

THE EDITOR

There persists to this day an ambivalent attitude in certain corners towards communications as a profession, seen as a less worthy adjunct to the proven rigorouslyness of journalism. In many cases this is down to perceived different educational and training backgrounds required by the two disciplines. Samuel Martín Barbero, who is uniquely qualified to speak on behalf of both, writes on how inequalities between Spanish media and PR are rooted in education, and how higher education can help to professionalize and legitimise communications work.

We hope you find it a stimulating read.



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COMMENTARY

Austria's government falters

Objective data on the state of Austria today is highly favourable: It enjoys strong economic growth, reaching 3.4 percent last year, and low unemployment of just over 4 percent. Many attribute this to the benefits of the EU expansion, and yet the country has seen an increase in public animosity towards the EU, especially focused on consumer prices and immigration. It is this bias that critics of Prime Minister Alfred Gusenbauer accused him of pandering to recently when, following the collapse of the Lisbon Treaty, he stated that future EU treaties, including an amended Lisbon, should be subject to popular votes. Conservatives, opposed to referendum votes on the EU, and those on the Left dismayed by what they saw as tapping dangerously into anti-EU sentiment, were quick to condemn Mr. Gusenbauer. His controversial statement added intolerable strain to the uneasy coalition between the leftist Social Democratic Party and the conservative



People's Party, and so helped bring about the government's collapse two weeks ago. Locked in a mutually harmful coalition, the government had failed to communicate the benefits that the EU has brought to Austria, and so one of the unforeseen results of the Irish "No" will be a round of elections, possibly in September.

By Dafydd Phillips

AN EDUCATIONAL MISCONCEPTION

Public Relations and journalism in Spain continue to be defined by the quality of the educational institutions teaching the disciplines.

by Samuel Martín Barbero

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his article seeks to discover the degree of intensity, well-being and unease between public relations and journalism in Spain.

To do so, we must first examine the very people who practise both professions, and we will see how history, popular culture and prejudices are still in place today in the communications landscape of this country.

STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS Currently, the cities of Madrid and Barcelona have the greatest number of experts in public relations at agencies and the greatest number of journalists working in newsrooms, and they have also been trained or educated in those cities. In both cases, the number of freelancers who are exclusively affiliated with just one media network (press, magazine, television and radio) is almost as insignificant as the total revenue of owners of boutique public relations agencies (small consulting agencies). In both cases, this lack is mainly down to structural reasons, due to a non-competitive labour market, due to the lack of private funding and public subsidies, and due to minimal private interest by managers in giving due worth to hiring and outsourcing information and communication services for corporate communication (except in periods of crisis) and political communication (except during election campaigns). As an example, the mean monthly wage of recent journalism graduates in 2007 ranged between six hundred

and twelve hundred Euros, according to sources at the Asociación de la Prensa de Madrid (Madrid Press Association). As regards public relations, the mean might be an annual salary of twenty-five thousand Euros for an account executive who speaks two languages, holds some management, business and finance knowledge, and who has four years of work experience (and prior internships, which are mostly unpaid given that one third of the universities involved don't require it). According to data from 'Universia', the university website portal owned by Grupo Santander, job insecurity among journalists is evidenced by the fact that only twenty-two per cent of journalism graduates (in 2007) have an open-ended employment contract.

MOST POPULAR NEWSPAPERS Along this same, weak line, the majority of the total revenue in the sector is captured by public relations agencies that are subsidiaries of a large holding company, versus about fifty independents (with less than ten employees each), as was pointed out in an article by the Spanish scholars Asunción Huertas and José Fernández Cavia, published in Public Relations Review in 2006. In turn, there continues to be a far higher presence of advertising agencies with management control by large international groups (Havas, Omnicom, Interpublic and WPP, for example) than public relations agencies. As regards the journalism industry, Madrid is the central headquarters of very young daily 'white' (general information), 'salmon' (economic) and free newspapers with the highest readership in all of Spain, such as El

País, El Mundo, ABC, Expansión, Cinco Días and 20 Minutos, while Barcelona has La Vanguardia, El Periódico de Catalunya and Avui. Nevertheless, the daily sports newspaper Marca—which basically covers football—continues to be the most sold (five hundred thousand copies) and profitable (CPT at five Euros) at the country's kiosks every day (over two million readers). Is there so much current and investigative news for this circumstance to occur? This could also lead to debate over whether or not football player representatives in Spain, through their public relations actions with sports journalists (and defending the private interests of their 'stars'), have an enormous influence on the themes and on how the information and opinions of daily sports papers are handled. Let's not forget that this is key to increasing or decreasing a player's market value and their negotiating power with their respective clubs.

