

## May 2004 News & Views

### *News & Views May issue at a glance:*

- May Program: Film Public Relations
- June Program: Cause marketing/ partnerships
- Letter from the President: Godsend or Godawful?
- PRSA on Video News releases
- PRSA Advocacy advisory Board extends support to LA Chapter following Mayor's decision to ban PR agencies
- Search for 2005 National Leadership
- Tips on successful interview techniques: Start by asking the right questions
- Job Bank

## PRSA Boston May Program: PR in Action!

### **How Public Relations Plays a Leading Role in Moving Films from Pariah to Paydirt**

From coast to coast, public relations plays an important role in promoting some of the best that Hollywood and independent filmmakers have to offer. The lessons learned in this fiercely competitive industry have insightful business-to-business and consumer applications, and will get you thinking about your own public relations strategies in a different light.

From site selection and "behind the scenes" anecdotes to L.A. press junkets, industry trade shows, and creative field marketing tactics, our panel of creative and connected strategists will explain how a film is marketed, who the players are, and what PR strategies and tactics elevate a film from pariah to pay-dirt.

Moderated by Dixie Whatley, WCVB's Arts & Entertainment Editor, our expert panelists include:

- **Robin Dawson**, Exec. Director, Massachusetts Film Bureau
- **Crystal King**, VP Exhibitor Relations, Newmarket Films ("The Passion of the Christ")
- **Tracy King**, Field Publicist for Paramount Pictures and New Line Cinema

**When: Wednesday, May 12, 2004**  
4:00 p.m. Networking and appetizers  
5:00-6:30 p.m. Panel discussion

**Where: Showcase Cinemas Randolph**  
(voted "Best Theater in New England")  
Route 139, 73 Mazzeo Drive, Randolph  
Directions: Routes 93 or 95 to Route 24.

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## Our April Program Highlighting Cause marketing/Partnerships has been rescheduled for June

The program will feature three leaders from the fascinating world of cause marketing and corporate/non-profit partnerships.

- Carol Cone, CEO, Cone, Inc.
- David Giagrando, Director of Cause Marketing, The Jimmy Fund at Dana Farber Cancer Institute
- James Froio, President, New England Burger King Franchisee Association.

In an age of increasing competition, Enron-esque corporate scandals and heightened consumer mistrust, cause marketing has evolved into a "must-do" business strategy. Companies today must add "humanity" to their brands to build sincere, relevant relationships with key stakeholders.

Carol Cone will tell attendees how companies can leverage cause marketing initiatives to differentiate themselves from their competitors, connect emotionally with consumers and employees and, ultimately, positively strengthen their bottom-lines.

David Giagrando will bring the perspective of one of Boston's leading charitable organizations, which has partnered with

many corporations and developed programs of mutual benefit. His credo: Find what's in it for the company, not what's in it for the charity.

James Froio will explain how Burger King franchisees look at various cause marketing opportunities and work together to help charitable organizations -- including the Jimmy Fund -- raise much-needed funds.

**When:** Monday, June 14, 2004;  
6-7:00 PM - networking, dinner  
7-8:30 PM - presentations, panel discussion, Q&As

**Where:** Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Smith Building, Jimmy Fund Auditorium, Corner of Binney St. and Jimmy Fund Way (Binney Street is off Longwood Ave.; Jimmy Fund Way is off Brookline Ave.) Parking is available in the Smith Building parking garage, or take the "T" (a short walk from the Longwood stop on the Green "D" Line.

**Costs:** \$40 PRSA Boston Members  
\$50 Guests  
\$20 PRSSA Members  
\$25 Students

To register, go to [www.prsaboston.org](http://www.prsaboston.org) or contact Beth Bryant, PRSA Boston Chapter Administrator, at 617-926-9595 or [bbwrites@comcast.net](mailto:bbwrites@comcast.net).

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*(Program continued from page 1)*

Take the Route 139 east exit and go about 1 mile -- just 25 minutes from Boston with free parking.

