

inPRint Newsletter

What is PR?

By Catherine Shelley

WHEN asked about PR, many people are lost for words. Perhaps it is because it's a relatively new craft, or perhaps because of the stereotypical, and often comical, characters on *Absolutely Famous* and *Sex and the City*. Many people immediately think of spin, champagne and long lunches. But is that what public relations is all about?

It could be argued that perhaps the best definitions of Public Relations are those born by companies and individuals who practice the art in every day situations.

For some, Public Relations is as simple as 'being clear and transparent in communication of the truth' (Tiffany Timmermans, Honours in PR, Deakin).

For those that have analysed and developed Public Relations over time this definition goes a bit deeper to acknowledge PR is becoming a profession, 'PR is promotion intended to create goodwill or publicity for a person or institution' (Mark Sheen, Editor of 'Public Relations Campaigns').

For student Emilia Sowden, PR is a completely new feature of her life.



"I used to think PR was publicity," she says.

"I didn't understand that it involved so much knowledge of business, externally and internally."

Without a specific definition to work with, PR tends to be quite complicated in theory, making it difficult for students to know where to start putting their knowledge into practice.

theMediaPod and the Public Relations Society have been developed to aid students in understanding the theories which they are taught throughout their courses, and to show how corporations have put them into practice in 'the real world'.

Public Relations is whatever the organization wants it to be?

Happy May Fellow inPRinters!

WELCOME to May; and the first edition of inPRint. Since this is the first edition, we'd like to introduce the editorial team.

Sarah and Catherine, are inPRint's editors but we are also your fellow students currently studying Media and Communications in second and third year respectively.

We, along with Ross Monaghan (Executive Editor) and Bonnie Murthy (Marketing Co-ordinator), have reincarnated the PR newsletter so that students, parents and other PR fans can keep in touch with the latest PR news.

Some features of this month's edition include; how Deakin deals with PR, the Melbourne Storm crisis, and we hear from off-campus student, Emilia Sowden.

Don't forget to check out our Opportunities section for ways you can get involved.

- Cathy and Sarah

Life as an Off Campus student

Living both sides of the fence

AS an off-campus student studying Public Relations, I struggle with the same problems as other On Campus students; time management, study skills, and knowledge of the course material. Although the obstacles of studying off campus may be more obvious, I feel they do not necessarily surpass the benefits.

However, these challenges do tend to become magnified when your university studies coincide with your already time-poor life. But, as any successful individual knows, challenges are what make us stronger!

Being an off-campus student means a complete reliance on the internet and DSO, with limited interaction with other students. This means you must rely completely on your own motivation as an incentive to complete work however you do have peers who can relate to your situation.

Having said this, the benefits of studying off-campus are enormous.

I am able to work full-time whilst studying full-time. My geographical distance from university is not a problem, and I am able to reap the benefits of extra-curricular activities. I was also able to enjoy theMediaPod dinner held on Wednesday night, without ever having stepped foot on university campus.

I'm only half way through the trimester, and already I feel that studying PR has added qualities to my lifestyle and bank of knowledge. First of all, the extra-curricular activities I have partaken in have allowed me to meet students of a similar demographic to myself – I have not been in such a sociable situation since high school! Secondly, my studies have opened my eyes to the abundance of PR in our society. Who would have thought that every advertisement we see, every product or service we utilise has in some way or another been molded or changed by PR Practitioners?

Would I recommend studying off-campus? Yes! Life is the most exciting journey we're ever going to make, so why not fit as much in as possible?

- by Emilia Sowden, Off Campus student

OPPORTUNITIES IN PR

THEMEDIAPOD

theMediaPod is an online blog which communication students are able to contribute to focusing on PR.

<http://themediapod.net/>

theMediaPod group meets most Mondays (see Media Monday Recap).

THE PR SOCIETY

Deakin University's club for enthusiastic and committed Communications students. For those looking to pursue a career in Public Relations

and Journalism, the society provides a learning platform combined with social ventures. Society members have the opportunity to interview PR practitioners, build networks, and get priority to attend theMediaPod dinners and events.

To become a PR society member and learn more about existing opportunities, please email Bonnie at bonnie.murthy@gmail.com

EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES

1) The Department of Sustainability and Environment is offering a one-day per week paid internship.

