

August 2010 E-Newsletter

In This Issue

[PRSA News](#)

[Chapter News](#)

[Member Spotlight](#)

[Media News](#)

Quick Links

[WMIPRSA Facebook Page](#)

[WMIPRSA Twitter Page](#)

[WMIPRSA website](#)

[PRSA website](#)

Member News

Enter in the Diamond Awards

The East Central District of the Public Relations Society of America is calling for shining examples of public relations campaigns and tactics for its 33rd annual Diamond Awards competition. The Diamond Awards are presented to public relations practitioners who have successfully addressed a communications challenge with exemplary professional skill, creativity and resourcefulness.

The Diamond Awards are open to any public relations professional who is a member of the 16 chapters in the PRSA East Central District or any nonmember whose place of business is within the district's boundaries. The East Central District covers the states of Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

This year's contest is proudly hosted by the PRSA Bluegrass Chapter in Louisville, KY .

Download your 2010 Diamond Awards

Upcoming Programs

Meet the Media



WMIPRSA member meeting with Lee Van Ameyde from WZZM TV 13.

Join us for a unique opportunity to meet personally with local media representatives

August 19, 2010

WMIPRSA's annual "Meet the Media" event has always been one of our most highly attended programs. For the second time this year, we will welcome the return of our popular "speed pitching" format at our August program.

Throughout the program, participants will meet one-on-one with members of the media during timed speed pitching sessions. For a few minutes, you will have the undivided attention of news directors, editors and reporters from local television and radio stations, daily, weekly and monthly publications and online outlets.

These three-minute meetings go fast - so, be prepared, plan your story pitches in advance and maximize your time.

Come early to book those coveted appointments. The appointment sign-up sheets will be available at 11 a.m. In the coming weeks, WMIPRSA will publish the list of expected media in future event notices, on our [Facebook page](#), on [Twitter](#) and on our [website](#).

Event Details

Thursday, Aug. 19, 2010

The Gainey Conference Center
Cornerstone University
1001 East Beltline Avenue NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

category descriptions and entry forms now by [clicking here](#) or [here](#).

10 Ways to Help Your Sound Bites Make a Positive Impression

To assist you in the selection process, we have compiled a list of 10 tips aimed at ensuring that your spokesperson's sound bites stand out from the rest (for all the right reasons) and leave the media and viewers wanting more.

1. Adapt for multiple uses. Stories that start off in print may find their way to the web, and vice versa. With that fact in mind, it's a good idea to make sound bites available in a variety of formats (e.g., text, video, and podcast) so that journalists can use them as needed.

2. Remember your online press center (OPC). A valuable, but often underused resource, your organization's OPC enables journalists and bloggers to access all relevant information in one place. The OPC will show them how others are using your sound bites in previous stories about your company, brand, or client.

3. Capture the personalities of your spokespeople. Conveying the personality of a spokesperson can enhance the representative's audience appeal. For that reason, don't be afraid to let the individual speak in the first person and to include anecdotes where appropriate. This will also enable your spokesperson to forge a relationship with a journalist.

4. Watch the cadence. In print, this means fashioning quotes that read in a natural speaking tone. Digitally, it implies not sounding monotone, boring, and/or robotic.

5. Make it memorable. Some may choose to include anecdotes, others to use alliteration, humor, or an emotional statement that speaks to the human condition. Anne Wylie, on [PRSA's ComPRhension blog](#), suggests using the "List, Rhyme, and Twist" method. Regardless of how you come up with it, a good sound bite must resonate in the hearts and minds of the audience.

6. Practice on video or audio. If creating sound bites doesn't come naturally to you, then you'll probably need the added practice. Regardless, you'll still want to rehearse a few times. But remember, the more you rehearse, the less natural you'll sound.

7. Develop brief, pithy statements. Brevity is key when

11 AM - Registration/Lunch
11:30 AM - 1 PM - Speed Pitching

\$30 - Members
\$40 - Non-members, guests
\$20 - Students

[Click here](#) to register.

[Click here](#) to see the list of media attending.

Ferris State University PR & WMPRSA Speaker Series & Social

When: Friday, Sept. 10 at 6 p.m.

