Dear colleague

It is a special pleasure for us to welcome you at already 11th International public relations symposium BledCom 2004.

The topic of this year’s meeting is New Concepts and Technologies for Public Relations, Public Affairs and Corporate Communication. According to some commentators, old-style public relations and corporate communication practice is moribund. Lord Bell, the head of one of the UK’s largest communication consultancies, Chime Communications, described the outlook for public relations in the near future as “dull, weak and depressed” in September 2003. As the world economy emerges from downturn, the future development of public relations will depend on new approaches and the whole-hearted embrace of opportunities offered by technological advances, some of which such as XPRL have been reviewed at previous Bled meetings.

In the days of your stay at Bled, you will be able to hear more than 40 speakers and short presentations of their ideas and views on the BledCom 2004 theme. This year we have received a record number of 51 abstracts in the call for papers and we accepted 31 papers for presentation. Because this is a very large number of presentations to be presented in one weekend, we made some changes of the usual sessions. The papers were published on www.bledcom.com before the symposium, so the participants of the symposium could read them before arriving to Bled. This way there will be more time for debates, which are a lot more productive and meaningful than speakers just lecturing. We believe this is a challenging topic to explore and hope you will join us in the discussions.

The following pages provide some insight into this year’s symposium. We are happy to have you here at Bled and we acknowledge the help from our sponsors that made it possible for us to organize this event.

We wish you a pleasant stay in Slovenia!

Danny Moss
Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, UK

Dejan Verčič
Pristop Communications, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Jon White
University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK

Other information
For more information, please visit our BledCom reception desk outside the conference hall.
Program
11th International Public Relations Research Symposium

Friday, 2 July 2004

9.30 - 9.45 Welcome Address

9.45 - 10.15 Opening keynote speaker
Ray Hiebert (Public Relations Review, USA)

10.15 - 11.00 Public Relations beyond the USA: European and Asian perspective
Moderated by Ray Hiebert (Public Relations Review, USA)
Betteke van Ruler (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands),
Dejan Verčič (Pristop Communications and University of Ljubljana, Slovenia) &
Krishnamurthy Sriramesh (Nanyang Technological University, Singapore)
Betteke van Ruler and Dejan Verčič will comment on the public relations in Asia
based on the book Public Relations in Asia edited by Krishnamurthy Sriramesh
while Krishnamurthy Sriramesh will comment on public relations in Europe based
on the book Public Relations and Communication Management in Europe edited by
Betteke van Ruler and Dejan Verčič. Ray Hiebert will moderate the debate.

11.00 - 11.30 Unlocking the potential of public relations: a UK perspective
Gerald Chan (Institute of Public Relations, UK)

11.30 - 12.00 Coffee break

12.00 - 12.30 A local point of view: Application of the coorientation theory on communication
problems in international relations: the case of Slovenia and Croatia.
Ana Tkalac Verčič (University of Zagreb, Croatia); Dejan Verčič (Pristop
Communications and University of Ljubljana, Slovenia) & Kristina Laco
(Premisa, Croatia)

12.30 - 14.00 Lunch break

14.00 - 16.00 1st Session: E-PR
Moderated by Anne Gregory (Leeds Business School, UK)
Serra Görpe (Istanbul University, Turkey) & Sergün Kurtoğlu (Istanbul
University, Turkey)
• Pros and cons of using new communication technologies in public relations:
an analysis of public relations practitioners’ views
Mine Saran (Ege University, Turkey) & Serra Görpe (Istanbul University, Turkey)
• Use of websites by public relations firms as an interactive communication tool:
  A comparative content analysis of websites of German and Turkish public relations’ firms

Berdine Cilliers (University of Pretoria, South Africa); Benita Steyn
(University of Pretoria, South Africa) & Anske Grobler (University of Pretoria, South Africa)
• The Internet: a Technology in Search of a Strategy

Krishnamurthy Sriramesh (Nanyang Technological University, Singapore) &
Milagros Riviera-Sanchez (National University of Singapore, Singapore)
• Public Affairs and E-Government: The Case of Singapore

Monika Kaczmarek-Śliwinska (University of Economics Poznan, Poland) &
Ryszard Ławniczak (University of Economics Poznan, Poland)
• Internet PR in transition economy - case of Poland

16.00 - 16.30 Coffee break

16.30 - 18.00 2nd Session: E-PR
Moderated by Jon White (University of Birmingham, UK)
Anne Gregory (Leeds Business School, UK) & Majda Tafra Vlahovic (Coca-Cola HBC, Croatia)
• Corporate social responsibility: New contexts, new applications

Mafalda Eiró-Gomes (Escola Superior de Comunicação Social, Portugal) &
João Duarte (Escola Superior de Comunicação Social, Portugal)
• New technologies, new publics?

Ursula Ströh (University of Technology, Australia)
• Can new technologies in public relations assist practitioners with relationship management? - a chaos and complexity question

Toni Muzi Falconi (FERPI, Italy) & Fabio Ventoruzzo (FERPI, Italy)
• Integrating real and virtual environments in stakeholder relationship management

Benita Steyn (University of Pretoria, South Africa) & Gerhard Bütschi
(Digital Management AG, Switzerland)
• A model for developing public relations/corporate communication strategy
  - an online application

21.00 Dinner
Saturday, 3 July 2004

10.00 - 11.00  Special session on Visualisation of relationships
Dejan Verčič (Pristop Communications and University of Ljubljana, Slovenia) and Jon White (University of Birmingham, UK)

11.00 - 12.30  3rd Session: ROI in PR
Moderated by Dejan Verčič (Pristop Communications and University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)
Peggy Simcic Brønn (Norwegian School of Management, Norway); Hanno Roberts (Norwegian School of Management, Norway) & Karl Joachim Breunig (SINTEF Industrial Management, Norway)
· Intangible Assets, Communication and Relationships
Marita Vos (University of professional education Utrecht, The Netherlands) & Henny Shoemaker (Director Advice in and Courses about Communication policy, The Netherlands)
· Accountability of communication policy
Sven Hamrefors (Stockholm School of Economics, Sweden)
· Management of attention - a responsibility for the information/communication department?
Jon White (University of Birmingham, UK) & Kevin Murray (Chime Communications, UK)
· CEO expectations of a changing public relations practice

12.30 - 14.00  Lunch break

14.00 - 16.00  4th Session: PR Education
Krishnamurthy Sriramesh (Nanyang Technological University, Singapore)
Julia Jahansoozi (University of Central Lancashire, UK) & Eric Koper (University of Central Lancashire, UK)
· Exploring constructivism in relation to technology and transparency in public relations education and practice.
Liz Yeomans (Leeds Metropolitan University, UK)
· Internal communication and organisational learning: an interpretive approach
Ralph Tench (Leeds Metropolitan University, UK) & Johanna Fawkes (Leeds Metropolitan University, UK);
· Does practitioner resistance to theory jeopardize the future of public relations? A consideration of research findings, comparing UK practitioner, academic and alumni attitudes to public relations education.
Helena Kantanen (University of Jyväskylä, Finland)
• Civic mission and social responsibility. New challenges for the practice of public relations in higher education

Danny Moss (Manchester Business School, UK); Barbara DeSanto (University of North Carolina, USA) & Andrew Newman (Manchester Business School, UK)
• Defining and refining the core elements of management in public relations/corporate communications context: What do Communication Managers Do?

