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How to Battle Information Overload

I'm sure you know the feeling. Even before you arrive at the office, the phone is buzzing with e-mails, text messages and tweets. A brief peek at your Facebook page, Twitter feed or website can often drown you in information irrelevant to the day's tasks. All this before you even check your voice and e-mail.

For PR professionals, up-to-date information is vital, but too much can stifle creativity and inhibit productivity. So how do you battle information overload?

President's Letter

What a wonderful night we had at the Clayton Center for the Arts and our V Awards ceremony. Congratulations to all of the winners!!

Our May meeting is going to be really special with Brian Solis from FutureWorks as our speaker. If you aren't familiar with Brian, he is a regular contributor to Mashable, one of the co-founders of the national Social Media Club, and considered to be a thought leader on PR 2.0, social media and branding.

It promises to be an excellent meeting! Invite your colleagues.

Susanne



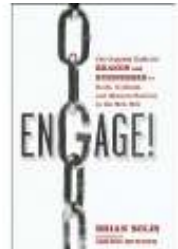
Save the Date: Thursday, May 20th at 4:00 p.m.

The Volunteer Chapter of PRSA presents Brian Solis, of FutureWorks and co-founder of the Social Media Club, as our guest speaker. Brian will be talking about brand and social media and touching on topics from his new book *Engage: The Complete Guide for Brands and Businesses to Build, Cultivate, and Measure Success in the New Web*.



Brian Solis is Principal of FutureWorks, an award-winning New Media marketing and branding agency in Silicon Valley. Solis is globally recognized for his views and insights on the convergence of PR, Traditional Media and Social Media. Considered one of the original thought leaders who paved the way for Social Media and PR 2.0, Solis is co-founder of the Social Media Club and is an original member of the Media 2.0 Workgroup.

BrianSolis.com is among the top 1.5% of all blogs tracked by Technorati and is ranked as one of the leading voices in the Ad Age Power 150 index of worldwide marketing bloggers. Solis is also the



An article from Mashable.com's Scott Belsky offers some practical solutions for reducing social media stress. Read it [here](#).

PRSA Volunteer Chapter Calendar

May 7
Last Day to Complete V Awards Survey

May 20
Chapter Meeting

Pay Your Dues Quarterly

Current members can pay their National and Professional Interest Section dues in four quarterly payments. The first payment will include the \$10 service fee and full Chapter dues. To participate, contact Member Services at (212) 460-1400 or membership@prsa.org.

The option is for renewing members only and is not available through online renewal.

Quick Links...

[Join PRSA & Volunteer Chapter](#)

[Update your information](#)

[Volunteer Chapter website](#)

facebook

Traveling soon?

Visit the following Southeast district's chapter websites to see when they have their meetings. All are welcome to any of the local PRSA meetings if in the neighborhood!

publisher of bub.blicio.us, a popular lifestyle and technology blog, and is also a contributor to TechCrunch, BrandWeek, and Mashable.

Details on the venue coming later this week. This is a special meeting. Cost for members is \$20 and \$25 for non-members. There will not be a meal.

RSVP by Monday, May 17, 2010, with Jan Welborn-Nichols at jan@marketartscreative.com. Please note whether you are a chapter member.

Member Profiles--Getting to Know Tyra Haag

Tyra Haag, Media Relations Coordinator from Mary Beth West Consulting is our next member profile.



Haag has said that had PR not been her chosen career path she would have gotten into acting. She love the theater and has done a few local films. Of PR's role in today's world, she says, "Specifically, in today's business climate, reputation and trust are the most significant factors for true success-both require key PR leadership. Of course, PR folks must continue to evolve with the changing nature of media, too."

In her profile, Tyra said she was profoundly affected (personally) by Gary Thomas' book *Scared Parenting: How Raising Children Shapes Our Souls*; it discusses how the journey of caring for, rearing, training and loving our children intensely alters us forever. I have a two-year-old son and one on the way. Professionally, Erving Goffman's 1959 book, titled *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, still resonates with her seven years after researching about Goffman's concept of dramaturgy for a Communication Theory class at UT.

She jokingly says her personal motto is, "Never pay retail for anything!" But seriously says Maya Angelou's words are her favorite, "Success is loving life and daring to live it."

UT Office of Marketing & Communication Takes Area's Top PR Award

The public relations campaign surrounding Dolly Parton's honorary degree from the University of Tennessee earned UT's Marketing & Communications department the 2010 "Best of Show" award for public relations achievement in East Tennessee.

The UT communicators were recognized for their "Dr. Dolly" campaign, a series of events and publicity tactics that took place in May 2009 when Parton received an honorary doctorate from the university. The Volunteer Chapter's best-of-show award is named in memory of J. Carroll Bateman, a University of Tennessee faculty member and leader in the profession who served as national president of PRSA.

Thinking Ethics by Michael Holtz, APR

Some prominent news sites are rethinking their policies on allowing anonymous online comments, according to a New York Times story published on April 11, 2010.

Atlanta:
www.prsageorgia.org

Birmingham:
www.alabamaprsa.org

Charleston:
www.scprsa.org

Charlotte:
www.prsacharlotte.org

Chattanooga:
www.lookoutprsa.org

Greensboro/High Point:
www.prsatarheel.org

Memphis:
www.prsamemphis.org

Nashville:
www.prsanashville.com

North Carolina:
www.NCprsa.org

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The Times and the Washington Post both require commenters to register, although they don't have to use real names when posting. The Post is considering giving greater prominence to comments left by those who do not hide behind aliases, and the Huffington Post may institute a ranking system based on the perceived trustworthiness of commenters. To paraphrase a song, the Times may be a-changin' -- but not by much.

