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Contents

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Crisis Communications

Have Advance Crisis Knowledge? Better Use Your Time Wisely

Baseball may be a game, but don't let that fool you. Major League Baseball is a very big business and the stakes are very high. Public relations fuels a big part of league revenues and every team must be on its toes when it comes to crisis management.

The Washington Nationals created a bit of a public relations crisis last week when they made the decision to prematurely end the season of their star pitcher Stephen Strasburg, one of the best young hurlers in the game. The Nationals had the best record in baseball, Strasburg was having a sensational season and the decision to shut him down (for potential) health reasons may have jeopardized the team's World Series championship hopes.

While there was an immediate hue and cry, the crisis has the potential of becoming exponentially worse if the Nationals ultimately fail to win the World Series and that failure could be directly tied to Strasburg's absence.

When most people think of a public relations crisis, they usually think of a major blunder that comes out of the blue; there's an explosion at a factory or a new drug is found to have deadly side-effects.

The fact is, most organizations and businesses are well aware of when a crisis is on the horizon. Some put their heads in the sand and hope no one notices, others face the problem head-on, planning for every contingency, ready to turn on a dime depending on how things play out.

Harlan Loeb, U.S. director of **Edelman**'s Issues & Crisis

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(DID YOU KNOW?)

Seven Things You Will Learn in This Week's Issue of *PR News*

1. The Washington Nationals' shutting down of pitcher Stephen Strasburg could have PR repercussions during the MLB postseason. (p. 1)
2. Millennials feel their lives are more fulfilled when they're connected via social media. (p. 1)
3. Half of the biggest advertisers in the U.S. cut their budgets during Q2 2012. (p. 3)
4. In the Fortune 500, 86% of defense and aerospace companies have Twitter accounts. (p. 3)
5. Apriso grew its team of bloggers from a handful of generalists to over 20 subject-matter specialists. (p. 4)
6. An agency executive reports that 80% of the crises he handles are not surprises. (p. 6)
7. H&R Block's "The 'Stache Act" campaign, targeted at Millennials, was mixture of politics, whimsy and genius. (p. 7)

Marketing | Social Media | Research

Give Back Component, Authenticity Keys To Reaching Powerful Millennials

Call 'em what you will: Generation Next, Gen Y, Echo Boomers—we'll just call them Millennials—the fact is, much has been written about this group of 16-34-year-olds (give or take a few years, depending on the source), a group that is very actively engaged in buying and influencing.

About 88-million strong, the Millennial generation has been found to have greater spending power than the Baby Boomers and Generation X (see the Generations chart). This powerful demographic sweet spot is the first generation of digital natives—early adopters of technology who are reliant on mobile devices and social networks to manage both their personal lives and their buying decisions.

That is why Millennials are a target audience that can't be ignored by communicators. A study released in April 2012 by **Boston Consulting Group, Service Management Group** and **Barkley** features some revealing findings that PR pros should take to heart. Here are a few:

- U.S. Millennials (defined in this study as those within the age of 16-34) are a generation actively engaged in consuming and influencing. Although they spend roughly the same amount of time online, they spend way more time creating user-generated content, rating products and services, and broadcasting their thought and experiences than non-Millennials.
- Of Millennials who make direct donations, almost half donate through their mobile devices, compared with only 5%of non-Millennials.
- Millennials are 16% more likely than non-Millennials to explore brands on social networks.
- Millennials overwhelmingly agree (47% versus 28% of non-Millennials) that their lives feel richer when they're connected to people through social media.
- Millennials are receptive to cause marketing and are more 7% more likely to choose products whose purchase supports a cause than

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▶ How To... | Branding | Marketing

Play the Business Naming Game—and Win

Everyone names things. We name our kids, our pets, our softball teams and our annual company outings. However, when it comes to developing a corporate or product name, companies need to approach the task with the same gravity and rigor that would apply to any major business decision. A business name can be created to provoke emotions, spur attraction or disrupt the marketplace, but the process of developing and selecting name should be a rational one. Naming is the combination of art and science; both parts need to be present to ensure a good outcome.

The art of naming comes in the creative team's ability to generate words and ideas that capture the key attributes of the organization or product. This team should have the ability to think metaphorically, as well as literally and descriptively.