**Cost:**

**\$40** PRSA Boston & Pub Club Members,  
**\$50** Guests and Nonmembers  
**\$20** PRSSA Members, **\$25** Students

Program admission includes a popcorn and soda during the program and a free pair of tickets to any Showcase Cinema (over \$20 in extra value). A special thank you to Elaine Purdy, Jennifer Hanson and Rebecca Stein at National Amusements for hosting

this program and for their invaluable assistance.

Register online at <http://www.opinionpower.com/Surveys/918014416.html> or fax registration form (below) to 617-926-4244. Master Card and Visa accepted. Payment MUST be made by day of the event. NOTE: No-shows will be billed; please cancel by May 10 to avoid being billed.

## Letter From The President

### Godsend or God Awful?

*"Death doesn't have to be an ending. At the Godsend Institute, we have the ability to make it a fresh start – a new beginning!"*

This fairly remarkable claim is posted on an otherwise unremarkable-looking website for a fertility clinic based in Cohasset, Massachusetts. As many of you know, the website – complete with moving family testimonials, photos of the facility, staff bios, and contact information – is part of a "Trojan Horse marketing" campaign to promote the new film, Godsend. The clinic doesn't exist, nor does the online petition campaign vowing to shutdown the clinic. (Can you say Hall of Mirrors?) Both are the creation of Lions Gate Film's marketing team, including Jeremy Walker & Associates, the public relations buzz-meisters for Blair Witch Project. Since our program this month is on film marketing and publicity, perhaps this campaign is a godsend (sorry) for those of us in the business of cutting through the clutter.

What should we make of this marketing/public relations envelope pushing? Are we cutting through or cluttering? Should we embrace the Trojan Horse as a public relations-based vehicle for garnering more budget share from our credibility-challenged advertising brethren? After all, aren't we (at least in part) in the business of generating third-party endorsements for our messages? Don't we pride ourselves on engaging audiences and driving traffic? The Godsend website has already attracted hundreds of thousands of hits according to Lions Gate's Director of Digital Marketing.

The website has succeeded in generating controversy and the inevitable widespread publicity, including this letter. (Talk about your Hall of Mirrors.)

Or should we regard this brand of stealth marketing more like the goose that laid the golden egg? To date, 150 people have left messages on the Godsend Institute's voicemail. More than 100 have signed the faux petition. It's not difficult to imagine the pain this campaign could cause unsuspecting website visitors. And even for those with a less immediate stake in death and cloning, might stealth marketing continue to erode public trust to the point where "genuine" third-party endorsements don't mean as much?

A couple of days ago I was stopped dead in my tracks by an ad in the *Globe* featuring a female divorce attorney and the line, *"Let's work together and show that scumbag that you are not weak and fragile."* Talk about clutter cutting! It took me several minutes to figure out it was an ad for the new film, *Laws of Attraction*. My reaction? *You got me. Very clever.*

So why does the photo of Julianne Moore as pseudo divorce attorney leave me smiling while Robert DiNero as founder of a phony cloning operation in Cohasset leave me worried? I guess it goes back to the Wizard of Oz. When they finally caught the Wizard in the act, his innocence and bumbling sincerity won out over my sense of betrayal.

So, should we pay attention to the man behind the curtain?

## PRSA on Video News Releases (VNRs)

Extensive discussion was focused in recent weeks on a Video News Release (VNR) produced by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), pertaining to the recently enacted Medicare drug bill. Content of the video release touched off partisan debate and discussion but also raised ethical questions about the use of VNRs. Since VNRs are a basic public relations tool used by corporations, organizations and other entities to provide news content to television stations and thus communicate with the public, PRSA believes that it is important for there to be a better understanding of the role and usage of VNRs.

**Background:** The VNR is the video equivalent of a press release, a written document sent to the media. The VNR is designed specifically for TV stations and consists of many elements including a complete story with visuals and narration/voiceovers, a suggested written script, added video that can be used by the station and suggested ways the story can be localized. Public relations professionals have produced VNRs in this manner for more than 25 years, and media outlets have used them on a regular basis.

**Issue in Question:** One of the issues raised about the DHHS VNR was the inclusion of a sign-off identification at the completion of the story that uses the words "reporting." This has caused some confusion among people who question whether someone who is not actually a reporter should be identified in a manner that could suggest that he or she is a journalist. While this is often done when VNRs are produced, we agree that this can be considered confusing and/or misleading.

