Book of Graduates

of Grad uates

Research Abstracts
2012

| A

Part-time Executive International Master of Science in Corporate Communication

Preface

Here we are proud to present the abstracts of the 18 theses that have been written by the Graduates of the Executive International MSc Programme Corporate Communication of the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University in The Netherlands.

In this year, we are able to allow eighteen new graduates to become Master of Science in Corporate Communication. This means that we now have a total of 200 MCC graduates. Most of these MCC's made a substantial career move after their graduation. I sincerely hope (but also expect) that the same will happen to the Graduates of this year. This year eighteen representatives of the business world and non-profit organizations can celebrate their graduation of a programme they participated in during two years of intense courses where they presented assignments, discussed the most recent academic theory and applied this to their daily life problems in their businesses. The participants graduating this year are:

Marc do Amaral, Caroline van de Beek (Friends of Carré Foundation), Petra Beisterveld (Hogeschool Utrecht / FCJ / Instituut voor Communicatie), Angelique Berden (Prins Autogassystemen BV), Mark Blok (Proof Reputation), Robbert Bodegraven (War Child Nederland), Conny Bressers (Roche Nederland BV), Marianne Cool, Lukas Deknatel (Hogeschool Utrecht), Karen Hackshaw (Custom Communications), Rebecca Joosten (DAS), Kinga Krepa (De Haagse Hogeschool), Christine van der Linden (Linden & Barbosa), Adwin Peeks (Achmea), Corina Ramers-Verhoeven (Lilly Nederland B.V.), Harold Reusken (ING), Petra Sommer (Sommer Communicatie), Ingrid Vleeskens (Stichting Pensioenfonds ING).

This year we celebrated the 14th graduation of the Part-time Executive International Master of Science in Corporate Communication Programme.

I hope they have learned a lot during the courses we offered them in the past years. The least I could say, also on behalf of all the teaching staff that worked with them, is that we have learned a lot from them too. Their willingness to discuss practical problems in their own organizations and to relate these to the issues we discussed in the classroom were inspiring and exciting.

In the fifteenth years of the Master of Science in Corporate Communication Programme we succeeded in creating an international programme that presents all leading experts in a teaching role. I would like to thank the following people (teaching staff) who contributed tremendously to the success of this programme: Paul Argenti of the Darthmouth College U.S.A.; John Balmer of Bradford University UK; Joan Hemels, Universiteit van Amsterdam; Jan Kleinnijenhuis, VU University Amsterdam; Onno Maathuis, Positioneerder; Wally Olins of Saffron Brand Consultants; Michael Pratt of University of Illinois, Urbana / Champaign;

Davide Ravasi of Bocconi University; Eliane Schoonman of Issues Management Institute, Majken Schultz of Copenhagen Business School, Danmark; Bob de Wit of Nyenrode Business University; and from our Faculty: Guido Berens, Frans van den Bosch, Dirk Brounen, Gerrit van Bruggen, Fred Gertsen, Mignon van Halderen, Pursey Heugens, Muel Kaptein, Swalef Magala, Gerard Mertens, Lucas Meijs, Erik Waarts, all working at the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University Rotterdam.

It's also with great pride that we welcome Drs. Bert Regeer of Royal Dutch Shell, who will present the 'Shell Netherlands Stimulation Award for Excellence in Corporate Communication' to the author of the 'best thesis' of 2012. 'The Andreas Innovation in Communication Award' will be announced by Ing. Dries van de Beek, Former Chairman of the Board, CCC BV. The winners of both awards will be announced at the Graduation Day on November 23, 2012.

Prof. dr. Cees B. M. van Riel
Director Corporate Communication Centre
Programme director of the Part-time Executive International Master of Science in Corporate Communication

Contents

When the frame doesn't fit the thinking: Intuitive and logical framing tactics in issue management

One of the fundamental findings of cognitive science of the last decades is that people think in terms of frames and metaphors.

Marc B. do Amaral is a communication professional who specializes in internal communication and multi-stakeholder reputation management. His experience ranges from marketing research to direct marketing, advertising, employee communication, media relations and reputation management.

He has worked on the agency side for multinational clients such as GSK, Siemens and Chrysler Motor Corporation and for a host of local Dutch companies.

In the financial services industry he has held numerous communication roles at the Dutch market leader in mutual funds Robeco, at ABN AMRO bank and at the third largest Dutch insurance company ASR.

From the many take-aways of following the MCC-program he especially likes to mention the numerous frameworks for approaching communication challenges: very practical, yet solidly grounded in research. Doing the MCC-thesis has provided him valuable, deepened insights in what makes communication effective in a given context.

Communication can be thought of as a process which aims to align the mental frames of those who communicate. For organizations the question then is, how can framing help to establish common frames between the organization and its stakeholders in order to facilitate mutual understanding, in other words: strategic alignment?

The objective of this thesis is to explore how recent insights from cognitive psychology about the way information is processed by the human brain, influence framing theory and practice. I argue that framing effects are moderated by the way issue impressions are cognitively processed and that frame sponsors can anticipate this moderating effect through the use of intuitive and logical framing tactics. In a case study concerning Shell and the Brent Spar issue (1995-1996) I examine how framing tactics are used in the portraying of an issue, both by frame sponsors and by the media, and to what degree framing tactics used by frame sponsors may constitute a fit with intuitive and deliberate cognitive processing of frames at the individual level. As such this study aims to lay the foundations for further, quantitative research to test these suggested relationships empirically.

The case study demonstrates that framing approaches which signal intuitive respectively logical framing tactics can indeed clearly be distinguished in message and media frames. This does necessarily imply that this congruence is the result of deliberate framing decisions. It is not unlikely in fact that frame sponsors often apply framing tactics intuitively, based on tacit knowledge of what works and what doesn't in issue communication.

The results of the case study analysis seem to support the prediction that the use of framing devices and logical reasoning devices by the media reflects the framing tactics of the frame sponsors. Furthermore, the case study suggests that the media portray an issue in two distinct ways. First, the media report the respective issue positions of the different frame sponsors. In doing so they seem to largely adopt the framing tactics "supplied" by the respective frame sponsors. Secondly, the media add their own frames to portray the issue, in this case a conflict frame. Rather than emphasizing material aspects of the issue, this frame portrays the issue as a battle between two opponents. The analysis suggests that the media almost exclusively rely on intuitive framing tactics to express this conflict frame.

The prediction that issue advocates, e.g. NGO's who aim to mobilize an audience, rely more strongly on intuitive framing than the defending frame sponsors and vice versa is not confirmed. In the case study this difference is only manifest for the category of substantive message frames, i.e. frames which emphasize material aspects of an issue. Assuming that the media largely adopt the framing tactics applied by frame sponsors, the results do seem to signal a preference for issue advocates to predominantly apply intuitive framing tactics.

The main theoretical contribution of this thesis is that it proposes a conceptual model which captures the relationships between framing tactics, cognitive processing, and framing effects, thus integrating framing as a social construct and individual-level framing effects in one model. I argue that when issue information is processed intuitively, framing

effects are strengthened to the degree that a frame is predominantly expressed through the use of framing devices. Frame sponsors who anticipate that an audience is likely to process issue information by intuitive, unconscious cognitive processing can thus enhance the effectiveness of their issue communication by intuitively framing their issue messages, i.e. by choosing for intuitive framing tactics. When issue information is processed by deliberate thinking, framing effects are strengthened to the degree that a frame is expressed by logical reasoning devices. Frame sponsors who anticipate that an audience is likely to process issue information by deliberate, conscious cognitive processing can thus enhance the effectiveness of their issue communication by logical framing of their issue messages, i.e. by choosing for logical framing tactics.

The results of the case study analysis seem to support this proposition in so far as that framing approaches which signal intuitive respectively logical framing tactics can indeed clearly be distinguished in message and media frames, thus suggesting that framing tactics-in-use are congruent with the proposed influence of intuitive versus deliberate cognitive processing of impressions.

The results of this case study seem to suggest the following implications for corporate communicators:

➔ Framing tactics need to be grounded in an understanding of the mode of cognitive processing most likely applicable at a specific time, for a specific audience in relation with a specific issue.
➔ The applicable mode of cognitive processing should guide the tactical

choice for intuitive or logical framing of an issue position, i.e. the proportion in which intuitive and logical framing devices are applied to express a message frame.
➔ Intuitive processing of issue messages will often be the applicable mode of cognitive processing for mass audiences, especially when involvement with the issue is low and the issue is still in its early stages when the level of public arousal is likely to be low.

The results of the case study thus seem to suggest that framing decisions encompass three important dimensions: in addition to the strategic dimensions of (1) framing tasks and (2) framing strategies as suggested in extant framing literature, a third dimension is emerging: (3) framing tactics.

The tactical dimension encompasses the choice between intuitive and deliberate framing. The choice of framing tactics needs to be grounded in an understanding of the mode of cognitive processing most likely applicable at a specific time, for a specific audience in relation with a specific issue. In practice, the main challenge regarding framing tactics will be to determine the balance between intuitive and logical message elements. While influencing public opinion is often a key task in issue management, other stakeholder categories usually need to be addressed as well, e.g. regulators, investors and employees. Framing tactics should thus aim to find a good balance between attending to the requirements of the average audience, the requirements of relevant subsegments in the public, and the requirements of other target groups.

Which Types of CSR are Relevant to Teenage Consumers?

CSR is a broad concept and many defenitions / explanations are given to this term.
The broad concept used in this research is best distinguished by Carroll in The Pyramid of Social Responsibility, in which he states that in his opinion CSR is "the entire spectrum of obligations business has to society, including the most fundamental-economic".[1]

Caroline van de Beek (1966) is a communications professional with a strong background in banking and the art industry (theatre). Caroline is currently employed a fundraiser at the Royal Theatre of Carré (Koninklijk theater Carré) in Amsterdam.
She has over 20 years experience in communications. She started her career as a management trainee at (currently named) ABN AMRO/Fortis where she held various positions in marketing, communications and public relations. In 2005 she started at the Royal Theatre of Carré as a fundraiser.
Caroline has a passion for everything in communication and she believes that the most essential and challenging part in communications is creating trust.
Caroline studied Communications at the HEAO in Utrecht followed by additional courses in Banking, Client Services and Sales. The International Master of Corporate Communication study was a cherry on Caroline's cake. Not only did it give her wonderful new insights, but it was also very inspiring.
Caroline will receive her Master degree with great pride.

His explanation of CSR is linked to the expectations society has of an organization during a certain period. The Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility is divided in economical, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities.

There are many reasons for companies to manage their CSR. We can distinguish economical reasons, political reasons, stakeholder reasons and ethical reasons.[2] CSR is of influence on an organization's reputation, on its financial performance, on how much stakeholders trust the company and on consumer behavior.[3] Many research is done on the influence of CSR on consumer behavior but little is known about the influence of CSR on teenage consumer behavior. Therefore this research tries to find an answer on the following question: Which types of CSR are relevant to teenage consumers?

The study

To find an answer to this question, qualitative research was initiated. This research was done using two focus groups. A boys group with seven participants and a girls group with nine participants were interviewed. All participants were 16 and 17 years of age. Their level of education is above average (HAVO and VWO) and they were still in school (4th and 5th class). Both sessions took about 1½ hour. Three short films were shown in the beginning of both sessions to explain what was meant by CSR.

The findings

All participants were able to mention brands related to CSR initiatives. They believe that all cheap apparel is produced in Asia under very poor working condi-

tions. They also believe CSR is only used by companies to increase sales and profits. Companies can't be altruistic. The girls did boycott products (l'Oréal and McDonalds) as a result of scandals. However the participants keep on buying (other) products from companies that are related to ethical scandals because of the fact that these products are cheap and fashionable.

When buying a product teenagers say that quality of the product is most important. Second in line is price, followed by a "good feeling" (which can also mean fashionable). The girls did emphasize that they like compliments and that this compliment factor is important for them.

Types of CSR that are of influence on teenage consumer behavior are working conditions and higher wages in Asian factories, child labor, education, a healthy environment and the support of projects in third world countries. Teenagers are willing to spend between 1% – 10% extra on their purchase to support a good cause. This good cause has to fit the company.

The participants are aware of sustainable labels. They are very much in favor of negative labeling which makes it much easier to choose between the "good" and the "bad" product.

Conclusions and recommendations

Teenagers are interested in CSR initiatives. Although teenagers are aware of ethical scandals they seldom boycott the brand or company involved. The girls sometimes do, but the price and fashion value are more important. Teenagers are willing to spend extra money on their purchases to support a good cause that fits the company. CSR types that matter most when

teenagers have to spend their money are working conditions and higher wages in Asian factories and healthy food. Further research is recommended to examine if teenagers would really buy products that are 1% - 10% more expensive and to find out if there is any difference between male and female consumer behavior in this age group. Negative labeling seems to be interesting for teenagers. They do not differ from adults in this matter.[4]

There are limitations of this research. Although focus groups are a suitable tool to study this group of young consumers the participants might have been influenced by each other. Teenagers are influenced by their peer group and they are afraid to be rejected by the group. Therefore their answers might have been manipulated by group pressure. The three films shown at the start of both sessions might also have influenced the participants. Focus groups are homogeneous and therefore research among teenagers from other parts of the country and with another level of education might have different outcomes. Further research among other teenager groups is recommended to get a better insight in general teenage consumer behavior related to CSR types.

Footnotes

1   Carroll, A.B. The Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility: Toward the Moral Management of Organizational Stakeholders, Business Horizons/ July-August 1991, p. 40

2   Garriga, E., Melé, D., 2004, Corporate Social Responsibility Theories: Mapping the Territory, Journal of Business Ethics, 53: pp. 51-71

3   Elective Corporate Social Responsibility, Berens, G. September 14, 2010, p. 21, slide 2

4   Grankvist, G., Dahlstrand U., Biel, A., The Impact of Environmental Labelling on Consumer Preference: Negative vs. Positive labels, Journal of Consumer Policy 27, 2004. pp. 213-230

The potential of social crowdfunding

Nowadays, there's numerous initiatives to protect the earth, nature as such; fortunately, because these are badly needed. The initiators of such initiatives are often very ambitious and driven, but equally often all face the same problem, especially in the face of the current financial crisis: how can they acquire financial and / or material support to get their projects off the ground?

The traditional approaches to fund-raising clearly do not work anymore; the Internet, however, offers a wealth of new opportunities which are eagerly seized upon by consumers who have become a lot more active in searching for information and feel the need of sharing things. New ways of fund-raising have come up, of which crowd-funding is a prominent, current example, an alternative, innovative form of financing projects: initiators of projects collect money for their project from a larger number of smaller (private) investors through the Internet.

The purpose of this thesis is to gain a better insight into the possibilities crowd-funding offers private initiators of projects in order for them to procure sustainable and successful funding for their projects.

The research question was the following: What potential does crowd-funding have to offer support to sustainable projects?

In order to be able to answer this research question, several sub questions have been addressed:

1 what motives do consumers as well as companies have to participate in crowd-funded projects?
2 which developments take place in the field of crowd-funding?
3 what opportunities does crowd-funding offer to support sustainable projects?

The literature studied shed light upon most of the first sub question: project instigators want to acquire money, become widely known, and rally supporters that subscribe to the good cause and offer wider support for the sustainable project in question. The consumer wishes to be part of a group of people whom he/she can identify with and hence construct and sustain a positive self image. Additionally, the consumer wishes to support good causes, based upon his/her need to help others, be relieved of his/her sense of guilt, and also reinforce his/her own identity and social status. The companies look for increased turn-over, basically, and hence they look for opportunities to connect to consumers. In order to achieve this, an important precondition is for companies to have an attractive identity that appeals to consumers; an important aspect in this respect is the way in which companies show corporate social responsibility in their business activities.

Social crowd-funding (i.e. crowd-funding aimed at successful financing and supporting of (private) initiatives in respect of sustainability) could cater to the combination of the needs mentioned if the sustainable project is supported by both consumers and companies, and would thus enable each of the parties to find what it is looking for. The literature, however, does not yet offer any clues to or insights into the possibilities of, or experiences with such a trilateral form of support through crowd-funding. Therefore, it was interesting to see in which direction crowd-funding develops, and which possibilities this would bring for a more successful way of financing sustainable projects. Hence, in my supplementary, empirical research I paid specific attention to answering my other two sub questions;

I searched for articles on crowd-funding in the media and analysed these closely.

Four themes can be determined on the basis of this desk research into, specifically, the developments in respect of crowd-funding:

1 crowd-funding is a growing phenomenon: it certainly caters to the financial needs of project instigators in respect of funding these projects.

