

Published by Prime Point Foundation and Chennai PR Club

PR-e-FACE: From the desk of Chief Editor

“Internal communication is the key to bottom line “

Today, all organizations talk about “Employer Branding” and they look forward to be the most ‘preferred employers’. In reality, a question arises as to how many Corporates in developing countries sincerely attempt to achieve this. Seldom have they realized that “Internal Communication” is the only route through which they can achieve “Employer Branding”, which in turn increases the productivity and bottom-line.

In many the organisations, “Internal Communication” is more a formality. In some, “Internal Communication” is totally absent. Confusion prevails in few other organisations as to who would handle the ‘Internal Communication’ - PR or HR? While in few of the organisations, the ‘Internal Communication’ just ends up with ‘employee satisfaction report’.

Time has come, that organisations need to handle the “Internal Communication” strategies at ‘Board Room’ level. PR / Corporate

Communication professionals need to align with HR professionals and work out the strategies.

Technology has provided lot of tools to improve the communication. Many Organisations boast of using intranet, blogs, podcasts, newsletters (online and print), etc. How many of our professionals know about using these tools effectively? How many organisations have verified the effectiveness of their strategies?

In this issue, we attempt to discuss some of the tools and the strategies used by various organisations.. Ultimately, one need to remember that more than these technological tools, it is only ‘Face to Face’ human relations alone can improve the effectiveness of the communication.

K. Srinivasan

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PR-e-CISE – Inside this ezine

- An exclusive interview with Mr T S Krishnamurthy, Former Chief Election Commissioner of India
 - A report on the Newsletter by Corporation Bank Officers’ Organisation
 - Extract of group discussions
 - Sample newsletters
 - PR Events in India and abroad
 - Communication measurement
 - and more ...
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PR-eXCLUSIVE - 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.

Mr T S Krishnbamurthy may be contacted at krishnamurthy.ts@gmail.com

PR –e- VIEW – Extract from media

Fall out of bad internal communication

<http://www.expresscomputeronline.com/20050207/>



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.
-

PRESTIGE – *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.

Mr T R Bhat, Editor could be reached at cbooco@hotmail.com

PR –e- VIEW – Extract from discussion groups

Image Management Group

Priyanka Sharma, Anand Group, Delhi

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An e-newsletter though makes economic sense cannot take the place of the printed version as there is a limit on the capacity that you can circulate - size restriction.



Therefore, it may be less

attractive than the printed copy,

A printed copy if attractive and with an important headline will at least ensure a first read - The pull factor is important. It shouldn't be to your liking (though it should reflect the organisation's style), it should appeal to the reader.

Also, the acceptance of e-newsletter as a mode of sharing of information varies from industry to industry, IT, ITES etc will be more receptive, and manufacturing might not be too receptive to the idea.

There are sets of thoughts that float in every organisation. When I said receptive I meant the audience/receivers. We would also like to explore the same option of e-newsletter to address the time factor but again it does mean making it light (file size) so less images or small doses of info (which is effective too).

PRpoint Group

N. Chandramouli, CEO, Blue Lotus Communications, Mumbai

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Almost every organization has a strategic approach when communicating with its external audiences, but very few actually look



at internal communications in with the same rigor.

Ironically, even in

those organizations where the human asset is valued the most, communicating to them often takes a back seat.

To look deeper, the reason any community, such as an organization,

exists is to try and achieve a common goal. More focused communities/organizations talk of common destinies. An important tool of that helps achieve a common culture with a shared vision across the company is an internal newsletter. A common culture is not just a nice thing to have; it is a strategic advantage for the company.

Four key elements make for a great internal communication. Always keep a long term focus, have clear values and goals, use comprehensive communication techniques and send out consistent messages. Put this to efficient use and you'll see the difference in the way people think and react in your organization.

PR –e- VIEW – Extract from discussion groups

Image Management Group

Prof. Ujwal K Chowdhury, Communication Consultant, Delhi

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The major weaknesses of newsletters of most organizations (corporate and even non-government development sector organizations) are that they put forth unnecessary emphasis on hierarchy or the organization, information more of the top and middle management at times even to

the chagrin of the staff below, many a time content being adulatory in nature to keep the hierarchy happy, and real cases of success and of beneficiaries of company activities and policies not getting enough space.

For example, while reporting on a success story of a Corporate Social Responsibility activity, the real life human stories of the beneficiaries at the grassroots are often lost in the drab reporting of who did what, when, under which policy or board directive, etc. Even photos show more of inaugurations and groups in programs, rather than telling stories of individuals or communities reached out to.