2) The Continence Foundation of Australia is the national peak body promoting bladder and bowel health. They currently have a flexible internship opportunity for a second/third year student.

For more information on these opportunities, email ross.monaghan@deakin.edu.au

The fathers of Public Relations

PUBLIC Relations (PR) as we know it today was developed as a recognised profession by Edward Bernays (right) and Ivy Lee.

These men created communication principles that would forever change the way corporations communicated with the public.

Before Lee and Bernays, corporations would run their company in a private capacity, usually not caring what the public thought about their operation.

In 1903 Lee pointed out that the idea of a business being private was now obsolete and that the public was now supervising the way in which a company is run. Lee also advised John D. Rockefeller on handling the Colorado Coal Strike, which also included a violent attack on striking miners by the National Guard.

Lee professionalised PR by releasing The Declaration of Principles' in 1906, which followed these three basic points;

- Tell the truth,
- Provide facts accurately,
- The PR practitioner must have access to top level management and influence decisions.

Bernays took PR to the next level of professionalism through his progressive thinking and publishing texts such as 'Crystallizing Public Opinion' in 1923 and his book 'Propaganda' in 1928. Bernays believed that corporations should accept and promote social re-



sponsibility and due to these principles, Bernays would refuse his services to unethical corporations.

Bernays also worked closely with the U.S Committee of Public Information (CPI), during WW II. Bernays used propaganda on the American public to engineer their consent in supporting the national war effort.

Throughout WW II Bernays successfully linked corporations with 'victory' as he encouraged Americans to buy Coca-Cola, smoke Lucky Strikes and drive Ford cars to help America win the war.

Bernays and Lee have undoubtedly shaped and influenced PR into the pro-

WORK EXPERIENCE PROFILE

NAME: Cathy Shelley

COURSE: MEDIA and Communications, Majoring in PR and Journalism

LOCATION/COMPANY: World Vision Australia, East Burwood PR Department

DATE AND LENGTH: September 2009. Two weeks.

HOW DID YOU GET THE PLACEMENT?

A guest speaker from World Vision Australia was invited to a lecture in a second year PR subject, to talk about PR in the workforce, specifically world vision. I made contact after the lecture and asked him if a work experience spot would be possible. After a few follow up emails and phone calls I was given a place.

Sometimes you have to keep calling because PR practitioners especially are very busy but a lot of people are willing to help if you remind them.

WHAT TYPES OF THINGS DID YOU DO?

The Public Affairs team put a lot of effort into what I was going to do, unlike some placements where you are only there to do photocopying. I completed media releases for issues in Papua New Guinea, their catalogue 'Smiles', and the Aboriginal Art Gallery in NT among others. I also interviewed and wrote the weekly blog for the CEO Tim Costello over the week and completed a few reports.



WHO WAS YOUR MAIN POINT OF CONTACT?

Dominic McInerney, Public Affairs

MEMORABLE MOMENT?

When I arrived the team had set me up with my own cubical in the office and had hired me a lap top so i really felt part of the team. As the placement went on people came to me because I was a help rather than a hinderance. It was a good feeling!

Parents and students hear about PR

IN the hope of putting an end to many head scratching conversations, this month's dinner was inspired by the theme 'What is PR?'. To continue in this vein, invitations were extended to parents and partners of Deakin PR students.

Deakin PR Lecturer Ross Monaghan kicked off the night with tales of his 'old days' working as a PRP (Public Relations Practitioner) for BHP. He also shared his experiences regarding the construction of the mobile phone towers for Optus, in his role as the former Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association.



This was followed by a short documentary, courtesy of Burwood PR Students, Bonnie and James. The students took to the streets to uncover what the people of Melbourne understood the role of PR Practitioners to involve. The night provided PR students across all levels a chance to mix and share their experiences thus far at Deakin and in the PR units. It also gave off campus students a chance for some face to face interaction with fellow PR Students.

Deakin PR student Jessica, thought that the night was a definite success.

"I thought it was informative and that it really narrowed down the essence of what PR is, which is important because there are a lot of misconceptions going around about PR Practitioner's role," she said.

theMediaPod events are held monthly and are open to all students who are interested.