The science comes from, understandably, the more academic side of things: Etymology, linguistics, knowledge of Greek and Latin roots, mythology, trademark law, etc. You need an in-depth understanding of how words and language work to convey ideas, and how those ideas can be protected in a crowded environment. Marrying these two aspects together can help companies find a name that works.

Still, the team leading the naming initiative on the client side is ultimately faced with the decision. Their attorneys' perspectives might help to make the decision a little easier, if one of the lead name candidates is clearly more legally viable than another. But often, companies are faced with a couple of cleared options that, on some level, are equally intriguing.

Here are five naming tips to consider that will keep subjectivity at bay so that companies can agree on a name that effectively communicates the brand and business strategy.

1. Trust the process: A naming initiative is as much a process as it is an outcome. With minor variances between naming consultants, the process is often similar: Objectives are set; broad creative development begins; name candidates are refined; names are initially screened for legal availability; and finally, top contenders are identified for approval. Following through on every step is key. It is your best chance of ending up with a name that is own-able, pronounceable, does not insult anyone and supports key objectives. Short-circuiting the process will result in "do-over" work and, at worst, could put you in legal hot water.

2. Do more than you think you need. At a rate of approximately 2,000 new corporate names registered per year, finding unique and ownable names gets harder by the hour. Your company's broad creative exploratory should go beyond the expected. Push boundaries and pre-conceived notions. Get out of your comfort zone and your expand options. With the ever-increasing plethora of names that are already taken, creating more names will increase your chances of getting one you can call your own.

3. It's not always love at first sight: Think of some of the most admired brands in the world and their corresponding names—Apple, Google, Amazon—now picture them as a word alone on a blank sheet of paper without any context. Some of them might seem pretty silly. But as odd as they were for the category, there was a story and rationale behind them, and in their own way, they supported the vision of the organization. Years of building the customer experience brought them to life. The lesson? It's not about loving the name itself. It's about understanding how that name can help create the foundation for your bigger story.

4. Be creative with the URL: A pure URL match to your company's ideal name is terrific. But don't let the lack of a perfect URL stop you from selecting alternatives. There are plenty of modifications and additions you can make in the URL to keep it intuitive and own-able in the space, such as adding a short descriptor after the proprietary name. Explore and present these options as finalists become clearer.

5. Some things need to be proven, not stated. A corporate name should not blatantly describe the desired perception you want your company to be known for in the market. Like being trustworthy. Or innovative. Or smart. These are qualities that must be earned by delivering on your business strategy and successfully managing your brand experience across all touch points.

A company name should evoke what makes your organization different and relevant, be it a philosophy, how you do business, a key focus or your breadth and scale. But calling your company something akin to "BrilliantCo" will not only draw extra scrutiny and criticism from your detractors, but could also raise more credibility questions with your desired audiences than it answers. PRN

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Big Brands Trim Ad Budgets—More Room for PR $$?; Employees: Benefits Communications are Fringe at Best

► Advertisers Trim Budgets—More Room for PR? Half of the biggest advertisers in the U.S. trimmed their budgets during the last quarter, including behemoths like **Procter & Gamble**, **AT&T** and **Verizon.** According to **Kantar Media**, Procter & Gamble witnessed a 13.2% slide in the second quarter to $577 million. AT&T claimed second place in Q2 2011, but cut back by 21% to $376m in Q2 2012. The drop in ad spending could free up budgets for increased communications efforts, known to be a less expensive and effective alternative to advertising. Other findings include:

- Verizon logged a 14.7% contraction to $327 million. **Time Warner**, the media owner, was similarly down by 12.9% to $298 million. **News Corp.**, from the same sector, was also at $298 million, representing a 6.8% decrease in spending.
- In automotive, **General Motors** recorded an even larger decline, of 30.1%, to $292 million. **Toyota**, its rival, posted a 22.7% leap to $285 million.
- **Unilever** was up 48.6% to $278 million. It thus replaced **Pfizer** in the top 10. The pharmaceutical firm slashed its ad spending by 15.9% in Q1 year on year to $301 million, and delivered a further dip in Q2.
- Retail was up by 0.9% to $3.8 billion, while automotive grew by 7.7% to $3.3 billion. Telecoms lodged a 2.4% decrease to $2 billion and financial services brands were down by 3.4%, coming in at just over $1.9 billion.
- As a group, the top 10 advertisers registered a 5.5% drop in advertising expenditure, to $3.6 billion. The top 100 marketers, together accounting for 40% of revenues, boosted their outgoings by 1.1%.