### Three principles are at work here:

- A VNR is the television equivalent of a press release and, as such, should always be truthful and represent the highest in ethical standards.
- Producers and distributors of VNRs and the organizations they represent should clearly and plainly identify themselves.
- Television stations airing VNRs should identify sources of the material.

### PRSA Position:

1. Organizations that produce VNRs should clearly identify the VNR as such and fully disclose who produced and paid for it at the time the VNR is provided to TV stations.
2. PRSA recommends that organizations that prepare VNRs should not use the word "reporting" if the narrator is not a reporter.
3. Use of VNRs or footage provided by sources other than the station or network should be identified as to source by the media outlet when it is aired.

PRSA supports use of VNRs as useful public relations tools. They will continue to be effective when adhering to the highest standards of practice as described above.

## LOS ANGELES MAYOR FIRES ALL PUBLIC RELATIONS AGENCIES WORKING FOR CITY;

### PRSA RESPONDS WITHIN 24 HOURS, CITING "OVERKILL" ACTION

#### Issue:

On Monday, April 26, Los Angeles Mayor James K. Hahn ordered all city departments to stop using public relations firms (including canceling existing contracts) and directed all city general managers and department heads to immediately cease any negotiations with public relations firms for future contracts. He said his actions were part of cost-saving efforts, but took no action affecting other professional service firms who work with the city.

While this situation affects only one metro area, it has implications for agencies across the country who might encounter similar situations and it affects all public relations professionals because the implication of this action is that public relations counsel does not provide value. One Los Angeles newspaper ran an editorial cartoon depicting the City of Los Angeles as a starving, malnourished animal and public relations as two overstuffed business men that sucked it dry.

#### PRSA Response:

Within 24 hours, PRSA's Advocacy Advisory Board, in conjunction with the Los Angeles Chapter, issued a statement on Tuesday calling on the Mayor to reconsider his decision banning city work with public

relations agencies. PRSA was the first organization to get out in front on this issue. Highlights from the statement:

*"While we clearly understand that the city is facing budgetary constraints, and must take steps to deal with that problem, we call upon Mayor Hahn to reconsider this ill-advised action and instead pursue a more equitable course, such as a review of city spending on all outside professional services firms, with an eye toward value provided and performance delivered. Singling out one profession, across the board, with no regard for the services that are being provided or the impact of the communications programs that are being conducted may be a short-sighted solution." "The public relations agencies who augment the efforts of the city's communications professionals provide valuable work that should be judged on its merits, and either continued or terminated based on measurable results after a careful review process."*

- PRSA President & CEO Del Galloway, APR  
To view the full press release, please click here: [http://www.prsa.org/\\_News/press/pr042704.asp](http://www.prsa.org/_News/press/pr042704.asp).

#### GOT AN ISSUE?

If there is an issue that you think PRSA should consider taking a stand on, send a detailed e-mail to [advocacy@prsa.org](mailto:advocacy@prsa.org). It will be reviewed by the Advocacy Advisory Board to determine if it is appropriate for PRSA. To see the Society's initiatives to date, visit [http://www.prsa.org/\\_News/leaders/index.asp?ident=n2.5](http://www.prsa.org/_News/leaders/index.asp?ident=n2.5).

### From the Editor

Dear friends,  
We would be delighted to carry news releases, product launches, account wins and other industry relevant articles. Our objective is to make News & Views a platform for exchanging information and gain insight into the world of Public

Relations. We cannot achieve this without your contribution, so please feel free to share information that might benefit our fellow PR brethren. Any volunteers for the Guest Editor?

Look forward to your active participation.  
Shweta Agarwal  
Email: [editornewsandviews@yahoo.com](mailto:editornewsandviews@yahoo.com)

## “Search for 2005 National Leadership Underway”

The 2004 PRSA Nominating Committee has begun its annual process of recruiting candidates for officer and director positions on the 2005 Board of Directors. The positions open for nomination are president-elect, treasurer, secretary and four director positions. One director position must be filled by a candidate from the Southeast District and one by a candidate from the Southwest District. The other two director positions are open to members from any District. In addition, the Committee will nominate three Assembly delegates-at-large and one Canadian delegate-at-large.