2 crowd-funding empowers society increasingly: people realise more than previously that through social media forces can be joined, and that like-minded people together can really make a difference. By means of investing in projects which are considered worthwhile, the masses can help realise these. This makes crowd-funding a suitable means of disseminating a message of sustainability as well as bringing people together to make out a case for a good cause. Amongst other things, this has led to forms of cooperation between crowd-funding platforms and charitable organisations.

3 professionalisation of crowd-funding: crowd-funding has matured in a way and all participating parties have started discovering the possibilities it offers; this has led to a variety of crowd-funding platforms, as well as to legislation.

4 the option of combined forms of funding seems particularly successful: in practice, it has been proven that successfully crowd-funded, sustainable projects can lead to other (bigger) investors' becoming convinced

of the advantages of crowd-funding, such as governmental organisations and companies; the number of supporters of the crowd-funded, sustainable project plays of course a very important role in this respect.

The possibilities crowd-funding offers all parties are hence promising.
Firstly, it offers large groups of like-minded people the opportunity to rally to a cause, plan interactively, and raise money to realise these plans. Of course, crowd-funding requires an initiator of a project who has an inspiring proposition and can kindle enthusiasm in people for the project to be launched. Crowd-funding is particularly suited to facilitating the bringing together of people, ideas, and money.
Subsequently, social media make it possible - and are used - to spread the message.

Secondly, crowd-funding caters exactly to the purpose for which it has been invented: simply, raising the necessary funds for plans to be realised. Whereas it was increasingly more difficult for initiators of projects to try and obtain funding from the standard sources (companies, governmental organisations, funds), crowd-funding offers the opportunity to partially procure the funds needed from a new group of investors. Surprisingly, these contributions of (many) small investors appear to have a positive effect in the sense that 'original' funding parties decide to contribute as well. This hybrid form of financing projects is still in its infancy, and, as yet, it seems that government bodies are much more aware of the opportunities this offers them than companies.

The overall conclusion is that social crowd-funding shows lots of potential and can make quite a difference for the support sustainable projects need, both in respect of acquiring the funds needed as well as generating wider support across society, hence, spreading the word.

Practical implications
Crowd-funding is a very sensible means to the end of procuring money needed for the funding of projects, yet it has more to offer: it is a platform facilitating consumers to raise money for projects or causes that these individual investors deem worthwhile and considerably (socially) relevant. As soon as the number of backers reaches a significant count, this will open doors for others to join as well. It shows that there is wider societal support for the projects involved, which makes other investors become interested in participating financially as well: if a crowd-funded project develops into a gathering of large numbers of like-minded people, then this will make investing in sponsoring such projects much more interesting for companies.

Personally, I think crowd-funding is a means of funding which we can hardly fathom the full potential of yet. The fact that crowd-funding conjoins large groups of people (and companies) that all consider a certain project significant could even lead to the development of crowd-funding into a new kind of democratic instrument: such a development would be very interesting to study - for initiators of projects, consumers, governments, and companies alike.

Petra Beisterveld (1964) is a dedicated communication professional with over 20 years of working experience in both consultancy and education. Driven by the simple joy she finds in solving all kinds of issues in the field of corporate and internal communication, she assisted many organizations in solving issues by advising them. She worked mainly as a consultant in her own consultancy company the first ten years. Later she combined this with a post of lecturer at the University of Applied Sciences in Utrecht. By teaching students about the ins and outs of corporate communication she hoped and still hopes to inspire these young professionals and kindle the same challenging spark of interest in this discipline in them. Coaching students, mainly in their last year of their studies, offers her an opportunity to share her knowledge and experience with young people who keep challenging her with their sharp and bright insights; essentially, a beautiful exchange of ideas and beliefs. Petra hopes to be able to continue this combination of jobs. Her interests include corporate social responsibility issues, a special area of corporate communication which she currently particularly focuses on.

Petra has two beautiful daughters and enjoys clearing her mind every day by going for a ride on her horse through the forests.

Corporate Silence: a phenomenon to be silent about or not

Things in life do not always seem to be what you think they are, or what you wish for or what you think should be. Circumstances in work and private life might lead to an inability to change situations. You may see things going wrong but may not know how to intervene to change the course. What can you do?

After I did a number of personal interviews among colleagues and friends it seems managers and employees do not always want to say what is in their minds. They say: "people do not listen anyway" or "they cannot tell" (incapable of expressing themselves), or "one does not want to tell because there is a hidden agenda that should lead to another approach or solution".

This information that can be in the mind of managers and employees, made me curious...

RESEARCH QUESTION

In the Advanced Elective of RSM Corporate Communication "Employee communication" and in various studies, I found that this phenomenon is related to Corporate Silence. I gathered information from these studies and from the discussions I had with people like Ms Frances Milliken.

That lead to my research question:

Does Corporate Silence have a big influence on the performance and the climate of a company? If yes, what can management do about it.

MANAGERIAL RELEVANCE

It is said that managers and employees who encounter this phenomenon express frustration at work. Employees turn themselves against the (clear or not clear) direction that is set by top management and do not say a word. Those people often influence other people/colleagues to go the other direction (conscious or not). It makes it very difficult for management to steer in one clear direction and keep peo-

ple on-board. It can also be that manage-ment makes decisions without consulting its employees and then those decisions seem to create friction with employees. If this is the case then it definitely is worth looking at the reasons, effects and what one can do about it in order to limit the negative effects and even turn it in a positive outcome for the company and its people.

Angelique Berden (1966) is marketing manager of Prins Autogassystemen BV in Eindhoven, the Netherlands. In this function she is responsible for developing and executing the (corporate) marketing strategy for Prins and its products being alternative fuel systems for cars and trucks. Alternative fuel systems let cars and trucks running on LPG (autogas) CNG (green gas), or bio gas. Drivers can save money on fuel costs and save the environment without loosing drivability. Angelique oversees the marketing communication, the website, social media, public relations, public affairs, internal communication and corporate reputation for Prins world-wide.

Before working at Prins Autogassytemen, Angelique was working on a project at the Chamber of Commerce in Den Haag. Before that she was working 12 years for Mystar Computer BV in Eindhoven, a subsidiary of the Taiwanees company MSI (Micro-Star International), as a corporate marketing director. She and her team were responsible for corporate marketing and marketing communications in Europe. Products to advertise were computer components, notebooks, netbooks and "all-in one" PCs.

Angelique Berden has a Bachelor degree in Communication (HEAO). In her free time she enjoys playing tennis and golf and going out with her friends.

angelique.berden@gmail.com

1.3 BOOKMARK ANCHOR

To provide insight into the research ques-tion, this report is built along the findings about Corporate Silence in literature and in practice. It means that after studying leading articles, I conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews among 17 managers (team leaders of five or more employees) of companies with 50 or more people in the Netherlands, to find out more about the phenomenon. What is Corporate Silence, what causes Corporate Silence and what are the effects of it, are described in chapter two. In chapter three I will describe the outcome of the studies and make conclusions. In chapter four I describe what management can do to prevent or limit Corporate Silence. I will then also give an outline for a communi-cation strategy. Finally I will provide the limitations of the research and give sug-gestions for further research.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Corporate Silence: a phenomenon mainly studied and described in American litera-ture, though not so well known in the Netherlands it seems to me. What is it? Is Corporate Silence influencing the perform-ance of a company? What does literature say about it and how do companies in the Netherlands experience Corporate Silence? Are managers aware of the phenomenon? And what do they do about it and what do they want to do about it?

As a student and as a manager I realized after talking to some people and reading some articles that the presence of Corporate Silence might affect the per-formance of a company and the climate in the company in a negative way. I was

thrilled to find out more about it. Mainly because in times of crisis a lot of companies and their employees already suffer from the economic situation.

So the research question is:

Does Corporate Silence have an influence on the climate in and the performance of a company? If yes, what can management do about it.

This report gives an overview of findings in literature and in practice of what Corporate Silence is, of what the causes and the effects are. Finally it is described what managers can do about it to prevent the phenomenon.

Various articles were provided in the Advance Elective Employee Communication. I read the book The Alignment Factor of Cees B.M. van Riel and I found literature on the internet and in the library of RSM, Erasmus University in Rotterdam.

The research in practice was done by performing an inductive, qualitative research with semi-structured questions among managers of various companies in the Netherlands with at least 50 employees. I interviewed 17 managers who are in a leading position and directly managing at least five people. Those managers most probably would be familiar with the phenomenon Corporate Silence. I compared the outcome of the research with the findings in literature and finally prepared a communication strategy for managers to prevent Corporate Silence.

OUTCOME

"Corporate Silence" is a situation where employees do not freely contribute to organizational discourse. Many organizations are caught up in an apparent paradox in which most employees know the truth about certain issues and problems within the organization yet dare not speak the truth to their supervisors. (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). That is my leading definition as Morrison & Milliken seem to me the leading researchers on this topic. Both persons talk about forces in the company that lead to the phenomenon. New research and research among the managers show that fear among employees is more crucial than Morrison & Milliken first described. Therefore I have adapted their model of drivers and consequences of Corporate Silence. It seems that there is even a spiral where fear leads to Corporate Silence and Corporate Silence leads to fear, in the end affecting the climate in the company and the performance in the company.

The managers that I interviewed are aware of the phenomenon. Most managers say it is present in their company but not on their department. The managers see themselves as approachable, responsive, willing to listen and supportive.

Of course it is up to the manager to acknowledge the presence of Corporate Silence and to do something about it. Corporate Communication managers can gather useful information, support implementation and give proper feedback to top management.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

I realize that each research has its limitations and open ends. I would like to give some indications for further research as then the topic could be described more complete.

Literature is mainly based on articles from researchers in the USA, research is done among companies in the Netherlands. The number of managers that are participating in the research is rather small and therefore is an indication of the facts presented.

Research is done among managers, not employees. This is due to the fact that the managers need to understand the phenomenon, need to be aware of it and be willing to do something about it. For the employees it takes a different kind of research in supporting them to raise their voices.

The research is done among various companies so there is no saying that the outcome is industry related.

Morrison & Milliken mention there are some indications that Corporate Silence is more visible in companies that have a hierarchy, centralized decision making structure and homogenous management. That was not the topic of this research but that could be a topic for further research as well.

Breaking Corporate Silence

In the existing literature, 'corporate silence' is defined as 'the widespread withholding of information about potential problems or issues among employees'. Various studies show that this phenomenon is common within organisations.

Mark Blok (1981) has studied at three universities (VU Amsterdam, the University of Western Australia and Erasmus University, Rotterdam). A graduate in international financial economics and a communications specialist, he began his career as a management trainee at ING, in 2004. Over the next three years he worked with clients every day – something that still gives him a buzz. His next step was to work for the management team of ING Nederland, where he was responsible for the internal communications around the merger of the Dutch Postbank and ING Bank organisations. He was also responsible for the internal communications concerning state aid for ING and the changes to the bank's strategy that resulted. In 2011 he jumped to the agency side of the communications business, joining Proof Reputation, where he is a strategy consultant.

Today Mark enjoys trading ideas with creatives and business leaders, and is a strong believer in alignment and reputation management as starting points for communication. He gets involved early and fully in the process of turning business strategy into communications strategy and developing the concepts, channels and media to support this, while maintaining an economist's desire to know and measure the return on the effort involved. Most recently Mark has developed an interest in the issue of 'corporate silence' and how to break through it. He specialised in the topic while studying for his MSc in Corporate Communications at Erasmus University and is currently completing a book on the subject. This is due to appear at the beginning of 2013.

Twitter: markblok81
LinkedIn: nl.linkedin.com/in/blokmark

It can lead to dramas such as the collapse of Enron, but also to many missed commercial and other opportunities. Naturally, silence has a role to play in social relationships and within an organisation, but in most cases, a climate of silence has a strong negative impact on the individual performance of employees and the collective performance of the organisation. Breaking the silence is a core task of senior management, to allow the organisation to move forward.

Both personal and environmental factors underlie corporate silence. Personal characteristics include the degree of self-confidence, self-determination and the locus of control. But more important than the personal factors are the underlying environmental factors of corporate silence. The attitude of and the relationships with the management are of particular importance here; the cause of corporate silence mainly lies with the (senior) management. Breaking corporate silence costs time and energy, and can be risky, for example for a personal career. But it also produces many rewards. Internally, it helps to increase alignment, the quality of decision-making and the detection and rapid response to potential risks. Externally, breaking silence helps to strengthen the organisation's license to operate and its reputation, because it can respond faster to the social context in which it operates. And in an atmosphere of openness better relationships are created with stakeholders.

In the academic world, little is yet known about how silence can be successfully broken within organisations. This study conducted an investigation among 20 senior managers from different types of organisation into which successful methods are available to break the silence within organisations on issues that have a direct impact on an organisation's performance. Supplemented with knowledge from the organisational change literature, a broad set of tools was developed on the basis of this study. These are management, communication and hybrid tools. Again, as with the causes of corporate silence, the first focus here rests with the management.

Furthermore, based on the issues raised during the interviews, a new set of issues was developed regarding which silence would have to be broken in order to improve the organisation's performance. These are the five Ps of corporate silence: Plan, People, Product, Process and Programme. This led to a sharper definition of corporate silence than in the current literature on this subject: 'Corporate silence exists when employees deliberately do not express views or share information with management on issues or risks regarding plan, people, products, processes and programmes, potentially undermining the performance of the organisation'.

The study thus provides a full picture of the phenomenon of corporate silence, from the history of its development to the causes and the consequences of corporate silence. Above all, it provides new insights into the issues regarding which silence must be broken, a sharper definition and a set of instruments for successfully breaking silence on issues that have a direct impact on the performance of an organisation.

'Corporate silence exists when employees deliberately do not express views or share information with management on issues or risks regarding plan, people, products, processes and programmes, potentially undermining the performance of the organisation'

A FRAGILE LOVE AFFAIR

Alliance building and collaboration between commercial businesses and NPO's

Once upon a time the world was divided into clearly separated groups of good guys and bad guys, realists and Utopians, business adepts and community believers. Businesses were steered by profit evangelists, not-for-profit organisations by morality prophets.

Those days are gone.

Businesses, at least the more forward looking ones, realise that profit is no longer the sole indicator for success. Stakeholders, and shareholders amongst them, push them to take responsibility for more than shareholder value. Engagement with the society and communities that surround business operations is no longer a voluntary extra, it slowly sneaked into the centre of business strategy and activities. Corporate Social Responsibility took the fast way from the periphery of top management attention to the heart of it. In short, businessmen and women are no longer the bad guys, greedy, avaricious and selfish. They turn out to be human as anyone else.

On the other hand, the not-for-profits slowly crept out of their ivory towers. Here also, the more foreseeing ones realise that they are no longer the guardians of moral truth, they are not the privileged elite representing an ethical forefront, struggling against the immoral capitalistic enemy in boardrooms. Not-for-profit organisations entered the twenty-first century facing a rapid decrease of government support, increasing competition in the market for private fundraising and growing distrust from the public in the effectiveness of the organisations operations. The exclusive right on the common good was no longer trusted to them. Closed windows had to be opened.

The former enemies have been driven into each other's arms. Although true and sustainable love affairs are still rare, we see an emergence of cautious friendships between businesses and not-for-profit organisations (NPO's). Both parties realise they have a need for each other's capabilities and resources. And the more advanced ones understand that there is a world to win from collaborating with a partner from the opposite camp.

This thesis is about suspicious partners starting love affairs. Careful and curious partners who have to learn to trust each other. We will focus on the effects of a business-NPO love affair on the reputation of both partners. The expectation is that some combinations are more promising than others. Partners that already are well reputed might strengthen reputations, partners with a weak reputation gain from a partner with a strong reputation. These seem to be logical assumptions. But are they true? Which influencers do we see, how does the environment respond to partnerships, and what kind of engagement leads to which influence of reputation? Those are the questions that made us start this investigation.

It is no more than a start. We know relations and marriages are subject to a multiplicity of internal and external factors that influence success. They are complicated in it self, none of them are completely the

same, and there is no golden bullet that guarantees success. Alas. We do not pretend to enumerate all influencing factors entirely. But I know that being ignorant to these factors is a sure recipe for failure. This thesis is a modest contribution to happy love affairs.

1. INTRODUCTION

Research question and thesis overview

Two brands are stronger than one. This insight led to the beginning of companies deciding to cooperate and make use of the value of their brands in a new collaboration. This kind of collaboration is of all ages. We see early examples in Dutch history, in the collaboration between trading companies competing for market share of spices from the Far East (establishment of the VOC, the Dutch East India Company) or in early examples of mergers. In the twentieth century, collaborations between businesses are omnipresent. But only at the end of that century, scholars began to pay attention to the mechanisms that influence and determine alliances and collaborations between businesses. Academic research on alliance building and collaboration is still young.

