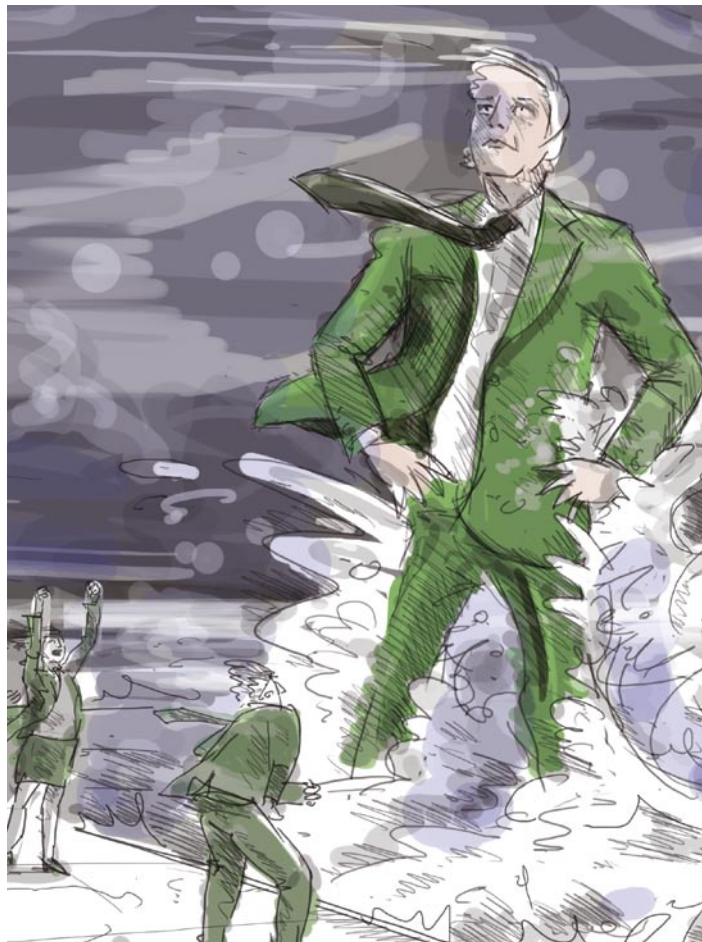


## ENSURING CREDIBILITY DURING TURMOIL

*In times of change and crisis, internal communicators must work alongside their chief executives to win the support of employees, which in turn will empower the leadership to drive the company forward.*

by Simone Niven

So, who said corporate communications is boring? The first six months of any new global corporate communications role is often tough – a global network to navigate and a new chief executive to build a relationship with. More so when you are joining the mining industry, a notoriously issues-based sector with inherent reputation-related risks. When the first six months also involves the second biggest rights issue in history, the fatigue associated with successfully defending against a hostile takeover bid, some senior board level changes, a significant global workforce reduction, and a change in strategy from growth to



curtailment, you know it is not exactly going to be all smooth sailing. Of course, communications related jobs have become a lot more interesting of late, with the global credit crisis and economic meltdown shifting the agenda. Relatively stable and solid industries are no longer

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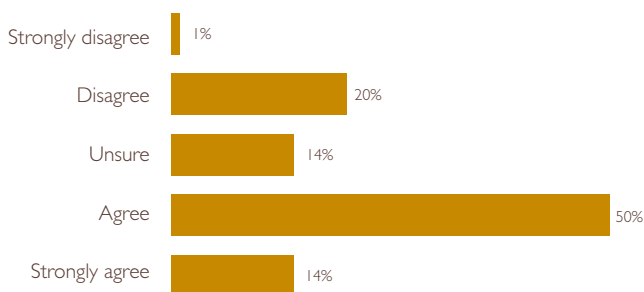
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## FACTS & FIGURES

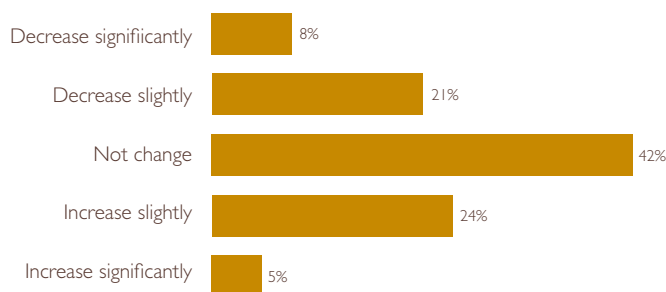
In the wake of the tremendous changes experienced in the field of public relations last year, US-based PR software company Vocus surveyed a total of 1,836 PR professionals to gauge their perceptions of the changing landscape, and the role of innovative media as a catalyst behind those changes. Special emphasis was given to their predictions for 2010; 64 per cent of respondents agreed that PR planning will be more difficult (below left). This suggests a lack of confidence, perhaps, in the effectiveness of new media as a PR tool. Could the 20 per cent who disagree with the

statement be confident early-adaptors, ready to incorporate new channels into their strategies? When it comes to the fraught subject of budgets, 42 per cent expect their budgets to remain flat in 2010 (below right). Adding up the rest of the answers, those who believe that budgets will increase slightly or significantly and those who believe the opposite are almost equal in number. Even so, Vocus suggest that these results are better than might have been expected, and therefore are grounds for cautious optimism. *Taken from Vocus PR Planning 2010 Survey Results.*