Source: Kantar Media

► All Sides Agree—Good Benefits Communications are Lacking: A study by **Guardian Life Insurance Company of America** finds that benefits communications are a point of contention with both employers and employees. Fewer than 4 in 10 employers (37%) say that their benefits communications are very effective in helping employees make the right benefits decisions. Only 34% of employees say that the benefits communications they receive are very effective. Other study highlights include:

- 70% of employees who were able to receive benefits communications in their preferred channel said they were very confident in their benefits selections versus just 57% of those who did not.
- Workers who were able to enroll in their preferred channel were more satisfied with their overall benefits package (70%).
- During the enrollment period, workers want to receive their benefits communications through multiple channels. In fact, almost 20% of employees would like to receive benefits communications through six or more options.
- 80% seek the ease and convenience of being able to sign up for benefits online so they can enroll when and where they choose.

Source: Guardian Life Insurance Company of America

Within Fortune 500, Twitter Usage Tops Facebook in Most Industries

Industry	Number of Companies w/Facebook Pages	Percent	Number of Companies w/Twitter Accounts	Percent
Aerospace and Defense	10/14	71%	12/14	86%
Chemicals	9/17	53%	13/17	76%
Commercial Banks	14/20	70%	15/20	75%
Food Consumer Products	12/14	86%	13/14	93%
Insurance: Property and Casualty (Stock)	11/16	69%	13/16	81%
Motor Vehicles and Parts	7/16	44%	7/16	44%
Specialty Retailers	25/28	89%	24/28	86%
Telecommunications	12/15	80%	12/15	80%
Utilities: Gas and Electric	11/22	50%	16/22	73%

Source: University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, August 2012

Twitter trumps Facebook among the Fortune 500. All of the top 10 companies (Exxon, Wal-Mart, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, General Motors, General Electric, Berkshire Hathaway, Fannie Mae, Ford Motors and Hewlett-Packard) consistently post on their Twitter accounts.

Carefully Executed B2B Blog Becomes a Powerful Tool in Demonstrating Apriso's Manufacturing Expertise

Company: Apriso
Agency: Gutenberg PR
Timeframe: Aug. 2010 - Present

Image courtesy of Apriso

Playing within the ultra-competitive manufacturing industry, Apriso has seen solid success with its blog, which has steadily increased its number of page views while drawing more people to its Web site.

When the **Apriso Corporation**, headquartered in Long Beach, Calif., was looking to establish itself as a thought leader in an ever-changing manufacturing industry, the creation of a corporate blog became integral to that strategy.

Apriso provides sophisticated consulting services and software solutions to manufacturers, and a blog provides an excellent forum for reaching a highly-targeted audience. In a rapidly changing taking place in the industry, the Apriso team believed a blog would give them the opportunity to broadcast their expertise, enhance brand awareness and create a powerful tool to support the company's sales efforts.

Apriso also felt it had the expertise and knowledge to demonstrate to potential customers that it not only possessed more industry knowledge than their competitors (which includes the likes of SAP, Siemens and GE), but that it was an influential player in their industry as a whole.

While many companies have blogs, creating one that consistently delivers quality and useful content is a challenge. Apriso had to figure out what critical information customers and potential customers were not receiving, how it could capture that audience and how to effectively deliver that content to its targets.

To get the development process rolling, lay the foundation for the blog and to identify the type of content that would produce the most bang for the buck, Apriso brought Gutenberg PR on board, and both teams created the following objectives:

- Build thought leadership in the manufacturing industry
- Provide a community forum to discuss different facets of today's global manufacturing transformation
- Increase Web site traffic and visitors to apriso.com

GETTING STARTED

Apriso knew what it wanted to do, but there was just one problem: There was no one to manage it.

