

INTERVIEW

James Appathurai: Spokesman, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Interview: Marc-Oliver Voigt



“A speech needs to be simple and clear, which is often the hardest part for people who are working on highly technical issues.”

As terrorism presents a less clearly defined, more dispersed threat, how has the role of communications adapted to mirror and convey these far more complicated dangers?

My experience is that it has not been that difficult. NATO does not engage in areas where there is much controversy about who it is that we are taking on. Afghanistan was the Grand Central Station, and now Pakistan has become the Grand Central Station for international terrorism in the tribal areas, with an increasing number of not just Taliban and local Al-Qaeda, but Chechens and Uzbeks and others. Explaining that what we are doing in Afghanistan is at the frontline in the fight against international terrorism is a pretty easy case to make. That is why so many governments have stuck through this and continue to stick through this, even though it is so difficult. It is because that is a bullet-proof case.

Most of NATO's work and engagement is associated with military action, and very often those are confidential. How extensively does this limit your work?

My biggest challenge with regard to the secrecy involved with military operations has been getting what is actually perfectly innocuous video – that can support the case we are trying to make – declassified for public use, because it has been filmed by a military platform of whatever kind. The rules have been that anything from those platforms is classified, no matter how harmless it is. Here is an example: I have a regular Wednesday press conference with a hundred journalists. In the North Atlantic Council on a particular Wednesday morning they discussed the newspaper headline that a district capital had fallen in Afghanistan....

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23RD AND 24TH
OF APRIL 2009

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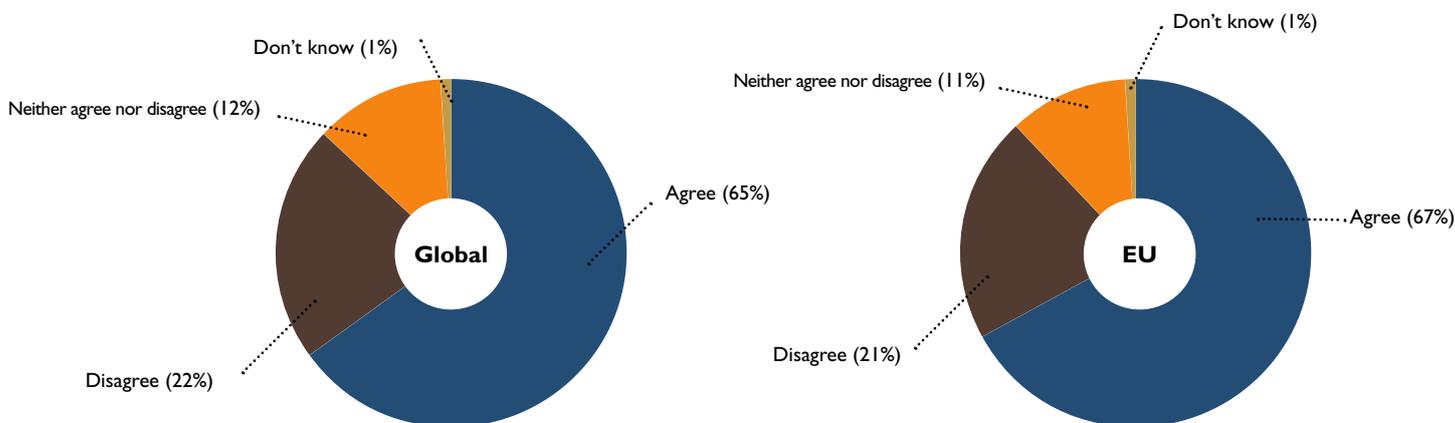
COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR
Magazine for Corporate Communications and Public Relations

FACTS & FIGURES

Edelman's Trust Barometer, published annually since 2001, is particularly relevant in today's unstable economic climate. Unsurprisingly, the collated data in the newly released 2009 edition suggests that the public's faith in governments and corporations is not exactly high at the moment, with much of the data showing that levels of faith have dipped

significantly during the past 12 months. This poor state of trust, most obviously felt in what we consider the world's developed countries, is what will need to be overcome in order to help get consumer confidence back on track. The graphs below clearly show that most people believe governments should be placing stricter regulations on businesses.