There seems to be sufficient need for information about this kind of alliances. In the last decade we see a huge interest and growth in commercial – NPO alliances. With this increase of alliances, they not only become more prevalent but also show more varieties and become more complex. The purpose of this study is to add insights to the understanding of the effectiveness of alliances between commercial and not-for-profit brands. We will, more specifically, investigate the *reputa-*

tional aspects of both the cause brand as the commercial brand.

This has lead to the overarching research question that will run through this thesis as a continuous thread:

How does reputation affect the success of business – NPO collaborations, and how does it have an effect on the reputation of both partners afterwards?

To gain insight in the way the reputation of companies are affected by an alliance, we will take a multi method approach. The first part contains a description of academic literature on brand extensions and brand alliances. Only in the most recent years research on brand alliances between profit and not-for-profit organizations occurred in academic literature.

In the second part of our thesis we will do two quantitative studies, asking consumers about the effects of the collaboration between a commercial business and a not-for-profit organisation. Here we will look at the way consumers value the reputation of both constituent brands related to the alliance.

In the third and last part, we will focus on a qualitative approach, interviewing CEO's and top management of as well commercial businesses as top branded NPO's. The aim of this third study is to reveal information about top management perceptions of the effects of collaboration on reputation.

From the results of these studies we will draw conclusions about the way these cross sector collaborations influence reputational drivers and supportive behaviour. A model will be presented that gives guidance to management, and we will finish the thesis with practical managerial consequences that can be drawn from the conclusions of the research. As this thesis is not only meant to be of interest for the small group of professional academics, we hope to support practitioners in the field with a list of recommendations.

2. LITERATURE OVERVIEW

Literature about brand extensions and brand alliances shows that a transfer of value from one brand to the other is possible. The way this happens depends on the fit of both brands and the products they make before the alliance. In this study we use the model Simonin & Ruth (1998) presented as a starting point. Apart from the drivers that describe the brand and product fit, we see a couple of moderating effects. These moderating effects depend on the familiarity of the brands, the personality of brands and the way they are perceived to behave as a brand. Schematically it looks like Figure 1.

When Corporate Social Responsibility became a new field of academic and managerial interest, alliance building was extended with a specific form of collaboration: business – NPO collaboration. The groundbreaking publications of Porter and Kramer about CSR defined classifications for the nature of collaboration between a commercial business and a NPO and its effects. Other studies build upon these publications and described other effects of collaboration, finding
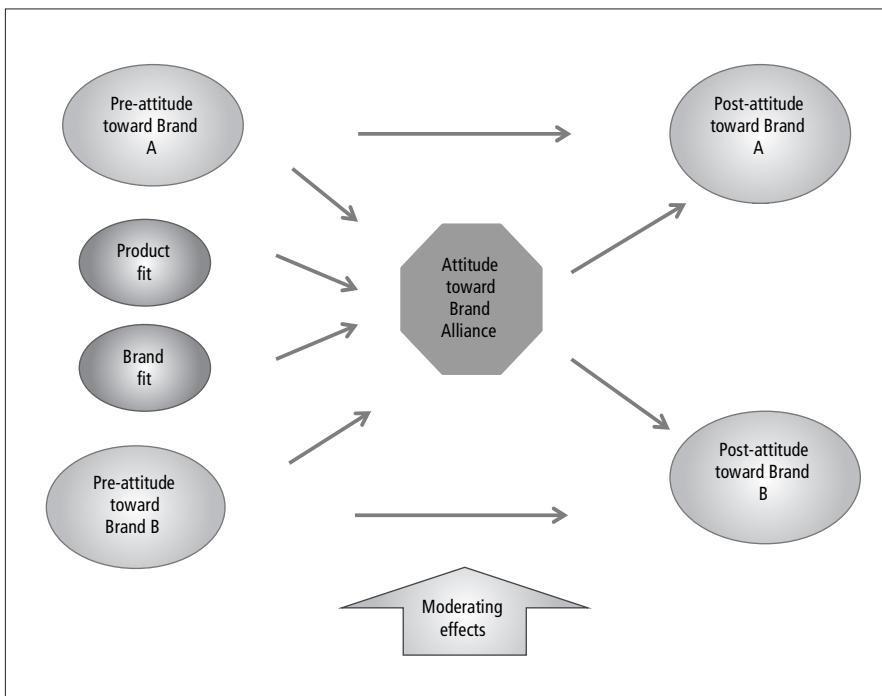
Figure 1: Conceptual model Brand Alliance (Simonin & Ruth, 1998)

evidence for increasing the value of the brand, as well as negative spill over effects and ceiling effects. From these insights, we propose an adjustment of the model. The level of Engagement seems to be a significant element in predicting the effects of a business – NPO collaboration. Another adjustment comes from the literature study. While the fit of products does not play a role in business – NPO collaboration, the fit of reputation of both partners does play a pivotal role. We added this element to the driving factors in the model and started three studies to research the reputational effects of collaboration as well as the relevance of the newly adjusted moderating effects.

3. PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTS OF BUSINESS – NPO COLLABORATION ON REPUTATION: THREE STUDIES

To understand the perceptions of the public of different forms of collaboration tactics, and the way different collaborations are perceived to affect the reputation of both commercial businesses and not-for-profit organizations, we did two surveys among the Dutch public.

In the first study, we measured perceptions of the public. We looked at the effects of the level of engagement in the collaboration on supportive behaviour of the public, with the assumption that this behaviour is a result of perceived reputation. In this study, the level of engagement of the collaboration is seen as the main moderating effect. So, we used two different models to describe the character of the collaboration – the Collaboration Continuum of James Austin (2000) and the bipolar model of Lucas Meijs (2011) – and

found that strategic partnering enhances supportive behaviour far better than a more philanthropic collaboration. This is congruent to a multitude of studies in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility.

Next, this study reveals that also in terms of reputation building, strategic collaboration gives better results than a low engagement philanthropic partnership. But it works better for businesses than it does for NPO's. In the business – NPO collaboration, the perception of the public is that the business increases reputation, even if the collaboration is superficial. For the NPO this is less clear. The risk of negative spill over effects from undesirable or unreliable business behaviour could easily affect reputation of the NPO negative. Though this effect is less to be expected the more strategic the collaboration is.

In this study, we recognise the moderating effects of the adjusted Simonin & Ruth model. In the perception of the public, they play a pivotal role.

The second study adds to the conclusions of study 1. It does not compare between collaboration on different levels of engagement (intensity of collaboration as a moderating effect), but chooses a real life partnership between a business and a NPO. The collaboration has a high level of engagement. This is important to know, because from study 1 we learned that effects on reputation are more to be expected from strategic collaboration, than from a more philanthropic one. In this second study, both partners have high familiarity and find a fit in brand personality. We expect to find effects on reputation for both partners, but the measured effect shows that the NPO benefits most. We did not measure an

effect on the reputation of the commercial partner. This is probably an effect of the already high reputation it has in the group of respondents. In accordance to the study of Lafferty (2009), we found a ceiling effect for the commercial partner's reputation growth.
If this ceiling effect is durable, we do not know. It would need further, longitudinal research, following reputation effects on the commercial partner for a period of years.

The overall conclusions of study 1 and study 2 are:

➔ Strategic, integrative business – NPO collaboration increases reputation of both partners, more than a philanthropic collaboration does
➔ The commercial business partner gains more from collaboration than the NPO partner
➔ A well reputed high familiar business does not gain reputation growth (ceiling effect)

We followed up on these two studies by a third one. This third study did not measure public perceptions, but intended to gain knowledge about the decision making process in business – NPO collaboration. We did a qualitative study, doing face-to-face interviews with business and NPO leaders, thus revealing their perceptions about the effects of collaboration. This study gives the opportunity to compare the findings of study 1 and 2 with the perceptions of the decision makers. What we found is that there are some incongruities between the perceptions of the public and the business and NPO leaders when it comes to the goals of collaboration. That outcome is important informa-

tion for future decisions about business – NPO collaboration. The gap between perceptions of the public and perceptions of decision makers brings a risk to the intended success of the collaboration. As far as reputation is seen as an important goal of the collaboration – it is mostly seen as an indirect effect, which is hard to measure – business and NPO leaders expect the collaboration to have positive effects on reputation of both partners. They accept that the level of engagement of the collaboration is an important modifying element. But they don't consider ceiling effects, as the ones found in study 2.

The leaders confirm the moderating effects we formulated in the adjusted model of chapter 3. Especially the level of engagement is regarded to be of decisive importance. But also familiarity, the personality of the partner, and the behaviour of the partner, is mentioned to be of importance by the business and NPO leaders. This confirms our moderated model.

The third study revealed another moderating effect that influences the results of a business – NPO collaboration. All respondents mention the importance of a personal fit. Neither the literature about business – NPO collaboration, nor the first two studies revealed this aspect, but it seems to be of critical importance. That is why we make a last adjustment to the model we started this thesis with. This third adjustment is again a moderating effect. But as far as business and NPO leaders are involved, it is one of the most important ones: the personal fit.

The final model for business – NPO collaboration looks as Figure 3.
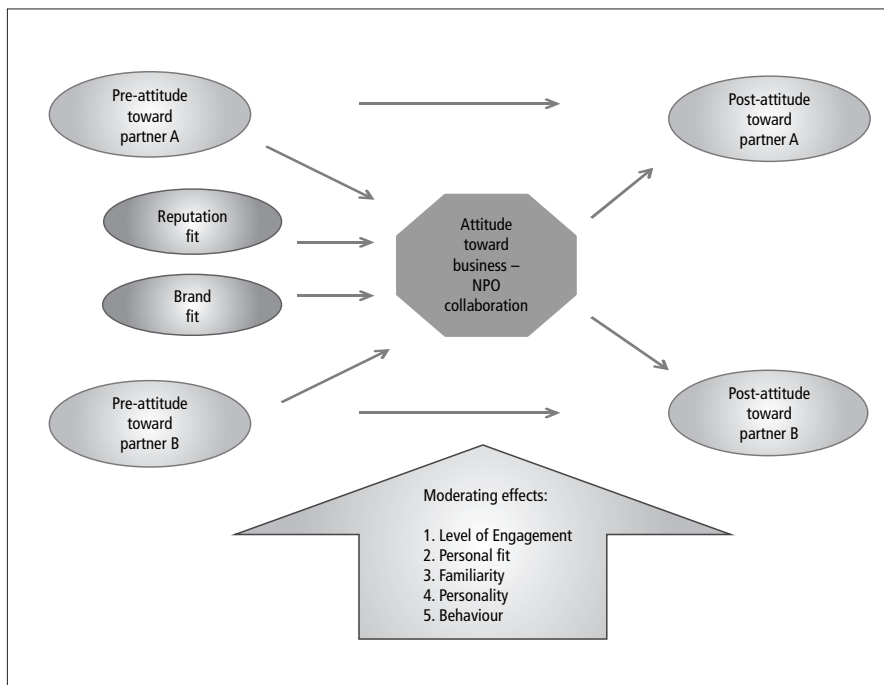
Figure 3: Business – NPO collaboration model

4. FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The model presented at the end of the three studies reveals the most influential elements when it comes to business – NPO collaboration. It is a ready to use framework for managers of as well businesses as of NPO's when they engage in a cross sector collaboration.

From the combination of the insights revealed by the two quantitative studies with the outcomes of the third qualitative study, we came to a 'ten rules to follow'-list. Guidance for everyone who considers stepping into this very challenging kind of collaboration. To become successful. To make the love affair a lasting one.

1 **Take your time:** Start to invest time and energy in your partner. Search for the 'click'; make a connection on a personal level. If you manage to create an emotional and personal connection linked to the mission of the collaboration, you will seed ground for future success.

2 **Be open:** Honesty and fairness are prerequisites for success. No false bottoms, no hidden agendas. Mutual trust doesn't come overnight, but is a necessary asset for a long lasting collaboration.

3 **Know what you want:** Collaboration with a partner operating in a different sector can easily become a slippery path. You need an itinerary that can keep you on track. A compass. To have that, you need to know where your priorities are, what you focus on.

4 **Find shared value:** You don't have to agree upon everything, but know

where you agree on. The collaboration is there to bring value to both of the partners. If you don't want to loose energy in the partnership after a first temporarily success, know what your shared mission is, visualise a dot on the horizon you both strive for.

5 **Put resources to it:** Personal synergy, shared missions, they can be very inspirational. But don't forget the 'hard' assets. Working towards a mutual shared goal, integrating business strategy with the NPO strategy, needs a lot of commitment, but that will not do the job. Put budget and people in it.

6 **Be entrepreneurial:** Collaboration between two different cultures asks for open minds. Participants will easily use dissimilar cognitive frameworks. Misunderstandings lie in wait. Participants have to think out of the box, take initiatives, accept (manageable) risks.

7 **Communicate about it:** Be proud of what you achieve and do not hesitate to tell your stakeholders about it. If you are restrained in communicating about your partnership, you will give food for second thoughts. It will not help to maintain trust, neither from your partner, nor from your stakeholders.

8 **Link it to business:** A business – NPO collaboration does not have to have the increase of revenues as a goal. It might be about creating change, or building reputation. But if you find a way to link the collaboration to one or more of your business units, it will strengthen the partnership.

And you will have fewer problems convincing your CEO to accept the cost of resourcing.

9 **Measure success:** Prove it to yourself. Prove it to your stakeholders. You did not start this collaboration because you had to reduce your feeling of guild. Or to easily find money. The collaboration is there because you found a shared mission that is worthwhile. There are indicators for success. Measure them, use them for evaluation and, if necessary, for adjustments.

10 **Don't give up:** Nobody says this is easy. Business – NPO collaborations are no quick wins. They are full of pitfalls. If you bail out after the first fight, you will not be successful. Accept this is a fragile love affair. Give and take. It will be worth the effort.

Robbert Bodegraven (1963)

Starting as a photojournalist, Robbert worked in journalism for more than ten years. After his master's degree in literature, he worked as a freelancer, wrote travel reportages, specialised in development and migration issues and became editor-in-chief of a national magazine. He decided to make a career move when a leading development aid organisation asked him to become head of the department responsible for internal and external publications. That is where he guided his teams in making target group specific publications, magazines, websites and more. He became head of the publication house of the organisation, introducing books from African, Asian and Latin American writers in the Netherlands. Three years ago Robbert again changed jobs, and started working for War Child Holland, a child's right based organisation, aiming to support children affected by conflict and war. He is head of the department Advocacy, Campaigning and Communication, leading the organisation in strategically influencing decision makers, convincing stakeholders to become active contributors to the mission of War Child and building and safeguarding the reputation of the organisation.

Robbert lives in Utrecht, the Netherlands, with his wife and two daughters. That is where his first passion lies. A second passion still lies in photography and literature. A third one is his work, and the challenges for development and aid organisations to find new ways to increase the effectiveness of their work. This thesis is a modest contribution to that passion.

Robbert can be reached at: robbert.bodegraven@zonnet.nl

SHRUGGING OFF PHARMA COMPANIES' STIGMA

How can pharmaceutical companies alter public perceptions of stigma?

The innovative pharmaceutical industry is a very important industry but also a very vulnerable one due to high risks in developing medicines and medical devices for people with (severe) disease. It is a commercial-driven company in the field of publicly financed healthcare. Market forces in healthcare differs from traditional commercial markets.

The position of pharma companies in healthcare, the objectives and focus of the companies are subject to an ongoing debate and many negative publications have been issued about being commercial in healthcare. External stakeholders view pharmaceutical companies with mistrust and disbelief. You can say that there is a stigma.

An organizational-level stigma is a label that evokes a collective stakeholder group-specific perception that an organization possesses a fundamental, deep-seated flaw that de-individuates and discredits the organization and imputes an alternative identity based on the stereotypes ascribed to the stigmatized category.

Stigma can be an obstruction in aiming the objectives of innovative pharma companies in the longer term. Although the license to operate of pharma companies will stay, because there will always be a medical need, it takes a lot of time, money and resources to defend this license to operate in the public debate. Pharma companies will always have to deal with and respond to negative publications. Instead of investing time and resources regarding this negative publicity, investment should be more profitable in constructive dialogues and cooperation in projects. But this appears to be very hard because the stigma is so perseverant.

