

THE EDITOR

The final touches are being put to the new issue of *Communication Director* magazine, which will be a timely edition as it focuses on financial communications as practised in Europe today. But it is events across the Atlantic that is focussing our minds at the moment, and while we are bombarded with op-ed pieces on the implications of an Obama presidency for virtually every field of endeavour, the financial markets are certain to result in lowered expectations by the time Obama takes up his office. In this month's newsletter, Utta Tuttilies explores the challenges of communicating in a diverse environment like Brussels: we hope you find it stimulating reading.

Until next time,



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COMMENTARY

Re-bridging the Atlantic

It is widely believed that the brimming praise from EU leaders over the election of Obama may be evidence that an end to strained EU - US relations is nigh. But exactly what has changed? The Atlantic split has principally resulted from Bush's Middle East policy, but here Obama himself has shown no major division in policy – he may offer shifts in tactics, but he still believes that the US is leading “the world in battling immediate evils and promoting the ultimate good”, as he proclaimed in April last year. “I strongly support the expansion of our ground forces by adding 65,000 soldiers to the Army and 27,000 Marines.” So reunification with the US may largely result from the image of change – the power this has afforded him will make it tough for EU leaders to turn him down. With Bush counting down the hours until he leaves office, there are several measures still outstanding that his administration failed to convince European governments to



comply with, such as ending limitations on how much involvement their troops face in Afghanistan. But when a new leader with a huge popular mandate reiterates these demands, resistance could be futile.

By John Clulow

TRANSLATING BETWEEN DIFFERENT WORLDS

Communicating a coherent, unified message to Brussels' journalists without getting lost in translation is a challenge in European Public Affairs.

by *Utta Tuttlies*

A lot has been written about Public Affairs and media relations. But little has been said about the need to strategically align these two disciplines towards a political communication approach in the increasingly complex and globalised world of today. What do we want to communicate and who is our target group? This is a rather simple question if you look at it from a national angle. When you look at it from a European and integrated communication approach, it becomes much more complex.

The position of the Head of Communications for the Association of Commercial Television in Europe (ACT) requires me to look at communications from a broader perspective and within different markets. With twenty-eight members in all, we are active in thirty-four European countries. While Brussels is the centre of our activities, we deal with several working languages on a daily basis, different national cultures and - very important for our sector - a diverse set of national media markets implementing EU-legislation differently.

As pointed out by Professor Miriam Meckel in the "European Communication Report 2008", "communications is becoming a more and more strategic task for all organisations. It is having a direct impact on organisation's standing within society". The Report also highlights that communication professionals regard "the increasingly active role of stakeholders in the European Union as one of the most important issues in the field of communications". I

agree with both assumptions and see the process of "Europeanisation" as one of the key challenges for communication professionals today. I would go even further, arguing that strategically-managed political communications - similar to Investor Relations - can have a direct impact on the revenue streams of companies. Today a wide range of consultancies offer services such as "Campaign Management", "Issue Management" or "Agenda Setting," thus responding to the needs of businesses which have realised the impact of politics on their businesses.

CHANGES IN EUROPEAN INITIATIVES Today about 80 per cent of legislation being implemented in the EU Member States stem from European initiatives. With an increasingly powerful role for the European Parliament and a very active European Commission, this trend is expected to increase. The EU professors Werner

“The institutionalised consultation process is a great opportunity for companies to make their voices heard and shape the legislative outcome.”

Weidenfeld and Wolfgang Wessels estimated in 2007 that up to 30.000 lobbyists are working in Brussels. The Commission has started to institutionalise the process of stakeholder consultation. In 1992, a Code of Conduct for lobbyists was been adopted, and today a new lobby register is being drawn up. In addition, there are clear rules about stakeholder consultation before coming up with

a legislative proposal. From my point of view the institutionalised consultation process is a great opportunity for companies to make their voices heard and shape the legislative outcome from Brussels.

INFLUENCING POLICY DECISIONS IN BRUSSELS Influencing decisions in Brussels is no longer the sole responsibility of Public Affairs professionals, or of lobbyists submitting position papers or arranging individual meetings behind closed doors or in large conference rooms. I believe that lobbying (in the wider sense of the word, namely influencing different stakeholders in a complex process of policy-making) is today a means of speaking with a coherent set of core messages but different communication tools at the right time to a wide range of different target groups including politicians, policy-makers, officials, third party stakeholders and - increasingly important - the media who transport the message to the wider society. The overall process is an integrated one, in which different target groups influence each other. A sound understanding of the complex European institutional set-up and its policy-making processes and the ways of influencing this through traditional public affairs tools is as much required as competence about media relations mechanisms.

