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Using Messaging and Communication to Influence and Inform: Insights From the Private Sector

*A Virtual Think Tank (ViTTa®)
Report*



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What Is ViTTa®?

NSI's Virtual Think Tank (ViTTa®) provides rapid response to critical information needs by pulsing a global network of subject matter experts (SMEs) to generate a wide range of expert insights. For the Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) Integrating Information into Joint Operations (IIJO) project, ViTTa® was used to address a number of key questions provided by the project's sponsors. ViTTa® reports are designed to provide highly customizable and compelling analyses, summaries, and briefings that consider varied perspectives across disciplines, challenge assumptions, provide actionable insights, and highlight areas of convergence and divergence.

Question of Focus

What are relevant insights from the private sector with respect to using messaging and communication to influence and inform different audiences?

Subject Matter Expert Contributors

Paul Astorino (Senior Vice President, Global Merchandizing, Clarks), **Catherine Chapman** (Founder and CEO, Parenthetic), **Cyndi Coon** (CEO and Founder, Labratory5 Inc.), **John DeBello** (President and Chief Creative Officer, Loma Media), **Bill Heater** (Creative Executive, Real Life Creative), **Dr. William McEwen** (Advertising Executive and Consultant, Independent), **Dr. Jay Rosen** (Author and Associate Professor of Journalism, NYU), **Shari Rosenfeld** (Senior Vice President of International Social Impact, Sesame Workshop), **Dr. Don Stacks** (Professor Emeritus, Public Relations, School of Communication, University of Miami; CEO, International Public Relations Research Conference), **Al Teller** (Music Industry Executive, Independent), **Sherrie Westin** (President, Sesame Workshop), **Two Anonymous Gaming Industry Executives**.



Using Messaging and Communication to Influence and Inform: Insights From the Private Sector

This ViTTa® summary report reflects on the insightful commentary from interviews with thirteen messaging and communications experts from the private sector. The backgrounds of the expert contributors interviewed as part of this ViTTa® elicitation include advertising, branding, marketing, public relations, storytelling, and journalism. For this ViTTa® report, the expert contributors offer insights from their experiences in using messaging and communication in the private sector to influence and inform different audiences. This summary presents an overview of the key expert contributor insights heard over the course of interviews with the experts.

Best Practices for Effective Messaging and Communication (i.e., the Art of Effective Storytelling)

The contributors offer several best practices for effective messaging and communication. The most commonly cited best practices from the overall contributor response include:

- Doing research to ensure that messengers know and understand their target audience, develop a well-crafted messaging plan, and set clear and measurable objectives for their messaging efforts.
- Tailoring and localizing messages and messengers to the targeted audience.
- Ensuring credibility, coherence, and consistency of both the message and messenger.
- Making emotional connections with those receiving the message.

Do Your Research: Know Your Audience, Have a Plan, and Set Clear Objectives

Know Your Audience. The most frequently cited best practice for effective messaging and communication is doing research to understand the audience being targeted by the message or communication (i.e., know your audience). The contributors universally emphasize the importance for those doing the messaging to know and understand the audience with which they are interested in communicating. Doing research to develop such knowledge and understanding of a targeted audience at the onset of any messaging effort is, according to the contributors, a key driver of whether that effort will ultimately be effective (Astorino, Chapman, Coon, DeBello, Heater, McEwen, Stacks, Westin & Rosenfeld).

Communication efforts should begin with an understanding of the target audience and what they think and how they think.

—John DeBello (Loma Media)

The contributors generally echo the assessment of John DeBello, of Loma Media, that “all communication efforts should begin with an understanding of the target audience and what they think and how they think.” Knowing the audience entails understanding what motivates them, who the stakeholders are, and what types of information and messaging various segments of that audience empathize with and advocate for (Astorino, DeBello, Heater, Stacks, Westin & Rosenfeld). Once such understanding and knowledge of a targeted audience is developed, those doing the messaging can then use that information to tailor the messages and information being conveyed to more directly appeal to that audience. Messages that are tailored and targeted, the contributors stress, are more likely to resonate with the audience, and can be designed and presented in a way that is more likely to trigger attitudinal or behavioral change among targeted stakeholders within that audience (Chapman, DeBello, McEwen, Stacks, Westin & Rosenfeld). Ultimately, as advertising executive Dr. William McEwen aptly concludes, effective communicators typically have a very good understanding of who their target audience is, and it cannot and should not be everyone.

Have a Plan and Clear Objectives. The contributors also emphasize the importance of developing a communication plan and fully understanding and outlining the objectives of the communication effort. This entails understanding what the communication is intended to do (i.e., inform, persuade, entertain, etc.); what communication channels are available and applicable; where the audience stands in relation to the communication being sent, both in terms of overall awareness and level of support; and how the impact and effect of the communication can be evaluated (Chapman, Coon, DeBello, Heater, McEwen, Stacks). Ultimately, as the contributors stress, effective communication efforts typically begin with a clear understanding of what the communication process will look like and what the objectives are, in addition to understanding who the targeted audience is.