Marié Ferreira (University of Pretoria, South Africa) & Ronél Rensburg (University of Pretoria, South Africa)
• Aligning corporate communications and excellence models to ensure continuous improvement in organisations

16.00 - 16.30 Coffee break

16.30 - 18.00 5th Session: Understanding PR
Moderated by Betteke van Ruler (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands)
Valérie Carayol (Michel de Montaigne University, France)
• The allagmatic approach. A new perspective in organizational communication

Andrej Škerlep (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)
• Cooperation and conflict in relationship management

Karl Nessman (University of Klagenfurt, Austria)
• Personality PR

Mai Hansford (University of Technology, Australia)
• Engaging a community: Storytelling to communicate with publics
Unlocking the Potential of Public Relations: a UK perspective

**Focus:** A Best Practice Case Study Examining Issues Facing the UK PR Profession. The presentation focuses on the largest Government-backed study of its kind conducted in the UK (and Europe).

**Content:** This session will focus on 'Unlocking the Potential of Public Relations' the competitiveness report - jointly funded by the UK Government (Department of Trade & Industry) and the Institute of Public Relations - on current best practice and future trends in the UK Public Relations industry: [http://www.ipr.org.uk/unlockpr/index.asp](http://www.ipr.org.uk/unlockpr/index.asp)

The project process, report and recommendations have enabled the UK institute to increase public, political and business understanding of the PR industry - imaginatively re-engaging opinion leaders about the value of UK PR - and rallying the industry and its partners to reflect on and take radical steps to advance PR professionalism.

**Outcomes:** Seminar attendees should be able to: Understand how the UK project engaged policy makers at Government level; Understand the key findings of the UK report and its recommendations - and contextualise these within the global industry; Envision applying lessons learnt to their own industry/national/state territory contexts.
A local point of view: Application of the coorientation theory on communication problems in international relations: the case of Slovenia and Croatia.

The social, interpersonal concept of public opinion involves two or more individuals ready to communicate about an object or issue of mutual interest. In a process of communication the two sides are “cooriented” towards a mutual issue or topic, as well as towards one another. If effective communication is defined as the level of accomplishment on one of the coorientational indicators (as defined by Chaffe and McLeod (1973) in their coorientational model, i.e. understanding, accuracy, agreement and congruency), it is possible to follow the effectiveness of communication through information behavior of either (or both) of the two sides. The mentioned model does not use the traditional concept of “individual agreement” in order to describe public opinion, nor does it use the aggregation of individual orientations towards a certain issue or problem. Instead, the coorientational approach formulates public opinion as a product of individual perceptions of a certain issue, on one side; and the perception that a group (public) has on the opinion of “significant others”, on the other.

In this paper, we questioned the possibility of applying the coorientational theory in researching the communication behavior between the “general” publics of two nations, Slovenian and Croatian. We used these findings to offer practical advice on solving the potential communication problems. The research had two primary objectives. First, the attitudes towards specific issues relevant for international relations between the publics of the two nations were compared. The coorientation model was used to examine the degree of agreement between the Slovenian and Croatian public; the accuracy of the predictions of one side about the views of the other side, and vice versa; and the degree of congruency between the views of one side and the responses that the mentioned side predicted for the other side. Second, we tried to compare perceptions of both publics, Slovenian and Croatian, about the level and direction of media presentation of each of the countries, to the real media coverage, by using content analysis.
Pros and Cons of Using New Communication Technologies in Public Relations: An Analysis of Public Relations Practitioners’ Views

One of the traditional functions of public relations is to influence perceptions of internal and external publics through communication. In order to accomplish this, appropriate use of communication channels is necessary to send accurate and timely information. Traditionally, public relations uses mass media and although this is still used today, technological developments in mass communications such as Internet, SMS and WAP are widely utilised by public relations professionals. Also some specialized areas of public relations such as crisis communications need to use it more so.

The messages to the target audiences sent out by these new channels have to be modified in content and form due to its nature. Although the new channels of communication are making life easier for public relations in certain ways under some conditions, it may also affect the impact of public relations messages sent out. For example, the presentation of public relations messages in different forms may have different perceptions on the same target audience. Credibility of the technologically conveyed message and its limited/short content could be interpreted differently.

The study will discuss the limits and advantages of new communication technologies for public relations in general. It will seek answers to what are the new technologies used by Turkish public relations professionals and how they are integrated into the public relations campaign. Through a web-based quantitative study with the Public Relations Society of Turkey, the study will explore when and how they are used and in addition to finding out more concretely the limits and advantages of these technologies.
Use of Websites by Public Relations Firms as an Interactive Communication Tool: A Comparative Content Analysis of Websites of German and Turkish Public Relations’ Firms

Internet is an interactive communication tool that has no time and no place boundaries. The information on the web is easily reachable: research could be conducted, complaints could be forwarded, feedback is received, etc. It could be both a proactive and reactive strategy for public relations. Nowadays, for corporations that want to be closer to their target audiences and to the general public, forming a website is a widely recommended communication tool by public relations consultants, but also a hard and a challenging operation. Forming a website should correctly reflect the corporation’s mission and position by allowing two-way interaction.

It is expected to have competition between the websites of corporations. The perception of a corporation is closely linked to how well its website is structured. A well-designed website is visual, functional, interactive, rich in content, attractive, user-friendly and updated regularly. Two important questions are:
1. what is the target audience that the corporation wants to reach by its website?
2. how should the website be designed in order to achieve the communication goals?

