

PR  *SENSE*

SPEAKS

on

**Communication,
Journalism &
Perception Management**

**Compiled by
Prime Point Srinivasan
Susan Koshy
Priyadharshni Rahul**

Prime Point Foundation | Chennai

2 PreSense Speaks – Communication & Journalism

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Compiling Team

Mr K. Srinivasan, popularly known as Prime Point Srinivasan is a banker turned communication professional. He has nearly 40 years of experience in communication domain. He established Corporate Communication Department at Delhi while working for a Public Sector Bank. He also founded a Communication and Image Management Consultancy at Chennai in 1998. He is a Digital journalist and he started the eMagazine *PreSense* in March 2006 on the suggestions of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam for positive journalism. He is also the Founder and Chairman of Digital Journalists Association of India (DiJAI). Prime Point Foundation, founded by him in 2000 is dedicated for promotion of communication and journalism awareness. He is also a visiting Professor to many Universities on communication related subjects.



Ms Susan Koshy is a former General Manager of a Public Sector Bank, where she was in charge of the Corporate Communication Department. With years of experience in the field of communication, she was a freelance trainer in communication related topics. She is a digital journalist and has a flair for editing. She is the Editor in Chief of eMagazine *PreSense*. She is also the Secretary of Digital Journalists Association of India (DiJAI).



Ms Priyadharshni Rahul, a Supreme Court Advocate is the Deputy Editor of this eMagazine *PreSense*. She is a communication professional for the past ten years. She was deputed as Youth Ambassador of India to United Kingdom by Govt. of India. She has also worked with Times Group as a Manager. Her specialisation is in Public Relations and Image building strategies. She is one of the popular anchors in professional Webinars. She is the Trustee-Secretary of Prime Point Foundation, Publishers of *PreSense*.



Foreword by Dr APJ Abdul Kalam for PreSense100

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
Former President of India



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New Delhi-110011

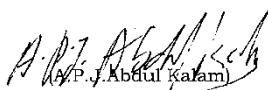
FOREWORD

I am very happy to know that the PreSense monthly ezine published by Prime Point Foundation is bringing out a book based on some of the unique articles, interviews and events published in its editions so far since from March 2006. The 100 issues of the publication have gone through an eventful journey, focusing on knowledge capture and important knowledge dissemination. I recollect my direct association with PreSense in July 2008, when I launched the cartoon character, 'Prince', created exclusively for PreSense.

I see PreSense continuing in its journey under the mentorship of Prime Point Srinivasan, maintaining its status as a must-read ezine, in the fast moving and evolving world of communication, knowledge and connectivity.

I congratulate the Editorial Team of PreSense for bringing out the 100th Edition as a Collector's Digest.

28th May 2015


(A.P.J. Abdul Kalam)


Preface to PreSense Speaks series

On behalf of the Editorial Team of PreSense, we present the first edition of PreSense Speaks Series. The eMagazine PreSense was started in March 2006 on the suggestion of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, former President of India, for positive journalism. In March 2021, PreSense completed 15 years. We have published 170 editions till April 2021.

As readers are aware, we have published digests of select articles up to 100, 110, 130 and 150 editions. We had the unique privilege of carrying Foreword from Dr Abdul Kalam himself. Now, we are planning a “PreSense Speaks” series containing select articles on various exclusive topics covered in the past editions. The first of this series contains select articles on Perception Management, Communication and Journalism.

We are happy that this series is launched by Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon’ble MoS Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India, in the presence of eminent communication professionals. We thank all the Editorial Team Members (past and present) for their sustained contribution to the eMagazine.

I place on record my deep sense of appreciation to Ms Susan Koshy, Editor in Chief and Ms Priyadharshni Rahul, Deputy Editor for taking initiatives in bringing out this edition by compiling the relevant articles. Both of them are communication professionals with good experience.

I am confident that this edition will be useful for communication professionals, Students, corporate and political parties.

Prime Point Srinivasan
Publisher and Managing Editor
PreSense

www.corpezine.com

24th May 2021

Communication tools and tips

Important Components of Business Communication

- Verbal Communication (oral and written)
- Non-verbal communication
- Listening
- Interpersonal skills or soft skills
- Presentation skills
- Negotiation skills
- Business letter writing (Pleasant, Unpleasant and persuasive)
- Preparation of Reports and Memos
- Cyber Communication and social media



(These are all only illustrative and not exhaustive. In this issue we attempt to spread awareness and importance of Biz. Communication in the competitive world. Readers are advised to refer to good books or learn from the courses.)

Punctuation is powerful!

An English professor wrote the words:

"A woman without her man is nothing."

on the chalkboard and asked his students to punctuate it correctly.

All the males in the class wrote:

"A woman, without her man, is nothing."

All the females in the class wrote:

"A woman: without her, man is nothing."



Online survey – common challenges

Your ezine conducted an online survey in Feb2010 to find out the major challenges of the respondents for making presentations. The following major 4 challenges emerged as frontrunners:

1. Stage fear or Stage fright
2. Lack of self-confidence;
3. Lack of language fluency; and
4. Organising the talk.

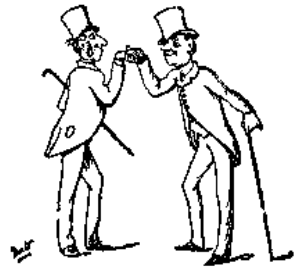
Presentation skills

- Before preparing for presentation, gather information about audience, topic and the duration of presentation;
- Structure content on the topic to suit audience (including relevant data and graphics)
- Use Power Point or speaking notes. Do not read your slides;
- Use simple language. Remember that your message should be understood by the audience.
- Use anecdotes / stories / experiences
- If it is marketing or persuasive presentation follow AIDA Plan
- Rehearse mentally or physically
- Prepare your presentation only to the extent of three-fourth of duration allotted to you - Keep up your time. Do not exceed the allotted time.
- Maintain eye contact with audience.



Inter personal skills

- Building positive relationship – showing
- empathy;
- Praise others, when needed;
- While criticising others or responding to
- criticism, avoid conflict and strain of
- relationship;
- Manage the conflict without damaging
- relationship;



Active listening

Many studies reveal that we remember a dismal 25-50% of what we hear. That means when you talk to your boss, colleagues, customers or spouse for 10 minutes, they only really hear 2½-5 minutes of the conversation. Tips to improve our listening:

- Pay attention to the speaker fully without distraction
- watch his body language;
- Show the speaker that you are listening – through
 - your body language and facial expressions;
 - Provide feedback – if needed ask clarifications;
 - Do not interrupt the speaker with counter argument
 - unnecessarily; allow him to continue;
 - When you respond, treat the speaker with respect.



Writing Business letters

- Understand your audience;
- Develop 'You' attitude – to think from the reader's point of view;
- Organise the message clearly and logically;
- While writing unpleasant letters, state the refusal using positive tone and de-emphasising techniques
- For persuasive letters, use AIDA Plan (Attention, Interest, Desire and Action)



Report writing – Four steps

Writing report needs careful planning. The following four steps are the foundation of report writing:

- Defining the problems and purpose;
- Identifying and organising the issues for study /investigation;
- Conducting research;
- Analysing and interpreting data, drawing conclusionsand developing recommendations.



Speaking – Thinking Rate



According to studies, we speak at the rate of 125 – 150 words per minute. Our mind is capable of processing 500 words per minute. This gives listeners a great deal of spare time. When we are listening to the lectures, this spare time is often used by our mind for 'mental excursion' ranging from day dreaming to thinking about the hairstyle or dress of the speaker. If we practise to spend this time for analysing the message, we would become the best listeners. Regular practise of 'meditation' will help to improve the listening skills.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0210.pdf (Feb 2010)

Presentation skills - Five steps to make good presentation

Step – one: Information Gathering

- About the audience profile.
- About the theme of presentation and information connected with the theme.
- About the duration of the presentation.

Step – two: Preparation

- Structure the contents using 5 W and 1 H (where, who, why, when, what and how).
- Use PowerPoint or speaking notes.
- Organise the content to suit the audience. Use pictures and other visuals.
- anecdotes/stories/experiences to be used to make the presentation interesting.
- For marketing presentation, adopt AIDA model (Attention, interest, desire and action).
- Prepare your slides only for three-fourth of the time allotted.
- Rehearse mentally and/or physically.
- when you have too many points mention briefly all (or important but speak about one or two appropriate points keeping, audience, time and relevance).

Step – Three: On-stage presentation

- Your appearance should be neat and acceptable to create the best first impression.
- If you have stage fright, before starting your presentation, take a deep breath.
- Start your presentation calmly without fear and with confidence.
- Deliver your presentation systematically; do not read the PowerPoint presentation robotically.
- Usage of anecdotes, stories, humour is important.
- Give importance to body language and voice modulation; be enthusiastic and smile.

Step – Four: Connecting with audience

- Keep revolving your eyes and observe audience reaction.
- Keep eye contact with them.
- Engage the audience in conversation and involve them.
- Ensure that your contents relate to the audience; Give only what they can consume; Do not showcase your knowledge and expertise.
- Speak for the occasion.

Step – Five: Sum-up and feedback

- Before closure of your presentation, sum up and give your final message.
- Confine to the allotted time and do not exceed.
- Thank the audience.
- Handle your Q & A Session gracefully; If you do not know an answer, accept this and promise to provide separately.
- Get the honest feedback from your friends and from others for future improvement.

Five things to be avoided in the presentation

1. Exceeding the time allotted.
2. Not connecting with the audience.
3. Monotony - Reading the slides in the PowerPoint.
4. Using unparliamentarily words.
5. Over confidence – making presentation without proper understanding of the audience and the theme – Not making adequate preparation.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1110.pdf (Nov 2010)

Lord Rama gives 7 tips for presentation

The great Indian epic, Valmiki Ramayana narrates an interesting incident highlighting the components of "Presentation Skills".



In the Ramayana, Hanuman meets Lord Rama and Lakshmana for the first time in the forest and introduces himself and his master, Sugriva. This is the first meeting of Hanuman with Lord Rama. Impressed with the way Hanuman communicated, Lord Rama lauds the communication and the presentation skills of Hanuman. In 7 *slokas*, Lord Rama explains the important aspects of the communication skills of Hanuman that impressed him most. They are:

1. Hanuman spoke concisely. Not too long or too short, but just sufficiently.
2. He also spoke with clarity and without ambiguity.
3. He spoke without any grammatical errors.
4. He used the apt words that cannot be better expressed with any other word.
5. He spoke in a moderate voice that was just audible to the other person. Not too loud or too feeble.
6. His pronunciation of words was correct and appealing to the ear.
7. All the words spoken by him, touched the heart straight.



These seven skills are relevant even today for making effective presentation. Please watch the podcast interview with Mr B S Raghavan IAS (Retd.) on the above 7 aspects.

<https://youtu.be/GKPRqWsG-50>

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense1110.pdf (Nov 2010)

Provide human dignity to fellow human beings - Rajaji

Can we start calling our drivers, attenders, watchmen, sweepers, and scavengers by name to give them dignity? Mr C Rajagopalachari (popularly known as Rajaji), the first Governor General of Independent India advised all the bureaucrats not to call the subordinate staff members as “peons” and instead call them with their names. He ensured that the last person in the hierarchy also was treated with human dignity. Can we try calling our peons, attenders, watchman, driver, security staff, scavengers, sweepers with their names from today? Let us provide human dignity to the fellow human beings



Source : www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1107.pdf (Nov 2007)

Avoiding miscommunication

Interesting procedure in Indian Railways and Airlines

Two persons Loco Pilot and Asst. Loco Pilot will operate the Locomotive. Due to huge noise in the Cab (where pilots are seated), oral communication between the two is likely to be distorted. To avoid this, Indian Railways follow a wonderful system. The Asst. Pilot used to watch the signal positions and alert the Main Pilot.

When the Asst. Pilot watches 'Green Signal', half KM in advance, he will shout at top of his voice like a military command "Signal Proceed". On hearing this, the Main Pilot also will see the Signal and shout back in high pitch like a military command, "Yes Signal Proceed". Same way, they will also use the other commands like "Signal Caution", "Signal Attention", "Signal Danger". In spite of the noisy environment in the Loco, they will be able to get the command right. It is reported that so far, no accident has taken place due to 'miscommunication'. Any accident would have occurred due to 'mis-information'.



In Airlines, there are two Pilots (Commander and Co-Pilot) operating the aircraft from Cockpit. While, one of the Pilots will be in conversation with the ATC (Air Traffic Controller), the other Pilot will be monitoring the conversation.

Even at ATC end, one officer will be giving command to the Planes and another officer will be monitoring with his headset to avoid miscommunication and misunderstanding.

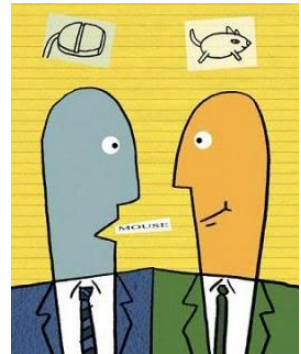
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When ATC says “Air India 123 Mumbai Control Climb flight level three- six-zero”, the Pilot from the plane will repeat the same words, while others monitor their conversation. To avoid miscommunication, they use three-six-zero, instead of three hundred and sixty.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0910.pdf (Sep 2010)

An interaction between two parties in which information is not communicated as desired due to mistakes, ambiguity, inadequate or overloading of messages. Miscommunication happens when the sender’s communication is wrongly perceived by the receiver. Sender sometimes takes it for granted so that the words he uses to communicate don't always clearly state the picture in his minds.



When Miscommunication is combined with misunderstanding and misinterpretation, it may lead to disaster or crisis.

Miscommunication happens due to environmental, physical, psychological, cultural, language and mental barriers,

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0910.pdf (Sep 2010)

Perception Management and Image Audit

Image Audit - 'Master perception check-up'

Image Audit is a tool to study the 'hidden perception' of employees, which otherwise would be difficult to extract. This research tool helps to bring out the collective hidden perception of the employees on various issues. The input will help the management to formulate suitable strategies to build 'internal brand' among employees.

For more details visit www.imageaudit.com

Watch a video podcast on Image Audit

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4Zh1XSXMaA>

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0310.pdf (March 2010)

Perception can lead to Image and Reputation

T N Ashok, Former PTI Editor, Delhi

Perception. Hmm, what a magical word. It means a whole lot of things to a whole lot of people. I call it magical because the word leads to a lot of dimensions with tremendous implications. Let me just begin by saying that perception is probably best defined as a measured feeling about a thing, a person, an event, institution based on some societal norms or value judgement. Perception automatically leads us to the next stage, imaging of the same in the above categories consequently reinforced by a standard of reputation.

So, perception can lead to: Image and Reputation. Consequence for the one perceived: Management. Reputation management and Image Management. Perception can be viewed at different levels. Perception by the public of an individual, a celebrity or a VIP, an institution - a political party, a corporate, a financial institution or service provider --transportation - Railways, Airlines, Hotels, Restaurants, Banks, Insurance companies, Telephone companies, etc, Government, NGOs and so on at a common or popular level. What leads to perception of these entities?



It is perhaps the manner in which they have conducted themselves while dealing with the public. Efficiency, promptness, delivery on time, delivery on promises or on assured returns. When they are on the dot on the deliverables, they generate good perception. When they fail they generate bad perception about themselves.

I don't want to sit on value judgement over any person or individual, but it is imperative for me to mention that certain institutions or celebrities generate good perception and certain others don't. Money making celebrities take to philanthropic activities to present a clean image and institutions shoulder good corporate social responsibilities, Before I conclude, I have only one question to ask of myself or the readers of this e-zine. Are the

norms on which perception is based in society right in the first place? If it's not what is the right mode or definition.

I can only think of an example. While classical musicians such as Bach, Beethoven, Handel or Schubert were venerated during their times and even today their compositions soothe our nerves after a hard day's work, a contemporary, Muzorsky, think from Poland, was dismissed as a mad man. But his compositions were subsequently resurrected by subsequent generation of great musicians to be hailed as masterpieces. Muzorsky was far ahead of his times.

Here is a case of perception going awry during a time line and getting it right in another. The Nazis stood trial at Nuremberg for their genocidal acts during World War II for their heinous crimes particularly against one community, the Jews. But they were perfectly normal human beings at home loving their families, pets and enjoying music. What an aberration in their characters. Different Perceptions. If the Nazis had won the war, would they have been heroes – what a grotesque thought in the first place. So, what's Perception all about?

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0709.pdf (July 2007)

Image Audit, a step away from making you successful.

T N Ashok, Former PTI Editor and Senior Journalist at Delhi

What is image audit, one might ask? Simply said, it is a logical extension of your regular auditing of accounts, cost, stock, health, finance. If regular auditing deals with accounting principles, image audit deals with the precepts of how public image is plotted on definitive scale among your stake holders.

Normally, public image to be audited would relate to employees of an organisation, customers of a commercial entity, shareholders of a corporate, suppliers, media, government related authorities etc. Image audit is a tool which will help you to measure in a scientific way how people at large perceive you. Such an audit would help a corporate to take decisions based on perceptions of his shareholders, clients or vendors or suppliers or customers, a government as voters or the public opinionate.

Often, governments or corporates or public entities take decisions based on their own assumptions of perceptions of people about themselves, which has never been measured scientifically, and often taking you on the wrong path. A new product launch based on such ill-conceived ideas can land the company in a disaster or a government policy decision can infuriate the people.

To safeguard, it's always wise to have an image audit and feel the pulse of the people and take decisions instead of taking actions based on self-proclaimed or imagined judgements.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9g2eEGx9FQI>

Internal (employees) perception is very important in an Organisation. Employees are the brand ambassadors. They play significant role in creating positive 'external perception'. Internal perception only can help to manage the crisis situation.

Any effort to study 'external perception' without studying the 'internal perception' through 'Image Audit' will not be of any help.

Image Audit



Image Audit is the research tool to study the 'hidden perception' of the stakeholders, particularly employees. 'Hidden perceptions' of the employees are the basis for HR branding. Normally, employees have hesitation to give their views frankly, when the study is made by the organizations themselves. They tend to become frank when they are in groups and

when they are asked to respond anonymously by reliable third persons.

Image Audit has helped many organisations to identify their 'hidden problems' and to take corrective measures.

Visit <http://www.imageaudit.com>

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1206.pdf (Dec 2006)

What you say can be perceived wrongly

Two Italian men got into a bus in London. They sat down and engaged in animated conversation. The lady sitting next to them ignored them first, but her attention was galvanized when she heard one of them say the following:

'Emma comes First. Den I come. Den two asses come together. I come once-amore! Two asses; They come together again. I come again and pee twice. Then I come one lasta Time.'

The lady could not take this anymore. 'You foul-mouthed sex-obsessed pig,' she retorted indignantly. 'In this country, we don't speak aloud in public places about our sex lives.'

'Hey, coola down lady,' said the man. 'Who talkin' abouta sex? I'm a Justa tellin my frienda how to spell " MISSISSIPPI "'

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1206.pdf

CONTINENTAL AIRLINES – A CASE STUDY Background

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Editor-in-Chief, PR-e-Sense



A 'hidden perception' amongst the third world countries that USA is a dominant nation uncaring for others sentiments, may be right or may be wrong, but it has generated a lot of heat and debate even on genuine agreements. Serious MoUs are coming under scrutiny after being looked at with suspicion. The Barack Obama Administration is hardput to reverse this perception by working

double time. The recent '**Kalam frisking issue**' has, one can say, frustrated Obama's efforts to correct the image of USA as a universal policeman.

Dr APJ Abdul Kalam is one of the most respected Indian leaders most venerated by the country's youth who consider him as an absolute 'role model'. Kalam is also looked at India's 'Missile man', since he helped developed India's defensive missile technology and oversaw the peaceful Pokron II, underground nuclear test. Recipient of India's highest civilian award 'Bharat Ratna', Kalam rose to the highest office of the land, the President of India. So popular was he that he earned the sobriquet, "People's President". Under Indian VVIP protocol, Former Presidents are exempt from frisking in Indian Airports. The protocol conforms to the guidelines issued by government-controlled Bureau of Civil Aviation Security(BCAS). When Dr Abdul Kalam boarded a flight to the USA by that country's *Continental Airlines* on 21st April 2009, the airlines security frisked Dr Abdul Kalam in full public glare at Delhi Airport in utter violation of VVIP protocol on security checks, overruling Indian security's strong objection.

Dr Kalam was made to remove his coat, his belt, and the contents in his coat and trouser pockets were subject to scrutiny. The last straw on the camel's back came when his shoes and socks too were asked to be removed for further scrutiny. This act was nothing short of publicly humiliating the former President, who is an 'Icon and Role Model' for one billion Indians. And there was not a whimper of protest from the modest Dr Kalam who complied with the airline's security check, though he was fully aware VVIP protocol was being breached by the airline.

The Indian government reacted sharply and justly to the incident on 9th July 2009 when it issued a show cause notice to Continental for violating Indian protocol guidelines on Indian soil while frisking the former President. The Airlines did not first respond. But on 21st July 2009, the TV and electronic media broke the news raising nation-wide indignation. Since Indian Parliament was in session that day, the Prime Minister and the Civil Aviation Minister led members of both house houses of the bicameral legislature in unanimously condemning the incident and demanding severe action. Within a few hours, it generated so much heat and debate, an entire nation stood up to protest Continental Airlines' arrogant attitude and some even went to the extent of calling for a boycott of the airlines' flights from India.

Even at this stage, Continental did not heed an enraged nation's sentiments. A junior officer of the airline issued a Press Note defending its action quoting guidelines issued by US TSA (Transport Security Administration). The airline claimed it did not have any special privileges for VIPs when it came to security. Even the TSA issued a similar statement from US. Continental's casual approach further angered the public particularly the youth.

So, on 22nd July 2009, Indian Government filed a police complaint against the airlines for violating Indian guidelines. The police action could eventually lead to six months imprisonment and a penalty of \$1 million. Social networks were flooded with condemnation calls against the Airlines, particularly from the younger generation, calling for a boycott of the airlines.

Apparently, sensing trouble from any police action, and to avoid any loss of public image and consequent loss of business, the Airlines swiftly sent an apology to the Government and to Dr Abdul Kalam personally. Though the apology is on record, the issue is still live, as police investigation is an ongoing process. Please read further about the online survey on this issue.

Our Comments and observations:

1. As we discussed already, perception is based on the actions and inactions of the organisations. When Dr Abdul Kalam, an iconic personality of India was travelling in Continental Airlines, their staff
2. should have done some homework on Indian protocol and adhered to it by treating him with dignity, instead of virtually stripping him in public. This has angered the entire Nation.
3. The airlines should have responded to the Notice issued by the Indian Government and settled the issue without getting into the media. Their silence has further complicated the issue.
4. Even when the Parliament was debating the issue and the entire World Media was discussing this issue, the Airlines should have apologized, instead of issuing a robot like routine statement by a junior level officer.
5. The Airlines realised the seriousness of the issue and its commercial impact only later. Then they climbed down on their stand and sent an apology letter, which should have been done earlier. Still the issue is live in the minds of the people.
6. The entire episode has strengthened the perception of Indians of USA's 'Uncle Sam' big brother attitude and role of universal policeman. Now unfortunately Continental Airlines and TSA have brought 'negative perception' against the USA through their action. Their action has made the public to perceive it as an "American ploy to belittle India", which may or may not be true.



Moral of the story

Every action of the organisation or individual has the potentiality of changing the perception drastically. Respect the law of the land and also the sentiments of the people where you serve. Robotic responses can worsen the situation. Accept mistakes with grace and in time, to help avoid perceptions deteriorate.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0709.pdf (July 2009)

Immediate boss – General perceptions

The editorial team discussed with many employees of traditional and new generation companies. Uniformly, the employees perceive 'Immediate boss' as one of the factors of employee attrition. The following are the common problems faced by subordinates from immediate bosses.



- Attitudinal problems – lack of leadership skills and soft skills to guide the subordinates;
- Gender bias – partiality – favouritism'
- Insecurity of bosses, due to narrow age difference between themselves and subordinates, lack of skills and experience, etc – Jealousy;
- Too much of control – Lack of trust in the subordinates – Too much of micro management, etc. – Lack of communication channel to next higher level authorities;
- Many organisations do not have grievance redressal system, if there is a grievance against immediate boss;

Immediate boss – A case study

Out of jealousy of the skills, personality and looks of the subordinate, the immediate boss started humiliating the subordinate in the presence of team members and clients. Even valuable suggestions given by the subordinate was made fun of by the boss. Even when the subordinate took up the issue to the CEO of the company, justice was not done. The subordinate resigned the lucrative job and preferred to stay at home, waiting for another job. Within six months, many such employees left the company, due to the harassment of 'immediate boss'. The CEO realised the gravity of the situation and nothing could be done, excepting to sack the 'immediate boss'. In this process, the company lost many employees and also clients. – This is a real incident narrated by the aggrieved directly to us. (all identity suppressed)

Corporate arrogance and human insensitivity – How people perceive?

The Editorial team conducted an on-line survey during November 07 to get a 'broad perception' of various people on corporate arrogance and human insensitivity. Some of the perceptions expressed by the respondents are classified:

Top Management

- Not responding to emails or phone calls, even when personally addressed.
- Management not understanding the media sensibility

HR

- Harassing the employees with good service record when they leave the organizations (mostly in Public Sector organisations);
- Seniors not treating the subordinates with human sensitivity;
- Giving false promises at the time of recruitment;
- Sending appointment orders through email without being followed with a hard copy – and subsequently cancelling the order unilaterally;
- During interviews, not treating the candidates with dignity.

Security Staff

- Behaviour of the front level security staff at many offices – Corporates not training them well to handle the front level.

Customer relations

- Companies not respecting the local cultural sensitivity;
- No response to the emails or phone calls within reasonable time;
- Call Centres of Service providers not responsive and technically incompetent;

Corporate Social responsibility

- CSR not being implemented genuinely and used only for protecting their brand;
- Giving false promises without proper implementation;
- Not following the rules and guidelines for environmental protection.

Finance

- Deduction of tax (TDS) even for ineligible payments, due to lack of maintenance of records of vendors;
- TDS certificates not being issued within reasonable time.

Big Corporates (including Multi- Nationals)

- Not exhibiting 'humility' towards consumers - "we are always right" attitude;
- Not respecting the consumer courts and judicial systems.

Banks, Insurance and mobile operators

- Using illegal methods for recovery of their dues;
- Call centres not responsive - Not providing direct contact with senior officials of the company, for any complaints.

Public Sector and other Govt. offices

- Not sensitive to customer's needs and irresponsible behaviour at the front offices;
- Declaring 'strike' to harass the general public, for their individual monetary benefits.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1107.pdf (Nov 2007)

Press Release and Media Relations



How to write effective Press Release - 12 points to remember

1. Use inverted pyramid style.
2. Confine the 'lead' to 25 words, using 5W and 1H method (where, when, why, who, what and how)
3. Provide proper caption, place and date
4. Write in third party language
5. Remember, your immediate audience is the 'News Editor'. He should get interested in the story.
6. Avoid cliché, superlatives and advertorial materials, to please the boss or client.
7. Use quotes of competent authorities, relevant to the story.
8. Furnish contactable phone or mobile numbers of the persons, who can provide additional information.
9. Print the release on the letter head of the company. Duly signed press release may be sent through email followed by hardcopy through fax or delivery.
10. Provide duly translated press release to the regional language media,
11. Simultaneously post the release in the company's website under 'media room'.
12. Avoid sending bulky attachments to journalists, without their consent. Respect others bandwidth.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1006.pdf (Oct 2006)

100th birthday of Press Release



The press release turned 100-yearsold over the weekend. As search marketers debate over the future of the online press release, we can learn some important lessons from the early history of public relations.

On October 28, 1906, at least 50 people lost their lives when a three-car train of the Pennsylvania Railroad's newly equipped electric service jumped a trestle at Atlantic City, NJ, and plunged into the Thoroughfare creek. That afternoon, Ivy Lee, who some consider to be the father of modern PR, created the first press release. The Pennsylvania Railroad was one of his clients. Following the accident, Lee not only convinced the railroad to distribute a public statement, he also convinced them to provide a special train to get reporters to the scene of the accident.

The New York Times was so impressed with this innovative approach to corporate communications that it printed the first press release—verbatim—on Oct. 30, 1906 as a "Statement from the Road." In the weeks that followed, both newspapers and public officials effusively praised Pennsylvania Railroad for its openness and honesty.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1006.pdf (Oct 2006)

Survey on quality of press releases

A quick on-line survey was conducted by Prime Point Foundation, as part of October 06 issue of Corporate e-zine *PR-e-Sense*. The survey was to get the perspective of PR/CorpComm professionals and the journalists on the 'Corporate Press Releases' released to the media. 38 PR/CorpComm professionals and 23 Journalists responded to the survey and gave their views anonymously.

CONCLUSIONS

- Generally, both PR/CorpComm professionals and Media persons have agreed that the quality of 'Corporate Press Releases' need to be improved. While PR/CorpComm persons have rated their own press releases at 51%, media persons have rated at 47%.
- Both PR/CorpComm professionals and media professionals agree with the listed deficiencies, like lack of newsworthiness, usage of marketing and promotional information, etc.
- Interference from the Corporate Management, while drafting the press releases seems to be eminent, as more than 60 percent of the PR segment and CorpComm segment have uniformly felt the same. This may be because of the lack of understanding of the 'media functioning' by the Corporate Management Executives.
- Nearly 70 percent of the Media professionals are unable to get in touch with the concerned persons or to get the required information.
- More than 60 percent of the Press Releases get rejected or discarded for various reasons.
- More than 60 percent of the Media professionals prefer to get the press releases through email followed by fax or hard copy.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1006.pdf (Oct 2006)

Avoiding media during crisis is the worst option

Mr T N Ashok, Senior Journalist and Former PTI Editor

Corporates (CEO's.CFOs) believe that a press release about an announcement should be written in a fashion that will please its shareholders and not the news media which is expected to project. The fact is, if a news release is presented in a news form it is picked up by newspapers and also better understood by shareholders. Corporates believe that meeting the media frequently is a dangerous practice. The fact is that if you meet them regularly you are seen as transparent and willing to share information.



You buy goodwill and avoid a hostile press. Corporates feel that avoiding the media during a crisis is the best option. The fact is it is the worst thing to do. You end up creating suspicion in the minds of the media and open up unnecessary media speculation that could be damaging to the company. Corporates feel that they can present their viewpoints better to the world through the media, only through five-star lunches, dinners and expensive gifts. The fact is that it proves counterproductive with the serious-minded journalists -- if you have nothing big to say don't meet the press; if you have something to say even a cup of tea would do; you can be on the front page depending upon the news you make.

Press Conference – Case study

Recently, there was a launch of a brand new Car held in Chennai. The venue for the launch was fixed near the airport, that too in the evening so that the CEO would find easy to reach the place to address the media. Journalists in turn were provided pick up and drop to the venue. The event witnessed delay in the start of the conference and end result was less as expected. It was late realisation but the agency was helpless. A small discussion with the agency would have averted loss of extra mileage out of the launch.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0507.pdf (May 2007)

Where to draw a line with Media

Tushar, Communication Strategist



Some senior management officials of many companies (read CEOs) have more than 200 numbers of journalists on their cell phone and they pick up any incoming call from them in order to give them opinion or views on the company, competition, policy and so on. They are always available to media. One such CEO had the similar ability and he boasted about his PR skills to the

agency.

One day Mr. CEO told a very friendly journalist that he went and met Chairman of the rival company 'X' for the position of CEO. Next day - it was a Headline "X on expansion, plans to poach CEO from Y" and with a confirmation from MR. CEO that he met the big boss of other company. Our dear friend had a tough time retaining his job and the other party did not hire him – stating, "we have no poaching agreement with that company and we don't hire people from there".

Mr. CEO is working with a third company now and he doesn't have any journalists' numbers in his cell phone. However, as PR professional my advice is never do it. Having a media friendly CEO is boon to PR guys but he or she should understand where to draw the line and behave with responsibility and care.

Golden rule is: be always accessible but not always available.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0507.pdf (May 2007)

Corporates should understand media priorities

Mr R Gopalakrishnan, Business Editor, The Hindu

Corporates and PR Agencies offer media opportunities like press conferences or exclusive interviews to all the media and expect all of them to respond positively. They should understand that every television channel or newspaper cannot take advantage of such media opportunities offered. It all depends on the priority, focus and space available in the concerned media or publication. Media can respond only to some of the opportunities. We cannot respond to the business plans or financial results of closely held or private limited companies, the same way, we respond to the financial results of listed companies.

Some Corporates focus on the release of products in the name of press release and corporate functions. This will not work really. This type of practices should be avoided. PR Agencies and Corporate communicators, when they work as intermediary between the Corporates and the Media, should understand the needs of each other better. I suspect, sometimes, few Corporates and Media Agencies plan media events or press releases to counter the impact of media events or press releases planned by their competitors. This type of practices will not help anybody. Some of the Corporates insist on publication of Awards or rankings. This depends on the media's assessment of the importance and credibility of the organisations who give the award.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0507.pdf (May 2007)

Improve credibility of press releases



Mr K T Jagannathan, one of the reputed and senior financial journalists of India with more than 25 years of experience in various leading business magazines of India speaks about the deficiencies in corporate press releases. In an exclusive podcast interview with Prime Point Srinivasan for *PR-e- Sense*, he emphasizes the urgent need for improving the credibility of corporate press releases. Please listen to the full podcast interview ([link given above](#)). Excerpts from his interview:

- The corporate press releases, whether they are sent directly by the corporates or through the PR agencies, should be printed on the letter head of the company and signed by an authority. Presently, many press releases are received by the media. We need to identify the responsibility.
- Press Releases do not contain the contact numbers of the company officials. Even if available, company officials are not reachable. PR persons do not have additional information.
- Multiple press releases are sent. Unwanted information reaches the journalists. Press Releases need to be targeted. They should be related to the journalist and the media. Many press releases are discarded, for these reasons.
- Press releases may be sent through e-mail, followed by duly
- signed hard copy printed on the letter head. When the email is received, the journalist may work around that story.
- Corporates do not inform the media about the appointment of PR agency. Anybody can send a mail claiming to be a PR agency for the company. Signed hard copy in the letterhead will add credibility. PR agencies should convince the corporate clients about the various regional and national media requirements.
- Because of the mushrooming PR agencies and acute competition
- amongst the agencies, false promises are given to clients. Because of this, they want to push the messages whether they are good, bad or ugly.
- PR agencies should be facilitators. They should procure the information from their clients and furnish to media, whenever needed. Now they do only 'courier' role.

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- MNC press releases are well packaged. If the journalists want to go beyond, it is very tough to get the information from them. They are always closed. They are not transparent to the extent what the
- journalists want PR persons should earn respectability from journalists, clients and others. This can come only by improving knowledge.
- Corporate CEOs should be transparent with the media. They should not 'beat around the bush', which may lead to misinterpretation.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1006.pdf (Oct 2006)

Balance the expectations of media and the corporates

Mr T N Ashok, Corpcom Consultant, Alstom Group



I have dealt with hundreds of companies during my tenure as Economics and Business Editor of a leading wire service. As a media advisor, I have written press releases for corporates such as TATAs, Xerox, ALCATEL, and now ALSTOM.

It can be a nerve-wracking experience, assembling it from raw data given by business units and giving it a face to the press. It undergoes dramatic changes in the hierarchy of a corporate from the CEO to the COO to the CFO and to the Company Secretary to the Chairman of the company. Each looks at the press release from his own perspective, and adds, deletes, rewrites, tones it down, tones it up as the need may be before it can go out. A press release can take anything between three days to fifteen days to be finalized, depending upon its sensitive nature. No tall claims, No understatements, just factual presentation is what is actually needed. While it may take a press release to be drafted over a week, it may take just seven seconds for a journalist to throw it into the waste paper basket. A corporate communicator has to necessarily balance the interests of various sections while drafting it. Most often journalists don't understand the deeper implications of a press release and why its worded in a particular manner.

Meanwhile as a person who has been in journalism for 25 years and in corporate communications for six years, I would like to point out the issues involved in a press release and how each one looks at it:

Journalist's perspective

- 1) A journalist looks at a press release from the point of view:
 - a) News value
 - b) Whether this has been highlighted
 - c) If it is a financial statement, then are all the figures there, revenues, turnover, profits etc given?
 - d) If it is a product - are all the details about the product there and

its utility value to the consumers and its pricing, affordable or not, does it offer value at that price to the consumer, etc.

Corporate perspective

2) A corporate or a corporate communicator (CEO, CFO COO) looks at a press release from a different perspective:

- a) Does the press release present the company in a good profile to the general public?
- b) to the stake holders (strength of the company)
- c) to the government (credibility of the company)
- d) to the competitors (competitive edge)
- e) to the general public (the value it offers to them)

The press release is not generally presented in terms of its news value to the journalists but more in terms of the projections it makes for the company in the market. The corporate leaves it to the journalists to pick it up in the manner his newspaper would like to present to its readers. A press release can be written from bottom to the top rungs of the hierarchy in a corporate atleast 25 times before its finally readied for release making sure there are:

- 1) no forward-looking statements if it is a listed company to prevent speculation in the markets
- 2) no vital information that could be publicised later is not prematurely publicised creating problems of queries and follow-up stories that could interfere in a Corporate's marketing strategies (telecom companies and automobile companies are most affected by this faux pas in a press release)
- 3) no discrepancies in figures in terms of profits, turnover, sales, dividends that cannot be reconciled
- 4) no discrepancy in statements in press release and when a company spokesperson speaks

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1006.pdf (Oct 2006)

Complete Communication

Arun Arora, Maruti Udyog Ltd., Delhi

Dad : I want you to marry a girl of my choice.

Son : I want to choose my own bride.

Dad : But this girl is Ambani's daughter.

Son : Well, in that case.....YES.

Next, the father approaches Mr. Ambani

Dad : I have a husband for your daughter.

Ambani : But my daughter is too young to marry.

Dad : But this young man is the Vice President of the World Bank.

Ambani : Ah, in that case...YES

Finally, the father goes to see the President of the World Bank.

Dad : I have a young man to be recommended as a Vice President.

President : But I already have more Vice Presidents than I need.

Dad : But this young man is Ambani's son-in-law.

President : Ah, in that case.....YES.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0406.pdf (April 2006)

Information Overload

Recession – Is it due to 'Information overload'?

This Story is about a man who once upon a time was selling hotdogs by the roadside. He was illiterate, so he never read newspapers. He was hard of hearing, so he never listened to the radio. His eyes were weak, so he never watched television. But enthusiastically, he sold lots of hotdogs. He was smart enough to offer some attractive schemes to increase his sales. His sales and profit went up. He ordered more and more raw material and buns and used to sale more. He recruited few more supporting staff to serve more customers.

He started offering home deliveries. Eventually he got himself a bigger and better stove. As his business was growing, the son, who had recently graduated from College, joined his father. Then something strange happened. The son asked, "Dad, aren't you aware of the great recession that is coming our way?"

The father replied, "No, but tell me about it." The son said, "The international situation is terrible. The domestic situation is even worse. We should be prepared for the coming bad times." The man thought that since his son had been to college, read the papers, listened to the radio and watched TV. He ought to know and his advice should not be taken lightly. So, the next day onwards, the father cut down his raw material order and buns, took down the colourful signboard, removed all the special schemes he was offering to the customers and was no longer as enthusiastic. He reduced his staff strength by giving layoffs. Very soon, fewer and fewer people bothered to stop at his hotdog stand. And his sales started coming down rapidly, same is the profit. The father said to his son, "Son, you were right". "We are in the middle of a recession and crisis. I am glad you warned me ahead of time."

Moral of the Story: It's all in your MIND! And we actually FUEL this recession much more than we think we do!!!!!!!!!! !!

By and large, India is an under-communicated society

Mr Madan Bahal, Managing Director, Adfactors Public Relations, one of the top 3 PR Companies in India shares his views exclusively for PR-e- Sense.



Q: How do you define information overload?

A: An information overload situation exists when you have multiple sources of communications focusing on the same subject simultaneously. The situation has a negative impact when multiple sources are communicating divergent views and positions on the same subject making it difficult for the viewer or reader to form a perspective. In the Indian context the consumer experiences this Phenomenon with respect to news television.

Q: How do you perceive whether the corporates in India and other countries provide optimum level of communication or are they overloading information?

A: I think India by and large suffers from the opposite problem. India is an under-communicated society. Most of our corporates communicate too little to too few people and constituencies. The communications in India do not often reach all the stakeholders.

Q: What is the impact of information overload on the stakeholders - positive and negative?

A: On the whole there is no negative impact of information overload on the stakeholders. It is better to err on the side of over communication than under communicate. Let the public have all the information and be empowered to make informed choices. Take the internet for example. One might say that there is an information overload on any subject. But the consumer is free to access what he wants, when he wants and from where he wants. He is free to form his opinions and judgements based on an adequate appraisal of the information available. One can say that the information available on

the internet has accelerated democratisation of human society in the last decade. The negative impact situations in India are few. In the case of consumer communications information overload sometimes creates excessive expectations. If the product finally doesn't measure up, or is not available, the impact will be negative.

Q: Can you mention any of the case studies, which you might have come across from your experience?

A: Some recent car launches in India come to mind. Excessive communication probably led to unreasonable expectations and also created a feeling amongst consumers that it might be difficult to get allotments. So many potential customers may have simply stayed away from applying.

Q: How do you feel we can optimize the communication?