The contributors offer several recommendations for shaping and designing processes and objectives of messaging and communication efforts. McEwen emphasizes the importance of pursuing objectives that are achievable, offering that communication processes should consist of intermediate steps that are clearly defined and work toward an ultimate longer-term goal. Catherine Chapman, of Parenthetic, similarly emphasizes the importance of having a clearly defined communication process, pointing to John Boyd's OODA (observe, orient, decide, act) Loop as a useful framework for thinking about and designing effective communication processes. Chapman offers a slightly tailored version of the OODA loop that, she suggests, more closely aligns with the communication space: One that consists of planning, development, execution, measurement, and optimization phases. Such a process, Chapman stresses, should ultimately begin by doing research to ensure that an appropriate and effective message will be sent, through an appropriate and effective messenger and messaging channel, at an appropriate and effective time, to achieve an intended effect. Cyndi Coon, of Labratory5 Inc., suggests that messaging and communication efforts should be designed to "show" rather than "tell," arguing that "information sharing is storytelling. You cannot tell people. You must show them." Coon contends that communicators should strive not to simply *tell* an audience to do something, which she suggests is more likely to trigger pushback and negative reaction, but instead to use trusted and influential messengers to *demonstrate* the message being sent, which she suggests is more likely to resonate with and encourage buy-in from the audience. Finally, DeBello asserts that "it is not what I say, it is what you hear," highlighting that there are differences in how various audiences will approach and interpret the same message. Thus, as DeBello concludes, the specific targeted audience of a communication should always be kept in mind when designing and tailoring communication processes and objectives.



Figure 1: Chapman's proposed process for effective communication

Tailor Your Message to Your Audience

The contributors generally agree that the most effective messages and communications are typically those that are tailored to a targeted audience. Tailored and localized messages that a targeted audience can relate to and see themselves in are often more likely to resonate with and have an impact on those

receiving the messages than are those messages that are largely generic or nonspecific (Astorino, Coon, Heater, Stacks, Westin & Rosenfeld, Anonymous Gaming Industry Executives). Not only should the message itself be tailored and localized to the targeted audience, but those communicating the message and the channels used for communication should also be similarly tailored and localized to effectively reach and impact the intended audience (Astorino, Coon, Westin & Rosenfeld).

Accordingly, those behind the crafting, design, and implementation of messaging efforts must also be aware of cultural sensitivities among intended audiences (Coon, Westin & Rosenfeld). In this vein, Coon emphasizes the importance of being diligent about using local and cultural representatives to convey the message, if appropriate to the specific message being sent. Doing so, Coon explains, helps ensure that the messages being sent will be relatable and, thus, more likely to resonate with the targeted audience. Sherrie Westin and Shari Rosenfeld, of Sesame Workshop, similarly stress the need for localized messaging and cultural sensitivity, highlighting the importance of listening to and learning from the communities in which messages are being targeted, reflecting the culture of the audience in the messages being sent, and, when possible, using local spokespeople and influencers to convey the messages rather than dictating those messages from an outside voice. As Westin and Rosenfeld explain, the reception to a message is typically enhanced when the audience can connect and personally relate to what is being said and who is saying it. Ultimately, audiences are most receptive to messages and messengers with whom they are familiar and can identify and connect directly with. Thus, the most effective messaging and communication efforts are typically those that are tailored and localized to trigger such reactions.

The Three Cs: Credibility, Coherence, and Consistency



Figure 2: The three Cs of effective messaging

Another frequently cited best practice for effective messaging and communication is establishing and promoting credibility, coherence, and consistency, both of the message and messenger.

Credibility (Your Brand Matters). The contributors emphasize the importance and central role of credibility in effective messaging and communication, both in relation to the message being sent and those sending the message. If the goal is to use messaging and communication to influence an audience, the messenger's "brand" matters. Messages and messengers are more likely to be accepted by a targeted audience if they are deemed credible (Chapman, DeBello, Heater, McEwen, Stacks, Westin & Rosenfeld). Moreover, credible messages and messengers are more likely to be perceived as authentic and trustworthy among the target audience. Like

credibility, perceived authenticity and trust of a message and messenger are factors that are frequently cited by contributors as being conducive to effective communication (Astorino, Coon, DeBello, Heater, McEwen, Stacks, Anonymous Gaming Industry Executives). Credibility is also especially important in a time when so many competing messages, messengers, and messaging channels are available to audiences. Those deemed credible are more likely to stand out and resonate, whereas those lacking credibility are increasingly likely to be overlooked or ignored (Chapman). Credibility, however, is not a given, nor something that is always easy to achieve among audiences in which it has not already been

established (Heater, McEwen, Stacks). Here again, tailored and localized messages and messengers can go a long way toward building the credibility, authenticity, and trustworthiness surrounding a communication effort (Astorino, Chapman, Coon, Heater, Westin & Rosenfeld).

Coherence (Keep it Simple and Clear, and Tell a Story). The most effective messages are typically those that are coherent and easy to understand (DeBello, Heater, McEwen, Rosen). Messengers sometimes overcomplicate their messages and communications, or try to say too much all at once. Doing so, the contributors stress, is often a mistake and something that should be avoided. A better practice for effective communication is to focus on message coherence and keeping the message simple, straightforward, clear, and easily digestible (Heater, McEwen, Rosen, Anonymous Gaming Industry Executives). Several contributors suggest that telling a story through the messaging being conveyed is also conducive to effective communication. These contributors generally agree that communicating through stories is typically an effective way to convey messages that are likely to resonate and stick with targeted audiences (Astorino, Coon, Heater, Westin & Rosenfeld, Anonymous Gaming Industry Executives).