Corporate websites reflect the image of a company; it is there all the time. The study will discuss the functions of websites from the communication point of view. In addition to it, it will specifically look at public relations firms’ websites and analyze them.
Public relations and advertising firms also establish their websites to profit from this technology and to be in the competition. Public relations firms use this technology to reach to their internal and external audiences to communicate with them. The study will discuss the reasons why public relations firms are establishing their own websites. Top German and Turkish public relations firms' websites will be analyzed with respect to well-designed website criteria. Also a model for public relations firms to form a website to promote themselves will be suggested in the paper.
The internet: a technology in search of a strategy

1. Problem statement

Managers know that the Internet should or could play an important role in achieving organisational goals, but are uncertain about its applications in strategic management. Web-sites are often developed based on intuition or technological design capabilities and not because they contribute to the achievement of organisational goals. Many have paid the price of unsuccessful web-sites or limited return on investment by not integrating the Internet into organisational strategy. However, the question of what ‘Internet strategy’ actually entails and which organisational strategy it should form part of remains unanswered. Corporate communication, marketing, information technology and human resource managers, as well as others, all claim ownership of the Internet. Corporate communication managers face the challenge that this technological development has not been part of their management responsibility in the past. It is thus necessary to determine where the Internet fits into the strategic communication management process and how to optimally realise its potential as a strategic tool.

2. Research objectives

Primary Objective 1
To conceptualise ‘Internet strategy’ by means of secondary research:
• To investigate whether the concept of ‘Internet strategy’ can be considered a strategy in the true sense of the word or a (corporate communication or marketing) medium.
• To investigate whether ‘Internet strategy’ refers to functional or operational (corporate communication or marketing) strategy.

Primary Objective 2
To investigate quantitatively whether the Internet is used by organisations to realise corporate communication or marketing goals.

3. Research strategy, design and methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PHASE 1</th>
<th>PHASE 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH STRATEGY</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH DESIGN</td>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Formal, descriptive, cross-sectional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>Secondary data investigation</td>
<td>Electronic mail survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAMPLE</td>
<td>632 companies listed on the Johannesburg Securities Exchange and on the ananzi.co.za search engine.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Meta-theoretical and conceptual framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>METATHEORETICAL APPROACHES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Systems approach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General theory of Excellence in PR and Communication Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship paradigm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEORIES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass communication theory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information theory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic management theory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPT1</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisational goal achievement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSTRUCTS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement of PR goals</td>
<td>Achievement of marketing goals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEASUREMENT ITEMS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 items</td>
<td>15 items</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Findings and conclusions

- 'Internet strategy' refers to organisational decisions on hardware and software.
- As a medium or channel, the Internet mainly forms part of operational strategy -- to be used in achieving functional goals such as marketing or public relations. It can also be used as a tool in gathering information about the environment.
- 19% of managers responsible for the management of organisations’ web-sites in SA were in the PR department, 18% in marketing, 30% in information technology and 33% in ‘other’ departments. This differs substantially from the US where communication departments were mostly found to be responsible for managing web-sites (Wright, 1998).
- The questionnaire items were reliable with a Cronbach Alpha of 0.93.
- Factor analysis confirmed the two proposed factors: marketing goals (with 10 pure items) and corporate communication goals (with 8 pure items).
- There was no significant difference between the various designations (marketing/communication/IT and ‘other’ managers) in their use of the Internet to achieve marketing or corporate communication goals. This might be explained by the fact that 63% of the managers responsible for web-sites were not in the marketing or PR department.
- Organisational web-sites should optimally be managed by an organisation’s PR or marketing department.
Public Affairs and E-Government: The Case of Singapore

Although technically labeled a parliamentary democracy, Singapore has been criticized by political observers (eg. Chua, 1995; Ho, 2000; Yuen, 1999) for a lack of pluralism. However, Singapore has also been a great economic success story as Yuen admitted: “Singapore is a place that arouses deeply divided feelings among observers. It is also one of the great economic success stories of this century, but it is also widely seen as an authoritarian state that limits freedom of speech and political rights” (1999, p.1).

In recent years, Singapore has witnessed a paradigmatic shift with government leaders emphasizing the need to make Singapore a Knowledge-Based Economy (KBE). This shift has been necessitated by a variety of societal factors such as the emergence of an affluent middle-class population, and a better educated (often in universities in Australia, the United States, and Great Britain) and well-traveled citizenry. The government’s Singapore 211 initiative, as part of its Reinventing Singapore program, is another indicator of the paradigmatic shift toward a more active citizenry.

It is in light of this changed mindset that E-Governance can be viewed as another key initiative that the government has envisaged in developing a communitarian democracy in Singapore. A communitarian democracy requires the establishment of formal institutions such as a free press, the right of citizens to be consulted, and an emphasis on consensus (Chua, 1995). It is clear that Singapore has recognized that among other things, e-governance helps governments improve decision-making and implementation by inviting active participation of the citizenry and by creating new methods for delivering information and knowledge to the populace all of which helps create a more holistic and productive society. In addition to being a corporatist country, Singapore has almost two decades of experience in creating an innovative e-government framework. Other countries have recognized its leadership and have sought to learn from its expertise (eg. Jordan, which recently signed such an agreement). Recently, the e-citizen portal—a one-stop service site—the government of Singapore was created to cement the country’s approach to e-government as a business model, again keeping with its corporatist ideology. Lee Kwok Cheong, the architect of e-governance in Singapore and CEO of National Computer Systems Pte. Ltd., said in a recent interview: “The citizens are the customers of the government … [and] you have to do everything to service your customers.” This mindset of treating citizens as customers is novel to Singapore as Mr. Lee admitted in the same interview. As the country has adopted the principle of a knowledge-based economy, IT policies and e-government initiatives are likely to lead to greater accountability, more transparency, and more public participation in decision making.

It is in light of this background that this study seeks to examine the current state of e-governance in Singapore. Data will be collected from different segments of the Singaporean government on their experiences in instituting e-government initiatives. Data will also be gathered from the Infocomm Development Authority (IDA), which is the primary regulator of information technologies in the city-state. The study will use these data to extrapolate on such things as the compatibility of e-governance with the political and societal culture of Singapore; the impact e-government has had on accountability, transparency, and public participation in government decision making; the challenges that the government has faced in establishing e-governance; the tangible benefits that e-government has brought to Singaporean society; and possible lessons that Singapore’s case can present especially to countries in Asia, who may be seeking to implement a similar e-government framework. In addition, the paper will also take assess the concept of e-government from a public affairs perspective.
Internet PR in Transition Economy - Case of Poland

The paper discusses the use of Internet PR in Poland’s transition economy. Its overview of Polish Internet PR begins with the turnaround year of 1989 when the country first embarked on building a new economy, and ends with December 2002 which marked the conclusion of research on Polish Internet PR.

Internet PR has revolutionized corporate public relations throughout Poland. The factors precipitating its big shift included the use of Internet tools that offered rapid and practically unlimited access to information and gave companies’ a world of new opportunities for communicating with their environment.