Today Brussels has the largest press corps in the whole world. Given its political weight, the city should have lots of stories to tell. However, given the nature of what Brussels is best at - namely to come up with often rather technical legislation in a wide range of sectors - the average journalist might be forgiven for finding it a rather difficult place to search for exciting or colourful stories. So how does one get a political message across as well as awake interest in politics among citizens?

UNDERSTANDING JOURNALISTS' NEEDS IN THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL As pointed out in a survey from the consultancy APCO on "Media Relations and Europe - from the journalists' perspective", the profession of an "EU journalist" is a rather recent one. Half of the reporters interviewed for the survey had been covering EU affairs for less than five years. APCO concludes: "This speaks to the need to start every conversation on the presumption that the journalist is not an expert on the subject or even on the EU". Obvi-

ously this does not account for all journalists and certainly not for the ones who have been in Brussels for a long time or are working for specialised EU trade press. However, it shows that it is important to explain your issues to journalists also.

This brings me to the question of whether anything like a European media landscape even exists or whether the media are still fragmented, with an 'EU story' fragmenting into twenty-seven different national stories. I will not go into detail about this question here. I would only like to stress that language matters greatly when it comes to European media relations and it is important to find a national angle to explain a European issue. To make European political issues tangible is crucial, which is why the work with the national correspondents in Brussels - often in their own languages - is of great importance. Against this background it might be worth translating press releases into several languages and adapting them locally to get your political message across throughout Europe.

TRANSLATION OF LEGISLATIVE MESSAGES INTO PLAIN LANGUAGE The journalistic approach on EU affairs is obviously different from the approach taken by policy-makers. While journalists tend to be generalists when it comes to sectors, policy-makers and officials are mainly experts in their field. As policy-makers and public affairs specialists often have the same educational background, they both tend to speak the same legalistic language. This is reflected in most of the position papers submitted to the EU institutions. While they might be of high legal value and appreciated by

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Europeanisation of Political Communications

- Europeanisation is a key challenge for communication professionals today.
- 80 per cent of legislation being implemented in the EU Member States, stem from European initiatives.
- Overall the lobbying process is an integrated one, in which different target groups influence each other.
- Translation of the legislative messages into non-technical language is key to an integrated communication approach.
- Combine the policy-agenda with the press schedule to communicate to the two target groups simultaneously.

their immediate target audience of a few key EU officials, they are often difficult to understand for all those who are not directly working in the area. The translation of the legislative messages into non-technical language is a key requirement for an integrated communication approach. This is not only a challenge for communication professionals but also for journalists when reporting on EU affairs. Even the EU institutions have stepped up their efforts to address this problem. The Commission Directorate General Communication established in 2005 and lead by Commissioner Margot Wallström

“Address target groups with one voice and clear core messages in any communication activity.”

aimed at “a new approach to European communication that puts citizens at the heart of European policies”. The Commission’s 2007 initiative on “Communicating Europe in partnership” stated that “A more sophisticated way of working is required, one that heavily relies on a partnership between different actors across European society.” According to a recent Eurobarometer survey, 64 per cent of people interviewed expressed interest in news about the EU. Satisfying this demand is the great challenge lying ahead for all of us working in the field of Political Communications.

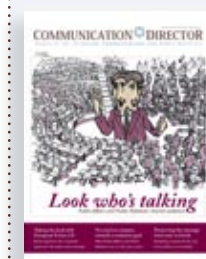
COMMUNICATING WITH POLITICIANS AND THE MEDIA

Effective Public Affairs work requires an organisation to know the issues and stakeholders having an impact on its business and activities. For successful media relations you need to know the journalists reporting on your issues. It is important to be in contact with both target groups and to know when to intervene and to pitch a story. For a Political Communications specialist it is important to combine policy-agenda with that of the press schedule so that you communicate your message to the two target groups simultaneously. As pointed out by the German Public Affairs specialists Marco Althaus, Michael Geffken and Sven Rawe in 2005: “In Public Affairs, the strategic placement of issues in dominant media and its impact on the public opinion, having again an influence on policy-makers, plays a crucial role.”

STRATEGIC MIX OF TOOLS ENSURES AN INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION APPROACH In order to ensure that the correct measures are being taken towards the right audience at the right time, it is important to establish a “communications mix”. This may entail a mix of publications such as press releases and position papers, presentations, interviews and by-lined articles. However, at the same time it should include the organisation of events matching the requirements of the individual target groups accordingly. Obviously, it is important to ensure that all these activities are being planned within a wider context which is based on the political agenda of the institutions within the European Union and the agendas of the individual dossiers which will be impacting your company. At the same time one should not forget that media has a different time schedule and is acting within the framework of much tighter deadlines.