Consistency (Stay on Message, and Repeat, Repeat, Repeat). Consistency in messaging is also frequently cited by contributors as a best practice for effective communication. The contributors generally agree that message consistency and staying on message is a key driver of message retention among audiences (Astorino, Heater, McEwen). Similarly, message repetition is also frequently cited by contributors as a key driver of message retention. In short, repeating the same message over and over to an audience increases the likelihood of that message sticking and resonating with that audience (Astorino, Heater, McEwen, Rosen).

Make Emotional Connections

Messages and messengers that trigger emotions or build emotional connections with a targeted audience are likely to resonate, impact, and spark attitudinal or behavioral change among those receiving the message (Astorino, Rosen, Westin & Rosenfeld, Anonymous Gaming Industry Executives). Emotional connections can come in many forms and can be triggered in many ways, but contributors point to a few emotions as particularly effective in making messages impact and resonate with audiences. Several contributors highlight empathy and feelings of relatability as emotions that, if triggered through messaging, can make the message resonate and stick in the minds of the audience (Westin & Rosenfeld, Anonymous Gaming Industry Executives). Westin and Rosenfeld point to humor as a particularly effective emotion when messaging, though they note that humor is not universal, especially across cultures, and must be tailored and localized to a targeted audience to be effective. Finally, Dr. Jay Rosen of NYU points to fear and sensationalism as emotions that are particularly effective for making messages resonate and stand out, especially in news media where attention appears to increasingly focus on stories that trigger such emotions. Rosen offers an important caveat, however, noting that while using messaging and communication to trigger fear and sensationalism among an

audience can be effective in getting an audience's attention and making a message resonate with the audience, it is not necessarily a responsible or best practice.¹

Best Practices for Countering False, Harmful Information and Competing Messages and Communications

Communicators frequently face the challenge of having to counter false, harmful information and competing messages. Such information can come in many forms, including misinformation, disinformation, and mal-information,² and from many sources, including direct competitors or other non-competitive entities. The contributors offer several best practices for countering these misleading types of messages and information. Overall, these best practices generally align closely with best practices for effective messaging and communication more generally, as outlined above. However, several are highlighted by the contributors as of particular relevance to effectively countering false, harmful information and competing messages in particular, including:

- Identify the false, harmful information and competing messages, its audience, and the channels through which it is spread, and develop a plan to counter it.
- Respond quickly and aggressively to directly confront false, harmful information.
- Be careful not to overamplify false, harmful information and competing messages.

Recognize False, Harmful Information and Develop a Plan to Counter

The first step to countering false and harmful information is recognizing its existence and understanding where it is coming from, who is spreading it, through what channels it is being distributed, and how it is resonating with and impacting different audiences (Coon, DeBello, Rosen, Westin & Rosenfeld). Understanding all of this can pose a significant challenge, however, and the rapid evolution of messaging tools and communication tactics has made tracking, understanding, and thwarting false, harmful information and competing messages all the more complex. To effectively combat and counter such information and messaging, communicators must simultaneously develop and implement an effective counter-communication strategy while also working to safeguard the communicator's "brand" against any damaging information (DeBello, Teller). Essentially, as DeBello explains, for communicators to be truly effective in this space of counter-communication, they must be able to message both offensively and defensively as needed.

¹ Rosen notes that this is especially true in journalism where, as he explains, the objective should be to inform the public rather than engaging or influencing their emotions.

² Most of the contributors use misinformation as an umbrella term for both false and harmful information. For the purposes of this report, these terms are defined as follows. **Misinformation** is the sharing of false information, but without the intent to harm. **Disinformation** is the purposeful sharing of false information with the intention of manipulating an audience. **Mal-information** is the release of accurate information with the intent to harm (Coon).

Respond Quickly and Aggressively

Contributors underscore the importance of responding quickly and aggressively to directly confront and counter false, harmful information (DeBello, Stacks, Teller). If the goal is to effectively counter false, harmful information and competing messages that are being directed toward an audience from a competing messenger, communicators should respond quickly. A false narrative has less time to linger, resonate, and spread if an effective counter-narrative is quickly made available to the audience. Similarly, communicators should respond aggressively, directly calling out and countering false, harmful information and messages (DeBello, Heater, Stacks, Teller). By aggressively and directly attacking false, harmful information, communicators can re-focus the audience's attention on more preferable information and messages, while simultaneously attacking the credibility of the competing messenger (DeBello, Heater). The sheer number of messages sent as part of a counter-messaging effort can also be a contributing factor to its success—sending more messages than a competitor can help with both share of voice and target audience message retention (Coon, DeBello, Heater, Rosen, Stacks).

Be Careful Not to Overamplify False, Harmful Information or Competing Messages

While the contributors highlight the importance of responding quickly and aggressively to counter false, harmful information and competing messages, they also stress the importance of doing so in a way that does not overamplify damaging information and messages (DeBello, Rosen, Stacks). Rosen underscores this point, noting that messengers have to be careful when calling out disinformation directly to protect the audience from being further indoctrinated by such information. Ultimately, the expert contributors highlight a delicate and important balance that must be struck in messaging to counter false, harmful information: Messengers should respond rapidly and aggressively to quickly counter the disinformation, but must also be careful to communicate in a way that does not overamplify the inaccurate and harmful information among the audience.