Poland first gained access to global Internet resources in 1991. By 1992, the first company made its appearance in Polish Internet giving rise to a whole new way of doing business. Soon afterwards, in 1993, a number of companies pioneered the use of the Internet in their PR work. The study in question showed that by December 2002, over 92% of companies operating in Poland relied on Internet PR instruments in their public relations.

As it appears, Internet PR is a powerful instrument for rapidly closing the gap in PR standards between transitional and highly-developed market economies and, by the same token, for equating the standard of PR practice across such countries.
Corporate social responsibility: New contexts, new applications

Corporate social responsibility, corporate citizenship, sustainable development are all phrases that are beginning to permeate the corporate vocabulary.

Organisations face external drivers for corporate responsibility communication for from two main sources. Firstly, stakeholders, especially knowledgeable and potentially opposing activist communities. Ongoing MOR research\(^1\) demonstrates that CSR is of increasing interest to the general public too.

Second, regulators are also beginning to require information that gives a more holistic view of the value of organisations, rather than the purely financial valuation given in the Annual Accounts. For example, the UK government’s proposals for reforming Company Law will require large companies to report on factors such as stakeholder relationships, environmental impacts and risk-management.

There are internal drivers for social reporting too. Often led by the Public Relations department\(^2\), organisations want to demonstrate the social responsibility in a pro-active way.

Large, international organisations have to respond to differing environments around the world. Corporate responsibility reporting has to be appropriate to the local communities in which they are based.

This paper seeks to explore the different approaches to social reporting depending on the different economic and social contexts in which companies operate. It will do three things. First it will review the current knowledge base on CSR, focusing on the international dimension. Second, it will take two large companies in the food and beverage industries, Coca-Cola HBC, Croatia and Cadbury Schweppes in the UK and will compare and contrast the context and approaches to social reporting in an emerging and mature economy and democracy. Third, recommendations on social reporting for international organisations will be made.
New technologies, new publics?

In 1996, professors John Pavlik and David Dozier issued an interim report to the Institute for Public Relations about the trends posed by information Superhighways to communication professionals. The report identified ten major challenges among which were factors such as the corporate culture (the question of who should have the responsibility of the web site management), the myths and facts of technologies (the mystification was seen as a way of maintaining organisational power), the employee’s uses of new technologies (the need for clear and written policies was identified), the unofficial sites (regarded as sources of potential damaging information), or the legal issues of the cyberspace. However, the report interestingly stressed the Public Mobilization in the cyberspace. Publics can be organized and mobilized as well as organize and mobilize themselves almost instantly. Their power is enormously amplified and in the online arena mobilized publics can influence almost everything.

In fact, when we talk about the changing nature of public relations due to information superhighways we are, above all, talking about changes in the very nature of PR’ publics. Although recognizing evident changes in many PR tools and in the nature of the PR process, this paper addresses mainly the question of the PR’ “publics”. We believe that it is not possible to discuss the evolution of the PR practice unless we analyse the evolution of the concept of “public”. Following Splichal (1999) we’ll start by questioning the nature and origins of the concept of ‘Public’ as a social category, trying to isolate it from concepts such as ‘publicity’, ‘public/ness’, ‘public sphere’, and ‘public opinion’. We will also review the theoretical assumptions underlying the idea that the Internet is a mass medium and assess its impact on the traditional forms of human association.

How shall we consider the new publics and how do they influence our way of being in the Public Relations practice?
Can new technologies in Public Relations assist practitioners with relationship management? - A chaos and complexity question

Current texts and theorists in corporate communication management and public relations suggest detailed and structured methods of long term strategic planning, and communication programs and strategies are derived from strategic management theory (See (Kendall, 1992); (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 1994); (D’Aprix, 1996); (Broom, Casey, & Ritchey, 1997); (Steyn & Puth, 2000); (Oliver, 2001); (Smith, 2002); (Harrison, 2003)). There are suggestions of software systems being developed based on structured strategic communication theory. Technological systems support this conventional ontology of corporate communication strategy.

New developments in management theory, as well as in corporate communication theory, have however extended the thoughts surrounding strategic planning. Postmodernism (such as the complexity and chaos theories) have stripped modernist concepts of its rational objectivity (Chia, 1995); (Jackson & Carter, 1992). Singh and Singh (2002) go as far as saying that postmodern approaches throw strategic planning out the window. The interaction of all the subsystems of a complex system and the role of the relationships formed, as well as the creation of information and knowledge through these interactions, form the basis of the complexity and chaos approaches. Building relationships between organizations and publics are becoming the most important function of the communication practitioner (Ledingham & Bruning, 2000). Postmodern theorists and corporate communication managers are starting to move away from the models of strategic planning, objective setting and positivistic measurement. New approaches suggest environmental scanning to identify stakeholders that might be affected by organizational actions, building relationships with those stakeholders by involving them in decision-making processes, and thereby affecting the goal achievement and reputation of the organization (Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2002), but in a non-linear, unstructured way (Holtzhausen, 2001). Corporate communication managers should be more concerned with the building of relationships with stakeholders through the facilitation of participation, than with ‘strategic planning’ and ‘strategic management’.

The question arises how these new approaches then suggest practitioners practice strategically? Do postmodernists suggest that the field move away from technologies that are in essence very technical (such as XPRL) back to more interpersonal communication methodologies to build true relationships based on trust, commitment, mutual satisfaction and power equality? Can new technologies not perpetuate power differences in society and thus not involve marginalized groups in decision-making processes? How can technologies be applied to ensure true strategic communication that has relational influences into a larger societal community structure? This paper will attempt to provide possible answers to these complex questions using some principles of the chaos and complexity approaches.
Integrating real and virtual environments in stakeholder relationship management

Based on the concept that:

New approaches to public relations practice will be based on the recognition that the conceptual basis of the practice is changing: it is based now less on attempts to influence perceptions and build reputation, more on building and managing relationships, and behaviour in relationships, to deliver real value to the organizations, groups and individuals on whose behalf it is practiced, as well as to the wider society.

I would like, together with the recently graduated from University of Udine (Gorizia) Fabio Ventoruzzo, to submit a paper which argues the following ideas:

• the Internet, besides being a formidable tool to retrieve information and -but only by an increasingly hostile e-mail channel- an astounding means for interactive communication, is also (and maybe foremost??) a relationship environment other than the one public relations usually employs.
• there are excellent examples of this but each success story is different from the other and it is very difficult to extrapolate guidelines for success.
• stakeholder relationship management, the nearest definition of the new concept of public relations the call for paper describes, is a discipline in itself and needs to be analysed, described and experimented in both environments: real and virtual.
• a first definition of srm could be something like:

SRM is a management process by which a complex organisation, intensely involved in developing pull, interactive and symmetrical relationships -with a strong Internet as an environment (rather than as merely an instrument) culture- monitors and manages the dynamics of its relationship systems with publics, believed to exert influence in reaching the objectives it (the organisation) pursues.