Furthermore, it is essential to address all target groups with one voice and a clear set of core messages. These core messages should be used in any communication activity in both fields of Public Affairs and media relations. With the aim of ensuring an integrated communication policy throughout Europe, the Association of Commercial Television in Brussels has established a new Working Group within the association aiming at communicating legislative messages more effectively in Brussels and at the national level. It is thus a challenging but nevertheless highly interesting task to deal with communications in a broader and more integrated context. Furthermore, it is a challenge which allows you to take a unique look into the two worlds of politics and media, as well as to be creative and active in a wide range of fields. |

STORYTELLER



This article is published in the latest issue of Communication Director, “Look who’s talking: Public Affairs and Public shared audience.” Utta Tuttlies is Head of Communications and Public Affairs at the Association of Commercial Television in Brussels. Previously, she worked as a political consultant in Brussels and as Media Relations Advisor in Germany, and has also worked for the financial communications consultancy Hering Schuppener, Frankfurt. She graduated with a MA in European Studies from the College of Europe in Bruges.



EXECUTIVE

Microsoft

INTERN

Andrea Mizzoni took part in the Microsoft Students to Business Program, receiving free training and an internship at one of our partner companies. He gained 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

Recent Appointments from the World of Communications / November 2008



Sonia Franco Pendás
(Director of Communications)
Institution: Iberdrola Renovables
Start: Nov



Spain: Franco Pendás leads communications for renewable energy

SONIA FRANCO PENDÁS has been appointed as Director of Communication at Iberdrola Renovables. Iberdrola Renovables is a conglomerate of multinational companies focused on renewable energy. Franco Pendás was previously the director of Forbes magazine in Spain and has held the post of Chief Editor of the online version of El Economista y Expansión. She has a degree in Information Sciences from the University Complutense of Madrid and has certificates in International Relations, Economics and General Business Administration.



Andreas Hammer
(Head of Public Relations)
Institution: KPMG Switzerland
Start: Nov 01



Switzerland: Hammer succeeds Mathys as Head of Public Relations

Effective November 1, ANDREAS HAMMER is the new Head of Public Relations at KPMG Switzerland, providers of audit, tax and advisory services. Replacing Stefan Mathys, he is responsible for external communications. Hammer has had experience as a consultant in several well-known, internationally active Public Relations agencies and for the last two years was Managing Director of the FDP in Zurich.



Anders-Sundt Jensen
(VP Brand Communications)
Institution: Mercedes-Benz
Start: Nov 01



Germany: Jensen is new VP Brand Communications Mercedes-Benz

On November 01 ANDERS-SUNDT JENSEN took up the role of Vice President Brand Communications at Mercedes-Benz, Stuttgart. He succeeds Olaf Göttgens. Joining the company in 1989, Jensen has held different leading positions: from 2000 to 2004, Jensen was President and CEO of the sales organisations DaimlerChrysler Denmark and Sweden. In 2005, he was Vice President Sales and Marketing, and from the start of 2007 was head of Smart Brand Management Team.



Eric Dumont
(VP, Financial Communications and Sustainable Development)
Institution: Rexel Group
Start: Nov 01



France: Dumont as new VP of Financial Communications of Rexel

ERIC DUMONT has been appointed Vice President, Financial Communication and Sustainable Development of Rexel Group. Succeeding Frédéric de Castro, he will be responsible for developing the group's financial communication policy and managing relations with investors, share holders and analysts. He will also be in charge of overseeing the Group's sustainable development policy. Before joining Rexel France in 2005, Dumont held positions with McKinsey & Co and Casino retail group.

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Recent Appointments from the World of Communications / November 2008



Matthias Schneider
(Public Affairs &
Communications Manager)
Institution: Coca-Cola AG
Start: Oct 01



Switzerland: Schneider takes over Public Affairs and Communications

MATTHIAS SCHNEIDER is Public Affairs & Communications Manager at Coca-Cola AG, Switzerland, taking over from Pia Lehmann. His new responsibilities are for the Corporate Communications Corporate Identity, Public Affairs and Brand PR. Schneider was previously Deputy Chief Marketing Euro 2008, and was responsible for media and communications initiatives under the campaign "Switzerland: Discover the plus". He has also held positions at IMG Switzerland and Credit Suisse.



