

2007 Year in Review

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FOUNDED 1956

As an independent nonprofit dedicated to the science beneath the art of public relations, the Institute for Public Relations bridges the academy and the profession, supports PR research, and mainstreams this knowledge into practice through education. The support of so many friends and contributors made this list of achievements possible.

BUILDING RESEARCH-BASED KNOWLEDGE IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Our new technology and PR practice research program - funded by Wieck Media - included a baseline paper (what research teaches us in this area) by Dr. John Pavlik and a column by Dr. Kirk Hallahan summarizing years of research into four key observations. The Society for New Communications Research Symposium released first results of an Institute-funded study, "New Media, New Influencers and Implications for the PR Profession."
- Trust, credibility and ethics in PR practice, another major research theme sponsored by ConocoPhillips and the Coca-Cola Company, included baseline papers by Dr. Brad Rawlins and Dr. Shannon A. Bowen on existing trust and ethics research. The Institute also agreed to fund experimental research on the effectiveness of different communications strategies in generating trust.
- Our diversity and PR practice research program, sponsored by ConAgra Foods, Inc., included a baseline paper on Hispanic markets in the US by Rosanna Fiske, and another on multirace Americans by Dr. Bey-Ling Sha.
- The Commission on PR Measurement & Evaluation produced new papers on measuring the effectiveness of speaker programs, the link between share of media coverage and business outcomes, measuring social media, and the comparative effectiveness of PR-generated media coverage versus advertising.
- The Commission on International Public Relations established a research thrust into the personal influence model of public relations, including a special prize to be awarded at the EUPRERA (European Public Relations Education & Research Association) 2008 World Congress. Another round of survey research on bribery for news coverage was conducted by Drs. Katerina Tsetsura and Dean Kruckeberg, drawing almost 600 responses from PR people and journalists around the world.
- Dr. W. Timothy Coombs authored "Crisis Management and Communications," examining the research base in this area.
- The 2007 Jack Felton Golden Ruler Award for excellence in public relations measurement and evaluation, sponsored in part by PR News, was presented to Padilla Speer Beardsley and GfK for Rockwell Automation for "Research Based Business Transformation: Benchmark and Tracking the Customer Experience."
- A new "Big Apple Best Use of Research, Measurement and Evaluation Award," presented in conjunction with PRSA New York, went to TRANE and Carmichael Lynch Spong.
- The Institute agreed to fund a third edition of an international PR case studies book by Dr. Judy Turk and Linda Scanlan, sponsored by Schering-Plough and Philips Electronics.

EDUCATING TODAY'S AND TOMORROW'S PROFESSIONALS

- We hosted more than 76,000 visitors to the Institute website. Search engine optimization, an ever richer selection of papers, and word-of-mouth all contributed to this success.
- Beth Comstock, President, NBC Universal Integrated Media, delivered the Annual Distinguished Lecture, "Putting It on the Line." At the New York event, Larry Foster, retired Corporate Vice President-Public Relations for Johnson & Johnson, accepted the Alexander Hamilton Medal for lifetime achievement in public relations.
- Our portfolio of educational programs for high-performing practitioners preparing for top leadership roles included the PR Executive Forum (corporate only), the PR Leadership Forum (agency and corporate), the Summit on Measurement, and the Summit on Corporate Communications. These programs variously involve partnerships with the Commission on PR Measurement & Evaluation, the Arthur W. Page Society, and the Council of PR Firms.
- Throughout the year, the Institute served as a leading voice for the importance of research-based knowledge in public relations, through trade media and speaking engagements in locations as diverse as Latvia, Romania, the United Arab Emirates, Brazil, Colombia, the UK, Canada and the US.

BRIDGING THE PRACTICE AND THE ACADEMY

- The International Public Relations Research Conference, which the Institute sponsors with the University of Miami, featured more than 73 new research projects presented by academic and professional attendees. The Institute funded the top paper awards.
- The fourth annual Business School Seminar, "Authentic Reputation and the Creation of Value in Business Relationships," was presented with Henley Management College and PRWeek in the United Kingdom.
- Institute Trustees and commission members guest lectured at universities in the US, Europe and Latin America.
- The Institute's annual reception at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication conference drew more than 100 public relations educators.
- The 2007 Pathfinder Award for outstanding scholarly research and contributions to professional knowledge was presented to Dr. Kirk Hallahan, Colorado State University.
- The Northwestern Mutual Best Master's Thesis Award was presented to Major Chad G. Carroll, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. University of Maryland doctoral student Brian Smith won the 2007 Ketchum Excellence in Public Relations Research Award.
- The Institute again co-sponsored the Arthur W. Page Society Case Study Competition. The grand prize went to Brynn Harris and Allison Ogilvy, grad students at the University of Notre Dame Mendoza College of Business, advised by Dr. James Scofield O'Rourke, IV.
- The Institute participated in a academic/practitioner symposium co-sponsored with the Arthur W. Page Society at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth. The agenda focused on curricula in corporate communications, public relations and related fields in schools of business and communication.