STIGMA AND THE IMPORTANCE OF EXPRESSING ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY

Stakeholders cognitively dis-identify with a stigmatized organization.
The importance of openness in communications about one's identity is emphasized to be important, but it also creates a boomerang effect among pharma companies in the sense that any communication by itself is perceived vigilantly and critically by key stakeholders. Pharma companies should benefit when they are perceived as more credible companies.

OBJECTIVE THESIS

The goal of this thesis was to gain insight into how pharma companies can diminish the stigma by openly expressing their company's identity in order to create more understanding, acceptance and support among relevant stakeholders.

CAUSES OF STIGMA

Based on two case studies of companies with a stigma aside from the pharmaceutical industry and eighteen qualitative interviews with experts in the pharmaceutical industry, this thesis identifies three causes of stigma that are obstructing the objectives of pharma companies: 1) little knowledge and understanding of pharma companies, 2) de-individuation of pharma companies due to stereotyping and 3) a lack of urgency to change.

1 Little knowledge and understanding of pharma companies

Stakeholders have little knowledge and understanding of pharma companies because it is not clear to them what the pharma's organizational identity is. There are two underlying sub causes, 1) a lack of transparency. Stakeholders don't receive, or not sufficiently, the information they need, to gain a better understanding of pharma companies and this creates negative evaluations, as the saying goes, "unknown, unloved". 2) the product doesn't appeal one's imagination, the value of the product is not clear. The financial value is not familiar and the value of the innovation is not obvious. The product seems to be of secondary importance, what matters most is the treatment of the physician. A lack of information about product development,

which is the core business of pharma companies, is not leading to more knowledge and understanding.

2 De-individuation due to stereotyping

Negative publicity appears to be an underlying sub cause of this de-individuation phenomenon. Due to a lack of transparency of pharma companies and lacking involvement of journalists by pharma companies, they create their own story based on stereotyping. A lack of publicity by patient organizations is because they are not fully committed to cooperate with pharma companies; they feel the risk of transferring stigma to their own organizations.

A second underlying cause of de-individuation is a lack of sincerity in communication messages. Stakeholders attribute the communication of pharma companies to self-serving motives (e.g. profit making), while pharma companies suggest that they are more focused on other motives, more positive, like the concerns to patients, and this leads to cynicism.

There is also a lack in communication about CSR activities of pharma companies. It is not clear for stakeholders why pharma companies are involved and what the motives are of these activities. Due to this obscurity, stakeholders tend to perceive CSR activities as window dressing. Another aspect is that the business-like and academic tone of voice - well-balanced and flawless - of pharma companies is associated with a lack of sincerity.

3 Lack of urgency to change

Pharma companies do not seem to sense any urgency to change. They don't feel the pressure of society because they don't have a close relationship with the general

public, patients and consumers, and it doesn't have immediate, direct consequences for the profitability of pharma companies. An indication for this lack of urgency to change is the silence about efforts. For external stakeholders it is not clear what the reasons are behind decisions and regulations.
This silence is perceived as a lack of visibility in the public debate and doesn't lead to more understanding and support of the organization and, accordingly, not to a positive attitude toward the organization.

PASSIVE ACCEPTANCE STRATEGY

Pharma companies currently apply the 'accepting' strategy. This means that pharma companies accept public expectations regarding the stigma and accept that the stigma applies to themselves. They determine that the stigmatized aspects are part of their identity; they are de-individuated due to stereotyping.

An important addition is that the 'accepting' pharma companies may cope by blaming the stigma for negative outcomes that they experience. Pharma companies accept the stigma's existence and applicability, and use it as an advantage or at least as a source of comfort. By placing the blame for an unpleasant outcome on something out of one's control, pharma companies can protect their identity.

But stigma obstructs positive interpretations when expressing organizational identity and doesn't increase credibility. According to the acceptance strategy, perceptions of external stakeholders can't be changed.

REDUCING OFFENSIVENESS STRATEGY

The above-described causes can make it hard to shrug off stigma, but pharma companies can try to take more control in their own hands in managing the stigma. The strategy 'Reducing offensiveness' is as an overall effective (communication) strategy for pharma companies when they accept that the stigma applies to them but wish to change how the stigma is perceived by others. Pharma companies can reduces the offensiveness of stakeholders with regard to the stigma. Bolstering and refocusing strategies involves shifting the focus from the stigmatized part of an individual's identity to a non-stigmatized part. When translated to organizations this means that there is an increasingly need to express the organizational identity, to give a clear, realistic and balanced view, in fact to prevent

(further) 'de-individualization of the company's identity'. The next solutions are uncovered in this study:

1 **Improving organizational identity expressions**
There is need for more transparency, to challenge public understanding in order to shift stigma. Organizational identity of pharma companies has to be expressed by framing. Self- serving motives (e.g. profit making), should be communicated more explicitly, in a frame.
Behavior and communication should be aligned: "practice what you preach" in order to increase credibility.

2 **Increasing perceived value of the product**
Communication, in a proactive way, about innovation of medicine and what it means for society is needed to create a better imagination. Storytelling is an easier way of communication and can be supported and visualized with info graphics. The story should be told by all employees, in a more differentiated way, to all different external stakeholders. Alignment increases credibility, and with the support of external stakeholders, a license to operate.

3 **More involvement external stakeholders**
➔ More investment in relationships with journalists and key opinion leaders with respect to negative publicity is needed. A more proactive approach is needed. Pharma companies should give more insights and should aim for an open dialogue. This can be done by creating a mutual advisory board on a regular base.
➔ Co-partnering with other stakeholders in projects for and with patients, like patient expertise centers or disease

Conny Bressers works as a Patient Relations Manager at Roche Nederland since 2006.
Roche is an international pharmaceutical company with a pioneering role in healthcare. As an innovator of products and services for the early detection, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases, Roche contributes on a broad range of fronts to improving people's health and quality of life. Roche is active in more than 150 countries and has about 80.000 employees.
Conny is responsible for the development and implementation of strategic patient organizations (communication) plans in favor of pharmaceutical and patient-(organization) related issues, for coalition building with patient advocacy groups, branch organizations and Roche.

Conny graduated from the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences in 1990, where she obtained a bachelor's degree in Occupational Therapy. For one year she studied Health Policy & Management at the Erasmus University Rotterdam.
Before joining Roche, Conny worked for 13 years at Organon, a pharmaceutical company. She started as a sales representative, and proceeded as Sales Manager and Product Manager. Then she moved to the head office of Organon N.V. as an Associate Director international communication. She was responsible for marketing communication and change management communication.
Conny has obtained several qualifications in the field of communications. She succesfully completed the Executive Master in Corporate Communication from the Erasmus University in Rotterdam in 2012.

management supportive projects, can advocate patients even better and creates a more visible role for pharma companies and patient organizations.

4 **Show sincerity with a empathic factor in communication**

Another observed sub cause of de-individuation is that stakeholders perceive a lack of sincerity in the communication of pharma companies. Pharma companies and Nefarma, the sector organization, can improve sincerity in their communication. Pharma companies by;

➔ more explicit communication about their self-serving motives, next to the other objectives.

➔ communication with an 'empathic tone of voice'. The tone of voice and language should be softer because it is perceived as too business like and too scientific. The language should be in a manner that fascinates and connects people in order to increase sincerity and diminish de-individuation.

The pharmaceutical sector, Nefarma by;

➔ a well-known authority with esteem, a personality who is reliable, well-known and has a broad network with key opinion leaders and media. Other sectors like healthcare insurers and the building sector are having good experiences with well-known authorities, like ex-politicians.

5 **Show sincerity by more alignment in CSR activities**

Communication and explanation is needed by showing stakeholders that CSR activities are value-driven and strategic and thus sincere.

➔ Co-creating in CSR projects by different stakeholders, like physicians and patients, next to patient organiza-

tions, gives a better understanding. With the involvement of these stakeholders, pharma companies can meet the expectations of that CSR activities are value-driven and strategic.

➔ An ambassador, a well-known person, outside of the pharmaceutical industry who is perceived as neutral, could show CSR activities from pharma companies to a larger public.

A better understanding of CSR activities decreases perceptions of window dressing.

6 **More alignment with society by partnering with other stakeholders**

One of the causes of stigma is a lack of urgency to change. Pharma companies have to be more open about their objectives and what their role is in healthcare. A proactive attitude is needed to show what kind of business pharma companies are, that healthcare is a business of various stakeholders. To be more aligned and connected with other stakeholders, pharma companies should have an open dialogue with different stakeholders. This can be done in an open forum dialogue via the internet, with strict rules, and in a face-to-face setting, in small discussion groups, with different stakeholders. CEO's with more attendance in the public debate, to explain the organizational identity and have a dialogue with different stakeholders.

By explaining the innovation in healthcare with these stakeholders/partners together, there will be a better understanding for this situation of how to view the issue of 'a lack of urgency to change'. Be transparent about the objectives in dialogue with positive and negative audiences.

7 **Make efforts, successes and failures, more public**

This is an effort which is linked to all the causes and solutions of stigma at pharma companies. There is a need for sharing more information. Pharma companies have to share this information in aforementioned ways. Communication departments have to do this in a more proactive. They have to advise the board on what and how to communicate about corporate issues, and how to communicate with external stakeholders. Communication plans for each aspect of the 'reducing offensiveness' strategy has to be prepared.

The sector organization, Nefarma, can show efforts of the pharmaceutical industry by a national advertising campaign, like e.g., how the universities are publishing their successes, with realistic, understandable stories in small advertisements. This can be done by the sector organization for the pharmaceutical industry. Individual companies could connect this with the opportunity to open their offices for the general public and show who they are and what they do.

Finally, the conclusion is that the 'reducing offensiveness strategy' can diminish the stigma of pharma companies and change public perception in a way that it creates more understanding, acceptance and support among relevant stakeholders. Although healthcare and being commercial will always be a difficult combination for some stakeholders, there is no alternative. By continuing the 'acceptance strategy' the stigma will stay and the credibility will decrease. Implementing the 'reducing offensiveness strategy' create more opportunities to show the more positive sides of pharma companies and thus doesn't obstruct the objectives of pharma companies.

Engaging next generation employees: A view on leadership communication in a rapidly changing world

About a year and a half ago I attended a LEAP New Leadership Event where Mrs Josephine Green (previously Senior Director of Trends and Strategy, Philips Design; and founder of 'Pyramids to Pancakes' (www.pyramids2pancakes.com) did a keynote about emerging trends that are shaping our world and that would require us to create new organizational values and leadership.

Marianne Cool (1967) is an all-round communication professional with over 20 years of international experience in corporate communication. During her career she has gained experience on all aspects in corporate communication at reputable companies such as Unilever and KPN. She led a large number of complex communication- and marketing projects around organisational change, outsourcing of various divisions and brands, and internal engagement. Three achievements she is particularly proud of in her career are the development and execution of the international communication strategy around the rebranding and identity of Unilever's Ice Cream (Walls/Ola) and Frozen Foods (Iglo/Birds Eye/Findus) brands in 2003; the orchestration of the announcement of the sale of Unilever's Frozen Foods division in 2006; and the crafting of the 'Fit for Winning' Engagement and co-creation programme for KPN Corporate Market (Client Services) in 2011 that led to a significant rise in energy and motivation among staff.

Having experienced all communication roles on her wish list, Marianne has recently decided to start her own consultancy business in the area of employee engagement and effective leadership communication. From the conviction that people make the difference and that leadership is not hierarchical but about the effort and quality you put into the dialogue and relationship, she will soon aim to help clients by stimulating meaningful dialogue and helping them change their company culture into a more cooperative, innovative and succesful working environment.

Marianne's strengths lie in her passion for change and her ability to listen and interpret what is said beyond the words that people use. She is a strong believer that developing people's perspective and behaviour and improving their communication capabilities can be a core driver of change and at the same time, she believes that willing people make failing systems work, and unwilling people make working systems fail.

Marianne is soon to be married to her partner Ollie, and together they hope to permanently move to Ollie's home country Australia in a few years from now. In her spare time she enjoys the company of her friends and family, travelling, cooking, art, sports and everything else that helps her celebrate life.

She told a story about how the 'pyramid world' as we know it – based on hierarchy, power (ego), closed systems, scarcity, competition, and dominated by large 19th century institutions – was rapidly transforming into a 'pancake' world characterized by flat, open and social ecosystems that favour collaboration, equality, sharing of knowledge and education, and world sources over possession and profit. She explained the need for a new perspective and point of reference for organizations and society at large, and how that required a new breed of leaders. Leaders who are not maintaining the status quo or their own position at the top of the pyramid, and fail to see that their employees and customers are 'getting tired of their command and control approach'.

There was no doubt in my mind that rapid globalization, new technologies and the changing social context are transforming the way people work and interact. In fact, I already experienced an emerging disconnect between management and employees in the organizations I worked with and had seen how difficult it was for some leaders to engage in a meaningful dialogue with their employees. However, did we really need completely different leadership styles and communication in future? And what impact would this transformation have on organizations and the communication function, I wondered?

Shortly after, I received the results of two global surveys in employee engagement that showed alarming figures on the decline in employee engagement scores over the past few years. How could that be? Was the transformation Josephine talked about happening or was there another reason? I contemplated whether during difficult economic times organiza-

tions focus less on how to manage talent and engage their employees, concentrating instead on how to reduce costs by cutting jobs and spending less on development. Perhaps some even thought that employee engagement – the level of intellectual and emotional commitment an employee has for the work, mission and vision of the organization – mattered less because their employees had fewer options and would stay because they needed a job. Surely companies were smarter than that, because they knew that engagement has consistently been connected to better organizational and financial performance?

THE ISSUE

Whilst many organizations do acknowledge the power of engagement, many also struggle to make progress in this area. Research shows that despite efforts being made by organizations to increase the level of engagement of their employees, engagement figures globally are actually very low and decreasing: over the last five years on average only one third (33%) of employees indicate they are actively engaged in their jobs; meaning 67% are not engaged, going through each work day putting time but no passion into their work. Harvard Professor Teresa Amabile even talks about a 'disengagement crisis' that is going on around the world. To make matters worse, there is an additional challenge that lies ahead for businesses when it comes to engagement: the arrival of an estimated 70 million Generation Y employees that are currently entering the workplace; a generation that is believed to be very different from previous generations, and perhaps even more difficult to engage than their older co-

workers; a generation that has a different view on leadership and authority, and is used to a very different way of communication and interaction.

RESEARCH QUESTION AND METHODOLOGY

With my Master Thesis on Leadership Communication and the Engagement of Next Generation Employees I wanted to generate insights into how and why next generation employees are different, how they look at their leaders and their communication, and what communication efforts engage and motivate them. I subsequently formulated the following Research Question:

Given a transforming organizational model, changing workforce and continuous change – is the traditional 'cascade model of communication' still effective, or should it evolve to ensure leaders continue to motivate and engage next generation (Y) employees?

I choose to conduct qualitative research by means of one-on-one in-depth interviews and focus groups. In total I conducted 44 interviews with senior business leaders, Generation Y employees and Communication Professionals across leading companies such as Unilever, KPN,

Hewlett Packard, Heineken, Accenture, Philips, VanderLande, Coca Cola Enterprises.

LITERATURE REVIEW

For the literature review I looked at the existing evidence and theoretical background on:
➔ Employee engagement and the role of the cascade model in engagement
➔ Next Generation (Gen Y) employees
➔ Leadership and the role of leadership communication in engagement

The literature review confirmed the following important findings:
➔ Numerous studies have shown that high employee morale correlates positively with business success. Engaged employees are more productive, more profitable, more customer focused and less likely to leave their employer.

➔ Opinions on the precise drivers that influence engagement differ and diverge. Despite marginal differences in the description of engagement drivers, what they have in common is that increasingly they all link employee engagement to performance, and they distil into four distinct elements: (1) Achievement – getting things done; (2) Affiliation – associating with others; (3) Affluence – influencing, power, respect, control; and (4) Autonomy – work life balance, freedom, responsibility, flexibility

➔ Opinions and experiences of a person's working life are strongly correlated with engagement levels, with the strongest driver being a sense of feeling valued and involved, e.g. involvement in decision making, the extent to which employees feel able to voice their ideas and managers listen and value employees' contributions; the opportunities to develop their jobs, and the organisation's concern for employees' health and well being.

➔ Academics agree that the role of leadership in communication is crucial as a driver for engagement and alignment. All engagement models highlight the importance of effective relationships with superiors (including feedback and dialogue) and effective internal communications to provide clarity and knowledge on the organization's goals and vision.

➔ According to a survey of The Economist, 84% of senior leaders say disengaged employees are considered one of the biggest threats facing their business, however only 12% of them reported doing anything about this problem and 43% of reported companies only occasionally, rarely, or never, discuss the issue at board level.

