

PRCA MONTGOMERY

January 2011

A report from the Montgomery Chapter of the Public Relations Council of Alabama

Letter from the President

January always brings a sense of excitement for me—a new beginning, a clean slate, an eager anticipation of what the new year will bring. As a self-diagnosed “Type-A”, that new beginning doesn’t come without much planning and preparation on my part. Every fall, I spend a few months setting goals for myself in the new year and a plan of action in how to accomplish them.



Lara Lewis

I am proud to be working with a phenomenal group of men and women who have been doing much the same for you so that we can begin the PRCA-Montgomery 2011 year with a renewed sense of excitement. Thanks to the hard work of Diane Christy, President-Elect; Julie Joyner, Secretary; Amy Odom, Treasurer; Robert Burns, VP of Communications; Morgan Berney, VP of Projects; Meg Lewis, VP of Programs; Melody Kitchen, VP of Students; DiDi Henry, VP of Membership; Nia Johnson, VP of Education; Darryl Gates, Accreditation Chair; Kristi Gates, Historian; Alison Ingle, Member-at-Large; Carol Gunter, Past President; and Lori Moneyham as our Board Advisor, we have a fantastic year in store.

We began the first stages of our planning in early fall with a survey sent out to our membership. Through your feedback, we were able to determine what topics you were interested in hearing about at our monthly luncheons, what kind of communication you would like to receive, what sort of after-hour socials you would like to see, with what service projects you would like to participate, and what member bene-

fits we could offer that would enhance the value found in PRCA-Montgomery.

I am happy to report that your board has planned our first quarter with a line-up of speakers who will address community relations, management, and decision-making—topics that all ranked highly on your wish list. We will be orchestrating a town hall meeting on

January 23rd in partnership

with KARMA (Kids Against Ridicule, Meanness, and Aggression), a service project many of you felt was important. Our newsletter has changed formats and will include new features including articles detailing trends in the public relations world. Finally, we are pleased to offer increased opportunities in which our students can participate, an additional quarterly educational session, and a quarterly after-hours social.

I hope these changes that we have made for PRCA-Montgomery’s 2011 year leave you with a sense of excitement about being a member of the Public Relations Council of Alabama—the largest group of communications and public relations professionals in the state. In fact, I hope it makes you so excited that you will want to encourage others in the community to join PRCA-Montgomery. Be sure to see details inside this newsletter of our new membership recruitment campaign and how you can become \$250 richer by sponsoring new members this year.

All my best for a new beginning!

Lara Lewis
2011 PRCA-Montgomery President

CHAPTER MEETING

Childhood Obesity

Tuesday — January 11
Montgomery Country Club
11:45 a.m.



GUEST SPEAKER
Michael Briddell
Director of Public Information
and External Affairs
City of Montgomery

Members \$18
Non-members: \$20

RSVP to Julie Joyner
jjoyner@riverregionunitedway.org

RSVP Deadline:
Noon Friday, January 7

If you do not RSVP
the lunch cost is \$20

SPECIAL NOTE

Members who make reservations for chapter luncheons but fail to cancel by noon the Friday prior to the meeting **ARE** responsible for payment. **We will invoice you!**

K.A.R.M.A. Town Hall—January 23, 2011



K.A.R.M.A.

Kids Against Ridicule Meanness & Aggression

The Montgomery chapter of PRCA has joined forces with KARMA (Kids. Against. Ridicule. Meanness and Aggression) and other community organizations to help put a stop to childhood bullying. A town hall meeting appropriately titled “Montgomery Stands Strong Against Bullying” will be hosted by Frazer Memorial United Methodist Church on Sunday, January 23rd at 6:00 p.m.

Jessica Brookshire, founder of KARMA, and Tina Meiers, a nationally known anti-bullying

activist, will be the keynote speakers and will touch on the effects of child bullying in schools and how to deal with the consequences. For details, visit www.standstrongagainstabullying.com. If you are interested in volunteering the night of the event, please contact Morgan Berney, VP of Projects at mberney@montgomerychamber.com.

PRCA Medallion Deadline Jan. 28, 2011

The Public Relations Council of Alabama has made it easier to enter your public relations programs and projects in its annual Medallion Awards program with this online awards entry system.

Entry Eligibility:

Entries must have been produced between January 1, 2010 and December 31, 2010.

