

## AFTER SWITCHING SIDES

*The career move from journalism to corporate communications can mean seeing the glass as half full, rather than half empty.*

by Oliver Herrgesell

**A**lthough the call came as a surprise, I knew the man on the other end of the line well: it was the communications director of a company I had regularly covered in an earlier job. I knew him as a reliable person who was always well informed, never unfriendly and occasionally tough. He asked me, "Would you consider becoming a press officer?" I quickly reviewed whether there were any other interesting jobs on the horizon. I'd worked in journalism for several years and had been privileged enough to have a wide variety of interesting jobs. Most recently, I had served as deputy editor-in-chief

of the German weekly magazine Stern. Now I was being offered the chance to be the spokesman of an international company, working directly with the most interesting CEO I was aware of. It didn't take me long to accept. As in other jobs, I made the decision based on the people involved and the job itself. The terms and conditions were right. The fact that I would be 'switching sides' was not an issue. Right at the beginning, one of the supposed strengths of a journalist was called upon: I was asked to quickly write a press announcement. And our first misunderstanding swiftly followed – the communications director's feedback on my draft was

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February 10/11, 2011

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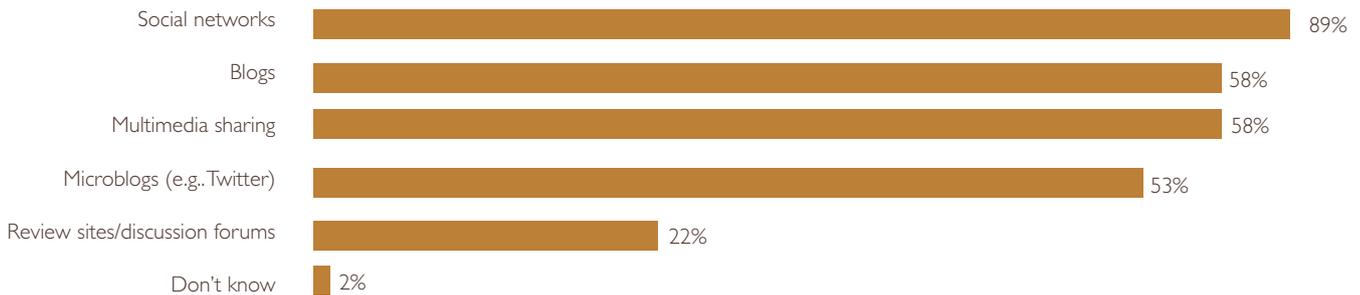
## FACTS & FIGURES

The beginning of a new year is as good a time as any to survey current attitudes towards, and uses of, social media in companies, while looking ahead to how people will be talking about the seemingly inexhaustible phenomenon in the years ahead. The question to be asked as we look ahead is will the use of social media by companies become more sophisticated: will companies become emboldened in their handling of new channels, and will the results back them up? The promise of engagement with millions of potential customers around the globe seems to be irresistible, as evinced by respondents to a new survey by Harvard Business Review (with sponsorship by business analytics software suppliers SAS): two thirds of them said they are either currently using social media channels or have firm plans to do so in the pipeline. HBR surveyed 2,100 subscribers to their magazine and email newsletter in July of last year, followed up by 12 in-depth qualitative interviews via

telephone. Respondents were based around the globe, with 57 per cent of organisations having international operations. A quick glance at the current usage of social media (below) gives an indication of the most popular channels; but the survey notes that for many companies, social media is still in an experimentation phase, where smaller projects are launched, usually under the initiative of a few individuals in communications or marketing. Among all companies, social networking sites were the most popular form of social media, with the majority (87 per cent) using sites such as Facebook. In another part of the survey, the most popular combination of channels are shown to be blogs, social networking sites, and either multimedia sharing sites such as YouTube or microblogs. *Taken from Harvard Business Review (sponsored by SAS), The New Conversation: Taking Social Media from Talk to Action*

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### Current Usage of Social Media



Editor in Chief  
Marc-Oliver Voigt

Newsletter Editors  
Neil Cranswick,  
Dafydd Phillips

Publishers  
Rudolf Hetzel,  
Torben Werner

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## PERSONNEL

PPR



Louise Beveridge  
(Head, Corporate Communications)

Institution: PPR

Start: March 01



### France: Louise Beveridge succeeds Chirac at PPR

PPR, the multinational holding company specialising in retail shops and luxury brands, has announced the appointment of LOUISE BEVERIDGE as head of corporate communication for the group, where she will be responsible for devising and implementing the group's communication strategy. Beveridge, who succeeds Claude Chirac, will also be a member of PPR's executive committee.



Denis Marquet  
(Director of Communications)

Institution: Crédit Agricole

Start: Jan 11



### France: New communications director at Crédit Agricole

DENIS MARQUET is the new director of communications at Crédit Agricole SA, the largest retail banking group in France, where he reports to the secretary general, Joseph Auzay. From 2000 to 2003, Marquet was head of PR, IR and communications event management at Crédit du Nord before joining Société Générale in 2004 as deputy director of the information group, and then as director of internal and institutional communications in 2008.

Banco Financiero y de Ahorros S.A.



Pilar Trucios  
(Head, Group Communications)

Institution: Banco Financiero y de Ahorros SA



### Spain: New appointment for Pilar Trucios

Banco Financiero y de Ahorros SA has chosen PILAR TRUCIOS, a financial reporter, to manage group communications. Trucios reports directly to the president of the organisation and is part of the steering committee. She has been deputy director and head of the newspaper Expansión, and has consulted extensively on human resources and internal communication projects.

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## EVENTS



### 12.01.2011 Butterfly Europe

Social networks are rocketing in popularity in the Web 2.0 era. This event gathers web experts and bloggers, as well as EU decision-makers, to discuss how social media and networks shape the European public opinion.

► Lo Spazio della Political/Gli Euros.eu, European Parliament, Brussels

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### 25.01.2011 Maximising Social Media PR in Practice

PRWeek hosts its fourth annual PR and Social Media conference. Emma Gilpin-Jacobs (pictured), global director of communications at the Financial Times, is one of the confirmed speakers.

► PRWeek, The Hurlingham Club, London

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### 08.02.2011 User Forum: SharePoint for Internal Communicators

Through case studies, benchmarking, debates, problem solving and thought leader panel discussions, this specialist forum explores the use of SharePoint® in internal communications.

► Melcrum, venue tba, London

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### 10.02.2011 – 11.02.2011 EU Public & Government Affairs

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► Quadriga, Renaissance Hotel, Brussels

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