The first principle is relevance. The second principle is adequate communication – give out everything that is necessary for the audience to form an opinion or perspective. The third principle is adequate reach – ensure that your communication reaches all the people it is supposed to. The last principle is timeliness.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0509.pdf (May 2009)

Internal Communication

Indian Elections – A communication wonder

In these days, when many of the companies break their heads for communicating with their few hundreds of internal stakeholders involved in projects, an Organisation in India successfully communicates and completes a 'mega project' within 60 days which involves 5 million internal stakeholders. That is Indian Election commission, whose functioning can be classified as 'Eighth' wonder of the world.



In India, the Election Commission holds 'General Elections' to elect 'legislatures' for Union Government's Parliament and 35 State Governments and Union Territories, once in five years. During the General Elections, Indian Election Commission involves around 800 political parties, 5 million election officials,

700 companies of para military forces, 670 million voters, 800,000 polling booths, one million Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). The entire precision-fine "world's largest election" is completed within 60 days in the presence of National and International media to the full satisfaction of all stakeholders and even judiciary. Similar operations are being carried out for the Assembly Elections of State Governments separately.

The entire internal communication model adopted by the Indian Election Commission has raised the eye brows of the entire world. In an exclusive interview with Narrendiran and Sakthi Prasanna of **PR-e-Sense**, **Mr T S Krishnamurthy** reveals the strategies of their communication.



Mr Krishnamurthy who recently retired as Chief Election Commissioner of India, had conducted one General Election and many State Elections during his tenure successfully. Presently, he is

being invited by many Governments across the world to share his suggestions. Only during his tenure, the entire Election operations in India were made totally Electronic, the only one of its kind in the world for use of EVMs (photo) for such huge voter population. Excerpts from his interview:

Q: What are your strategies to communicate with 5 Million Government officials, who act as Election officers during the Elections?

A: We have two tier system of communication with our officials. In the first tier, the Head Quarters of the Election Commission at Delhi provides the training inputs to 'Observers' who are sent to oversee the election process and other officials who in turn train at field level. In the second tier, the ground level officials are trained periodically by District Collectors. In these trainings, they are briefed and provided booklets (English and local languages) on the procedures, rules, use of EVMs etc. The entire training process is time bound and well monitored. Now, in India, we have around 4 million officials who can handle the election process quite efficiently.

Q: How do you create awareness amongst the voters about their rights?



A: In India, we have around 670 million voters, spread across the country, including remote places. Election commission uses various tools like demonstration, film shows, posters, print/electronic media and creates awareness amongst the voters. Presently, In India, around 60 percent of the voters exercise their franchise, which does not happen even in developed countries. Our officials visit even the remote places through different modes of transport like boats, elephants (Photo) and create awareness and conduct elections.

Q: How do you communicate with political parties?

A: We meet the representatives of all political parties every year and discuss with them on the various process involved. All the good suggestions are taken up. We have an online newsletter "Election India". The website www.eci.gov.in is a very informative site with more than 10000 pages of content. The Election Commission briefs the media on a daily basis, after the election process starts, to update the stakeholders. The entire operations are done transparently in the presence of all media through 'Electronic voting machines' and this has improved our credibility globally. We combine technological tools with, probably the largest 'Face **to Face**' communication exercise successfully.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0608.pdf (June 2008)

Fallout of bad internal communication

Short-term impact

- Spread of misinformation.
- Erosion of employee trust and confidence.
- Conflicts between employees and management.
- Misinformed employees can make wrong decisions.
- Internal brand image suffers.

Long-term impact

- Dissatisfaction among employees leads to higher attrition.
- Lack of coherent and shared vision.
- Low employee morale results in lower productivity
- Impact on company's stocks
- Organisation's external brand value suffers.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0607.pdf (June 2007)

Officers' Voice – Darling of employees ...!

Many times, the traditional and old economy organisations practice communication strategies more successfully than the Hi-Tech companies. Can you believe that an internal newsletter of Mangalore based Corporation Bank Officers' Organization (CBOO), a Trade Union has silently entered its 25th year of unbroken publication?

CBOO publishes every month a 20 page 'black and white' newsletter printed on a normal paper with the title "**Officers' Voice**" and distributes free of cost to their 3000 plus members and other Authorities. When compared to the 'glossy' and 'costly' newsletters of companies, this newsletter printed at a cost of Rs.2.50 is a 'darling' of the members who eagerly wait to receive it on the first week of each month. Though it is an internal newsletter, circulated amongst their members, copies are sent to the various Bank Managements, Trade Union leaders, and Government and Reserve Bank authorities. The editorials and columns in every issue on current topics are keenly read by members and even by Govt. / RBI Authorities. One volume of such Editorials from 1982 to 1997 has already been published as a book. The second volume is now under print. What is the secret of success?



Mr T R Bhat, Editor of this newsletter (Photo) since its inception says, "Our emphasis has been on the contents of **Officers' Voice**.



We ensure that they are topical and relevant to the job the readers perform as Bank officials. We watch the feedback of readers continuously". Mr Bhat further says, "Publication of activities of its social action wing 'Swasti' in the newsletter has evoked spontaneous response from the readers to contribute generously towards the cause without any appeal from the union" Mr P N Venkatraman, an Officer at Chennai with more than 25 years of service says, "Many members preserve the earlier

issues. **Officers' Voice** is transparent. Even criticisms are published without hesitation.

During 1990s when our Bank was facing critical situation, this newsletter played a greater role in motivating the employees and to overcome the challenges". He prefers to read the Editorial column and "Through the looking glass" which act as conscience keepers of the Bank and the Union. Ms Juny Sam, another Officer at Mangalore with two years of service scans the newsletter within 10 minutes of its arrival. She does the deep reading later. She prefers to read, 'lighter vein', cartoons, health tips and inspirational quotes. Both Venkatraman and Juny Sam agree that the **Officers' Voice** kindles their thought process and provokes all the readers to discuss the contents.

There is no wonder why **Officer' Voice** is awaited by both seniors and juniors alike.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0606.pdf (June 2006)

Why newsletters go wrong?

- Not being published regularly
- Not using catchy headlines – not descriptive (Instead of writing Chairman's message, write as "Chairman expects to double the size")
- Not using larger font for headlines
- Weak opening sentences or lead
- Using too many type styles and fonts – use italics sparingly
- Not using photos
- Excessive CEO and Top Management centric
- Not providing content, which creates interest to readers

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0606.pdf (June 2006)

Elements to consider when producing a newsletter for internal communications

- **Readership:** Who is it? (Newsletters often try to reach a number of different readerships, which can be limiting in terms of content.)
- **Frequency:** How often does it come out? Weekly? Fortnightly? Monthly? Annually?
- **Coverage:** What stories/issues do you cover?
- **Editorial control:** Who has it? (A written editorial policy or an editorial board can help to ensure a consistent editorial policy.)
- **Advertising:** Do you have any? Would you like some? (The *Bulletin* seems to be the only newsletter on campus that carries advertising.)
- **Design:** Who designed it? Who implements the design? (This varies from a member of staff - who may be limited by technical or design/layout knowledge and expertise - to a professional designer.)
- **Schedules:** How much time do you have for production? When is your copy deadline?
- **Computer hardware and software:** PC or Apple? Word, Quark, PageMaker or other?
- **Illustration:** Photos, line drawings, cartoons, clip art, tables, graphs/charts. (Images add interest to a newsletter and can encourage potential readers to pick it up. It is important to plan images early, at the same time or even before the text. Stuart Robinson in MSU is the University photographer. Image quality is another issue; minimum of 300dpi is recommended for print.)

- **Origination:** Do you provide the printer with hard copy, disk or email? Do you provide original illustrations or are they scanned in?
- **Paper:** What is it? (Coated/uncoated, weight in gsm, recycled, etc.) Why did you choose it? What messages (e.g. environmentally friendly) can it convey? (The Print and Reprographics Unit can source paper in bulk.)
- **Printing:** Who prints it? How many colours is it printed in? (University policy is that all print buying should be channelled through the Print and Reprographics Unit.)
- **Print run:** How many do you produce?
- **Distribution:** Where and how is it distributed? (The main methods are a mailing list, distribution points around campus, or a mix of the two.)

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0606.pdf (June 2006)

Communication through Silence

Communication through 'Silence' – A Westerner's experience with Ramana Maharshi

*In the book "**A Search in Secret India**", Paul Brunton, a British Philosopher and Guru, narrated his experience with Ramana Maharshi, a South Indian Saint as follows:*

"Maharshi turned and looked into my face. I, in turn, gazed expectantly at him. I become aware of a mysterious change taking place with great rapidity in my heart and mind. The old motives, which have lured me on, begin to desert me. The urgent desires, which have sent my feet hither and thither, vanish with incredible swiftness. The dislikes, misunderstandings, coldness and selfishness, which have marked my dealings with many of my fellows, collapse into the abyss of nothingness. An untellable peace falls upon me and I know now that there is nothing further that I shall ask from life."



Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0609.pdf (June 2009)

Albert Einstein's 'Success Formula' – Keep your mouth shut



Albert Einstein had a formula for success. Can you believe that? One of the greatest minds of all time developed a math formula for success!

This may be the most important math equation that you may look for:

'If A equals success, then the formula is: $A = X + Y + Z$.

X is work.

Y is play or relaxation.

Z is **keep your mouth shut.**

The person who talks the least, says the most

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0609.pdf (June 2009)

‘Silence’ will open up many closed gates of the mind

D. V. Sridhar, Director, Yogaraksanam, Chennai

When the work proceeds on expected lines one feels great. When it is interrupted by bottlenecks, we need to generate new ideas to overcome the humps. New ideas come from different sources- articles, from our mistakes, from our boss/peers/subordinates etc. But many of these could be outdated or weather-beaten ones which may not excite and may not be really new. Fresh and new ideas must emanate from inside. One has to create a conducive atmosphere for this to happen.



Fresh ideas and new thinking are the backbone for growth be it a country, organization or individual. New ideas are not the old wine put in a new bottle but must be pristine. They must emanate from inside. One has to create a conducive atmosphere for this to happen. Great discoveries had their roots inwards and this awakening can happen when the senses are restrained. Tongue among all the senses can dissipate a lot of energy and by talking too much we waste a lot of creative energy. Creativity will receive a fillip when we observe silence. In Yoga we believe that *silence* is an active practice which can transcend the mind to new levels and open up many closed gates unravelled by the mind so far.

Traditional Indian guru is Daksinamurthy, a teacher par excellence.

The saying is (in Sanskrit) ***Gurostu mounam vyakhyanam sisyaste cinna samsayah*** Which means: *The teacher's (Dakshinamurthy) explanation is in the language of silence (Mounam) and all the doubts (samsaya) of the students are clarified.*

This is a communication in silence, where the speaker is ready to send the message and the listener is tuned in to receive the message. When this harmony is achieved between the speaker and the listener there is no need for flowery words and phrases, there is no need to raise one's voice to be heard.

How to practice active silence

D. V Sridhar, Director, Yogaraksanam

How to practice active silence.

- Choose a conducive place in the house which is quiet.
- Sit in a comfortable seat and easy posture.
- Move your arms from front and side-wards in a rhythmic fashion to ease you in to the seat.
- Repeat this a few times till you are comfortable.
- Start breathing actively with force. Listen to the sound of your breathing.
- Concentrate on this sound and increase the effectiveness of this sound.
- Slowly make this breathing more and more subtle till such time the breathing becomes noiseless.
- Choose a sound for repetition. It can be from your religion (Eg. Ohm) or a simple sound Aaa.

Chant this sound:

I Stage

i. 'louder' for length of about 5 seconds

ii Repeat this 'softly'

iii. Repeat this sound 'mentally' without opening the lips.

Go over this cycle – say 6 rounds

II Stage

Drop i. and repeat the ii and iii. 6 times

III Stage

Repeat iii. 6 times

Stay quiet listening to yourself for the next 5 minutes.

This exercise should be done early morning or late in the night before going to bed.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0609.pdf (June 2009)

Silence – A subtle and powerful medium of communication

By Susan Koshy, Former General Manager, IDBI and presently communication Consultant

As sensitised beings, we exist in a realm of vibrations that interconnects us with every other living being, the Universe and the Higher Being. Our attitudes, thoughts and behaviour reverberate from our aura of energy to the aura of other people in constant unspoken communication. And so we have people who walk into a room and the atmosphere 'lights up' with their positivity, creating what the practitioners of Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP) call 'rapport'. Rapport plays a critical role especially in personal communication. Telepathy is a message in silence, communicated through the ripple effect to people in rapport. Ancient books of wisdom and scriptures contain philosophies, anecdotes and illustrations of this sublime yet powerful mode of communication.

One's action is another silent mode that can speak louder than words. For instance, in the corporate world, how a company actually performs overrides its publicised claims. We also come across leaders like Aaron Feuerstein, CEO of Malden Mills, USA, whose actions speak of his values on corporate ethics, more convincingly than any verbal proclamation. Today however, we are caught up in a cacophonous network of communication thrown across the world with information overload in a dog-eat-dog existence.

Maybe, we have come full circle and need to step back and look at some less polluting means of striking the right chord of effective communication through the sound of silence.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0609.pdf (June 2009)

Time Management

Value of Time



To realize the value of **one year**: Ask a student who has failed a final exam.

To realize the value of **one month**: Ask a mother who has given birth to a premature baby.

To realize the value of **one week**: Ask an editor of a weekly newspaper.

To realize the value of **one hour**: Ask the lovers who are waiting to meet.

To realize the value of **one minute**: Ask the person who has missed the train, bus or plane.

To realize the value of **one second**: Ask a person who has survived an accident.

To realize the value of **one millisecond**: Ask the person who has won a silver medal in the Olympics.

Time waits for no one. Treasure every moment you have.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0907.pdf(Sep 2007)

How to prioritise your tasks?

Important and Urgent (1)	Important but not Urgent (2)
Not Important and Not Urgent (3)	Not Important but Urgent (4)

In Time Management, there is a popular quadrant to define priority of tasks to arrange them appropriately in a planner.

- Box 1 Important and urgent – crisis activities
- Box 2 Important but not urgent - planned activities
- Box 3 Not important and not urgent - diversion

activitiesBox 4 Not Important but urgent - surprise activities

One more thing to watch is what is called priority shift. A task's priority moving from one box to another. The most common being "planned (Box 2) to crisis (Box 1)". The common reason for this shift is **procrastination**.

Time Management case study in Ramayana

In Kishkinda kanda of Ramayana, Rama kills Vali and makes Sugriva the king of Kishkinda. Rama tells Sugriva to come back after the rainy season is over and help him in searching for Sita. Rama stays in a cave outside kishkinda during that period. Sugriva who became a king after a long time, indulged too long in sensual pleasures that he forgot to report to Rama in time. Rama got angry and told Lakshmana to go to Kishkinda and threaten Sugriva for life. When Lakshmana did the same, Sugriva apologized and came and fell at the feet of to Rama.

Luckily for him Rama was kind and Hanuman and Nila, the commander in chief had gathered the huge monkey army which also reported at site. Sugriva gave them orders and they went forward in search of Sita. Sugriva did not realize the priority shift i.e. the planned activity of searching for Sita after rainy season, postponed, became a crisis which almost cost him his life. In fact, a good time manager can move items from box 1 (crisis) to box 2 (planned) by

analysing the root cause of a crisis and making a process correction for the next time. Meaning, defining the "when what who and how" so that it is not handled as a crisis next time.

Five reasons for Procrastination (putting off the work)

1. Lack of commitment
2. Afraid of doing the job
3. Not giving due priority
4. Not having the sufficient knowledge to do the job
5. You simply don't want to do the job

How to overcome?

Only you have to strategise, if you want to be successful. Nobody can help.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0907.pdf (Sep 2007)

IPO Communication

Role of communication in raising capital through IPO



Madan Bahal is the Founder of Adfactors Group, one of the largest independent communication groups in India. During his 28 years in this business, he has advised over 600 Corporates and led the marketing strategies for over 300 IPOs - which include most of the big-ticket IPOs in Indian capital market history.

Introduction

Growth is a *raison-de-etre* of all business enterprises, whether it is a micro enterprise or a global corporation. The pursuit of growth remains a fundamental preoccupation of top management and strategists. To support sustained growth, businesses need access to capital. Beyond a certain point, relying on private sources of finance becomes inadequate. The corporate world turns to the public for raising capital – and in the process it shares the risks and rewards with a large body of co-owners.

There are other strategic benefits of going public. The principal benefit is higher credibility and acceptance of all stakeholders including consumers, employees, financial institutions, business partners, government and regulatory bodies. Whenever a company taps the capital market for the first time by issuing shares to the general public, it is called an Initial Public Offering (IPO). Subsequent offerings are called Follow-on offers (FPOs).

Critical Factors For The Success Of An IPO

Initial public offering (IPO) is a critical milestone in realising the company's vision and business strategy. The success of an IPO is in turn critical for the sustainability and growth of a business. There are several key factors that determine the success of an IPO. These are as follows:

1. The reputation of the company

2. The knowledge and awareness about the company amongst the investing community and opinion influencers
3. The right partners for the IPO, such as investment bankers, broker syndicate, legal advisors, registrars and communications consultants
4. The Success of events *en route* the IPO, such as M&A, restructuring, PE investment, etc
5. Strong investment proposition and optimal valuation
6. A management team that inspires confidence and stands up to public scrutiny successfully.

Unique Challenges in IPO Communications

- Companies often underestimate the value of corporate reputation in successfully concluding an IPO, and managing the events *en route* the IPO.
- Most companies approach the capital market under-prepared in terms of adequate public profile and little knowledge among the investors and even opinion influencers.
- This results in lower-than-deserved public response to the IPO.
- Other challenges include severe regulatory constraints governing IPO communications combined with the tight timelines in creating nationwide awareness and interest in the IPO.
Management's ability to face intense public scrutiny and articulate the vision and the business strategy of the company.
- Crisis situations precipitated by hostile stakeholders.
- Last but not the least, there is no room for trial and error.

The target markets and target groups for the IPO Communications

- The universe of investors is about 15 million investors, a very small audience considering the large population of India.
- Top ten markets account for nearly 90 per cent response to the IPOs. The Mumbai, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Delhi corridor alone accounts for nearly 80 per cent response to IPOs.
- The main target groups include

- Investors (Retail individual investors, High Networth Investors, (HNI definition also includes corporates, trusts, etc), Qualified Institutional Investors (QIBs)
- Opinion influencers including (, Brokers, Analysts, Media)
- Company's eco-system (Employees, Business partners, Existing shareholders of group companies, Customers)

Key Elements of IPO Campaign

The IPO campaign is designed to meet the plan objectives in a short period of time, while completely conforming to regulatory framework laid out by the market's regulator – Security & Exchange Board of India (SEBI). The plan usually has three components

1. Corporate advertising, to rapidly build the identity of the company.
2. Issue advertising, to raise awareness about the offer.
3. A public relations exercise addressing all opinion influencers so that there is a favourable consensus in the market. The opinion influencers have tremendous bearing on the investment behaviour of all categories of investors.
 - a. The issue marketing exercise usually involves briefings to QIBs, media, analysts and brokers. Road shows are held in target markets for this purpose.
 - b. The QIB briefings take place in India as well as in other financial capitals of the world including New York, London, Hong Kong, Singapore, etc.

Measuring IPO Campaign Success

- The success of IPO campaign is measured using the following metrics:
- Overall response to the offer in terms of number of times subscription
- Level of participation by individual investors
- Favourable consensus in the market as reflected in the level of endorsement
- Quantum leap in the corporate reputation of the company

- Continued interest in the company's equity after the listing of the stock

Last Take

Companies aspiring to tap the capital market and optimizing value through the IPO process should keep the following things in mind:

- Start early in terms of building a public profile – the ideal time to start should be from 9 to 12 months before the planned IPO
- Prepare the management team to confidently articulate the vision, business model and growth strategy
- Be proactive and consistent in communications
- Plan all communications in accordance with the regulatory framework.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0909.pdf(Sep 2009)

Marketing Communication

Relax - Marketing defined

A Professor at one of the IIM's (INDIA) was explaining marketing concept to the students:

1. You see a gorgeous girl at a party. You go up to her and say: "I am very rich. Marry me!"

*That's **Direct Marketing***

2. You're at a party with a bunch of friends and see a gorgeous girl. One of your friends goes up to her and pointing at you says: He's very rich. Marry him."

*That's **Advertising***

3. You see a gorgeous girl at a party. You go up to her and get her telephone number. The next day, you call and say: Hi, I'm very rich. Marry me."

*That's **Telemarketing***

4. You're at a party and see gorgeous girl. You get up and straighten your tie, you walk up to her and pour her a drink, you open the door (of the car) for her, pick up her bag after she drops it, offer her ride and then say: "By the way, I'm rich. Will you marry me?"

*That's **Public Relations***

5. You're at a party and see gorgeous girl. She walks up to you and say: "You are very rich! Can you marry me?"

*That's **Brand Recognition***



6. You see a gorgeous girl at a party. You go up to her and say: " I am very rich. Marry me!" She gives you a nice hard slap on your face.

*That's **Customer Feedback***

7. You see a gorgeous girl at a party. You go up to her and say: I am very rich. Marry me!" And she introduces you to her husband.

*That's **demand and supply gap***

8. You see a gorgeous girl at a party. You go up to her and before you say anything, another person come and tell her: "I'm rich. Will you marry me?" and she goes with him.

*That's competition **eating into your market share***

9. You see a gorgeous girl at a party. You go up to her and before you say: "I'm rich, Marry me!" And your wife arrives.

*That's **restriction for entering new markets***

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1007.pdf(Oct 2007)

“Choose the right media and right message to communicate to the right audience”

Subha Ganesh, Search Marketing Consultant, London



In the recent years, the communication that we practice has undergone tremendous changes. Till few years back, people were using pen and paper for communication. Today email and other digital form of communication have become cost effective and popular method of communication across the globe. Technological changes of communication sweeping across the world, has forced the business community to adapt to new

environment. They need to prepare a better communication model, depending on the audience they target. This should take into account not just conveying the message to the consumers but also to help them to take decision too.

The business community is more familiar with the traditional media and one cannot deny the fact that New Media communication has come to stay. While the Traditional Media is perceived more as a 'dumping of information' on the target audience, the New Media is more seen as an 'interactive medium'. But after having sufficient exposure in both traditional and new media, I personally feel that we need to integrate both the media together and prepare a strategy without missing the advantages of both for converting the 'normal business' into a 'successful business'. Marketing Success lies in choosing the right media, right tone, and right message to be communicated to the right audience.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1007.pdf(Oct 2007)

What is Digital Buzz?

A Rekha Raja, Marketing Professional from Hyderabad



The Digital Buzz is the Buzz marketing technique employed in the social media arena. Buzz marketing is a viral marketing technique that attempts to make each encounter with a consumer appear to be a unique, spontaneous personal exchange of information

The digital Buzz happens when contents are produced by one consumer and distributed to other consumers using an online medium like blogs, wikis, forums, podcasts and social networks. The Brand could effectively use Buzz to

- Get feedbacks and complaints i.e., to listen to customers
- Introduce new product or offer announcement
- Consumer engagement
- Increase the Brand Awareness

Digital Buzz is one of the powerful BTL activities, a Brand could employ to retain and grow the customer-base on a long run. The prime objective of Digital buzz should be consumer engagement and brand awareness rather than sales.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1007.pdf (Oct 2007)

Communication through Cartoons

'King' blesses the 'PRince'



Inspired by the talk of Dr Abdul Kalam, former Indian President, **PR-e-Sense** has introduced cartoons from the May 08 issue. Subsequently, we decided to create a new cartoon character symbolizing the PR youth. When we floated the idea in the Prpoint and Image Management groups and sought the suggestions for name, we got nearly one hundred suggestions.



Ms Uma, one of the members and a communication professional from Chennai suggested the name of 'PRince', which was accepted by all. Mr Triambak Sharma, Editor, Cartoon Watch, the only cartoon magazine of India, has created the

'PRince'. In the first cartoon, **PRince** takes blessings from Dr Abdul Kalam to start his journey in the future ezines. (see next page) PRince is in line with the 'common man' character created by the noted Indian cartoonist Mr R K Lakshman. When the cartoon was presented to Dr Abdul Kalam during his visit to Chennai, on 24th July 2008, he looked at the cartoon very carefully and appreciated the concept. He also said, "all cartoons should bring smile". Impressed with the cartoon, Dr Abdul Kalam, spontaneously signed on the cartoon as a mark of his greetings and appreciation. The cartoon with the signature of Dr Abdul Kalam is published in this ezine.

On behalf of the readers of PR-e-Sense, we welcome PRince into our midst. He will represent the new generation communication professionals globally. Editorial Team thanks Mr Triambak Sharma for creating this new cartoon character. In the picture above, Dr Abdul Kalam is seen signing the cartoon. Prime Point Srinivasan is holding the cartoon folder.

– Editorial Team

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense0708.pdf (July 2008)

Cartoons in Dr Kalam's success story

In 1979, it was the time that our team and I were highly depressed after the failure of the launch of Indian made SLV3 rocket. We were highly determined to launch the rocket again successfully within one year from that day. We were working very seriously round the clock towards our goal. Our failure was often disturbing our minds and causing depression. One day, a friend of mine handed over a file to me, containing a lot of cartoons, published by various newspapers, on the failure of SLV3 project. I showed these cartoons to my team. We went through these cartoons one by one. We were able to understand the sadness and humour in those cartoons. We laughed heartily, after almost a month.

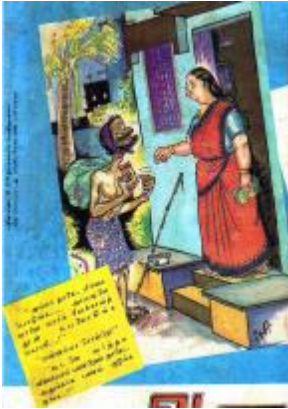


The cartoons were like a pain-relieving gel. This rejuvenated us resulting in happiness and greater determination. Those cartoons triggered intellectual thoughts within our SLV3 team. It strengthened my resolve and every member of the SLV3 team. We realised that success and failure were part of our life and failure was the stepping stone for success. In a way, these cartoons were mainly responsible for strengthening our resolve to succeed in our mission in 1980. Ever since, whenever I read newspapers, I look at the cartoons first. Only after enjoying the cartoons, I read the main stories. That is why, I always appeal to my media friends to publish the cartoons in the front page.

(Translated Excerpts from the speech of Dr Abdul Kalam, Former President of India, while launching Mathi's Cartoon at Chennai during April 2008 – Cartoon of Dr Kalam by Mathi)

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1208.pdf (Dec 2008)

**This cartoon of 1987 is relevant for today's Context –
Commercials through a beggar**



Ananda Vikatan issue dated 29.3.1987 in their wrapper carried this cartoon. Free translation:

Beggar : Madam. Please give me some alms. By the way, also purchase elephant mark soap powder.

Lady : What are you saying?

Beggar : Madam, I am being paid for this commercials!

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1208.pdf (Dec 2008)

R K Laxman's cartoon character in a statue



One of the most famous Indians of our time doesn't exist in real life- the Common Man. With his hair and glasses askew, in his crumpled dhoti and checked shirt, this always puzzled, ever silent being was created by Rasipuram Krishnaswamy Laxman, a cartoonist who has been synonymous with the Times of India ever since your grandfather was a child.

Laxman once said of his Common Man, "He's been with me throughout my career. I didn't find him. He found me... I would say he symbolises the mute millions of India, or perhaps the whole world, a silent spectator of marching time".

Half a century ago, he would draw a Bengali, a Tamilian, a Punjabi and so on to represent Indians. These figures dropped out of his cartoons gradually, until he was left with this lone character. Laxman insists that a cartoonist needs a sense of humour, the talent to draw, and a sound education. "It is of no use if one of these traits is present without the others, or any two without the third. He must have all of them. Cartooning is inborn," he says. "It cannot be taught."

Picture : Common man statue at Symbiosis, Pune

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1208.pdf (Dec 2008)

Word-less cartoon is a 'Global language'

By Triambak Sharma, Editor, Cartoon Watch

I firmly believe that, a cartoon without WORD is a cartoon for whole WORLD. I wrote this line long back because I found that a word-less cartoon itself has a language which can be termed a GLOBAL LANGUAGE.

As we are all aware that the whole world is full of different kinds of languages, which are the only communication medium. During travelling in different states of India and different parts of the world, we have to face lot of problem due to LANGUAGE. But as far as cartoon is concerned, if it is word-less, it is acceptable all over the world, without any discrimination. Cartoons having captions can face difficulty but a caption less cartoon can do a miracle.



But we are not here to talk only about caption less cartoons. We are here to advocate the role of cartoons in communication. It is said that A PICTURE CAN SAY THOUSAND WORDS. Similarly, A CARTOON CAN SAY MORE THAN TEN THOUSAND WORDS. This art reminds us the language of Stone age man, who used to draw pictures on cave walls to express his feelings. After this era, many new languages came in to existence. Now after having plenty of languages all over the world, once again we have to use the

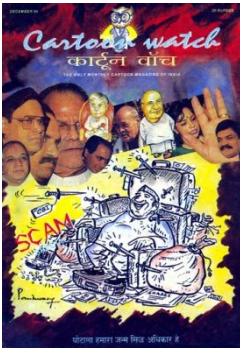
old art of stone age man for global communication, which is now

known as CARTOONS. Today, cartoon can be termed as the most advanced language of the world, as it is beyond boundaries. Thus, we can proudly say that CARTOON IS THE BEST MEDIA TO COMMUNICATE.

A cartoon can speak the truth more easily than any News or Article. Similarly, cartoons attract the common man if it is used in Advertisement. It can be in print media or in visual media. During elections, many political parties use this media to attack each other.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1208.pdf(Dec 2008)

Cartoon Watch, the Only Cartoon Magazine of India, Enters 25th Year



**Cover Page
of First Edition**

Triambak Sharma, the cartoonist for 'Princetoon', carried in eMagazine PreSense regularly, also runs his own cartoon magazine, 'Cartoon Watch'. Cartoon Watch entered its 25th year of publication in December 2020.

The Shankar's Weekly, the only cartoon magazine running in the country till the mid-1970s, closed down in 1975 during emergency period. Several people tried to start a cartoon magazine thereafter, but none of them could survive. Triambak Sharma started 'Cartoon Watch', an exclusive cartoon magazine, on 5th

December 1996. He has so far published 289 monthly editions without a break.

Cartoon Watch has been honouring outstanding cartoonists with Lifetime Achievement Awards annually since 2003. They have honoured 25 outstanding cartoonists, including Shri R K Laxman, Balasaheb Thackeray, Abid Surati, Pran, Madan, Shankar, and Surendra. Cartoon Watch has been honouring international cartoonists since 2019. The magazine regularly organises cartoon competitions, cartoon exhibitions and cartoon workshops, and have created an online cartoon museum.

The Limca Book of Records, and the India Book of Records have recognised Cartoon Watch as the only bilingual cartoon magazine of India.

Cartoon magazine can be downloaded from www.cartoonwatchindia.com.

PreSense greets Cartoon Watch and its team on this landmark occasion.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0121.pdf (Jan 2021)

Science Communication

Science Communication is a fast emerging field

Shabana Sultana, Student, Anna University

The entire student community is greatly honoured to get the privilege of Guest Editing this prestigious third anniversary issue. Science writing still tends to be dry and boring, making it unsurprising that only a few science articles interest newspapers and magazines. The number of capable science communicators and voluntary scientific organizations is alarmingly low and hardly sufficient to cater to the country's large and diverse population. As far as science writing and journalism are concerned, there is ample scope for furthering such efforts in developing countries. India could take the initiative in mobilizing like-minded people in South Asia to form Science Writers' and Journalists' Associations in each country, ideally with help from international organizations.



'It is suicidal to create a society dependent on science and technology in which hardly anybody knows about science and technology.' - Carl Sagan Knowledge about science and technology (S&T) is inevitable in this modern hi-tech world. There is a great demand for communicating or popularizing science among the masses.

Most of the S&T institutions or laboratories have a social mandate for science popularization and development of scientific temper among the masses. Today, science communication is a fast-emerging field of scientific enterprise both in the developed and developing countries. So, trained science journalists, writers, reporters and communicators are in great demand in different media outlets, and the S&T institutions or laboratories. Recognizing this scenario, the National Council for Science and Technology Communication (NCSTC), Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, has taken the initiative, to train science graduates as skilled science communicators and equip them to present science intelligibly and effectively to the masses. I believe that science communication in India has a bright future.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense0209.pdf (Feb 2009)

Science Communicators have great job opportunities

Prof. Anuj Sinha, one of the Senior most Scientists of India in Grade G, is presently heading the National Council for Science and Technology Communication (NCSTC) under the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. He is one of the pioneers in promoting Science and Technology Communication in India. He has won several awards. The following is a free transcript of his podcast interview.

What is the importance of science and technology communication?

Science and technology communication is a key to having a rational society. Each of us has cultural burden and so it is important to have a rational attitude. People have to look out for real reasons as to why something is happening? And are we guided or misguided by the happening of the society? Science communication is the key to have a developed society and help take better decisions even within the family, society and the community.

What is the role of NCSTC in promoting Science and Technology?

Over 27 years, National Council for Science and Technology (NCSTC) has been guiding the science communication efforts in the country. It focuses mainly on seven areas, research being the top priority, also finding out as what is the level of public understanding of science is and what is the impact of science programmes on radio or television. Another aspect is to train the science communicators, who are not adequate in number. Many short-term and long-term courses have been organized. About nine universities are offering Post Graduate programmes in science communication. Developing or preparing the communication materials is another facet which is gaining importance. Preparing pamphlets, posters, scripts for street plays, stage shows, devising the video format programmes and updating through website are taken care of. As a token of encouraging and recognizing the work of outstanding science communicators, NCSTC has been giving National awards for those who excel in communicating science and popularizing science. Field

programme involves elements of research, training and software development. Children science congress is a typical example for field work, where students from 600 districts from all over India participated. Since 2009 being the year of astronomy, lots of young people will be encouraged to participate in the relevant projects and in the viewing of the solar eclipse. Now NSCTC is concentrating on environmental issues and in encouraging the creativity of the youth.

What are the job opportunities for Science Communicators?

Number of news channels are picking up Science Communicators either as full time or part time Journalists. Some Big pharmaceutical companies are recruiting the Science Communicators as public relation executives. Embassies need spokespersons dealing with Science too. But there is a great demand for science communicators in print media, where they can create great impact.

What is the global trend of science communication and where does India stand?

India being a unique country with varied levels of literacy, it is difficult to compare India with others. But, as far as the public understanding of the science is concerned there has been increase in the index which is not true in the countries like US. With the availability and accessibility of the media, we are doing pretty well and pretty good. There are lessons for us everywhere, but we need to adopt and adapt them. There can be no clear cut example which can be transferable. For example, Max Plank Society is a large European Society which encourages about 45 laboratories. It developed a Science tunnel format to spread science awareness. They keep the model for 6 months and then dismantle it. India adopted the model and altered it to suit Indian scenario. We set up a specially commissioned train containing 16 coaches where the exhibition has been redesigned. Every year Feb 28th is celebrated as National Science Day. It is more appropriate that you are featuring Science Communication.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0209.pdf (Feb 2009)

Kalinga Awards for Science Communicators

The **Kalinga Prize for the Popularization of Science** is an award given by UNESCO for exceptional skill in presenting scientific ideas to lay people. It was created in 1952, following a donation from Biju Patnaik, Founder President of the Kalinga Foundation Trust in India.

The recipient of this annual award must have demonstrated — during a brilliant career as writer, editor, lecturer, film producer, radio/television programme director or presenter — talent in interpreting science and technology for the public. The recipient should have striven to emphasize the international importance of science and technology and the contribution they make to improving public welfare, enriching the cultural heritage of nations, and solving problems facing humanity. Many past prize winners have been scientists, while others have been trained in journalism or have been educators or writers.

The Kalinga Prize is awarded during the Celebration of the World Science Day (2003, 2005, etc.) and in New Delhi, India, in even years. Under the terms of the Prize, the recipient receives ten thousand pounds sterling and a UNESCO Albert Einstein Silver Medal. The recipient is also awarded the Ruchi Ram Sahni Chair, introduced by the Government of India in 2001 to mark the 50th anniversary of the Kalinga Prize. As holder of the Ruchi Ram Sahni Chair, the winner travels to India for a period of two to four weeks as the guest of the Government of India. The Chair also comprises a token honorarium of USD 2,000. In the years when the award ceremony takes place during the celebration of the World Science Day, the recipient travels to the city where the science day celebrate (2003 in Budapest) as the guest of UNESCO, in the years when it is awarded in New Delhi, the recipient is invited, as the guest of the Kalinga Foundation Trust, to undertake a brief lecture tour in India. For this reason, it is preferable that the recipient be proficient in English. For more details

http://www.unesco.org/science/psd/prizes/kalinga/kalinga_regulations.shtml

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense0209.pdf (Feb 2009)

Advertising

Evolution of Advertising

By Sukruti Narayanan, Editorial Team Member

The world of advertising is a billion-dollar global industry today. However, it evolved from very humble beginnings, the history of which dates as far back as 4000 B.C. when people used symbols marked on goods to identify them with the sellers. The evolution of advertising is an interesting sequence of events starting from the age of the sign language to the present world of abbreviations and taglines. Incidentally, the word “advertising” comes from the Latin word, *Advertere* to mean “turn towards”.

The stages of evolution can mainly be classified into the Pre-Industrial Age and the Post-Industrial Age. The advancements in the advertising industry was manifold and a hundred times more rapid during the period after the 1900s as against the period before the 1900s.

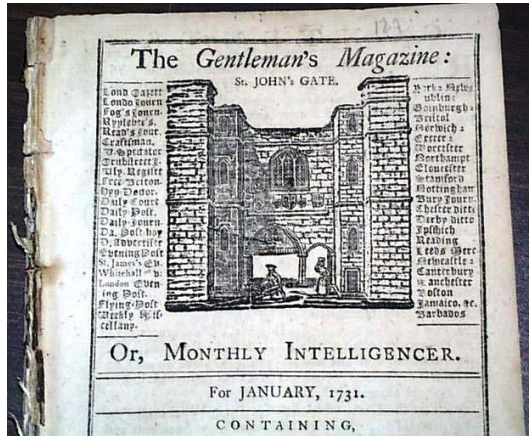


Printing Press invented in 1440

In the pre-industrial age, people were obviously unaware of the concept of mass production as there was no machine involved. People worked on the barter system, *ie.* exchange of one good for another instead of exchange of goods over money. “Word of mouth” was the means to “spread the good news” about a product. In order to differentiate among the goods like cattle, grain or any type of goods possessed, people used to mark them with a symbol, otherwise called branding. Since the common people did not know how to read or write, they recognised symbols and understood the ‘town criers’ (people carrying messages from one place to another and

announcing them). Paintings on walls and carvings on stones were other common forms of advertisement.

When paper was invented by the Chinese in 105 A.D., it was mainly used to pad articles such as bronze mirrors, until the advent of the paper mill in Europe in 1275 A.D. In 1440, a German named Johannes Gutenberg invented the Printing Press which gained popularity. But it took over three decades before the first "Poster Ad" was brought to the world. These Ads were placed on church doors in London. By the middle of the 17th Century (1650), the first newspaper Ad appeared, which offered "reward for finding 12 stolen horses".



First Magazine published in London in 1731

In the beginning of the 18th century, the Boston Newsletter asked its readers to place Ads for real estate, ships or goods for sale. In 1731, the first general-interest magazine was published in London. At that time, advertisers just played with headlines to garner attention.



First paid advertisement in 1836

The 1800s resulted in the onset of the Industrial Revolution where animals were replaced by machines and goods were manufactured in large quantities. In order to differentiate identical looking mass-produced goods, people resorted to advertising to promote their brands. In 1836, the French newspaper, *La Presse* was the first to include paid advertisement in its pages. The same was soon followed in magazines too. This led to the opening of the first advertising agency in Philadelphia, USA by Volney B Palmer in 1850. As modes of transportation advanced, the advertising world saw billboard Ads and transit Ads emerge. A

commission-based Ad agency was started 1869 by Francis Wayland Ayer. And with this, advertising took a professional leap into a world bombarded by Ads, billboards, sound bites, byte slots and so on.

In India, advertising started well before the 18th century with hawkers calling out their wares, right from the days when cities and markets first began. The advertising world has since evolved in a big way so that the Indian advertising arena scores high among its global competitors.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0717.pdf(July 2017)

Evolution of Advertising - The Branding Boom Era

By Sukruti Narayanan, Editorial Team Member

The evolution of advertising during the pre-Industrialisation period was discussed in the previous edition of this e-magazine (PreSense July 2017). The changes that occurred in the 1900s were dynamic when compared to the evolution that took place over the preceding period of 700 years (between 1200 A.D to 1900 A.D).

Industrialisation resulted in mass production of goods which were similar in nature. This forced merchants to think of ways to project their products as the unique one. They chose advertising as the medium to reach out to people *en masse*. The idea of branding and attractive packaging began to play a key role in sale of goods.

Creativity in branding expanded from print designs in newspapers to aerial advertising of the products, using air balloons; for example, balloons displaying the baby formula brand by Mellin's Food in 1902.