Deadline for entering:

Postmarked by Friday, January 28, 2011.

Please note the deadline WILL NOT be extended for this year's competition due to the tight turn around time for judging and the state conference!

Visit prcamedallions.com/prca for more information.

PRCA State Conference 2011 April 3-5

In a word...PRCA conferences are educational. Informative. Entertaining. And in 2011, it's all about *the words*.

The 2011 conference theme, In A Word, is a nod to the various forms of writing we all encounter in our practice of public relations. Writing for news media. Writing for the Web. Speechwriting. Visual communications. Telling your story. Telling your company's story. It's all about the words.

The 2011 Conference will take place April 3-5, 2010 at the Embassy Suites Birmingham-Hoover in Birmingham, Alabama.

What's the best word to describe PRCA's conference registration fees?

The full conference rate is \$275.

Your registration includes all keynote

and breakout sessions, social activities, networking opportunities with fellow PRCA members, as well as the Student Awards and Medallion Awards luncheons.

Watch your e-mail inbox for your registration invitation.

Dates to Remember:

January 28: Medallion Awards entry deadline

Find us online at bit.ly/Facebook_InAWord <http://bit.ly/Facebook_InAWord> and twitter.com/PRCA_InAWord <http://twitter.com/PRCA_InAWord> .

Sponsorship Opportunities: Does your company provide a service to PR professionals? As a sponsor of PRCA's annual conference, you will have the opportunity to interact with some of the state's



leading PR professionals. PRCA members regularly work with vendors for a variety of public relations-related needs.

And don't forget – chapters can earn a 10 percent commission on any sponsors they bring in. Send any sponsorship leads to Association Manager Hugh Rushing at hugh@prcaonline.com. For more information about sponsorship opportunities, please visit http://bit.ly/PRCA_Sponsors.

How Much Does a House Cost?

I don't come from the "there are no dumb questions" school. For example, in an academic environment, I would define a 'dumb question' as one in which the answer should be easily known had the student read the assignment or attended the previous class. There are a lot of dumb questions asked all the time and social media gets more than its share of these. Many of them are specific to social media measurement/ROI.

For example:

Which has higher ROI, Twitter or Facebook?

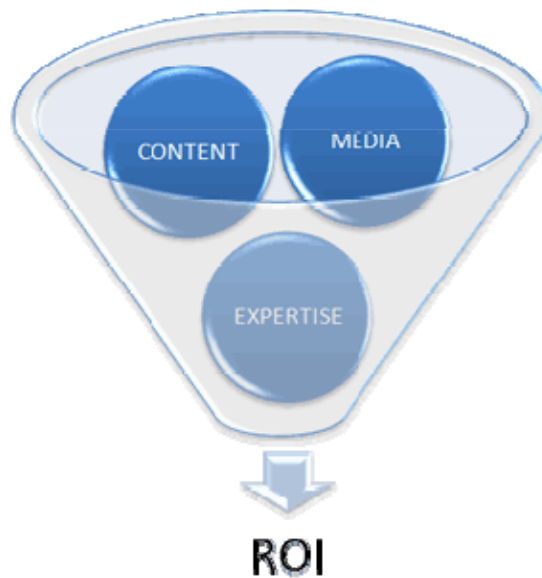
What ROI should I expect from Twitter?

How do I measure the ROI of social media?

The flip answer to all these questions is, it depends. All results are contextual. Results are also specific. While industry averages may be interesting, averages mask any real meaning for an individual brand or company. They result in 'one size fits none' thinking. Let's go back to our house analogy and bring this to life. The cost of a house depends on several factors:

Where is the house located? You'll need to know the city and the specific neighborhood. You may also want to know which block the house is on within a given neighborhood.

- How large is the house in terms of square feet?
- How large is the lot?
- Is the house new or previously owned?



- In what condition is the house?
- What is the level of finish-out? For example, granite versus tile countertops. High-end appliances or mid-range?
- What are the desirable or unique features of the house?

In social media measurement we have our own list of questions to ask before attempting to answer generally stated questions about measurement and ROI:

What brand/company are we speaking about? The answers for a well-established cult brand will be very different from those of a less well-established brand. Answers for eCommerce companies will vary from those of B2B companies. Answers will also vary by industry segment.

How long has the brand/company been participating in social networks?

How much investment in social media marketing – time and money – has the brand/company made? What has been the level of effort?