➔ The leading leadership style of today is still rooted in the industrial area. Connecting, guiding and enriching network-like 21st century organizations and communities will require a completely different form of leadership than the one we know now.

➔ The importance of having a clear Corporate Purpose and values that are at the core of an organization's identity is gaining support in the academic world. Sinek for example presents a theory rooted in biological processes in the neocortex (associated with rational, analytical thoughts) and the limbic part of the brain (which controls many essential human behaviours such as trust and loyalty).

He therefore claims that analytical facts and figures (the WHAT and HOW in communication) don't help drive behaviour or engagement, but a higher cause or belief - the corporate purpose of the organization – will, because it is connected to feelings, emotions and behaviour. In order to engage and move people, communication should therefore focus much more on the WHY.

➔ Generation Y shows different characteristics and preferences than previous generations, particularly in the area of: traits (globally concerned, communication savvy, networked), values (they live more by their own values than by group norms), wanting working that has meaning for them, looking for leaders who act as partners and provide constant feedback and recognition, desiring a collaborative communication style and being much less likely to respond to traditional 'command-and-control type leadership and hierarchical authority

➔ As regards the cascade model of communication, there is evidence that despite this well developed mechanism companies do not always succeed in cascading information in a consistent and orchestrated way to all levels. Van Riel calls this the 'cascading trap'. Reijnders states that the cascade model appears to have become an

outmoded system of passing information down step by step via an hierarchical structure that is quickly disappearing, and gives 10 compelling reasons why cascading doesn't work well. The most important reasons he states are:

– The model does not allow for upward flow and disregards that people want to (and will) respond, making it a one-sided model offering only one-way communication
– Information spreads much more readily through informal channels now, over-taking the speed and effectivity of the formal cascade process
– Cascading assumes that various forms of consultation at every level are connected in terms of time, which is often unfeasible for all kinds of practical reasons
– Cascading assumes that managers want to, are able to and have the courage to share and discuss all information with their staff. Often this is not the case, especially when it concerns difficult messages such as during restructuring
– Cascading assumes uniformity not only in terms of persuasiveness and enthusiasm but also in interpretation of content, resulting in great message variety
– Cascade information is often too abstract and not specific enough; managers are often unable to provide answers because many aspects still have to be worked out
– Today's employees are proactive information finders and processors, going beyond the cascade in search of the information they require. Cascading passes these proactive recipients by.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Analyzing all the interview transcripts, I found several themes, which allowed for an easier interpretation of the findings beyond only individual views. This resulted in the following overall observations and findings:

Observation1 - The workplace is definitively changing

Respondents all agreed on this and predominantly experienced said changes in 4 areas:
➜ Hierarchical structures are under pressure or breaking down, the organizational pyramid is getting flatter and network structures/communities are starting to appear
➜ There is a rise in importance for employees to have and understand the corporate purpose that articulates the 'why' (vision) and binds them to the company and its leaders
➜ There is more awareness on the importance engagement from employers and employees
➜ Generational differences are beginning to appear in the workforce, with more of a need to 'make it work' (collaboration) across all generations

Observation 2 – More efforts are being put into engagement, with mixed results

Efforts concentrated mainly on management information and interaction, capability development and reward & recognition actions, and introducing more purpose-led communication initiatives. Some respondents were experiencing an increase in employee engagement levels; others stated that their engagement levels were 'at an all time low'.

Observation 3 – Gen Y: similar in values and work ethics; different in attitude

Analysis made it clear that – in line with the literature – opinions varied as to whether Gen Y was similar or different to other generations. In terms of values, respondents were more of the same opinion and felt that Gen Y was very similar to other generations. In terms of attitudes however, more differences were experienced, especially in the area of:
➜ Attitude towards Communication and Interaction
➜ Attitude towards Hierarchy and Authority
➜ Role work plays in their life/attitude to the job
➜ A bigger need to know 'why'; and having a bigger purpose

Observation 4 – Leaders are beginning to understand the need to change, but most still struggle as to how to achieve that

On the positive, respondents from the Communication Professionals and Gen Y group felt that leaders were being more visible, real and accessible, offering more/different channels and interaction moments. They also felt that leaders were becoming more accepting that they needed to communicate versus communication being owned and delivered by the communication department or the CEO office.

On a more critical note, respondents felt that leaders were still too busy communicating about performance and efficiency instead of being focused on 'Binden & Boeien' (interact & engage); were struggling to articulate the 'why' and give meaning, and were reluctant to use new channels and tools that could

not be 'controlled' and that involved dialogue and two-way communication.

Leaders themselves added to the discussion that they were conscious that they were 'part of the problem' and needed to up their communication competencies; in that regard they felt that they were not always supported (well) enough by their communication people.

Observation 5 – The communication landscape is changing significantly

Reasons for this were:

➔ Technological developments (increased speed of information, the arrival of social and how that had given some of the ability to manage stakeholders and reputations away from companies towards customers and employees; how the lines between internal and external communication were much more blurred)
➔ More emphasis on engagement and motivation (how employees expected much more involvement and interaction; how social had made communication and interaction less bound to hierarchy and given a platform to networks and individuals; the notion that the 'why' was more important to engage employees)
➔ Contextual changes and the arrival of Generation Y (Gen Y's desire for more feedback, interaction and dialogue; more need for 'real time' communication requiring them to be much more flexible and less controlling of the message; how a more open culture and climate meant they need to be almost always available and accessible; that more transparency and honesty in communication was required due to increased regulation

Observation 6 – The cascade model is still effective

Favourable comments on the cascade model included:

➔ A well oiled machine that logically followed the organizational structure and infrastructure
➔ An efficient way to disseminate information in an orderly way
➔ A good mechanism to drive messages from global/central
➔ It has a function to explain strategy and decision making to all employees

Many respondents however indicated their dissatisfaction with the cascade model:

➔ 'the cascade model works but it does not get our organisation in motion'
➔ 'I doubt whether it still works (...) it is more an information model, not a communication model;
➔ there is no dialogue and feedback; it is not engaging'
➔ 'It is effective but you definitely need other mechanisms next to it to engage
➔ 'Cascade has too many layers; it would be more practical to just put it on the intranet so it is there and you can find what you need'
➔ 'Lots of layers, that delays communication. It is too slow and inefficient'

Observation 7 – But for engagement purposes, the cascade model has limitations

The limitations that were identified by respondents concentrated around four distinct areas:

➔ Traditionally the cascade model does not allow for dialogue and feedback, which in today's workplace and with the arrival of Gen Y is seen as a serious limitation

➔ The cascade model does not take into account the increased speed of information that is the norm now, making it too slow a process, especially in large companies
➔ With organisations moving away from formal hierarchy and becoming more network-based organisations, the cascade model is under threat because it follows an organizational structure that is based on that disappearing hierarchy
➔ Especially business leaders felt that the cascade model was too rigid and that there needs to be more freedom within the cascading framework for managers to interpret, segment and tailor messages to specific audiences. In this context all respondents felt quite strongly that 'one size fits nobody' anymore.

Because of these limitations, the overall conclusion of respondents was that the cascade model still worked well as an information model but that it was not necessarily effective in engagement of their internal audiences, especially in the context of a transforming organization model and changing workforce.

The thesis includes some additional observations from the research on:

➔ The Asian view on employee engagement and leadership communication
➔ A compelling case on the positive impact of 'co-creation' and 'dialogue' on engagement
➔ The changing role of the communication professional
➔ The role of HR and IT in engagement
➔ The role of middle management in the cascade and how important it is to involve them rather than using them as an 'execution channel'

→ The role of social and social media in engagement

ANSWER TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Concluding, based on the interviews with 30 senior business leaders and communication professionals and 14 generation Y employees, a valid assessment could be made as to the role of the cascade model of communication in engaging and motivation employees.

Looking back to my research question, my conclusion is that:

(1) Yes, the cascade model of communication is still effective, and

(2) Yes, it does need to evolve to ensure leaders continue to motivate and engage next generation employees

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from this research, I believe there are several implications for organizations, business leaders and communication professionals.

My advice for business leaders is threefold:

1 It's all about the WHY
Evidence shows that employees look at their leaders to give meaning to their work; the best way to do that is through purpose-led communication.

2 Don't 'tell-sell'; be real
With Gen Y having such a well developed radar for authenticity versus crafted or scripted communication, leaders would gain a lot in terms of engagement if they were more natural in their communication, both in terms of tone of voice as well as content. In a way (perhaps put somewhat strongly), I believe it would already make a big difference if leaders would stop concentrating on being a leader, and start focusing on acting as a human being again.

3 Leader as personal brand
With leaders increasingly being the source of inspiration and engagement as an individual rather than as a leader, employees are looking to make a connection and affiliate with the person behind the message. In order to do that, leaders will need to build their own persona as a 'brand' in the company. This includes demonstrating their values, working on their brand awareness by being visible and accessible to their workers, and of course knowing in detail who their internal customers are and what makes them tick.

My advice to communication professionals:

1 Encourage and be an ambassador for all internal communication
With leaders increasingly becoming the delivery channel in communication and engaging with employees, communication professionals should become more loose and free in how messages are being delivered. Rather than 'policing', they should become a communication sparring partner with a more coaching and advising attitude to help leaders become better communicators. What would be helpful here is to provide leaders with engaging communication platforms, combined with a clear communication framework and useful toolkits for them to choose from.

2 Deliver better audience and channel insights
One of the most valuable things a communication professional brings to the table is audience insights. One thing I became aware of during this study is that although externally organizations always target their audiences very specifically, internally - even though all respondents agreed that 'one size fits all' doesn't work anymore - most companies still follow this approach in their internal communication, treating employees as a homogeneous group with the same preferences and needs, and ignoring a more diverse segmentation that incorporates age, gender, nationalities, worklife phases, generations etc. Going forward, I strongly believe that a more tailored and segmented approach will be necessary to engage the diverse workforce that is there.

3 Understand the bigger picture
Van Riel always emphasizes to his Master students that 'communication is first

Engaging next generation employees: A view on leadership communication in rapidly changing world

business, and only then communication'. Building on this, it is important that communication professionals further increase their understanding of the wider business issues that an organization is facing, beyond only communication, and shift towards the advisory role.

Some considerations for Generation Y employees:

1 **Actively help organizations and leaders make the transition**
As leaders and organizations are becoming more aware about generational differences and the importance to involve and engage, so should Gen Y become more aware of the importance to get involved and engaged with the company and their leaders. What I mean by that is that because they are who they are (less impressed with authority and hierarchy, a real team player and collaborator, knowledgeable, digital native, and very adept networker), Gen Y potentially has a very valuable role to play in helping organization and leaders achieve real collaboration, and making the transition from a more hierarchical organization to a network organization that truly taps into the talent and passion of every one of its employees. So, they shouldn't accept 'the system' but work it and make it better!

2 **However, please remember that you are still a 'rookie'**
Although Gen Y has probably been exposed to more knowledge and learning possibilities, and are perhaps better educated than many of their older co-workers, they are still 'rookies' that lack the experience that some older people in the organization have. They should not confuse

knowledge with experience but instead keep an open mind and heart for the experience of others.

CONCLUDING

Without a doubt it is in the best interest of any organization and leader to realize the full potential of their employees by getting them engaged in the organization. For this engagement to happen successfully, effective leadership communication and an effective cascade throughout the organization are of great importance. But engagement is not just in the best interest of the company; it is also of great value to any individual employee because engagement provides energy and a sense of fulfilment, and allows individuals to learn and develop themselves.

Going back to the presentation of Josephine Green and the books of Menno Lanting, I have noted that organizations and leaders are beginning to embrace the changes that are happening in the workplace, and are putting in the effort to redefine the organizational model of the future. What model that will be? Nobody really knows, because we don't know how we will interface and interact with the future. How we think about that future however, determines the way we act in the present, meaning that making sense of things lies in understanding how employees and organizations are evolving, and engaging together on a journey of exploration and co-creation.

During tough economic times, engaged employees and a united workforce are a necessity, not a luxury. It is important for leaders to realize that attitudes towards work and employment are changing with the arrival of a more diverse workforce, and that this will require them to change some of their attitudes as well. Global employee engagement figures have been declining for years now, indicating that the issue of employee engagement transcends beyond generation Y to include larger numbers of employees. This highlights the urgency to reassess the effectiveness of current engagement activities and leadership communication as part of that.

As for communication, the role of the communication professional as a 'business partner' will become even more important, as dialogue with internal and external stakeholders increases. As a result, they will increasingly have to coach others to become more effective in their dialogue with employees and other stakeholders.

Having seen that organizations are contemplating on the importance of involvement and engagement of employees through stimulating meaningful dialogue, feedback and co- creation, I see that companies – and leaders – are beginning to understand that next generation employees (but increasingly also other employees) make a conscious choice as to whether they want to engage with leaders or companies, and that therefore companies and leaders should also become more conscious about their efforts into providing meaningful work and a stimulating work environment that employees enjoy being a part of. It would seem that at times however, managers are still getting too much caught up in day-to-day tasks around performance and efficiency, seeing employees' work merely as a means to accomplish the organization's objectives.

I believe they would be wise to put more effort into building sustainable relationships with their workers and having meaningful dialogues about the 'why'. After all, people usually don't engage with, or leave the company as such but they engage with, or leave, their leaders.

Strategic Issues and Communication

Strategic decisions are often complex because the underlying information is complex. Research shows that the core process of making a strategic decision is often a matter of perception. Precisely the operation of these perception processes implies that individual managers and management teams reduce reality varieties to such a degree on such a level that potentially dangerous biases may arise. Many managers feel that they reduce the reality but the question is whether you can avoid reducing it.

Lukas Deknatel (1957) started in 1986 as project manager in the greenhouse industry in Saudi Arabia, after finishing his study Horticultural Economy in 1984. There he has got the leadership to 20 people in the production department of a complex of greenhouses the village of Taif. He has created sales channels in Jeddah and Taif and assisted the university of Jeddah regarding horticultural experiments. In 1988 he became account manager (specialist of horticultural finance) in the field of financing greenhouse businesses. In 1993 he became senior account manager 'special appropriations'. In this position he was making special financial treatments and plans in consultation with accountants and lawyers for companies with insolvency problems or continuity issues. In 1997 he became senior account manager for medium and large (also small listed) companies. Providing loans, trade finances and treasury advises were the main issues of this job. Since 1999 he is lecturer at the "Faculteit voor Communicatie en Journalistiek" of the Utrecht University of Applied Sciences in the field of financial management, financial communication and corporate communication.

Strategic plans can sometimes be founded on monomaniacal visions of reality, without any awareness of decision makers. Sometimes the definitions of reality may become 'stretched'.

Reforms in education often cause violent reactions. These reactions imply that many lecturers are involved in and committed to their work. This involvement also surfaced during the interviews that I conducted. People who feel more involved with their work are generally more satisfied, more motivated and more productive (Matthieu & Zajec, 1990). The more a person identifies with an organization (or department) the more his behavior will be determined by that organization. If lecturers identify themselves with the organization then their behavior changes in a more predictable way. Research in other educational institutes (Van Knippenberg and Van Schie, 2000) shows that the identification of lecturers with their own department is stronger than identification with the entire organization.

People do not think the principle of change is bad. Anxiety (or even pessimism) may be caused by the loss of certain things, which will surface afterwards. The experience of an impending loss is always more difficult than an opportunity that comes along[i]. Rewarding desirable behavior could be an effective way to initiate change.

Answering the question about how policy makers obtain support from lecturers, the factor 'influence' is of great importance. Everyone understands that sometimes measures have to be taken if internal or external factors make it necessary. These factors have to be communicated properly.

People are concerned about the future when the organization changes; therefore people have to be involved as much as possible with implementing the changes. The policy should be based on building trust.

The following research question has been formulated about strategic decision making at the Hogeschool Utrecht (HU).

How can policy makers at the HU obtain internal support among lecturers about strategic changes; what are the pillars of logic in decision making, which aspects are problematic for this problem and how can these aspects be changed?

Answering these questions requires adequate insight into the organization and the playing field of the organization. The disadvantages of tighter housing may be limited by smart solutions. What kind of smart solutions? It is necessary to get the lecturers and other people involved in the process.

Footnotes

[i] Daniel Kahneman: Thinking, fast and slow; Penguin Books, 2012

Corporate Social Innovation: New paradigm or CSR2.0?

