India's first corporate PR ezine VOL 1 Issue 2 Apr 06

Published by Prime Point Foundation and Chennai PR Club

PR-e-FACE: "Keep pace with the changing time"

The inaugural issue of *PResense* was well received by corporate CEOs and communicators from India and abroad. Since the file size is very small, the ezine has been forwarded by many organisations to various other people. Some Educational Institutions have even photocopied the print out and circulated amongst the students and Professors. The editorial team has received lot of appreciation for this new attempt. The launch of *PResense* has evoked interest amongst the media also. Editorial team re-dedicates its commitment to provide quality contents and inform the industry updates and trends.

In the recent months, lots of discussions are going on in India about the "Corporate Governance". "Transparency" and "Disclosures" have become buzzwords in the new environment. Focus has been shifted to "stakeholders" from "shareholders". This situation has made the role of 'Corporate Communicators' more challenging. Today 'communication' is emerging as a management function. Every organisation needs to develop the core competency in internal and external communication.

CEOs and Corporate Communicators need to update their knowledge and skills. They need to be aware of the current trends. Professional organisations like PR Clubs, PR societies need to reorient their activities to keep pace with the changing time.

PR-e-CISE

Inside this ezine:

PR-e-VIEW

PRIME POINT Foundation runs two major groups on Public Relations and Corporate Communication.

Image Management group, the global group with nearly 1200 members discusses issues at global perspective.

prpoint group, the only Indian group with nearly 500 members discusses issues in Indian perspective.

To join these groups visit http://www.primepointfoundation.org/

Some of the best views of members extracted from the group discussions are reproduced in these columns

PR eXCLUSIVE - An Indian wonder – Unknown story

Indian Postal Department, the second largest civil employer under Central Government with nearly **5.5 lakh employees** and **1.56 lakh post offices** has **150 years of tradition**. This Department operates both the 19th century 'Telegraph' (in rural areas) and the latest 'Satellite' gadgets. They handle around **7 billion registered and unregistered mails** physically per annum with near perfection and earn a **revenue of around Rs. 50000 millions.** It is the largest conglomerate organization handling mail services, financial services, life insurance etc. They hold **deposits around Rs. 4,000 billion** spread over nearly **180 million savings bank and other accounts**. They are the second largest 'life insurer' of the country with very high market share in rural India, handling around **7 million policies.** With this mind-boggling operation, it is a wonder as to how this Department maintains the highest levels of efficiency and customer confidence. In an exclusive interview Dr. U. Srinivasa Raghavan, Chairman, Indian Postal Services Board spoke to Mr Sakthi Prasanna of *PResense*. Excerpts:

Q: The average educational level of your employees is less than matriculation. How are you able to manage such a volume of business with high efficiency and managing the technology and competition together?

A: The average educational qualification of most of the departmental employees is matriculation or higher. No doubt managing such a volume of business with high efficiency and meeting the competition is a difficult task. However, effective internal communication, newsletters, training centers, regular interaction etc., has enabled us to overcome this hurdle. Systematic and defined operative procedures also help. In the new thrust areas like financial services (mutual funds, securities, etc), computerisation, logistics, etc., we have not only gone in for massive internal communication and training but have also encouraged employees to get qualifications like AMFI certification.

Our "Meghdoot" software produced in-house for our postal operation, has now found export market in the neighbouring countries also.

We maintain very high level of interactions and internal communication with our two major trade unions and other associations. The joint effort of the management and our employees, based on mutual trust and respect, has enabled us to manage such a volume of business with highest efficiency and to face the competition with confidence.

Q: What is the role of Communication when we move towards Corporate Governance?

A: Corporate Governance focuses on transparency. External transparency cannot come unless internal transparency exists.

By a process of education, internal communication and shared vision, we have sensitized our employees to meet the customer expectations. Corporate governance, we believe, is a combination of fulfillment of customer expectations in a transparent and ethical way and total organizational commitment. We gear up our internal and external communications towards that goal.

Website : www.indiapost.gov.in

PReSTIGE - Two pillars of Corporate Governance

Clause 49 of listing agreement announced by SEBI stipulates all listed companies in India to develop good Corporate Governance model. Madras Chamber of Commerce and industry (MCCI) organised two days programme at Chennai jointly with National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) on 17th and 18th March 06, to create awareness amongst the Corporate Managements on this new development.

Ms Chitra Ramakrishna, Deputy Managing Director of National Stock Exchange of India delivered the "Keynote address". NSE is the third largest stock exchange in the world with listing of more than 1000 companies. Extract from the presentation of Ms Chitra:

Corporate Governance stands on two pillars viz. (1) disclosures and (2) management of Governance structure. Now the companies are moving towards transparent regime. Greater the quality of disclosures in the structured format, greater will be respectability amongst the stakeholders. Non-structured information may have an adverse impact.

Nowadays, lots of rumours are floating around in the market about the companies. This creates lot of confusion amongst the public. NSE has enabled dialogue between companies and the exchange to 'verify the rumours'. Many companies deny the rumours or offer 'No comment'. When rumours are not commented upon, it leads to further confusion.