Best Practices for Evaluating Messaging and Communication Effectiveness

Determining the effectiveness of messaging and communication efforts can be challenging. While there does not appear to be a universal, one-size-fits-all approach to evaluating and measuring the effectiveness of messaging and communications, the contributors do offer several basic principles and best practices for such evaluation, including:

- Set clear and measurable objectives.
- Measure both the reach and impact of messages and communications.
- Evaluate and understand trends, both consistent and emerging, relating to the audience's sentiment and perceptions.

Set Clear and Measurable Objectives

As discussed above, to fully evaluate the effectiveness of a message, a communicator first needs to define what the objective of the message is, what effectiveness means in relation to the message, and how progress toward the objective can be measured (Chapman, Heater, McEwen, Stacks). What it means to be “effective” will vary depending on these factors, as well as the nature of the message. For example, in commercial marketing, sales data can offer useful insight into a marketing campaign’s effectiveness (McEwen). For journalists, metrics such as online views and the number and location of a story’s publications can help indicate that story’s effectiveness and reach (Rosen). For storytellers, audience ratings and viewership metrics can offer a window into the extent of a message’s spread (Westin & Rosenfeld, Anonymous Gaming Industry Executives). Ultimately, communicators should strive to establish clear and measurable objectives at the onset of a communication effort, and should then work to develop evaluation and effectiveness measurements and metrics that relate to those established objectives (Chapman, Heater, McEwen, Stacks).

Measure Both the Reach and Impact of the Message

The overall number of exposures a message receives and its lasting impact on the audience are two strong indicators of messaging performance and effectiveness. Evaluating a message’s overall exposure and reach, however, is an easier undertaking than understanding how that message is affecting and impacting an audience (Chapman, Heater, McEwen, Stacks). To understand and evaluate a message’s overall exposure and reach, one can look to data on metrics such as audience interactions, likes or shares on social media platforms, clicks on an online news story, television viewership ratings, or even retail purchases (Astorino, Heater, McEwen, Rosen, Teller). Exposure is generally measured in terms of both reach and frequency of exposure. For example, target rating points (TRPs), a standard advertising industry metric, is calculated as the share of the target audience that is reached times the number of times they are exposed to the message. A generally accepted practice is to attempt to achieve a minimum of three exposures among a target audience (McEwen).

Understanding and evaluating a message’s longer-term impact and effect on an audience is more challenging (Chapman, DeBello, Heater, McEwen, Stacks). Audience polling, survey, and focus group data can provide useful insight on impact, but it is not always conclusive. Moreover, if a message or communication is designed to sell a product, it can be challenging to discern whether a customer is making a purchase because they connected with a brand or message or are doing so randomly. There are many factors that influence behavior. It is naïve to think that one message will likely achieve widespread change. It is, however, one ingredient or variable in the overall influence and decision calculus that does drive behavioral shifts. Other factors (situational, environmental, cultural, monetary, opportunistic, etc.) are also important to consider. A key to understanding impact is to discern the shift in behavior that occurred after the communication took place. While this cannot be considered causal, the time series aspect of that type of analysis does lend support that it is reasonable to assume that, at a minimum, it may have influenced the result (McEwen).

Evaluate and Understand Trends Within the Audience

Communicators should attempt to evaluate and understand trends, both consistent and emerging, in their target audience's sentiment and perceptions over time. Understanding such trends enables communicators to better recognize and predict how their targeted audience will react to specific messages and different content, themes, and media. Evaluating trends should be a fluid process that includes constant gathering of audience feedback on the messages being sent (Chapman, DeBello, Teller). One effective approach to measuring and evaluating trends in an audience's sentiment and perceptions is by reaching out directly to members of that audience, through some means able to capture audience feedback. As with evaluating a message's impact and effect, audience polling, representative panels, surveys, and focus groups are effective evaluation methods for garnering such insight (Astorino, Chapman, DeBello, Heater, McEwen).³ Scenario forecasting can also be an effective tool for predicting trends and trajectories relating to audience sentiment and perceptions (Coon).

The Impact of Organizational Structure on Effective Messaging and Communication

Several contributors also indicate that organizational structure can impact an organization's ability to effectively message and communicate externally. Entrenched bureaucratic and hierarchical processes and structures within an organization can be a barrier to effective communication (Astorino, DeBello, Teller, Rosen). Alternatively, organizations that are nimble, agile, and able to message and respond quickly are typically the most effective external messengers and communicators (Astorino, DeBello, Heater). Moreover, as the contributors suggest, the most effective organizations in terms of external messaging and communication are typically those that have a central, overarching, guiding idea and message in which the entire organization can believe in, work toward, and support through messaging content and execution (Astorino, DeBello).