PRpoint Group

Siddhartha, Director (Commn), TAM Media Research P Ltd, Mumbai

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In today's age of tremendous client or work pressures at large, an employee suffers on a number of counts:

- a) is unaware of developments across divisions
- b) is unaware of developments within

the industry

c) is unaware of achievements/difficulties of immediate and intra-divisional colleagues

Collectively, what this does is that it creates a foul atmosphere within the organization. An employee doesnot

give respect to his colleagues. He underestimates them. One looks down upon the other...no one is happy. In short, it could end up becoming a serious HR issue.

Internal newsletters come in very handy. Right from sharing someone's birthday, becoming a parent, someone's kid winning a race, helping the company save money or earn revenues, any value add in quality checks, jokes, photographs, industry news update, exchange of viewpoints, a client project, etc...All these go a long way in creating a general awareness or a FEEL GOOD for one another

PR –e- VIEW – Extract from discussion groups

Image Management Group

Hazel Zulu, PR Consultant, Zambia zulu_h@tenderboard.gov.zm



I think that the target audience actually reads these newsletters, because they get ideas about their day to day tasks. What is important is to identify messages or information that is critical to this group and will entice them to read on.

Image Management Group

Rita Bhimani, Communication Consultant, Kolkatta ritabhi@rediffmail.com

I am all for on line newsletters-- more cost effective, greatly time saving and of course a prompt method of getting across news, and views too.

My worry is only this -- do people in their busy schedules actually take time to go online and read the contents, or do they gloss over it, thinking – “I will

read this at a later stage -- right now, let me get on with my work priorities, and maybe with other juicier online offerings”



Image Management Group

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Internal newsletter plays a major role in making perceptual changes amongst the employees, as it gets to know their own company better especially in the case of large organizations.



letter is all about the

As the news

happenings in the organisation, more of positive outcomes and happenings in the organization will develop a positive image amongst the employees about the company which helps sustain the employees.

As a general view, both online & print are advisable, More of success stories within the company are more preferred by the readers.

Newsletters may contain interesting sections like 'Employee of the month', which makes everyone to grab a chance to appear in the same.

PR –e- VIEW – Extract from discussion groups

Image Management Group

S Krishnamurthy, Management Consultant and Trainer, Chennai

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Electronic form or print form - interested people will always have a look. The cost, availability, format, resource like time etc are secondary if people have interest and they feel they have something in it.



Like communication experts say the effective formula for communication is W I I I FM (What is in it for me) the receiver always look for something useful or interesting for him if not some thing about him.

So the important tool for success is to make the reader feel interested. Then I think we need not worry about E form or P form.

PR –eMINENCE - Some sample newsletters

Apeejay Surrendra Group has diversified business, and they do not to have a common Group magazine. The Tea division has " Apeejay Tea



"Speaks", the Shipping company has "Apeejay Shipping Sails" and the

Hospitality Division (The Park Hotels) has "Prangan" and Information Technology

Department has "IT Bytes", an online newsletter. Prangan is taken out from Delhi while the other three from Kolkata. Apeejay Tea Speaks reaches 40,000 of their people in their Tea Plantations and is translated in Assamese. Apeejay Shipping reaches on board all their

ships no matter where they are sailing across the globe on High seas. IT Bytes is online and reaches across their network. Soft copies of each of these are hosted on their Intranet. They create a front page (so to say) of the newsletter from where each story is clickable



While they do not have a Group magazine, being a multi-interest group they do keep all their employees updated on the various happenings in the group and not just the company that they work for.

Contact : Renu Kakkar, Vice President (Technology & Corporate communications)

rkakkar@apeejaygroup.com

PR –eMINENCE - Some sample newsletters

Percept Holdings distributes electronically (pdf file) to their one thousand plus employees in their 23 group organisations.



The Electronic newsletter titled “P2P” ((Percept-to-Perceptites).

It is a single platform for dissemination of information happening across the globe, to their members. All the articles or write-ups, except for the editorial are provided or contributed by the employees themselves.

Contact **Rajiv Arvind**, Manager - Corporate Communications
Percept Holdings, Mumbai
rajiv.arvind@perceptholdings.com

Motilal Oswal Securities, distributes internally their newsletter titled **MOST Baatein** (acronym for- Motilal Oswal Securities)

The USP of their newsletter is the look & Feel, its very young as average age of their employees is 28. The popular columns are Gyan Patra, Hall of Fame, and MOST Spotlight , where they select two associates and give a peek-a-boo into their likes and dislikes, their aspirations, passion, food, book etc.

Chairman of the company shares his views transparently though “Chairman’s Column”



Contact:
Mona Mohan, Manager-Corporate Communications
monam@motilaloswal.com



Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited (CPCL) is one organisation which cares for the employees even after retirement. Annually, they hold

get-together with the ex-employees with the participation of top management executives.