There was progressive advancement every year in technology and this worked in favour of improving branding. In 1903, the Commercial Pacific Cable Company laid the Pacific Telegraph Cable. Nobody thought then that this would help in tele-marketing. The domestic electricity was standardised in 1910, and this created a market for household appliances. Within a decade, America's first radio station, KDKA was launched in Pittsburgh in 1920. This became a medium for branding, and the advertising industry turned out to be nearly a \$3-billion industry by then. In 2016, the global advertising spend was over \$500 billion.



First Television advertisement

By 1940, television (TV) sets were manufactured in the United States of America, Britain and Germany. After World War II, the sale of TV sets began to boom and the first TV commercial was by Bulova Clocks. (picture)

This opened advertising to a different level and creativity played a vital role in drawing attention. Creative teams in the ad world collaborated with artists and copy writers to make interesting film clips.

In 1975, the video cassette recorder (VCR) became popular among the masses. The viewers could watch their favourite programmes without being interrupted by advertisements. The personal computer (PC), introduced by IBM in 1980s, shook the ad world as the attention shifted from TVs to PCs. In the 2000s, mobile phones were the talk of the decade and it emerged as a vital gadget over the decade. This resulted in integrated marketing becoming important in order to increase sales. With the advent of the Internet, which had over 400 million users in the 2000s, the digital age was born. The “wealth of information created a poverty of attention”. This made the concept of brand positioning critical.

There was a paradigm shift from exploiting the traditional ad space to an information overload on the Internet and this resulted in the development of many ad-free channels and applications. Spamming became a very serious problem and people started blocking online ads. The social media tools like FaceBook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Pinterest, SnapChat and many other applications became a medium to reach the target audience currently.

Today, the scenario is such that companies pay consumers to grab their attention and they have gone to the extent of creating sponsored programmes for the viewers. Now, customers find their brand rather than *vice versa*.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0817.pdf (Aug 2017)

PR will be the driving force in marketing programmes

Al Ries & Laura Ries need no introduction. The duo authored a much debated book **"The Fall of Advertising & Rise of PR"**, which created ripples in the world of communications and established the importance of PR in a never before manner. Here in an exclusive email interview with *Tushar* for *PR-e-Sense* Al talks about the future of PR and how we should be preparing ourselves for the same.

Q: Its quite some time now since you have written the legendary book on PR Industry. The world is moving at a speed of light and in this fast-changing world where does PR industry stand today?

A: While the PR industry might be moving at the speed of light in your part of the world, the same thing isn't true here and in many other countries of the world. It was our concept (in the book, *The Fall of Advertising & the Rise of PR*) that brands should be introduced by PR and only when the brand is established should the company switch to advertising. Furthermore, we believe that PR people should be primarily responsible for the strategy of a new brand, not advertising people. That notion has not been accepted by most companies here in the U.S.

Today, more companies look to their advertising agencies to develop the strategies for new brands. Actually, many PR agencies are reluctant to be involved in strategy. They seem to feel that if they did, they would be blamed for the failures of new brands. They seem to believe their job is to deliver media clips for their clients and not to be responsible for the success or failure of brands. However, we believe that the PR industry will eventually move in the direction we suggested in our book. As we said in the book, it's going to take some time for this to happen.

Q: As it has been increasingly said that PR builds the brand, what in your opinion are the ideal traits of a successful PR Manager to be able to replace the traditional brand managers?

A: A successful PR manager has to look at a brand from the consumer's point of view. And then try to figure out what attributes of the brand would make the best impression on consumers. Actually, looking at a brand from the consumer's point of view is quite similar to what media do when they decide whether or not to run a story about a brand. So in many ways, a good PR manager already has the traits necessary to become a good brand strategist.

Q: You visit India quite frequently and I am sure you must have got a chance to observe Indian PR business as well, what is your opinion on Indian PR business?

A: While Laura and I have visited India a number of times, we still don't feel that we know about Indian PR business to comment on this question. We have been pleased, however, that there seems to be great interest in PR in India. Much more so than in many other countries.

Q: Where do you see the Future of PR and what advice would you like to give to young and aspiring PR professionals to become the future-proof?

A: We see the future of PR to be the future of marketing. In other words, PR will become the driving force in most marketing programs. Young and aspiring PR professionals should take a great interest in strategy rather than just in the traditional PR skills. "Getting your name in the paper" is not the goal of a marketing program. "Building a powerful brand in consumers' minds" is the goal of a marketing program. PR is just a tactic in the broader goal of winning the battle in consumers' minds.

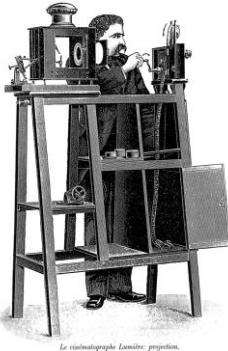
Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0717.pdf (July 2017)

Indian Cinema

Jai Ho – Indian Cinema hits Century

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Editor in Chief, PreSense`

The Indian Cinema Industry entered the 100th year on 3rd May 2013. India ranks first among the nations which produce films and contributes nearly 23% of the films produced in the world.



Lumieres' Cinematographie

Within a year of Lumieres' first exhibiting their cinematographie in Paris, an agent brought the equipments and films from France and exhibited the moving pictures in Bombay (now known as Mumbai) on 7th July 1896. Within a few months, this was shown in Madras and Calcutta. It is said that when the Lumieres showed their moving picture of the arrival of a train on the screen, the audience rushed out of the theatre at Bombay and Madras fearing that they were going to be run over by the oncoming train.

The First Silent Movie in 1913

The first feature film in Marathi "Raja Harishchandra" (a silent movie) made by Dadasaheb Phalke was released on 3rd May 1913, marking the beginning of the Indian cinema industry. The film was Dada's first feature film venture of a full film length of 3700 feet (in four reels) and about 50 minutes of running time. It took seven months 21 days to complete the film. The film was screened at the Coronation Cinema in 1913 before an invited audience of representatives of the press, and guests. The film received wide acclaim and was a commercial success. Phalke followed it up by making films such as Satyavan Savitri, Satyawadi Raja Harish Chandra (1917), Lanka Dahan (1917), Sri Krishna Janma



(1918) and Kaliya Mardan (1919). Dadasaheb Phalke was by then known as the 'Father of Indian Cinema'. During the early days, no woman was willing to act in films and hence men were playing the roles of women.

The First Indian Talkie in 1931



The first Indian talkie 'Alam Ara' (with sound), directed by Ardeshir Irani was released in Majestic Cinema on 14th March 1931. This film had 7 songs. During that time, there was no sound proof recording theatres or dubbing. The shootings used to be held in the nights with actors acting and delivering the dialogues or singing live. The recordings used to be done with hidden microphones. Alam Ara ran for 124 minutes. This film changed the course of direction of Indian films. This film was produced by "Imperial Movie-

Tone".

Tamil and Telugu Movies

After producing Alam Ara in 1931, Ardeshir Irani made many talkies in the same sets at Bombay. In the same year, Bhakta Prahlada, the first Telugu talking film and Kalidas (in Tamil) were made in the same sets as Alam Ara. Both were directed by H M Reddy, one of the earlier assistants of Ardeshir Irani. Kalidas had multiple language dialogues and songs.

Newspaper Advertisement about Kalidas on 29th October 1931

It is reported that when the first film reels of Kalidas was brought to the Madras Central Railway Station, it was received by the people with great excitement. Although the film was released on 31st October 1931, Swadesamitran, one of the leading Tamil dailies



of those times wrote a review on 29th October itself, praising the movie.

Bhaktha Prahlada (Telugu talkie) was first released in Bombay on 6th February 1932 and then in Madras on 2nd April 1932. Later it was released in Andhra Pradesh, but no documentary proof is available on the date of its release in this region.

Gemini Introduced a New Style of Publicity

A turning point in the film industry happened when 'Chandralekha' was produced by Gemini S S Vasan in 1948. This was the first grand film in India produced at a cost of Rs.30 lakhs (Rs.3 million) during 1948. It had a magnificent dance sequence with a large number of dancers dancing on drums. This was also the first film in India to be released with sub-titles in 609 theatres in India and abroad.



For the first time, S S Vasan spent heavily on huge publicity banners all over the country to promote the film. The face of the actress in a large mega poster in Bombay, attracted a large crowd at that time. The film, which was 207 minutes long, was produced in the popular 'Gemini Studios' and the production took 5 years. The film was released in April 1948.

Growth of Indian Cinema

From then on, the Indian cinema progressed faster. From the 'drama' type cinemas, real dialogue-oriented and music-oriented films evolved. Moving from the ancient epic-oriented films, directors started taking up social issues. From studio-oriented settings, the directors moved to real outdoor locations in villages, rivers and mountains for shooting their films.

Today, the Indian Cinema has acquired the capability in technology and creativity to match international standards. India is the topmost

country in the world to produce the largest number of films. India produces around 1200 films every year. On an average, around 20 million people watch the movies in theatres every day. With the growth of television, cable TV, and exclusive film-oriented channels, more and more people are watching movies.

Hindi (Bollywood), Tamil (Kollywood) and Telugu (Tollywood) films constitute nearly three-fourth of the films produced in India. These films have also captured international attention.

Great Indian Directors

Many Indian cinema directors like Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen, V Shantharam, Dada Saheb Palke, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, K. Balachander, Mani Ratnam, Mahendran, L V Prasad, K Viswanath, Adurthi Subbarao and many more veterans have contributed in their own way to the growth of the Indian Cinema Industry.

Films Influencing Politics

In the past four decades, we have seen film personalities like MGR, NTR, Jayalalitha, Karunanidhi and Vijayakanth occupying high political positions in the South. The film industry still influences political decisions in Tamil Nadu and Andhra.

Serious Concerns

On the positive side, the Indian cinema has developed creativity and capability to match international standards. In the recent decades, it has also become highly commercial, focusing only on revenue. The involvement of underground people and black money has made the industry dangerous to be associated with.

Many of the young directors feel that the 'Masters' who are highly creative and take the industry to the next level, do not get recognised, and in their passion for films and creativity, they undergo much humiliation. The industry, which provides employment opportunities to millions of people directly and indirectly, should get relief from the clutches of unwanted anti-

national elements and work towards the development of the industry and the nation.

*Input courtesy to P K Saravanan (Anna University) and
Dhanapal Padmanabhan (Cine Director)*

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0513.pdf (May 2013)

Snippet About Oscar Award

By Sukruti Narayanan, Editorial Team

The Academy Awards or popularly known as the Oscars is a group of artistic and technical honors given annually by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) to recognize excellence in cinematic achievements in the United States film industry as assessed by the Academy's voting membership.

The winners under the various categories are awarded a copy of a statuette, officially called the Academy Award of Merit, which has become commonly known by its nickname "Oscar." The awards, was first presented in 1929 at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel



The awards ceremony was first broadcast on radio in 1930 and televised for the first time in 1953. It is now seen live in more than 200 countries and can be streamed live online.

The Academy Awards ceremony is the oldest entertainment awards ceremony. Its equivalents - the Emmy Awards for television, the Tony Awards for theatre, and the Grammy Awards for music and recording - are modeled after the Academy Awards.

A total of 3,048 Oscars have been awarded since the inception of the Award through its 88 editions. The statuette, made of gold-plated britannium (a specific type of pewter alloy, composed of tin, antimony and copper) stands on a black metal base.

It is 13.5 in (34.3 cm) tall and weighs 8.5 lb (3.856 kg). It depicts a knight rendered in Art Deco style, holding a crusader's sword, on a reel of film with five spokes. The five spokes represent the original branches of the Academy: Actors, Writers, Directors, Producers, and Technicians.

As of 2016, eleven Indians have been nominated for a total of fourteen Oscars, five Indians of whom have won a total of six Oscars. Three Indian films have been nominated in the Best Foreign Language Film category. As of 2016, at least one film has been submitted by 118 countries.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0217.pdf (Feb 2017)

New Age Political Communication

New Age Techno Strategic Political Communication

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

The 2014 General Elections witnessed a new way of political campaigning using various technology tools. The campaign model used in the western countries was tweaked to suit the Indian elections and to promote Narendra Modi. In any communication, whether it is a political campaign or corporate branding, a powerful message is sent to the audience through effective media tools, with the purpose of creating a positive or negative perception. According to S Narendra, Former Information Advisor to various Prime Ministers of India, it involves a strong strategy to successfully flight the message to the right audience through the right media, distinguishing it from the competing messages.

Right Message



Right Media



Right Audience

During the freedom movement, Mahatma Gandhi's Dandi March created a strong anti-British sentiment among the people. While Mahatma Gandhi was undertaking the Salt March in North India, Rajaji simultaneously undertook a Salt March in the south, to galvanise the entire country. In both the events, 'common salt' was the message and the 'March' was used as a 'Media' tool, to communicate the message to the people. For any successful campaign, the message should relate and appeal to the audience.

'Strategic' is a key word that represents the most critical input. A strategy is not very useful without such a critical input, an input that is a force multiplier. The strategic input can be an investment, person, alliance, a message, event or a decision.

The 1947-1990 Era

During this pre-liberalisation period, the radio and print media were mainly used. The ruling party had the opportunity of using the public sector organisations to promote the achievements of the Government through their advertisements.

During the first General Elections held in 1952, Jawaharlal Nehru and the Congress Party contested on a symbol of 'two bullocks tied to a yoke' and won massive majority. In the later days, Indira Gandhi used the 'Cow and Calf' symbol and the Janatha Party used 'a Farmer Within a Wheel'. These symbols were in themselves powerful messages to connect with the people and appeal to them.

In 1971, Indira Gandhi used the powerful message '*Garibi Hatao*' and swept the elections. During the 1989 elections, VP Singh used the powerful message of the 'Bofors Scandal' against Rajiv Gandhi. BJP used the 'Ram Mandir' issue to increase the tally.

During this period, the political parties used conventional methods of the print media. At that time, only the AllIndia Radio and Doordarshan were the electronic media available and mostly used by ruling party. Political campaigns were based on public meetings, personal contact with voters, wall posters, banners, notices, etc. Cinema, stage dramas, street plays and cut-outs were used by political parties in the south to promote their philosophies. MGR, Karunanidhi, Annadurai, NT Ramarao, Jayalalitha and Raj Kumar emerged from the film industry to acquire political power.

The 1990-2014 Era

After the economic liberalisation in 1991, the emergence of the television (TV) media changed the campaign strategies. Political parties started owning TV channels to promote their parties. In 1993, Sun TV was started as an entertainment channel with an agenda of promoting the DMK political party. Later on, many more parties started their own channels.

In 1996, the BSP leader, Kanshiram slapped Ashutosh (now a spokesperson of AAP), then reporter in NDTV, when he was asked some uncomfortable questions. That led to the political parties thinking in terms of engaging professional agencies for handling the media and appointing spokespersons to engage the media.

The BJP and the Congress parties began using Professional Public Relation (PR) Agencies like Good Relations India and Perfect Relations to handle media relations on their behalf. After 2004, national parties began using professional agencies in the states they

were ruling (mostly in the north and the west), for election campaign.

Soon, national parties set up their own Internal Campaign Managers, to professionally handle the campaign. Arun Nehru (Congress) Arun Jaitly (BJP), Narendra Modi (BJP), Pramod Mahajan (BJP) and Jairam Ramesh (Congress) emerged as good campaign managers.

The 2004 General Elections saw the emergence of 'theme-based advertisements'. BJP heavily campaigned under the theme 'India Shining', employing the Advertising Agency Grey, reportedly spending around Rs.600 crores for the campaign. For the first time, the Indian Elections witnessed a corporate type of advertisements. Although the Congress was weak, they used the campaign '*Aap Ko Kiya Mila*' (What Did You Get). Although the economy was upbeat and BJP had spent a huge amount their campaign, they could not form the Government in 2004. Experts opine that the negative campaign run by BJP on Sonia Gandhi as a 'foreigner' coupled with the 'India Shining' campaign of BJP could not win them the elections. The common voters could not connect with the 'India Shining' theme.

Technology was used only to a limited extent in the 2004 General Elections. BJP projected Vajpayee as PM Candidate. For the first time in the Indian elections, a candidate was projected as a PM candidate.

After 2004, Political Communication Strategists emerged in a small way to support individual leaders at the regional level.

In the 2009 General Elections, both BJP and Congress used technology tools like the social media, SMS / telephone campaign, etc. Advani and Dr Manmohan Singh were projected as PM candidates of BJP and Congress respectively. BJP was the major user of technology tools. BJP lost the elections.

Till 2009, there was no 'paid media' concept. Political parties appointed advertising agencies to plan and place their advertisements.

The 2014 (Post Modi) Era

Narendra Modi (BJP) used technology tools like the social media, 3D hologram, mobile phones, smart phones, etc in Gujarat Assembly Elections in 2012.

Political Techno Strategies were used in the 2014 General Elections. Professionals like Prashant Kishore supported the BJP campaign. A more professional approach towards the campaign, like survey, big data analytics, and micro-management of the campaign through technology were used. New technologies like Augmented Reality (QR code) and Virtual Reality (like hologram) were also used.

The campaign branded Narendra Modi as PM candidate. Slogans like '*Acche Din*' (Good Days/Times) and '*Aap ki Bar Modi Sarkar*' (This Time, It's Modi's Government) attracted voters nationwide. They involved the youth through the social media. The campaign was supplemented by a large number of road shows (public meetings) in different states. The Congress could not match the technology-driven campaign of BJP. BJP and its alliance parties won the election with a big margin, leaving the Congress disappointed.

The same model was used in other state elections held subsequently in Maharashtra, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Bihar and Delhi. The BJP lost in Delhi and Bihar, indicating that creating 'hype' alone might not be enough to win elections and that it should be coupled with field work. This new type of campaign will be adopted in the 2016 Assembly Elections. Some of the regional political parties have begun employing the expertise of professionals for their campaigns.

After 2009, media houses were encouraging 'sponsored news' or 'paid news' to propagate positive and success stories. Although the Election Commission and the Press Council of India have banned the 'paid news' concept, excepting a few media houses, many others have been promoting this concept for earning revenue. Ironically, the same media houses shout about 'values and ethics', while they go about to the extent of publishing/telecasting sponsored 'opinion polls' in favour of one party or the other.

Traditional Vs Modern Campaign

In the traditional campaign, the political leaders and workers had personal interaction with the voters. After the introduction of the technology campaign, personal interactions were lost. Since 80% of the voters are not connected with technology tools, traditional campaign model requires to be supplemented. The technology tools are useful for creating a 'brand image'.

In the traditional model, the leaders emerged from the grass root level with knowledge about the nuances of various problems. Vajpayee, Advani, Karunanidhi, MGR, NTR, Kamaraj, Pranab Kumar Mukherjee, Narasimha Rao, Bansilal, Mulayam Singh Yadav, Lallu Prasad Yadav, Mayavati, Mamta Banerjee and Sharath Pawar are examples of such leaders who had emerged from the grass root. But in the technology model, leaders are emerging from the social media, eg. Arvind Kejriwal, and Narendra Modi as PM candidate).

Hype is created through intensive campaigns using the social media and other technology tools, the projected leader runs the risk of losing his image when the campaign ceases. In other words, the leaders or the brand created out of this hype is unable to stand on their own but rely on a virtual standing. For this reason, a fair mix of both traditional and technology strategies is necessary.

Presently, political parties suffer from a bad culture of hooliganism, rowdyism, etc. In future, it is hoped that a balance can be maintained in the political culture, with the emergence of new-age educated leaders.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0116.pdf (Jan 2016)

Exclusive Interview with Suryah, Techno Campaign Strategist

Suryah SG (25), a law graduate from a premier Law College at Pune was part of the Political Techno Campaign Team of BJP during the 2014 General Elections and four Assembly Elections. He will be playing a crucial role in the Techno Campaign Strategy Team for BJP in the 2016 Tamil Nadu Assembly Elections. He is one of the few persons followed by Narendra Modi in his Twitter. In an exclusive interview for PreSense, he shares his views on this new concept. Excerpt:

How did you involve yourself in the 'New Age Techno Communication Campaign' of Narendra Modi?

On 24th June 2012, I received a call from the Office of the then



“

2012 Gujarat Election Campaign was a landmark in the history of Indian Elections. We integrated all the technology tools like internet, social media, mobile phones, smart phones, 3D Rallies, etc. to connect with people.

Suryah SG

Gujarat Chief Minister, Narendra Modi. I was invited to meet the Chief Minister the following day to discuss the evolving trends of the social media. I was then a law student at Pune. This phone call proved to be a turning point in my life and provided an opportunity to learn about election

communication strategy. The historical interaction with Modi for 20 minutes still lingers in my mind like a dream. I worked for the Gujarat Assembly Elections 2012 and later got involved in different elections to assist the BJP in different capacities thereafter. The 2012 Gujarat Election Campaign was a landmark in the history of Indian Elections. We integrated all the technology tools like internet, social media, mobile phones, smart phones, 3D Rallies, etc. to connect with people.

What were the strategies planned by your team during 2014 General Elections?

In January 2014, Congress MP & Former Union Minister, Mani Shankar Aiyar mocked the then Gujarat Chief Minister Modi as a *Chaiwala*. Our CAG Team (Campaign Team that worked for Narendra Modi during the run-up for the Lok Sabha Elections 2014) immediately sprang into action and coined a political event, "*Chai pe Charcha*" (Discussion over Tea) throughout the country. As someone who had organised dozens of *Chai pe Charcha* events across the country it was a totally new and refreshing experience, interacting with *chaiwalas* (Those who prepare and serve tea at tea stalls) all over the country, live and through video conferences. We were able to capitalise on Modi being a *Chaiwala* earlier in his life. While the ground activity was executed by the party workers, the idea to conduct such catchy events came from our strategy team.

The importance of the social media is largely underestimated. We normally believe that Face book, Twitter & WhatsApp influence only a particular age group of people. In reality, the impact of the word-of-mouth campaign spreading through these social media platforms is very huge. One WhatsApp user has the potential to spread the message he receives across an entire village.

Do the senior political leaders and workers accept a team of youngsters?

Political leaders who have toiled at ground level for over three to four decades, do not tend to easily accept the newly sprung up election techno strategists overnight. It takes time for them to come into an understanding that the political landscape in India is slowly turning towards a strategy-based activity. These political leaders still do not accept the evolution and adaptation of technology as influential factors in electioneering.

Since I had studied law from a premier law school in Pune, I was fortunate to have friends from different political parties studying with me in my college. I had opportunities to interact with strategists from various political parties like the Congress, the Nationalist Congress Party, the Shiv Sena and other small parties

during the run up of the Lok Sabha Elections 2014 and the Maharashtra Assembly Elections 2014. Presently, I am also interacting with the strategists for the Assam, Kerala and West Bengal Elections 2016. Everywhere, I find a similar experience cutting across the party lines among the new groups of young techno strategists facing difficulty in being accepted by the old political guards. The seniors in the parties just cannot accept fresh youngsters as potential strategists for the elections. While their worries are totally justified, the recent elections have proven that fresh political techno strategists can walk the talk and give a tough contention to conventional political experts.

In one of the state elections where my friends were associated, the local political leadership had a tough time to amend their ways. This compelled the central leadership to come down to the state for two days, camp there and convince the local political set up that these techno strategists were present only for a temporary period till the elections were over. Till such time this assurance was given by the central leadership, this young group of people were treated like bitter rivals. The existing senior leaders feel unsecured. At the same time, I also find that some of the pro-active senior leaders encourage the youngsters by supplementing the knowledge with their own experience and wisdom.

What are the skills needed to become a political techno strategist?

Anyone who wants to become a Election Techno Strategist should have exceptional skills in using technology tools, and smartness to convert every challenge into an opportunity. The Indian political situation is not yet matured like that of the western countries. It needs immense patience and perseverance by youngsters to get into the political setup and become a real strategist and influence the political decisions of the party. With my experience I can boldly say that it is definitely not a cake walk. Ambitious youngsters aspiring to become a politician should behave in a matured manner, if they take the role of a strategist. Exhibiting the political ambitions openly during their role as strategist will prove disastrous and counter-productive.

What is the difference between corporate campaigning and political campaigning?

Political campaign is time-based and sprouts suddenly during the election time. Corporate campaigning needs continuous engagement with stake holders through various agencies and PR mechanisms. While corporate campaigning is well established in India, political campaigning will take some more years to stabilise.

To cite an example, when our team was working for BJP in the Maharashtra Assembly Elections 2015, we formed a Campaign Team Y4D (Youth for Development). Through this team, we strategised a series of events and meetings to reach the voters. In Pune, hundreds of volunteers wearing the Modi Mask thronged the streets with printed charge sheets on the misgovernance of the state ruling party. Using proper strategies, BJP won the toughest seats. After assuming office as Chief Minister, Devendra Fadnavis invited the entire team for dinner. In the corporate campaigning, the strategy is different.

What is the difference in strategies between national elections and regional assembly elections?

I worked for BJP in the 2014 Lok Sabha Election and four Assembly Elections. The national elections have a broad perspective, while regional elections are localised. People are smart enough to differentiate between them. BJP which won 7 out of 7 seats in Delhi in the 2014 Lok Sabha Elections, could win only 3 out of 70 assembly seats in the elections held after 8 months. In Bihar, where BJP had won majority during the Lok Sabha Elections failed to form the Government, largely because of the unification of two rival factors, RJD and JDU.

Content-wise, the strategy team will have to create contents on regional issues and they have to be delivered through the communication channels of the party. Regional issues should be the talking point and research has to be done locally. Also, linguistic problems arise at every stage both in National and Regional Elections. Four big states viz. Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Assam that are going for Assembly elections in 2016 have strong

local languages – Malayalam, Tamil, Bengali and Assamese. National Parties like BJP and Congress are handicapped as they deploy their own Strategists who are not well versed with the local language and culture. Therefore, from my experience, I would say both the elections are completely different and the approach should be unique.

What do you think is the future for the Political Techno Strategic Communication experts? What is the trend among the Indian political parties, both at the national and regional level?

India has very few national parties. Congress and BJP have already started to realise the need for proper strategies. As for regional parties, we saw AAP in Delhi & JDU in Bihar hiring professional agencies to handle their campaign strategies. DMK and a few other regional parties in Tamil Nadu seem to have roped in Techno Strategy teams to handle their Social Media and PR assignments in the run-up of the 2016 Elections.

'Political Techno Strategic Communication' is still a grey area; I do not see much scope for aspirants now, unless they have the right connections politically and a proper understanding of the political landscape and culture of the region. It is a difficult area to even risk and venture upon. Those who achieve success in this field will be sure to be successful everywhere. There is no institute or University to teach Strategy. At the end of the day, everything comes down to the individual's capacity to deal with complex situations with a variety of factors, at the shortest time.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0116.pdf (Jan 2016)

Case Study - Gujarat Elections 2012

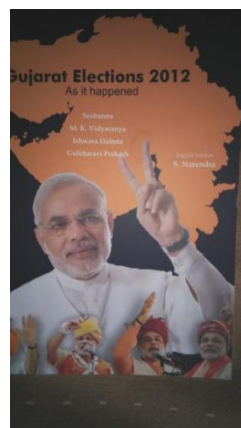
**An Extract from 'Gujarat Election 2012'
by Sheshachandrika and other Reporters –
English Translation by S Narendra**

3D Rhetoric Magic

The 2012 Gujarat Assembly election campaign witnessed the full unfurling of the power of the digital media by the then chief minister, Narendra Modi. He personally addressed nearly 200 rallies in a short span of time. His team used the video technology for every rally held by Modi to live telecast to multiple places simultaneously, using large television screens. Thousands of people accompanied by their families including children would be present at the site and witness the rally from the multiple TV screens and listen to Modi's speeches.

Many in the audience were given Modi masks to wear. This new campaign strategy used in conjunction with the traditional mask brought the leader closer to the people. And many of the rally speeches were covered live on the social media. Every attack and criticism by the opposition was carefully tracked and assessed for suitable and effective counter response. This lock, stock and barrel adoption of the new media technologies and adapting them to the Indian situation by combining them with traditional media was something unique. The media dubbed Narendra Modi's election communication as 3D campaign.

With the expansion of the visual media and the access of mobile computer-aided devices by the rural and urban audiences, for



sourcing information on the go, people are able to obtain information in capsules. Gone are the days of leisurely-timed campaigns of the bygone era. Modi's campaign managers were quick to seize the opportunity of this voters' transformation and customised their campaigns to take Modi and his message where the voters were.

Editor's Note: Many of the elements of Narendra Modi's technology-led Assembly Election campaign were deployed during the 2014 Lok Sabha Election. This book was published by few journalists in February 2013 in Kannada language. Shri S Narendra, Former Information Advisor to Prime Ministers translated into English. Shri Narendra was the Chief Spokesman of the Government of India and Director General of Press Information Bureau. Limited copies of this book were distributed then. This book is not available in the market. Shri Narendra shared the above piece from his personal file.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0116.pdf (Jan 2016)

Is Social Media the 'Game Changer' For Indian General Elections 2019?

by Prime Point Srinivasan, Publisher and Mg. Editor, PreSense

Indians experienced the impact of the social media in elections' campaigning for the first time in 2014. Many technology tools were used then. The voters who were used to the traditional style, experienced a different kind of campaigning which was run through internet tools. The then BJP party candidate and Prime Minister-designate, Narendra Modi used these tools effectively. In 2016, the social media was utilised in full swing during the US Presidential Elections.



Growth of Social Media

Internet tools are used in elections' campaigning across the world since 2012. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and WhatsApp are mainly used in India for political communications. The penetration of the mobile phones in India over the past five years, and the availability of internet data at very low cost, has increased its use in political communication and in a highly competitive manner by political parties.

Between 2014 and 2019, mobile subscribers have gone up by 32% and internet subscribers have gone up by nearly 12 times. The entry of Jio as service provider has revolutionised data usage by smartphone users.

Category	No. of Mobiles in millions		Tele-density for Mobiles in %	
	Jan 2014	Jan 2019	Jan 2014	Jan 2019
Urban	529	654	139	157
Rural	364	528	42	59
Total	893	1182	72	90
Internet	42	522		

Source: TRAI website

Social media users have gone up from 125 million in 2014 to 360 million in 2019, with a three-fold increase. This has created more challenges for political parties. The social media remains both a boon and a bane for the political parties.

“The early movers in the social media have gained a lot. Their early gain in the social media is still there but it is fast eroding with others playing quick catch-up, especially in the rural constituencies. Newer tools and micro segmentation analytics that can precisely predict user clusters/user behaviour, using AI (Artificial Intelligence) and Deep Learning technologies are now being used”, says Srinivasan Venkatraghavan, social media data expert.

Political Parties in Social Media

Currently, all political parties at the national and regional levels, are using social media tools extensively for their political communication.

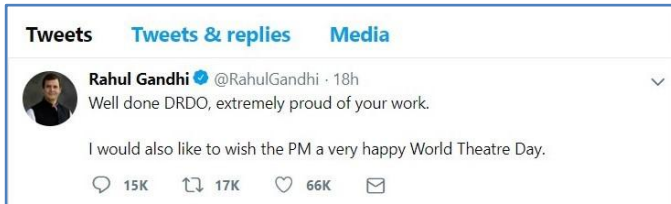


Prime Minister Narendra Modi has more followings in the social media than frontline Opposition leader, Rahul

Gandhi. Interestingly, during March 2019, Rahul Gandhi’s tweets were more re-tweeted than those of Narendra Modi.

On 27th March 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the achievement of DRDO scientists in ‘Mission Shakti’. Both Narendra

Modi and Rahul Gandhi tweeted on this issue. Narendra Modi's tweet had more re-tweets than that of Rahul Gandhi.



These social media engagements are also taken up by mainline media like the television and

the print media. Therefore, the views from the social media are discussed outside the social media too.

Almost all the parties are using WhatsApp groups to communicate their messages and instructions to their last mile workers. They also use WhatsApp groups to transmit their messages to potential voters.

According to the Election Commission data, 25 million new voters were added in 2014 and 45 million in 2019. The total number of voters in India is around 900 million. The new voters, particularly from the younger age group, should not be taken for granted.

Traditional and Social Media Campaigns

Two questions emerge while considering the type of campaigning to use to reach potential voters:

- whether the social media communication could influence voters to vote in favour of the candidates, and
- whether the young voters who spend more time on social media, would actually go to the polling booths to cast their votes, since the campaigning style itself has changed over the past five years, due to the emergence of the social media.

Interestingly, during the 2014 and 2016 elections, Jayalalitha in Tamil Nadu did not bother about the social media, to the extent that even the party's website was not updated. She resorted to traditional campaigning, by personally reaching out to the people. Even though the other parties used the social media extensively for

their campaigning, Jayalalitha and her party swept the polls. According to Bhanu Gomes, a political analyst, the social media does not add much to the existing charisma of mass leaders. The social media is only complementary for them.

Opinions are divided when assessing whether young voters would go to polling booths for voting on election day. According to many party workers who work at the ground level, only very few of the youngsters in the past who had shared their strong views on social media platforms, had actually gone to the polling booths to vote. With the Election Commission currently on an aggressive campaign mode for 100% polling, it is expected that many more youngsters will go to the polling booths on the election day to cast their votes.

It is the opinion of almost everyone who was asked, that the social media would have some impact in influencing potential voters. When the engagements of the social media are picked up by the mainline media, they assume greater significance. Those topics are picked up for discussion and debate by the mainline media, and are also discussed by the people.

“The uneducated voter may not be influenced by the social media, as he goes by various other parameters to vote for a candidate”, says Ranganathan, digital media consultant.

Social Media		
Twitter - followers	46.6 M	9.1 M
Facebook - followers	45.0 M	2.0 M
Instagram - followers	19.6 M	0.6 M
Twitter – Average retweets *	5.8 K	9.0 K

* Average for the last 25 tweets in Mar 2019

According to C H Sekhar, Ex-MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly), who contested the elections three times before, there is an increase

in the impact of the social media in influencing the voters. “In my view, about 10-15% of the voters can be influenced by the social media. There are fence sitters in every constituency. They may not be unduly influenced by a single message. They will compare and analyse fully before voting. However, the social media will also help them in taking a decision. The trending in the social media about a week before the polling date, can influence greatly”, he added.

Dr Y S Rajan, eminent scientist and co-author of the book, *India 2020* with Dr Abdul Kalam, says that the middle-class and the lower middle-class people take the elections seriously. The social media reflects the mood of the middle-class. The people of the upper middle class do not take the elections seriously. It is doubtful how many of them go to polling booths. Information not carried by mainline media, is usually circulated in the social media.

Many political leaders agree that the campaign model has changed. K T Raghavan, a senior leader of a national party agrees that political parties have to depend on social media to reach out to their party workers and voters, due to the restrictions imposed on wall posters and street meetings. He agrees that the penetration of the social media is more than what it was in 2014, and that political parties do face the challenge of converting this into votes.

Generally, the voters decide their votes, based on the political party rather than the candidate. Around 10-15% of the fence sitters may vote according to their last-minute perception, influenced either by the party or the candidate. These would be the deciding votes. Everybody agrees that the social media can influence this segment of fence sitters to take their decision.

Challenges

Even though the social media helps political parties to run their campaigns to reach their target audience, it also poses great challenges to the parties.

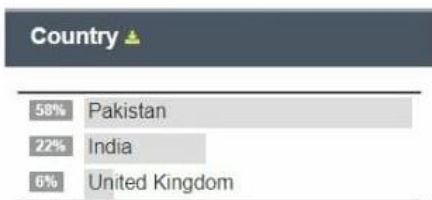
“Innumerable fake news generating agencies have come up. They spread YouTube videos out of context. Fake news, misinformation, disinformation and malinformation (malicious information) are

already playing a major role in communication, in the run-up to this year's elections. Emotional messages are transmitted. Even rural people view WhatsApp messages, which are transmitted in the local languages", says C J Singh, Strategic Communication Consultant from Chandigarh.

Many political workers and supporters have started circulating fake news and memes to malign their opponents, without realising that they could boomerang on them too. WhatsApp groups are flooded with fake news. They run the risk of influencing the people to take decisions, based on misinformation or incorrect messages received by them.



In the recent years, memes have become popular in the social media. Meme creators use text, image and video to convey political messages in a humorous way. "Entertainment-oriented humorous memes in regional languages are used by political workers to attack their rivals. People enjoy memes. Memes can create crisis situations for even senior leaders", says Sridhar Raj, President of Next Gen Political Leaders Forum (NGPL).



It is also reported that some foreign countries are interfering in the election campaigning, using the social media to create confusion in

India during its run-up for elections. On 1st March 2019, some opposition parties at Chennai campaigned against Narendra Modi with a global trending of *#GoBackModi*. According to Ranganathan, social media trend analyst, nearly 58% of the tweets originated in Pakistan and 6% in UK, much to the shock of the opposition parties, which had initiated this trending. Strangely, Chennai which started the campaign had only 4%. According to Ranganathan, such trending might not impact much as they are short-lived. However, when the trending is carried through the mainline media, it reaches a larger section of the people.

Wrap Up

According to many experts, General Elections 2019 can show around a 5% swing in the voting pattern, due to social media. Every 1% swing makes a difference for the candidates. As the social media does not have any regulator at present, fake news will continue to pose greater challenges to the political parties and its candidates. Even though the Election Commission is taking active steps to regulate social media advertising, it would be difficult to totally eradicate/prevent fake news, misinformation, disinformation and malinformation. This throws more responsibility on the citizens and social media users. Every citizen should ensure that wrong information is not circulated in the social media, which can destroy the credibility of the genuine candidates. Mainline media should take efforts to create awareness among the people for responsible use of the social media, instead of looking for sensational news.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0319.pdf(March 2019)

Emergence of New Age Political Consultancies – Are Political Parties Getting Corporatised?

by Prime Point Srinivasan, Publisher and Managing Editor

In the recent elections in India, we have seen major political parties and candidates engaging professional consultants to manage their elections. Rulers and potential rulers seeking advice from experts, is not a new phenomenon in India.

Political Strategies by Internal Team

Even in *Mahabharata*, Lord Krishna functioned more like a political advisor to the *Pandavas*, and Sakuni for the *Kauravas*. In ancient India, every king had wise ministers to advise him on political strategies. During the freedom struggle, Pandit Nehru, Rajaji, Sardar Patel and many others planned strategies with Mahatma Gandhi. From ancient times, the people who provided strategies were from the team, and not outsiders.

Even in the post-Independence era, till 15 years ago, leaders of the various national and regional political parties worked out political and poll strategies on their own and they were highly successful. They never hired people to advise political or poll strategies. "Great leaders like Vajpayee, Advani, India Gandhi, and many others, worked out their political and election strategies on their own with the help of their internal leaders and workers," says, R Nurullah, a senior political journalist with 40 years of standing.

Leaders Lack Connectivity with Party Workers

"The present-day leaders of big political parties do not have connectivity with their cadre and they do not get any feedback on the aspirations and feelings of the people and hence, they have to depend on outsiders for obtaining feedback and planning strategies. A new class of 'political leaders' has emerged in the recent years, and they function like corporate leaders. Unlike the earlier era, where top leaders were easily accessible to party workers, nowadays, it is difficult for any party worker to meet the leaders and give feedback. Since most of the leaders nowadays function only from their air-conditioned chambers, their connectivity with the

people and the party workers is lost, so that they need a third person to give them the feedback”, says N K Premachandran, fourth term Member of Parliament (MP) from Kerala State, representing the political party, RSP.

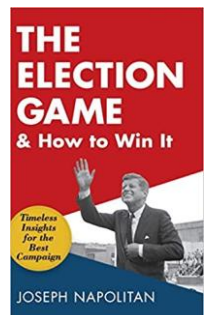
Agreeing with the above views, one of the poll strategists, who prefers to remain anonymous, says that in the earlier era, party workers were able to freely converse with their top leaders without fear. Presently, due to sycophancy, party workers and second level leaders do not share the correct feedback with their top leaders. He confirms that all major political parties are engaging outside professional consultants to undertake surveys and to work out poll strategies.

Global Scenario

Political strategists have been in existence since the advent of electoral politics, mainly in the USA, and later in India. However, these strategists were part of an internal team of a political party and not independent advisors.

The first organised political campaign can be traced back to 1896 with businessman turned senator, Marcus Alonzo Hannasuccessfully undertaking a campaign for William McKinley, the 25th President of the USA. As a corporate entity, Campaigns Inc., a consulting firm by Whitaker and Baxter in California, is said to be the first political consulting firm to get into the business in 1934.

Joseph Napolitan is said to have coined the word ‘political consultant’ and declared himself a political consultant in the USA. He has done more than 100 campaigns in the USA and other countries. He campaigned for President Kennedy in the 1960 elections. The New York Times newspaper described him in a 1968 profile, as the newest American phenomenon, the professional campaign manager and a pioneering campaign consultant. ‘The Election Game & How to Win It’ authored by Joe Napolitan, is one of the top selling books, despite its high price. This indicates the high



esteem held for the man who helped give birth to the modern political consulting industry.

Many political consultants in the USA work not only for parties, but also for political action committees, which is a unique trend in the USA. Internationally, many parties/leaders from various countries have started engaging political consultants during their poll campaigns.

The Indian Scenario

The 1990-2014 Era

After the economic liberalisation in 1991, the emergence of the television (TV) media changed the campaign strategies. Political parties began owning TV channels to promote their parties. In 1993, Sun TV was started as an entertainment channel with the agenda of promoting the DMK political party. Later on, many more parties started their own channels.

In 1996, the BSP leader, Kanshiram slapped Ashutosh, a reporter with the NDTV news channel, when he was asked some uncomfortable questions. That led to the political parties thinking in terms of engaging professional agencies for handling the media and appointing spokespersons to engage the media.