The trust divide | Do you agree that governments should impose stricter regulations and greater control over business across all industries?



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COMMENTARY

Hot off the Twitter by Dafydd Phillips



With HD broadcasts of all the sessions, 3 million YouTube hits, and the inescapable, incessant Twittering, the 2009 World Economic Forum in Davos seemed keen to show the world that it was determined to keep up with evolving tools of communication. From the mass of high-profile meetings, press conferences and talks, breaking news direct from Davos itself was able to disseminate the official line, as well as in several cases trumping the official news wires. When Turkish PM Tayyip Erdogan stormed out of a talk with the Israeli President Shimon Peres, Davos president Klaus Schwab was able to express his regret and "deep concern" almost instantaneously via Twitter. With the relevance of this year's sessions coming into question – most figures responsible for the current financial crisis were noticeable by their absence, as well as several major world leaders – this was one way to make sure that media interest, at least, was as high as ever.

Imprint

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PERSONNEL



Olivier Blain
(VP, Corporate Communications)
Institution: Eurocopter
Start: January 26



France: Blain succeeds Rigolini to head comms at Eurocopter

OLIVIER BLAIN has been appointed Vice-President of Corporate Communications within Eurocopter, the Franco-German-Spanish Group established in 1992 as a Division of EADS. He will report to Lutz Bertling, CEO of Eurocopter. He succeeds Laurence Rigolini who is taking over new management responsibilities as Vice-President within the subsidiaries and participation directorate of Eurocopter.



Lauri Peltola
(Head, Corporate Communications)
Institution: Stora Enso
Start: April 01



Finland: Peltola to head communications at Stora Enso

Stora Enso, the integrated group of forest products companies, has appointed LAURI PELTOLA as the new Head of Corporate Communications. He succeeds Kari Vainio, who retired at the end of last year. Peltola is currently Head of Group Identity and Communications of Nordea, the largest financial institution in the Nordic countries. He has previously worked as Communications Director for Metsäliitto Group.



Thorsten Voigt
(Director, Marketing & Communications)
Institution: Compass Group
Start: Feb 03



Germany: Newly-created communications role for Voigt

THORSTEN VOIGT has been appointed to the newly-created role of Director of Strategy, Marketing & Communication at the Compass Group Germany in Eschborn. He serves as the press spokesman of the business. Voigt has previously developed and led the Group's Strategy and Corporate Development. Before that, he was active in various corporate development and internal management consultations in the food and energy industry.

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EVENTS



23.04.2009 – 24.04.2009

2009 Crisis Communications Conference

Communication Director magazine hosts this year's Crisis Communications Conference, to be held in London. Speakers include James Appathurai from NATO (interviewed in this newsletter), Philip Dewhurst from Gazprom, and Marianne Honkoop from Fortis.

► Communication Director,
Jolly Hotel, London

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28.05.2009 PR On The Edge

How do some of the industry's most influential PROs think you can embrace seismic opportunities and challenges head-on? And how do they think the industry must evolve to meet them?

► PR Week, Cumberland Hotel,
London

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28.05.2009 – 30.05.2009 The Reputation Institute's 13th International Conference

This year, the focus is on a key concern of reputation management: the balance between investor confidence and institutional legitimacy.

► Reputation Institute Netherlands,
Amsterdam

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EXECUTIVE

Microsoft

INTERN

Andrea Mizzone took part in the Microsoft Students to Business Program, receiving free training and an internship at one of our partner companies, and a clearer path to his confidence, real life experience, and a clearer path to his potential. Through Microsoft Unlimited Potential™, we are committed to helping 20 million people across Europe gain new skills for employability by 2010. For the rest of his story and more useful facts, visit www.onmywayEU.com