To be eligible for an officer or director position, an individual must be a member in

good standing who is Accredited and has been either a voting delegate in at least one national Assembly, a Chapter president, a Section or District chair, or a national committee or task force chair. Starting this year, all officers and directors will serve concurrently on the PRSA Board of Directors and as members of the PRSA Foundation Board of Trustees. Candidates for Assembly delegate-at-large positions must be Accredited.

For more information on the 2004 Nomination process, click here ([http://www.prsa.org/\\_About/Leadership/candidates.asp](http://www.prsa.org/_About/Leadership/candidates.asp)) or send your questions to [nominating@prsa.org](mailto:nominating@prsa.org). Deadline for filing candidate application material is 5:00 p.m., EDT, Monday, June 28, 2004.

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## For Interview Success Start by Asking the Right Questions

By Deborah Walker, CCMC

Often the greatest interview anxiety focuses on trying to anticipate all the correct answers to interview questions. Equally important, however, are the questions YOU ask the interviewer. If job interviews are getting you no closer to an offer, maybe you are not asking the right questions. There are three types of questions that help jobseekers gain interview advantage:

### 1. Questions to uncover the interviewer's top hiring motives

You'll answer the interviewer's questions better once you know his/her particular hiring concerns. Here are examples of questions that will help you “get inside the head” of the interviewer:

- What do you see as the toughest challenge of this position?

- What qualities do you see as most important for this position?
- Why have others failed in this position?

Once you've asked any or all of the above questions, listen very closely. The first thing the interviewer says reveals his/her truest feelings. Use this information as insight for answering his/her questions to you. After all, what is an interview but a sales presentation? Any salesperson will tell you that you cannot sell until you know what the buyer wants.

### 2. Questions that illustrate your interest and intelligence

Did you know that an intelligent question can impress an interviewer even more than a snap answer?

The best types of questions to showcase your intelligence and interest come out of your research of the company and industry.

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You may want to ask questions concerning:

- Strategy for reaching a specific niche market
- The company's long-range goals
- Territorial expansion plans

Granted, some information may be deemed confidential. If you begin your inquiry with, "Can you tell me..." you give the interviewer an out if he/she cannot speak on the subject. Either way, you get the opportunity to impress the interviewer with your intelligent curiosity about corporate goals and plans.

Remember, pre-interview research is the key to forming insightful questions. Never try to "wing your way" through an interview without finding out facts ahead of time. Some good sources for research include: Online searches using search engines such as Google or Yahoo for:

- Public library reference materials
- Company website
- Press releases

If you've been out-performed in interviews lately, try this strategy and see if you don't get called back for second interviews more often.

### **3. Question to uncover the interviewer's unspoken concerns.**

As you sense your interview winding down, don't forget to find out what issues or concerns the interviewer has concerning you as a good candidate fit. Don't make the assumption that the interviewer will

volunteer his/her concern. Nine times out of ten they won't. If you don't ask, the interviewer won't tell you his negative perceptions of you. The most straightforward way to find out is just to ask:

- "What concerns do you have that prevent you from asking me back for the second interview?"
- "What concerns ... that prevent you from offering me the position?"

Once you've asked this question, be still and listen closely to how the interviewer responds. Pay attention to body language as well. If the interviewer says, "I have no concerns," while averting his eyes, or touching his face, it's a sure sign the interviewer DOES have concerns but is reluctant to state them. If so, a little gentle prying is in order as long as you don't make the interviewer too uncomfortable.

Once the interviewer has stated his concerns, use the opportunity to answer with one of your previously thought out success stories that illustrate your ability to meet or exceed his expectations.