"The first thing I tried to do was learn how to do it. I'd never managed a blog before," says Gordon Benzie, director, public and analyst relations, Apriso. "I had to learn what worked and what didn't. I realized you have to build a history (on your blog) before you try to raise more awareness."

Benzie and his team decided to create a platform for industry experts to be able to share their perspectives, experiences and best practices to the masses. To know exactly what the target readers were looking for, Apriso researched the type of content existing blogs were producing, who was reading that content and what type of impact it had on the industry. The research found that the content on competing sites was almost impossible to find due to a lack of promotion. This poor marketing opened the door for Apriso to gain a competitive advantage.

Ariso's next act—on a shoestring budget—was to produce content of sufficient quality and readability to be of genuine use to its target audience.

With the blog taking center stage in Apriso's content marketing efforts, there was no room for inconsistency. Each post had to provide meaningful content. To achieve that goal, a consistent format needed to be established. Everything from what topics would be discussed to how in-depth each subject would be covered needed to be established at the outset. The decision was made to create specific, targeted content aimed

5 TIPS FOR GETTING YOUR CORPORATE BLOG FOUND AND READ

As part of your company's business objectives, a corporate blog has been added to the must-do list as a vehicle for providing consumers and those in your industry with valuable information. How do you make sure that information can be found? Leah Beatty, search media manager at **Slingshot SEO, Inc**., offers five steps in starting and publicizing your blog:

1. **Answer the question, "What's my message?"** You must know what you represent before you can create any real connections with your audience. Targeting your message will help you connect with your audience and increase your opportunity for thought leadership.
2. **Figure out who will care.** Do the things you're passionate about resonate with others? It's great to be passionate, but if no one is listening your message will be lost. Use a keyword research tool like Google Keyword Tool to discover what people are searching for that is relevant to your blog niche.
3. **Create a social profile.** Choose one of the Big Four social platforms (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google+) used by your target audience and create your profile. Each network has different best practices; be sure to learn them.
4. **Create content.** The key to ranking your blog lies with content. Don't box yourself into thinking content means words; photos, videos, graphics, podcasts, presentations and social updates all count as content. Stay organized by creating a content calendar. Plan your content a month in advance and tweak as necessary.
5. **Update frequently.** Create compelling content that your audience will read and share. Content should interest your audience (so they will share it) and include a call to action. Remember to upcycle and recycle content: the presentation you gave last month would make a great blog post series or white paper.

at those actually involved in manufacturing.

GETTING IT DONE

Once the structure and focus of the blog was established, the next step involved defining tactics to make the blog a success. It needed to cover a wide range of topics, and Apriso grew the team from a handful of generalists into a collection of over 20 bloggers, with each covering a specific area of expertise. An editing framework would provide clear direction for the editorial team on how to write effective blog entries.

Launched in August 2010, the Manufacturing Transformation Blog averages two to three posts a week. The blog provids nuts and bolts information of immediate and practical use to the target audience. Here are some typical headlines:

- Nanofibres—It Turns out that Size Matters
- My Lessons Learned from 5 Years of Assessing Manufacturing Operations
- Why Manufacturing Standards Matter

To gain an even greater audience, the Apriso blogging team secures guest blog appearances in industry leading Web sites and publications.

Thoroughly researched keywords—based on what terms Apriso's prospects are looking for online—helped set the plate for optimal reach of the blog. Benzie wouldn't reveal specific keywords for competitive reasons, but says that the search strategy extends to all of Apriso's Web properties.

Once it was established that people were actually reading Manufacturing Transformation and the content being produced was of genuine interest to Apriso's target audience, it became clear that the blog should immediately become the focal point of their social media activities. The company's Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn pages were synched to include links to the blog's posts. In the company e-mail newsletter, four popular posts of the week are included.

BLOG BENEFITS

As the blog's popularity has grown, other departments within Apriso have leveraged its power for their own needs. "It's been a good sales tool," Benzie says. "An account executive will call about someone who's asking about X, Y or Z, and I'll point them to literature on that topic. If it's already on the blog, that's perfect."

According to Tom Hennessey, VP marketing, Apriso, the blog has not only opened the door for increased PR and social media outreach, it has had some unexpected benefits, particularly internally.