Conclusion

Overall, the contributors largely echo a consistent set of best practices for effectively messaging and communicating to influence and inform targeted audiences. As a whole, these best practices highlight the importance of having a well-thought-out communication plan and process—particularly one that ensures a proper understanding of the objectives and target audience at the onset, promotes appropriate and effective messages and messengers, enables monitoring and evaluation throughout, and is agile and able to be adjusted and optimized as needed. More specifically, these best practices, as outlined by the contributors, include:

³ Qualitative methods such as focus groups are not projectable but can uncover specific issues in depth for further exploration.

- Do research to develop knowledge and understanding of the target audience.
- Have a communication plan and set clear and measurable objectives.
- Tailor and localize both the messages and messengers to the targeted audience.
- Promote credible, coherent, and consistent messages.
- Connect emotionally, when appropriate, with those receiving the message.
- Strive to maximize both the reach and impact of the messaging effort.
- Quickly and aggressively counter false, harmful information, while also being careful to do so in a way that does not overamplify damaging information and messages.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the messaging effort using measurements and metrics that relate to the established objectives, and adjust accordingly.

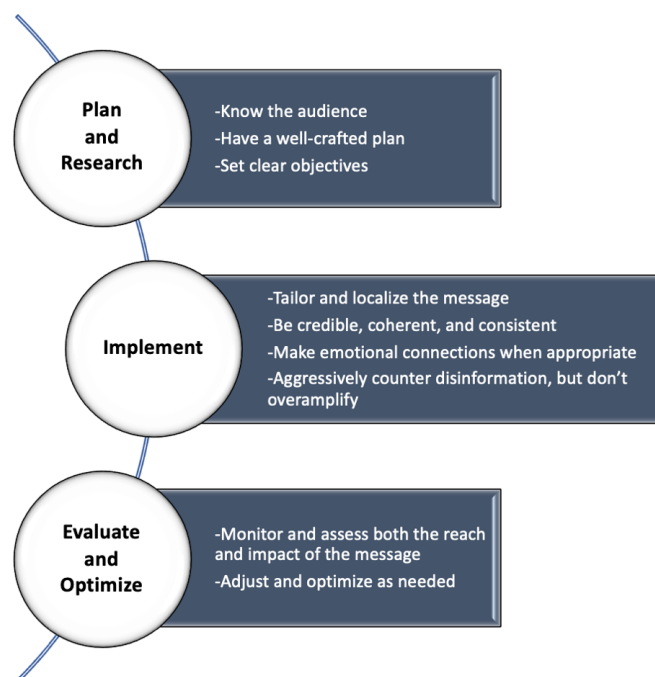


Figure 3: Best practices for effective messaging and communication

The contributors also make clear that there is a significant body of relevant research, insight, and experience from the advertising, branding, marketing, public relations, storytelling, and journalism fields on the topic of using messaging and communication to inform and influence different audiences. If the goal is to better understand how to effectively use messaging and communication as a tool of influence for targeted audiences, exploring the insights and lessons learned from these fields is likely a good place to start. This report offers a brief overview of some of those key, relevant insights from experts in those fields, but it is just a start. For a more comprehensive understanding of how to best use messaging and communication to influence, a deeper dive into those fields of expertise is certainly warranted.

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Paul Astorino

Senior Vice President, Global Merchandizing, Clarks



Paul Astorino is a writer, holder of an MFA in Creative Writing from Lesley University, and a business, product creation, and marketing executive. He has led product teams at the world's leading sports and outdoor brands including NIKE, adidas, asics, Reebok, Burton Snowboards, The NorthFace, Clark's and rabbit running apparel.

He is the only person who has won the prestigious Runner's World Editor's Choice awards at five different brands and teaches creative writing Tool Box Session on a seminar basis at Lesley University.

Catherine Chapman

Founder and CEO, Parenthetic



Catherine Chapman is the Founder and CEO of Parenthetic, a communications firm working on innovative, fast-paced data-driven solutions to the hardest problems in the influence and information operations space. Chapman applies her expertise in strategic communications to advance the way influence campaigns are developed, discovered and measured. She has worked at every stage of the communication development cycle, providing services in strategy and design; audience, competitor and communication landscape analysis; message content creation and assessment; and quantifying campaign effects. At Parenthetic, she leads teams for public and private sector clients

developing new techniques and technologies to tackle difficult challenges with global impact. Her team is focused on pioneering fail-fast R&D projects that bridge science and the art of influence. Prior to starting Parenthetic, Chapman worked for communications consulting firms where she built teams and designed projects to assess and develop business, marketing and communication strategies for Fortune 500 companies, non-profit organizations and U.S. Government agencies. Chapman also taught at Yale University on information warfare and related methods for analysis.

Cyndi Coon

CEO and Founder, Labratory5 Inc.



Cyndi Coon serves as the Chief of Staff at the Threatcasting Lab, Producer at ASURE Applied Research Lab, Producing Director at the Weaponized Narrative Initiative, and a producer for the office of the president at Arizona State University. She is on the board of directors of the People Centered Internet. Cyndi is the Founder and CEO of Laboratory5 Inc. where she is an ecosystem producer, writer, and rule-bender for good for government agencies, military, higher education and nonprofits.

Cyndi is the author of Thrive! Creative Guidebook to Professional Tenacity (Cognella, 2019) and co-author of the upcoming book Threatcasting (Morgan & Claypool 2021) She is a speaker on the topics of inclusion, information shaping, Threatcasting and human ecosystems.