Where: Holiday Inn, Big Rapids

Speaker: Curt McAllister, Toyota, Midwest PR Manager

Cost: \$30 each, \$50 for two, \$22 for students, Dinner is included. A cash bar will be available.

Toyota in Crisis - How Communications Helped an Automaker Transition from Recalls to Recovery

During the first half of 2010, the crisis facing Toyota dominated headlines and broadcasts around the world. With more than eight million vehicles recalled globally, the world's largest automaker saw its sterling reputation - painstakingly built over several decades - diminished in a matter of weeks. A company known for quality and reliability was now relegated to punch-line status. Yet, in light of harsh public scrutiny and intense criticism, the car company is still selling vehicles at a solid pace in the U.S.

Curt McAllister, Midwest Public Relations Manager at Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc., will discuss the events involved in this historic corporate crisis and how communications played a pivotal role in reaching out to vital internal and external audiences, at the height of media saturation. He'll divulge how public relations helped assure the industry's most loyal customer base, and forge an even tighter bond between dealer and OEM. McAllister will also discuss how transparency and executive availability played prominent roles in a nationwide media tour that hit dozens of major and secondary markets across America.

McAllister will also talk about ongoing communications tools and tactics that keep employees, dealers and customers apprised of the company's activities, providing a sense of security and openness they've come to expect from Toyota. McAllister is an alumnus of Ferris State University, and a graduate of the public relations program.

RSVP by Wednesday, September 1 by mailing your name and check to: FSUPR, Patrick Bishop, COB 320, 119 South St, Big Rapids, MI 49307.

Checks may be made out to FSU PRSSA.

Please email [Patrick Bishop](#) with any questions about the event.

Chapter News

Call for WMPRSA board member nominations

If you, or someone you know, is interested in becoming more involved with WMPRSA, please nominate them for several soon to be open positions on the WMPRSA board of directors. These nominations will be taken into consideration by the board, and a vote will be opened up to all WMPRSA members.

Email your nominations to juanita.vorel@priorityhealth.com.

Member Spotlight

Rick Jensen

News Information Manager

creating a sound bite. But make sure your messages are persuasive at the same time that you're keeping them short and sweet.

8. Use plain language. People aren't going to listen, let alone act, if they don't understand what you're saying. Forgo the jargon and instead focus on delivering your messages in a clear, concise manner.

9. Include testimonials. Sound bites work best when you can convey all of your key messages in a lively manner. And they have even greater impact if you can get someone else - say, a current user - to reinforce those messages.

10. Quote industry leaders and competitors. This goes doubly if they support what you say. [According to the Media Gazette](#), "Your friends will always be on your side. If your opponent agrees with something you do, think or say, then you have a story."

Regardless of the form or medium, sound bites should demonstrate a level of authenticity and transparency. For some this means forgoing the traditional PR "script," while others may choose a more methodical approach. But regardless of your methods, you always want to make sure your spokespeople are truthful.

PRSA News

PRSA Offering Financial Hardship Plan

PRSA is offering a financial hardship plan to members who are unemployed or temporarily disabled. Members wishing to take advantage of the hardship plan should contact a Member Services representative at membership@prsa.org or (212) 460-1400.

Take Advantage of the PRSA Quarterly Membership Payment Plan

Thinking about renewing your membership, but don't want to pay the fee all at once?

PRSA members have the option of renewing their membership with a payment plan. Your national dues will be automatically charged to your credit card each quarter (sorry, no checks or wire transfer payments, and PRSA cannot defer any charges).

Your chapter, professional interest

Davenport University



1. Where do you work and what is your title?

Davenport University, News Information Manager

2. What is your main objective in that role?

I manage all media inquiries for the university's 14 campuses across the state of Michigan, proactively pitch news stories and assist with internal communications to students, faculty and staff.

3. How long have you been a member of WMPRSA?

About five years.

4. Why did you join WMPRSA?

I wanted to network with other PR professionals in the area and knew that WMPRSA has great programs. Actually, one of my college mentors, Cindy Droog, explained to me how important the membership is in networking and talked me into joining.

5. If you could have a job anywhere in the world, where and what would it be?

I would ultimately like to teach PR, Marketing, or Communications classes at the college level - where? I guess I don't know where. I love Grand Rapids and would be happy teaching here at Davenport University or GVSU. If I could somehow swing a house on Lake Michigan while doing so - well that would be my anywhere.