BJP and Congress began using professional public relation (PR) agencies like Good Relations India and Perfect Relations to handle media relations on their behalf. After 2004, national parties began using professional agencies in the states they were ruling (mostly in the North and the West), for election campaign.

Soon, national parties set up their own internal campaign managers, to professionally handle the campaign. Arun Nehru (Congress) Arun Jaitly (BJP), Narendra Modi (BJP), Pramod Mahajan (BJP) and Jairam Ramesh (Congress) emerged as good campaign managers.

The 2004 General Elections saw the emergence of 'theme-based advertisements'. Technology was used only to a limited extent in the 2004 General Elections. BJP projected Vajpayee as the Prime Minister (PM) candidate. For the first time in the Indian elections, a

candidate was projected as a PM candidate. After 2004, political communication strategists emerged in a small way to support individual leaders at the regional level.

In the 2009 General Elections, both BJP and Congress used technology tools like the social media and SMS/telephone in their campaigns. Advani and Dr Manmohan Singh were projected as PM candidates of BJP and Congress respectively. BJP was the major user of technology tools. BJP lost the elections.



BJP War Room –
Photo Courtesy: DailyMail

Till 2009, there was no concept of 'paid media'. Political parties appointed advertising agencies to plan and place their advertisements. Initially, many leading professional advertising and PR Gurus like Piyush Pandey, Sam Balsara, and Dilip Cherian were involved in advising leaders and running their election campaigns until the new breed of branding, technology, and data science consultants arrived and changed the entire campaign landscape.

Narendra Modi (BJP) used technology tools like social media, 3D hologram, mobile phones, and smart phones in the Gujarat Assembly Elections in 2012.

The 2014 (Post-Modi) Era

Political techno strategies were used in the 2014 General Elections. Professionals like Prashant Kishore supported the BJP campaign. A more professional approach towards the campaign, like survey, big data analytics, and micro-management of the campaign through technology, were used. New technologies like Augmented Reality (QR code) and Virtual Reality (like hologram) were also used. Even in 2019, new generation political consultants engaged by both BJP and Congress, used a mix of traditional and technology strategies.

Bihar's Prashant Kishore (IPAC), Karnataka's Sunil Konagalu, Tamil Nadu's Jhon Arokiasamy (JPG-PAC), Maharashtra's Girish Dhoke (JPG-PAC), and Maharashtra's Tushar Panchal (WarRoom Strategies) have contributed to end-to-end election campaigns for many leaders running for PM's (Prime Minister) and CM's (Chief Minister) offices.

Apart from these well-known consultants, there are numerous others who specialise in exclusive areas such as data science, opinion polls, party and candidate centric surveys, digital campaigns, political events, and voter outreach activations. Many public relations agencies have now started a separate wing for political consultancy.



Indian National Congress War Room – *Photo courtesy: Huffingtonpost*

Role of Political Strategies

Political consultants act as political strategists, brand strategists, and election or poll strategists. This is achieved by planning political narratives, moves and counter moves for leaders and parties, and campaign strategies and events to promote leaders, candidates or causes. They also provide media strategies for traditional and internet media.

Controversies

The Indian political system is engaging external professional consultants for the first time, to manage poll strategies. They conduct surveys, analyse data and suggest names for the selection of candidates. What was hitherto done by the political leaders, is now being done by outsiders. This is causing heartburn for the second level leaders. In many places, they are also protesting against the involvement of consultants.

The parties spend large amounts of money towards consultancy charges. Despite this, the consultants' team cannot work at the ground level. They engage a large number of educated professionals for undertaking surveys, collecting feedback and preparing reports. They have to depend on the party workers for execution of strategies.

Notwithstanding the initial hiccups, the engagement of professional consultants has come to stay in India and it may further improve, according to R Jai Krishna, a media expert from Delhi. According to N K Premachandran, MP, a new class of corporate-styled 'political leaders' is emerging, who may not have direct contact with the people and the party cadre.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1120.pdf (Nov 2020)

Internet and Digital Communication

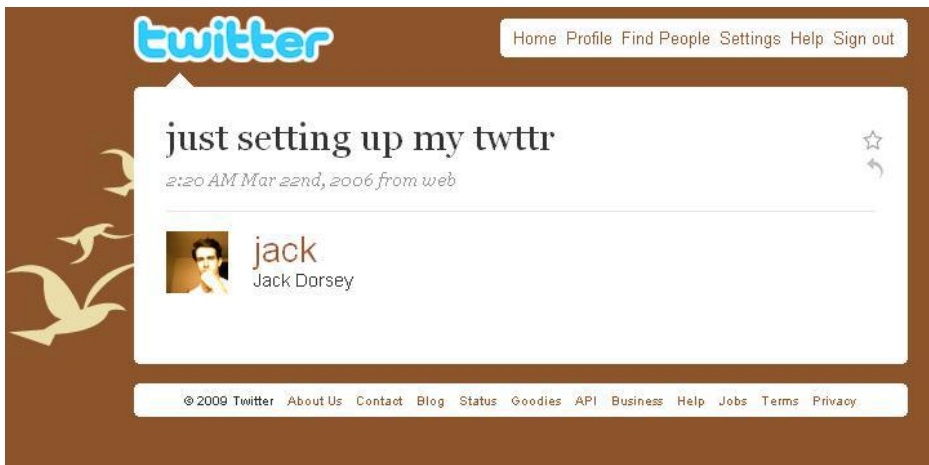
Social Media

Story of Twitter



Twitter began in a "daylong brainstorming session" that was held by board members of the podcasting company Odeo in an attempt to break out of a creative slump. At that meeting Jack

Dorsey introduced the idea of an individual using an SMS service to communicate with a small group, a concept partly inspired by the SMS group messaging service TXTMob.



On 21st March 2006, Jack published his first tweet (see picture). They named this as "twitter", which according to dictionary means "a short burst of inconsequential information," and "chirps from birds." That was the purpose of this tool. Though, originally, it was meant for exchange of short messages in a small group of family or friends, the tool opened up an opportunity of large scale tweets, which could be received by the followers either through internet or through mobile phone. (source: wikipedia)

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0809.pdf (Aug 2009)

2000 years old Twitter

Saint Thiruvalluvar, who lived 2000 years back, has written Thirukkural in Tamil. Thirukkural contains 1330 Kurals (short two lined couplets). Each Kural is written only in 7 words (25 to 40 characters). Every Kural contains management tips and advices for good governance. Though written two thousand years back, it is more relevant even for the present situation. Every week, we are explaining two Kurals to suit the modern day requirement. Please visit the following link:



Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0810.pdf(Aug 2010)

Facebook Historical facts

Facebook is a social networking website that is operated and privately owned by Facebook, Inc. **Mark Zuckerberg** founded Facebook on 4th April 2004 with his college roommates and fellow computer science students

Eduardo Saverin, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes while he was a student at Harvard University. The website's membership was initially limited to Harvard students, but was expanded to other



colleges in the Boston area, the Ivy League, and Stanford University. It later expanded further to include any university student, then high school students, and, finally, to anyone aged 13 and over. The website currently has more than 350 million active users worldwide. See the young founder



Mark Zuckerberg (above)

This is the Screen shot of the home page of Facebook when it was launched in Feb 2004.

At that time, it was in the URL www.thefacebook.com.

Now, the site is available at www.facebook.com

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense1209.pdf (Dec 2009)

Forward Mania Syndrome of WhatsApp Users

Prime Point Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

In the recent days, many of the WhatsApp users are suffering from "Forward mania syndrome". That means whenever they receive any



WhatsApp Menace

message in their whatsapp inbox, (including personal messages), their fingers immediately jump to forward to all their contacts, whether it is relevant or irrelevant. They don't understand that they are causing lot of inconvenience to

others, unknowingly. I request all whatsapp users to avoid sending forwarded images and videos to anyone. These images and videos will get downloaded in the mobile and cause problems to mobile users. Without the knowledge of the sender and unknowingly every day the sender of such messages causes inconvenience to many mobile users. A survey reveals that more than 95% percent of receivers do not even look at the photos and videos. They feel uncomfortable to receive such forwarded images and videos. This is also a wastage of bandwidth.

Everybody can use whatsapp chat or group to send his/her original messages for conversation. If needed they can send YouTube link with proper introduction in the original message. Also do not simply forward the videos, without mentioning about the relevance of such video. You can share this message with everyone who is in the habit of forwarding everything to others.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0617.pdf(June 2017)

Spreading Rumours through WhatsApp and Other Social Media

By V. Rajendran, Editorial Team

Of late, it has become fashionable to post all and sundry information on social networking sites like Facebook and WhatsApp. In a nation with a tech-savvy Prime Minister taking selfies with other dignitaries, and encouraging his visitors to take selfies with him, this selfie mania is quite understandable. But when it comes to posting someone else's picture or a controversial opinion or spreading rumours, or even just information without knowing the genuineness and authenticity of the news, it becomes a serious issue.

For a nation marching ahead in Digital India, e-governance and digital communication, it is a major concern

- i) if the people are not aware of the repercussions of spreading falsehood in a social networking site, or
- ii) if the law is inefficient to curb such menaces, or
- iii) if the police is incapacitated technically or legally to handle such activities.

Earlier, there was a powerful Section 66A in the Information Technology Amendment Act, 2008 that stipulated punishment for sending offensive messages through communication services. It spoke of 'grossly offensive' messages of 'menacing character' and messages transmitted 'for the purpose of causing annoyance', knowing to be false, to deceive or mislead etc. All these expressions were best suited to define an offence of spreading falsehood, cyber stalking or even alarming the public through an electronic communication. Unfortunately, this section was repealed by the Supreme Court in an historic judgement in March 2015.

Spreading rumours and disturbing public peace continues to be a punishable offence, as per the 155-year old time-tested Indian Penal Code and the police still have the powers to book culprits who spread unfounded messages on a public post like Facebook or WhatsApp and cause public disturbance. It is better to think twice about the genuineness of a post in WhatsApp or about its necessity

to be made available in a public domain. Those posting the photos of their private domestic functions should think twice before posting it on Facebook. Would they display their wedding album or the photo album of their domestic function at a railway station, and would they call the people on the street to their house to show them these photographs! Then, why post them in public domains?

Most of the media rejoiced when the Section 66A was removed by the Supreme Court in a misguided comfort that freedom of expression has been protected. The government in an overt move to project itself as a saviour of the freedom of press, did not defend the strength of the Section, and allowed it to die. Now, during the massive rains in the states of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh and in other similar critical situations, when people resort to and spread some unfounded news through WhatsApp, the same media is now concerned that a powerful weapon in the hands of the police has been lost.

On the question of posting some indecent selfies and socially disturbing photos on the networking sites, just as the originator of the news should behave responsibly and desist from posting them, the subsequent users too, who simply forward the mail or the information, should show the responsibility and discretion of a mature netizen.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1115.pdf (Nov 2015)

Bloggers: beware and be aware of Cyber laws!

Mr Na. Vijaya Shankar (popularly known as Naavi) (52) is one of the leading Cyber Law Consultants in India. He is also the Founder of virtual Cyber Law College, He is the author of the first book on Cyber Law, way back in 1999. He is the Co-Founder of Cyber Society of India. In an exclusive conversation with Prime Point Srinivasan of *PR-e-Sense*, Mr Naavi speaks about the Cyber laws affecting the bloggers. Excerpts:



- Anything in electronic space will have the same legal validity as any of the written material (like books, newspapers, etc). It is applicable to blogs, discussion groups, websites, etc.
- Publishing in the electronic space is also like publishing a book or newspaper. Regulations relating to contents which are objectionable in the local laws are also applicable to contents in internet space. It depends on the law of the place where the publisher resides.
- Yahoo website published certain information, which was objected by French Government. Finally, it was resolved by removing the objectionable content from the French language site.
- 'Comments' placed in the blogs is part of the publishing, for which the blog owner is responsible.
- If any employee of an organisation, while blogging, reveals the trade secrets of the company or post the intellectual property information in public domain, he would be committing an offence under relevant provisions.
- There is no 'absolute freedom of expression' anywhere. Bloggers cannot act outside the law of his country. Even in USA, Patriot Act has imposed certain restrictions.
- Bloggers should be cautious about the 'infringement' of Intellectual
- Property laws. Journalists using the contents for comments, anyone using for research purposes, personal use, educational purposes in class room, etc. would be considered as 'fair use' and would not be considered as 'infringement'. In other cases,

the permission of the owner of the content either express or implied needs to be taken. Indian laws consider publishing, distribution and transmission of obscene materials as punishable upto 5 years of imprisonment. According to Indian Penal Code, promotion and advertising of obscene materials is also punishable. Blog owners should avoid even giving hyperlink to such obscene sites.

- Bloggers before posting the message, should analyse the contents
- to avoid violating (1) pornographic laws (2) copy right laws and (3) Trade Secrets Act.
- Prevent posting of anonymous comments in the blogs. The author of such contents should be identifiable, atleast the IP address.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0906.pdf(Sep 2006)

Are Social Networking Sites A Threat to Nation's Security?

By V. Rajendran, Editor



Man is a social animal and is naturally communicative. And we find this nature especially pronounced in a country like India. Indians are generally outspoken, ready to share and care. For this reason, not surprisingly, the social networking sites have always been a big hit in India, possibly growing at a faster pace than anywhere else in the world. Along with its popularity, the social networking medium also runs a high security risk for the user, as no messaging service can be stated to be 100% safe, secure and impenetrable. A service considered secure today could prove to be vulnerable tomorrow. Technology professionals are constantly casting aspersions on the security mechanism available, and are never confident about the fool-proof security strength of any technology.

WhatsApp, in its official website says, *"confidentiality and security are laid down in our DNA"*. It adds that from the very first day it helps *"you stay in touch with your friends, share vital information during a disaster, reunite divorced families....share personal moments ...we have built-in encryption"*. It claims that the photos, videos, calls and documents shared over WhatsApp are protected against unauthorised access. It adds that it does not store the messages on its servers. But the flip side is that this very assurance

raises the concern of governments and investigators, engaged in solving and arresting cyber-crime and combating cyber terrorism.

There are interesting debates about lack of security in social networking sites, especially WhatsApp. In fact, there is a lurking fear as to whether one can eavesdrop on WhatsApp calls (i.e. intercepted and accessed) even though WhatsApp assures that the chats and calls are end-to-end encrypted. This assurance raises the comfort level of WhatsApp users in the sense that even if anyone tries to intercept messages using stealth technology, he would not be able to read (i.e. understand) the message. In technical parlance, it means that any chat message in WhatsApp travels in an encrypted mode, i.e. not in plain text. It can be decoded and understood only with the help of a specific decryption methodology only. The comfort one gets from this assurance is that even if anyone tries to intercept using technology, he would not be able to read (i.e. understand) the message.

On the flip side, however, this privacy of messages (which cannot be intercepted by anyone) can be a major threat to the security of a country. Often, there is criticism that security is breached as terrorists and anti-nationals exploit these private networking media to exchange security-threatening messages and instructions among themselves. Fortunately, there are software tools that can be used for mobile data recovery. These tools can also access WhatsApp data including stored text and pictures, even if they have been 'deleted'.

Of late, there have been many other messenger services emerging, to compete with WhatsApp, such as Telegram, which is gaining popularity. Telegram initially came up with the unique feature of self-deleting the message in the recipient's device too, within a few seconds after the message is sent and received at the other end. Recently, WhatsApp too added this facility of 'delete' or 'revoke' *after* the message has been sent. Although it is touted as a useful tool, it is an added nightmare for cyber-crime investigators because the evidence of messages exchanged between criminals and terrorists could then be destroyed.

And so, the debate continues on the question: "Which is supreme – the priority of the nation's security and sovereignty, OR individual

data privacy”? The judiciary has repeatedly held that the nation’s security is always supreme and of paramount importance, compared to individual privacy and data security. With the Data Privacy Act being discussed for immediate introduction, one hopes that the legislative provisions will be in place, removing ambiguity in the interpretation of what individual privacy is, and what national security and sovereignty is. India, as a nation in its fast-paced progress in the digital world, anxiously awaits.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1117.pdf(Nov 2017)

Regulations for Social Media and OTT Platforms: A Review

***By Prime Point Srinivasan, Publisher & Managing Editor & V
Rajendran, Editor***

Background



The Digital India Programme has now become a movement which has empowered many Indians to use the technology platforms for communication, ecommerce, banking, etc. in a significant manner. According to the Government of India Press Release, the Indian user base of social media platforms like WhatsApp (53 Crore users), YouTube (44.8 crores), Facebook (41 crores), Instagram (21 crores) and Twitter (1.75 crores), is on the increase daily. These social media platforms have enabled common Indians to showcase their creativity, ask questions, be informed and freely share their views, including criticism of the Government and its functionaries.

India is the world's largest open Internet society and the Indian Government has allowed all international social media and Internet companies to operate here, subject to the condition that they have to be accountable to the Indian Constitution and Indian laws. While social media has empowered Indians in many ways, it has also thrown up various challenges like fake news, frequent abuse by

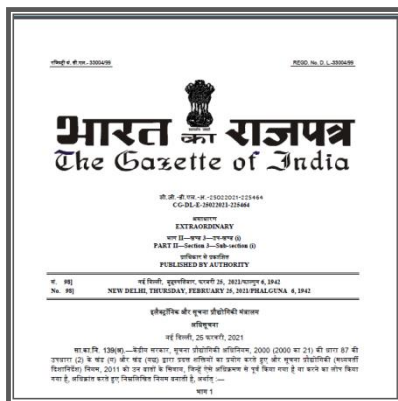
sharing morphed images of women and children, misuse to settle corporate rivalry, use of abusive language, defamatory and obscene contents and blatant disrespect to religious sentiments, etc. Criminals and anti-national elements have started misusing the social media extensively, to generate unwanted emotions and create disturbance in the society.

It was found that currently there is no robust complaint mechanism wherein the ordinary users of social media and OTT platforms can register their complaint and get it redressed within a defined timeline. Lack of transparency and absence of robust grievance redress mechanism have left the users totally dependent on the whims and fancies of social media platforms. Often, it has been seen that a user who has spent his time, energy and money in developing a social media profile, is left with no remedies in case that profile is restricted or removed by the platform without giving any opportunity to be heard. Serious concerns have been expressed in various platforms like Civil Society, Judicial Orders, Parliament, Parliament Committees, etc.

In order to address these issues, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, after various public discussions, on 25th February 2021 issued guidelines known as Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 under Sec 87 of IT act 2000.

The New Guidelines

Diligence to be Followed by Intermediaries: All intermediaries, be they network providers, telecom providers or OTT platforms, or social networking sites, have to comply with the concept of due diligence. Although the concept of due diligence has already been discussed in the original IT Act, it was not clear and was subject to interpretations to be read with other sections of the IT Act. Now, these rules throw more clarity on this.



Grievance Redress Mechanism is an altogether new feature now. All intermediaries are now mandated to have grievance redress mechanism in place, and resolve user complaints. Right now, there are thousands of users of social networking sites like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter, who have faced some form of victimisation in such platforms, like their account getting hacked and misused, with the victims not knowing the procedure to lodge a complaint. These rules address this issue.

Ensuring Online Safety and Dignity of Users, especially Women Users: Intermediaries shall remove or disable access within 24 hours of receipt of complaints of contents that expose the private areas of individuals, show such individuals in full or partial nudity or in sexual act or is in the nature of impersonation including morphed images etc. Such a complaint can be filed either by the individual or by any other person on his/her behalf.

Categories of Social Media

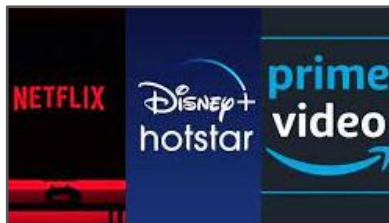
Social media intermediaries are now categorised into two types viz. (1) social media intermediaries and (2) significant social media intermediaries. Depending upon the volume of usage, the Government will fix a threshold and classify what is to be brought under 'significant social media'. Presumably, giant intermediaries such as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp will come under this. The significant social media intermediaries will have to comply with some additional rules like having a Chief Compliance Officer responsible for ensuring compliance with the Act and Rules, a Nodal Contact Person for 24x7 coordination and a Resident Grievance Officer. All these three should be residents of India with their contact details clearly publicised. The Government has now mandated this by these rules.

In the case of OTT platforms, there is a self-classification system of categorising the OTT content (films, short films, feature films or any story) as suitable for those under 7, or 13, or 13 plus age, or 17, and finally the adult content. There are three levels of regulatory mechanisms: (i) a self-regulatory mechanism (ii) self-regulation by a body of publishers (something like the Press Council of India for the print media) and (iii) oversight mechanism, to be formulated by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

The Legal Battle

Some online media news portals have filed a case in the Supreme Court. They argue, *inter alia*, that the IT Rules, 2021 go far beyond the remit of the parent Act and seek to regulate digital news media by imposing a 'Code of Ethics', with all manner of stipulations as 'half-truths', 'good taste', 'decency' etc., and vest the power of interference ultimately with the Central Government as the chief regulator, at the highest of three tiers. They contend that the Central Government has framed these rules under section 87 of the IT Act (*ie.* the rule-making powers of the Government, to carry out the provisions of the Act) and since these portals are not intermediaries, nor are these the provisions or objective of the Act, these rules cannot be framed under this Act in this manner. They add that these rules travel beyond the terms of the IT Act, which is limited to 'intermediaries' or 'agency of the Government', and that too on grounds relating to security interests of the State.

The rules now provide for tracking the originator of the message or newsfeed with the objective that any legally objectionable news can be traced and be blocked by the OTT platform and the creator may be punished, as may be required as per law. During the course of the legal proceedings, an affidavit was filed by Dr V Kamakoti, a senior professor from IIT-Madras and a member of the Prime Minister's Scientific Advisory Committee, on the question of traceability of messages to the originator. It was stated in the affidavit that such traceability is possible by adding an originator information with each message, which will be displayed during the decryption. Services like WhatsApp, which vociferously claim 'end-to-end encryption', raise objection to such a technology and scenario. Now, WhatsApp, Signal, Telegram and others assert that they may have to cope with the issue of breaking the privacy of end-to-end encryption and tracking the originator. The Supreme Court is currently adjudicating on the issue of how the intermediaries can trace the originators of a message shared on their respective platforms.



In the entire discussion on this subject, a distinction is being sought between original content and curated content, justifiably, to fix the responsibility of the stake holders. Curating a content means finding such a content that will suit your audience catering to their likes and tastes, and which is not created by you. Netflix, Amazon Prime, etc come in this category, where they air feature films, short films and such videos, like distributors or theatre owners of feature films. From the guidelines or control perspective, such firms only air the films, not owning the responsibility for the content in such films. If it were a feature film to be released in theatres, there is the Film Censor Board which certifies it before release in cinema houses. In this case, there is no such certification. On the other hand, media news houses or WhatsApp groups and any social networking groups create the content and air the news. Thus, they are the 'owners' or 'creators' of the posts and hence are undeniably responsible. Information security professionals argue that controls should naturally be applicable for both these categories viz. the curative contents and the normal contents like WhatsApp posts and newsfeeds.

Atul Kumar Tiwari, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) reportedly said, "*OTT (Over-The-Top video streaming industry) is a strange animal but our self-regulation model will only apply to curated content on streaming platforms (like Netflix, Amazon, Hotstar and others) while user-generated content and social media would be the reserve of the IT Ministry*". Subsequently on 9th November 2020, the President of India issued a notification under Article 77(3) of the Constitution, amending the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961 which granted MIB the power to regulate online news platforms and OTT platforms.

Clarification by Government

The Government has clarified that it respected freedom of expression and is committed to it. It only wants accountability for the social networking media and the firms which have a huge user-base running into crores in India, like Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter

etc. The Central Government has made it clear that if they want to do business here, they will have to abide by the laws of the land.

It has been repeatedly asserted, including in many Supreme Court judgments, that freedom of expression is not an unfettered one and is always subject to reasonable restrictions. Viewed in that context, these rules are a significant step in that direction.

We are not sure how effective the implementation is going to be, and how much legal hurdles these rules would face in the days to come, besides the technological issues. As expected, there are protests that these rules are draconian and are an onslaught into the freedom of expression. Besides the technological difficulties envisaged in tracing the originator, there are also objections on the legal technicalities of these rules, that the IT Act was mainly passed with the objective of recognising electronic records, and passing such kind of rules does not come under the purview of the IT Act.

All these points are to be debated in the apex court. Perhaps in the arguments that come up during the trial, much more clarity may emerge and the Supreme Court in all its wisdom, may interpret and pass the verdict with the larger interests of the nation, in its avowed commitment to protect the sovereignty, and try to bring in some control in the otherwise uncontrolled beast called the 'Internet'.

Observation by Supreme Court

On 25th February 2021, while passing orders in a different case, Hon'ble Supreme Court had mentioned about these Rules, as follows:

Quote

A perusal of the Rules indicate that the Rules are more and more in the form of guidelines and have no effective mechanism for either screening or taking appropriate action for those who violate the guidelines.

Unquote

For this remark, Mr. Tushar Mehta, the learned Solicitor General submitted that the Government shall consider and take appropriate

steps for regulation or legislation as may be found fit by the Government, and the same shall be placed before the Court.

Conclusion

After all, every industry, society, entity or set-up needs some kind of monitoring or control and the government cannot be expected to be a mute spectator if any arm of governance and administration including of course, the media, is misused to destabilise the sovereignty, cultural fabric or the social harmony in the nation. Inefficiency in administration is not a virtue, and a government has to be capable even if it is not 'good' to everyone!

Those who oppose these rules should also keep in mind that in the name of 'freedom of speech and expression', they should not get protection for the wrong persons, leaving the genuine helpless citizens to suffer. A day before his retirement, Chief Justice of India, Sharad Bobde in an exclusive interview, observed, "*Freedom of speech is the most abused right at present.*"

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0421.pdf (April 2021)

Ban Online Gambling and Related Advertisements to Save Youth

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Publisher & Mg. Editor and V Rajendran, Editor

Youth commits suicide after losing Rs 15 lakh in online gambling game in Mancherial

Roja Mayabrahma
Hans News Service | 12 July 2020 9:24 AM IST

HIGHLIGHTS

A 24-year-old youngster committed suicide after he lost Rs 15 lakh to the fraudsters in an online gambling game Dafabet.

Chennai: 20-year-old student ends life after losing savings in online gambling; suicide note recovered

Crime

Mirror Now Digital
Updated: Jul 20, 2020 | 12:55 IST

ANDHRA PRADESH

Gambling addiction on the rise among youth

Rajulapudi Srinivas

VIJAYAWADA, JUNE 21, 2020 23:01 IST
UPDATED: JUNE 21, 2020 23:01 IST

Man, 28, loses money in online rummy, ends life

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: The city police are investigating the death of a 28-year-old man who hanged himself in Sembium allegedly after losing money while playing rummy online.

The deceased was identified as M Kumaresan. A native of Adhanur in Villupuram district, he was working in the city as a collection agent for a private bank.

His roommates found him hanging around 11pm on Tuesday night. Personnel from Sembium police station rushed to the scene and took Kumaresan to the Government Stanley Hospital, where he was declared 'brought dead'.

Preliminary investigations revealed that the deceased was addicted to online gambling and would stay awake till early hours of the day playing rummy.

His family members told investigators that he never sent any money home. His monthly salary was about Rs 18,000 and he had borrowed Rs 1 lakh from his father recently which he lost while gambling. Sembium police have registered a case and are investigating, police said.

Shocking recent media reports

The recent shocking reports in the media about the suicide of many youngsters after losing money in online gambling is highly disturbing. The unregulated screaming advertisements on television and other online media inviting people to play rummy add more serious concern. It is reported that many youngsters have become addicted to internet gambling.

Gambling in India is governed by The Public Gaming Act of 1867, The Madras Police Act of 1888 and the Tamil Nadu Gaming Act of 1930 in the state. Gambling is listed in the List II of the Seventh Schedule of Indian Constitution and the States are empowered to enact laws to regulate gambling. Goa, Sikkim and Nagaland have permitted gambling online and offline. In the majority of the other

States, gambling is permitted in specific places which are called 'Gaming Houses', after taking permission from the authorities concerned.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court has permitted gaming activities like rummy with stakes, which has been described as a game with "preponderance of skill over chance". When these cases were decided, online gambling was not prevalent. Today, a situation has arisen where online gambling has become popular but has neither been specifically prohibited nor permitted. A grey area exists which needs to be addressed expeditiously. In the online Rummy gambling, a person uses the internet to play the game. Cards are dealt virtually and the player does not know whether he plays with a machine or a real human being. Any fraud committed in the physical domain can be detected, but any fraud committed in the virtual domain is almost impossible to detect. Every game could be a 'fixed match'. 'Match fixing' is illegal in India.

Our ancient scriptures like Rig Veda and Mahabharata describe the evils of gambling. In Arthashastra, Chanakya has laid down some stringent conditions for operating Gaming Houses. If there was any violation, the gaming house owner and players were penalised heavily.

All card games, lotteries, IPL betting, commodity trading by unrecognised exchanges, currency trading by unauthorised people are freely available online in India.

Some of the major challenges arising out of online gambling:

- Unlimited losses will ruin the family of the player.
- It will lead to a rise in crimes on the streets.
- Most of the money gets transferred outside India through the hawala channel. Technical manipulations seem to be taking place to circumvent the Money Laundering Act by the game operators. It is also reported that the money is used for drug trafficking and terrorism activities.
- Already people are addicted to the internet. Gambling is more addictive. These two reinforce each other. This will lead the player to pick up other addictions like drugs and alcohol.

- It is also reported that several gaming sites use crypto currencies as a medium of transaction and this will damage the nation's economy, because of unregulated currency flow.
- Through TV and online advertisements, children and housewives are targeted and encouraged to play.
- Personal information is taken, mostly in an unauthorised manner, by the game operator and he uses this information to profile the player and to sell the data to others.

PreSense appeals to the Government of India to immediately address this issue without delay and consider the following suggestions:

- To pass laws to ban or at least regulate such online gaming/gambling websites and permit only restricted access to identified persons (KYC regulated) with strict surveillance over the transactions, limiting betting amounts and monitoring operation of such sites;
- To sensitise the public on the dangers of gambling on the same lines and issue statutory warnings in a similar manner as is done for tobacco users;
- To put in place strict guidelines like antecedent verification, player admission screening, profiling etc before granting admission and creating and maintaining databases of such people after granting access; and
- To consider putting in place rules and guidelines for such practitioners including possible issue of licenses to practice the profession.

Shri S N Ravichandran, a Cyber Security Expert and Social Worker from Coimbatore has filed Public Interest Litigation in the Madras High Court seeking the intervention of the Hon'ble High Court to address the issues urgently. The Court has taken up the case for hearing and issued notices to all concerned.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1020.pdf (Oct 2020)

Email facility

Origin of email

In 1965, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) was the first to demonstrate the use of the first email system, known as MAILBOX. This was before internet work came into existence and therefore, this system was used to send messages to different users on the same computer.



In 1971, Ray Tomlinson, a former MITian, was working on TENEX operating system for BBN technologies as an ARPANET contractor. While using a local email program called SNDMSG, Tomlinson created the first email application when he patched a program called CPYNET to the existing SNDMSG. This introduced the capability to copy files through a network and Ray notified his colleagues by sending them the first email. It's said that the first message sent by Ray was 'QWERTYUIOP', which is formed by the entire first row

characters of a standard keyboard. Mr Tomlinson sent this historic message to himself from one machine to another sometime in October 1971. (see picture below)

The history of email addresses can also be attributed to Tomlinson. He chose the '@' symbol to provide an addressing standard in the form of "user@host", which is in use till date. This is why Tomlinson is called the 'father of email' and is credited with its invention.



This is the room from where Mr Tomlinson sent the first email message from one computer to the other. Photo courtesy: <http://tenex.opost.com/>

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0111.pdf(Jan 2011)

Netiquette – While sending bulk mails

1. While sending common mail or invitation to many people, do not give out the email ids of your contacts in the 'To' column. This may lead to misuse of email ids for spamming.
2. Use 'mass mailer software' for sending bulk mails, so that the recipients will not know the mail ids of others. Or use BCC facility.
3. Even when you receive such mails with lot of email ids under 'To' column, please do not send private replies to all. Respond only to the sender. Take care while clicking 'Reply to all'.
4. If you are a member of un-moderated discussion groups, do not send personal mails to the group. While responding to such mails, do not respond to all, unless it is relevant. Otherwise, respond only to the author.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0509.pdf(May 2009)

Do you need 'email' for success?



A Jobless man applied for the position of "office boy" at a leading software company. The HR manager interviewed him then watched him cleaning the floor as a test. "You are employed" he said.

"Give me your e-mail address and I'll send you the application to fill in, as well as date when you may start. The man replied "But I don't have a computer, neither an email". "I'm sorry", said the HR manager. If you don't have an email, that means you do not exist. And who doesn't exist, cannot have the job."

The man left with no hope at all. He didn't know what to do, with only \$10 in his pocket. He then decided to go to the supermarket and buy a 10Kg tomato crate. He then sold the tomatoes in a door to door round. In less than two hours, he succeeded to double his capital. He repeated the operation three times, and returned home with \$60. The man realized that he can survive by this way, and started to go every day earlier, and return late. Thus, his money doubled or tripled every day. Shortly, he bought a cart, then a truck, and then he had his own fleet of delivery vehicles.

Five years later, the man is one of the biggest food retailers in the US. He started to plan his family's future, and decided to have a life insurance. He called an insurance broker, and chose a protection plan. When the conversation was concluded the broker asked him his email. The man replied, "I don't have an email." The broker answered curiously, "You don't have an email, and yet have succeeded to build an empire. Can you imagine what you could have been if you had an e mail?!!

"The man thought for a while and replied, "Yes, I'd be an office boy at a software company!"

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense0606.pdf(June 2006)

Podcasts

More awareness needed about podcast amongst corporates

By Prime Point Srinivasan. Editor in Chief

Podcasting, an exciting and revolutionary alternate medium is sweeping across the globe. Many of the Corporates in USA, UK have started using Podcasts for promoting their brand image and positioning their products and services.

In the developing countries, there is a lack of awareness about this new media amongst the Corporates. The events like PodWorks at Chennai need to be organised at different places. IPRS, Singapore has also taken the initiative in creating awareness about this new media. Corporates need to understand that the usage of audio and video podcasts regularly would enhance the image both internally and externally. Already some of the multinational companies have started using audio and video podcasts for marketing their products. Some companies in India also use Podcasting for internal communication, effectively. Podcasting is never a replacement for other traditional communication channels. This will function as a 'formidable ally' to the other channels. PR Agencies and Advertisement Agencies need to understand this powerful medium and effectively use this medium for their clients.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0607.pdf (June 2007)

Few tips to conduct interviews

By Chinmayee, Playback singer

- Don't interrupt when the subject (interviewee) is speaking
- Listen with genuine interest. Non-verbal communication, communicates faster.
- When you pose a question to the subject, allow him to answer. Any further question arising out of the answer, may be quickly noted down and ask him after he finishes the answer.
- As far as possible reduce 'umms', 'aahs' and other audible affirmations when the subject is speaking.
- When you are speaking to the subject, pause between the lines. Make sure that intonations and pronunciations are correct.
- If your conversation is in English, polish your language. Ensure that 'Mother tongue influence' (MTI) is not present in your language.
- Do some research on the person who is being interviewed. Ask questions which are of interest to him (like sports, family). This will make the subject more comfortable create interest in him to speak to you.
- Maintain eye contact. But do not 'stare'
- Show genuine interest in the subject who is going to be interviewed. Even if you hate the subject, think of his contribution for what he is today. Everybody has a role to play and we need to respect each other.



Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0607.pdf(June 2007)

Know about Podcasts

Why Podcast?

- Widely accepted Marketing Communication tool
- Flexibility and convenience.
- Can be produced in any language
- Cost effective
- Users can listen at their convenience at any time (even while traveling)
- Supported by RSS, Atom feed for efficient distribution

What Corporates can communicate through podcast?

- News updates – Corporate performance, financial information, etc
- Information about Products/Services
- Media Releases
- Training materials for employees

Seven steps in production of podcasts

1. Prepare the Plan
2. Prepare the script for contents
3. Recording of audio, video, images
4. Editing of audio and mixing
5. Upload to the Podcast server
6. Distribute using syndicated feed
7. Promote your Podcast

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0607.pdf(June 2007)

Websites

Look for web consultants and not designers

R. Kiron Kasbekar (56), is a well-known name in the media industry. He has served as Editor of *The Economic Times*, Bombay; Business Editor of *The Times of India*; and Managing Editor of *Business India*. He involved himself in media design and database/software development since 1980s. And today, Kiron Kasbekar runs the country's premier web consultancy company, The Information Company Private Limited (TIC). The company has designed and maintains the websites of industrial conglomerates like www.tata.com, (ranked by *Business Today* magazine as best website) www.adityabirla.com. www.murugappa.com and many other corporate websites.

In an exclusive interview with Mr Sakthi Prasanna, of **PR-e-Sense**, Mr Kiron Kasbekar spoke about the importance of corporate websites and the designing aspects. Excerpts:

Q: Why is a website important for Indian corporates?

A : A corporate website is like a permanent ad campaign and exhibition for a company available to people across the world round the clock and every day of the year. In this sense, a website is more important than a major advertising campaign. Companies that have invested well in websites and other online activities have reaped huge benefits from them, including wider reach for the corporate image and product marketing messages, market feedback, improved customer relationships, and reduced costs.

Q: How should a company select its website designer?

A: Companies should be looking for website consultants, not website designers. That is comparable with companies seeking top-rated advertising agencies instead of photographers or illustrators. A good website design is the culmination of the formulation of an online communication strategy, creating appropriate information architecture, working out a good content plan, creating a visual design that is in line with these things, and developing the right

software to make the website effective. A vendor must have competencies in all these areas – business/communication strategy, editorial expertise, visual design expertise and skills (which require much more than an ability to use graphics software), and good software experience and skills. Most vendors do not have this combination of competencies.

Q: Do you think Indian corporate are not willing to spend money on designing a good website? If yes, why?

A: I agree. It is penny-wise, pound-foolish attitude. Even big companies, entrust the website design to persons who know only html and graphics. Designing a good website requires strategic thinking and communication expertise well as a deep understanding of the internet as a medium. A website so needs strong editorial skills to ensure quality.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0706.pdf(July 2006)

How effective 'contact us' details in the websites? A survey

In order to find out as to how quickly the companies respond to the enquiries submitted through the website forms or email ids available in 'contact us' page, the Editorial Team sent enquires to 15 leading Corporates. We requested them to inform us the USP of their site. We could get immediate response (within 24 hours) only from **two companies viz. IBM (India) and WIPRO. PR-e-Sense** places on record the appreciations to Varsha (IBM) and Sanjeeth (WIPRO) for the quick response.

When we wrote to one of the leading Private Sector Banks enquiring the URL of their corporate Group website covering all their Banking, Insurance, Mutual Fund and other business, (through the contact form), we received a prompt reply as follows :

Quote

Greetings from xxxx Bank!

**We will be unable to provide you
the requested details.**

Thank you for writing to us.

Regards,

xxxxxxxxxxxx

Customer Service Officer

Xxxxxx Bank Limited

Unquote

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0606.pdf (June 2006)

Tips for effective websites

By Subir Ghosh, Editor, Newswatch India

- **Design:** Avoid flashy stuff. The pun is very much there. Flash animations are most exasperating. Those look good all right, but
- don't add much value to the site. Keep such stuff for yuppie end consumers.
- **All press releases** should be archived properly. If these are archived under a Press Room section, all the better. Do not lay too much stress on "XXX in the news". Most people are not interested in that.
- **Contact details** should be in a proper hierarchical order, if possible. The visitor should know who to contact for what. Be transparent: give both phone numbers as well as email addresses.
- **Who should handle?** The corpcomm professionals any day. The techie's job is to make the website. Period. Don't ever ask a techie's opinion about site features. Rather, hire a usability professional to ascertain whether your site is usable or not. If possible, take three different opinions. Ensure that the site navigation system makes life easy for the visitor, and not the other way round.
- **Keep a downloads section.** Your company logos (in cdr/gif/jpg/tif formats), brochures (pdf preferably), annual reports (pdf/html/doc) must all be available there. I was only handling an invite to an event which was being co-sponsored by a big hotel. I needed the logo in CDR format, but the people in Delhi were of no use. I finally got it from the parent company's website (based in the US)
- **Have a dedicated person** for the website. Don't rely on the webmaster. Webmasters have their own opinions about what a site should be, and those might not augur well for your company.



Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0706.pdf (July 2006)

Web Usability

By HR Mohan, Associate VP (Systems), The Hindu, Chennai

Web Usability



The Web has become the window to the corporate houses and having a good corporate website is a must in this Internet Age. While the current web technologies provide excellent attractive / interactive features, a simple but usable website will be of more value to the users.

The users visit websites to seek information which is accurate, authentic and current. The features, which the users desire would include consistent and easier navigation, simple search, fast loading pages, meaningful and relevant content, contact details for further information. A site presented with the information architecture design principles in mind will be highly productive, usable and enhance the user experiences.

The users tend to avoid sites which have distracting features like heavy and flashy images, multiple frames, drop-down and interactive menus, the need to use the plug-ins to access the information. In essence, the KISS principle *Keep It Short and Simple* applies to websites too. As the Net is being used by people of all age group (kids to elderly), people of different cultural & educational background and different skill levels of accessibility & disability problems, designing a good website to meet the expectations of all is a great challenge.