"To continue leading the industry, we must always look for ways to be more innovative in how we run our business," says Hennessey. As with any organization, the challenge lies in getting everyone moving in the same direction toward a common goal, he says.

But that challenge appears to be met with the blog, as divisions across Apriso have worked toward a common goal—and experienced success.

"It feels really great when the team can point back to the exact moment a customer became interested in our unique value point by what they read on the blog, and then turn to us to help them deliver that same value for their own organization," says Hennessey.

MEASURING SUCCESS

Doubts that surrounded the creation of the Manufacturing Transformation and worries about producing enough content on a weekly basis have subsided, says Benzie. One of the main goals has been accomplished: The blog provides a trove of posts that are meaningful and relevant to the targeted audience.

In addition, the blog provides Apriso a medium where it can further categorize its many messages. "It gives the control to the reader, no matter the number of messages, to view our capabilities and industry by simply reading by topic or subject matter expert," says Hennessey.

But what about that holy grail of social media measurement: ROI? Like most companies, Apriso is in the process of figuring it out. Because of the complexities of proving ROI, Benzie is hesitant to give the blog more credit than it deserves. But he does say that the Manufacturing Transformation Blog has played a part. "This strategy, combined with other campaigns and sales execution, has resulted in the company's 25%+ steady compounded annual growth over the past six years," says Benzie.

The data Apriso can directly attribute to the blog show that people have been reading it:

- The number of page views of the blog took off in 2011, tripling from January through October (see the chart).
- From January, 2011 to March 2012, monthly unique visitors to Apriso's Web site increased 65%.
- From an SEO perspective, Apriso went from not appearing on page one for searches on topics and keyword combinations critical to Apriso's business for most of 2011, to achieving a ranking of No. 2 or No. 3 on page 1 for those same terms.

In the end, solid ideas, objectives, strategies and execution of its plan helped solidify Apriso's Manufacturing Transformation Blog as a must-read—and an integral part of the company's marketing and communications mix. PRN

[Learn more about social media measurement—and ROI—at the PR News Social Media Measurement Conference on Oct. 2 in New York City (www.prnewsonline.com/socialmediameasureConference/).]

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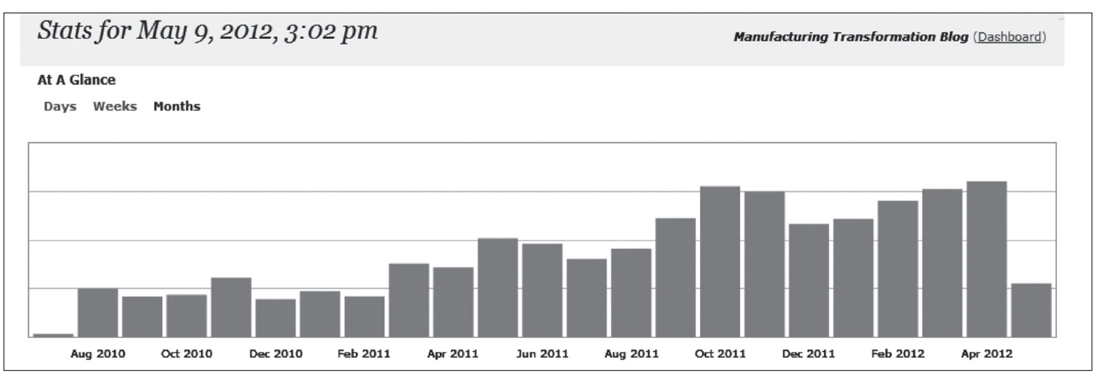

Launched in August 2010, Apriso's Manufacturing Transformation Blog has steadily climbed in page views, tripling views from January to October 2011. Thanks to SEO efforts, the blog has also significantly improved its search ranking on Google.

Preparing for the Expected

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group, estimates that 80% of the crises he's handled have been known in advance.

PROS AND CONS

The question is, what do you do when you know you'll be slammed? Loeb says you've got to weigh your options carefully. Conventional wisdom is to base your response on enterprise value—how much will your decision affect the value of your organization? "Usually it's not a complicated answer—until you think about the consequences," says Loeb.