John DeBello

President and Chief Creative Officer, Loma Media



John DeBello has produced, written and directed an impressive variety of strategic communication campaigns, initiatives and projects for major brands, diverse public agencies and leading institutions.

The quality of his work is underscored by the scope of Tier One organizations that have repeatedly called upon him to deliver exceptional results. These include AAA, Callaway Golf, Dell, DirecTV, Discovery Networks, Disney, DXC Technology, EA SPORTS, Google, the Mountain West Conference, Qualcomm, SAIC and SRI International.

His notable accomplishments include creating the live multimedia event for

Motorola that introduced digital HDTV to North America; a customer acquisition campaign for DirecTV that achieved the best results in company history; a direct response broadcast strategy for Dell that tripled anticipated response; and a TV ad for GameStop named “TV Spot of the Week” by AdAge.

DeBello has developed client outreach strategy and produced compelling content for major events and trade show presentations at CES, CTIA, SBCA, the Super Bowl, the Olympic Games, and in international stadiums and arenas. He’s written & directed the video portion of presentations that have resulted in the award of 3 Super Bowls and the US Open.

Utilizing Loma’s VisionCapture™ methodology, John’s produced major communications programs and projects for federal agencies including the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Department of Transportation (DOT), the Defense Advanced Research Products Agency (DARPA), the Intelligence Advanced Research Products Agency (IARPA), SPAWAR, and US Naval Special Warfare.

He’s led community relations and public service initiatives for the City of Austin, the City of Sheffield, England, the City of San Diego and many others. His work for more than 20 major universities has included multiple engagements on behalf of Harvard, Stanford, Northwestern, SDSU, UCLA, UCSD and the University of Virginia.

Fresh out of college, John directed, co-produced, and co-wrote the cult-classic comedy Attack of the Killer Tomatoes. He also directed and co-wrote three sequels, served as co-executive producer of the top-rated Fox animated series, and wrote the famous Killer Tomato theme song—an international favorite in its own right, from frat house sing-alongs to a “universal” broadcast from the space shuttle Atlantis.

He has also written and directed numerous award winning documentaries, including The Story Behind the Spectacle, an inside look at the making of the revolutionary Los Angeles Olympics; Beat the Baja, the official story of the world’s most famous off-road race; The College Game, a celebration of American football starring legendary sportscaster Keith Jackson; and X-Carriers, a Discovery special that explores the science of America’s next generation aircraft carrier. He is currently writing and directing “A Soldier’s Journey” for the US World War I Centennial Commission, slated to debut during the nation’s official ceremonies commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Armistice. A graduate of the University of California San Diego with a degree in American History, John’s been inducted into the Silver Circle by the National Association of Television Arts & Sciences (NATAS), Pacific Southwest chapter, in recognition of 25 years of special achievement in television.

Bill Heater

Creative Executive, Real Life Creative

Bill Heater is a creative executive currently consulting with agencies and clients on their brand advertising. His clients include: PricewaterhouseCoopers, TD Ameritrade, Morgan Stanley, DuPont, HighTower Investments and Johnson & Johnson. From 1994-2000, Bill was president and creative director of Heater Advertising in Boston. The agency's clients were Reebok Int'l., Anheuser Busch and Scudder Investments. He was also partner in The Heat, a minority-owned youth/urban-oriented agency also based in Boston. Bill created two of the most memorable campaigns of the 1980's and 90's. In 1988, he wrote John Hancock Financial Services' "Real life, real answers" campaign. The campaign won the Grand Prix at The Cannes Film Festival. In 1992, he wrote and directed the advertising that introduced the Infiniti Q45 to the United States. His spare, minimalist ads for the luxury car division of Nissan are considered some of the most memorable in automotive advertising. Bill has also been a creative consultant on such brands as: Nike, Microsoft, Coca Cola, Mercedes Benz, Ford Motor Company, American Express and many other blue chip advertising clients. He has also worked on three presidential campaigns and, outside of advertising, as an independent screenwriter. He has served on the board of directors for VinFen Corporation, Massachusetts' largest private mental health services organization, and is past president of the Milton Academy Lower School Parent's Association. He and his wife, Kathi, have five children.

Dr. William McEwen

Advertising Executive and Consultant, Independent



Bill McEwen is an independent brand and marketing consultant, currently working with a variety of leading marketers in categories ranging from auto manufacturers and hotel chains to B2B marketers and commodity marketing organizations. He was previously Global Practice Leader at The Gallup Organization, in charge of its worldwide Brand Management Practice. As team leader, he spearheaded the development of programs tasked with building brand relationships in locales from Sydney to Sao Paulo and from Washington to Wiesbaden. These programs have been successfully applied to a broad range of marketing and messaging challenges — including department stores and banks, as well as packaged goods brand marketers.

Bill's perspective derives from a singular scope and depth of experience in advertising, marketing education, brand consulting, and marketing management. His extensive background in brand marketing includes shampoos and snacks — but also mortgages and microprocessors, grocers and gas stations,

data transmission services and department stores. He has worked with brands that include Kraft, Coors, and Nestlé — as well as Wells Fargo, Wal-Mart, Intel, and Gap Inc.