The feedback from the users is a valuable input that every webmaster should look for in constantly improving the site and thereby the user experiences.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0706.pdf (July 2006)

Website Visibility

By T Balamurugan, IT Consultant, Coimbatore



The success of your corporate website is measured by number of visitors accessing your web pages. Having a knowledge management system (articles, whitepapers, discussion forums, Mailing lists etc) available for public access related to the product/services you deal with in your website will highly improve your website visibility in Internet.

Another one important thing to do is creating website that are search engine friendly and search engine conscious, This will highly help in showing what you want to show and hiding what you do not want to show while searched for information through any search engine (Google, Altavista, Yahoo etc)

Website Maintenance

Whatever created needs a level of maintenance and up gradation. Technologies in Internet get outdated/updated in a very faster pace. Virtual / Shared hosting and dedicated server hosting purchased from service providers require comparatively very less maintenance work as compared to in-house hosting solution

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0706.pdf(July 2006)

Booking Domain Name for a Company



The head of a popular organisation in India, one day found that the domain name of his organisation was registered with some other person, who was handling its website management. A few months earlier, the head of the organisation had requested that web designer to book a domain name like *www.mydomain.com* and paid the charges. The web designer instead of booking the domain name in the name of the organisation, booked it in his name. When the head of the organisation requested the web designer to change the registration in the name of the organisation, he was reluctant to oblige. Since the domain, including the user ID and the password of the booking, is in the name of the web designer, the organisation has to depend on the web designer always.

As per the international guidelines of The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), anybody can book the domain name with any extension, barring a few names. The commercial and non-commercial organisations run the risk of their full name or short name being used for domain name booking by any third person, on payment of the required charges. Here are a few tips for secure registration of the domain name, without the risk of being misused.

1. Select your domain name, like 'mydomain'. This name should be short, reflect your organisation and should be easily remembered.

2. Go to any domain booking registrar like Godaddy, Networksolution, Register, etc. Search for your domain name. If it is available, create an account with them with your full name, organisation, postal address, contact numbers, etc. Then you can book your domain name online, paying the required charges through credit card.

3. Every domain name has three contact details viz. Registrant, Admin and Tech. Ensure that the name of your organisation is given as the contact detail for all the three contact categories. Even if you are advising the web designer to book your domain, advise him to book it only in the name of the organisation or the real owner, to avoid any future complications.

4. Once the domain name is booked in the name of the organisation, the web designer will need to visit the control panel of the domain name only when he has to change the DNS Settings or the Name Server Settings. The annual renewal charges can be paid online, when you receive the alert from the registrar.



parked whitehouse.com site

5. Keep the user ID and the password of Domain Registrar safely and do not share them with others. Using the same user ID, you can book any number of additional domains.

6. To ensure against any misuse of the name of your organisation in the future, you can register several domain names with different connotations like *mydomain.com*, *mydomain.net*, *mydomain.org*, *mydomain.in*, *mydomain.co.in*, etc. All the domains can be pointed towards your main site. If yours are a popular company or organisation, and if you are holding only one domain name *mydomain.com*, another person can book a domain name

mydomain.in and could create trouble for you. This kind of activity is called 'cyber-squatting'. Since cyber-squatting has not yet been categorised as an offence under the cyber law, the responsibility of protecting the domain name vests with the genuine owners.

Interestingly, *whitehouse.com* is not with the American Government. It was used as a porn site earlier and now they have parked the site without content. *Whitehouse.gov* is the official site of the President of India. There are instances where several leading Indian organisations do not own domain names with other extensions. Such organisations run the great risk of mischief makers who might purchase these domain names, causing embarrassment.

After reading this article, please visit *who.is* and get the registration details of your personal and official domain names. If there are any discrepancies, you can rectify them immediately and safeguard the interest of your organisation and yourself.

Web designers have no moral or legal authority to book domains in their name on behalf of the organisation when you have asked him to book on your behalf.

V Rajendran, Editorial Team

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0316.pdf (March 2016)

How to rate Websites?

Evaluation of some sites – A study

A team of experts along with Editorial team, under the guidance of Mr M M Selvakumar, a senior web Consultant at Chennai evaluated some of the websites of leading companies on the following parameters:

Website Design (10 Marks) : Look & Feel of the website, fonts, Colours, formatting, Usage of animation, Image size – optimization – alt tags

Services/Products/Events (10 Marks) : Product Updating Product ,description/ Information, Product Enquiry and contact information, Product Grievance, About us section (Board of Directors –must) Career

Web Usability (10 Marks): Easy Navigation & Accessibility, Search Engine Popularity, Website name popularity, link popularity, Site map Avoid Intros

Investor Section (10 Marks): Investor News(like Board Meeting), Financial. Results (Yearly & Quarterly), Share Information – Share Values & Share History, BSE Registration Code, how to invest in the company

Media (10 Marks): Media Release, pictures of Executives and Logos, Ads, Contact Details, Contact Person, Media Reports, Quick Response

We are publishing our review for six of such sites in this issue. 5 Star denotes 'Excellent Rating', 4 Star - 'Very Good'; 3 star - 'Good'; 2 star –Average; and single star – Poor

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0706.pdf(July 2006)

Wiki Basics - What is Wiki?

A Wiki is an openly editable set of pages that allows any user to edit content through a simple browser. A Wiki is a piece of server software that allows users to freely create and edit Web page content using any Web browser. Wiki supports hyperlinks and has a simple text syntax for creating new pages and crosslinks between internal pages on the fly.

In a layman's words

Imagine a public park with a wall set aside for mural artists. Anyone could show up at any time and start painting, adding to existing images, filling blank space, or whitewashing as much as they like. A Wiki is an analogous public space, but it's on the web.

Technical meaning

A Wiki is a special type of website that allows the visitors themselves to easily add, remove, and otherwise edit and change available content. It is a set of web pages editable by anyone. No knowledge of computer programming is needed. Nor is it necessary to access a web server to upload pages. Every page in a Wiki can be amended, edited, or even deleted by anyone with a web browser.

The term Wiki also can refer to the collaborative software itself (Wiki engine) that facilitates the operation of such a website or to certain specific Wiki sites, including the computer science site (the original Wiki) WikiWikiWeb and on-line encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia. A Wiki enables documents to be written very collaboratively in a simple markup language using a web browser. A single page in a Wiki is referred to as a "Wiki page", while the entire body of pages, which are usually highly interconnected via hyperlinks, is "the Wiki"; in effect, a Wiki is actually a very simple, easy-to-use user-maintained database for searching or even creating information.

History behind Wiki

It all started when a renowned person named Ward Cunningham started developing WikiWikiWeb in 1994 and installed it on Internet domain c2.com on March 25, 1995. It was named by Cunningham, who remembered a Honolulu International Airport counter employee telling him to take the so called "Wiki Wiki" Chance RT-52 shuttle bus line that runs between the airport's terminals According to Cunningham, "I chose wiki-wiki as an alliterative substitute for 'quick' and thereby avoided naming this stuff quick-web." "Wiki Wiki" is a reduplication of "wiki", a Hawaiian language word for fast. WikiWikiWeb was the first of such software to be called a wiki. The word wiki is a shorter form of wiki wiki (weekie, weekie). The word is sometimes interpreted as the backronym for "what I know is", which describes the knowledge contribution, storage, and the exchange function. According to Cunningham, the idea of 'Wiki' can be traced back to a HyperCard stack he wrote in the late 1980s. In the late 1990's, wikis were increasingly recognized as a promising way to develop private and public knowledge bases,[citation needed] and this potential inspired the founders of the Nupedia encyclopaedia project, which later became Wikipedia.

Source : www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0207.pdf (Feb 2007)

Online Advertising

What is online Advertising?

Online advertising is a form of advertising, which uses the Internet and WWW in order to communicate its messages to the right target audience. There are various forms of online advertising like search engine result pages, banner ads, rich media (using animation and video), social network advertising, interstitial ad, online classified advertising, advertising networks etc.

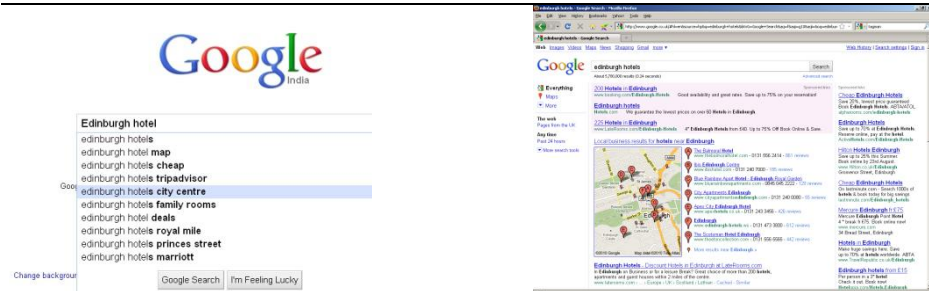
What are advertising networks?

Networks are those companies, which connect advertisers to the websites, which want to host their advertisements online. For example, Google has acquired an ad networks called Double-Click through which their ads are hosted. Many thirdparty networks work with websites for a charge in return for their advertising space.

The most common methods of purchasing online space are CPM, CPA and CPC. Detailed explanation of these revenue models are given below.

One major advantage of online advertising is that it is not limited by geographic regions and can be targeted according to the appropriate audience requirement. The different types of targeting models are:

Contextual targeting – where display/graphic/text-only ads are webcast based on a keyword search conducted by the user. For e.g. If one searches for Edinburgh Hotels, they would be targeted with hotel offers and packages in and around Edinburgh, alternatively, on Google, they would be subjected to the top websites, based on Google ranking, on their search page.



Behavioural Targeting – This kind of targeting is based on user click/browsing history, for example. If a user is known to have searched for automotive web pages, based on their cookie data, they can be re-targeted with an auto related ad even when they are not surfing through an automotive website.

Semantic Advertising – this method semantically (to study the relation between words, signs and symbols) analyses each web page to understand the meaning and purpose of them. This ensures that the ad server only displays advertising, which is suited to the web page. Semantic advertising increases the chance that the viewer will click-thru because only advertising relevant to what they are viewing, and therefore their interests, should be displayed.

The disadvantage of behavioural and contextual advertising in comparison to semantic advertising is that, while semantic checks the entire web page, behavioural and contextual only check keywords. For example, Jaguar as a keyword may mean the animal/the car. Semantic would check other content on the web page to identify the actual product, whereas behavioural/contextual may not.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0810.pdf(Aug 2010)

People read differently when they are online

When online, people read very differently, than when they are reading a book or magazine. On the Internet people try not to read until they find what they are looking for and reach the content they need. Up to that point, they scan, looking for keywords. What does this mean? People do not read introductory text, instruction text, navigation options... almost anything if they can avoid it. This must be taken into account during website design, and content creation. Following are the ways to reduce the problem:

- Reduce the word count of each page (ideally by half)
- Try to remove/minimise instruction text
- Highlight key words
- Use lists/bullet points where possible
- Break up text using clear sub-headings
- Try to start each page/paragraph with the conclusion, so that users can decide whether to read the page/paragraph early
- Use images instead of words where possible

Source: <http://www.webcredible.co.uk>

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0810.pdf(Aug 2010)

GLOSSARY of online advertising

Impressions: The number of times an online ad (any format) has been seen by a user. It is often hard to obtain an accurate impression count as they can be miscounted due to issues relating to cache incomplete requests.

Clicks: The number of click through occurred as a result of a user viewing an online ad (any format) and being re-directed to the advertiser's page.

Click through Rate (CTR): The number of clicks of the online ad (any format) divided by the number of impressions of the online ad (any format).

Cost per thousand (CPM): is one of the online payment models by which advertisers pays for every 1000 impressions of their advertisement. Prices typically range from £1 to over £50 per thousand impressions. This is an ideal method of payment for advertisers who want to guarantee only the number of people who sees their online ad. The "M" in CPM is from the Roman numeral for 1000, "mille" meaning "thousand".

Cost per click (CPC): is one of the online payment models by which advertisers pay for each click through made on their online ad (any format). Prices typically range from £0.01 - £50 per click through. This is an ideal method of payment for advertisers who need to guarantee they only pay for those viewers of the banner that click on it and visit a page on their site.

Cost per action (CPA): is one of the online payment models by which advertisers pay for every action (sale or registration) completed as a result of a visitor clicking on their advertisement. Prices typically range from £0.50 to £50 or if a percentage of a sale 5% to 25%. This is an ideal method of payment for advertisers who want to guarantee only the number of customers generated as a result of an advertisement.

Cost per Lead (CPL): One of the types of CPA, a cost per lead (CPL) method allows advertisers to pay for every lead or customer inquiry that resulted from a visitor who clicked on their

advertisement. Prices typically range from £1 to £6. This is an ideal method of payment for advertisers who want to guarantee only the number of potential customers with an interest generated as a result of an advertisement. Also known as cost per inquiry (CPI).

Rich Media: A type of advertisement technology that often includes richer graphics, audio or video within the advertisement. Unlike static or animated GIF banner advertisements, rich media advertisements often enable users to interact with the banner without leaving the page on which it appears. Some popular types of rich media banners are created with HTML, Shockwave & Flash.

Contextual Advertising: Contextual Advertising is also known as content-targeted advertising, which means that an advertisement is shown on a web site that is "in context" to a company's specific product or service. For e.g. If one searches for Edinburgh Hotels, they would be targeted with hotel offers and packages in and around Edinburgh, alternatively, on Google, they would be subjected to the top websites, based on Google ranking, on their search page. Source: <http://www.adglossary.com/>

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0810.pdf (Aug 2010)

Digital Journalism

Digital Journalists Association of India launched - First of its Kind Initiative in India

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

Digital Journalists Association of India (DiJAI), the recent initiative of your ezine PreSense, was inaugurated on 2nd April 2016 at IIT Madras by Dr Santhosh Babu IAS, Chairman of Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Corporation. The inauguration was followed by a workshop on "Essentials of Digital Journalism". Highlights of the speeches:



Dr Santhosh Babu, IAS - Inaugural Speech

- The digital audience of today want to see latest and up-to-date news and not news that is even a day old. Digital journalists should cater to the needs of smart phone users also.
- Digital journalists should learn to use the 'Big data' to understand human preferences and help make their stories more meaningful.
- Professional ethics should be inculcated as each digital journalist's personal 'Lakshman Rekha'. DiJAI should facilitate this and create awareness.



Dr B Muthukumaran, Technology Expert - "Digital journalism Tools"

- Present day readers are not satisfied with just stories. They demand supporting data too.
- Big data can be used to solve complex problems in digital journalism.
- There are several free tools in the internet that can be effectively used by the digital journalists.
- Drupal and WordPress (both open source) can be used for news sites. Recently, New York Observer migrated from Drupal to WordPress.



- 'Google Translate' Android app can be used to interact with people of different language.

Dr Muthukumaran's Presentation can be downloaded from the link <http://goo.gl/a3soVI>

N Ramesh, Advocate - "Legal Aspects in Digital Journalism"

- The Indian Constitution is the basis for fundamental rights. The Constitution does not provide any special freedom to 'Press'. The rights and duties applicable to all the citizens are applicable to the media too.
- In the case of messages, where intrusion of privacy is involved, all the persons who have shared such messages defaming others are chargeable with civil and criminal liability. However, statements made in the public domain are subject to criticism. Such criticism will not come under defamation.
- 'Hate speech' and 'defamation' have different definitions.
- Many digital media writers do violate several codes. The Government should enact laws to regulate the digital media.



Cyber Simman, Technology Columnist and Senior Journalist - "Ethics in Digital Journalism"

- All journalists, including digital journalists, should be aware of the do's and don'ts.
- Basic ethics have not changed over the years, in spite of all development and progress. They however need to be updated.
- Digital journalists should follow four important fundamentals viz. (1) accuracy and truth, (2) reliability, (3) responsibility and (4) neutrality.
- The fear, concern and debates that are being held today due to the growth of digital media, were present even in 1858 when



the telegram was introduced. It is considered the second revolution in media, the first being the printing technology. The telegram when introduced, was considered 'too fast for the truth'.

DiJAI plans to conduct similar workshops to hone the professional skills and to bring together digital journalists at a global level.

For more details, visit www.dijai.in.

DiJAI can be reached at dijai.india@gmail.com.

Founders of DiJAI (Board of Trustees)

Chairman: Prime Point Srinivasan (Editor in Chief, PreSense)

President: E Perumal alias Bharathi Thamizhan (Online Editor, The Tamil Hindu)

Vice President: R Nurullah (Senior Tamil journalist)

Secretary: Susan Koshy (Editor, PreSense),

Treasurer: V Rajendran (Cyber Advocate and Editorial Team of PreSense),

Trustee: Dr Sudarshan Padmanabhan (Associate Professor, IIT Madras)

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0316.pdf(March 2016)

Indian Media – A Review

Regional Media

Corporates and Regional media to build Nation jointly

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

A recent survey conducted exclusively for this ezine, revealed a large gap between Corporates and Regional language media. Corporates and Regional language media perceive that 'corporate information' is irrelevant to each other's audience. In the past decade, there has been tremendous growth in the language media in terms of circulation and readership. It is estimated that Indian regional language media is larger by five times in circulation and ten times in readership than English media. Due to technological growth, even the rural and semi urban people are able to show interest in latest economic developments.

Unfortunately, majority of the Indian language media has not understood their strength and reorient themselves to the changing needs and expectations of the public. They are yet to come out of their 'traditional' thinking. However, it is quite heartening that some of the leading Media houses have already taken some proactive steps.

On the other side, Corporate Houses, including MNCs have not realised that they are in 'public domain' and their accountability to the entire society. Their information is more relevant to the language speaking public also. The Corporates and MNCs, who have ignored the language media in the normal time, face difficulties, at the time of crisis, when the language media takes up the lead. If the Corporates think that "suit clad Manager" alone can build the company, they are mistaken. They should keep in mind that an 'uneducated dhoti clad villager' can demolish the company overnight.

A time has come that Corporates and Regional language media should understand each other's strength and role in the development of the Nation.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense1106.pdf (Nov 2006)

‘Reader connect’ is the biggest advantage of Regional media

Mr B Srinivasan, Managing Director of Vikatan group of publications, in an exclusive interview with Prime Point Srinivasan of PR-e-Sense, explains the present growing trends of Regional language media and the need for Corporates and language media to understand each other. Vikatan group is the largest publisher of Tamil magazines, Tamil books and Tamil TV serials. They have a circulation of more than one million with readership exceeding 10 million. Excerpts from his interview:

- Regional media is bigger than the English media in terms of circulation by 5 times in circulation and 10 times in readership. While English media is growing in single digit, Regional language media grows in double digit.
- The readers of language media see it as an ‘extension of knowledge base’. Regional media reaches them in an effective manner, in a way, they can understand. Also, there is an effective communication between the readers and the language media.
- Corporates view the language media as low priced, not reaching effectively the audience, and poor quality in printing and paper when compared to English media. In the last decade, Regional media has matured effectively and match with English media in quality of printing, paper and layout. Corporates are yet to warm up to this idea. They are having the feeling that Regional media is still in ‘stone age’.
- Regional media is set to grow at a faster rate. They are insulated against any competition. It is difficult for the foreign media to set up language media.
- Regional language media is weak in presenting its case to Advertising Agencies and to the Corporates.
- Presently, Regional media is capable of carrying the corporate messages more effectively with quality reporting, than English media, when compared to its position 15 years back.

- While English media is important, Corporates cannot ignore language media, because of its growth.
- 'Reader connect' is the biggest single advantage for the languagemedia.
- Regional language media has not understood the power of 'branding' with Corporates. This is the biggest weakness.
- It is not true that Regional media is more skewed to politics and cinema. Now they have understood the need of the readers.
- Journalists, per-se, are skilled in language. They need to be 're-skilled' in niche areas like share market, economy, etc. Regional media has started re-skilling their manpower.
- Corporates should understand the power of Regional media. It is closer to 'hearts and minds' of the people, than English media.

In the Corporate set up, the top Managers understanding only English should not be a handicap for them to understand the power of language media. They should quip themselves with better management techniques, to understand the pulse of the people.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1106.pdf

Quick Survey on Indian Regional language media

A quick survey was conducted by Prime Point Foundation, as part of November 06 issue of Corporate ezine PR-e-Sense. The survey was to get the perspective of PR/CorpComm professionals and the journalists on the 'Indian Regional Media'. A questionnaire was prepared and were uploaded in www.surveymonkey.com site. The information was circulated in the various PR/Media groups, inviting the responses anonymously. 154 respondents across the country participated in this survey.

Conclusions

- Presently, the Regional Media has a larger reach to the grass root level. They also command a credibility amongst the readers. But because of their traditional approach, they are unable to understand importance of Corporates.
- Corporates have not understood the ground reality and do not provide the importance to Regional Media, what it deserves. Corporates are under an 'illusion' that the Regional Media does not reach their relevant audience.
- There is large gap between Corporates and the Regional Media. Both have not understood that jointly they are denying valuable information to the large number of people.

Recommendations

- There is an urgent need for Corporates and Regional Media to understand each other's importance in the growing Indian Economy. Due to technological growth, even the semi urban and rural people are having access to new media and try to utilize the new opportunities. Corporates and Regional Media cannot be 'mute spectators' for this ground reality. They do not have any right to deny the information to the large population of our country.
- Corporates, including MNCs operating in India, should first understand that they are in public domain. Lack of local language knowledge amongst the top management, should not drive them to treat the Regional Media as undeserved. Many such

companies, who have ignored language media at the normal time, have understood their folly at the time of crisis. Corporates should start treating the Regional Media at par with English Media.

- In spite of enormous strength, Regional media has not understood its role fully. They are still living in the illusions of 'pre-liberalisation days. They need to realise their new role in the liberalised economy and facilitate the economic growth in the Semi urban and rural segments, which constitute around 75 percent of India. Only Regional media can take up this task. Hence, they need to reorient themselves to the 'need of the hour' and start taking up the new roles, like few other successful regional media.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1106.pdf (Nov 2006)

Media credibility

Media should maintain the highest credibility

In an email interview with Megha Gupta, Senior Journalist and Guest Editor of this edition. **Mr S Narendra**,



former Information adviser to Indian Prime Ministers and, the Principal Information officer to Government of India shared his insights on the business of media and what newcomers need to know. Excerpts:

Do you believe that the old school, which feels that good journalists are born, still holds value today, or has training become mandatory with changing times and increasing competition?

Unfortunately, the lack of quality training institutions (in this line) strengthens the perception that journalists are born, and it is an inborn gift or aptitude. I hear complaints that even after recruiting so-called 'trained' people, media houses have to re-train them.

What are the qualities of a good media-training programme?

There has to be a mix of education in journalism and skill building training in journalism practice and media management. This perspective is missing in most programmes. Any media education is only a stepping-stone; one needs to build on it with diligent self-learning throughout one's professional career.

In the course of your role as the information adviser to PM and Principal Information Officer to Government of India, you would have interacted with many journalists. Are there any names of outstanding journalists that come to mind?

My interaction was with different levels of media and their practitioners - owners, owner editors, editors, desk journalists, reporters and foreign correspondents. A majority of them have distinguished themselves in the profession and I cannot single out

anyone. Historically, Hornimann of Free Press, Ramarao of Pioneer and Chellapathirao of Pioneer and later National Herald, are famous as fearless editors.

According to you, which qualities distinguish a journalist from his/ her peers and make the person outstanding?

Outstanding journalists have a passion to research facts and gain access to different voices of stakeholders in a story; they report facts honestly without comment in news stories. Media persons are not activists, nor are they partisan but sceptic observers of fleeting moments of history, who write its first draft without bias. They try to gain audience credibility by representing the public voice.

What are some of the trends marking this industry today?

Media economics is continually changing and the profession is adapting to the arrival of new media and a new audience market. Unlike media in developed countries, Indian media is growing at twice the rate of the national GDP. Even print is thriving in India. The same media vehicle is available in multiple platforms print in online, print partnering radio and TV and wire agencies in mobile. This media morphing is exciting and opens doors to anyone who wants to report, wants to be heard or noticed. I see lot more opportunities to any one aspiring to be a media person today, than any other time in human history.

What are some of the challenges facing this profession and consequently journalists?

In India, specialisation in a particular media, in a particular area or subject is lacking. Further, gatekeepers or subeditorial desks that check facts, restrain from libellous comment and invasion of privacy, are disappearing. This robs journalism of its credibility. Media is an institution in which people repose faith and credibility, even now. That should be valued and preserved.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense1109.pdf (Nov 2009)

Activists and media should not cross 'Lakshman Rekha'

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Editor in Chief



It has become the fashion of the day to accuse politicians for each and every thing, including the blockage of water pipe in the wash basin at home. In the recent days, a few of the activists and TV channels shout in the highest pitch, throwing 'mud' on some

of the political leaders of ruling and opposition parties. Media trials are conducted to defame them.

When politicians are accused in such manner, the attacking person immediately gets short term visibility through all national and regional media. This has become the short cut route to become well-known, without any great achievement and effort. Defaming one segment of the society viz politician selectively is fraught with danger. The democracy can function smoothly, only when all the stakeholders like political leaders, media, judiciary, corporate companies, civil society and bureaucracy function with utmost honesty and integrity. The way some of the social activists accuse the politicians selectively may not be in the interest of the nation.

This may lead to the people losing faith in democracy and the constitutional system. For their own reasons, these activists do not talk about the frauds committed by the NGOs, corporate houses and even the civil society. They do not talk about the media houses indulging in 'paid news' and 'advertorial', flouting media ethics for money. They do not talk about the various corporate houses which manage to intervene in the policy decisions of the Government to suit their needs. They do not talk about the legal system where a judge was arrested for taking a bribe to grant bail.

They do not question the sources of funds that some NGOs spend in lakhs and lakhs of rupees for organising protests. They do not talk about the civil society violating many systems for selfish ends. Knowingly or unknowingly, this section of activists and the media are trying to create 'diffidence' among the public, as if they were living in a horrific environment. The reason is that some of the activists want to enter politics with quick visibility and without accountability. The media uses them as a tool to increase their TRP ratings and securing advertisements.

In early 2000, when there was a crisis in Indian Bank, many of the senior officials, including the Chairman of the Bank were arrested by CBI. That created de-motivation in the entire Indian banking system. The officials at various levels were not willing to take even the smallest decisions, fearing police action. The entire banking system came to grinding halt, which affected the economy of this country badly. After much persuasion, the banking system got into the rails after three or four years.

As a common citizen of this country, a few people, for their selfish interest, should not drive the nation to a state of 'indecision' by the bureaucrats and in the political system. One of the well-known communication professionals of Europe recently pointed out to us that the Indian image was getting damaged the world over because of such adverse hype by the negative news when India could also boast of many positive aspects. In the interest of the nation, these activists and media should never cross the 'Lakshman rekha', while accusing anybody. Overdoing anything could be counterproductive.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1012.pdf (Oct 2012)

Confusing Media Priority

By Susan Koshy, Editor

Sheena Murder Mystery vs. GSLV-6 Launch

Last week, leading news headlines at prime time on the mainstream news channels screamed about the high profile and sensational "Sheena Murder" mystery. The other news headlines that followed included the capture of a terrorist, the victory of the Indian cricket team over Sri Lanka in their second test match and finally, just before fading away, came the news of the successful launch of the Geo-synchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) D6 which carried India's latest communication satellite GSAT-6. The "Sheena Murder" story continues to occupy prime time on TV even as we write this article (31st August 2015).



The "Sheena Murder" case then took over most of the main part of the "news in detail". Reporters were sending real-time sound-bytes from different parts of the country where Sheena's family members were

residing. The Sheena murder mystery was the prime-time news in all the main news channels. There were analyses, debates, interviews, and speculations about what could have happened and what could happen. We had panellists who were unconnected with the case, and whose contribution to the debate was by way of mere speculations and inconsiderate character assassination of the suspects.

The satellite-carrying GSLV launched in Sriharikota in the state of Andhra Pradesh in South India, is intended to end India's

dependence on foreign launch vehicles for its own satellites. It was a project that took 10 years and 150 Indian industries which supplied its components – a proud moment for its scientists and the Indian people. Yet it barely managed as brief news in the fag-end of the news prime time.

Independence and Accountability

This brings us to the issue of independence, responsibility and accountability. Our democracy is perceived to be based on four pillars namely the executive, the legislature, the judiciary and the media. Each of these pillars, functions independently but is also accountable.

- The legislature enacts the law and is accountable to the voters when the representative members go to the people during election time. The legislature is also monitored by the judiciary, which has in the past overturned out-of-place decisions passed by the legislature.
- The executive implements the law and is accountable to the legislature and the judiciary.
- The judiciary interprets and upholds the law. The accountability of judiciary is now being debated especially in these days of judicial activism and discussions are underway, for major reforms to make the judiciary accountable to the other pillars and the people.
- In this backdrop, the fourth pillar that is generally accepted in modern India is the media, with its social role as the “conscience keeper”. The other pillars, namely the legislature and the executive, are monitored by the media on behalf of the people. Even judicial functions are debated in media. Currently, the media is unaccountable to anybody. It is only in case of defamation by the media can one turn to the courts for relief. Even then, the judicial process being long and cumbersome, few people turn to the courts for relief. For this very reason, the media must function under a self-governed responsibility.

News Channels

People are mainly exposed to the news that the media feeds them with. Over the years, the electronic media has taken over the print media in reaching current news to the people. It is able to provide real-time news, updated by the minute, through a variety of platforms such as debates, interviews, live coverage and spot sound bytes. News channels bring news to the living room of the common people on a 24/7 basis. The reporters of the news channels vie with one another in the field to be the first to broadcast the latest.

The media plays an important role in bringing true, unbiased and balanced information to the people. However, of late, it seems to have shifted its primary focus to topping Television Rating Points (TRPs). The media has begun building sensationalism into the prime news, or else sensational news became the prime news.

The media's sensationalised coverage of the incidence of rapes in India has damaged the image of our country at the international level. Some countries issued travel advisory to their citizens about travelling to India, as if the country was full of rapists. Statistics show that rapes occur more frequently in many other countries including the developed ones. (<http://www.more.com/news/india-rape-capital-world>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rape_statistics). No doubt, this does not condone the act in India, but what is required is a fair and balanced portrayal of the situation by the media. Indians living in foreign countries face a tough time convincing the local people about the true and fair image about India.

During the recent pandemonium in the Houses of the Parliament, when some of the members disrupted the normal proceedings of the House, the media were up in arms, and rightfully so, pulling up the erring members and demanding that they did their job for which they were elected. Today, the media needs to be pulled up too for the way they have been dealing with news and views.

Survey: 80% People Dissatisfied with Mainstream Media

The media may argue that they are bringing to the people what they want viz. sensational news. This is not necessarily the case as a recent survey revealed. A survey was conducted by a group of individuals from top academic, professional and corporate sectors called The Indian Iris, to gauge the public perception of mainstream media. It was conducted both online (email and Facebook) and offline among over 500 respondents, mostly in the age range of 18-40 years. (<http://www.opindia.com/2015/07/survey>).

The results show that a whopping 80 percent of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction over the quality of today's mainstream media, while 87% felt the media was biased. 70% found the prime time debates chaotic and meaningless while 23% thought the debates were more an entertainment than of any other relevance. When comparing the print media with the electronic media, the former had more loyalists with 22% finding it reliable, as against a meagre 4% for the electronic media. When the survey asked about the respondents' expectations from the future media, most of them wanted **fairness and transparency**.

Therefore, it certainly is high time the media did some introspection on why public trust has eroded to such an extent, going by the survey, and if it needs to re-focus on their primary role and responsibility. It would be a relief if the media could get back on track to doing what they are meant to do – bringing news and views that are true, balanced and unbiased.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0815.pdf (Aug 2015)

Media Should Stop Sensationalising Social Issues and Be 'Change Agents'

By Susan Koshy, Editor

Rohith Vemula commits suicide, apparently in disillusionment and disappointment with his life and his social circle's discrimination against him.....Saranya, Priyanka and Monisha apparently commit suicide over hopelessness and frustration about their college administration and facilities.....17-year-old girl of Jharkhand commits suicide after being denied the facility of a toilet at her home.....Youth commits suicide over failed love affair.

Has suicide become the new buzz word among the youth or are we just getting better informed about these occurrences, because of the hyperactive and sensationalising media? Even though one suspects the latter as the reason, it does not diminish the gravity of the situation. Where youth should reflect life, hope and enthusiasm and thus, solace for the aging generation, this trend of despair among the youth must disturb the nation at large.

Stirring emotions and aggression does little to resolve. Prime-time war of words with people both connected and unconnected with the issue, including passing celebrities, results in much ado with nothing positive or constructive for an outcome. The media, especially the real-time channels that thrive on TRPs for their 24/7 relays, seem to rely on sensationalism to keep them going. They call this 'responsible and investigative reporting for the people of India'. Besides reporting the tragic stories, the media sets up a virtual court martial and demands the resignation of the suspected culprit or coerces him to apologise on live television. The solution is not in an apology or resignation alone, or even in just confronting and cornering the accused at the debate forum on air.

Stirring emotions and aggression does little to resolve. Prime-time war of words with people both connected and unconnected with the issue, including passing celebrities, results in much ado with nothing positive or constructive for an outcome. They only cause riots and futile disruption and then when fatigue sets in, people go back to their lives as before until another tragedy strikes and another one

bites the dust. It is not enough to inform. One needs to inform correctly and productively. To cite an example, in the case of Rohith, the police had clarified after verifying documents that the student was not of the reported community and that his certificate of that specific community was 'procured'. However, this report was ignored and the issue of communalism was fanned during the reporting. Besides, the issue should be that a student resorted to a drastic end, whether he belonged to a particular community or not. A suicide is a suicide, irrespective of who the person is.

In these kinds of social issues, the problem goes beyond the specific case of the victims and the culprits. If the media adorns the role of an investigating and monitoring entity, they need to do more than emoting over sensational news and events. If the media are only change-catalysts and not change-makers, they still need to do a more conscientious job there too.

For example, Rohith and his friends have been facing discriminatory issues for over three months before the tragedy of Rohith's suicide happened. The same holds good in the case of the three girls of the naturopathy college in Tamil Nadu State. The issue to be addressed is the fundamental and underlying issue of discrimination by the authorities, excesses by the colleges, lack of sanitary facilities at the grass root levels. One needs to sustain the tempo till the issue is addressed, and the media plays a key role as the popular medium of communication and influence for the people. What strikes as a matter of utmost concern and worry is the vulnerability of the youth today and their lack of resilience to face their life issues. They seem to buckle without a fight. To quote Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, 'When a problem arises, become the captain of the problem and defeat it!'

The media, including the movies, play a key role in influencing the trend of the youth today. Their corporate social responsibility towards the youth is primary here. They will need to re-think and re-tune their policy, strategy and approach to their job of coverage and reporting and entertaining so as to live up to their assumed role as change catalysts to make India 'Incredible' for the right reasons.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0116.pdf (Jan 2016)

Trends in Media & Journalism: Traditional vs Digital

by Susan Koshy, Editor-in-Chief

In a recent interview held with Dr K Ramachandra Murthy, Senior Journalist, and Ms Sneha Gore, Journalist turned Journalism Educator, the profession of journalism as evolved over the years, was discussed. The seasoned panellists shared their experiences and stories as journalists. We bring you a synopsis of the conversation.



The detailed interview can be watched in the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tAEwwdGwmrk> .

Traditional Working Style

Traditionally, journalism was confined to the print media where the editor of the newspaper personally wrote the editorial, and there was a full-fledged team of reporters who filed news for the daily newspaper, which was released the following morning. Editors remained in the office from late morning till the early hours of the following day to oversee the publication of the newspaper. There was little time for socialising. Journalists of the earlier era were known for their fearlessness in reporting facts. The bold stand and reporting by at least some of the journalists during the Emergency Rule in India is still laudable.

Emerged Working Style

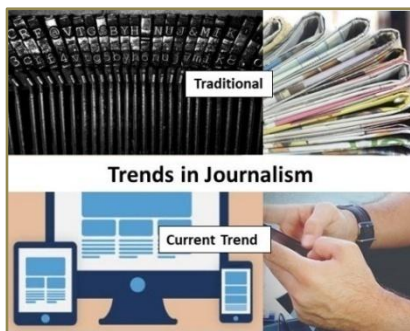
With the emergence of political influence on journalists, the neutrality in reporting was compromised, as journalists and later on even the editors, developed proximity with the politicians. Editorial writers took over the writing of editorials from the editors. The editor's presence in the office was till late evenings, after which

many were found in the company of politicians. The current trend is that media houses are affiliated to political parties, so that news reporting is influenced and biased in their policies and outlook. The quality of writing and reporting took a beating. Media became divided on cash lines and political lines.

Traditional Fact-based Reporting vs Modern Breaking News-based Reporting

The traditional focus on facts over news has also changed to the current trend of news over facts, due to the emphasis on speed reporting. Speed reporting runs the risk of wrong reporting, to be apologised for, later – an unhealthy trend that adversely affects the credibility of the news provider. It also compromises the sacrosanctity of journalism and its discipline. This is a continuing trend as breaking news is mainly from Twitter, from where even the web editions of the print media source most of the breaking news. This compromise on fact-driven journalism to breaking news-driven journalism has necessitated the development of fact-checking training modules, such as the one initiated by Google News. During the traditional era of print media, this aspect of fact-checking was inherent in the profession. This is a trait that the journalists of today need to learn to develop – stand up for what is right and against what is wrong, for the social good. Today, social media heads in news-break, followed by the television, and print media being last in the order.

Who is a Journalist?



The identity of today's journalist has become complex. In the era of the print media, the distinction between the common man and the journalist was clear. The journalist then had access to news first and it was his job to bring it to the common man who could access it from the newspaper, the radio or the television. Today, this distinction between the common man and the

journalist has become unclear, with the democratisation of

information that the Internet has brought about. Any blogger, Facebook user or smartphone user is a potential journalist since he can disseminate information. He can propagate fake news as is happening with Whatsapp. Therefore, any common man is a potential competitor for the journalist. Another matter of concern is how to identify what is news. It has become a challenge for the journalist to navigate along ideological lines about what is news, that is good or worthwhile for society.

Almost every social media user posts individualised viewpoints on a spectrum of topics on such platforms as Twitter and Whatsapp. Journalists too have become biased, reporting viewpoints in place of facts. Journalists are divided based on their political affiliations and not on ideologies. Neutrality is no longer practised. Earlier, news was facts and the editorial was a viewpoint but today, news itself is a viewpoint.

Future of Journalism

Undoubtedly, the future lies with social media. As against the traditional habit of reading one newspaper, today's reader accesses multiple platforms for news, especially from social media.

It is important for the journalist to remember that everyone, including governments and politicians, have both good and not-so-good sides to their behaviour. Not all do all bad, and not all do all good. Therefore, while reporting, it is important for the journalist to have a balanced assessment of what he is reporting in order to report facts and the truth. A journalist's personal opinion should not colour his approach to his profession, and he should not be influenced by bias. This approach of avoiding both the extreme ends of the spectrum while reporting, is a major challenge worldwide.

The Young Journalist

The young professionals in the journalistic arena are a pessimistic lot, mainly because of the kind of content they are exposed to, and consume. These contents are usually skewed and paints the world in colours of bias. These contents are accessed mainly from social media, as print media is almost lost in the midst of social media.

Journalists can safeguard their reputation and their credibility through their balanced and unbiased reporting, adhering to facts and the truth. This is called media ethics.

Etiquette in Journalism

Aggression in journalism is acceptable, provided it is sensible and unbiased. It is commendable for acquiring facts, and pursuing with people to obtain the truth because it facilitates in getting to the crunch of the matter and the truth. However, there is a thin line between aggression and activism. Shouting guest speakers down on televised debates, for example, is far from aggressive journalism. It is poor media etiquette.

Media Policy and Monitoring

While there is a need for a media policy, the question is who will monitor them – the readers, the owners (of the media) or the government. It is difficult to monitor and moderate because of the democracy of social media. It is also important for the media policy to be constantly and regularly updated to accommodate changing trends. For example, the Over-The-Top (OTT) streaming media service has recently been brought under the purview of the media policy, and this move is commendable. However, the media policy was last amended in 1995 when the Act was amended to include the cable TV network. Thereafter, there has been no significant amendment or change to keep in line with the changes that have evolved.

One could conclude that journalism has evolved over the years from a conventional, time-bound, limited-edition circulation of news to an open-sourced, real-time, virtual platform of information, often circulated with views. The current trend of journalism is here to stay and traditional journalists must keep pace with the change to stay afloat in the profession. The current journalists however, have much to learn, imbibe and practise in order to bring some credibility and quality to the form of reporting that is happening today.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense0121.pdf (Jan 2021)

Freedom of speech and fake news

Is Freedom of Expression Absolute?

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Editor-in-Chief

Case Study 1: Charlie Hebdo

On 7th January 2015, the whole world was shaken by the shocking news of the massacre of 17 journalists and cartoonists of Charlie Hebdo, as well as some innocent people, by a group of Islamic terrorists in Paris. The reason was that in 2011, the magazine had carried some objectionable cartoons depicting Prophet Mohammed. It is reported that the magazine had published similar cartoons of icons of other religions, as well. More than three million people including 40 world leaders participated in a march across France to protest against the killings. Journalists and cartoonists debated about “freedom of expression”. There were also counter protest marches in several parts of the world against the magazine, Charlie Hebdo for hurting the sentiments of a religious community.