Whatever the response, there should bias toward action, says Loeb. "The lawyer in me may be saying 'inaction,' and that is synonymous with lower risk. But I don't agree with that," he says.

Recently the Edelman team had a healthcare client that was about to be hit with some controversy. "We knew something had to be done before the news came out," says Loeb.

So Loeb recommended what he calls a "controlled detonation," using the opportunity to be the first mover in the situation. "Disclose the problem smartly. It could be a press release or phone calls to customers, but don't under-communicate or over-communicate," says Loeb.

TIME IS EVERYTHING

Whatever your response, remember that if you know a crisis is coming, time is on your side, and that can be the great equalizer, says Roger Friedensen, president and CEO at Raleigh-Durham, N.C.-based **Forge Communications**. Friedensen calls this situation a "smoldering crisis."

Meaning, you know it's coming and it may be punctuated by flare-ups. "But you have the luxury of time," says Friedensen. Thus, you have time to take the following actions suggested by Friedensen:

AT SALVATION ARMY, CRISIS LEARNINGS COME NATURALLY

Jennifer Byrd

When Hurricane Isaac was moving towards the Gulf Coast in late August 2012, Jennifer Byrd, national public relations director of the **Salvation Army** and her team weren't sitting around waiting for the storm to hit land. Just as its disaster teams in the region began to mobilize, Bryd was too. Storms are a prime example of knowing when a crisis will strike in advance. Here are some tactics from Byrd on preparing for the worst but hoping for the best:

- **Keep your stakeholders in the impacted region informed.** In the case of hurricanes, this starts when the storm is out at sea.
- **Have spokespeople strategically situated and media briefed.** This is to engage directly with media and help tell the story through social media.
- **Send a fact sheet and/or press release daily.** These go to media and Salvation Army units throughout the country, updating them on our latest activities.
- **Stock up your Web site with information.** The SA Web site, disaster.salvationarmyusa.org, also allows people in the field to directly upload the latest stories and statistics online.
- **Keep a two-way connection.** The Salvation Army team in Washington, D.C. is in constant contact with people on the ground, ensuring the most up-to-date and accurate data.

1. **Have time to get the facts straight.** "You're not in the fog of war," says Friedensen. So ask and answer all questions, line up experts and do research of similar crises.
2. **Have time to hone your messaging.** You can sharpen you message, sub-messages and proof points, and think about the channels you'll select to tell your side.
3. **Have time to coach spokespeople on specific questions.** "This is where you can hone in and ask questions you know will come initially," says Friedensen.
4. **Have the time to plan ahead for what is likely to happen.** In an unexpected crisis, you're moving so fast that you can only anticipate what will happen in an hour, if that. "Now you can project what's likely to happen on day two, in a week or in a month," he says.

I DON'T LIKE MONDAYS

Robin Carr, director of public relations at San Francisco-based **Xoom Corp.**, knows a little about putting out PR fires that are known in advance. As the former public relations director at video game maker **Electronic Arts,** it wasn't unusual to launch a game and announce that a patch was forthcoming to fix a bug.

And, while with the San Francisco Giants for nine years as communications manager, Carr had to deal with instances of player misbehavior.

"There's nothing worse on a Sunday night than seeing one of your players on the news in handcuffs," says Carr. "You know that Monday will be bad, but you have to get ahead of the story as much as possible."

Carr says in order to face those kinds of days, there are three points to remember:

Photo by Aubrey Hord

"There's nothing worse on a Sunday night than seeing one of your players on the news in handcuffs. You know that Monday will be bad, but you have to get ahead of the story."

Robin Carr
Xoom Corp., formerly with the S.F. Giants

- **The relationships you have with the media are crucial.** "Being able to pick up the phone and explain the situation to a reporter who has your trust makes a big difference," says Carr.
- **Get as much information as you can.** Learn the background of the possible crisis, getting exact details, because you'll need them.
- **Don't leave a trail.** If the potential crisis is a hot one, Carr recommends not leaving a paper or e-trail, which could come back to haunt you later. "Use the phone instead," she says.

PR pros are paid doomsayers, muses Friedensen. "We think of the worst thing that can happen, and then try to manage that scenario effectively," he says.