If you've done your pre-interview homework and conducted a little role-play practice, using these three types of questions in your next interview will help you reach your career objective faster. Here's hoping you get a chance very soon to try out all three of these types of questions in an interview. (Deborah Walker, CCMC is a resume writer and career coach. Find resume writing and job search tips at [www.AlphaAdvantage.com](http://www.AlphaAdvantage.com))

Email Deborah at:  
[Deb@AlphaAdvantage.com](mailto:Deb@AlphaAdvantage.com)

## Jobs

### PR Manager, eCopy Based: Nashua, NH

eCopy is seeking a Public Relations Manager to increase the firm's visibility, and position it to the business community as a dynamic, innovative industry leader. This person needs to be an experienced professional, a hands-on leader and a self-starter who can set up and run a pro-active media relations function. The successful candidate must have an extensive list of high-level media contacts in business publications (NY Times, Newsweek, etc.) and IT trade journals. The Public Relations Manager will also act as company spokesperson. Specific experience in the Technology industry required. The right candidate will bring enthusiasm and innovation to every opportunity.

#### Responsibilities:

- Represent eCopy to the media and act as spokesperson; drive our positioning and messaging to the media.
- Manage key reporter relationships.
- Write/pitch stories to obtain placements.
- Perform a quarterly measurement of press coverage to gauge success.
- Select and package thought-leadership and case study content for media consumption to convey key eCopy messages.
- Develop plans for stories and projects that will build a leadership role for eCopy and establish our industry category.
- Monitor general news for eCopy media opportunities.
- Promote eCopy experts as media spokespeople to provide commentary and background for reporters.
- Promote media coverage of public appearances by eCopy speakers.
- Work with trade shows and other organizations to secure speaking opportunities for eCopy experts.
- Manage major communication projects to impact the company's reputation in the marketplace – especially around product launches.
- Train and prepare eCopy spokespeople for media interviews.
- Monitor competitive media coverage and prepare regular analyses of strengths, weaknesses, gaps and opportunities.
- Deliver presentations to senior management and leadership teams on progress and strategies for media visibility.
- Maintain consistent contact with key journalists who cover eCopy and its industry.
- Conduct press tours to promote eCopy products and technology.

#### Education and Experience:

- 7+ years stellar experience in either agency or corporate PR – **high tech industry experience is a requirement.**
- A proven track record of getting ink.
- Strong relationships with key publications and reporters that cover eCopy's industry.
- Technically savvy.
- Track record of successfully launched creative PR and Media programs.
- BA/BS required.
- 20% travel anticipated

#### **Contact:**

Allison Huffman  
Corporate Communications Manager , ECopy Inc.  
One oracle Drive, Nashua, NH  
Ph: 603-881-4450 ext. 291, Fax: 603-584-1696 , Cell: 603-557-3276

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**HOUGHTON MIFFLIN**

### **Corporate Communications Manager**

Houghton Mifflin Company, 222 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116

The Houghton Mifflin Corporate Communications Department is looking for a Corporate Communications Manager to develop and coordinate Company communications activities. This includes: recommending and implementing policies and programs to increase employee awareness and knowledge of activities; writing, preparing, and editing a variety of documents used in Company publications; overseeing the preparation of Company publications and articles by confirming artwork and verifying facts, etc.; and evaluating, recommending, and maintaining editorial policy and standards.

#### **REQUIREMENTS**

Qualified candidates will have five or more years of experience in Communications or a related field, and have a firm understanding of corporate strategy in creating a corporate message. Prior experience in managing internal communications, and with intranet, Internet and e-mail policies is required. Strong writing skills and experience with company collateral and branding are essential. Demonstrated ability to manage multiple projects is important.

Division: Communications

Location: Boston, MA

Travel Involved: 0-10%

Job Type: Full Time

Job Level: Experienced

Education: Bachelors Degree or Equivalent

Category: Communications-Internal Communications

Compensation: Not Specified

We thank all candidates for applying, however, only those under consideration will be contacted. No phone calls and or agency solicitations. Apply online at [www.hmco.com](http://www.hmco.com).

Job ID: 1082732506

#### **About Houghton Mifflin**

Boston-based Houghton Mifflin Company is one of the leading educational publishers in the United States; publishing textbooks, instructional technology, assessments and other educational materials for elementary and secondary schools and colleges. The Company also publishes an extensive line of reference works and award-winning fiction and nonfiction for adults and young readers, and offers computer-administered testing programs and services for the professional and certification markets. With its origins dating back to 1832, Houghton Mifflin combines its tradition of excellence with a commitment to innovation. The company's Web site can be found at [www.hmco.com](http://www.hmco.com).