Bill came to Gallup in 1994 with more than 20 years of experience in senior strategic planning and account management roles at multinational ad agencies with outstanding brand-building credentials — Leo Burnett, FCB, Needham, D’Arcy, and McCann-Erickson. His ad agency background combines with his client-side product management experience and his academic expertise as a former tenured Associate Professor of Communication Sciences at the University of Connecticut.

Bill received his Ph.D. in Communication from Michigan State University, where he was an NDEA Fellow. MSU recognized him with its Outstanding Alumni Award for 2004. He is the author of “Married to the Brand” (Gallup Press, 2005) and has been a frequent and prolific contributor to advertising and marketing journals, a regular speaker at industry events, and has also served as an editorial board member for two marketing and advertising journals. He has been an American Marketing Association keynoter, President of AMA’s San Francisco chapter, and an AMA Executive Fellow in Residence.

Dr. Jay Rosen

Author and Associate Professor of Journalism, NYU



Jay Rosen has been on the journalism faculty at New York University since 1986; from 1999 to 2005 he served as chair of the Department. He lives in New York City. Rosen is the author of PressThink, a blog about journalism and its ordeals (www.pressthink.org), which he introduced in September 2003.

In 1999, Yale University Press published his book, *What Are Journalists For?*, which is about the rise of the civic journalism movement. Rosen wrote and spoke frequently about civic journalism (also called public journalism) over a ten-year period, 1989-99. From 1993 to 1997 he was the director of the Project on Public Life and the Press, funded by the Knight Foundation.

Since 2017 he has been the director of the Membership Puzzle Project, which studies membership models for the support of public service journalism.

In 2008 he was the co-publisher, with Arianna Huffington, of OffTheBus.net, which allowed anyone who was interested to sign up and contribute to campaign coverage for the Huffington Post.

As a press critic and reviewer, he has published in The Nation, Columbia Journalism Review, the Chronicle of Higher Education, The New York Times, the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, The Guardian, the New York Review of Books Daily and many others. In 1990 he and Neil Postman (friend, colleague, mentor) hosted a radio show on WBAI in New York called “The Zeitgeist Hour.”

In 1994 he was a fellow at the Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy at Harvard University, and in 1990-91 he held a fellowship at the Gannett Center for Media Studies at Columbia University.

A native of Buffalo, NY, Rosen had a very brief career in journalism at the Buffalo Courier-Express before beginning graduate study. He has a Ph.D. from NYU in media studies (1986).

Shari Rosenfeld

Senior Vice President of International Social Impact, Sesame Workshop



Shari Rosenfeld is Senior Vice President of International Social Impact at Sesame Workshop, overseeing the development and execution of high impact transmedia educational initiatives that help young children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, grow smarter, stronger and kinder.

Rosenfeld manages Sesame Workshop's international offices and expansion efforts in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, harnessing the power of media and Muppets to deliver impact on areas such as early education, gender equity, resilience and

WASH. Over her 25 years at Sesame, Rosenfeld has been instrumental in developing groundbreaking programs in Israel, Jordan, Palestine, Kosovo and Northern Ireland that promote mutual respect and understanding. She launched Sesame's first international subsidiary office in India, and has since established offices in Bangladesh and South Africa. Currently, she is overseeing Sesame Workshop's partnership with the IRC to launch an early childhood development intervention in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Syria, to address the needs of children affected by the Syrian conflict.

Rosenfeld holds a BA in Political Science from Tufts University and an MBA from Yale University. She currently resides in New York with her husband, four children and dog.

Dr. Don Stacks

Professor Emeritus, Public Relations, School of Communications, University of Miami



Dr. Stacks received his Ph.D. in communication studies from the University of Florida. He has earned numerous academic and professional awards for teaching and research. At the University of Miami his awards include “Professor of the Year” and “Provost’s Award for Scholarly Activity.” His professional recognitions include the three highest awards an academic can get from the public relations profession: the “Pathfinder Award” for programmatic research, the “Jackson Jackson and Wagner Award” for applied research, and the Public Relations Society of America’s “Educator of the Year” award. He was also named as a “Measurement Maven” by The Measurement Standard. In addition, Dr. Stacks was recently inducted into

the first Research Fellows of the Institute for Public Relations, was elected an Eastern Communication Association Research Fellow in 2007 and most recently elected as an Eastern Communication Association Teaching Fellow in 2008, both awards are based on life-time accomplishments in communication.

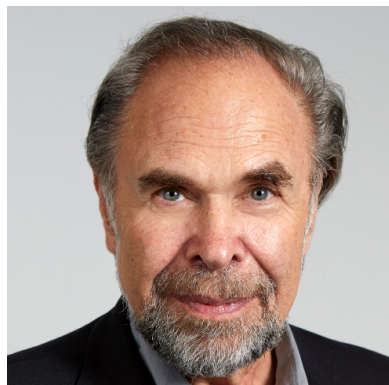
Dr. Stacks’ background is based primarily in corporate/governmental public relations and consulting. He has authored and edited numerous books, book chapters, and articles. His most recent works are in the area of public relations measurement and evaluation and include the *Primer of Public Relations Research* (Guilford Press, now in its third edition) and the *Dictionary of Public Relations Measurement and Research* (three editions), which has been translated into several languages.