Just remember that transparency and credibility are the drivers in crisis response. "Always think that anything you do can end up on YouTube, on a blog or on Twitter," says Friedensen. "It *will* come out."

That's why communicators and lawyers often have different takes on crisis response. Friedensen is apt to error on the side of transparency, living by the old PR adage: If you mess up, fess up. PRN

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Reaching Millennials

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non-Millennials are.

CAUSE ELEMENT

In reaching this group, giving back is a major element, says Scott Gulbransen, director, social business strategy at **H&R Block**.

The 54-year-old tax services company was looking to tap a younger demo (some Millennials pay taxes, too) and decided to launch an irreverent campaign—some might say risky—called "The 'Stache Act." A mixture of politics, whimsy and genius, the campaign involved a proposed bill (the 'Stache Act) that would provide a $250 tax cut to anyone sporting a mustache.

An array of staged events, social media blasts, and media outreach helped H&R Block overtake competitor TurboTax in buzz. A big part of the success though was a charity tie-in with **Million from One**, a nonprofit that provides long-term clean water and antimicrobial shoes, along with education and hygiene training, to those in need across the world.

"Our target audience thrived on being part of a bigger cause than just moustaches," says Gulbransen, wryly. "They fed off of this and saw the value in engaging with our brand, which started to change perceptions."

Tammy Tibbets, founder and president of the nonprofit **She's the First**, agrees that giving back is a major trait of Millennials, and can be leveraged by good PR to do some very good things. According to **Harris Interactive**, 90%+ of U.S. youth use social media, and they want to use it to make a difference, but 70% never have.

Tibbets has built She's the First—which sponsors girls' education in the developing world—around that data point, and keeps three other Millennial traits in mind when planning programs: how they define & celebrate goals; how they learn social responsibility; and how they act as global citizens.

She's the First has worked with a number of brands in reaching Millennials, and Tibbets has some campaign tactics for those brands looking to work with nonprofits to tap this important audience:

1. Get them to sign up—for a concrete, easy action;
2. Use social media to drive offline action;
3. Provide more resources: downloadable guides, PDFs;
4. Give Millennials decision-making power;
5. Recognize and reward excellence; and
6. Follow up and show results.

MILLENNIALS 2.0

Yet there is a monkey wrench thrown into the Millennial mix—the sagging economy. Since birth, Millennials were groomed by their parents to be successful and community minded, says Jake Katz, general manager of **YPulse**, a youth market research company. The recession has changed all of that.

"Now they are rethinking the American Dream," says Katz. "Before they were destination driven. Now life is more about the journey." And very much about living for the moment, a theme that **Pepsi** expertly tapped in April, 2012 when launching its first global campaign, "Live For Now."

Katz stresses the importance of social interaction as a way to reach Millennials. "Facebook is like their bedroom TVs," he says. "And they don't know anything else other than their cellphones."

As an example of great Facebook engagement of Millennials, Katz offers up Skittles. The brand's "Greatest Fan in the World" contest regularly displays Millennials' photos, who then share them with friends.

BE BOLD

Yet, social media may not be the way to go with all Millennials. Katz says the biggest misconception of brands is that everybody needs a social media campaign. "Give them the right platforms to best leverage their experience," he says. "Does Tide really need a Facebook page?"

Whichever platforms you use to reach Millennials, Tibbets says the more you innovate, the more successful you'll be in your efforts. "Be willing to try new things, and always be thinking about how Millennials can change your business," she says.

Jean Twenge, author of the 2007 book *Generation Me*, considers Millennials to be full of narcissism when compared with Baby Boomers and other generations.

While that may be the case, with a little understanding of this important audience, organizations should turn any negativity into a business positive. PRN

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Other Generations—Through the Years

Generation	Born	Description	Characterized by
The Lost Generation	1883 – 1900	Popularized by Ernest Hemmingway in *The Sun Also Rises*.	Those who fought in World War I.
Greatest Generation	1901 – 1924	Dubbed so by Tom Brokaw in his book of the same name.	Grit and guile demonstrated by World War II veterans.
Silent Generation	1925 - 1945	Children of the Great Depression.	Tough trials during formative years, which profoundly impacted them.
Baby Boom Generation	1946 – 1964	Sheer numbers alone reshaped society.	Rejection or redefinition of traditional values.
Generation X	1965 - 1981	Shaped by events such as the election of Ronald Reagan and the Chernobyl disaster.	Group without identity who faced uncertain, ill-defined future.
Generation Z	1990s on	The Internet Generation.	Always on and connected.

