

New media was the preferred info source for the worried public on Oct. 27, when the stock market plunged more than 550 points, according to a Pew Research Center phone survey of 1000 adults. Cable tv was relied on by affluent people who have larger stock portfolios & greater access to cable. Network tv news was the medium of choice for the less affluent & the less educated. The Internet was used by more than 1 in 5 of those age 18-49, but by hardly anyone over 50. Nearly half of the attentive audience with on-line capability followed the market via the Internet.

Among those who followed the story "very" closely

	Sources used to:	
	First Hear	Follow Thru The Day
All-news cable tv	31%	35%
Network broadcast	17	26
Local tv	15	8
Internet	3	11
Radio	14	18
Newspaper	3	20
Talking with others	9	16
Other/don't remember	8	4

"Newspapers aren't going to go out of business, they are too convenient. They will become hybrids with online services for more immediate news. But they will still have the advantage of credibility. However, all newspapers will eventually need to have an online service to accentuate the printed word, including community newspapers. The industry needs online services to remain commercially viable. The real power of news on the Web is that you can get your information when you want it, not when someone else gives it to you," Sam Meddis (USA Today Online) said at Media 2000 conference. Regarding the availability of vast amounts of info on the Internet, Meddis points out, "You can put out all the information you want to, but people don't have the time or inclination to look for every last thing. A 'filter' is still important & people will be attracted to those sources disseminating good information." (More info & audio tape of conference: West Glen Communications, 1430 Broadway, NYC 10018; 800-325-8677)

'98 edition of Business Speaker's Resource reviews more than 1,000 speaking platforms all over the world -- 300 more than the last edition. Includes local & national ass'ns & business groups, as well as trade shows. Each venue is described in a 2-page profile -- dates, topics of interest, past speakers, leadership, description of org'n hosting the event, audience demographics, various promotional opportunities available to speakers. Covers 24 industry/market areas. (\$595; if ordered before Jan 1, '98, \$525. From Top Speaking Forums, 1146 Nineteenth St, NW, 3rd floor, DC 20036; 800-466-SPKR; fax 202/833-1808)

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

DIED. Howard Charbeneau, 54, of was pres, Dayton-Montgomery cancer. Served on IABC's exec board & IABC Research Fdn; prior to death was pres, Dayton-Montgomery Scholarship Program; 20 yrs with Monsanto.

LINKING PAY TO BUSINESS GOALS BOOSTS BOTTOM LINE, BUT "STRATEGIC REWARD" PLANS DEPEND ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Companies that align reward plans with business strategy "to a great extent" posted stronger total shareholder return (13.6% TSR) than companies that link the two "to a little extent" (9% TSR), finds a Watson Wyatt Worldwide study of 614 org'ns employing 3.5 million workers.

"STRATEGIC REWARD" PLANS:

1. Reward individuals or groups for actions, behaviors & accomplishments that help advance the company toward specific business goals
2. Go beyond cash to include such things as training & educational opportunities, recognition awards & travel -- Herzberg's classic motivation factors
3. Most importantly -- what makes them strategic -- they stand in contrast to traditional merit pay increases, "which have come to be viewed as entitlements & are no longer capable of truly motivating employees."

A MULTIPLICITY OF ADVANTAGES IF PLAN IS COMMUNICATED WELL

Study shows that when rewards are linked to strategy, employees also get a better understanding of their reward plans. Thus a well-communicated reward strategy can be critical to a company's overall performance. Also, clearly communicated reward plans can lead to more effective attraction & retention of employees --

- 41% of org'ns that believe they clearly communicate their compensation strategy report little or no trouble with turnover; 44%, some trouble; 15% great trouble (as always, there are also other factors at work)
- 47% of employers who report their employees understand their reward plans "to a great extent" experience few or no turnover problems
- When workers understand reward strategy, 78% find this understanding encourages the organization's desired culture & behaviors.

... BUT FEW ARE WELL COMMUNICATED

According to the survey, only 13% of employers think their employees understand their reward plans "to a great extent." "This finding is particularly troubling when we see that companies whose employees do understand their reward plans show higher TSR than those whose do not." Another opportunity for public relations to impact the bottom line.