Their internal newsletter “CPCL News” covering the developments in the CPCL is being sent to the past employees also. The ex-employees also run a news magazine “Akshaya”, where the CEO of CPCL shares his views with past employees. This indirectly motivates the present employees also and enhances the Institutional loyalty.

Contact: **Mr S Ansar Shah**, Chief Manager (PR) pro@cpcl.co.in

PR – eMINENCE - Some sample newsletters

Maruti Udyog has inculcated "Listen" culture among senior management - especially during their communication meetings with subordinates. DCM (Divisional communication meetings) is one such initiative. Each division head is expected to organise a communication meeting with his / her employees and share various developments of the company (both



positive and negative). Recently, they have started including topics for discussion. (for last 3 months) - (e.g. - work life balance, phase out of models, company's vision etc).

In another initiative - they have experimented with the latest issue of house magazine Gatirang - wherein they encourage their employees and their spouses themselves writing the cover story and many more article

Contact : Mr Arun Arora, Senior Manager (Corpcom)
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Post Graduate students of Public Relations course of MOP Vaishnav College, Chennai were advised by their College to design and make 'internal newsletters' as part of their project. The students studied various companies, who did not have 'internal newsletters' and designed newsletters for them. Eight of such newsletters (photo) were made by the students during April 06.

It was a pleasant surprise for the teachers and students that some of the companies agreed to continue the internal newsletters with the name and



design suggested by the students themselves.

Contact : Rashmi, Student
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PR – e - LEARN - 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
-

PR – e - LEARN - Elements of a newsletter

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/pressandcomms/1-3-7.html>

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.)
-

PR – e - LEARN - Calculating Communication's ROI

Communications measurement – PRSA Teleconference –
Presentation by Angela D. Sinickas, ABC - angela@sinicom.com

www.prssa.org/Networking/ec/pdf/sinickastcsldes.ppt

Calculating communication's ROI (a sample)

Increase in sales revenue	\$24 million
% employees saying comm. played major role in goal	x 54%
Discounting for 2 other possible major factors	x 33%
Comm.'s "credit" for sales million	= \$4.28
Cost of comm. + research	÷ \$217,000
Return on Investment (ROI)	1971%

Communications Measurement

PRSA Teleconference
March 14, 2002

Angela D. Sinickas, ABC
www.sinickas.com

SINICKAS™

PR – e - LEARN - Study of perception of employees



Image Audit is a 'research tool' to study the perception of internal and external stakeholders. The methodology involves, identification of issues, framing of questionnaire, administration, analysis and interpretation. Image Audit brings out the 'hidden perceptions' of stakeholders and trends.

For more details visit www.imageaudit.com or mail to prpoint@yahoo.com

PR – eEVENTS - 'World Communicators day'- PRCI



(Chennai)

(Bangalore)

(Hyderabad)

Public Relations Council of India (PRCI) celebrated "World Communicators day" during the last

week of May. 2006 at Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad. Eminent personalities participated.

PR – e -News - Asia Pacific PR Directory - 2006

Media will be publishing CONTACT - The Asia-Pacific PR Directory 2006 in August 2006 again. This will be the definitive listing of all PR consultancies, suppliers, and associations from across Asia-Pacific,



designed to allow Asia' leading marketers to effectively find a PR partner of choice from the only directory for the PR industry across the region. We have several option to chose,

For more details contact Karen.Wong Karen.Wong@media.com.hk on or before June 23, 2006. Website: <http://www.media.com.hk/>

PR – e -News - PRCI institutes PR Awards



Public Relations Council of India (PRCI) has announced 10 Awards and one Special Award under the following categories.

- 1) COMMUNICATOR OF THE YEAR
- 2) PR AGENCY OF THE YEAR
- 3) CORPORATE CITIZEN OF THE YEAR
 - a) CORPORATE LEADERSHIP
 - b) SOCIAL LEADERSHIP
- d) INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR
- e) EXCELLENCY IN NEWS DELIVERY
- d) RURAL ENTREPRENEUR

- 4) COMMUNICATION SCHOOL OF THE YEAR
- 5) N.G.O OF THE YEAR

SPECIAL AWARD---

- 6) EMERGING YOUNG VISIONARY (Age Under 18 ONLY)

(Each Category will have only one award)

The last date for filing nominations is 31st July 2006. For more details and for filing nominations contact Mr M B Jayaram at cccm@karnatakapower.com or Ms Gita Shankar at gitashankar_2006@yahoo.com

Have you joined the PR discussion groups?

Image Management Group – Second largest yahoo group on PR with 1200 plus global members. Click here

http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/Image_Management/

PRpoint Group - the largest Indian group for PR/Corpcom/academic professionals with 530 plus members. Click here

<http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/prpoint/>

PR eTTY - Relax – 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 everyday 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 : Unknown)

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