The companies which are rated as "Well governed" get higher premium. By introducing corporate governance measures, the companies will be able to see tangible benefits.

Corporate governance should now become a movement very similar to privatization. Such movements have an effect of leading to superior quality service & customer satisfaction.

Companies with a paid up capital of Rs. 3 cr and above or Net worth of Rs. 25 cr or more at any time in the history of the company are required to comply with CG norms.

PResentors of *PReSENSE*

Feedback and contributions to:
ezinepresense@gmail.com

PR –e- VIEW – Extract from discussion groups

Prpoint Group

Corporate Governance and Corporate Communication – S Ganesh – 20:20 Media, Chennai sriganesh.r@gmail.com

Coming back to the compliance, it is also noted that if SEC (the governing body in US) asks Indian companies (having operations in US) to follow SoX, it will be followed without any questions. But if SEBI asks us to do the same why do Indian companies cause so much noise pollution?

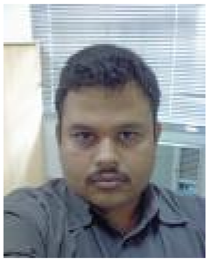

Image Management Group

Media contacting CEO directly – Mitesh Kapadia - Sentinal PR, Mumbai mitesh_kapadia@yahoo.com

On one hand journos are always under the pressure of a deadline (and hence the short cut of talking directly to the Top Management) and on the other hand they may not be sure of the 100% accuracy of the info given by the PR/CC person.

If the info given by the cc/pr person turns out to be false the management can sit back and say they never said anything.

However, once a journo actually talks to the Top Management, he/she knows it is safe to write. Its up to us cc/pr guys to create credibility for ourselves and this cannot come overnight!

This credibility can come (as has been mentioned by others in this forum) by knowing the subject properly and by giving 100% accurate info all the time.

Image Management Group

Brand Management – Rupali Kalav, SBI capital Markets Ltd., Mumbai rupali_kalav@yahoo.com

Brand physique is a part of brand personality… when you assume that the brand is a living human being, you can describe how the brand looks, his traits etc.. Brand Reflection is a part of the Kapferer Model i.e. also referred as Brand Identity Prism…. Basically it is an external perception of a brand by the multiple Stakeholders of the brand… Whereas Brand Architecture is more to do with brand portfolio, graphical representations, etc..

log on and download a pdf on brand architecture…
http://www.cim.co.uk/mediastore/Brand_eGuides/eGuide6.pdf

PR –e- VIEW – Extract from discussion groups

Image Management Group

Corporate citizenship and Reputation – Meena Vaidyanathan, Honeywell India, Delhi Meena.vaidyanathan@honeywell.com

To view CSR activities as PR events doesn't talk for majority organisations that value and endorse CSR as an inherent part of their business. Sure, there are fish that look for a quick photo-op, but the average reader/consumer can figure that out in a jiffy. CSR is today important for two main reasons for a company:

- to build and sustain employee engagement
- to position itself as a corporate citizen and align itself with its brand promise through these programmes

I agree that organisations who succeed in building a long-term and successful CSR programme are those who choose their programmes carefully and stay focussed on the key deliverables

Prpoint Group

When an exclusive story lose its 'exclusivity'.. ?? – Mona Kwatra, DSP Merrill Lynch Limited, Mumbai mona_kwatra@ml.com

If you are a listed company, then any material information first has to be communicated to the stock exchange and then only it can be disclosed to outsiders or third parties. You can inform the exchange anytime, even late at night. (it helps if you alert them to expect something before hand)

The idea is that when we say - material info - any info that will have a positive or negative impact on your stock price, has to uniformly go out to everybody at the same time. Which is why people prefer to disclose such info only after market hours.

Prpoint Group

Using the services of freelance journalists – Deepa Kandaswamy, Professional writer, Tiruchy daknews@yahoo.com

I was wondering why PR agencies especially in India don't tap the large freelancer base for placing their stories in the media. It would save you money and time instead of contacting staff members in the media.

Visit the following link for *Freelancer database* in India http://www.nwmindia.org/freelancers_database/index.htm

PR –e- VIEW – Extract from discussion groups

Image Management Group

How to measure the capability of a PR Agency – Manish Rathour

mrathour@gmail.com

Well the parameters are multiple, and one needs to chose from a list, based on the purpose of engagement. Broadly speaking one can categorize the capability around three parameters (not limited to this though) :

1. Experience : This can cover the number of years in industry, stature in the industry, access to editors/jurnos, Account mangers experience, Account executive experience etc.

2. Competency: this covers Industry knowledge, Teamwork, Stability of firm and staff, Writing skills etc.

3. Financial/Business : To cover Size of firm, Cost of services, Methods of reporting results, ability to stay within budget, etc.

Ideally, do a weighted average to weigh one against the other. Finally, it is also the chemistry of the organization with the agency, which needs to be considered. Trust this helps...