• the Italian association of public relations (Ferpi) has been working on this idea with the srm project. The paper will dwell on the various (mostly failed) attempts to develop a new relationship environment with its members of the association's web site.
• also, a common thread of 22 recent Italian 'best practice in pr' cases is that while Internet sites are increasingly being used to retrieve information, actual interactivity and involvement of site visitors is extremely complex and rare.
• the paper will define challenges in developing this new relationship environment with the aim of enabling and empowering pr professionals to govern this potentially extraordinary opportunity.
A model for developing public relations/corporate communication strategy – an online application

1. Problem statement

The public relations function is in need of a new paradigm – a new pattern of thinking about and studying organisational and communication problems, and of evaluating PR practice. Major advances stem from defining a problem in a whole new way, often discarding previously standard beliefs and procedures (Kuhn, 1969). This includes developing totally different methodologies to study the same problem. Beyond the notion that PR entails persuasion or communications, and in the absence of another ‘richer, unifying perspective’, Cutlip and Center's (1952) four-step PR process model has become the field’s predominant paradigm by default (Hallahan, 1993).

Although the public relations body of knowledge indicates a strategic role for the public relations manager (White & Mazur 1995; Bartha 1994; Grunig & Repper, in Grunig 1992:120), there are but a few references to public relations/corporate communication ‘strategy’ in a strategic organisational context. The small number of publications that refer to the topic deal mainly with communication campaigns and plans, as illustrated by the many planning models, operational plans and checklists frequently seen in PR text books and articles. The key problem seems to lie in the application of strategy for public relations issues, i.e. what strategy means in a communication context.

Steyn (2000; 2002; 2003) conceptualised public relations strategy as a functional strategy, providing the vital link between the enterprise/corporate/business-unit strategies and the public relations function. Public relations strategy is formulated by a practitioner in the redefined role of the ‘PR manager’. It is mainly derived from/influenced by the organisation’s enterprise strategy and also delivers inputs into the enterprise strategy -- the role of the ‘PR strategist’ (Steyn, 2000).

Steyn’s (2000) model for formulating a public relations strategy for an organisation/institution was developed as part of a longitudinal action research project at the Dept of Marketing and Communication Management at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. A framework was hypothesised from the literature (1997) and implemented amongst 94 non-profit organisations in 1998 and 1999, amongst 48 government institutions in 2000 and amongst 68 small-to-medium sized companies in South Africa in 2001. Based on the findings of the action research, the model was adapted.

2. Research objective

To develop a Web--based application of Steyn’s model (2000) for formulating public relations/corporate communication strategy, to be used by corporates as a new (technological) approach to the day-to-day management of the public relations function.
3. Research strategy, design and methodology

The research strategy is qualitative, the design confirmatory and the methodology participatory action research. This paper describes a new action research project, undertaken during 2003/2004, focusing on the first two stages of the action research process:

Stage 1: The resources and needs of a community (large corporates) are assessed and the necessary information to guide action is gathered. The steps in the existing model for developing PR strategy are adjusted/new steps are developed to accommodate the online environment (by means of a literature study/expert interviews). A web-based application of the new hypothesised model is created.

Stage 2: Some kind of action is undertaken together by the action research partners. In this case, the existing PR process of a large corporate is analysed/assessed and recommendations are made for adjustments/restructuring according to the Web-based model. In turn, the online application is also adjusted to satisfy the requirements of the corporate.

During Stages 3, 4 and 5 of the action research process, the online version of the model is implemented in the corporate, the results assessed and a further period of research (of an evaluative nature) is initiated. Depending on the results of the research, it may be necessary to adjust or completely redesign the original action undertaken (i.e. the new hypothesised model and/or its online application).

4. Findings

Stages 1 and 2 of the action research process is being undertaken at present. The findings (i.e. the new version of the model and its Web-based application) will be shared with delegates at the 11th Bled Symposium, July 2004.
Intangible Assets, Communication and Relationships

(This paper is based on research carried out for the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Research Foundation.)

Communicated knowledge is postulated as being the ‘single most important source of competitive advantage in the 21st Century’. Thus it is the combination of the knowledge base and the organization’s communication systems that are the core foundation of interactive exchanges and competitive advantage.

This research looks at the concept of intangible assets and their link to communication. The first part of the research discusses the phenomenon of intangible assets, what they are and why they have become more and more important to today’s firms. Second, the research looks at the three main parts of intangible assets, comprised of human capital, relationship capital and structural capital.

There is a clear linkage between communication and intangible assets, particularly with respect to relationship capital. Existing theory demonstrates the relationship between intangible assets and communication. Three ‘screens’ or tools were developed in this research to enable assessment of an organization’s relationship building capability. Two of the screens allow firms to assess 1) their conditions for sharing information, i.e. their network competencies and 2) staffing and systems requirements for information sharing. The third screen tells the firm how to express the activities from screens 1 and 2 in financial and non-financial measurements.

In order for organizations to achieve the most value from their intangible assets they must encourage systematic relationship building and boundary-spanning behavior by everyone in the organization. This view challenges the notion that this is the primary role of communication managers. With the use of the methodology described in this research, the main challenge for communication managers now is to understand how they can aid organizational members in building relationships with stakeholders both internally and externally.
Accountability of communication policy

The approach of the ‘Balanced scorecard’ of Kaplan and Norton nowadays is quite well known in business surroundings. Many organisations use the balanced scorecard to organise a system of quality control. But although the approach has been used for functional areas as human resource en ICT, for communication management an application is not yet available. Such an approach of quality control could stimulate research in practice and reflection on quality standards for the profession.

A balanced scorecard is a measurement and improvement system. We searched for advantages of this approach in communication management and what the conditions for such a system would be. Looking at the structure of the balanced scorecard of Kaplan & Norton we came up with a similar structure consisting of four domains: concern communication, internal communication, marketing communication and organisation of the communication function. We opted for five dimensions of quality and transformed these into indicators specific for each domain. We then looked into the process necessary to implement the innovation.

Kaplan & Norton say quality cannot be measured and improved in the same way for every organisation, the method has to be developed anew for every situation. For the functional area of communication management we attempted to make a product that brings you half way. There is a basis given, but it has to be adjusted to an organisation’s needs. This is what our investigations have led to so far. The method has not yet been field tested but we hope to have more experience with it before the summer.