What other communications channels (e.g. advertising, direct, search, public relations) are being utilized in parallel with social marketing?

What is our point of view on the role of social media in the marketing mix? For example, is the role of social media primarily to drive exposure to content or is the program or initiative designed to drive conversion events through social channels?

What were/are the specific objectives of the program or initiative?

This last question is especially important because measurement is fundamentally about assessing performance against stated objectives. When someone asks you how to measure something in social media your first response should always be this question – What were the specific objectives of the program or initiative?

The question of when to expect a return on social media efforts is also an interesting one. Brands often expect an immediate ROI on social media efforts. Social media marketing is a process not an event. Too often people forget about the 'I' aspect of ROI – you usually have to make an investment in resources and time before you can drive a return. It is wise to listen to social conversations before engaging, and build your presence and trust before trying to drive conversion events. Listen and learn and then convert. I would argue the majority of social media efforts today are likely in the investment phase and not the return phase. It is somewhat unfair in these cases for the social media effort to be held to an ROI standard in the short-term. Measuring impact rather than ROI is advised. Perhaps we can add another question to our list of dumb social media ROI questions – 'What ROI should we expect in the first year of our social media initiative?'

If you are one of the prescient humans who has a crystal ball that enables you to answer the 'how much does a house cost' question, I have another question for you, 'how long is a string?'

Source: MetrisMan is the personal blog of Don Bartholomew, VP of Digital Research at Feishman Hillard. It offers insight and opinions on the fast changing world of social media and public relations research and measurement.



GEEK AND POKE

Member Job Changes and Promotions

Calling All Members

Through the fall 2010 Membership Survey that PRCA conducted, we learned an overwhelming majority of you would like to learn more about each other. You would be interested in knowing when our members change jobs, earn promotions, and receive awards.

We are glad to do that, but we will need YOUR help. Please forward any job changes, promotions, and recognitions you receive over the year to our VP of Communications, Robert Burns at rburns@hmmausa.com and we will publish them in our monthly newsletter and announce them at our monthly meetings.

Hold the Date

Exciting and Informative Speakers are lined up for February and March PRCA Meetings

Tuesday, February 8



Sharleen Smith, Associate Director of the Alabama Training Institute. Sharleen will talk about managing and being part of a multigenerational professional community.

Tuesday, March 8



Dr. John Forde on benefits of APR accreditation. Workshop to follow the luncheon.

2011 PRCA– Montgomery officers sworn in during December meeting

The 2011 Public Relations Council of Alabama—Montgomery Chapter Board of Directors was sworn in during the chapter’s December 14, 2010 meeting.



Lara Lewis, marketing and public relations director - Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, is the president of the Montgomery Chapter.

Other officers include President-Elect Diane Christy, communication director - Alabama Society of Certified Public Accountants; Meg Lewis, director of marketing and communications - Alabama Shakespeare Festival, vice president of programs; DiDi Henry, public affairs director - Montgomery County Commission, vice president of membership; Morgan Berney, marketing and events coordinator - Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce, vice president of projects; Nia Johnson, communications coordinator - Lads to Leaders & Leaderettes, vice president of education; Julie Joyner, director of communications

and marketing - River Region United Way, secretary; Amy Odom, public relations supervisor - United Methodist Children’s, treasurer; Robert Burns, public relations and sales manager – Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Alabama, vice president communications; Kristi Gates, community relations specialist - Alabama Department of Mental Health, historian; Melody Ragland Kitchen, public relations manager-Baptist Health, student liaison; Carol Gunter, public relations administrator - City of Montgomery, past president and ethics chair; Alison Ingle, communications manager - Alabama Housing Finance, member-at-large; and Lori Moneyham, public information specialist - Alabama Real Estate Commission, board advisor.

New Surveys After Membership Meetings

In order to help us effectively evaluate programming for our members, we are implementing a new tool this year to help us do so. At the end of each monthly luncheon meeting, we will ask that you fill out a short survey. The survey will assess your satisfaction level with the food, service, topic, and the speaker. Please be sure to fill out the short survey each time you attend a luncheon.

PRCA Montgomery is a monthly publication for PRCA’s Montgomery Chapter members. For the most up-to-date information, visit www.prcamontgomery.org. Please send all job announcements, news items, updates and comments to Robert Burns at rburns@hmmausa.com and indicate “PRCA” in the subject line.