ONLY THREE PROFESSIONAL PR ASSOCIATIONS There are curious concentrations in Spain, in the News Corporation style, but in the micro-scale it turns out that approximately 80 per cent of the regional press is in the hands of the Vocento media group, although PRISA, with its assets in press, radio, pay-per-view TV and film (in some cases also in Latin America), continues to be the big player in media. Within the economic environment of the media, the professional and scientific associations and even trade unions for this non-collegiate profession are very weak (it is not recognised in the state's body of civil servants, for example), and it is not essential to have studied any of the university degrees associated with communication in order to privately exercise the profession. There are only three professional public relations associations in all of Spain (Asociación de Directivos de Comunicación, Club de la Comunicación and ADECEC).

BOLOGNA CONVERGENCE PROCESS As regards Europe and its university model of the future, we can take a look at the Bologna convergence process (European Space for Higher Education). Among other things, it endeavours to implement by 2010 in all universities a single overall quality system in this continent

(psycho-pedagogic learning and 'non-teaching' method, common evaluation systems, etc.), thereby facilitating the free interchange of students, scholars and even courses. This uniform framework could lead us to a single intellectual model for understanding disciplines or areas (of scientific knowledge), which is good and bad at the same time. Communication will probably be affected by this turn towards a stricter European and Latin American perspective, which is anchored more in economic-cultural neo-Marxism and linguistic post-structuralism than in social neo-functionalism, from which it is more sensible to contemplate the new role of communication and of the communicator of the future.

PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE Due to intrusive intellectual practices (scholars coming from all possible disciplines except communications) in the 60s and 70s in Spain, when the first university 'schools' of journalists (not 'faculties') were created, the pioneering experience of Joseph Pulitzer, with his 'story telling' journalism workshops at Columbia University in New York at the beginning of the 20th Century, inspired an original and real idea, but sadly it was not spread throughout Spain. Over time and with the same focus, the School of Journalism of El País/Universidad Autónoma de Madrid has been able to maintain the good international reputation of its Masters degree (even while the teaching is entirely in Spanish), which specifically focuses on teaching journalists in analogue and digital, and not on training communication theorists (a failed aim of the Spanish university system). This poses another question: Is

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Madrid and Barcelona have the greatest number of PR agencies and journalists working in newsrooms.
- The majority of journalism graduates do not have permanent jobs secured and earn much less than PR colleagues.
- Most PR agencies are subsidiaries of larger holding companies, with only 50 independents.
- 80 per cent of regional press belongs to the Vocento media group, with PRISA owning the majority of broadcast media.

journalism a discipline or a profession? Certainly in Spain, the inter-departmental power-fighting by academics of great intellectual depth but of uncertain global research impact, in addition to the arduous task of reaching common scientific objectives (the anarchy of multidisciplinary versus the value of interdisciplinarity), has taken a lot away from the charm of the Spanish way of executing and educating in communications. We still find veteran professors who continue to explain systems and cybernetics theories in the classroom without ‘connecting’ or believing in the internet revolution. We still find politicians who continue to talk about the Information Society in Congress and the Senate without visiting or taking into consideration their daily contact with journalists or online newspapers (El Confidencial, Hispanidad, Libertad Digital etc).

BLURRING LINES This is a country where many still continue to refer colloquially to the friendly doorman at the local discothèque, who charms customers into his bar, a ‘public relation’. As an antidote, the French finesse-term ‘dircom’ (directeur de communication) of the eighties has grown in popularity, and there are even public relations professionals who openly refuse to be called ‘public relations’ specialists, because they don’t think it sounds very serious.

Of course, faced with these prejudices, this ignorance of both the terminological meaning and the conceptual sense,—as well as of who Ivy L. Lee, William W. Smith or George Creel were—it is very difficult to develop a profession among other hybrids (journalist and public relations specialist at the same time) and close the gap with academia that fragments the specialties of communicators without understanding that it is precisely the ‘holos’ (the whole) that gives it power and existential dimension. The market also cannot understand the reason why there are journalists working for companies or public relations specialists working for the media.