PR – eVENTS - What is happening around the world?

Third International Public Relations Conference at Iran

Third International PR Conference of Iran will be held during 12-16 November 2006 at Tehran. Around three thousand PR professionals, Academic experts, Corporate Communication Managers and students are likely to participate. They invite papers to be read during the conference. For more details contact Mr Mehdi Bagherian, Secretary of ICPR Website: http://www.iranpr.org Email: kargozar80@yahoo.com

Public Relations Council of India (PRCI) - new Chapter at Chennai launched

PRCI launched the Chennai Chapter on 11th March 2006. Mr. S. D. Reuben, PRCI's National President, Mr M B Jayaram, Chairman, Governing Council and other National level leaders participated. Mrs Geetha Shankar was elected as President of Chennai Chapter. Chennai is the eleventh Chapter for PRCI in India. Many leading Corporates participated. For details contact gitashankar_2001@rediffmail.com

PR – eVENTS - What is happening around the world?

PR Seminar at Bangalore College

S R N Adarsh College, Bangalore organised a seminar on 9th March 2006 on "Corporate Communication" for their Management students. The programme was inaugurated by Mr. Sanjay Vir Singh IPS, Deputy Inspector General of Police. (third from left in the picture). Dr C Manohar, Director of the Management studies organised this programme.

Delhi PR Club meeting

Second meeting of the members of Delhi PR Club was held on 11th March 2006 at Delhi. The meeting was convened by Mr Arun Arora (Maruti). Members discussed various aspects of Internal Communication. Members shared the insight about making of effective newsletters. They decided to hold the monthly meetings on every second Saturday. For details contact Arun.Arora@maruti.co.in

PR – e – LEARN - Knowledge sources

Crisis and Legal PR Bulletin

Have you visited the Crisis & Legal PR Bulletin lately? This is a new online publication of PR News that's designed to take the pain out of crisis communications. You'll find articles written by PR News staff and crisis/legal PR experts on a wide range of relevant topics. With partner Levick Strategic Communications, the Crisis & Legal PR Bulletin offers timely strategies and tips for managing and communicating during a crisis or litigation.

http://www.prnewsonline.com/legalpr/

PR –eMINENCE - Useful information for Corporates

Ten basic principles of PR – R. Sudarshan, Indian Telephone Industries Ltd., Bangalore sudarshanr_swr@itiltd.co.in

1. PR deals with facts, not fiction.
2. PR is public, not personal service.

3. PR practition-ers must have the guts to say no to a client or to refuse a deceptive program.
4. PR practitioner should never lie to the news media, either out-right or by implication.
5. The PR practitioner probably was the original ombudsman / woman (conveying information back & forth) until understanding is reached.
6. PR cannot to be a guessing game.
7. Intuition is not enough. (PR practitioner must employ the social sciences - sociology, social psychology, public opinion, communication study & semantics).
8. The PR field requires multi disciplinary applications.
9. PR practitioner should alert & advise, so that people won't be taken by surprise.
10. A PR practitioner is only as good as the reputation he or she deserves.

Corporate Governance and Corp Communication – T N Ashok, Alstom Group, Delhi tn.ashok@power.alstom.com

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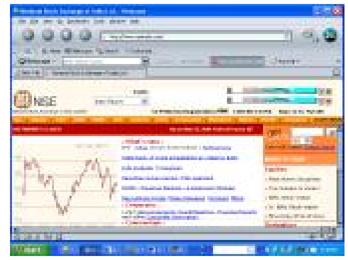
Corporate Communication handles not just internal and external communications but also plays an important role in Corporate Governance and Corporate Social Responsibility. Through these twin responsibilities, a corporate establishes a rapport with the public and the stakeholders. Government of India is strict to monitor how best these responsibilities are enforced by the companies. As Corporate Governance deals with the transparency and ethical practices of a company, a corporate communicator has an important role to play in projecting these virtues. When absent, the communicator must hold his ground and say “no” to bluffing to the public. Information purveyed on governance practices relating to financial practices or work philosophy or functioning has to be accurate. A corporate has an obligation to society to protect the environment in which it works and its social responsibilities have to be projected in the right light by the communicator. It’s no doubt a challenging task.

The modes of implementation are highly restricted to the company’s work culture and philosophy

PR –eMINENCE - Useful information for Corporates

Important Indian financial websites

www.domainb.com
www.indiainfoline.com
www.myiris.com
www.nseindia.com
www.bseindia.com



PR wire for distribution of Press Release

Indo-Asian News Service (IANS) has launched a PR Corporate Wire service to disseminate corporate news and publicity material directly into the newsrooms of the media houses in India and in countries with substantial Indian presence, like the Gulf Countries, US, UK, Australia, etc. For details visit www.ians.in or e mail to ians@vsnl.com

PR eTTY - Relax

Complete Communication – Arun Arora, Maruti Udyog Ltd., Delhi

Arun.Arora@maruti.co.in

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.