Karen Hackshaw has over 20 years of experience in public relations, marketing and communications. She started her career as a copywriter working with the three largest advertising firms in her native Trinidad and Tobago. Seeking greater challenges, she joined the public relations department of the national energy company. Stepping further afield, she led the communications programme for a regional tourism organisation headquartered in Barbados. Taking a break to do a MSc in Tourism Studies in Mexico, she returned to Barbados to work in the NGO sector in sustainable development and environment and pursued this interest at an international level in the Netherlands. Currently, she has her own independent consultancy which aims to help clients develop custom-made solutions to their communication challenges. Karen's passion for communication and sustainable and ethical development are reflected by her thesis, which looks at how businesses can create win-win situations that can enhance their reputation and still address their corporate responsibility.

It would seem inevitable that businesses, as a result of the current global downturn, should look for ways to get more out of their investments. Porter and Kramer (2003) support the position that while it is expected that organizations must fulfill their responsibilities to people, planet and profit, they need to find more strategic ways to do so and Friedman (1970) dictates that a business' responsibility to its stakeholders is to make profits. In the case of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which to date has assumed more of a philanthropic and compliance profile, this implies a greater streamlining of the activity.

Jason Saul, in the book Social Innovation Inc. (2011) states that the basic benchmarks for having a CSR platform have changed and proposes Corporate Social Innovation (CSI) whereby companies make the social issue their core business.

While in theory this is a great idea, how feasible it is really? Saul, Kanter (2003) and Bisgaard (2009) identify several successful case studies, but how prevalent is this? What is the uptake of this new direction? Are companies really looking at CSI to survive the current, choppy financial waters and beyond?

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Corporate Social Responsibility

The concept of CSR which broadly refers to a company's social obligations to its stakeholders, has existed for several years, yet its legitimacy and relevance is still questioned (Crook, 2005). Despite efforts by prominent organizations to define CSR, it remains open to interpretation, with references being made to 'old' (good deeds peripheral to the organisation, aimed mainly at improving the firm's image and reputation) vs 'new' or 'next generation' CSR (a more strategic alignment of the company's philanthropic efforts with its business to improve the overall performance) (Auld, Bernstein & Cashore, 2008; Reputation Institute, 2011).

Corporate Social Innovation

Current theories see CSI as a more business-oriented, profit-focussed means of addressing social issues (Saul, 2011 and Kanter, 2003). Bisgaard (2009) describes it as "...when companies innovate to develop new prod-

ucts, services, business models, processes, distribution channels and so on, while simultaneously being conscious of solving global challenges related to both environmental issues and social problems". Key characteristics of CSI are:

➔ Business Orientation
In CSI, businesses innovate aspects of the organization's product or service value chain to strategically align their social obligations to the business and integrate these more seamlessly into their operations.

➔ Impact
Companies practising CSI strategically focus their efforts on the impact of their activities. They emphasize tangible vs intangible ROI and employ rigorous monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of their investment.

➔ Investment/Financial
Through internalising their investments in people and planet, CSI is more of an investment by and for the company.

RESEARCH APPROACH

The data set consisted of the entire population of the 12 Dutch companies in the Fortune 500 listing for 2011. A custom-built checklist, the 'Corporate Social Responsibility / Corporate Social Innovation Checklist' comprising separate checklists for CSR and CSI mapped companies' status with respect to the two terms. Definitions for each of the statements were devised to guide the scoring and ensure the reliability. The checklist was divided into three sections comprising a total of thirteen statements. As far as possible, at least two on-line sources were consulted for each organization in the data set: (i) the organization's corporate website and (ii) specific documents on its social responsibility or sustainability initiatives.

RESULTS

The study aimed to gauge companies' preference or use of CSR vs CSI and the adoption of the practices related to both concepts as contained in their corporate communcations. The *prevalence* of certain practices was used as an indicator of their popularity or adoption, looking at the strength or weakness of the CSR/CSI rubrics, depending on their total scores. The total CSR score was 134 compared to a CSI total of 95.5. Within the three subgroups, the trend was for higher scores for the CSR aspects, which reinforces the greater use and popularity of CSR. Eleven of the 12 companies had strong CSR programmes and ten also had a strong CSI programme. Nine companies had a strong uptake of both; two companies had a marked preference for CSR and one had a preference for CSI.

Business Orientation

With respect to the measurement of the degree of strategic alignment to the business, the results indicate that significantly more businesses utilise CSR practices with respect to aligning their social activities to their business' activities (95% vs 57%).

Impact

Impact, in the CSI context, related to companies' focus on tangible vs intangible ROIs and M&E. The scores generated by companies were 69% for CSR vs 64% for CSI. While the majority of the companies complied with the impact definitions of CSR (11-strong, 1- weak); many companies (9-strong, 3-weak) also complied with the CSI definitions. Of the 12 companies, nine had strong scores for both CSR and CSI; two had stronger CSR scores and one had a stronger CSI score.

Investment / Financial

The third sub-section looked at the aspect of investing financial and other assets. The scores generated by the CSR component were higher, (87%) than those generated by CSI (65%). Analysis of the strong/weak dimension show that the majority of the companies complied with the investment / financial definitions of both CSR and CSI.

Industry insights

Data were compared to detect any industry-specific variations in the use of CSR/CSI. The companies in the population were grouped into three categories: (1) aerospace/energy/petrochemical; (2) financial and (3) consumer/food/industrial. The overall industry-specific scores as well as those for the the sub-sections were analysed. The strong/weak dimension of the indicators in the three sub-sections were also examined.

Generally, the CSR scores were all higher than those for CSI and conform with the findings of the previous section. Interesting distinctions however emerged in the 'Impact' (CSR: 3.4; CSI: 3.5) and 'investment / financial' (CSR: 2.9; CSI: 3.3) segments of the Consumer / Food / Industrial industries, which had CSI coming out in front.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS ARISING FROM THE STUDY

Despite the overwhelming reliance on traditional CSR practices related to compliance and image/reputation building, CSI tenets with respect to impact, financial and social performance have also been adopted and nearly all of the population had some sort of CSI programme. Many had innovation programmes and a subset had linked these programmes to sustainability themes and social issues. While companies were inclined to follow traditional guidelines regarding impact, they also demonstrated a commitment to greater sustainability and financial accountability.

The analysis of the prevalence of CSR vs CSI demonstrates the uptake of CSI principles and a preference for CSI in the fields of consumer goods and food, where it may be inferred that given the competitiveness of these markets these industries are more willing to embrace CSI's more stringent impact and accountability requirements.

Halme and Laurila (2009) propose 'corporate responsibility - Innovation' as the third of their three corporate responsibility action-orientation typologies, in which "a business enterprise takes an environmental or a social problem as a source of business innovation and seeks to develop new products or services that provide a solution to the problem." The similarity of the two definitions suggests that the most sensible approach may be to delimit the two concepts to make them more easily appreciated by all; CSR would encompass actions related to compliance, philanthropy and social responsibility and CSI would represent the business approach that focuses on social and environmental innovation.

The future of CSR/CSI

Is CSI a new paradigm or simply the next step for CSR? CSR will always constitute a key element of the organization's outreach as it impacts the company's identity, image and reputation. Effective CSR allows businesses to answer the inevitable demands in their environments and should be sufficiently flexible and adaptable to meet changing needs and scenarios, including the demands for a more "aware" CSR where donors, in addition to the reputational gains, call for more from recipients.

The results indicate that businesses are exploring more innovative and sustainable alternatives to guide their corporate responsibility activities. The type of communications arising from these alternatives would need to stress different parameters and achievements as well as serve different functions in keeping with how CSR is integrated into the organization.

Both a mindset and a set of practices, CSI's greatest contribution may be seen with respect to the area of impact where companies seem to want to be more accountable. CSI communications replace the words 'sponsorships' and 'donations' with 'investments' and 'awards' which imply greater return value for the donor organization. Investments are made so that the businesses can be self-sustaining and the monies paid up-front are more like seed funds to get the social construct off the ground, hence a number of the organizations in the study had established Foundations, charged with administering their more significant social sustainability activities.

Whereas CSR stays at the periphery of the business and serves as a medium through which the organization attempts to fulfill society's expectations, CSI represents the addition of value to an internalized social issue, requiring a totally new mindset, and a new set of skills.

A Case of Communication: Managing Legitimacy in the Law Firm Industry

'Legitimacy is a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions' (Suchman, 1995). Various signals in the market and in society indicate that the legitimacy of the law firm industry could be under threat. The aim of this research was to find out how it can maintain its legitimacy in these turbulent times.

The central question of this thesis is: *What can lawyers do to maintain their legitimacy?*

Subquestions are defined as:
➜ What changes and threats to their legitimacy do lawyers perceive?
➜ How do lawyers manage their legitimacy?
➜ How does communication provide a solution to managing (their) legitimacy?

Literature review first gave answers to how the concept is defined, why legitimacy is important, what approaches and types there are, and what perception management entails. As a form of preliminary research, I spoke to various stakeholders of the law firm industry. The main research then consisted of fifteen explorative interviews with a diverse group of lawyers.

The results led to three sets of perceived changes and threats to their legitimacy: 1.) social changes and threats, 2.) economical changes and threats and 3.) political changes and threats. For each type of threat, I offered insight into what these threats look like. Regarding the first, I discovered that lawyers are confronted with an increase in 1.) information access, 2.) media attention, 3.) outspokenness, and 4.) a changed position in society. With respect to the second, lawyers are confronted with the crisis and an increase in competition. And with respect to the third, lawyers perceive changes and threats to their legal domain and their oversight.

The lawyers realize that the way they are perceived by the general public is not a realistic, and even a negative image. However, they are not too concerned about their perception and do not consciously manage their legitimacy. In terms of communications, lawyers predominantly stick to traditional means of (one-way) communication towards their direct audiences. Themes I labeled here are: 1.) traditional media, 2.) social media and 3.) use of language. In terms of behavior, my research shows that there are three themes that indicate how is acted upon legitimacy threats: 1.) corporate social responsibility, 2.) approach to customers and 3.) physical markers.

Finally, based on the findings of the interviews and literature, I formulated three ways in which communication provides a solution to maintaining their legitimacy. First of all, lawyers need to enable dialogue and listen and monitor their audiences. Secondly, they need to start messaging pro-actively. Thirdly, the Bar needs to pay attention to their internal communications in order to be able to do the above effectively. These activities together are aimed at creating a correct and trustworthy image, being able to act upon perceived changes and threats to legitimacy and ultimately, maintaining legitimacy.

REBECCA JOOSTEN

Reputation is becoming an increasingly important asset for organizations nowadays, as it attracts talent, finance and customers. This international executive master boosted my theoretical knowledge on corporate communication and presented me with best practices from the world of business. I thoroughly enjoyed going to New York and Brussels, meeting fellow communication managers and being inspired by business leaders.

After completing a degree in Communication and Design Management, I started my career at the District Court of Breda where I was responsible for media relations and public information. Soon after, I became communications advisor to the national Criminal Sector Program and the Quality Management Board at the Netherlands Council for the Judiciary in The Hague.

My favorite projects include managing the national Open Day of the Judiciary in 2009, opening the doors of all courts in the Netherlands to 46.000 visitors. I aligned colleagues throughout the country and managed the national campaign, which led to a significant increase in visitors and extensive press coverage. Following this success, I then became responsible for the complete development, redesign and content migration of the 1000+ page website of the Judiciary, which is used by lawyers, students and the press.

To broaden my horizon, I then joined the country's largest legal service provider to work in Marketing. I believe it is essential that communication is understood from a result-driven perspective and enjoy combining communication, marketing and business development. I believe these disciplines will continue to grow closer towards each other in the future and hope to pursue my career in this exciting field.

www.linkedin.com/in/joosten

'What's in it for me?' The mediating role of value in alumni relations

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become a strategic activity adding value to both organisations and the society and is by now an important component of the dialogue between organisations and their stakeholders. Nevertheless, little guidance is available providing direction for organisations on how to implement CSR strategy in order to impact stakeholders' attitudes and behaviour.

KINGA KREPA

In the course of six years as a marketing and communications professional, Kinga has worked closely with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders at Shell, the European Space Agency and The Hague University of Applied Sciences and has gained a wide exposure to all aspects of internal branding, organizational change and strategic marketing and communications.

As a Communication and Change Coordinator at Shell she was a member of the team developing and delivering internal communication and organizational change activities to support Shell's IT infrastructure group during the IT outsourcing process. At the European Space Agency (ESA), she was responsible for reporting and communications activities for ESA's Human Spaceflight Directorate, which included drafting the Directorate's reports for internal use, as well as formal progress reports targeted at external stakeholders. She also worked on the design of the Directorate's Intranet Community Site and wrote articles for ESA's Corporate Intranet site on a regular basis. At The Hague University of Applied Sciences she is currently supporting the implementation of the university's internationalisation policy and long-term marketing and positioning strategy. Prior to the Executive Master's degree in Corporate Communication at the Erasmus University, Rotterdam School of Management, she completed a Bachelor's degree in Communication Management at The Hague University of Applied Sciences (THU). As a graduate who currently works at the THU, she has used her knowledge and interest in the relationship between the university and its graduates, and her passion for Corporate Social responsibility, to write a thesis which successfully combined the two aspects.

Contact: k.krepa@gmail.com

Theorists have identified many company-favouring outcomes of CSR, yet little is known about the psychological mechanisms that drive stakeholder responses to CSR activity. Borrowing from the literature on consumer value, a research model is proposed that explains how CSR provides individual stakeholders, in this case individual alumni, with extrinsic versus intrinsic benefits. The model examines how the extent of benefits which an individual stakeholder, in this case an alumnus / alumna, derives from CSR initiatives, influences his/her attitude and behaviour towards the university. The process proposed in this model is one in which alumni gain personal benefits based on their perceptions of various initiatives. The results provide evidence that there is a positive relation between CSR and willingness to participate in university activities. With that, the proposed scenarios contribute to understanding the impact that CSR has on alumni as a stakeholder group. The proposed experiment fails, however, to clarify the nature of the relationship between the CSR and non CSR activities and attitudes and behaviour of alumni. Collected data shows that intrinsic and extrinsic value sought by alumni does not mediate the relationship between CSR and willingness. There is, however, a positive

Building relationships through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): Impact of CSR related activities on alumni attitudes and behaviours

relation between willingness and the value sought in an activity. These findings suggest that when a university wants to develop a sustainable alumni relations programme, certain CSR-related activities seem to be more effective at eliciting the willingness to participate than non CSR activities. Therefore it is crucial for policy makers to consider CSR-related elements in the alumni policies and for communication practitioners to highlight in their communication both intrinsic and extrinsic value of various initiatives.

INTRODUCTION

Research area

This research covered the area of stakeholder management, namely creating stakeholder value through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the impact of CSR on stakeholders' attitudes and behaviours.

Introduction

Up until now alumni relations at The Hague University of Applied Sciences (THU) have been established and maintained on a decentralized level between international alumni (students of foreign nationality who studied at THU) and their programmes / lecturers. Considering that in the future THU will depend more on their alumni support, the university is looking for a sustainable approach to the alumni relations on a centralized level. This research paper was aimed at finding the basis for such a sustainable approach.

The key to successful alumni relations is to find out what impacts the willingness to give back, namely, what type of activities impact willingness to give back, and what type of value sought from these activities

gives rise to such action/choice. Understanding these different motives to give back can help education policy makers and communication professionals customize their alumni policy and communication more effectively and determine which alumni to approach and how.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Universities begin to engage in social responsibility initiatives by devoting their time and resources to aspects such as sustainability (Alshuwaikhat and Abubakar, 2008; Pollock, et al., 2009; Wright, 2010), environmental impact (Christensen et al., 2009) and inclusion of environmental issues in their teaching activities, research, and university management (Smith et al., 1994; Hoffman, 1999; Carpenter and Meehan, 2002; Sharp, 2002; Holt, 2003; Rohweder, 2004; Rusinko, 2005). Just like companies and other organizations, universities report on CSR activities to a wide array of stakeholders. However, the impact of such practices on university's stakeholders is yet to be researched (Nejati, 2011).

Despite the clear potential of CSR to impact stakeholders' attitudes and behaviour, the CSR activities and outcomes measured have been varied and inconsistent. Researchers have examined many of the outcomes of CSR for various stakeholder groups, but there remains a dearth of research looking at the psychological mechanisms through which individual stakeholders interpret and react to a company's CSR activities.

Borrowing from the literature on consumer value, a research model has been proposed that explains how CSR provides individual

stakeholders, in this case individual alumni, with extrinsic versus intrinsic benefits. The model examined how the extent of benefits which an individual stakeholder, in this case an alumnus / alumna, derives from CSR initiatives, influences his/her attitude and behaviour towards the university. The process proposed in this model is one in which alumni gain personal benefits based on their perceptions of various initiatives. This paper also discussed how the extent to which a stakeholder derives benefits from CSR initiatives impacts stakeholders' attitudes and behaviour.