Dr. Stacks serves on a number of academic and professional review boards. He has served as a Trustee for the Institute for Public Relations, an elected member of the International Public Relations Association, and chaired the Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication’s (AEJMC) Elected Standing Committee on Research and served on the AEJMC Board of Directors. In addition, he has served as a member of the national Commission on Public Relations Measurement and Evaluation and former research chair for the Commission on Public Relations Education. He currently directs the nation’s largest public relations research conference, the International Public Relations Research Conference. He served as a senior advisor to Echo Research, an international public relations/corporate communications research company, has consulted for top Fortune companies in matters ranging from communication audits to crisis management to marketing research, and serves as a Trustee of the Arthur W. Page Society.

Dr. Stacks’ research interests include crisis management, public relations theory and methodology, nonverbal communication, persuasion, intercultural communication, listening in the corporate environment, and biosocial/neurocommunication research.

Al Teller

Music Industry Executive, Independent



Al Teller has been a major figure in the worldwide music industry for over four decades. Tapped to run his first major label, United Artists Records, at age 29, he subsequently rose to run two of the world's largest music companies, CBS (now Sony) and MCA (now Universal). Among the earliest executives in the music industry to recognize the profound impact of the Internet, he served as its representative on the National Information Infrastructure Advisory Council created by President Bill Clinton to develop public policy regarding the Internet. He currently consults on corporate, technology and marketing strategies and serves on the Board of Directors of On Stage Enterprises after serving on the Boards of Department13, developers of cutting edge software and communications systems, INgrooves, a leading media digital distribution company, and GT Interactive Software, publisher of entertainment gaming software.

In his capacity as Chairman and CEO of the MCA Music Entertainment Group, he managed MCA's worldwide recorded music, music publishing, and live concert businesses. Under Teller's leadership, MCA became a global force in the music business. He oversaw the acquisition of the Geffen and GRP labels and executed the fastest international expansion ever undertaken by a music company, launching operations in twenty-four additional countries over a two year period.

After MCA, Teller led two venture capital-funded businesses, Atomic Pop LLC and Red Ant Entertainment, both widely regarded as innovative milestones in the growth of the digital distribution of music through the Internet.

Teller has guided the careers of many world class artists, including such stars as Bruce Springsteen, Billy Joel, Elton John, Tom Petty, The Rolling Stones, Paul McCartney, The Grateful Dead, Pink Floyd, George Michael, Kenny Rogers, Michael Bolton, Electric Light Orchestra, Meat Loaf, George Strait, Reba McEntire, Vince Gill, Marvin Gaye, Julio Iglesias and Wynton Marsalis. Teller was the first major label head to enter the rap music genre, signing Def Jam Records to a deal with Columbia Records.

Teller has been deeply involved in shaping the major initiatives of the music industry, having served on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and the Board of the International Federation of Phonogram and Videogram Producers (IFPI) as well as a Board Member and Trustee of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Teller graduated from Columbia University with a BS in Electronics Engineering and an MS in Operations Research and went on to earn an MBA from Harvard Business School.

Sherrie Westin

President, Sesame Workshop



Sherrie Westin is President of Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit educational organization behind Sesame Street.

Westin leads the organization's efforts to serve vulnerable children through mass media and targeted initiatives in the United States and around the world. She serves as Sesame Workshop's chief mission ambassador, raising awareness, developing strategic partnerships, and cultivating philanthropic support to further the Workshop's mission to help children everywhere grow smarter, stronger, and kinder.

Previously Westin served as Sesame Workshop's President of Social Impact and Philanthropy. In that role, she spearheaded a partnership to create the largest early childhood intervention in the history of humanitarian response, bringing critical early education to refugee children in the Syrian response region. Working with the International Rescue Committee, she led Sesame Workshop's efforts to compete for and win a historic \$100 million grant from the MacArthur Foundation to fund this work. With an additional \$100 million grant from the LEGO Foundation, this initiative has expanded to Bangladesh. She also oversees Sesame Street in Communities, Sesame's comprehensive initiative designed to give children the tools they need to overcome traumatic experiences.

Westin was named a "Leading Global Thinker" by Foreign Policy Magazine and one of Fast Company's "100 Most Creative People in Business" and was recognized with the Smithsonian's "American Ingenuity Award". A staunch advocate for addressing children's needs, she regularly appears on major media outlets on the value of investing in early childhood development, especially for the most vulnerable children.

Westin has held leadership positions in media, nonprofit, and public service. She was Assistant to the President for Public Liaison and Intergovernmental Affairs for President George H.W. Bush, Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and held senior positions at the ABC Television Network and U.S. News & World Report.

Westin serves on the board of directors of the U.S. Fund for UNICEF, the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, Communities in Schools and Vital Voices Global Partnership. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the U.S. Afghan Women's Council, and the Early Childhood Peace Consortium Advisory Board and serves on the Executive Leadership Council of the Early Childhood Development Action Network (ECDAN).

Westin is a graduate of the University of Virginia and holds an Honorary Doctorate from Concordia College in New York.

Two Anonymous Gaming Industry Executives

Two gaming industry executives contributed to this effort under the condition of anonymity. As such, their names, biographies, and organizations have been withheld from this report.