Proof of this is that, based on Infoadex data for 2007, advertising investment above and below the line was close to fifteen billion Euros, while unofficially investment in public relations wouldn’t

even reach ten per cent of that figure.

EDUCATION FIGHTING AGAINST DISCORD It is therefore no surprise that there are barely any privately-financed chairs at any of the more than forty communications faculties in Spain; Companies and think tanks are rarely interested in what is being investigated at those faculties. However, the Spanish university system needs to fight against this great divide and needs to reassess, reformulate and teach subjects and courses (in both content and form) along the lines of globalisation, diversity, individual entrepreneurship and group responsibility.

It is counter-productive for Spanish society and organisations (both profit and non-profit sectors) to have ‘dircom’ vacancies covered by journalists with ‘seniority’ seeking a good schedule and a better salary, but who lack the skills and capability for planning and managing data and human resources. Unfortunately, thoughtful men and women with a critical spirit and a great capacity for consensus, credibility, trust and leadership are not highly-valued or ranked. As communicators we have arrived very late to become great and famous, but we certainly have the potential to become very different, as we are highly aware of the pulse of the world, of the uncertainty and contingency in which we all live; a virtual world without linearity, one of numerous publics, of soft power, of public diplomacy and of global interest. This is where we find the thematic essence and core that emphasises abstract thinking first, subsequently followed by contemplation and action, thereby attempting to apply an exclusive educational and training model for communication. |

STORYTELLER



This article is published in the latest issue of Communication Director; “Natural Competitors: The struggle between journalism and PR.” Since April 2008, Samuel Martín Barbero has served as Dean of the IE School of Communication (IE University, Spain) and since September 2007 as Director of Communication Studies at IE Business School. He previously worked as Project Manager in Information Society at Telefónica Group. He holds a PhD in Communication from Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

Recent Appointments from the World of Communications / June 2008



Anton Hunger
(Head, Press & Public Relations)
Institution: Porsche AG
Start: July 01



Germany: New communications appointment at Porsche

Since July 1, ANTON HUNGER has been responsible for leading the recently-created Press and Public Relations Department of Porsche Automobile Holding. At the same time, FRANK GAUBE changes over to Porsche SE, where he will head the Financial Press and Investor Relations Department. Previously, Hunger was Director of Corporate Communications at Porsche AG.



Frédérique Le Grèves
(Chief Information Officer)
Institution: Renault
Start: July 01



France: New Corporate role for Le Grèves

FRÉDÉRIQUE LE GRÈVES has joined Renault as Chief Information Officer of the corporation. She replaces Claire Martin, who will take on another role with the company in November after completing training at Harvard Business School. Le Grèves began her career in 1991 at Opel France, before joining Delphi USA in their communication and marketing department. From 1995 to 2003, she led their communications in Europe, Middle East and Africa. Since 2003, she worked for Nissan, most recently as Communications Director, the Americas.



Jean-Claude Dassier
(Director General, News Programming)
Institution: TF1
Start: June 16



France: News department of TF1 restructured

JEAN-CLAUDE DASSIER replaced Robert Namias as Director General of News Programming at TF1, France's largest commercial network, on June 16. His appointment follows several personnel changes at the network, including Catherine Nayl as Editorial Director. Dassier, who began his career as a journalist at France Inter, has been with the network since joining in 1988, a year after its privatization. For 12 years he was the Head of the LCI.

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Recent Appointments from the World of Communications / June 2008




Christine Rödlach
(Director of Public Affairs and
Communication)
Institution: FACE
Start: July 01



Austria: Rödlach directs Public Affairs at FACE

FACE, the Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU, have announced that Christine Rödlach will be their new Director of Public Affairs and Communication. Rödlach was previously Political Advisor and Head of the Brussels office of MEP Mag. Othmar Karas. She has had previous experience as Political Advisor and Personal Assistant of the president of Austria's farmer's union, Deputy to the national parliament, Chairman of the agricultural committee and Member of the environmental committee of the Austrian national parliament.




Henrik Hannemann
(Head of Media and PR)
Institution: Bosch
Start: August 15



Germany: Bosch appoints Hannemann to communications role

As of August 15, HENRIK HANNEMANN will be the new Head of Media and Public Relations at Bosch, the industrial company, in Stuttgart. He will succeed Michael Preuss, who returned at the beginning of May to Bayer AG to become their Head of Corporate Policy & Media Relations. In his new role, Hannemann will report to the Head of Corporate Communications, Prof. Uta-Micaela Dürig.