The content of the paper is based on a Dutch book to be published in March 2004, the English version is expected in June 2004.
Management of attention - A responsibility for the Information/Communication Department?

Background
This paper is based upon a research made in the Swedish context. It had the objective to find out what organisational factors are influencing the focus and intensity of the attention of an organisation’s business environment. The method used was 283 in-depth interviews with respondents in 4 organisations.

It can be assumed that attention is playing a significant role in communication. On one hand attention is a limiting factor of the perception of the message communicated by, for example, an information department. On the other hand an information department is an integrated part of the organisation it belongs to and, consequently, the communication as such may be limited to those characteristics in the environment that the organisation attends to.

Theory
Individuals who are members of an organisation are affected in their attention by the organisational context in both the focus and the intensity. The focus is affected by factors relating to the content of the individual's immediate work context. That part of reality tends to narrow the focus. The broader organisational context may bring in inspirational elements into the individual’s work by supplying notions of Co-ordinating logic, Transparency and Knowledge transfer.

The intensity of the attention is affected by intrinsic motivating factors related to the work situation.

Various combinations of these affecting elements give birth to various attentive behaviours.

Private Scanning
In this situation the organisation is hardly sense making at all and the attention will be related to private matters only.

Anarchistic Scanning
In this situation people in the organisation are mainly focused on their own work situation and highly intrinsically motivated. The attention will be intense and scattered.

Scanning in Principle
In this situation the general organisational context is dominating and this is combined with low intrinsic motivation. The attention will be weak and narrow down to the core business of the organisation.
Targeted Scanning
In this situation the work situations and the general situation are balancing in affecting the focus and people are highly intrinsically motivated. The attention in this case will be both focused and wide enough to catch what otherwise would be unexpected. This is more efficient attention than the others mentioned above.

**How can the information department contribute to the creation of the prerequisites for Targeted Scanning?**

The information department can contribute in several ways:

- By integrating communication processes in other processes better flow and better co-ordination of the processes can be created.
- The transparency can be increase by better information systems, better formulated and communicated mission statements and better conceptualisations of social roles.
- The knowledge transfer can be enabled by better pull functionality of the information system, a more refined dialogue and more focused corporate epistemology.

It is suggested that an information department has a vital role to play in making these managerial measures efficient in the creation of the prerequisites for Targeted Scanning.
CEO expectations of a changing public relations practice

This paper examines expectations held by chief executive officers in relation to public relations, which is, the authors suggest, a changing practice. Emphasis in practice has shifted over recent years, moving from message delivery and presentation, through a focus on reputation to a current emphasis on the need to understand and manage strategic relationships, and to try to influence behaviour in relationships.

This change in emphasis can be tracked through academic writing on the subject of public relations, and also in discussions within practitioner groups such as the UK’s Institute of Public Relations. The IPR, having made the importance of reputation central in its understanding of public relations for most of the 1990s, has now moved on, in a recent study completed with the UK’s Department of Trade and Industry, to recognising that the purpose of public relations is to influence behaviour, through the management of reputation and relationships.

This paper, based on interviews with ten chief executives with major international business organisations, considers whether or not these changes, prominent in discussions in academic and practitioner circles, have been recognised by business leaders and managers. It sets out to understand their expectations, and to relate these to the academic and practice changes mooted by researchers and practitioners.
Exploring constructivism in relation to technology and transparency in public relations education and practice.

Theory related to public relations education and practice has significantly developed over the last decades with the introduction of system theory in the early 1980s exploring its functions in a management context. Parallel to these developments have been significant developments in the thinking about education and learning with interesting shifts from more objectivist paradigms to social systems and ultimately constructivist paradigms. There are several implicit links to public relations with the most explicit ones relating to the objectivist idea that learning is transmitted knowledge compared to the constructivist believe that learning is constructed knowledge. Constructivism supports the notion that communication is not simply an information transfer process between sender and receiver but that it needs to derive meaning and subsequent behaviour. Adoption of the constructivist paradigm has led to major changes in education and integration of learning technologies as explored by third generation learning environments. Similar changes are not only expected in public relations education but also in its practice. The communication process that supports public relations activities needs to be more directly related to behavioural and knowledge outcomes, accepting that the integration of technology has and will influence it future practice.

Following on from the earlier difference between transmitted and constructed knowledge, questions relating to organizational transparency in the public sphere can be further explored and explained. Transparency, as a relational element, is closely linked with trust and truthfulness. It provides verification within the public sphere, enabling publics to ascertain an organization’s truthfulness thereby building / maintaining trust. Trust, when viewed as a commodity, can be linked to share prices, sales, and reputation. Publics trust when they have faith in an organization and believe it to be doing what it claims it is. Transparency validates this process by allowing publics to see if the organization’s actions are congruent with its policies. This paper links organizational transparency with developments in constructivist thinking, technological influences, and reflects on their influence on and explanation of public relations education and practice. The paper advances a more theoretical exploration to practical consequences and opens the debate for inclusion of constructivist theory to partly explain the public relations practice.
Internal communication and organisational learning: an interpretive approach

This chapter is concerned with the relationship between managed internal communication and organisational learning. It examines and explores the notion that managed internal communication, defined as “the management of meaning” (White, 1991, p. 40) is counter-productive to organisational learning. While public relations scholars (e.g., Cutlip, Center and Broom, 2000 and Grunig, 1992) promote strategically managed internal communication, researchers within the organisational development field, notably Argyris, oppose the idea of communication that is designed to win support from employees. Arygris (1994; 1999) argues that “good” communication programmes fit within what he calls the Model I organisational culture where controlling, winning, and avoiding negative feelings encourage “defensive routines” among employees. Scholars such as Banks (1995) propose a culturally-centred theory of public relations which seeks to understand the 'receiver' perspective; the premise being that 'reality' is socially constructed, in this case, by employees who may not share the same worldview as their managers.

I begin the article by reviewing the public relations and corporate communication literature to map normative views of internal communication management. I then go on to define and discuss Banks' social-interpretive perspective which informs the empirical approach to this study. The discussion will move on to examine the organisational learning literature and in particular the obstacles to learning articulated by Argyris.