REPORT CARD ON COMMUNICATION OF REWARD PLANS

	Employees understand reward plans to leads to Total Shareholder Return
A great extent	13%	12.5%
Some extent	50	11.4
Little extent	30	9.0

(More from 1-800-388-9868; www.watsonwyatt.com)

INTERNAL AMBASSADOR PROGRAM SELLS CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Julie Manning, dir dev'l & comty rels, tells prr how it's working at Good Samaritan Hospital in Corvallis, Ore.:

- "Once a year we open up nominations for service excellence 'stars' -- individuals who model exemplary service behavior to internal & external customers. The first year we did this ('95) we had 11 nominees. This year we had 30!
- "These individuals have lunch with the CEO, where he gives them a gold star to wear on their ID badges & talks with them about the importance of service excellence in our industry. He also introduces each person to the group & talks about why they were nominated.
- "After that lunch they are invited to participate in a 4-hr training at which they are given public speaking & presentation training & prepared to give a 1-hr presentation on service excellence for our monthly new employee orientation sessions. These individuals -- mostly line staff -- are very well received by new employees & are seen as an ongoing resource for them after they start their new job. They are also positioned as positive role models internally.
- "Based on the face-to-face model of effective pr (pr 1/25/93), we now are working with current & past 'stars' to continue building that 5-8% of positive opinion leaders internally.
 - "We just held a debriefing session with this year's 'stars' & asked how they would like to continue to stay involved with the service excellence effort. Their suggestions included: a) filling in as orientation trainers when needed, b) mentoring new employees in their departments or elsewhere, c) serving as an informal advisory group on service excellence training topics.
- "This group reflects tremendous positive energy & can make a lasting impact on our organization as we channel that energy toward 'customer delight.'"

Manning notes that all employees get involved by undergoing 3 hours of mandatory service excellence training each year.

STUDY: HOW SELF-PERCEPTION INFLUENCES BRAND PREFERENCE

To communicate more effectively with consumers worldwide, Porter Novelli conducted the "Global Reflections" Study -- exploring how consumers wish to be perceived & how that influences the products & brands they purchase.

1000 respondents in 12 countries (US, Canada, Japan, China, Australia, Brazil, Mexico, France, UK, Germany, Italy, Spain) were surveyed about 1) their desired self-image, 2) what products they use, own or intend to buy, 3) their main sources of info about products & brands. Each sample was weighted to be nationally representative. Some examples:

- Computer owners or those who intend to buy: a) in the US they want to be seen as cautious & careful, helpful, cooperative & likeable; b) in Japan they want to be seen as self-confident, powerful & aggressive.
- Salty snack buyers: in Mexico & Brazil they are demographically similar & share the desire to be seen as successful. But "success" has different associations & connotations in the 2 countries -- 1) in Brazil it's linked with being "cool" & contemporary; 2) in Mexico, "macho" characteristics such as daring, adventurous & aggressive.

- Main self-reported source of info about products & brands:

	TV	Magz	Newspapers	Friends/ Family	Radio	Direct Mail
USA	43%	15%	18%	18%	2%	2%
Brazil	72	4	9	4	9	1
Japan	56	10	19	7	2	2
France	62	8	4	7	5	11
Australia	45	12	17	16	4	5

- The universal desired self image:

Across countries, many people want to be seen as:

Friendly 72% (except Brazil, 35%)
 Helpful 56% (Brazil 39%, Japan 14%)
 Hardworking 51% (Italy, 34%)
 Open-minded 48% (Spain 23%,
 Italy 18%)
 Practical 47% (France 10%)

Across countries, few people want to be seen as:

High class 4% (except Italy, 13%)
 Influential 5% (Italy 10%)
 Aggressive 6% (China 15%)
 Sexy 7% (USA 14%, Brazil 12%)
 Powerful 7% (Japan 15%, Germany 18%)

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO PROFESSIONALS:

"I've always wondered why PRSA invites media stars to speak at its most important forums. For people in our profession, it's like hearing a lecture on flyfishing from a trout," responds Tom Brennan (Brennan Communications, Anchorage, Alaska) to prr's 11/17 statement that plenaries & social events at PRSA conference are for entertainment.