### Planning in 2010 will be more difficult than in years past



### I expect my organisation's 2010 budget for PR to:



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## COMMENTARY

### Regaining trust in the Greek government a herculean task

To revise your projected budget deficit once may be regarded as a misfortune; to revise it twice looks like carelessness. This is the situation in which the new Greek government finds itself, having disclosed in October that, at 12.7 per cent, their deficit is more than double the previously announced figure. It is a venerable political tradition to lay the blame on the previous administration, and Prime Minister George Papandreou, who won the October 4 elections vowing to tax the rich and help the poor, condemned the “criminal policies of the previous government” and described the situation as an “unprecedented dead end”. It seems his predecessors used smoke and mirrors to keep deficit levels down; regardless, it is the current government that is in hot water with the rest of the EU as well as facing a credibility crisis at home. International observers raised the alarm over the prospect of a default on loan repayments, while several industrial actions at home protest against proposed spending cuts. A bomb planted near the finance ministry on January 10 has raised the temperature to boiling point. Faced with no other alternative, the government has explicitly acknowledged the fraught situation, as shown by an admirably frank address by Finance Minister George Papacon-



stantinou to parliament: “Our credibility deficit is more important than the deficit in our public finances...People just don’t believe us. ‘We’ve heard the same talk for five years’ they say”. Prime Minister Papandreou met with his equivalents in several countries in a move to quell fears of a lethal undermining of the euro currency zone; this simple message was reinforced at home by cross-party talks, a sign of the government’s determination to regain confidence, both at home and abroad.

Image: flickr

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## PERSONNEL



Caroline Guillaumin  
(Head of Communications)  
Institution: Société Générale  
Start: January 01



### France: New leading role for Caroline Guillaumin

CAROLINE GUILLAUMIN, formerly head of corporate communications at Alcatel-Lucent, has recently taken up the role of head of communications at the Société Générale group. She will also be a member of the group executive committee. Before joining Alcatel in 1998 as senior marketing and communication manager, Guillaumin was European marketing and communication director for US internet search engines company Verity Inc.



Nicholas Ashooh  
(VP, Corporate Affairs)  
Institution: Alcoa  
Start: January 18



### US: Nicholas Ashooh moves from AIG to Alcoa

NICHOLAS ASHOOH, senior vice president of communications at American International Group, joins aluminium company Alcoa as vice president, corporate affairs. He will be a member of the Alcoa Executive Council and have oversight for global communications, government affairs, community relations and the Alcoa Foundation. Ashooh succeeds John D. Bergen, who has been appointed vice president, human resources.

DAIMLER



Thomas Fröhlich  
(Head, Global Media & Marketing)  
Institution: Daimler  
Start: January 01



### Germany: Fröhlich promoted to head global media at Daimler

As of January 01 this year, THOMAS FRÖHLICH is now head of global media and marketing at Daimler. In this position he is responsible for all internal communication at the automobile manufacturer. He succeeds Ulrike Becker. Fröhlich's successor as head of corporate communications is Marc Binder. Both will report to Joerg Howe, head of global communications.

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## EVENTS



### 26.01.2010 **Which Social Media Channels are right for your Brand?**

This dedicated interactive conference for PR and communication professionals will focus on engaging audiences through social media. In the course of just one day, attendees will ex

- ▶ Haymarket Events, The Hurlingham Club, London

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### 04.02.2010 **The Media and Business Continuity**

Armed with the facts, tools and techniques this highly interactive day will provide the opportunity for every delegate to experience media handling first hand.

- ▶ Emergency Planning Society/Manchester Business Continuity Forum, Manchester Town Hall UK

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### 10.02.2010 – 12.02.2010 **The Speechwriters Conference**

New and experienced speechwriters will meet and exchange tips, experiences, ideas and contact details at this annual event that attracts attendees from executive, freelance, corporate and governmental backgrounds.

- ▶ Ragan Communications/ PR Society of America, Renaissance Mayflower Hotel, Washington DC

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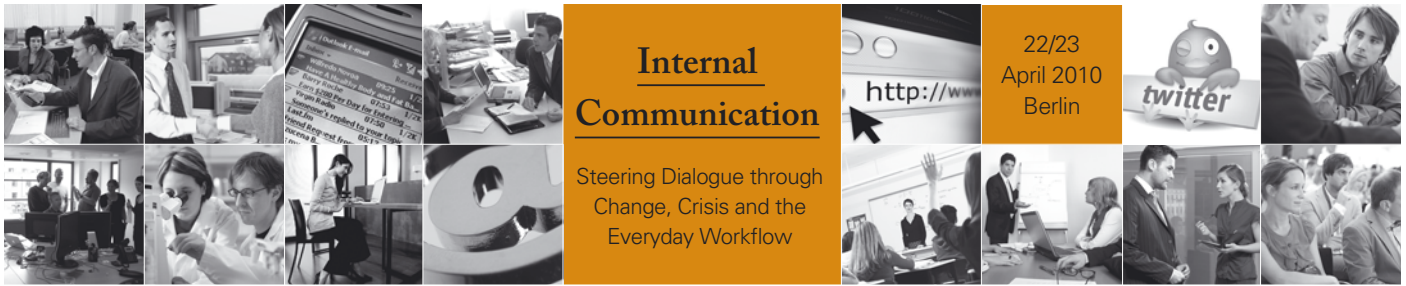


### 22.04.2010 – 23.04.2010 **Internal Communication Conference**

New and experienced speechwriters will meet and exchange tips, experiences, ideas and contact details at this annual event that attracts attendees from executive, freelance, corporate and governmental backgrounds.

- ▶ Quadriga University, The Westin Grand, Berlin

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I would like to attend the Internal Communication conference on the 22nd and 23rd of April in Berlin.

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Conference Fee: 840 Euro\*

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\* Included in the participant's fee is access to all parts of the programme, as well as meals and coffee breaks. Prices do not include VAT.

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