Lucile Chevallard
(Director of Communication)
Institution: Keolis
Start: July 01



France: Chevallard is new Communication Director at Keolis

Keolis, the French public transport operator, has appointed LUCILE CHEVALLARD as its new Director of Communication. She will report directly to Michel Bleitrach, the CEO of Keolis. A graduate of l'Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Rouen, Chevallard was previously a transport journalist with Echoes (2004-08), and before that an economic journalist at Option Finance (2000-04).




Jiri Šuchman
(Public Relations Manager)
Institution: Telefonica O2Czech
Republic
Start: July 01



Czech Republic: Communications appointment at Telefonica O2

JIRI ŠUCHMAN is the new Public Relations Manager at Telefonica O2 Czech Republic. His areas of specialization will include public affairs and CSR. He worked for almost 10 years for T-Mobile Czech Republic (formerly RadioMobil), where from 2002 he was public affairs manager. He has worked in the telecommunication sector since 1992 when he joined SPT Telecom (now Telefonica O2 Czech Republic). Šuchman is a graduate of the University of Economics, Prague.




Sally Robins
(Communication Director)
Institution: Steria Group
Start: July 01



UK: Robins appointed Communication Director of Steria Group

Steria, the European-wide provider of IT-driven business services, has appointed SALLY ROBINS as its new Communication Director. Reporting directly to the Group's CEO François Enaud, Robins will be responsible for the continuation of the international development of the brand and to drive proactive communications across the Group, ensuring that all communications (internal and external) support company strategy. Robins was previously Marketing and Communication Director of the Xansa Group, which was acquired by Steria last year.

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EVENTS



18.08.2008-19.08.2008

“Globalization, International Migration and Development”

The seminar will facilitate an exchange of views and experiences between Members of the Club of Madrid, international experts and representatives from governments, international organizations and civil society. It will address the multidimensional aspects, opportunities and challenges of international migration and its links with development, bringing political expertise from all regions, aiming towards an interdisciplinary management of international migration flows in order to recommend practical and results-oriented policies at regional and global levels.

Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo (UIMP)
Santander, Spain

[➔ More](#)

18.07.2008-05.10.2008

“Art and Finance in Europe”



The European Association of Public Banks (EAPB) announces a new joint initiative with the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium (RMFAB) entitled “Art and Finance in Europe-15th century Masterwork in a New Light”.

Royal Museums of Fine Arts,
Brussels, Belgium

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18.07.2008

Intensive Seminar on the EU



The seminar provides professionals from the public and private sectors with a general and up-to-date overview of European affairs, as well as a specific understanding of EU structures, policies and working practices.

College of Europe
Bruges, Belgium

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19.07.2008

Europa Ball 2008



Established in 1990, the Europaball is one of the foremost summer events in Europe today. This year, the 19th in its history, the Ball will be held in a lake-side setting in Velden, Austria.

Motorship Klagenfurt,
Austria

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08.08.2008 – 31.08.08

The Edinburgh International Festival

The Edinburgh International Festival presents a rich programme of music, theatre, opera and dance in six major theatres and concert halls and a number of smaller venues, over a three-week period in late summer each year. In addition to mounting the annual three week programme of events, the Festival has a year-round programme of education and outreach work, aimed at all ages from primary school pupils to adults. The Festival began in 1947, with the aim of “providing a platform for the flowering of the human spirit”. Right from the start it inspired people to put on shows of their own outside the official Festival, and soon these grew into the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

Edinburgh
Scotland, UK

[➔ More](#)

23.07.2008

Networking a Room



A practical course to provide you with the skills to build your confidence and enable you to network effectively. This course is packed with practical tips that will be invaluable for anyone whose role involves meeting other people.

Vantis
London, UK

[➔ More](#)

29.07.2008

Public Affairs Training Day



A one-day practical training delivered by experienced PA practitioners an insight into immediate job prospects from junior consultants and stagiaires.

European Training Institute
Brussels, Belgium

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17.08.2008-23.08.2008

World Water Week



The World Water Week is an annual global meeting place for capacity-building, partnership-building and follow-up on the implementation of international processes and programmes in water and development.

International Water Institute
Stockholm, Sweden

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