Antonella Basile
(Head of Communications)
Institution: Metasytem Group
Group Start: Oct 01



Italy: Basile heads communications for Metasytem

ANTONELLA BASILE became Head of Communications for the MetaSystem Group, Italy at the beginning of October. She is responsible for coordinating the office and print advertising campaigns, developing communication strategies and ensuring its visibility, including the brand of the group. MetaSystem is active in automotive, telecommunications, energy, photovoltaics, telecommunications and broadcasting. Basile previously held the position of Account Director, Head of the ICT Practice in Weber Shandwick, Italy.



Sebastian Cebrián
(Director of Communications)
Institution: dircom
Start: Nov 01



Spain: Cebrián takes over as Director General at dircom

The Spanish Association of Directors of Communications (dircom) has appointed SEBASTIEN CEBRIÁN as its new Director General, in place of Rose-Marie Losier. Cebrián has a doctorate of Information Sciences and a Bachelor of Journalism from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid and holds a Masters in Socio-economic Information. Cebrián was recently Directors of Communications at Fremap, Mutual of Accidents and Diseases Social Security, after a successful term as Directors of Communications at the Spanish division of Carrefour.



Arnd Liedtke
(Head of Communications)
Institution: Tchibo
Start: Nov 01



Germany: Liedtke becomes Head of Communications for Tchibo

From November, ARND LIEDTKE is the new Head of Corporate Communications of Tchibo and maxingvest in Hamburg. Since 2001, Liedtke has worked in the coffee roaster and consumer products group in various senior marketing and sales functions, most recently as chief marketing officer for the food business. His career began with Mars. At his new position, Liedtke takes over from Klaus Peter Nebel.



Zuzana Doležalová
(PR Manager & Press
Spokeswoman)
Institution: Atlantik
Start: Oct 01



Czech Republic: Doležalová takes up PR Manager post

ZUZANA DOLEŽALOVÁ has taken up the post of Public Relations Manager and Press Spokeswoman at the independent financial group Atlantik. She is in charge of all communication and PR activities. Doležalová previously held positions with ECM Real Estate Investments, and in the press department of Telefónica O2 Czech Republic and Vodafone Czech Republic (formerly Oskar).

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EVENTS



11.12.2008

European Agenda Summit 2008

The European Agenda Summit is a platform for political communication, management and lobbying which welcomes decision-makers from politics and business both inside and outside the EU. Taking place between the US elections and the European Parliament elections in 2009, this year's Summit explores the question "What can we learn from America?" in terms of public affairs, political communication and campaigning. Keynotes will be given by six renowned American political communication and public affairs professionals.

European Agenda,
Brussels

[More](#)

19.11.2008 - 20.11.2008

How to run an international office



Designed for heads of international offices at all levels, this conference explores how to set up or expand an international office, design an international agenda, build effective alliances, identify financial resources, and set budgets.

European Assoc. for Int. Education,
Prague

[More](#)

25.11.2008 - 26.11.2008

Environmental Business Strategies Summit 2008



This summit is geared towards sustainability, environmental and corporate responsibility professionals concerned about finding a holistic approach to formulating a successful environmental business strategy for their organization.

Ethical Corporation,
Amsterdam

[More](#)

22.10.2008 - 25.10.2008

Sustainable Manufacturing Summit Europe



This summit will focus on the sustainability strategies of over 25 leading manufacturers, discuss action plans for sustainable consumption and production and, explore new ways to drive carbon efficiencies

exploring clean technologies

Green Power Conferences,
Brussels

[More](#)



11.12.2008

The European Excellence Awards 2008

Communication is, by definition, the exchange of information by any number of different means. Each and every method of communication has its varied avenues and assets. The European Excellence Awards will honour outstanding achievement in the profession on aspect on a international scale. Bringing together the finest working in the field of communications for a memorable evening, the European Excellence Awards will spotlight the importance of the entire profession, and provide an excellent networking forum for all in attendance. The awards take a comprehensive look at the full spectrum of the communications disciplines throughout Europe.

Corinthia Grand Hotel,
Budapest

[More](#)

16.11.2008 - 23.11.2008

HR Management



Productive work is impossible without the right staff, which requires effective personnel selection, good management and retention. This programme will look at the processes of selection, management and behavioural patterns of staff.

Leading Ventures Associates,
London

[More](#)

06.12.2008 - 09.12.2008

Exporama Show



A business-to-business exhibition in South-East Europe that focuses exclusively on the events industry. For those interested in planning your access, or expanding your business to the East Mediterranean and the developing Middle East region.

Exporama Crossmedia,
Athens

[More](#)

24.11.2008 - 25.11.2008

Strategic Asset Allocation Conference



It is generally accepted that Strategic Asset Allocation (SAA) is the main driver of the risk and return profile of any investment portfolio. This conference aims at fostering the development and dissemination of SSA best practices.

European Central Bank,
Frankfurt am Main

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