Source: PR News

Editor's Note: Learn how to measure your PR programs across all the dominant social media platforms at the PR News Social Media Measurement Conference in NYC on Tuesday, Oct. 2 (www.prnewsonline.com/socialmediameasureConference/).

BY LUKE LAMBERT

Instilling Optimism to Build a Resilient Workforce

Although most experts declared the U.S. recession over in 2009, few executives are singing "Happy Days are Here Again." In the PR industry, at least, those experts seem to know what they're talking about, Since 2009 the PR agency industry has been humming along rather nicely.

The PR agency industry last year grew to $10 billion worldwide, up 25% from 2009, according to *The Holmes Report*. Most exciting is anecdotal knowledge that more clients have broadened their horizons by expanding the scope of PR work beyond the traditional to accelerate growth trajectories. Not bad at all. That's because instead of worrying, many PR firms were busy reinventing their organizations.

Some invested in acquisitions to expand their capabilities. For others, including me, the re-engineering had started before the recession and was part of long-term planning.

Regardless the paths we've chosen, central to all is the support of a resilient workforce. A generation ago, it was called "mental toughness."

MENTAL TOUGHNESS

By definition, mental toughness is the emotional perseverance necessary to overcome adversity and stay focused, while emerging stronger after the transition. At a time of great uncertainty, mental toughness is in big demand. As a result, all forms of resilience training are being adopted in the workplace.

At Gibbs & Soell, we recently attended a program facilitated by the Center for Creative Leadership to explore what it takes to guide an organization through business gyrations. A key learning is that change is "situational" and an experience with clearly defined terms, while a transition is "psychological" and akin to the mourning process that precedes a new endeavor.

Even the U.S. military, a group known for its training to withstand physical and psychological pressure, has rolled out a program focused on conditioning its drill sergeants to be more resilient. How? By being more of an optimist.

DIMENSIONS OF OPTIMISM

The program, developed for the U.S. Army by the University of Pennsylvania, teaches the sergeants that optimism has very specific dimensions that contribute to achieving mental toughness. The most productive ways of behaving optimistically are to:

- Understand that failure in varying degrees happens with some regularity and cannot always be avoided, but it is temporary.
- Nurture a positive style of thinking that addresses rational concerns, but does not constantly dwell on the worst case scenario.
- Work to recognize and appreciate others' strengths, and avoid jumping to conclusions especially when an individual initially struggles.

MALCONTENTS

Even when an optimistic point of view considers the harsh reality, does it still expose an organization's vulnerabilities?

After all, some may say the American "can-do" spirit hasn't delivered the immediate economic recovery many had hoped for. Frida Ghitis, a *Miami Herald* columnist, wondered "Is optimism really good for you?" in a CNN.com commentary. Ms. Ghitis wrote:

"It's this kind of arrogance passing for self-confident optimism that gave us the economic mess we have had for the past five years. It's the optimism that falsely promised home prices could only go up, so we should borrow as much as possible, regardless of income."

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES

Obviously not all optimism is healthy, but firms can protect themselves by understanding that confidence cannot be selfish and must be rooted in optimism and generosity.

Gaining the prize is rarely a solitary win. Over time, organizations whose teams build up their resilience can embed into their culture certain survival strategies, which help them ride out rougher business conditions. Leaders should ask these questions about their teams:

- **Expertise.** Do they possess the know-how to help others facilitate their organization's transitions? Can they recognize the obstacles that stand in the way of moving forward with a change?
- **Experience.** Will they be capable of drawing from practical knowledge or first-hand observations to find ways of coping with change? How will they use this information to counsel clients with their own change management situations?
- **Network of resources.** Do they have the right tools and support to help catalyze change in our organization?

Whether you call it resiliency or mental toughness, one thing's for sure: When the going gets tough, the tough head to the sunny side of the street. PRN

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