To explore Argyris' 'resistance' theory, a small sample of employees was interviewed within a UK healthcare organisation committed to the principles of the 'learning organisation'. Participants ranging from directors to nurses and other ‘front-line’ workers were questioned through semi-structured interviews on the themes of work relationships, communication, trustworthy sources, managed communication, and learning. Observational notes were made at a 'learning conference' held by the same organisation. A preliminary analysis of findings suggests the importance of participants' immediate setting in defining the organisational culture; incongruence in the meanings attached to the same words by people occupying different roles within the organisation; and a conflict between managing risk and letting people make their own decisions. A fuller analysis will determine the outcome of this study, draw conclusions and make recommendations.
Does practitioner resistance to theory jeopardise the future of public relations? A consideration of research findings, comparing UK practitioner, academic and alumni attitudes to public relations education.

Hutton (2001) sees ‘the failure of public relations to define itself and to develop sophisticated and progressive theory’, plus its failure to develop its central tenet or core concept (which he states is managing relationships) as two key issues (of seven) facing public relations. As a result of these failures, it is losing the battle for supremacy with marketing. He comments that “There remains a critical need for public relations to define its intellectual and practical domain… to regain control of its own destiny” (2001:205).

Nevertheless, the majority of practitioners require university degrees to produce graduates who can hit the ground running (L’Etang, 1996b). Such practitioners are “scornful of well-educated graduates whose knowledge of strategic implication of the field and underpinning theory … was substantial, but whose practical skills were not fully honed” (L’Etang, 2002).

The public relations industry seeks professional status, and the 2003 Department for Trade and Industry/IPR report in the UK makes it clear that Chartered status should be sought. According to most approaches to professionalism, (Pieczka, 2001, Grunig, 2002) ‘the body of knowledge’ is key to recognition. L’Etang (2002) states that: “Education is the crucial plank in PR’s quest for professional status. It is education that can provide the cognitive core to the occupation and thus help define the field of jurisdiction.” (L’Etang, 2002:47).

Nevertheless recent research (2003/4) shows that there is evidence of resistance to education as a vital element of that project. A survey of public relations practitioners (in-house and consultancy), academics and alumni, conducted by Leeds Metropolitan University with support from the Institute of Public Relations, explored attitudes towards public relations education.

Their responses reveal conflicting attitudes towards public relations education as a whole and the skill sets of graduates in particular. The tension between education as vocational training (as expected and/or preferred by many practitioners) and education as intellectual activity and personal development are highlighted in the responses.

The key quantitative and qualitative findings show that attitudes of practitioners, educators and alumni show interesting variations, especially in the following areas:

• whether dissertations should be part of undergraduate public relations education
• the role of theory versus practice in designing a public relations curriculum
• the contribution public relations education makes to the field

The paper concludes by exploring the parallels in the literature regarding different approaches to public relations education, and comparing the responses of the different stakeholders to these approaches.
Civic Mission and Social Responsibility
New challenges for the practice of public relations in higher education

All over the world, cultural shifts are forcing university teachers, scientists and policy makers to reflect on their purpose and function in society. The question is: what is the civic mission of the research university in a modern society? How does it challenge the PR professionals of the universities?

The Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council, a specialist organ of the Ministry of Education, has conducted several university evaluations with special emphasis on the regional role of Finnish universities. In February 2004 the Finnish university legislation is being changed to include the civic mission as the third basic function of the universities, as a parallel concept with research and teaching. This change can be seen both as a challenge and as a recognition to the PR professionals of Finnish universities. In my PhD thesis, I aim to study how the PR practitioners of Finnish research universities are facing the challenge of the new mission.

The paper in question intends to clarify the concept of the civic mission, currently lively discussed among Finnish academics, and to find eventual connections to and similarities with the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR). While in Finland the emphasis of the civic mission seems to be on the regional development and economic welfare an academic institution can bring along to its region, in the United States almost 700 American academic institutions have become members of Campus Compact coalition of universities committed to helping students develop the values and skills of citizenship through participation in public and community service. In addition to Finland and the USA, the paper also outlines how the meaning of the civic mission is understood and how the dialogues between universities and their local communities are developed in some other regions.
Defining and Refining the Core Elements of Management in Public Relations/Corporate Communications Context: What do Communication Managers Do?

The concept of a dual typology of ‘manager and technician roles’ in public relations (Dozier, 1984) has provided researchers with a useful conceptual framework for examining and explaining the work performed by public relations practitioners over the past two decades. In recent years, however, the adequacy of the way in which the manager’s role has been conceptualised in public relations has been questioned (Moss, Warnaby and Newman, 2000; Moss and Green, 2001), particularly in terms understanding the relative importance in the public relations context of what management scholars have identified as some of the more generic elements of management, and in terms of distinguishing between managerial tasks and responsibilities and managerial behaviours.

This paper reports the findings from the first stage of an international collaborative research programme which is intended to lead to a comprehensive reconceptualisation of the manager profile and of the main elements of managerial behaviour in the public relations context. The study is designed to map and compare what constitutes the main elements of management performed by public relations/communication practitioners working in a range of organisational settings and also in different cultural contexts. In this sense, the study seeks to identify the commonalities and differences in the way the managerial role in public relations manifests itself in different organisations and cultures.

The first phase of the study, reported in this paper, examines the findings of a survey distributed to over 1000 UK-based practitioners designed to identify and map the main elements of managerial work performed by public relations/communication practitioners—what public relations/communications managers do.. Based on the findings, the paper reflects on the adequacy of existing conceptualisations of the ‘manager’s role’ in public relations, and explores how such conceptualisations might be modified to better reflect the reality of modern public relations/communication practices. Moreover, in re-examining critically the way the manager’s role in public relations has been conceptualised, the study also draws out the implications for how the manager’s role has been conceptualised within the mainstream management literature, suggesting how organisational role theory might inform and strengthen understanding of mainstream management practice.
Aligning corporate communications and excellence models to ensure continuous improvement in organisations

“Good corporate governance”, “excellent organisations”, “reputation management” and “stakeholder involvement” are concepts now often heard as part of the corporate discourse in the corridors of South African organisations.

This presentation links the theoretical constructs and implementation of excellence models (developed to measure quality and excellence in organisations) to corporate communication, ensuring added value and continuous improvement in organisations. The objective of the presentation is therefore to align.

Philip Kotler, marketing guru, recently pointed out that “organisations that grasp the true role and potential of marketing, will use it as the driver of their business strategy, and not simply as a tactical complement. Marketers won’t get respect until they deliver better return on investment accountability”. For decades this battle of tactician versus strategist has also been raging in corporate communication circles where practitioners have been clamouring for respect as well.

Kotler also added that: “marketing is poorly understood by business leaders and the public and that business leaders largely view marketing as a promotion function”. Exactly the same view is held by business leaders and the public of corporate communication. If marketing is now viewed as a promotion function, where does this leave corporate communication that has traditionally been responsible for promotion?