-Sarah Lamanna

Next Month's theMediaPod Dinner:

Date: 31 May, 2010

Time: 6.30pm

Location: La Notte Restaurant, Carlton.



Where the Truth Lies; by Jack; <http://wherethetruthlies.ning.com>

Honours for Media Monday

MEDIAMONDAY see's PR students across all levels congregate every Monday at 5pm in He2.015. It is an opportunity for students to discuss what they have learnt, what is happening in the PR world and also a chance to hear from those already in the industry.

This month Deakin's PR honours students, accompanied by Senior Lecturer Mark Sheehan were invited to talk about their experiences and the history of the Public Relations industry.

Honours students Tiffany Timmermans and Robbie Cumbrae-Stewart,

spoke about the historical highlights of Public Relations from the our Founder Ivy Lee, who although changed the thinking of corporations towards their publics through to Edward Bernays, now regarded as the father of PR, with his propaganda links. (See story on P.2)

Mark Sheehan highlighted that there were also many Australian Public Relation Pioneers, for example Eric White; being the first to establish the PR consultancy in Australia in 1947.

Both students completed their Bachelor of Media and Communica-

tions and have now moved into the brand new year long Honours program for Public Relations. This is as Tiffany points out, 'not as easy as she expected' as it includes a 14,000 word thesis and a number of smaller related assignments.

When asked what the historical turning point for PR was, our honours students replied:

'Edward Bernays, he changed the world of PR; by transforming PR into a profession that said 'pay me to make it fantastic'.

-Sarah Lamanna & Catherine Shelley

PR Issues Update. By Sarah Lamanna & Catherine Shelley

Crisis in the NRL 'The Melbourne Storm' Storm

THE NRL conducted an investigation into the Melbourne Storm in early 2010 which uncovered salary breaches and financial irregularities estimated to be in excess of \$1.7million over five years.

After initially denying the claims, Melbourne Storm eventually fronted up to their misconduct on 22 April 2010; breaches of around \$400,000 in 2009, with a projected breach of \$700,000 in this year (2010).

The internal whistleblower claimed that the Storm was running a dual-contract system, in which the NRL were unable to expose payments made to the players outside of the \$4.2 million yearly cap.



Penalties

As a result of this breach, NRL Chief Executive David Gallop announced that the Melbourne Storm would be stripped of their 2007 & 2009 premierships, face a \$500,000 fine and have been ordered to pay back \$1.1m in prize money. In addition, the club has also been barred from receiving future premiership points for the remainder of this season.

PRP

With the organisation's success now relying on the commitment and dedication from its fans (target public), the Public Relations Practitioner's have focused many of their media releases on apologising to this particular group.

In a move by the PR team at Melbourne Storm, the website is completely devoid of any news related to the crisis, in order to only remind the

public of the 'good points'.

However, many fans have displayed public acts demonstrating their feels of disgust and betrayal by removing their jerseys and dumping them at the Storm's head quarters. However, despite this fact it was recorded that last Sunday over 500 Melbourne Storm memberships were sold to dedicated supporters. The membership count on the website now registers nearly double that of 'pre storm'.

Crisis Management

With the Storm having already lost their CEO Brian Waldron, as a result of this crisis; the Melbourne storm's personal Public Relations team are working behind the scenes with no one person coming to the front as 'PR Manager'.

Coverage

The story received an exponential amount of coverage

across Melbourne Newspapers, Television and Radio, being nicknamed 'The Melbourne Storm, Storm'.

This coverage brought NRL into the limelight with people claiming that it was the first time they had ever seen NRL take over AFL in the media before. The news was referred to by *The Age* as "The biggest scandal in Australian sports history".

Public Opinion

Joan Davies, Manager of the Telstra Emergency Service Answer Point, said that she has never experienced such unity as that demonstrated throughout the Melbourne Storm match on 25 April.

"The crowd, the atmosphere, the support, it was truly a watershed moment for Australian sporting history" she said.

Want to get inPRint?

Have you recently completed work experience or an internship?

Are you interested in writing an article, or would you like to advertise in inPRint?

If so, contact the inPRint Team at

inPRint.team@gmail.com

with your ideas, expressions of interest and details.

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For Your Information

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