Charlie Hebdo issue



Case Study 2: A Book in South India

Around the same time in South India, another controversy cropped up. Perumal Murugan, a Tamil writer had published a book, ‘*Mathorubaagan*’ in 2010. In the novel, the author wrote about the childless married women of a particular community in a particular town in the state of Tamil Nadu in South India. He narrated how they used to have clandestine relationships with other men during the temple festival day and bear children thereafter. (Although the

author had named the community and the town in his book, the same is withheld in this article.)

Perumal Murugan issue



When the English translation of the book was released in 2014, the particular community raised protests and demanded the withdrawal of the book from the market. Writers and activists ganged up in defence of the author, claiming 'freedom of expression'. The entire town showed their solidarity against the author, by pulling down their shutters for a day in January 2015. Although the author was defended in the social media as well as in seminars held in the cities, none of the activists had the courage to defend the author in that particular town.

The Government formed a peace committee to address the crisis. The author later apologised for the contents and admitted that he did not possess any documentary evidence to support his claim. All his books were withdrawn from the market. In spite of these steps to resolve the situation, the topic was debated on various TV channels and other media, in their attempt to defend their freedom of expression.

How Far Does One's Liberty Extend?

These two incidents have brought the issue of the freedom of expression to the forefront. Can there be an absolute freedom of expression for anyone in the world? There is a saying in English, "Your liberty to swing your fist ends just where my nose begins".

Does the media, the writers or anyone have the right to absolute freedom of expression because they express their views in public domain? Is there or should there be a restriction?

Double Standards of the Media

Very unfortunately, in India, the media exhibit double standards on such sensitive issues. One of the leading newspapers published 'I am Charlie' posters, with a photograph of marchers in Paris protesting against the killing. After printing nearly 50 percent of the newspapers, the editorial board realised that such photos might hurt the sentiments of a section of a community in India.

The photograph was withdrawn from the remaining issues of the newspaper. An apology was also published to state "Some copies of XXXX (name of the newspaper withheld) dated January 18, 2015, carried an image of people holding copies of the French magazine, Charlie Hebdo, featuring the cover page with the image, which might have offended a section of our readers.

The image was removed mid-way through the print-run. XXXX (name of the paper) regrets and apologises for the inadvertent and accidental use of the image - Editor".

Four days prior to this incident, the same newspaper had concluded their editorial stating, "The rights under the Constitution are designed to protect the freedom of expression of writers like Perumal Murugan who may seek to question uncomfortable truths from the past. It is a pity that a range of forces conspired to silence him".

A few years ago, there was a protest in the media against Salman Rushdie, who wrote some portions in his book that hurt religious sentiments. The same media defended M. F. Hussain, the artist who portrayed a Hindu goddess in what many people regarded as distasteful and disrespectful. They justified it as freedom of expression in art.

'Faith' is always a 'Faith' Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, etc. are called 'faiths'. Billions of people worship their respective gods or their founders. Such allegiance and belief is built and followed only on faith and it is often difficult to rationalise them scientifically. Any writing, picture or speech which portrays these faiths in poor light is

likely to hurt the religious sentiments of these billions of followers. In this scenario, nobody can claim any absolute liberty that risks hurting the feelings of a large number of people. Protesting and defending such actions selectively is also unfair and not in good taste.

The same can be said of the cartoons published by Charlie Hebdo. The Islamic people have the right to decry such cartoons and take suitable legal actions against these publications. Unfortunately, the killing of the cartoonists by the terrorists has diverted the focus from the issue. Charlie Hebdo received the sympathy and support they did not deserve. They cannot claim the publishing of such provocative cartoons as their freedom of expression.

The Indian Constitution and IPC

Article 19(1) of the Indian Constitution provides freedom of speech and expression to all citizens of India. Article 19(2) imposes reasonable restrictions on the same, on grounds of security of the state, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency and morality, contempt of court, defamation, incitement to an offence, and sovereignty and integrity of India. Sections 153A, 153B, and 295-298 of the Indian Penal Code contain the restrictions on the freedom of expression. It also includes the punishment for violation.

Freedom of Expression and Misuse of this Right

We often forget the fine line between freedom and misuse of a right. While freedom of speech gives a person the right to express his opinion, he should not forget his responsibility to respect religious sentiments. The media too should address these issues objectively and fairly. They should not defend or protest selectively. The freedom of any one person should not infringe upon the rights of the society in the name of creativity.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense0116.pdf (Jan 2016)

Snap Survey on the perception of journalists

An online 'snap survey' was conducted for this issue during November 2009, to understand the perceptions of young media professionals. 80 young professionals participated in this study. The survey broadly indicated the following:

About Media Training:

- 80% of the professionals want the traineeship to last six months
- 60% found it difficult to enter good media houses. On further enquiry, it was found that the selection process at top media houses was stringent. Many respondents found themselves grappling with the written test and interview
- There is an all-pervasive need to repair media training

What makes a good journalist?

- Good communication skills (85%), good networking (75%)
- Being ethical was supported by only 45%
- 55% feel journalism today is too commercialised and ad-centric

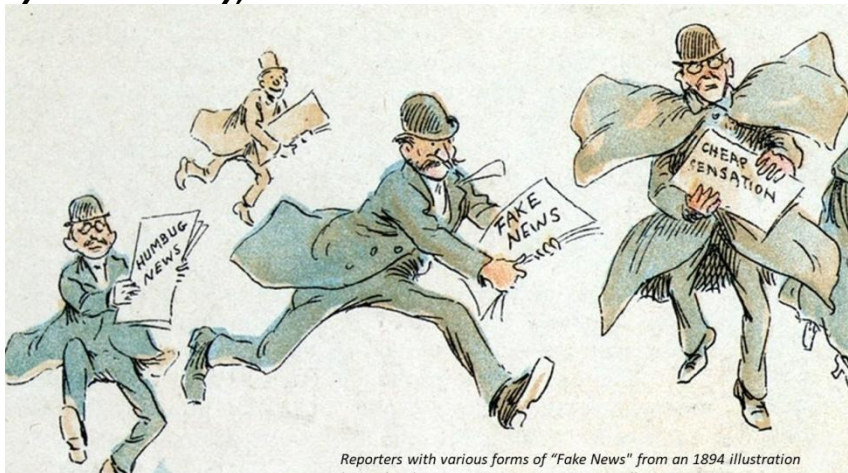
Challenges

- 95% feel mentoring is necessary to become a good journalist. However, close to 50% are not able to find good mentors
- 63% feel that recession has been a blow their journalism career

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0509.pdf(May 2009)

Fake News – At What Cost?

By Susan Koshy, Editor-in-Chief



Reporters with various forms of "Fake News" from an 1894 illustration by Frederick Burr Oppen, American Cartoon Illustrator

The country and the world itself seems to be reeling under the threat of fake news which is making its rounds, often without the consumer's knowledge about the manipulation. What is fake news?

Fake news is deliberately fabricated information, spread through traditional or digital media with the malicious intention to mislead. Fake news differs from incorrect news which is inadvertent. In case of incorrect news, we usually see an immediate corrigendum and an apology. Fake news on the other hand, is distributed with the intention to deliberately mislead and misinform. The intentions are often for profit through increased eyeballs to the sensational news or to malign one's reputation.

Types of Fake News

There are several types of fake news:

- **Satire** is information that is obviously misinterpreted for the amusement of the readers/viewers/listeners. It is the least harmful of fake news as both the consumer as well as the

broadcaster are aware of the intent to amuse rather than to deceive. An example is the stand-up comedy, or the satirical television shows.

- **False connection** is where the accompanying headline or photo does not connect with the main news content. Since headlines capture the curiosity, interest and attention of the consumer, a sensational but incorrect caption for example, drives the consumer to read/view the contents, resulting in more eyeballs.
- **Misleading content** is information reproduced selectively so as to distort the message to suit the agenda of the broadcaster (either to sensationalise or to malign). For example, someone's quote is misinterpreted by the reporter to distort the intent of the quote.
- **False context** is where genuine information is reported in a false context. In a recent incident where some politicians took up a protest by fasting and boycotting a popular cricket match, a mischievous social medium propagated an archived and unrelated photograph of one of the politicians snacking at the cricket stadium.
- **Imposter content** is fake information with its source falsely credited to genuine sources.
- **Manipulative content** is morphed or doctored content, especially photographs, to give false credibility to the fake news.
- **Fabricated news** is 100% deliberately manipulated information, with the absolute intention to deceive and harm.

Threat of Fake News

The risk of fake news circulation and the threat of damage that it can cause is real-time now with the emergence of the digital era. During the 'print media only' era, the publication had almost an entire day to verify and corroborate the information sourced. Today, with information and updates streaming on a 24/7 cycle, verification and authentication is a tough challenge. Besides, with the access of the internet and its technology to the common man, anyone and everyone has become a citizen journalist.

It is interesting that some fake news, especially the imposter content types, have positive objectives. For example, some valuable and wise advice is incorrectly attributed to revered personalities like

Dr Kalam so that they are noticed and possibly imbibed in life for good practice. No doubt, this does not condone the mischief behind the act of propagating fake news.

Dealing with Fake News

Spotting fake news is neither easy nor fool-proof. But there are suggestive ways:

- The source of the news and the author if available is a reliable point for verification of genuineness.
- Using one's discretion and intelligence, one can evaluate the news content.
- Verifying the contents with multiple other sources helps in checking its genuineness.

The society is increasingly aware of the menace and notoriety of fake news. But it is difficult to curb it without compromising on the freedom of expression, a fundamental right in democracy. Speaking to Shri Vinoba Bhoopathy, advocate and spokesperson of the political party, *Pattali Makkal Katchi* (PMK), he referred to Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India which guarantees the right to freedom of speech and expression to all its citizens. "This freedom is one of the fundamental principles in any mature democracy and this includes the freedom of press," he said. "To ensure that this constitutional right is upheld without any bias, it is important that the State or any arm or agency of the State of the country should not have any control over the media. Any compromise in this safeguard would lead to a potential threat of degradation of democracy." Shri Bhoopathy recalled the plight of the Fourth Pillar (the press) during the Emergency Rule in India in the mid-1970s, when the freedom of the press was severely curtailed. The democracy of the country was then at stake.

It was in this backdrop that the media put up a strong objection when a recent circular about fake news, was issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. The circular had stated that in case a journalist was accused of creating or propagating fake news, his accreditation with the Press Information Bureau would be suspended pending an inquiry by regulatory bodies of the media. Severe penalty was spelt out in case of confirmation

of the allegation. This circular was suspected to be a precursor to an Emergency-type curtailment of the freedom of expression, which was subsequently vetoed by the people of India in the elections, by voting against the ruling government.

Article 19(2) of the Constitution of India does provide for “reasonable restrictions on the provisions of Article 19(1)(a)”. It specifies that the freedom spelt out in Article 19(1)(a) is not absolute but puts a limitation on the power of the legislature to restrict the freedom. There is ground for restriction on the freedom of speech and expression in case of any threat to:

- the sovereignty and integrity of India
- security of the State
- friendly relations with foreign nations
- public order
- decency or morality
- contempt of court
- defamation
- incitement to an offence
- sedition

Bhoopathy asserted that in case of propagation of fake news, there is sufficient teeth in legal recourse for redressal and punitive action.

Shri Vinoth Poovalingam, web news portal management expert from New Delhi said that there are fake news detecting software and agencies that can scrutinise the contents for authenticity and genuineness, using ‘Clipbins’ and ‘Rolls’ for tracing and sourcing the news under scrutiny. Similarly, image-processing software can detect morphed and doctored images. Unfortunately, these actions can be used in post-mortem analysis only and not pre-emptively. The results can be used for catching the criminal after the crime,



and also as reference for assessing and evaluating the credibility of the sites and links that had promoted the news. Poovalingam believes that such a system of evaluation through analytical assessment of the media platforms, can help in rating these platforms and websites and media houses in scales of credibility, somewhat like the ISO standards or the CIBIL credit ratings.

Bhoopathy believed that an inherent self-regulatory mechanism is the sustainable solution to this menace. The question is what can motivate the media to adhere to self-regulatory standards. Although transparency in the ownership pattern of the media houses can help in dealing with the big houses that might appear skewed in their views, in most cases of fake news, it is the little known and small media sites that are notorious. It is difficult to keep a track on them or curb them on time.

A senior journalist from New Delhi was of the opinion that fake news in most cases was a point of view that could be in divergence with a popular assumption. He also felt that these were inherent features in a democracy and it was up to the individual to exercise discretion in believing or disbelieving these points of view, sometimes labelled as fake news.

In conclusion, it is pertinent to point out that just as Article 19(1)(a) gives the right of expression to every citizen, including all media, the provisions of Article 19(2) are equally applicable to every citizen including the print, broadcast and internet media. Every citizen – all inclusive – must remember that every right comes with corresponding responsibility.

The Editorial Team of your e-magazine, PreSense has on board a cyber law and cyber security expert to take care of the adherence to the cyber laws applicable to digital journalism, ensuring ethical responsibility. As in any other profession, the journalist – professional or citizen – is bound by the moral and ethical standards demanded of him.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0418.pdf(April 2018)

The Traditional Indian Newspaper Still Preferred

By V Rajendran, Editor

Ancient Indian literature or the Hindu literature is known to have existed in two forms viz *Smriti* and *Shruti* forms, *Smriti* meaning 'which is remembered' and *Shruti* meaning 'which is heard'. The ancient Hindu scriptures, *Vedas* and *Upanishads*, are considered to be originally in *Shruti* format and canonical (sustaining, authentic about its pronunciation and meaning, and ordained to be recited and understood as they are presented). In other words, *Vedas* have been 'verbally documented' and recited by the *guru* to his *Shishyas* (students), who in turn, memorise and chant them. Thus, these scriptures were passed on over centuries and generations. The printed formats of *Vedas* and other related literature followed much later.

The history of printing in the world dates back several centuries, much before the Christian era (BCE), and makes interesting reading. Wooden block seals, pottery imprinting and textile printing were used in many parts of the globe, especially in the Asian countries. Palm-leaf manuscripts used as writing material and dating back to several centuries BCE, are still found in many ancient South Indian villages, especially in the southern parts of Tamil Nadu State, and parts of Nepal too. They contain treasures of information on astrology, astronomy, administration, governance, and many such social subjects, passed down from ancient scholars and sages.



The First Print Medium

Printing in its present format, is an invention of the 15th century. As a tool for news propagation, it is believed that the first printed weekly newspaper called '*Relation*', was published in 1605 in Antwerp in Europe, as a collection of distinguished and mostly positive news. The print media has had a great influence in the political administration of nations, sometimes even instrumental in

the falling of some governments and rising of some parties, resulting in a paradigm shift of public perception.

In India, especially during the Freedom Struggle, the print media and the broadcasting medium (viz. the radio) served as tools to convey the views of the leaders of the Freedom Struggle to the general public. The two factors for the success of the print media were the content (to ensure readership interest) and advertisements (to ensure revenue generation). Increase in readership ensured increase in advertisements.

The Emergence of e-Newspaper

In the digital world and electronic era today, with digital money replacing cash, commerce giving way to e-commerce and all the world going the 'e-way', it is no wonder that print newspapers were facing the threat of closure, with the taking over by e-newspapers and digital journalism. Laptops and mobiles with high speed internet connections are gradually replacing the conventional print media. Today, if someone says that 'sipping a cup of coffee in the morning and reading the newspaper, delivered by the newspaper boy, is the first item in the day's agenda', he would be relegated to an outdated generation. With speedy and easy tools of communication to reach the 'last mile' (the reader), the e-newspaper is now accessible through an app on the reader's mobile. The economic viability and commercial feasibility is another reason why print media is on the wane.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1018.pdf (Oct 2018)

Status of the Newspaper in India

by V.Rajendan, Editor

In India, however, the situation is interestingly different. According to an Indian Readership Survey (IRS) conducted by MRUC (Media Research Users Council) and RSCI (Readership Studies Council of India), vide its Report dated 19th January 2018, new readers of newspaper during 2017, have increased to more than 110 million, almost 40% rise since the last IRS of 2014. The increase is said to be mostly in the rural and urban areas, thanks to increase in literacy in these sectors.



Advertisements in newspapers too are on the rise. The report adds that only 4% readers prefer reading news online. Interestingly, FICCI (The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) has projected a growth rate of around 8% for the print media in India for the next two decades.

It is a welcome trend that books and book fairs continue to draw large crowds in most parts in India. Books are still considered elegant gifts. As a matter of principle, your eMagazine, PreSense and its associated entities are proud to present only books as compliments to its dignitaries and guests at all their events, as against the customary shawl, bouquet or other mementos. Therefore, digital news portals are not yet a threat to the print media in India. Currently, e-newspaper is complementary to the print media, with better visual effects in the form of high-resolution images and video supplements.

For a discerning and conservative readership that India prides itself of, the printed newspaper is still not passé and is still sought after, for its credibility and reading pleasure, even though it is at the cost of speed and instant news....somewhat like experiencing homemade food with its emotional satiety, as against fast food, as a convenient alternative in our lifestyle on the fast track!

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1018.pdf(Oct 2018)

Need for a National Media Policy

by Prime Point Srinivasan, Publisher and Managing Editor

The Indian Constitution provides for the “right to freedom of speech and expression” under Article 19(1)a, subject to reasonable restrictions mentioned in sub clause (2). The Indian Constitution provides this freedom of speech and expression to every citizen equally, which includes all the media.

After the emergence of technology, many people in India have the mistaken notion that the ‘freedom’ given by the Constitution is absolute. This is incorrect. In the past, we have seen some writers, artists and journalists claiming this freedom as “absolute”. Reasonable restrictions are provided for, in the Constitution.

Emergence of the New Media

In the earlier days, we had only the Government-controlled broadcasting media (All India Radio, Doordarshan) and select print media newspapers and magazines. With the development of technology, many more television channels have emerged. 200 television channels with a viewership of 20 million in early 2000 have now grown to 900-plus authorised channels with a viewership of 900 million. This does not include the unaccounted cable channels across the country.

In the past decade, the emergence of internet technology has changed the entire communication model. Today, every person in the world with a mobile device has become a ‘journalist’ and is capable of disseminating information to millions of people. This phenomenon has posed challenges to the governments across the world. Fake news and false information spread quickly, throwing more challenges. Many times, even the mainline media like television and print media carry information generated by the internet media.

Many democratic countries do not yet have an effective regulation mechanism for the media, even though every country has a ‘self-regulatory’ mechanism in place. Countries like Nepal, Norway, the

European Union and Sri Lanka are now moving towards industry-led regulation with statutory powers.

Regulatory Mechanism in India

In India, content and carriage of any media is governed by the Indian Telegraph Act 1885. In the course of 130 years, the Indian Government has made several laws to regulate the print media, cinema, television and internet. All these regulations deal with the technology (platform or carriage) and not the contents. India does not have a statutory regulatory mechanism for delivery of contents, excepting for the print media. There are self-regulatory mechanisms set up by the industry bodies themselves.

The Press Council of India, a statutory body set up by the Government of India, regulates the contents of the print media. It functions only as an advisory body and does not have teeth. Broadcast industry bodies like Indian Broadcasters Foundation, News Broadcasters Association and News Broadcasters Federation have set up their own self-regulating bodies for their members and brought out codes for contents. The Internet and Mobile Association of India is a self-regulating body for “online curated contents”. Media like YouTube and other social media tools are outside the purview of any regulatory mechanism. Nobody has control over the inappropriate contents delivered through such media.

Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI), is a self-regulating body in advertising, ensuring the protection of the interest of consumers. All these self-regulating bodies do not have the statutory powers to punish any erring media. Media experts say that world over such self-regulatory bodies have failed for various reasons. They say that unless these bodies have legally-backed statutory powers, they may not be able to function effectively.

The Inter Ministerial Committee (IMC) set up by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting can examine any complaint against any channel, with the authority to stop the broadcast. The Government of India has set up the Electronic Media Monitoring Centre (EMMC) in 2008. They monitor the contents of all the TV

channels and the radio. No data is available about any action taken by them for any violation.

Present Position of Convergence of Media

Sector/ Year	2017	2018	2019 (Estimate)	2021 (Estimate)	CAGR 2019-2021
Television	660	740	815	955	8.8%
Print	303	306	317	338	3.4%
Filmed Entertainment	156	175	194	236	10.6%
Digital Media	119	169	223	354	28.0%
Animation and VFX	67	79	93	128	17.4%
Live Events	65	75	86	112	14.0%
Online Gaming	30	49	68	120	35.4%
Out of Home Media	34	37	41	49	9.2%
Radio	29	31	34	39	8.0%
Music	13	14	16	19	10.8%
	1476	1675	1887	2350	12%

Note: All figures are gross of taxes (INR in billion) for the respective calendar yearsData courtesy : FICCI

The media and the entertainment industries are the most vibrant industries in India, generating huge revenue and employment opportunities. They are the cultural ambassadors for the country's values and stories for many foreign countries as well. As per the FICCI-EY 2019 report, the Indian media and entertainment sector is pegged to grow to INR2.35 trillion by 2021 (US\$33.6 billion), after witnessing a growth of 13% in 2018 to reach INR1.67 trillion (US\$23.9 billion). As per this study, online gaming and digital media will be growing fast in the coming years in India. How India is going to regulate the content then is to be debated.

Need for an Integrated Authority and Policy

All the professionals in India (except media persons), like advocates, doctors, chartered accountants, cost accountants and

company secretaries have their own legally backed regulatory mechanism operated by their own respective industries. Because of this, these professions are highly respected and they have progressed considerably. We have policies for the telecom, education, banking, and various other segments. It is high time that we think of a Media Policy too that can take the media industry to the next level.

Many senior journalists feel that due to the lack of a proper media policy and regulation, the media industry is suffering in spite of its great potentiality. Many journalists have lost their jobs in the recent days. The media industry should be able to function like any other professional industry with a proper policy and regulation in place.

During the past decade, due to socio political changes, the media industry has migrated from 'Institutions' to 'Individuals'. Besides, many of the rules framed during the British days are not in line with current trends. When we talk about media policy or regulation, it does not mean "censorship" as was implied and implemented during the Emergency. If India needs to protect the 'freedom of speech and expression' provided in the Indian Constitution, the Government has to convert the industry-operated self-regulatory mechanism into legally backed statutory bodies. The mechanism can be operated by the industry itself with more statutory powers to punish the violators. This would help not only to enhance the quality of the contents but also help in the growth of the Industry. India is already the third largest media market in the world, next to USA and China, with high potentiality to grow.

The Government of India can set up a Committee under the chairmanship of a retired Supreme Court judge with experts from different media and fields, to codify the 'draft policy' relating to convergence of platforms, ownership and delivery of contents. The Committee can study the policies framed by other democratic countries. The draft policy can be further debated by the public and industry before adoption.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0719.pdf(July 2019)

When News Reporting Turns Into Reality Shows

by Susan Koshy, Editor-in-Chief

The last weekend was a doleful one for most of the Indian regional news channel viewers especially in the south as they were subjected to the live non-stop coverage of the rescue operation to bring out an infant child caught in the bottom of an 88-foot bore well pit he had slipped into. After an 82-hour ordeal, the mission ended tragically as the rescuers brought out the decomposed remains of the child. The 82-hour ordeal was an extremely stressful and depressing one for the family of the victim, the rescuers, the onlookers both at the site and on the TV screens and for the supervisors and reporters, particularly during *Diwali*.

However, the focus of this editorial is not on the operation or even the accident but the live non-stop coverage for more than 80 hours that almost all the regional news channels did. The channels have apparently capitalised on the emotional strains of the viewers, to keep them glued to the live non-stop coverage – the similar emotional strain with which viewers get glued to soap operas and reality shows.

This is not criticism. This is intense concern about how the media in their attempt to win eyeballs, have turned insensitive and inconsiderate to the people involved, and to the situation. They fail to realise that during the operation, rescuers are working in a tense situation and the media peering over their shoulders is helping little. Instead, their presence is a hindrance to their optimum performance.

The media always attracts more people than necessary. This impedes the operation in process. We observe from previous media live non-stop coverages of crisis situations that people become overtly emotional, aggressively expressive and interfering when they are aware of cameras on the roll. This does not help the rescuers who are already under acute stress to rescue the trapped infant. Then we have parallel panel discussions to discuss, dissect the reasons for the calamity, point random fingers without understanding the ground reality, and to top them all, draw

politicians to ground zero to distract the authorities and rescuers in their work.

While the role of the media in bringing truth and news to the homes of viewers is appreciated, the media should constantly check to see that they do not infringe the lines of privacy or cross over from reporting to bulldozing for the sake of eyeballs. The live non-stop media coverage of the 26/11 terror attacks in Mumbai is an example of how the media unconsciously and unintentionally helped the terrorists in their terror operation by giving real-time updates about what, how and where our uniformed men were stationed and dealing with the crisis.

One is reminded of a 1998 Hollywood movie, *The Truman Show*, where the life of Truman is tracked on television on real-time basis, right from the time he was born till adulthood, infringing his privacy, space, freedom and emotional balance for the sake of bringing home to the viewers a reality show about his life. While the storyline might be fantasy, it does trigger a check about how far we might go for the sake of news, views and TRPs (Television Rating Points).

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1018.pdf (Oct 2019)

Freedom of Speech is Not Absolute

By Priyadharshni Rahul, Deputy Editor

The 17th Edition of the series, 'Dialogue with Experts', organised by your eMagazine PreSense and DiJAI (Digital Journalists of India) under Prime Point Foundation, had Mr Rahul Shyam Bhandari, Advocate on Record, Supreme Court of India, explaining about the often-misconstrued rights under Freedom of Speech and Expression as outlined in the Constitution of India. A report on the topic as discussed by Mr Bhandari, is brought out below.



Freedom of speech and expression, contained in Article 19(1) of the Constitution of India, is the most precious of all fundamental rights guaranteed to every citizen of India. 'Fundamental Rights' represents the basic structure of our Constitution, covered from Article 12 to 35 in Part III of the Constitution of India. Essentially, these rights are conferred to the citizens, and cannot be taken away by any Legislation. The Constitution of India is considered a 'living' document, which has catered to the needs of the citizens from generation to generation.

Article 19 provides 6 fundamental rights, and one amongst them is Article 19(1)(a) – Freedom of Speech and Expression. Undoubtedly, freedom of speech and expression is the mother of all liberties. This right has four broad social purposes to serve, which are:

1. Promotion of rule of self-governance,
2. Discovery of truth,
3. Strengthening the participation process in decision making,
4. Societal tolerance and self-restraint.

Freedom of the press is included within this right itself.

A famous judge of the US Supreme Court, Justice Holmes remarked that "free expression does not mean free thought for those who

would agree with us, but freedom for the thought we hate". This means the value of a dissenting opinion is equally critical for any society. Interestingly, this right also includes the right to silence.

No country across the globe accepts freedom of speech and expression as absolute. Although the 1st Amendment to the US Constitution says that Congress shall make no law abridging freedom of speech and expression, and there are no specified restrictions like in India, in practice, the right is not absolute even there and from time to time, the Courts have been applying some restrictions.

The same situation prevails in UK where there is freedom of expression, but that is again subject to specific restrictions, laid down by their law.

In India, 'Freedom of Speech and Expression' is controlled by 8 restrictions, *viz.*:

- Sovereignty and Integrity of India which is enforced to restrict activities that threaten the sovereignty of the country, such as alliance with foreign states to wage war, burning of the national flag *etc.*,
- Security of State, which means no state can tolerate activities that threaten the stability of an organised government by unlawful or unconstitutional means, giving aid to an enemy country, obstructing war activities *etc.*,
- Friendly Relations with Foreign States, based on the lines of International Principles/Conventions and mutual respect,
- Public Order, as minimum requirement in any organised society, and therefore to curtail any activity/ association that causes a state of disorder. Examples are restricted use of sound amplifiers in public places, curbing hate speech, fake news *etc.*,

- Decency or Morality, so as to control activities that undermine public morals, such as child abuse, provocative publications *etc.*,
- Contempt of Court, enforced to secure public respect and confidence in the judicial process. Maintenance of dignity of courts is one of the cardinal principles of any democratic set up. A fair criticism is permissible but not scandalisation.
- Defamation, so that freedom of speech and expression does not entitle you to hurt others' reputation in the public sphere. Right to reputation is a fundamental right, implicitly specified in Article 21.
- Incitement to an Offence, *viz.* an act to persuade others to commit a crime; abetment or instigating a person to commit an offence.

These restrictions are subject to judicial review. Any democratic set up is expected to impose these restrictions only in a rare and exceptional case when the order of the state is under threat. One must not forget that this freedom is not absolute and should be exercised, keeping in mind the eight restrictions, which operate in the interest of the society.

In the last few years, social media, like Twitter and Facebook, has become the platform for freedom of speech and expression. Even during the lockdown, people used this right exponentially. But in the light of some recent incidents, it can be inferred that social media is no longer a neutral platform. Incidents like those of Cambridge Analytica, to the issue of regular data mining, polarisation, hate speech, and fake news have become a matter of grave concern.

There is no control over the information on social media. Unlike the print and the electronic media, social media is not yet regulated by an external authority. Hence, they do not own any accountability for the content posted. For platforms like Netflix and Amazon, there is no accountability in the form of censorship of content, unlike the case of cinema-house screened movies.

The Supreme Court of India is considering the issue of accountability for social media. On the other hand, freedom of the press has always been kept at a pinnacle as an agency to promote healthy constructive democracy, till fake news became a serious threat. All these issues are pitted against Freedom of Speech and Expression. Therefore, fundamental rights are also subject to restrictions. Had there been no restraint, rights and freedom could threaten to become synonymous with anarchy and disorder. The complete interview can be watched in the link: <https://youtu.be/fEsd3RYfX3o>.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0121.pdf(Jan 2021)

Celebrating Negativity – Quo Vadis?

by Prime Point Srinivasan, Publisher and Managing Editor

In the recent years, India has been seeing a trend, where a section of the public and the media celebrate negative news, without any reservation. In many states of the country, convicts and criminal offenders who are released from jail after serving their period of imprisonment, are hailed as heroes and received in grandeur. Anti-hero characters who feature in films, social media and television serials, are hero-worshipped. Hanged terrorists are given grand funerals, with large crowds turning up. In the process, genuine heroes of our nation are not recognised, and are often side-lined.



In the recent violence caused by miscreants in the garb of farmers' support, at the time of the Republic Day celebrations at Delhi, some senior journalists tweeted some fake news against the police. These promoters of

the fake news were hailed by a section of media and some intellectuals, in defence of 'freedom of speech and expression'.

Recently, the arrested young girls who were allegedly associated with some international separatist organisations, were hailed, again in defence of 'freedom of speech and expression'. Whatever be the legal position, any association with international groups that work against the sovereignty of India, must not be tolerated and must be condemned. Unfortunately, if anyone dares to condemn these activities, he is silenced and shamed by a powerful lobby of the social media and the traditional media.

The Silence of Concerned Citizens

People who are concerned about the welfare of their nation, are afraid to speak against the celebration of negativity, for fear of

being shamed by its supporters. Even though the supporters of negativity are few in number when compared to the larger number of silent, concerned citizens, these negative people are extremely vocal in the media, especially in the social media, drowning the silence of the people.

The author spoke to a cross section of intellectual people from different professional backgrounds. While they deplored this new trend, they were reluctant to share their views publicly.

Freedom of Speech is Not Absolute

With the emergence of the social media, it is generally assumed that 'freedom of speech and expression' is absolute. This is incorrect. The Indian Constitution provides 'freedom of speech and expression' as a fundamental right under section 19(1)(a). However, under Article 19(2), the Indian Constitution empowers the State to enact laws that impose reasonable restrictions on the exercise of the right conferred by the said article 19(1)(a), "in the interest of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence". In India, there are enough laws to impose reasonable restrictions. In the United States, even though their Constitution provides for absolute freedom of speech and expression, this freedom is restricted through various judgements. No country in the world enjoys absolute freedom of speech and expression.

Sadly, the people who advocate 'freedom of speech' do not educate the youngsters about the reasonable restrictions. When the author spoke to one of the senior professors of journalism of a reputed university, the professor questioned the right of the police to arrest any person who violated the restrictions.

Surprisingly, this professor was ignorant of the reasonable restrictions and even the fundamental duties enshrined in the Constitution. Thousands of students who are taught by this professor, are likely to be misinformed by him, and therefore, they run the risk of breaking the law, out of ignorance.

Why This Trend?

During the conversation with various people about why this trend has emerged in the recent years, many observed that there was polarisation of right and left across the world with extreme views on both sides, and both finding fault with each other. This polarisation has affected India too.

An internationally reputed neurologist opined that some adverse economic developments, rising unemployment and even some of the good but lenient reform measures introduced by the Government, has caused insecurity and fear among the youngsters, and they tend to react with anger. Out of their lack of awareness about the restrictions and the law, they tend to overstep their right of expression, to vent their frustration. This results in such untoward behaviour and trends.

Inadequate communication from the ruling establishment, and lack of concerted efforts to educate the people about the various useful economic initiatives and reforms, coupled with the 'chest-beating' arrogance of some of the followers of the ruling establishment, have infuriated even the politically unbiased and apolitical people of the country.

Role of Political Parties and the Media

It is a dangerous and unhealthy trend to see youngsters violating the law of the land, using the social media, to the embarrassment for our nation. It is also a dangerous trend that political parties, instead of guiding and checking the youngsters, encourage them, in their pursuit of short-term political gains. Tweets against the sovereignty and integrity of the nation are often hailed by some political parties. The traditional media like print and television, instead of playing a positive role, fuel such acts, to up their TRP ratings.

Differentiate between Government and Sovereignty of the Nation

Critics of the ruling establishment should differentiate between the Government and the sovereignty of the nation. In the pretext of opposing the Government, these 'activists' collude with national enemies, to protest against the nation's sovereignty. If the political parties and the media realise the dangers of this trend and act in a responsible manner, we can protect and uphold the sovereignty of the country and its legitimate citizens.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0221.pdf (Feb 2021)

Media Should Focus on Performing MPs – Dr Kalam

On 8th Feb 2014, I had the opportunity to travel with Dr Abdul Kalam, Former President of India. We had a detailed discussion about the ruckus in the Parliament and the loss to the nation. He expressed his deep concern over the disruptions in the Parliament. I mentioned about the 'top performing MPs' who quietly discharged their constitutional duties and how the media did not focus on the issues of the people and the performing MPs. On the same day, he referred to this issue in his speech.

Quote

"The media should not focus on those MPs who disrupt the Parliament and create a blot in the Parliamentary democracy and make them 'heroes'. For the sake of our country, the media should celebrate top-performing MPs, and discuss and highlight the important issues pending before the Parliament, particularly when it is not functioning. It should focus on issues of importance rather on the conduct of erring MPs. Once the media start to focus on constructive debates and celebrate good performance, pseudo heroism in the form of disrupting the Parliament, will come down. Let us hope for the best in parliamentary"

Unquote

Media should highlight the good HR practices of small and medium companies

Thyagraj Sharma, Senior Journalist, The Statesman, Bangalore



There is always a feeling that media does not highlight the good HR practices of small and medium companies. They are only after large companies. The first and foremost thing for the media professionals is to keep tabs on the developments in and around a particular sector, if not all. The reason why the small and medium companies get left out is the rush for catching only the prominent people and companies. A little bit

of researching, updating and exploring of available industry contacts, however, can easily enable the more enthusiastic and committed among the journalists to do justice to their job.

I can say for sure that if one (journalist) were to be in regular touch with the chambers of commerce and related industry bodies, it would not be difficult to learn about the new and path breaking work which a large number of small and medium enterprises are doing. All one has to do is to highlight the outstanding work done by a few of these companies. Other firms will automatically take the lead and they will get in touch with you (journalist) to talk about their achievements.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1206.pdf (Dec 2006)

Conversation with Experts

International Experts

30 Years of Modern Internet – Legendary Dr Vinton G Cerf, Father of Internet Speaks Exclusively to *PreSense*

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

Thirty years ago, on 1st January 1983, the world entered a new era of communication with the birth of 'Modern Internet' which we use today. This communication revolution was enabled by the TCP/IP protocol, developed by Dr Vinton G. Cerf and Robert E. Kahn. They are now considered 'Fathers of Modern Internet'.



In those days, ARPANET was the wide-area network sponsored by the US Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). It went live in 1969, when Vinton Cerf was an ARPANET scientist at the Stanford University. The military became interested in a common protocol as different networks and systems using different and proprietary protocols began to hook up to ARPANET, and they found that they could not talk to each other easily. On 1st January 1983, the new Internet Protocol TCP/IP, which replaced the older system, was accepted as the standard and the modern Internet was born. The Internet, a revolutionary and cost-effective communication system has transformed the lives of billions of people across the world. Using data "packet-switching", the new method of linking computers and sharing information paved the way for the arrival of the World Wide Web.

Dr Vinton G. Cerf (70), the main architect of Modern Internet, is presently the President and CEO of Google Special Services Inc. and Chief Internet Evangelist at Google. He visited Chennai in mid-January 2013 to participate in the annual meeting of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) – India Council. Dr Vinton is the International President of ACM. We had the opportunity of recording his inspiring interview for PodUniversal and PreSense. (Link for his interview is given at the end of this article).

While people with less qualification and achievement pose themselves as great men, this legendary person, who revolutionised the entire globe with his invention, looked very simple and humble. In the 45 minutes of conversation we had with him, he spoke and came across as a very simple man.

Dr Vinton Cerf has received hundreds of national and international awards for his achievement. He is also the recipient of the 'Turing Award' for Technology, equivalent to the Nobel Prize, in Computing. Recently, President Obama has appointed him as a member of National Science Board in US Government.



Dr Vinton suffered from a hearing impairment from an early age, and he later attributed some of his interest in computer networking to its promise as an alternative communications channel for the hearing impaired. His personal disability triggered a great communication revolution in the globe. In an exclusive interview with Prime Point Srinivasan, Editor-in-

Chief of PreSense and PodUniversal,

Dr Vinton said that at the time of the invention, his team had high hopes that this would become a powerful infrastructure in future. "I think those hopes have been largely realised" he added proudly. On computer security, he said, "There is still plenty of work to be done on the technical side and on the training side to get users to adopt safer communication practices." He suggested 'two factor authentication' for the safety of the users.

On his passion, his achievement, and his message to the Indian youth, he said, "The simple message here is that you need to be really passionate about making something happen and you better be prepared to be patient and persistent because some ideas, the Net included, will not be widely accepted." In the same breath, he also appreciated Indian entrepreneurs for exporting their skill, talents and inventions to the rest of the world.

PreSense is proud to feature him as 'Man of the month' (though he is the Man of the Century) in the current issue, when the world celebrates the 30th year of modern Internet. Please listen to his inspiring interview in the following link. We have also published the transcript (courtesy: Esther Emil, Good Relations India) for the benefit of those who cannot follow the American accent. Please listen to his interesting Podcast through the link given below.

Please listen to his full interview:

Dr Vinton G Cerf, Father of Internet and President & CEO of Google Special Services Inc and Chief Internet Evangelist of Google
<http://youtu.be/V6VOAAQEyE0>

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0113.pdf (Jan 2013)

Exclusive interview with Jimmy Wales, Founder of Wikipedia

This is an extract from the exclusive interview Prime Point Srinivasan, Editor-in-Chief, PreSense had with Mr Jimmy Wales, Founder of Wikipedia on 25th Feb 2007 personally.

Q: In which year you started the Wikipedia?

Jimmy : Wikipedia was started on January 15, 2001. But prior to that, for two years, I had a project called "Nupedia" which had the same goal as WikiPedia, in terms of having free licenses encyclopedia with thousands of volunteers, but I didn't have the idea of the "Wiki" editing model. So, it was designed as a very traditional top-down model that shows something generic.



Jimmy Wales (left) interviewed by K. Srinivasan on 25 Feb 2007

Q: So, how do you ensure the credibility of the information & integrity?

Jimmy : There is a very good community of users very actively and meticulously policing the site and they elect among themselves administrators and also there are many mechanisms on the website that allow the community to exercise controls and quality. And for example, every single change is recorded in the "recent changes" page and all of the past versions of the articles are saved for ever so that, if someone comes up and makes an article that was a lower quality than it was before, someone can restore the best version. Lot of little techniques like that empowers the community to actually build something that's more valuable.

Q: What inspired you to start Wikipedia?

Jimmy : Originally, as I said it was the open source software, i.e., free software movement. As a child, when I was growing up, I had parents who really strongly emphasize education. I went to a very

small private school run by mother and grandmother. There were only four children in my grade! It was a one room school-house, very old fashioned, small school. I had lots of fun when I used to read encyclopaedia. I used to read the words in encyclopaedia Britannica quite a bit. As a child I always had the idea of broad information and just loved reading.

Q: How do you see the future of Wiki's in another 5 to 10 years?

Jimmy: I think one the most important things that you are going to see in five to ten years is that the editing process to become a lot easier, a lot smoother, a lot more approachable by people who are not necessarily IT specialists. I think that is probably the most important thing that you are going to see. And I think you are going to see that Wiki is used for more things that are useful. You are going to realise people can write Wiki and can do fictions and do all kinds of things in Wiki that I would have never expected, but I'm seeing all this creativity emerge online. I actually don't know. I think we have to watch and see what people come up with.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0207.pdf (Feb 2007)

Yes – We can!

By Archana Verma (Director of Marketing and Communications, IABC, United States of America)



Over the past few months, the financial crisis has had an impact on PR professionals, regardless of which country or industry we are in. Communicators in the U.S. have been especially embroiled in managing the crisis at their organizations—be it reassuring employees and investors, rebuilding corporate reputation or restoring public confidence.