If corporate communication is to survive in the new world order, then it will need to adopt and adapt to innovative new approaches to set it apart from marketing and also prove that corporate communication adds value to an organisation.

Organisations worldwide are faced with increased competition due to globalisation and have attempted to gain competitive advantage by positioning themselves as “excellent” and espousing quality. Worldwide, quality (excellence) has emerged as the number one issue and organisations have made steady progress in adopting excellence models and using institutional self-assessment approaches. In the United States of America, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) and in the United Kingdom, the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) are increasingly being used as organisations recognise their benefits. Organisational excellence is addressed by adopting quality principles and institutional self-assessment approaches where issues like leadership, policy and strategy, people management and satisfaction, client/customer focus and satisfaction, resource and information management, processes, impact on society and organisational results are analysed to determine the organisation’s strengths and areas to improve.

Corporate communication could be used as the driver of business strategy if all communication efforts are aligned to an excellence model. The value added by corporate communication will become tangible and business leaders will eventually gain respect as well as a better understanding of corporate communication.
The allagmatic approach
A new perspective in organizational communication

If the ideas of reputation and perception were at the heart of most conceptual perspectives in public relation and more broadly in organizational communication, new theoretical paradigms are emerging offering alternatives ways of thinking the field.

I propose to develop what I have called an "allagmatic approach" in organizational communication. The term "allagmatic" refers to the greek expression "allagma" that means change. The main hypothesis of this work which is the result of several years of research is that organizational communication may be associated with four transformation, actualization and modulation processes, affecting much more than perceptions or representations.

1. **A temporization process or chronological articulation process.** While generating temporal dynamics, communicational practices initiate space-time trajectories and preserve and secure activities. They enhance an adaptation capacity and an expansion possibility for organizations. From anticipation to memorization going throw improvisation, many kinds of temporal figures can be found. (Firm histories, event creations, promises through advertising and ethical writings, etc.)

2. **A correlation and institution process.** While constructing sense and instituting evidence, communicational practices contribute to establish co-orientation systems and to offer correlation possibilities. From enunciation to induction, from seduction to stimulation, they seem to generate echoing configurations. Much attention has been paid to representational modes and sense creation throw rational dialogue and argumentation but other modes of co-références generation can been observed using olfactive ways, space planning etc. which refer to an induction paradigm.

3. **A configuration process.** If communication activities have been very often considered in relation with symmetric interactions, many organizational practices show the use of what DESCOMBES calls "order relations". While generating symmetry or asymmetry communicational practices organize, modulate and configure interactions. From order to donation and from donation to exchange, communicational practices contribute to the distribution of positions and lead to various configurations, appropriation, emancipation, alienation., etc.

4. **An actualization and definition process.** While generating distinction or isomorphy, individuation or desindividuation, communicational practices contribute to constitute or actualize interaction terms in their identities, their edges or borders. They allow the constitution of identities, singular ones but also collectives one. From the elaboration of organizational identities to mimetic practices including benchmarking, communicational activities seem to swift from social recognition to institutional distinction.
Cooperation and conflict in relationship management

Paper questions Grunig's theory of excellence in public relations from perspective of relationship management. Interdependencies between organization and multiple strategic constituencies (Pfeffer, Salancik) are first approached via coorientation model of communication in context of which relationships between organization and its strategic constituencies are defined with oscillation between cooperation and conflict. Strategic constituencies are seen as enacted (Weick) by organizational interest positions and developed management strategies. Three decisive dimensions of relationships are examined: first, different interest positions; secondly, different levels of power; and thirdly, common normative constraints (legal and ethical). An argument is developed that organization with limited resources and multiple strategic constituencies cooperates with situationally more strategic constituencies with more power and is (potentially) in conflict with less strategic constituencies with less power, with addendum that possible scope of organizational actions is limited by normative constraints. Grunig’s tendency to emphasize two-way symmetrical model (implicit even in his “mixed motives model”) is criticized as at least in part misleading because of its one-sided promotion of cooperation that obscures pervasive practice of advocacy and persuasion in conflicts of interest. Concluding remarks explore implications of cooperation and conflict in relationship management for critical theory of public relations.
Personality PR

This contribution deals with a branch of PR which is enjoying great popularity at present: personality PR, a new approach to PR and one which issues new challenges to theory and practice.

Somewhat surprisingly, PPR is still a very marginal topic: neither the academic world nor the professional associations tend to pay much attention to it although the market is booming and business with vanity is thriving.

Alongside classical PR advice, more and more agencies and consultants are offering their clients personal coaching: interview and presentation techniques, image and brand creation, CEO positioning. Numerous "how to" books provide tips on marketing/promoting/branding yourself. At the same time the media like to include more personal details in their reporting: portraits of and reports on personalities from the worlds of politics, business, culture and sports are becoming far more common. The newsworthiness of individuals is growing in importance - both for the media and PR. The popularity of chief executive officers can have a very important effect on the reputation of the companies they work for as well as on share prices and reports in the media, as can the fact whether they are well-known or not.

The fact is that personalization is becoming an increasingly important success factor in public relations. Against this background, it is about time that personality PR takes on a more central role in PR discussions. Karl Nessmann will introduce the person-oriented approach to PR which he has been developing over the last few years, an approach where people and not just companies are at the centre of attention.
Engaging a Community:
Storytelling to communicate with publics

Increasing numbers of scholars in the public relations literature are exploring ways of understanding publics which challenge the traditional conceptualisation of publics as organisational constructs.

This paper represents publics as communication constructs by focusing on the tendency of humans to make sense of their world through storytelling. In Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT), stories become rhetorical visions when they are created and repeated in and by members of the group to represent issues and events in their world. With rhetorical visions we employ symbols from our common references to develop a shared reality in which our symbolic worlds converge.

Using SCT as a communicative framework, this paper examines the use of stories by an Australian activist public which quickly and effectively mobilises its community. The researchers uncover the use of rhetorical visions, the structures of these visions and the presence of repeated symbols.

The deep structures of rhetorical visions, known as master analogues, work together to unite individual symbolic worlds and create a rhetorical community or public. Co-existing master analogues are found in the rhetorical visions of this public - righteous, social and pragmatic - indicating several stories appealing to different perceptions in the community. Earlier studies have established master analogues as useful concepts for understanding what motivates individuals to become involved in an issue.

The analysis of stories and storytelling is an approach to understanding publics which focuses on their communicative processes. This growing body of research has implications for communicators wanting to engage effectively with publics.
BledCom is organised by Pristop Communications

BledCom is sponsored by:
Zavarovalnica Maribor
Lek
Krka
Petrol
Adria Airways
Public Relations Society of Slovenia