Consistent with both the stakeholder view (Donaldson and Preston, 1995; Post et al. 2002) and the literature on the effects of CSR on performance (Bhattacharya et al., 2006; Barnett, 2007), in the proposed model benefits are the central mediator through which CSR strengthens stakeholder-company relationships. As argued by Bhattacharya et al. (2009), consumers do not view CSR as one, overall impression of a firm, rather, they view each initiative presented to them in relation to how it can add to the overall value proposition for a purchase. This effect is based primarily on the perception of value in an exchange derived from conceiving CSR in different forms. So it can be assumed that based on their perceptions of the activity organised by the university, alumni gain different intrinsic and extrinsic benefits (such as activity being fun or being recognized for volunteering).

Main question

The research paper was aimed at providing direction for the university on how to develop and implement an alumni relations programme and whether CSR could

be a basis of such a programme and positively impact stakeholders' attitudes and behaviour. Therefore the main research question is:

How do CSR activities impact alumni attitudes and behaviours?

Sub-questions

To allow for more in-depth analysis a set of sub questions have also been addressed:

➔ Which activities, CSR or non-CSR related, have a greater impact on alumni attitudes and behaviour?
➔ Which types of intrinsic and extrinsic value do alumni seek?
➔ Which intrinsic and extrinsic benefits, both CSR related and non CSR related, could THU provide to alumni?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

CSR activity

Consistent with Wood's definition of CSR (1991, p. 693), company's initiatives can be considered to be socially responsible to the extent that they meet particular social needs or ends (actions socially desirable) through the investment of resources (e.g. time, money), and provide observable outcomes. Barnett (2007) refers to these observable outcomes as activities. Previous research shows that CSR activities can be categorised into different types which elicit different forms of stakeholder responses (Barnett, 2007; Peloza and

Shang, 2011; Kourula and Halme, 2008. Many other studies examine differences in CSR activities across three categories suggesting that some CSR types are more effective than others (Anselmsson and Johansson, 2007; Arli and Lasmono, 2010; Greening and Turban, 2000; Oppewal et al., 2006; Pirsh et al., 2007; Singh et al., 2008; Turker, 2009; Wang, 2008). These findings suggest that those forms of CSR that deliver the most value to specific stakeholders will be the most effective (Peloza and Shang, 2011). Thus, it can be assumed that some alumni activities will be more effective than others.

CSR impact on stakeholder attitudes and behaviour

A large and growing body of evidence shows that CSR positively impacts stakeholder attitudes and behaviour. Previous research amongst consumers indicates that CSR contributes to improving attitudes and eliciting desired behaviour (Du et al., 2007; Creyer and Ross, 1996; Brown and Dacin, 1997; Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001; Sen, Bhattacharya, and Korschun, 2006; Klein and Dawar, 2004). Other researchers contribute toward understanding of what positive impact corporate social activities have on employees (Riordan et al., 1997; Bartel, 2001; Peterson, 2004; Brammer et al., 2005; Greening and Turban, 2000; Turban and Greening, 1997).

Alumni, as a stakeholder group, share certain similarities with both consumers and employees. On one hand they can be considered as external stakeholders, like consumers, because of the fact that alumni might in the future purchase university 'products' (e.g. pursuing a master's programme or professional course). On the other hand, alumni can be considered as

internal stakeholders, like employees, because of alumni bonds with the lecturers and their involvement in their university. Thus, considering that alumni, as stakeholders, share similarities with both consumers and employees, it can be hypothesised that:

H1: CSR-related activities are more effective at improving attitudes and eliciting desired behaviour amongst alumni towards THU than non CSR-related activities.

Stakeholder theory

Organisations' survival and success depends on their stakeholders' willingness to share their resources. According to Clarkson (1995), organisations are not responsible to the entire society but to their stakeholders – those who are, and can be, affected. In order to manage the resource exchange with stakeholders, organisations need to fulfil certain financial and social responsibilities and obligations toward them (Wood, 1991; Carroll, 1979; 1991; Freeman, 1984; Clarkson, 1995). Considering that alumni hold many of THU's key resources such as time, knowledge, skills and money, as suggested by scholars and researchers, by balancing universities and alumni interest, THU might be able to attract the key resources which can contribute to various aspects from student recruitment to improving quality of education. Based on Clarkson (1995) one can also assume that THU's success will depend upon the ability to create value for this stakeholder group.

Stakeholder value

Many philosophers and researchers attempted to define value and reflected on its multifaceted nature (Dodds and Monroe 1985; Mandler 1982; Perry 1926;

Table 1: Holbrook's typology of consumer value

		Extrinsic	**Intrinsic**
Self-oriented	Active	Efficiency (O/I; convenience)	Play (Fun)
	Reactive	Excellence (Quality)	Aesthetics (Beauty)
Other-oriented	Active	Status (Success, impression)	Ethics (Virtue, Justice)
	Reactive	Esteem (Reputation, materialism)	Spirituality (Faith)

Sewall 1901; Zeithaml 1988). Amongst researchers, Holbrook has shown a long and consistent interest in the topic of value from both objective (price and functionality) and subjective (experience) viewpoints. During the early 1980s, he proposed to describe value in the consumption process as both a hedonistic and utilitarian experience, offering a broader view of consumer behaviour. Holbrook's interest in the issue resulted in a formal typology (see table 1).

Peloza and Shang's (2011) examination of value suggests that all four types of consumer value - Extrinsic Self-oriented, Extrinsic Other-oriented, Intrinsic Self-oriented, and Intrinsic Other-oriented - may be present in CSR activities. As argued by Day (2000), value equals benefits obtained minus resources expended. The greatest value derives from goods and services that are believed to yield the most benefits and require the least expenditure of consumer resources. Thus,

H2: the extent to which an alumnus / alumna derives benefits from CSR initiatives influences his / her attitude and behaviour towards the university.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research model

A research model has been proposed that explains how CSR provides individual stakeholders, in this case individual alumni, with extrinsic versus intrinsic benefits. The model suggests that the extent of benefits which an individual stakeholder, in this case an alumnus / alumna, derives from CSR initiatives influences his/her attitude and behaviour

towards the university. The process proposed in this model is one in which alumni gain personal benefits based on their perceptions of various initiatives.

Consistent with both the stakeholder view (Donaldson and Preston, 1995; Post et al. 2002) and the literature on the CSR effects on performance (Bhattacharya et al., 2009; Barnett, 2007), in the proposed model benefits were the central mediator through which CSR strengthens stakeholder-company relationships.

In general, the proposed approach assumes the following model intended to portray the mediating role that value plays in determining CSR effects:

Experiment

To identify a cause-and-effect relationship between variables, an experiment has been conducted. This experiment examined the influence of CSR on alumni responses and the type of value alumni seek based on two scenarios, CSR related activities versus non-CSR related activities. A two-phase survey of THU international alumni has been conducted.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Respondents

A total of 106 respondents participated in the study (50 in the CSR group and 56 in the Non CSR group). 39% of participants were male and 61% were female. Most of participants graduated between 2009 and 2012, some 60%, 16% graduates between 2007 and 2008 and 24% in 2006 or earlier. As for the nationalities, the biggest group were those holding Bulgarian nationality

17% followed by Indonesians 13%. Other nationalities represented in fairly big number were Russians 8%, Chinese 8% and Germans 6%.

Hypothesis testing

As suggested by previous research on CSR (Bhattacharya, et al., 2009; Peloza and Shang, 2011), the relation between CSR activities and alumni willingness has been tested:
H1: CSR-related activities are more effective at improving attitudes and eliciting desired behaviour amongst alumni towards THU than non CSR-related activities.

The null and alternative hypotheses that were tested:
H_O : μ CSR = μ non CSR
H_1 : μ CSR > μ non CSR

The critical value of 1,96 (Rumsey, 2011, p. 351) allowed for rejecting the Ho but only in the case of the first activity, where the t-value is 2,029 falling on the right 'tail' of the distribution (above positive critical value).

As suggested by previous research on CSR (Bhattacharya, et al., 2009; Peloza and Shang, 2011), it has been tested whether value mediates the relationship between CSR and willingness:
H2: the extent to which an alumnus / alumna derives benefits from CSR initiatives influences his / her attitude and behaviour towards the university.

The collected data suggest that there is no significant relationship between CSR and value, therefore it can be concluded that value does not mediate the relationship between CSR and willingness, and that willingness is positively related to the value sought in an activity.

Figure 1: Research model - mediating role of value on CSR

Antecedents (drivers)	Mediator	Consequences

CSR
(CSR-related versus non-CSR - related activities)

Value (intrinsic versus extrinsic value sought from each activity)

(Attitudes (A) & Behaviours (B))
(A)Willingness
(B) Donating time, money, skills
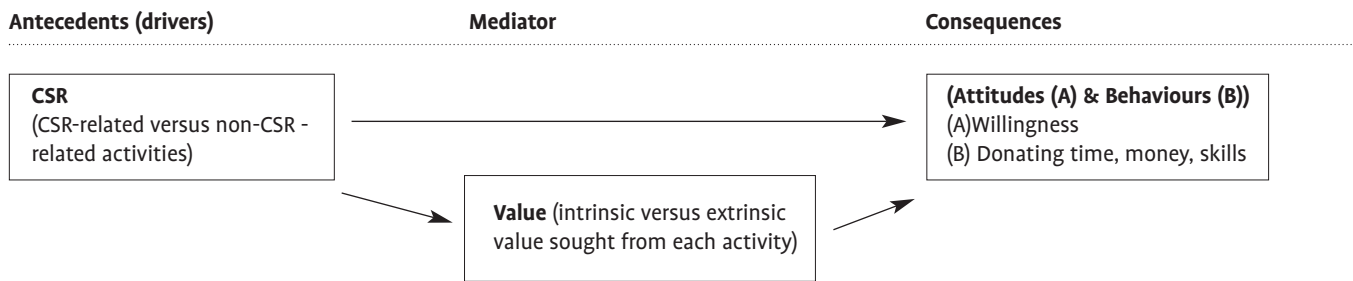
CONCLUSION

This research paper was aimed at answering the question of how CSR activities impact alumni attitudes and behaviours. The results provide evidence that there is a positive relation between CSR and willingness to participate in university activities. With that, the proposed scenarios contribute to understanding of the impact CSR has on alumni as a stakeholder group. The proposed experiment fails however, to clarify the nature of the relationship between the CSR and non CSR activities (the independent variable) and attitudes and behaviour of alumni (dependent variables). Collected data shows that intrinsic and extrinsic value sought by alumni (the mediator variable) does not mediate the relationship between CSR and willingness.

Theoretical implications

The experiment conducted in this study was based on three theoretical pillars, namely the impact of CSR on attitudes and behaviour; the stakeholder view; and stakeholder value. The findings of this study add to the body of knowledge regarding all three aspects.

This research paper provides ground in understanding the impact CSR has on alumni as a stakeholder and allows concluding that, to a certain extent, alumni are similar to consumers and other traditionally studied stakeholders in terms of their preferences for CSR activities versus non CSR activities. Collected data points to a positive relation between CSR and willingness of alumni to participate in THU activity, namely THU alumni day.

The area of research where this paper fails to be conclusive and contribute to the

body of knowledge on CSR, is stakeholder responses to CSR depending on how CSR is manifested (Green and Peloza, 2011). From the four activities that have been tested, two were categorized as philanthropy and two as a business practice. The fact that results regarding one of the activities, alumni day, were statistically significant, suggests that philanthropic activities are more effective at eliciting desired attitudes and behaviour than the business practice related activities. However, the fact that the results for another philanthropic activity, donating money to the THU fund, were not statistically significant asks for further research.

The collected data suggest that there is no significant relationship between CSR and value, therefore it can be concluded that value does not mediate the relationship between CSR and willingness and that willingness is positively related to the value sought in an activity.

What the collected data does point to is a strong positive correlation between the willingness to participate and the value sought (Pearson's $r = 0{,}201$, $p < 0.05$) and between value and willingness (Pearson's $r = 0{,}463$, $p < 0.01$). As for the different types of value the strongest positive relation is between 'intrinsic-self oriented' type of value and willingness (Pearson's $r = 0{,}514$, $p < 0.01$) and the weakest between 'intrinsic other-related' type of value and willingness (Pearson's $r = 0{,}414$, $p < 0.01$).

Managerial implications

These research findings have implications for communication practitioners and educational policymakers for the use of CSR in their communication and policies. Specifically, the findings suggest that

when a university wants to develop a sustainable alumni relations programme, certain CSR related activities seem to be more effective at eliciting the willingness to participate than non CSR activities. Therefore it is crucial for policy makers to consider CSR related elements in the alumni policies and for communication practitioners to highlight in their communication both intrinsic and extrinsic value of various initiatives.

The effectiveness of an organisation depends on its ability to attract key resources from its stakeholders, and in order to succeed, organisations must therefore develop and maintain healthy interactive relationships with their stakeholders. Considering that alumni hold many of THU's key resources such as time, knowledge, skills and money, as suggested by scholars and researchers, by balancing universities and alumni interest, THU might be able to attract the key resources which can contribute to various aspects from student recruitment to improving quality of education.

CEO Reputation: A critical success factor for company reputation

The search for the right balance between restraint and exuberance in the positioning of the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) is a main question for the CEO and the CCO (Chief Communication Officer). From prior studies we know that the reputation of a company is linked to the reputation of the CEO (Gaines-Ross, 2003; Ranft and Ferris and Zinko and Buckley, 2006).

Christine van der Linden (42) is co-founder and senior consultant at Marketing PR agency Linden & Barbosa in Amsterdam. She prefers innovative ideas to well-trodden paths. Linden & Barbosa was founded in 2001 and has clients in different branches, such as lifestyle, entertainment, tourism, food and business services.

"We put brand strategy and effective results first. And thanks to our personal contacts with the media, we know exactly what matters to journalists, editors, bloggers and other influentials. Again and again, we succeed in responding to their needs with relevant campaigns and stimulating stories. Because real news is something you can make. We represent guaranteed publicity. Our customers can judge us on it."

Christine has been involved in diverse communication issues, such as 'the rebranding of TNT Post to PostNL', 'the repositioning of the island Aruba', 'the 170 anniversary of C&A', 'the 35 anniversary of Sesamstraat', and 'the introduction of Dutch Mars bars with UTZ certified logo (made from sustainably produced cocoa)'. She also advised on many international product introductions, eg. the launches of the game consoles PlayStation3 and PlayStation Portable (PSP), the opening of Europe's largest online shoeshop Sarenza, and the introduction of the organic product range Whole Earth.

Before establishing her own agency Christine has worked as a communication manager at the real estate company Cushman & Wakefield and at the French Tourist Board, where she represented the Rhône-Alpes region. She studied International Tourism Management & Consultancy in Breda followed by diverse marketing courses.

The main objectives of this study were to investigate if the CEO and CCO acknowledge that a CEO's reputation influences the reputation of the company and to identify the key drivers of a CEO's reputation, assuming that the CEO's reputation, like a company's reputation, is the sum of perceptions of different constituents. Based on diverse theories about company reputation and CEO reputation a conceptual framework has been developed, with as starting point the RepTrak Model by Fombrun and Van Riel (2007). The driver "leadership" of the RepTrak Model has been replaced by a new driver "CEO reputation". Leadership is one of the elements driving the CEO's reputation.

The study involved three initial face-to-face interviews to refine questions and theories, an online survey and a final face-to-face interview for qualitative feedback. The interviews were conducted with a very experienced corporate communication professional and three CCOs of major organizations. In total 19 CCOs, head of the department or reporting directly to the CEO or to the senior management team participated to the study.

The results give evidence that CEOs in general recognize the importance of the company's reputation to achieve business goals. In the organization a CCO is in charge of the daily management of the company brand and reputation. The majority of CCOs in this study agreed that the reputation of the CEO has an impact on the company's reputation.

The CCOs indicated the following top 10 drivers as most important drivers influencing a CEO's reputation:
1 Having a clear vision
2 Verbal qualities
3 Motivating/inspiring employees
4 Employee relations
5 Individual leadership capability
6 Media relations
7 Ethical behavior
8 Customer relations
9 Attracting and retaining a quality management team
10 Charisma

Other objectives of this study were to investigate which of the drivers are on the agenda in the working relationship between the CEO and the CCO. The study shows that CCOs are in particular involved in the top 8 key drivers . They are hardly involved in "attracting and retaining a quality management team" neither in the CEO's reputation driver "charisma". In general CCOs would like to have more influence on the top ten drivers especially on the vision of the CEO and on how he motivates and inspires employees. They would also like to be involved in the choice for a qualitative management team as well as in the verbal qualities of the CEO. Last, CCO's would like to have more influence on the corporate social responsibility policy.