Anonymous comments present an ethical conundrum for public relations practitioners. If an item posted on a news site is critical of your organization or client in any way, how do we respond?

"The main thing PRSA members need to know is that the Code of Ethics is very clear on this," says Mary Beth West, APR, owner of Mary Beth West Consulting, LLC.

Specifically, the Code of Ethics guidelines under the Free Flow of Information and Disclosure of Information provisions provide that practitioners should "be honest and accurate in all communications" and "reveal the sponsors for causes and interests represented."

"It's our responsibility as PR professionals to be very vocal about upholding these standards," West said.

Locally, most news sites allow anonymous comments so long as commenters register before posting. Randy Neal, who operates Knoxviews.com, calls it being "pseudo-anonymous."

"People think they're hiding behind an anonymous e-mail, but they can be tracked down if necessary," Neal said, especially if a commenter is being libelous or defamatory.

He also offers the following advice for PR practitioners, and for news site commenters in general: "If you have a stake in whatever the issue is, you should sign your name."

My organization had to grapple with the "to post or not to post" question last fall when a prominent blogger at the Clarion-Ledger in Jackson, Miss., incorrectly asserted that the American Cancer Society endorsed a U.S. Senate candidate in the last election. The assertion was made in a blog post by Andy Taggart about our involvement, and that of our advocacy affiliate the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, in the health care reform debate.

Ultimately, we responded in two ways. First, we did submit an online comment, but it came from a leadership volunteer in Mississippi who stated her name and her affiliation with the Society. Additionally, we submitted an op/ed to the print edition signed by president of the Society's Mid-South Division board of directors.

For more information on this issue, check out PRSA's Professional Standards Advisory, PS-8, "Deceptive Online Practices and Misrepresentation of Organizations and Individuals."

Michael Holtz, APR, is media advocacy and federal issues director for the American Cancer Society Mid-South Division, Inc., and is the ethics chair for the Volunteer Chapter PRSA.

Congratulations, Photos and Feedback: PRSA V Awards

Congratulations to all the 2010 V Awards winners!

On behalf of the PRSA Volunteer Chapter, thank you for supporting the 2010 V Awards, held at the Clayton Arts Center on Thursday, April 15. Check out volunteerprsa.org soon for the list of winners.

V Awards Photos

Here's a link that will take you directly to the event album online at Shutterfly.com:

<http://volunteerprsa.shutterfly.com/105>

V Awards Feedback

Please participate in a brief opinion survey regarding the V Awards. We would greatly appreciate your feedback and comments regarding the V Awards as we seek to improve this premiere event for our chapter. The survey is short and anonymous. Click [here](#) to take the survey. Please complete the survey by Friday, May 7.

A Note from the PRSSA 2010-2011 President: Taylor Griffin

My name is Taylor Griffin and I am going to be the PRSSA president for the 2010-2011 school year. I am really looking forward to holding this position, and I have a lot of great ideas for chapter meetings. I am hoping to get PRSSA more involved with PRSA this year! If you are at all interested in speaking at a meeting, please let me know. We are always looking for professionals to learn from and network with! I cannot wait to work with both PRSSA and PRSA and I hope to make it to some PRSA meetings this summer to meet everyone. I would also like to thank PRSA for its help with our Silent Auction. We raised more than \$800 to send us to the 2010 National Conference, and we really appreciate everyone's donations! If you ever need anything from me or PRSSA, please feel free to e-mail me at tgriffi5@utk.edu.

I'd also like to let you know about the following PRSSA Graduating Seniors:

Hillary Adams, Nicholas Altmann, Molly Bingham, Nikki Crane, Leigh Durbin, Allison Fulmer, and Jamie Lonie,

Belmont University Seeks Director of University Marketing & Special Initiatives

Named one of the top two "Schools to Watch" in the nation by U.S. News & World Report, Belmont University, located in the heart of Nashville, Tennessee, is a fast-growing community of more than 5,400 students. Committed to being a leader among teaching universities, Belmont brings together the best of liberal arts and professional education in a Christian community of learning and service.

The Director of University Marketing & Special Initiatives will have responsibilities in leading university marketing including development and coordination of campus-wide integrated marketing, planning, and execution for print, video, audio, and web marketing, advertising, and special initiatives.

This position works closely with academic deans, enrollment services and the President. The duties of this position include:

- Identify and capitalize on marketing opportunities that will enhance the visibility of the University.
- Chair the Strategic Marketing Team: this team is responsible for the development and coordination of campus-wide integrated marketing,

planning, and execution for print, video, audio, and web marketing and advertising. This team is responsible for the review and approval of departmental/administrative unit marketing strategy, materials, and budgets.

- Responsible for the ongoing coordination and assessment of all approved marketing resources and campaigns.
- Consult with relevant academic and administrative units on the development and management of all marketing and advertising processes and budgets.
- Responsible for planning and execution of institution-wide special initiatives
- Supervise creative services and marketing staff.

Position Requirements include: 10+ years extensive experience in marketing and PR within an academic or corporate setting; strategic planning and budget management skills; ability to design, implement and track marketing programs; and excellent written and oral communication skills with demonstrated success in management.

Bachelor's degree required, Master's degree preferred.

To complete the online application, candidates are directed to <https://jobs.belmont.edu>. Belmont University is an EOE/AA employer under all applicable civil rights laws. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

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