According to a recent survey of 1,442 business communicators from around the world, conducted by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), over 75% of respondents said they were feeling the effects of the crisis. Yet, only 56% of the survey respondents said their organizations were responding with proactive communication to employees and other key audiences, 30% said their organizations were responding to specific inquiries or issues only, and 14% said their organizations had no communication response to the crisis. With respect to leadership communication, almost half of the respondents (49 percent) said their organization's leaders were visible and active in communicating information about the crisis, 31% said their leaders were responding to specific inquiries or issues only and 20% said their leaders were not actively communicating with stakeholders about the crisis.

During difficult times, employees are looking toward their leaders for reassurance and direction. It is incumbent upon leaders to communicate clearly and honestly with employees about how the downturn will affect the company and their jobs. Even if they don't have the answers or can't share information at the present time, they should offer frequent updates as and when possible, to reassure their workforce and prevent rumours, fear and anxiety. And it behoves us, as communicators, to help our leaders navigate these challenges. We have a unique responsibility to think about the best interests of our company and to use the power of

communication to inform and educate both management and stakeholders. To employees and customers, communicators must reinforce the vision, goals and plans that management defines as a priority for the next year. To management, communicators must bring information about interests and concerns of the workforce to promote employee engagement, morale and productivity.

We are often faced with the challenge of proving the value of PR and employee communication to management. Let us treat the current economic climate as an opportunity to rise to this challenge. In the words of the new U.S. President, Barrack Obama, "Yes, we can!"

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0109.pdf (Jan 2009)

How the Corporates look at Communication and Public Relations in Indonesia

By Rini Firdaus, Indonesia

Indonesia has experienced a wide array of changes in the business industry these days. One particular yet important positive change is that more and more white colour crimes are uncovered. This dishonest behaviour executed by people in positions of power has brought enormous changes in their customer's trust. This should also be a call for public relations to communicate with the media as the new social force as well as to the customers. But ironically, nowadays communication and PR officers are still perceived as second-class people in the business industry. Even some companies are afraid to use the name '*public relations*' instead using '*community relations*', '*investor relations*', and some other titles, so they are not trapped in the stereotyped circle of PR image as a make-up maker. Not only that, PR tasks are now also done by the marketing department. This fact is painful for any public relations in Indonesia.

On the other hand, some PR experts still believe that Indonesia's native culture prevents public relations in a company to speak up honestly to the public or the media. Therefore, the media tend to honour the decision to hire independent PR consultants to reveal some important news to the media in order to re-build the corporate image. This is why currently individual PR agencies are becoming more popular among the corporates. Now Indonesia has some important PR groups that give support to each group members, such as by doing seminars, workshops, etc. This also visualizes that PR is growing rapidly, and that PR no longer belong to the second-class people anymore.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense0108.pdf (Jan 2008)

Reputation Audit and Brand Audit

By Deon Binneman, Reputation Management Consultant and Trainer, Johannesburg, South Africa



“A Reputation audit takes a look at all the drivers that drives organizational reputation. Whilst a brand audit deals very often only with the physical manifestation of the brand - product, trademarks, visual elements etc. Reputation is made up of image – how stakeholders view the whole organisation, Identity - what the organisation says it is and personality - What the organisation is really

like. A Reputation Audit takes a look at all those factors. For instance, certain organisations are known for their brands, but as a customer the ROI financial returns are not a deciding factor for you. ROI will definitely be a factor when shareholders want to invest.”

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense0306.pdf (March 2005)

Reputation Audit and Brand Audit

By Rita Bhimani, Founder and CEO, Ritam Communications, Kolkatta, India and author of many PR books



“Aha! Reputation Audit versus Brand Audit?! The former is driven by the Image Management Experts who have to work out a subjective SWOT analysis of their client-- which could be an individual or a corporation, whereas a brand would require the marketing specialists to get into the act and work their quantitative numbers....”

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0306.pdf (March 2006)

Public Relations is more about ‘what’ you know than ‘who’ you know

Prof. Sreenath Sreenivasan, Dean, Columbia School of Journalism



Well that the main thing that Indian PR needs to do is to become as professional as it can. Certain efforts now in India and with the leadership of folks like you (meaning Prime Point Foundation) can make a real difference. PR education is undergoing transformation in the US as well, there has been lot of interest to become more

transparent and to use new technology to help clients and in connecting clients in general.

Well, what I feel about the comparison of PR industry in India and in developing countries is the new generation of PR happening in India that wasn't always as professional as it is today. In the old age, PR was more about who you knew than what you knew. I am seeing that in India as it is in US and elsewhere PR is more about what you know. And the more we communicate this to young people, the better.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0307.pdf (March 2007)

Raise PR standards by shared knowledge and collective experience

Ms Sulosana Karthigasu, Mg. Director, PR Academy, Singapore

Public Relations education can no longer remain theory based. While an understanding and knowledge of PR principles is very necessary, education in universities and polytechnics need to focus on practical training in the various PR fields so that graduates joining the industry are able to bring to the table the latest thinking in PR and contribute immediately and provide valueaddition to the projects that they undertake. This is one of the reasons why the curriculum in polytechnics in Singapore that conduct PR and related studies provide equal emphasis on practical work and engage renowned PR practitioners as lecturers. By training students to meet the needs and demands of the industry, each new batch of officers who enter the profession also help to raise standards of existing practitioners through shared knowledge and their collective experiences

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0307.pdf (March 2007)

Good reputation is the key to success of any business or country



Elisabeth Lewis-Jones FCIPR, presently the President of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations, London, in an exclusive interview with Ms Subha Ganesh, International Editor of PR-e-Sense talks about the role of PR in developing the Nation. Ms Elisabeth is also the Director of Liquid Public Relations at UK. Excerpts:

How can PR benefit the public in developing nations?

Public relations is intrinsically linked with the freedom of expression, it can provide a voice to those who wouldn't otherwise have one and it can provide a two-way communication in a developing society. The all-encompassing nature of public relations helps it to celebrate diversity and promote social cohesion, providing a forum for expressing differences and sharing shared viewpoints.

The public benefit of public relations has been seen in the information / health campaigns in Africa to educate communities about the dangers of HIV / AIDS, it can help give a voice to under-represented sections of the community and it can help countries to compete on reputation and attract investment. The theme for the World Public Relations Conference and Festival, taking place in London this year is ***'The public benefit of public relations'*** – we highlight not only the voice it can give to groups but also how public relations can act as a driver of economic growth and regeneration. Check out www.cipr.co.uk/wprf08 for further information

How do you envisage the role of PR in another five years in developing nations?

Expectations are that the role of public relations in the success of any business or society will become increasingly recognized globally. In order for any business or nation to develop internally and on the world stage it needs to engage with key groups and get their buy-in if it is to achieve its objectives and prosper. And the only way you can get buy-in is via a two-way dialogue, which is what public relations is all about. Public relations helps to build the long term relationships upon which a business or nation's reputation is based – and a good reputation is key to the success of any business or country.

How will the CIPR help the global PR industry to develop?

Second only in size to the US PR industry, the CIPR is increasingly recognised as a thought leader by other PR national associations. Through its involvement with the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management the CIPR shares its experiences and best practice in the UK with other national associations, in return learning from them about what works and does not work in their countries. Through the sharing of information, we anticipate that national PR associations and industries, all at different points in their development, will advance in a similar way to that of the UK's. Just as public relations is considered a profession in the UK, staffed by graduates of PR courses, a shift will happen in other countries too. Just as the CIPR in the UK is a government recognised professional body to lead the PR industry by raising industry standards via its training courses and qualifications, policy work and awards schemes, other national associations will, if they haven't already done so, achieve a similar mantle.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0308.pdf (March 2008)

Companies err on marketing and communication at the board level

Carol Matthews MCIPR is presently the Chair, Chartered Institute of Public Relations Scotland. She is a specialist in Marketing Communication.

What are the common mistakes corporates commit in "Marketing Communication"?

There are two key areas where, I believe, companies err on their marketing and communications. Both happen at Board level. First, there are still companies that don't see communications as a key strategic function – a management tool that should sit at senior management level around the same table as operations, production or finance. There is still a lack of awareness of the added value that communications can give to business not only to customers and potential markets but also in enhancing relations with suppliers and colleagues. Great communications can bring about excellent results at every level of business.

At a tourism conference in Glasgow last week, a top award-winning hotelier was asked which part of his marketing mix had proved the most successful to his business. "Without a doubt," he responded, "PR". Having monitored the growth in business over several years, the Hotel managing director was able to draw a direct correlation between his PR activity and sales. Giving inadequate recognition to the breadth and depth that marketing and communications can bring to a company is folly. Another fundamental mistake is brand neglect. The personality of the corporate brand should sing out from every communication whether it's in print, online, or verbal. Investing in your brand is like laying a foundation stone for the future business. The PR work can enhance the 'look and feel' and entire character of the company by consistent use of key messages, style and frequency of presentation

Unless the staff, product, marketing materials and all communications support the brand, customers can't be expected to! Clients can only share your brand values, have confidence in and, more to the point, buy your brand when they know exactly what the

brand represents. Nurturing and communicating the brand from the very heart of the company is a shared responsibility and a core role of the Board and senior team.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0308.pdf **(March 2008)**

Effective leaders are good communicators

Pamela Mounter FCIPR, is the Chair of the CIPR's International Group. She has co-authored the popular book on "Effective Internal Communication". She is a wellknown 'Corporate Communication Consultant' at London.

What are the common mistakes corporates commit in "Internal communication"?

When BP asked me to develop communication with employees for one of its global businesses it soon became clear that some senior managers did not recognise it had anything to do with them. One even asked me: "Don't they read the national newspapers?" That lack of understanding of the crucial role for senior managers holds true in many organisations and is, I believe, a serious if not the most serious mistake they make with regard to internal communication. But why should senior managers get involved in something so often passed on to others or even outsourced? In a word: leadership.



Effective leaders are good communicators. In well run organizations it is part of the appraisal process. Those organisations know that effective internal communication leads to good results for the organisation's bottom line. If people do not understand what they are doing –and why – it is difficult for them to work productively. And they want to hear it from their relevant managers. Lack of communication results in lack of trust. You can put a figure on that: the 54-day strike at General Motors in 1998 cost the company \$2.6 billion. "We have to build better relationships between management and our line employees," said the CEO.

The bottom line is that communication is not something *done to* people: the most common mistake. The most effective internal communication is where everyone in the organisation sees they are

part of it. That great Chinese sage Confucius understood this all those centuries ago when he wrote:

Tell me and I forget: Show me and I remember; Involve me and I understand.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0308.pdf (March 2008)

Accreditation “benchmarks” the profession

Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR), www.cipr.co.uk based at London is the largest public relations institute in Europe, with more than 8000 members. CIPR supports training and development of its members, produces policy guidelines for PR profession to bring out the best practices. It also publishes books and periodicals on PR CIPR is dedicated for raising standards of the PR industry, by enforcing code of conduct for their members to operate ethically with integrity and transparency.



Mr Colin Farrington, Director General of CIPR in an exclusive interview to Prime Point

*Srinivasan, Chief Editor of **PR-e-Sense** emphasizes the need for Accreditation to raise the professional standards of communication profession in India. Mr Colin, a well-known PR professional of UK, was inducted into UK PR week’s “Hall of Fame 2005” for his contribution to the PR profession. As Principal Advisor to Institute’s Council, he is responsible for positioning CIPR as one of the leading PR organizations in the world. Excerpts from his interview:*

Q: What are the advantages of Accreditation to the PR professionals? Since it is a voluntary scheme, how the accredited PR professionals are in advantageous position over the others who are not accredited?

A: ‘Public Relations’ is not really a profession that can successfully be regulated by laws. It is too diverse and too dynamic. Public Relations practitioners must reflect the culture and economy in which they work. However, it is critical that the users of public relations have a nationally accepted benchmark so that they use only qualified people and do not waste money on the unqualified. Accreditation, whether it takes the form of examinations or recognition of years of experience, is an essential tool to show the ‘clear water’ between the qualified and the unqualified.

Q: In a developing country like India, how the Accreditation would help to improve the quality of PR profession to International standards.

A: Accreditation is best done to national standards by national associations. But by working and benchmarking with internationally recognized bodies such as the CIPR (see www.cipr.co.uk) in the UK all standards can be raised.

Q: What is your fraternal message to Indian PR professionals?

A: I had the privilege of visiting Delhi in November 2005 for the conference of the Indian public relations association. I made many friends there and understood the great strides that are being made in the Indian economy and in the professionalisation of services such as public relations. I hope that those strides can be maintained and that we can continue to work together productively.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0306.pdf (March 2006)

Accreditation is a symbol of professionalism

The Institute of Public Relations of Singapore (IPRS), established in 1970 as a non-profit organisation, is the only accrediting body for public relations practitioners. In an exclusive interview to Ms Meera of **PR-e-sense**, Ms Bhavani, President, IPRS explained as to how employers would get better professional proficiency when they hire Accredited Professionals. Ms Bhavani is also the Director of Corporate Communication Department in Singapore Government (www.mica.gov.sg). Excerpts from her interview



Q. What are the advantages of Accreditation to the PR professionals?

A. An Accredited PR Professional has demonstrated broad knowledge, experience and professional judgment in the field. The main objective of an Accreditation programme is to provide professional recognition and formal certification to prominent and experienced PR professionals. This means that employers can be assured of a certain degree of professional proficiency in hiring such PR professionals. These individuals would have been assessed by independent panels made up of fellow eminent industry practitioners before being awarded with the accredited status. The Accredited status would become a symbol of professionalism and competence. This is especially important for hires at key strategic management level. In the Singapore's context, having evaluated and compared the Accreditation schemes of matured markets such as the USA, UK, Australia and Canada, we felt that it is important to focus our resources on getting the professionals accredited before considering Accreditation for PR agencies.

Q. In a developing country like India, how the Accreditation would help to improve the quality of PR profession to International standards.

A. In our experience, we have studied similar programmes in United

Kingdom, Australia, Canada and the United States before drawing up an Accreditation scheme that suits the Singapore context. We believe that as more of our PR practitioners get accredited, it would invariably help raise the level of professionalism to compete in the international arena. With the tremendous growth in the Indian economy, India should join the ranks of other countries and adopt the Accreditation scheme.

Q. What is your fraternal message to Indian PR professionals?

A. The introduction and acceptance of an Accreditation scheme is no doubt a long and tedious one. I believe that as Asia becomes an economic hub, the demand for certified PR professionals would make it viable for India to push forth with this scheme **Website :** <http://www.iprs.org.sg/>

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0306.pdf **(March 2006)**

How to combat information overload?

Ms Archana Verma, Director of Marketing and communication, International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), USA

We've all heard about information overload, but did you know that too much information is also a silent productivity and motivation killer in the workplace?



The New York Times reported on a survey that estimated the loss of information overload to the U.S. economy was \$650 billion. A workplace survey done by LexisNexis in the U.S. reports that more than seven in ten American white-collar workers feel inundated with information at their workplace, while more than two in five feel that they are headed for an

information "breaking point."

A survey conducted by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) reported that three out of four users say they receive too much e-mail. The biggest cause of information overload was found to be external news sources and professional subscriptions (61 percent), followed by co-workers (39 percent), professional networks (34 percent), team/department sources (29 percent) and companywide corporate sources such as senior management and HR (23 percent).

Regardless of whether we have been affected by information overload directly in our professional or personal life, it is important to understand our unique role as communication professionals and how we may be contributing to the problem. As senders of information to journalists, employees and other audiences, we should take a step back and examine the quantity and quality of our communication periodically. In this issue of PR-e-Sense, we hope to highlight this topic from the perspectives of both senders and receivers of information.

We are honoured to have Prof. Martin Eppler as a guest editor for the issue. Prof. Eppler is an eminent professor at Switzerland He is also the co-author of a recent research report on this topic commissioned by the IABC Research Foundation. I hope the articles in this issue will not only make you more aware of the problem but also help you consider creative ways in which you can reduce your own (or your organization's) contribution to the problem.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0509.pdf (May 2009)

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Seven Simple Ideas to Reduce Overload in Communication

Below we provide you with seven simple ideas that you can use to reduce information overload for your internal and external audiences:

- **Time it well:** Provide information when it is needed or when it is likely that it will receive the most attention. Avoid peak times when employees or clients feel tired or are busy with other things.
- **Overview first:** Provide an overview (what the information is about) and a context (why it is important and to whom) for your messages first, and only then confront your audience with more detailed information.
- **Visualise:** Use simple and systematic diagrams or visual metaphors to summarize your messages and help readers get an overview of your main points.
- **Keep it consistent:** Use a consistent and clear structure for your messages that remains the same over time. This way, readers already know how your messages are structured and do not lose time understanding what is where.
- **Make it personal:** Try to tailor your messages to your audiences' needs and preferences. Addressing people personally (i.e., using their name in an e-mail), or pointing to issues or people that interest them, engages people on another level and helps them to focus on your messages.
- **Make it interactive:** Communication is a two-way street. If people can actively engage with your messages and work with them, they will be able to more easily process them. Already Confucius said: I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand.

- **Make it accessible:** Using illustrative metaphors or employing simple analogies, intriguing stories or examples all help to make complex content accessible to a diverse audience and thus lower the risks of overloading them.

Courtesy: IABC's *Communication World* magazine

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0509.pdf (May 2009)

What is information overload and why should you care?



(Prof. Martin Eppler is a chaired professor of information and communication management at the University of Lugano (USI), Switzerland where he teaches managerial communication and knowledge management, and conducts research on strategic decision making and strategy communication. He is also the co-author of a recent research report on this topic *Preparing Messages for Information*

Overload Environments commissioned by the IABC Research Foundation.)

The situation is all too familiar: 50 new email messages in your inbox, four reports that await your attention, a new intranet section you should review, an interesting website to check out, plus the new issue of a trade journal that you should read and pass on to colleagues. Not to mention the two business books you have put aside. And all of this while preparing and attending numerous meetings and workshops, answering phone calls from colleagues and clients, and thinking about solutions to pressing problems. You are experiencing information overload—too much information, too little time.

But, as a professional communicator, you might actually be part of the problem. When your information processing needs exceed your information processing capacity you are experiencing information overload, a state where more information actually reduces your reasoning and decision quality. More information leads to less knowledge. Because of this, you feel overwhelmed by information and unable to make the right decision (the so-called paralysis by analysis). You may even feel annoyed, stressed, frustrated, or angry. Information overload occurs when more information results in lower decision accuracy.

So far, this topic has been mainly addressed from a receiver's or audience point of view. There are numerous surveys that show that information overload is a huge problem for the productivity of most

employees in organizations. In addition, there are over thirty years of research on the topic. However, overload is not only caused by the quantity of information (i.e., its volume and intensity), but also by more qualitative aspects, such as its ambiguity, diversity, or novelty.

Communicators can thus actively control these aspects and reduce overload for their target groups. We recently partnered with the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Research Foundation on a report *Preparing Messages for Information Overload Environments*. This report helps bridge the gap and addresses the information overload issue from a sender's viewpoint and offers examples of what companies are doing to manage the issue. Details of where you can find the IABC report are available in this issue of PR-e- Sense. You will also find articles about a global survey of communication professionals on this topic and a few simple ideas that you can use to reduce information overload for your internal and external audiences.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense0509.pdf (May 2009)

Strategic partnerships enhances best practices of communication

Todd T. Hattori, ABC, 2007-08 IABC International Chair; Washington State Department of Information Technology, Manager of Technology Acquisition Services.

It is an honor to be the guest editor of this issue of PR-e-Sense. The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) (www.iabc.com) has a longstanding history of advancing the communication profession by providing professional resources to our global membership, the communication profession, and the organizations served by professional communicators. We acknowledge that much of this success has resulted from strategic partnerships with organizations such as PR-e-Sense. Why do we value these partnerships?

Allow me to provide an example. Last year, Julie Freeman, ABC, APR, IABC President, Glenda Holmes, ABC, IABC Immediate Past Chair, and I had the opportunity to participate in an advisory work group that was sponsored by the State Department of the United States government. Approximately 100 public relations and communication professionals gathered in Washington D.C. to discuss and develop recommendations for how to improve international relations. The overarching goal was to establish a strategy for improving the reputation of the United States.

What I found most interesting was that the majority of the discussion focused on "How may we help people from other countries gain a better understanding of the United States?" From our point of view, the missed opportunity was discussing "How may we help Americans better understand the beliefs, cultures, practices, and circumstances of other countries?"

The effort was driven by good intentions. The public and private partnership of United States government and communication professionals generated a range of creative tactics. However, imagine how different those tactics would have looked if the partnership involved communication professionals from various

countries – the target audience of this effort. Global communication is a challenge when we don't engage our global audience.

Helping communication professionals throughout the world arrive at the best strategic solution for the right strategic goal/objective is what IABC strives to achieve. We meet this goal/objective by offering a cross-disciplinary code of ethics, relevant professional development, globally recognized professional accreditation, communication research, and – very important – global networking that enables global discussions.

Thank you for giving IABC the opportunity to partner with **PR-e-Sense** to provide quality professional development that enhances global communication practices

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense0608.pdf (June 2008)

International Association of Business Communicators – Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators



**International Association
of Business Communicators**

Professional communicators uphold the credibility and dignity of their profession by practicing honest, candid and timely communication and by fostering the free flow of essential information in accord with the public interest.

2. Professional communicators disseminate accurate information and promptly correct any erroneous communication for which they may be responsible.
3. Professional communicators understand and support the principles of free speech, freedom of assembly, and access to an open marketplace of ideas, and act accordingly.
4. Professional communicators are sensitive to cultural values and beliefs and engage in fair and balanced communication activities that foster and encourage mutual understanding.
5. Professional communicators refrain from participating in any undertaking that the communicator considers to be unethical.
6. Professional communicators obey laws and public policies governing their professional activities and are sensitive to the spirit of all laws and regulations. Should any law or public policy be violated, for whatever reason, professional communicators act promptly to correct the situation.
7. Professional communicators give credit for unique expressions borrowed from others and identify the sources and purposes of all information disseminated to the public.
8. Professional communicators protect confidential information and, at the same time, comply with all legal requirements for the disclosure of information affecting the welfare of others.

9. Professional communicators do not use confidential information gained as a result of professional activities for personal benefit and do not represent conflicting or competing interests without written consent of those involved.

10. Professional communicators do not accept undisclosed gifts or payments for professional services from anyone other than a client or employer.

11. Professional communicators do not guarantee results that are beyond the power of the practitioner to deliver.

12. Professional communicators are honest not only with others but also, most importantly, with themselves as individuals. Professional communicators seek the truth and speak that truth to themselves first.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0608.pdf (June 2008)

We need to address the changing face of communication

Ms. Jane Weaver, Chairman of Public Relations Consultants' Chapter of PRISA (Public Relations Institute of South Africa) and MD of HMC Seswa Corporate Communications.



The Public Relations profession today finds itself at a historic crossroads. To work effectively in this interconnected global village, we need to find ways of working that address the changing face of communication. As public relations practitioners, we need to use our communication and relationship building skills to identify, highlight and nurture common interests and common values among our audiences, nationally and internationally. In a world of interconnectedness, public relations consultants need to work together to push the boundaries of creative thinking. Many Public Relations companies in South Africa are “re-tooling” their strategies in order to meet the needs of globalization, and in particular are creating teams to work on each account – moving away from the traditional role of having an account manager for each client.

Many organisations in South Africa still face the challenges of social transformation. Disparate groups of people with totally different cultural backgrounds are required to work together in an environment with strict policies and structures that do not accommodate their needs, values and beliefs. These policies and structures often restrict open communication, creative thinking and innovation – prerequisites for a Public Relations consultancy responsible for building their clients brands.

Today, organisations are changing their mindset and are urging staff to show their character and make a long-lasting contribution within a team, rather than only concentrating on the pursuit of prestige. Teams within a Public Relations consultancy that operate in this way are more likely to generate innovative solutions and achieve success. The environment in which a team operates also plays an important role in its success. Understanding and appreciating each

individual's role within the team is the first step to a cohesive work environment.

Each person brings his unique expertise to the company but the real potential and energy of a team is unleashed when these skills are combined. In doing so, it is important for employees to build mutual respect for each other's values, needs, preferences and unique contribution. In the creative Public Relations consultancy environment, a team setting facilitates better work coordination which in turn builds the trust of the clients; they feed off each other's creativity producing a vibrant energy which translates into creative campaigns.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0908.pdf(Sep 2008)

Look at the science of communication, rather than marketing art

“Marketing professionals should look at Marcom as less of marketing art and need to pay more attention to the science of communication” said Mr Vinod Harith, the Group Marketing Manager for Wipro at London. He has an extensive experience of working in international market and has been a successful marketer. In an exclusive interview with Ms Subha Ganesh, Guest Editor of *PR-e-Sense*, he talks about the latest trends in Marcom. Excerpts from his interview:



What exactly is marketing communication? What is good communication?

Marketing communication is often confused with corporate communications while in reality its scope includes, but is not limited to corporate communications. Marketing Communications is a blend of strategic planning, design, and communications ingenuity enabling the marketer to reach customers and key stakeholders through multiple channels in architecting growth for business, brands, and products. Good communication is one that is well crafted to resonate with a defined target group and can trigger desirable action – like buying or recommending a product or service.

'Branding' is the latest trend for all companies, what steps need to be implemented to increase brand awareness?

Organizations are now realizing that Branding is more than just a designer logo or a smart tag line. It is essentially the sum total of the experience your product or service provides to your customers, which by definition can increase or decrease the value or price your customers are willing to pay for that product or service. There is a misconception that building a brand or improving brand awareness usually costs a lot of money. It is often a factor of how close as a marketer you are able to get to your customers' 'moments of truth'

and impact them with your brand messages or experiences that results in effective 'brand awareness'.

What are the major challenges faced by an Indian company in terms of marketing communication & branding in an international market?

The key challenge for Indian brands in global markets continues to be that of awareness. Speaking of the IT industry, the awareness of even the top three Indian brands just about half of that of the top three global brands and with typically about one-tenth or less of their marketing budgets, we compete with them head-on for share-of-mind and wallet in the same space of services and with the same base of customers. This calls for a lot of resourcefulness, lateral thinking and often making the right calls on your marketing programs nine out of ten times.

What is the right ingredient for a company to be successful in an international market?

Globalization has compounded the number of variables we need to deal with in our businesses. From fiscal to geo political to data security, organizations need to contend with elements that they can no longer see, predict or control. Innovation is clearly one of the key ingredients that will help organizations whether the challenges of globalization and successful organizations are already driving change by integrating innovation as a key communication lever and differentiator in internal and external stakeholder communication.

What is the future of Marcom and what advice do you give for young professionals in this field?

Marcom is clearly getting more strategic for organizations. The media is getting fragmented while the way media is consumed has changed and communication challenges abound in the web 2.0 world where the individual is as much a creator and disseminator of the communication as much as he or she is a consumer of the communication. Young professionals need to view marcom as less of marketing art and need to pay more attention to the science of communication.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1007.pdf (Oct 2007)

Managing relationships has become more complex and vital today

Lisa Ditlefsen, Head of Search & Web Analytics, Base One Search, London, is one of the 'B2B marketing' expert. In an exclusive interview with Ms Subha Ganesh, Guest Editor for *PR-e-Sense*, Lisa talks about online reputation management. Excerpts :

What is Marketing Communication?

Wow now that's a big question. Marcom can be so many things, but in core marketing communications are basically the messages and media used to communicate to a market. Marcom includes advertising, branding, direct marketing, PR, promotions, sales and of course online marketing.



What is the role of Social Media for creating 'Brand Awareness'?

Social Media is one of the most effective online marketing forms at the moment. Mostly because it's the "in" thing to be involved in, you can reach a mass audience with a small budget and the outcome can be phenomenal, both in terms of traffic to your website and brand awareness. From a branding point of view Facebook and YouTube are the leaders and where most advertisers target. A successful SMO (Social Media Optimisation) "hitting"

Facebook can generate 100,000 of traffic and incoming links to a website. Usually, these SMO campaigns come in form of a game, quiz or similar that goes viral on one of the social media networks such as Facebook.

How can companies control negative review and work on better online presence?

There is actually a new service that covers this now, called “online reputation management”, the principal of online reputation management is to improve visibility and rankings on the search engines for positive (good) publicity and to push negative (bad) reviews and publicity further down the search engine rankings so that fewer people see the bad publicity. In effect online reputation management consists of owning most of the search engine rankings for your brand name and populating it with the positive reviews.

What is the future of Marcom and what advice do you give for young professional in this field?

Although online marketing is dominating the marketing growth, Marketing Communications will always be the heart of marketing. Integration of online and offline marketing will become more and more important, and new exciting ways of marketing will be revealed.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense1007.pdf(Oct 2007)

Word of mouth has always been the best marketing tool

Henrietta Blyth, Head of Programme Support and Development, Christian Aid, London

For Charity/NGO marketing and communications cover fundraising, media, supporter relations and public relations. Communication is very important in any kind of organization. The things that need to be remembered are who the audience is, what is the message, which medium!

For Charities and NGOs, communications have two main purposes: to raise funds and to raise awareness about what is happening with/to poor people and to build a movement to challenge the systems and structures that keep people poor. New ways of communication are faster and have immediate effect for e.g. recent events in Burma.

Blogging and other use of the new media means, a lot of information are shared which results in difficulty in controlling and monitoring the information. With the new media, it has become difficult to differentiate between 'what are the facts and what is people's perception'. Different types of communications appeal to different age groups. Surprisingly we find a lot of our older supporters are very good at using the internet!

Word of mouth has always been the best marketing tool – social media provides even more opportunity for this – which can be good but can also be bad!! Marketing and communication will remain extremely important for all businesses. But it will be necessary for professionals to keep up with the speed of change in the media available.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1007.pdf (Oct 2007)

Communications is About Making a Connection



Bob Lutz, vice chairman of global product development for General Motors, addressing the General Session at the 2008 PRSA International Conference. Excerpts from Mr. Lutz's address appear below.

"Detroit and the U.S. domestic automobile industry need to change a lot of perceptions — often misguided and wrong perceptions — that the rest of the country has about us if we're going to turn things around," Lutz, vice chairman of global product development for GM, said yesterday morning during the General Session at the 2008 PRSA International Conference.

And given the recessive global economy, Lutz acknowledged that it's even more challenging to get your message across and make yourself heard. Lutz, a veteran of more than 40 years in the automobile industry and chief blogger for GM's Fastlane blog, shared his thoughts on the art of communications with the 3,000 students and professionals in attendance. His five key points echoed the theme of this year's Conference — the Point of Connection.

1) Communications is about making a connection.

That connection — message sent and received — is the essence of communications. "Your message must be received, heard and understood," he said. "Otherwise, no connection is made." Lutz compared making a connection to the concept of automobile design. "An automobile's design must make an immediate, emotional connection to a potential buyer," he said. "If there is no connection — if that automobile visually doesn't fascinate — then the potential customer has no desire to learn more about it...there will be no sale." So how do you make a message connect? He discussed that in his second point.

2) Communications must say something.

Lutz said that he dislikes canned, sanitized corporate messaging that doesn't say anything. "All large corporations are good at it. General Motors is no exception. Instead of being a weapon for putting out the truth, [a press release] becomes a method of risk avoidance," he said. "It focuses on making sure no one says the wrong thing. By focusing on not saying the wrong thing, you're essentially saying nothing." What's a better approach? Good, effective communications messaging is expressed skillfully, directly, accurately, precisely and honestly, he said. "I don't think any serious company lies in its communications," Lutz said. "But you can create the wrong impression by only imparting half the truth. Of course, that is the art of propaganda. It is not honest."

3) Communications has value that paid advertising does not.

Lutz made it clear that he's not down on marketing or advertising. Still, nothing compares to public relations in his estimation. "Public relations offers us the chance to put our messages out there...and have others spread the message for us usually at the best possible price, which is called 'free,' " Lutz said. "This can often have a multiplier effect as the message repeats, grows and travels from source to source." However, the tone of the message is key. "We have to keep ridiculous hyperbole and blatant self-praise out of communications. Hyperbole and self-praise can really do a lot of damage — even when it is accurate."

4) Communications should view the media as an opportunity and not an obstacle.

Building relationships with key media members is important, Lutz said. "I believe that listening carefully, avoiding being condescending and just being straight with [the media] is the right formula," he said. "Journalists like subjects who have a human touch, have a sense of humour and don't take themselves too seriously. "That's how I would tell you to approach journalists; how to counsel your executives to approach them."

He put himself in the shoes of a reporter. "If I were a journalist, I would really hate the pompous, self-congratulatory big shot stuffed shirts who they often have to interview, especially when all they can get from the interview is little tidbits of the predigested corporate line doled out with heaping side helpings of corporate arrogance."

5) Communicators must evolve with the communications environment.

It's very simple, he said: "To be effective, we all have to adopt and try new things." As proof of his adoption of the new media environment, he mentioned GM's Fastlane blog and discussed the rewards of corporate blogging. "It's an opportunity to have a real dialogue with our customers and potential customers and an opportunity to put our message out there that's totally unfiltered," Lutz said. "It's also immediate. I don't have to tell you how important that timing of getting your message out there is. If it's too late, it's too late. And you're sunk."

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1108.pdf(Nov 2008)

Introduce laws to increase transparency, to avoid bribery

In an exclusive interview with Ms Shvetha Sridhar, Consulting Editor of PreSense at US Mr Doug Pinkham, President, Public Affairs Council, Washington explains the role of Public Affairs at global level. Public Affairs Council is the largest body of PA professionals in the world. This Council was founded in 1954 at the suggestion of President Eisenhower, who felt the business community needed to learn to be more strategic in its relationship to government and society. Council's website is www.pac.org. Excerpts from his interview:



How do you see the emerging role of Public Affairs professionals at global level both in developing and developed nations?

Throughout the world, public affairs is becoming more important than ever. There are four major reasons for this trend. First of all, in both developing and developed nations, the era of “big government” is certainly not over. Even before the global financial crisis, government involvement in business had been increasing. This trend is of strategic importance to companies because government decides many things, including: how commerce is conducted, who owns intellectual property, who acquires or merges with other companies, who imports or exports goods and services, and who pays taxes.

Secondly, in a free-market society, politics is a competitive sport. Most public policy debates are not conflicts that pit large corporations against helpless consumers. They are debates between companies in the same industry or in different industries. In the U.S., our political system encourages this free and open debate. The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution states that the U.S. Congress is prohibited from making laws that limit our right to “petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

The third reason why public affairs is gaining importance is the new challenges created by globalization and technology. As companies

look to expand overseas, they are finding they have to rethink their corporate strategies. As we all know, different cultures and different political systems require different approaches to advocacy, communications and corporate citizenship.

The nexus of globalization and technology has created a host of public policy dilemmas. These are not problems that can be solved easily through legislation because the trade-offs are problematic. For example:

- How do we encourage free trade while protecting workers?
- How do we safeguard personal privacy while protecting national security?
- How do we encourage advancements in biotechnology while maintaining our intellectual property laws?

In addition, advances in information technology have revolutionized the world of politics. Back in the late 1990s, while the whole world was marvelling at the birth of e-commerce, the real revolution was occurring in the business of “idea-commerce” – that is, in the “marketplace of ideas.” The fact is that the Internet is the most effective tool ever created for organizing people.

Because of the Internet, like-minded activists can find each other, organize themselves, and carry out a political movement. It has flattened the playing field in politics. The result has been an explosion in the number of NGOs, higher levels of citizen involvement, a greater push for transparency, and a generally more robust – but less predictable – political environment.

The fourth reason for growth in the public affairs field is the simple maxim that “life isn’t fair.” When companies are big and successful, they inevitably become targets of competitors, unhappy customers, groups with political differences and others. No matter how much effort you put into managing your reputation, you are bound to make mistakes sooner or later. In a global economy with global media, these mistakes become news headlines within a matter of minutes. If you don’t make the effort to build positive relationships and a strong reputation before you face a crisis, you may not survive.

At the same time, it is a fact that every new law or regulation always has unintended consequences. Companies – and NGOs – have learned that you have to be engaged in the process of public-policy decision-making. Sometimes you take the offense, sometimes your role is to keep bad things from happening. But, as we say in the U.S., you have to be “at the table.”

Generally Public Affairs is perceived negatively in the developing nations? What do you feel about this? How we can correct the perception?

The advocacy role – what we call “lobbying” – is the most controversial role in public affairs for a host of reasons that include political scandals, varying laws and levels of enforcement, and public distrust of large institutions. I’ve come to the conclusion that the only ways to improve the image of lobbying is (1) avoid scandals at all costs and (2) become more transparent.

Developing nations need laws governing lobbying that increase transparency and prevent all *quid pro quo* deals (bribery), but still allow the public policy development process to work in a way that benefits society. While the U.S. system of regulation has been criticized over the years, most of the rules at the federal level achieve these goals. (The results are mixed at the state level.)

But keep in mind that the public affairs profession consists of more functions than lobbying. It includes policy monitoring, issues management, corporate citizenship and strategic communication. Taken together, these functions help a company or an NGO better manage the environment in which it operates. In the long-term, this will translate into higher productivity, economic growth and the emergence of stronger countries that empower their citizens to be engaged in policy-making. As I said earlier, the profession is increasing in importance throughout the world. My hope is that business leaders, government officials and the general public will come to understand this trend so that the negative perception in the developing world will subside.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1010.pdf (Oct 2010)

Public Affairs (PA) helps to get the best out of politicians

In an exclusive message to PreSense, Graham Watson Member of European Parliament (MEP), Chairman of European Parliament's Delegation for relations with India said,



“Public Affairs is a vital part of social and political life. Members of parliament have to make decisions about issues on which frequently they are not experts in. They have to listen to people of different views so that they can reach a balanced decision and public affairs companies are a part of that process which is essential in helping their clients to express themselves properly to get best advantage of politicians.”

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1010.pdf (Oct 2010)

Indian Experts

Unearth the communication talents of SME sector

Editorial - Jan 2008

Association of Business Communicators of India (ABCI), mother of all the Indian communication organisations has completed 50 years of service to the profession. For the past 47 years, they have been recognizing the best 'communication tools' through their Awards. The communication industry always cherishes the ABCI Awards as the 'Oscar of Business Communication'. **PR-e-Sense** feels proud to feature ABCI in this edition and salutes the founders and torch bearers of ABCI. The Golden Jubilee of ABCI coincided with the 47th Annual Awards Nite.

Many of the leading Indian Corporates participated in the competition and won awards under various categories. Notable observation was many of the IT and new generation companies and the organisations in Small and Medium Sector (SME) were not participating considerably. ABCI Award Scheme has improved the quality of Business Communication in India. We could not reason out as to why new generation IT companies are not coming out in public to showcase their talents. It is high time, these 'new generation companies' joined the mainstream.

There may be genuine reasons for non-participation of SME sector companies. They might have felt shy of competing with giant and large organisations. Indian economy thrives on SME segment largely. ABCI and other Industry bodies should develop a separate model for this SME sector to bring out their 'indigenous communication talents'.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0108.pdf (Jan 2008)

ABCI Awards have developed Business Communication

*Mr K S Neelakantan, doyen in the PR industry took initiative in the past decades to develop PR and communication movement in India. He has received many awards and recognitions from various organizations for his achievement. He was also honoured earlier by ABCI with Life time achievement award. Mr Tushar, Strategic Editor of **PR-e- Sense** interviewed him for this edition. You can also listen his interview in the audio podcast. Excerpts:*



Business Communication though fairly new in India, has started growing significantly. I recall the days, when 'Indian Association of Industrial Editors' (IAIE), in which a few Corporate magazines joined together and did the role of Business Communicators. In those days, hardly any corporate had any house journal. The concept was promoted by IAIE, which was subsequently renamed as 'Association of Business Communicators of India' (ABCI) which is a better and clear title for such organization.

After the formation of ABCI, they used to conduct lot of seminars, workshops, trainings and this had encouraged the Business Communication professionals. Most of the companies, whether they had scope or not, started internal news magazines or even four-page newsletters, which used to go to every employee. Some of the companies revolutionised this and used visual medium for their interviews and house magazines. The tapes used to be screened to the employees at the workshops. This has brought the Business Communication to this present level.

Communication business has now got revolutionised in India, to such an extent that no one in this field has full grasp or idea on its scope and potential. This is a good sign. Lot of youngsters enter this field. Educational institutions also have started special diploma and degree courses on communication.

Techniques and medium of Business Communication have not received the coverage publicity, it should receive. After ABCI started the Annual Award Scheme, every company wanted to produce something in a professional manner and compete in the Annual Award competition. This has played a major role in the development of Business communication techniques.

There is a tremendous scope for business communication in India. From one house magazine for the entire employees, now a tendency has come to have one journal for each department or sector like marketing or manufacturing. Specialisation is taking place gradually. The objective of this is to persuade the employees to their way of thinking and to sell the management concepts and ideas.

No University gives enough importance to Business Communication. There are courses on journalism. Corporate Houses should join together and encourage the educational institutions to start specialized Business Communication courses. This is only for their advantage. Associations like ABCI should motivate such activities and organise seminars and workshops.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0108.pdf (Jan 2008)

PRSI and PRCI should make joint efforts to develop professional excellence

Dr C V Narasimha Reddi, Editor, PR Voice, Hyderabad

Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and Chartered Institute of Public Relations, London (CIPR), play a major role in promoting professionalism in their respective countries. We have to achieve a lot in the field of professionalism, in India. Whether it is Public Relations Society of India (PRSI) or Public Relations Council of India (PRCI), their aim should be to promote PR and professional excellence. Need of the hour is to promote professional excellence. We have grown quantitatively; but we are yet to grow qualitatively. Of course, there are few PR professionals in India, who match International standards. But many people suffer from professional excellence.

