, our service structure, & even a mentoring program for new volunteers."

(More from: *Sociodrama: An Interpretive Theory For The Practice of PR* by Mickey, Scholars' Bookstore, Box 443, Bridgewater, Mass 02324; 508/279-1712; \$25 +postage; or check the Q Method website, www.rz.unibw-muenchen.de/~p41bsmk/qmethod/)

SC INFORMATION MAPPING: COMMON-SENSE COMMUNICATION FOR TODAY

Whether it's written, oral or on-line, the focus in today's busy world should be on "bite-sized communications that are easy to understand and remember," states Robin Schell, Jackson Jackson & Wagner (Exeter, NH).

In a world of vast overcommunication, readers who scan (90% do) & resistance to unrequested info, this is a method for breaking thru the clutter.

3 PHASES OF INFORMATION MAPPING

1. Analysis. Ask yourself:

- **What's the purpose of your communication?** Write a purpose statement to get clarity.
- **Who is your audience?** Do you know their existing perceptions? Knowledge levels? What they consider "need to know" vs. "nice to know"?
- **What type of information are you delivering?** (e.g. background, procedural, numeric?) This may dictate decisions on how best to present it.

Use the "5 Self-Editing Indicators" to determine:

1. Is it appropriate to the audience?
2. Is it meaningful?
3. Is it memorable?
4. Is it understandable?
5. Is it believable?

2. Organization. Organize the info for ultimate reader-friendliness by:

- **Presenting information in small chunks, grouped by relevance**
- **Labeling key sections** to guide the reader
- **Using consistent terms** (don't confuse the reader)
- **Integrating graphics** with related text -- or in place of it
- **Providing not too much information.** Make more information easily available via a contact name, phone number etc.

3. Presentation. Use of visual strategies, including:

- Pull-out quotes
- Visual identification of regular sections (e.g. President's message, business unit highlights, calendar of events, etc.)
- Rules or boxes (including the logic box, inside-out box, etc.)
- Step-action tables (great for procedures, directions, etc.)
- Pagination (brief copy followed by white space can be visually interesting)
- White space (let the copy breathe!)