6. Name a favorite website and explain why you like it?

[Facebook](#). I'm a total Facebook junkie - constantly coming up with random updates and keeping up with friends. I get my news from Facebook and have become friends with many local media personalities. Making these connections through social media and keeping in touch can be very helpful in pitching and relationship building. I sometimes wonder how I spent my time on the web before Facebook - probably much more productively! :-)

Other than Facebook, I like to visit [failblog.org](#) and [icanhascheezburger.com](#) for daily entertainment. Who doesn't enjoy watching funny photos of cats with captions?!

section, and/or affinity group dues, plus a \$10 annual service fee, will be charged in full in the first payment. Members cannot renew online if they have opted for quarterly dues billing.

PRSA will continue to bill for quarterly dues until notified to do so otherwise by the member. A bimonthly e-mail is sent to members who have opted for quarterly payments to remind them how it works.

Suggestions?

EMAIL THE EDITOR!

We are always looking for interesting new content for the WMPRSA newsletter.

Please email any ideas or submissions for the newsletter to [Rick Jensen](#).

Like what you read?

SPONSOR THIS NEWSLETTER!

WMPRSA's monthly newsletter is a way for businesses to get their names in front of hundreds of professionals from across the region by being a sponsor.

Sponsors are spotlighted with each edition of the newsletter, as well as with each program notice and on the WMPRSA Web site.

If you're interested in learning more about being a sponsor, please e-mail [Andrea Clark](#).



P.O. Box 230292
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49523

Media News

Phil Catlett leaves Townsquare Media

After 24 years overseeing some of Grand Rapids' most popular radio stations, Phil Catlett isn't sure if he'll stay in broadcasting.

Catlett, 56, was removed from his job as general manager of [Townsquare Media's](#) West Michigan operation that owns WLHT-FM (95.7), WGRD-FM (97.9), WTRV-FM (100.5), WFGR-FM (98.7) and WNWZ-AM (1410).

Catlett is the latest top executive to be replaced in a leadership shake-up following the company's renaming from Regent Communications Inc. in May after it emerged from Chapter 11 bankruptcy reorganization.

Mayes and Wright Media Center opens in Muskegon Heights

The Mayes and Wright Media Center, the new home and source of WUVS, 103.7 FM The Beat, an urban contemporary format radio station that sends out more than just music across Muskegon County, recently opened its doors. For the first time in its eight-year history, the station owns its own home.

[Click here](#) for the full story in the Muskegon Chronicle.

WYCE increases power to 10,000 watts

A noncommercial Grand Rapids radio station recently boosted its signal strength, which station officials say will help it reach the lakeshore.

WYCE (88.1 FM), the radio station of the Grand Rapids Community Media Center, has increased its output power from 7,000 watts to 10,000 watts. The move completes a decade-long campaign to obtain signal increase approval from the Federal Communications Commission and raise the necessary funds to make the upgrade.

The new transmitter and antenna needed for the signal expansion project were funded through a capital campaign completed in 2007. An additional \$15,000 was raised this past spring to complete the installation.

The music-formatted WYCE is solely supported by listeners and its 70-plus volunteer programmers.

Brent Ashcroft joins WZZM-TV

After leaving WXMI-TV in March 2009, Brent Ashcroft now joins the team at WZZM-TV. His responsibilities include handling the sports anchor duties Monday and Tuesday nights and helping the news desk for three days. Ashcroft is looking forward to working with familiar faces and trying his hand at news stories for the first time.

Tim Dye leaves WXMI FOX 17

Tim Dye, news executive at station WXMI-TV FOX 17 is heading east to Detroit to join ABC affiliate WXYZ-TV on July 19 as news director.

Dye has more than 15 years experience in newsroom leadership and special project planning. He previously served as the assistant news director at WOOD-TV in Grand Rapids and managing editor at WNEM-TV in Saginaw.

[Click here](#) for the full story.

Dustin Dwyer Leaves Michigan Radio

West Michigan reporter Dustin Dwyer leaves Michigan Radio to become stay at home dad to take care of the new baby.

[Click here](#) to listen to one of Dustin's final podcast.

Join Our Mailing List!

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