My submission is that PRSI and PRCI should try to promote Public Relations and professionalism. The major pitfall in the Indian PR profession is lack of 'in-service training'. These two PR bodies should make joint efforts in this area, by approaching Universities and UGC. In India we do not have exclusive PR courses.

In Western countries, exclusive courses are available in PR. Whatever be the differences between PRSI and PRCI, they should make joint efforts for creating "professional development programmes". This is a pre-requisite for the growth of PR profession.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0407.pdf (April 2007)

**Exclusive interview with Dr A P J Abdul Kalam
(Former President of India)**

In an exclusive interview with Prime Point Srinivasan, Editor-in-Chief, Dr A P J Abdul Kalam, former President of India speaks on the various contemporary issues faced by the youngsters. Excerpts:

Q: In this technology-driven global village, everything is looked at from RoI (return on investment) angle. Packaging is the name of the game. We see the consistent degeneration in value system. The present education system produces only graduates and not human beings. What, according to you, should be done to bring the values back and live for pride?

A: Parents and teachers have to set an example of value system. The schools can conduct moral science classes atleast once in a week to talk about great personalities who have demonstrated value system to the society. The school curriculum should include selfless societal work such as teaching the needy, planting trees, caring for the old, orphans and differently abled. These actions will promote values in the minds of the young.



Q: Talking on unsung heroes - the media - across the canvass - has become a product. Ipso facto, the thrust is on selling only. This being the case, the `unsung heroes' will forever be confined to oblivion. How do we remedy the situation?

A: Organisations like yours should initiate action to remedy this situation.

Q: We do not have the type of political leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Rajaji, Nehru, Kamaraj and Sardar Patel. Youngsters get easily frustrated with the political system and many do not even participate in the election process. What do you think should be done to make the youngsters participate in

the political process and to bring about a transformation in the current situation?

A: The major parties should recruit educated youth with passion for societal work in the party structure. These members must be put through special training on developing unity of minds and development politics. They will be leaders who will make India a land of prosperity with value system.

Q: After graduation, many want to go to jobs. They are more driven by the immediate money and charm provided by companies. They do not want to become entrepreneurs. How can they be inspired to become 'employment generators' rather than just be 'employment seekers'?

A: It is not true. While I addressed the participants of Confluence seminar at IIM Ahmedabad, I asked the question, "how many of you would like to become an entrepreneur?". Almost 75% of the audience responded in a loud affirmative. The trend is changing. We have to make system and procedures simple and user friendly for an entrepreneur to flourish.

Q: A personal question. Politics and bureaucracy are generally perceived as the most corrupt fields in our country. You were working in this system very closely for many decades. In spite of your proximity to the system, you have remained 'above board' and many youngsters consider you as a 'role model'. What makes people like you - straight forward and honest ones at that - survive and come out unscathed?

A: Maintained the principle "work with integrity and succeed with integrity". Do not be worried about others. You follow, what your conscience says.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0407.pdf (April 2007)

**“A good leader owns the failure; leaves success to team” –
Dr APJ Abdul Kalam**

From the interview of Dr A P J Abdul Kalam, Former President of India: Let me tell you about my experience. In 1973 I became the project director of India's satellite launch vehicle program, commonly called the SLV-3. Our goal was to put India's "Rohini" satellite into orbit by 1980. I was given funds and human resources

but was told clearly that by 1980 we had to launch the satellite into space. Thousands of people worked together in scientific and technical teams towards that goal.



By 1979, I think the month was August – we thought we were ready. As the project director, I went to the control centre for the launch. At four minutes before the satellite launch, the computer began to go through the checklist of items that needed to be checked. One minute later, the computer program put the launch on hold; the display showed that some control components were not in order. My experts, I had four or five of them with me -- told me not to worry; they had done their calculations and there was enough reserve fuel.

So, I bypassed the computer, switched to manual mode, and launched the rocket. In the first stage, everything worked fine. In the second stage, a problem developed. Instead of the satellite going into orbit, the whole rocket system plunged into the Bay of

Bengal. It was a big failure. That day, the chairman of the Indian Space Research Organization, Prof. Satish Dhawan, had called a press conference.

The launch was at 7:00 am, and the press conference -- where journalists from around the world were present -- was at 7:45 am at ISRO's satellite launch range in Sriharikota [in Andhra Pradesh in southern India]. Prof. Dhawan, the leader of the organization, conducted the press conference himself. He took responsibility for the failure -- he said that the team had worked very hard, but that it needed more technological support. He assured the media that in another year, the team would definitely succeed. Now, I was the project director, and it was my failure, but instead, he took responsibility for the failure as chairman of the organization.

The next year, in July 1980, we tried again to launch the satellite -- and this time we succeeded. The whole nation was jubilant. Again, there was a press conference. Prof. Dhawan called me aside and told me, "You conduct the press conference today." I learned a very important lesson that day. When failure occurred, the leader of the organization owned that failure. When success came, he gave it to his team. The best management lesson I have learned did not come to me from reading a book; it came from that experience.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0508.pdf (May 2008)

General – Articles and Webinars

About our initiatives



Prime Point Foundation, a Non-Profit Trust and NGO was founded in December 1999 by Shri Prime Point Srinivasan (popularly known as Prime Point Srinivasan), a former Senior Banker and a Digital Journalist and Communication Professional, to promote leadership and communication skills among the youth. Very eminent persons are associated with the Foundation.

In the past 20 years, the Foundation has organised several seminars, workshops, training and interactive sessions, both offline and online, on various subjects of national interest. The Foundation manages various online discussion groups and podcasts on communication, and digital journalism.

The Foundation has formed 6 initiatives to create awareness in various domains. All these initiatives are managed independently by passionate experts. These initiatives are non-commercial, and focussed on youth.

PreSense: The eMagazine PreSense was started in March 2006 on the suggestion of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam to promote positive journalism. Till April 2021, the Foundation has published 170 editions. This is a digital-only magazine. Digests, containing select articles upto 150 editions of the eMagazine, have so far been published. Dr Abdul Kalam has written the foreword for the Digest of articles upto 100 editions. PreSense publishes the cartoon character Prince, which was launched by Dr Abdul Kalam in 2008.



Sansad Ratna Awards: This is a flagship initiative started in 2010 to honour top performing Parliamentarians every year, based on various performance parameters, and selected by a Jury Committee of eminent Parliamentarians. Dr Abdul Kalam himself inaugurated the first edition of the Awards event in



May 2010. Till 2021, the Foundation has conducted 11 editions and presented 75 Awards.

Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL) is an off-shoot of Sansad Ratna Awards. This is a registered NGO operating since 2018. NGPL has organised several workshops online and offline, for young political leaders and aspirants. Ministers, parliamentarians, legislators and retired constitutional authorities have participated and shared their views. NGPL will shortly be instituting Awards for young promising politicians.



Education Loan Task Force (ELTF) was started in 2010 to create awareness about education loans, among students and parents. More than 30,000 queries have been responded to, through email, and more than 5000 serious complaints have been taken up with the top management of the banks concerned, for redressal. Many policy issues have been taken up by Sansad Ratna Awardee MPs, in the Parliament for solution. ELTF does not facilitate loans.



Digital Journalists Association of India (DiJAI): DiJAI is an independent NGO founded in 2017 to create awareness about digital journalism and its implications, among the public and particularly among the journalists. DiJAI conducts several online and offline workshops and seminars, with panels of domain experts.



Digital Security Association of India (DiSAI): DiSAI is an independent NGO founded in 2017 to create awareness about digital security and cyber law, among the people. DiSAI has submitted recommendations to the Government of India, for strengthening digital security. Many online and offline workshops and seminars are being organised, with domain experts on the panels.



Webinars on interesting subjects

How to Face Job Interviews

Your eMagazine PreSense and NGPL (Next Gen Political Leaders) initiated a talk series by experts under the theme, 'Saturday Talk Series with Experts'. The first episode was held on Saturday, 25th July 2020.



Susan Koshy, former General Manager of IDBI Bank, spoke about 'How to Face Job Interviews'. The session covered some practical tips on how to prepare oneself for a job interview, the key points to keep in mind while facing the interview and the way forward after getting into a job. Ms Susan emphasised the importance of self belief and confidence in oneself. The programme was anchored by Sukruti Narayanan, Actor and communication professional from Australia. The recording of the event can be watched on

<https://youtu.be/Yfth04eM2r4?l>

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0720.pdf (July 2020)

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Webinar on Grooming Leaders with Right Attitude

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PreSense and Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL) organised a panel discussion on the topic, 'Grooming Leaders with Right Attitude' on Sunday, 19th July 2020 through Zoom.

Ms. Priyanka Chaturvedi, MP (Shiv Sena - Rajya Sabha from Maharashtra) and Shri Ram Mohan Naidu, MP (TDP - Lok Sabha from Andhra Pradesh) shared their views. The panel discussion can be watched from this link:

https://youtu.be/n2_8bQYrqeM

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0720.pdf (July 2020)

Webinar on 'Women in Politics'



Madras Management Association (MMA) organised a Webinar jointly with Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL) on 18th June 2020 on the theme, 'Women in Politics'. Popular film actress Ms Kushbu Sundar (Spokesperson, Congress), Ms Nupur Sharma (Spokesperson, BJP), Ms Rehana Ameer (Indian-born politician at London) were the panellists.

Ms Lakshmi Ramakrishnan, popular actress and television anchor moderated the discussions.

The proceedings can be watched at
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mx4-pSTVE_M

By Priyadharshni Rahul, Deputy Editor

**Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0620.pdf
(June 2020)**

Webinar on 'Parliamentary Democracy During COVID Times'



On 23rd June 2020, Madras Management Association (MMA) organised a Webinar on the theme, 'Parliamentary Democracy during COVID Times' jointly with Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL). Mr N K Premachandran MP (Lok Sabha), Mr Naresh Gujral MP (Rajya Sabha) and Prof G Ramesh (Professor, Public Policy, IIM, Bangalore) were the panellists.

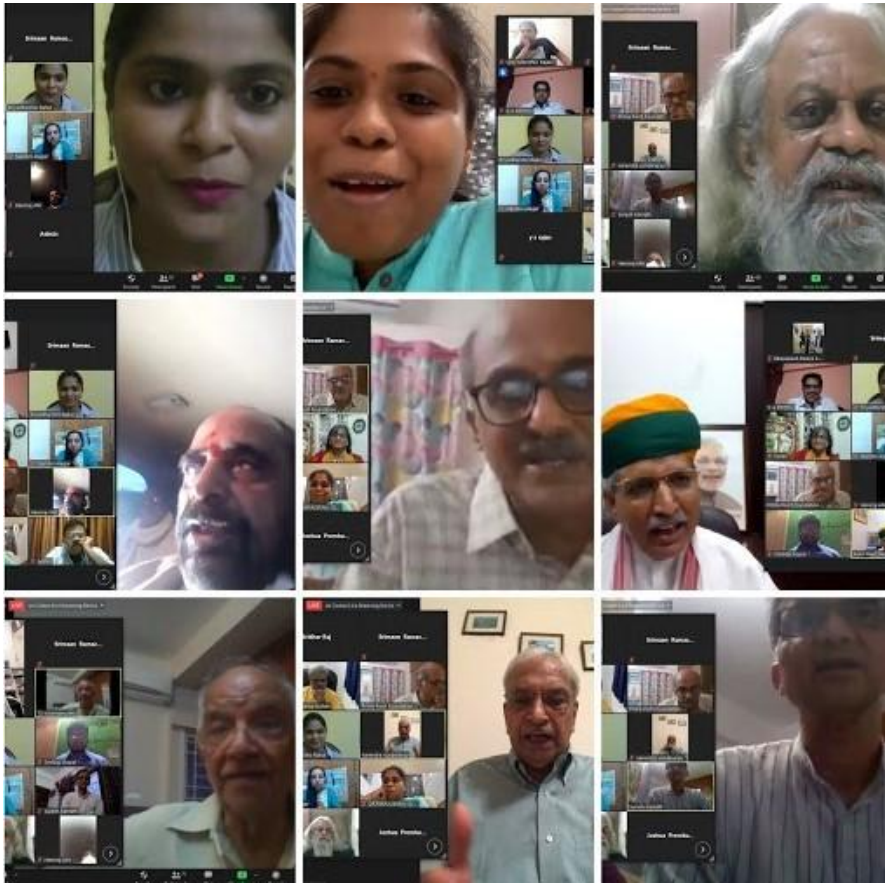
Dr Madhavan, President of PRS Research was the Moderator.

The proceedings can be watched at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49O2avTnaqk>

by Priyadharshni Rahul, Deputy Editor

**Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0620.pdf
 (June 2020)**

Prime Point Foundation Completes 20 Years



The 20th anniversary of Prime Point Foundation was celebrated on 5th July 2020 through a Zoom meeting.

Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal (Hon'ble Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs), Shri Hansraj Ahir (Former Hon'ble Minister of State for Home Affairs), Shri T S Krishnamurthy (Former Chief Election Commissioner of India), Dr Y S Rajan (co-author of the book, 'India 2020' with late Dr Abdul Kalam), Shri S Narendra (Former Media Advisor to Prime Minister), Dr Maria Zeena Johnson (Chancellor, Sathyabama University), Shri B Suresh Kamath (Managing Director, Patterns) and Shri Nurulla (senior Tamil journalist) participated in

the event and shared their views. They had all supported the Foundation during its incubation and take-off period,

Programme Host: Priyadharshni Rahul, Deputy Editor

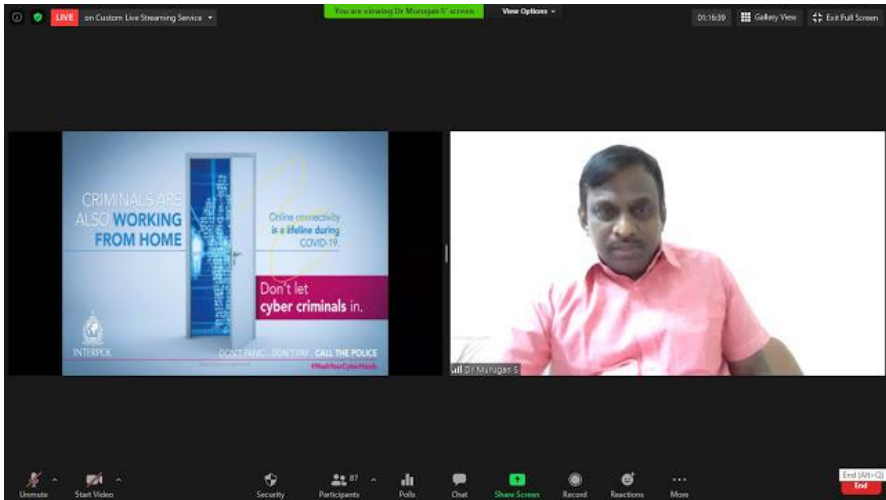
The proceedings can be watched from this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wn2zWiv_0fY&feature=youtu.be

by Prime Point Srinivasan, Publisher and Managing Editor

**Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0720.pdf
(July 2020)**

Current Trends in Cyber Crime



Digital Security Association of India (DiSAI) and eMagazine PreSense organised a Webinar through Zoom on 28th July 2020 on the topic, 'Current Trends in Cyber Crime'.

Dr S Murugan, IPS, Inspector General of Police, South, Madurai, Tamil Nadu shared his views.

The proceedings can be watched from the link:
<https://youtu.be/WfgimKF7WQQ>

by Prime Point Srinivasan, Publisher and Managing Editor

**Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0720.pdf
(July 2020)**

How to Avail Education Loan?



On 8th August 2020, Shri Prime Point Srinivasan, Convenor of Education Loan task Force (ELTF), talked

about 'How to Avail Education Loan'. His session provided guidelines for students on the application process, loan disbursement and repayment methods, including interest subsidy for education loans. Shri Srinivasan emphasised the importance of students creating rapport with the banks during the tenancy of the loan and repayment. He also covered details of eligibility for the loan under various categories.

Programme Host: Sukruti Narayanan

The recording of the event can be watched on:

<https://youtu.be/SuSj8gVNE>.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense0820.pdf (August 2020)

Open Schooling: Opportunities and Advantages

On 22nd August 2020, Dr P Ravi, former Regional Director of National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) talked about 'Open Schooling – Opportunities and Advantages'. He shared 2 videos about the open schooling system and the flexibility that NIOS provides.



Dr Ravi discussed various aspects about the courses offered viz. Personal Contact Programmes with Study Centres to aid self-learning, Online Demand Examination (ODE), and the nominal fee structure that encourages all types of students to participate. He emphasised the credibility of NIOS and the opportunity to join reputed institutions like IIT after completing the open schooling course under NIOS.

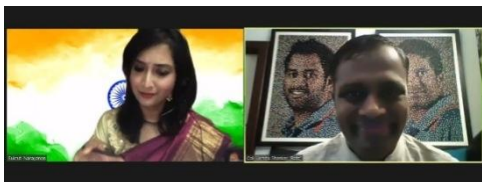
Programme Host: Sukruti Narayanan

The recording of the event can be watched on <https://youtu.be/A9ozR89KJII>.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0820.pdf (August 2020)

Career Opportunities in Indian Army

In the Saturday Talk Series held on 29th August 2020, we had Colonel Vembu Shankar, Shaurya Chakra Awardee (India's 3rd highest gallantry award in peace) talk about 'Opportunities in the Indian Army'. He shared his experience as a military academy graduate and his deployment in the Jammu and



Kashmir border. His videos gave a glimpse of life in the Indian army. The topic on war cry, and his post-retirement life were informative and interesting. There are opportunities for men and women in various capacities in the Indian army. To know more about these opportunities, one can visit the website, www.joinindianarmy.nic.in.

Programme Host: Sukruti Narayanan

The recording of the video can be watched on <https://youtu.be/yyQiOv1SQw4>.

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0820.pdf (Aug 2020)

Public Relations and Integrated Communication



On 12th September 2020, Mr Vikram Kharvi, Vice President, Corporate Reputation Practice at AdFactors PR, spoke about 'Public Relations and

Integrated Communication'. With his expertise in running various online PR forums, he shared real time examples about how brands communicate with their audience.

The recording of the event is available in the following link:
<https://youtu.be/rVIVzgcRcQw>.

Programme Host: Sukruti Narayanan

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0920.pdf (Sep 2020)

eGovernance and its Opportunities

On 19th September 2020, Dr Santhosh Babu, IAS, Former Principal Secretary and Information Technology Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu, and an authority on eGovernance model, shared his views on 'eGovernance and its Opportunities'. He explained the importance of 'Time Budgeting' and multitasking.



The recording of the event is available in the following link:
<https://youtu.be/PeuAL16WjA>.

Programme Host: Sukruti Narayanan

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0920.pdf (Sep 2020)

Democracy: Citizens' Responsibilities and Rights

The second episode of '*Sangamam*: Fusion of Great Minds' series, organised by Prime Point Foundation, with the support of its initiatives, eMagazine PreSense, NextGen Political Leaders (NGPL) and Digital Journalists Association of India (DiJAI), was held in the evening of Sunday, 27th September 2020.

The topic was 'Democracy: Citizens' Responsibilities and Rights'.



Shri T S Krishnamurthy, Former Chief Election Commissioner of India, and Dr S K Kharventhan, Former Member of Parliament and Former Chairman, Bar Council of India, were the speakers for the evening. They discussed the various implications and situations concerning the responsibilities of the citizens of India, along with their rights. They also addressed a variety of questions from the viewers.

Shri Prime Point Srinivasan welcomed the speakers and introduced them. Smt Susan Koshy, Editor-in-Chief was the Moderator of the programme. The programme was conducted through Zoom, and was streamed live through YouTube, Face book and Twitter.

The recording of the event is available on

<https://youtu.be/JqUHjooHQiE> .

**Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0920.pdf
(Sep 2020)**

National Education Conclave 2020

Academicians Welcome NEP 2020: Demand Effective Implementation

Prime Point Foundation jointly with this eMagazine PreSense, Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL) and Education Loan Task Force (ELTF) organised online a three-day National Education Conclave 2020 on the topic “NEP 2020 – Understanding the right way”. Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon’ble MoS, Parliamentary Affairs, Govt. of India and many eminent academicians and industrialists participated and shared their views. The proceedings were streamed live through YouTube, Twitter and Facebook.

All the academicians welcomed the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), and hoped that this would bring in a paradigm shift in the standards of education in our country. Many of them felt that the earlier education policy,



Arjun Ram Meghwal

framed in 1986, was not effectively implemented. Hence, they appealed to the Government to ensure that NEP 2020 is implemented effectively by all the stakeholders.

While inaugurating the Conclave, Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon’ble MoS, Parliamentary Affairs, extensively quoted Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, who acquired knowledge and inspiration right from the school itself, and who had always emphasised on quality school education for a bright future to this Nation. Shri Meghwal highlighted the importance of school education which shapes the future of the children. He also insisted on moral education at every level. He stressed that in the twenty-first century, knowledge would be the power.

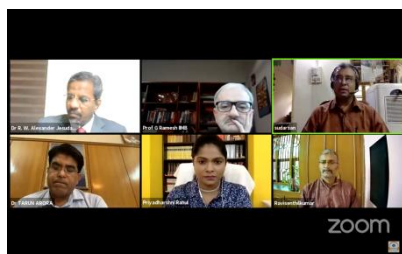


Session I



Session II

Some of the observations / suggestions made by the Panelists:



Session III

Dr. Ravi Mathur, Former CEO, CS1 India, Delhi: Employability is a big challenge to our graduates because of the lack of skills and bleak understanding of the concepts. A robust Digital India infrastructure system will ensure uninterrupted learning and empowered graduates. Computers and other devices should

be available at affordable prices for the best implementation of NEP 2020.

Dr. R. Jagannathan, Provost, Saint Teresa University, Saint Vincent and The Grenadines, West Indies: Whenever an Indian student is asked, the student will invariably say that he / she would like to become a doctor or an engineer, while most of the Finland students prefer to become a teacher. Students should be encouraged to become teachers, to provide high quality education. Though India produces nearly 20 lakh teachers every year, as against the requirement of 3 lakh teachers, the quality of teacher training in India is below par, resulting in poor quality education. Salary and perquisites should be made more attractive to encourage quality teachers.

Mr. Vijay Kumar, Executive Director, Madras Management Association: Teachers are to be trained in an ongoing basis. Also

the teachers – students' ratio, should be adequately addressed and enhanced. The focus on skill development and vocational training will create more opportunities and will improve employability.

Dr. R W Alexandar Jesudasan, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science (Deemed to be University): NEP 2020 being a well drafted policy document compared to the earlier 1968 and 1986 policies, shifts focus from theory to practice. There should be effective communication to convince the students. The establishment of the Academic Bank of Credit viz., digital storage of academic credits is a welcome move. The success of NEP2020 depends upon the effective implementation and coordination amongst all the stakeholders.

Dr. Tarun Arora, Dean, School of Legal Studies, Central University of Punjab: The infrastructure in Schools and Colleges, for Vocational and Skill Development, is to be improved. The Regulatory system should be made more effective. Educational Institutions should provide the required infrastructure to the teachers to learn to teach better. Teacher Training Institutes should not be just commercial shops and should rather be a committed unit to orient the teachers with the required knowledge.

Dr. Ameeta Mulla Wattal, Principal, Springdales School, New Delhi: Understanding the regional language is very important. Children should be encouraged to think creatively. Teaching the primary school children in their mother tongue improves the child's understanding and imagination. This NEP 2020 is the most flexible proposal amongst all other National Education Policies earlier and has given high scope of creativity to teachers in teaching concepts. This policy will moot the child's development in whole and prepare him/her with confidence. If we plan for its implementation next year, the teachers should start their training from today, right now!

Dr. Ashok Pandey, Director, Ahlcon Public and International Schools, Delhi: NEP 2020 is a good policy to improve the quality of

education in India. Effective implementation of the Policy is to be ensured. NEP is truly a paradigm shift that requires collective commitment from the Teachers, Parents, Students, Government and the Civil Society in its effective implementation. This is surely a slow process for it to reach every corner of this nation and hence, the sooner we understand this magnificent document and its progressive vision, the faster we will be giving a great education to our children. It is just not a visionary document but also a policy to certainty.

Dr. Sudarsan Padmanabhan, Associate Professor, IIT Madras:

Presently the education system is textbook centric, teacher centric and not student centric. It does not provide the opportunity for students to apply their mind and be creative. NEP2020 will change the perspective of students. Their life will no longer be designed by the parents' ambitions and dreams, but by the ability and capability of the child. All stakeholders are to coordinate and be involved effectively for successful implementation, .

Dr. Maria Zeena Johnson, Chancellor, Satyabhama Institute of Science and Technology (Deemed to be University):

In NEP 2020 there will be no dropouts as the student will have a certificate at any time of his exit. Online education has become the order of the day in our country. NEP 2020 is student centric. Infrastructure in Colleges and Universities is reasonably good but infrastructure in schools is to be improved to maintain uniformity.

Dr. G. Ramesh, Professor, Center for Public Policy, Indian Institute of Management, Bengaluru:

Normally Arts and sciences courses have been going down in the order of preference amongst the students. Students rush towards engineering and medical courses in herds. In the United States, whatever be the major a student takes, he has to take a certain number of credits in liberal arts courses. Apart from certain prescribed minimum credits to qualify for a major, they are free to take the subjects of their choice. The Universities in the US are mostly large ones which may happen in India also. It means, smaller colleges in small towns can

offer first year's basic courses or convert into vocational training colleges. India will become a place to accept international students to provide quality education rather than our students going abroad for a better education.

YouTube Links

18th Oct 2020 - Inauguration and Session 1:

<https://youtu.be/qsLfJPrJ-q8>

19th October 2020 - Session II: <https://youtu.be/K1aImuE61EM>

20th October 2020 – Session III: <https://youtu.be/2jxYpCs8vJc>

The Conclave was moderated by Ms. Priyadharshni Rahul, Trustee Secretary Prime Point Foundation and Deputy Editor of PreSense. Mr Srinivas Gopal was the Event Coordinator.

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Publisher & Mg. Editor and C Badri, Editorial Advisor

**Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1020.pdf
(Oct 2020)**

Panel Discussion: Ethics in Politics

"Legislation needed to regulate political parties and political funding" – Justice A K Patnaik

In the panel discussion under the segment, *Sangamam*, organised by this eMagazine PreSense, on 1st November 2020, Justice A K Patnaik urged the need for an immediate legislation to regulate political parties and political funding.



'Ethics in Politics' – Is it an Oxymoron?

PreSense and Prime Point Foundation in association with Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL) organise a monthly panel discussion with nationally renowned persons under the series, *"Sangamam – Fusion of Great Minds"*. On 1st November 2020, a panel discussion was held on the topic "Ethics in Politics", moderated by Ms Priyadharshni Rahul, Deputy Editor of PreSense. Justice A K Patnaik (Retired Judge, Supreme Court) and Mr Bhartruhari Mahtab (sixth-time sitting MP from Cuttack, Odisha) were the expert panellists.

While introducing the subject, Prime Point Srinivasan, Publisher and Managing Editor of PreSense, said that many people thought ethics and politics were an oxymoron. But he cited the example of great leaders across the nation like Dr Ambedkar, Sardar Patel, Lal

Bahadur Shastri, Morarji Desai, Dr Hari Krishna Mahtab, Kamaraj, Rajaji, Kakkan and many others who practised ethics in their political life. It was only after the period of the 60s and 70s that ethics seemed compromised in politics, he added.

Why Erosion of Values in Politics?

Justice Patnaik said that freedom fighters, who were committed to the national cause, were participants in the legislatures and in the Government till 1960s. He added that it was thereafter that the new class of 'fortune seekers' began to join politics, leading to the erosion of values in politics.

Mr Bhartruhari Mahtab, concurred with the views of Justice Patnaik that a new class of politicians has emerged after the 1960s, with the sole aim to acquire power and earn money. They also interfered with the functioning of the civil administration to gain illegal benefits. Mr Bhartruhari Mahtab quoted Dr Ashok Mehta, a well-known socialist leader who wrote in 1960 that people were rushing towards the political parties, which were expected to come to power.

Legislation Needed

Justice Patnaik observed that electoral politics has led to the collection of large amounts of funds. Therefore, political parties prefer people with a source of large funds. Over a period of time, the leaders themselves have become arrogant and do not follow democracy within their own party. He suggested legislation to regulate the political parties and political funding, along the lines of the UK, Australia, Germany, Cambodia, and South Africa, which have effective legislations in place. He insisted that internal democracy should also be included in the legislation.

Mr Bhartruhari Mahtab felt that in India, the enforcement of the law was weak and any amount of legislation would not help unless enforced effectively. He added that at present, details of funding of political parties cannot be sought through RTI (Right to Information). In response to this observation, Justice Patnaik said that unless there is a legislation, the Supreme Court, the High Courts and the Election Commission would not be able to enforce,

when needed. Both agreed that funding of political parties should become transparent.

Dynastic Politics

Justice Patnaik said that he was not in favour of dynastic politics. If any family is good, they can come back to power on their own. But he was not in favour of individual families controlling the political parties in India, as this was against the interest of democracy.

Agreeing with his views, Mr Bhartruhari Mahtab felt that complacency has developed in dynastic politics. Fortunately, people have become more demanding, and are more conscious of their rights. With the emergence of social media, people have better access to information. He added that the main challenge before politics was how to sustain a high standard of ethics, and do good for the society.

Advice to Young Politicians

Justice Patnaik appealed to youngsters to join politics, after ensuring they had a regular income base to maintain their families. He also appealed to the general public to be vigilant while exercising their votes, so that good people are elected to the legislature.

Mr Bhartruhari Mahtab welcomed the New Education Policy 2020, whereby children would be taught values and ethics from the primary school level. Honesty, gratitude, forgiveness and non-violence need to be taught and inculcated. That would help to build a strong nation.

The discussion in full can be watched on
https://youtu.be/cf_w2EKJrmM.

by G. Priyadarshni Rahul, Deputy Editor

**Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1120.pdf
(Nov 2020)**

You Too can Be a Cartoonist

Mr Triambak Sharma, a well-known Raipur-based cartoonist and Editor of Cartoon Watch, shared tips about how to become a cartoonist. He demonstrated how anybody can become a cartoonist. This show was hosted by Ms Sukruti Narayanan (Actor and Communication Professional from Australia). The talk show can be watched from this link:

<https://youtu.be/bVOyRXYRnVU>



Know Your Income Tax Rules (Individuals)



Mr S Mohan, a leading Chennai-based Chartered Accountant, in conversation with Prime Point Srinivasan discussed the latest rules and guidelines on Income Tax for

individuals. This conversation can be watched at:

<https://youtu.be/MLXReJWiA2E> .

Fundamental Duties Enshrined in the Constitution

Mr Purvish Malkan, Advocate on Record at the Supreme Court of India, Delhi shared his views about the Constitution Day celebrations, and also about the Fundamental Duties enshrined in the Indian Constitution. Prime Point Srinivasan hosts the show. The conversation can be watched at <https://youtu.be/nwDSjf8NGOY>

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1120.pdf
(Nov 2020)

Interview with Dr Sam Pitroda, Father of Indian Telecom Revolution

"We need technology in agriculture to improve the income of our farmers"

The Editorial Team of PreSense had an interactive session with Dr Sam Pitroda, an internationally renowned telecom inventor, entrepreneur and policy maker with over 50 years of experience in the Information and Communication domain. We reproduce an extract from the interview. The recording of the full interview is available at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Inz9VKDv1I> .



Q1. Why is India not able to merge technology with agriculture which is the backbone of the country?

Dr. Pitroda: In agriculture, technology has a lot to do in the areas of soil, irrigation, seeds, weather forecasting, marketing, distribution and delivery. We need technology in agriculture to improve the income of our farmers. We need technology for the people at the bottom of the economic pyramid. The best brains in the world are busy solving problems of the rich. The problems of the poor do not get the right talent to resolve them.

Q2. How can we use technology with data security?

Dr. Pitroda: Technology can track you down through your credit card, your mobile phone and your social media, besides other devices. Let us accept this fact and be cautious about our private matters like health, wealth and family, where we need to keep them as private as possible. We need to take care of security here like we lock our house. We need to continuously use better locks to keep our private matters private.

Q3. Please share your experience in the technology revolution that you were involved, in the 1980s.

Dr. Pitroda: I strongly believed that connectivity could bring everyone in this diverse and interesting country together. When the then Prime Minister approved my proposal, I was empowered with the political will to do something for this country. The focus was to improve access to telephones rather than telephones themselves. The idea of STD PCOs (Public Calling Offices) booths, developed with indigenous resources, became popular. Thus, in forty years, from just 2 million telephones for which we needed to wait 10 years, India now has 1.2 billion phones.

Q4. In the banking sector, how do we maintain the right technology while maintaining high security?

Dr. Pitroda: In today's banking, transacting is almost instant to any place in the world so that distance is irrelevant and time is instant. When compared to the volume of banking transactions running to trillions and trillions every day globally, the extent of frauds is miniscule, and it is calculated into the cost of banking. And the banking sector is doing its best to take care of the threats and risks.

Q5. How do you see our education system and what would you suggest for change?

Dr. Pitroda: We need three things for education – motivation, time and content. If one has the motivation and time, content is available on the internet. So, we do not really need a teacher in the conventional sense, but a mentor. Therefore, we need to change the

education system. There are three challenges to address – expansion for inclusivity, quality of education to equip students to solve problems and not learn by rote, and reach so that the poorest of poor have access to proper education.

Education is fundamentally about being a good human being and a good citizen – a self that is disciplined, respectful, creative and comfortable with oneself. The three fundamental things in life are to love, be engaged/occupied, and be fulfilled with life.

Q6. What are the strengths you see in the Indian youth today? Do you see any area for improvement?

Dr. Pitroda: India has an advantage because of its large number of the youth. Our young people should be the workforce for the world, solving problems of the world, and not just India. We need to build their character to see beyond making money at some point. They needed to trust in life, practise truth, respect one another, heed age, experience and wisdom, and build an inclusive society.

The Team comprised Prime Point Srinivasan Managing Editor & Publisher, Susan Koshy, Editor-in-Chief, Priyadarshni Rahul, Deputy Editor, and Srinivasa Gopal, Technical Support.

by Susan Koshy, Editor-in-Chief

**Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1220.pdf
(Dec 2020)**

**Exclusive interview with Ms Priyanka Chaturvedi,
Member of Parliament**

"Be persistent in your effort. When they see progress, the world is with you!"

In an exclusive conversation with Ms Priyanka Vickram Chaturvedi, Member of Parliament in the talk series, Aura, Ms Priyanka shared her experiences in her journey to become a well-known politician, and a successful woman. Ms Priyanka Chaturvedi is also the deputy leader of her political party, Shiv Sena. She was earlier the national spokesperson of Indian National Congress before she quit.



We reproduce some of Ms Priyanka Chaturvedi's thoughts, shared in the conversation with Priyadharshni Rahul:

Ms Priyanka Joining Politics

As a mother of two, it was the 26/11/2008 Mumbai terrorist attack that triggered my zeal to join politics. Politics was an opportunity to be the change I was seeking.

My decision was an initial shock to my family. When I was getting into politics, I was advised that as a woman, I cannot have an impactful political career unless I came from a politically connected family or I was a well-established celebrity or someone with lots of money.

But my conviction, determination and perseverance impressed my family, the people and the public in general, so as to acknowledge and appreciate what I am, with my legitimate space in politics in the male-dominated arena.

Ms Priyanka in Politics

Politicians are viewed with suspicion by the public. You need to prove yourself and gain their confidence. It is important to be

committed and grounded. Remember the 1.3 billion people in India and the 800 odd representatives in the Parliament. That is where you stand. With great power comes great responsibility. Your duty should be to strengthen the nation and its people.

Women in Politics

It is equally important for women to perform with utmost commitment. Consistently prove your worth, convince your family of your decision and ambition. Be persistent in your effort. When they see progress, the world is with you. And there is no compromise to your womanhood. Fighting for your dignity and self-respect is imperative and not a tradable commodity.

Women's Performance in Parliament

With their confidence and efforts, women MPs give a sense of purpose to younger women who look for a political career. Women have this amazing power of inspiring other women. Ms Supriya Sule, as the top performing MP, encourages and inspires others with her personal commitment, positivity and openness to suggestions.

Managing Family and Politics

During my initial years, my daughter was just two years. I was trying to establish myself by burning the midnight oil. I did miss out on many important family events, but my husband, my children and my family gave me the strength to go after my calling for this nation. My husband and I shared the parenting responsibilities between ourselves, and today my kids are independent, mature and grounded with a strong value system.

Ms Priyanka's Strength Against Social Harassment

My self-respect is valuable. I cannot let my children see me as a leader from outside, and a broken person inside. So, I did not let go of those perpetrators of social harassment against me. This is a message to my son that he cannot behave badly with women, and for my daughter that she must never forget her core values.

After resigning (from the political party that condoned the perpetrators who harassed me), the options were to either end up as a failure who stood up for her dignity, or else try again in another political party which will respect me for what I am. I chose Shiv Sena, and I continue in my political career with many more achievements on the way!

Youth in Politics

This is the best time for youngsters to understand and learn about politics, and aspire, as almost every political party is looking for fresh blood and ideas. Young minds with the right spirit must govern this country. Tomorrow is yours. Believe in it!

Message to Men with Ambitious Women by their Side

Respect and support women for their choices. Be open to discuss their decisions and do not judge their abilities by conventional yardsticks. Treat them as equals and have conversations with them. Convince them that you are with them.

Prerequisites of a Good Politician

Empathy, staying grounded, patience, high emotional quotient, ability to stay connected with the people, and to listen. Communication should be clear. Create a narrative about yourself. The social media can help in effectively conveying one's opinion to the public. Always be aware of the others' ideologies. It helps in strengthening your own convictions. Prepare and be thorough in understanding the concept and background of any topic for debate or discussion.

The complete conversation can be viewed in the following link:
<https://youtu.be/nPyr9d14AEk>.

by Priyadharshni Rahul, Deputy Editor

**Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense1220.pdf
(Dec 2020)**

Exclusive interview with Ms Rehana Ameer, Councillor, London City Corporation

In the third edition of Aura, the Inspiration series, streamed on 2nd January 2021, Ms Rehana Ameer, Councillor, London City Corporation shared her inspiring journey to success, and explained how she involved her children in her family decision-making. In the history of London City Corporation, she is the first person of Indian origin to hold the position.



The entire conversation is available in the following link:

<https://youtu.be/ONegy7znSzg> .

Exclusive interview with Mr Arvind Thiagarajan, Serial Inventor from USA

On 17th January 2021, Mr Arvind Thiagarajan, Serial Inventor & Entrepreneur from USA, spoke about 'How to be a Successful Inventor and Entrepreneur'. He shared his special moments of inspiration, from the life and character of late Dr APJ Abdul Kalam (former President of India), during his days as a University student and his personal interaction with him. He spoke about how he became an entrepreneur, and gave tips on how to be a successful one, based on his own life experience, inspired by Dr Kalam.

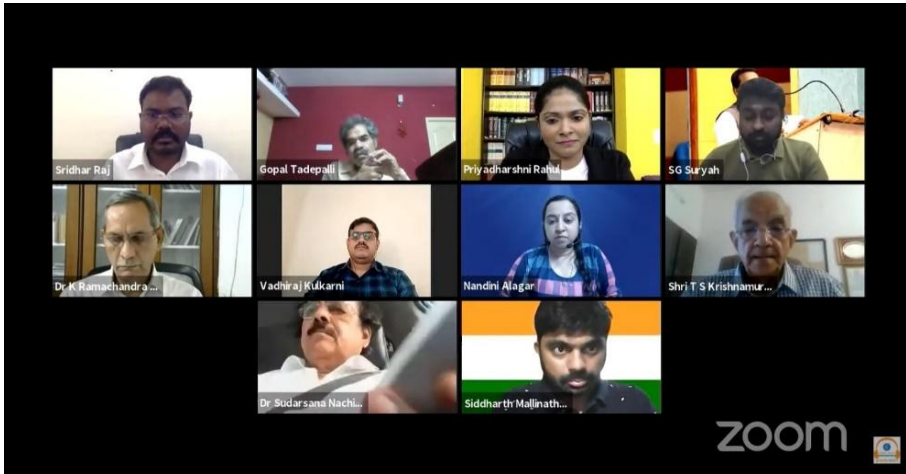


The recording can be watched in the following link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=47_Q4WDhLIU

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezone/presense0121.pdf (Jan 2021)

Exclusive Panel Discussion on 'Electoral Reforms and Simultaneous Elections'



A panel discussion on 'Electoral Reforms and Simultaneous Elections' was organised on 24th January 2021, with Dr Sudarsana Nachiappan, Former Member of Parliament, and Shri T S Krishnamurthy, Former Chief Election Commissioner of India, sharing their expert comments and thoughts before a virtually live audience on social media. The programme was keenly attended and the audience posed several interesting questions to the panelists for their valued opinions.

The programme can be watched in the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbOZHs-2fxk> .

Source: www.prpoint.com/ezine/presense0221.pdf
(Feb 2021)

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