Elements like the private life of the CEO and his philanthropic interests are not seen as important drivers of the CEO's reputation by the CCO's participating in this study. Although Anglo-Saxon literature suggests that the public is more and more obsessed with celebrity gossip and culture and wants to learn more about CEO's on different subjects.

A CEO must be aware that he is the ultimate spokesperson of the organization and the ambassador of the corporate brand. In case of a board of directors, they will have to agree that the CEO spend a portion of time to communicate his clear vision, to improve his verbal qualities and to motivate and inspire his employees. Once the CEO and the board are convinced about the positive effects of the CEO's reputation on the company's reputation, the CCO should be involved and build the CEO's reputation as part of his communication strategy. In the process of building the CEO's reputation, it is recommendable that a CEO works closely with the CCO in

Figure 1: the main drivers of company reputation and the multiple constituencies' images of a company
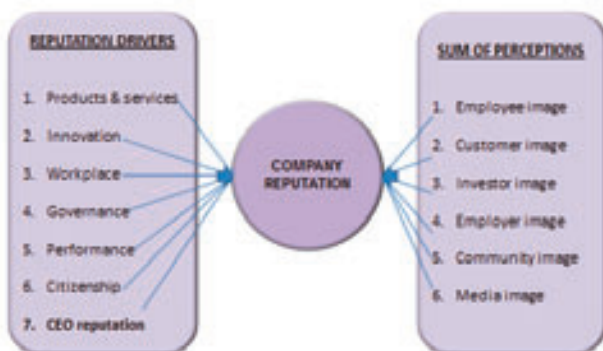
Figure 2: conceptual framework of the influence of the CEO's reputation on the company's reputation

building or maintaining charismatic relationships with employees, media and customers.

CEOs who are well perceived by the company's stakeholders can have a direct positive impact on the company's reputation and success. For the organization acquiring a celebrity CEO it can increase the stock price of the company, at least on the short-term. It can signal to investors and other key stakeholders that the CEO is of high quality and likely to add economic value to the company. Organizations also can benefit from the image of their new CEO. They can give a sign to the public that the company is moving in a different direction. The reputation of the CEO can inspire and motivate employees and increase their morale. As a consequence, the firm may also be able to attract higher quality employees, acquire capital at lower rates and transact with suppliers under more favorable terms.

Amongst others the role of the CCO is to advise the CEO on when, where, how and

how often the CEO has to communicate with which key stakeholders. It is recommendable to set up a CEO constellation chart and indicate the key stakeholders for the CEO to communicate with. The best moments to profile the CEO and build his reputation are when the company is in change, for example when moving from a new course or when a new CEO takes over. The CEO's personal reputation can also be strengthened at the presentation of financial figures and in times of crisis. As shown in Figure 3. a greater understanding of the CCO's roles can be developed by juxtaposing the concepts of *company reputation and CEO reputation*. The two-by-two matrix shown in Figure 3. offers four types of CCO's roles. A low reputation either means that 1) the CEO or the company is unknown, ignored or overlooked by the stakeholders or that 2) the CEO or the company has a bad or negative reputation.

The highest attainable position in reputation management is to have a high company reputation and a high CEO reputation. The arrows in figure 3. indicate the

sequence in changing towards the ideal situation. For example in case the company's reputation and the CEO's reputation are low the first move forward is to improve the CEO's reputation which can have a direct positive impact on the company's reputation and success.

Figure 3: four types of CCO's roles

Building Communication: An exploration of contemporary themes and practices in shaping the communication function of organizations

As a manager in communication I'm standing with one leg in the communication profession and with the other in the field of management. An important part of my daily practice is the building and shaping of the communication function at Achmea. This seemed an interesting topic for my graduation research as well.

Adwin Peeks (1969) is a communication manager with a background in marketing communication, organizational change and corporate communication. He currently works at Achmea Corporate Communication as manager of the team Internal and External Communication advice.

As a communication professional he works with passion on innovative projects in reputation management, strategic alignment, internal change and enhancement of communicative skills of the organization. As a manager he builds, together with his colleagues, on a 'best in class' team of responsible communication professionals.

I have investigated common practises in the communication field and tried to create an image of the themes that play a role in shaping departments of communication and how these themes are implemented in practice. My colleagues and I can certainly use the insights of this research in our efforts to achieve 'a best in class communication department'. Hopefully the results are of interest to you too.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to create an image of the main themes that play a role in shaping departments of communication and how these themes are implemented in practice, I asked the following research question:

What is currently considered the best way to shape a communication department?

By answering the following sub questions I worked on my conclusions:
- ➔ What are relevant developments concerning the communication field?
- ➔ How do communication professionals perceive these developments?
- ➔ What are common themes and practices that are currently seen and used in shaping communication departments?
- ➔ In what way do (managers of) communication departments cope with these developments when (re) shaping their structure, processes and focus?

RESEARCH STRATEGY

This is a qualitative field research with an explorative goal and nature. This kind of research is often chosen when there is insufficient knowledge or a lack of (good) theory to start with. Prior to my research I did not formulate a hypothesis about the possible outcomes. As much as possible I have started this adventure with an open mind, as blank as possible, in order to generate a broad view on the contemporary themes and practices in the communication field. The explorative nature of this research fits well with my objective to focus on perceptions and behaviour of the communications professionals.

Data collection methods

The collection of data was carried out in two phases. The first phase was more exploratory in nature and intended to create a general overview of the topics to be discussed. In the second phase, these issues are further elaborated using in-depth interviews.

Phase 1: exploring the topics

In the first phase I collected and prioritised trends, themes and practices that can be recognised. In order to get an overview of trends and themes concerning the organization of communication as seen by scholars and practitioners, I reviewed available literature and research.

The field research started with a case study of the Corporate Communication Department of Achmea. Through interviews and a brainstorm session with the members of the management team the main themes in shaping the communication department were gathered and prioritized.

At a meeting of Logeion (a union of communication professionals) these findings were elaborated. In a group session with 29 communication professionals, the main topics from Achmea were reviewed and complemented with new topics. These topics were then prioritized again. Finally, best- and worst cases in shaping a communication department were discussed.

Phase 2: deepening the understanding

The first phase of research resulted in a general overview of the topics that are currently perceived as important when (re) shaping a communication department. In this second phase, these topics are further elaborated using semi-standardized interviews (Berg 2007:70-72). Ten communication professionals from different organizations were questioned on their priorities and current practice in two hour long talks at their own location.

In preparation of the interview the interviewees filled out a short questionnaire. An important part of this was the ranking of the predetermined themes in the order in which they were relevant to them in their current situation.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

In the following table the findings of the theoretical and field research are combined. On the left you find the shortlist of important themes in organizing the communication function, as found in literature. The middle column lists developments, most mentioned in the interviews as drivers for changing the communication function. On the right- are the most important themes as discussed in the interviews.

Shortlist theoretical findings
→ Linking business strategy to communication effectively.
→ Helping top management in strategic decision-making.
→ Coping with changing roles in a changing society (financial crisis, trust issues, digital evolution and social web).
→ Cross-functional connection, cooperation and integration of communication practitioners in the organization.

Developments as drivers for change
→ The financial crisis and the resulting budget cuts on communication.
→ The changing environment motivates a new strategic direction of the organization.
→ Developments in society make the delegation of central tasks to operational departments obvious. In the case of communication this is enhanced by the rise of social media.
→ Developments in social media have a fundamental impact on the role of communication.

Shortlist field research
→ Connection with the business and top management.
→ Enhancing communicative skills and actions of (employees & management of) the organisation.
→ Developments in digital evolution and social media.

When combining the themes from theoretical and field research with the most mentioned drivers for change, the following list of practices that are currently considered to be the best way to shape a communication department can be found:

Building Communication:
An exploration
of contemporary
themes and
practices in shaping
the communication
function of
organizations

1 **Connecting with the business and top management**
In a time of financial crisis and budget cuts, communication needs to add clear value to the organization. This can be achieved by linking business strategy to communication effectively or by making a contribution to strategic decision making of the top. The changing environment often motivates new strategic directions for the organization; this creates the opportunity to contribute strategically, but also increases the need to invest permanently in the connection with members and developments of the organization.

2 **Enhancing communicative skills and actions of (employees & management of) the organisation**
In a 'social society', where everyone is a communicator, a growing awareness of individual responsibility seems to emerge. In line with this, organizations find it obvious to delegate central (staff) responsibilities to employees. Instead of delivering an operational contribution, communication now takes a role in teaching the members of the organisation to take up communication themselves. Advisors take the roles of coach, facilitator and perhaps guardian of quality standards.

3 **Increasing social media capabilities**
Developments in social media have a fundamental impact on the role of communication and need to be incorporated in building and shaping the communication function. Training, hiring new talent and restructuring the department are means to this goal.He has gained new friendships and a broader perspective on corporate communication, during his study at Erasmus MCC.

Nothing about us, without us. Creating axternal alignment around patient access to cancer care excellence

These are challenging times for the pharmaceutical industry. Stakeholder trust, almost everywhere, is at an all time low. The industry suffers countless negative portrayals in the media and in popular culture. These constant attacks are based on a number of interrelated negative perceptions.

Corina Ramers-Verhoeven is the global communications lead for an innovative Lilly oncology project. Mrs. Ramers-Verhoeven provides strategic guidance to the oncology business unit, its global corporate affairs team and the Lilly affiliates. She helps drive business results through tailored communications initiatives and develops and implements communications plans to create alignment among key internal and external stakeholders. This includes building Lilly oncology's reputation as well as implementing and coordinating communications initiatives in the affiliates. Mrs. Ramers-Verhoeven acts as a media spokesperson and is responsible for issues and crisis management. She has over twenty years of communications experience of which more than 12 years in the innovative pharmaceutical industry. After her work experience in 1990 for the NHS in the UK, Mrs. Ramers-Verhoeven returned back to the Netherlands to take on a position as health promotion advisor for the Dutch regional health service. Simultaneously she worked as a medical writer for the biggest regional newspaper in the Netherlands. In the 1990s she implemented and coordinated two large population cancer screening programs for breast cancer and cervical cancer in the southern part of the Netherlands. In the new millennium she took the opportunity to join the then only Dutch based research oriented pharmaceutical company Organon as director global communications for women's health and R&D. Eight years later she decided to spread her wings and joined U.S. based bio-pharmaceutical company Eli Lily. After being responsible for regional communications in Europe for almost four years, she joined the global Lilly oncology business unit in the beginning of this year as dedicated communications lead for an innovative Lilly oncology project. Based out of the Netherlands Mrs. Ramers-Verhoeven is a member of the global oncology project team that resides in Indianapolis, Indiana, U.S. After participating in the Corporate Communications Summer Course already in 2003, Mrs. Ramers-Verhoeven started the executive program in Corporate Communications at the Rotterdam School of Management in December 2010. She successfully completed this study in November 2012.

The true and harsh reality is that, today, perception is the only thing that matters. Though some now argue that perception is reality, it is what is now done by the industry that will set it apart.

No one argues about the value of truly innovative medicines. They save and improve patients' lives, give new hope, and improve the quality of life by reducing the need for hospitalization and surgery. And they add value to national healthcare systems. Everyone depends, at some point, on pharmaceutical innovation for their wellbeing.

Pharmaceutical companies must continue to combine novel and incremental innovation in ways that optimize the medical and economic benefits to stakeholders. But they also need to listen to stakeholders and innovate in ways that addresses real stakeholder needs—as opposed to industry needs.

STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

Organizations are lost without the full support of key stakeholders both inside and outside of its four walls. When the viewpoints of outside stakeholders are in sync with a company's strategic intents, the benefits are clear. If organizations invest time and money to create access

Because of the confidential nature of the research findings, the author
has requested not to publish the results in a public platform

to external stakeholders, or successively persuade external stakeholders to work together, organizations can reduce their susceptibility. This can be done through a set of strategies built around negotiation or, in an inevitable situation, with methods that are focused on confrontation. Negotiation and confrontation strategies to achieve external support can be applied in a one-to-one manner or with a network of parties. Besides each can be done in a formal or informal way. Developing an effective roadmap to internal and external alignment requires a balanced approach between negotiation and confrontation. Selecting the most appropriate roadmap requires managerial courage in parallel with relevant intelligence about stakeholders and a clear anticipation of their reactions to the roadmap's style.

PROVIDING ACCESS TO INNOVATIVE CANCER TREATMENTS

Lilly Oncology's core business is the discovery and development of innovative cancer medicines. However developing new cancer medicines is only part of the picture. Ensuring people actually benefit from these solutions is even more important. This involves addressing regulatory pricing and reimbursement barriers to access to new medicines, combating trade in falsified medicines and helping ensure that patients adhere to the treatments they have been prescribed. The industry is actively involved in driving progress in all of these areas in collaboration with regulators, payers, the medical community and civil society. Key to ensuring patients do not have to wait to access potentially life changing new treatments are more efficient procedures for the pricing and reim-

bursement of innovative medicines. Lilly wants to help to provide access to oncology medicines. Currently Lilly has three promising oncology molecules in its pipeline and aims create a favorable environment as to provide access to these new innovative treatments. A corporate and business goal.

My thesis question was: How can an innovative Lilly corporate affairs initiative help to align the interest of all stakeholders around the objective of creating access to innovative cancers treatment for patients? The mutual benefit for all these stakeholders is getting the right treatment to the right patient at the right time.

RESEARCH

Lilly required information about the current level of awareness, understanding and perceptions with regards to cancer in general, cancer treatment and the different stakeholders involved. The Lilly team decided to focus on the general public, which also had to include cancer caregivers (e.g. relatives and friends of cancer patients) and former/current cancer patients. This research project was conducted in six of the largest developed countries in the world: the U.S., Japan, and four E.U. countries: UK, Germany, France, and Italy.

The overarching goal was to collect data that will help informing and educating stakeholders (internal and external to Lilly) about perceptions and expectations of cancer care/innovation to facilitate patient centric decisions. Secondary objective was to publish the results of the survey and promote conclusions from this study that illustrate understanding of key issues in oncology.

A summary of previously identified barriers to the more rapid progress of cancer innovation and/or the clearer establishment of value, which need to be overcome, was developed by mining literature, news feeds, websites, and publications by organizations and initiatives dedicated to improving cancer care.

The literature review on barriers and the public citizen research both provide a wealth of information that will serve as input for Lilly's external alignment effort. However, clearly more information is needed around value of treatment and cost as well as willingness to pay. What are payers willing to contribute when it comes to reimbursing innovative cancer treatment; what do they consider innovation? Is one month extra life worth 20,000 USD or more? We have asked these question to the general public and patients and caregivers, but the organizations who will be deciding on medicines approval and reimbursement we have not yet investigated. Next step will be to research local governments, HTA bodies and health insurers to assess their perception of cancer care innovation and value of innovation.

There can be no trust without honest and open dialogue, and a new spirit of openness is, possibly, the most important theme we need to communicate. Stakeholder integration and alignment with total stakeholder support is the strongest form of alignment. Succeeding in total stakeholder support will lead to an unconditional license-to-operate.

The Impact of Social Media

Mr. Harold Reusken (1971) studied Business Administration for the Financial Sector (Bachelor). A collaboration between Hoge School Holland and the VU University Amsterdam. He graduated in 1999 and started his career as a business trainee at MeesPierson. After 1,5 years he pursued his dream to work for a radio company. For almost 4 years he was a spokesperson/communications manager for Talpa Radio International. At that time owner of the Dutch radio stations Radio 10 Gold, Noordzee FM, the Belgium radio station 4FM and Radio 100FM of Copenhagen, Denmark. In November of 2004 Mr. Reusken joined the team of media relations of Postbank which became ING in February 2009 and continued his work as a spokesperson till now. He was involved in projects like SAIL 2005/2010, the sponsoring of the Dutch National Soccer Team, the transition of Postbank into ING and the initiation of the ING Webcare Team. The last four years he has specialized himself in issue and reputation management with a strong focus on Social Media and Public Relations. Mr. Reusken is married to Patrice and has a son of 5, Finn.

The increased use of social media by consumers is resulting in continued growth in the number of online posts and information about brands and organisations on social media.

CONSUMERS FIND SOCIAL MEDIA INCREASINGLY TRUSTWORTHY

Dutch financial institution ING Netherlands, for example, has witnessed a strong rise in the online buzz surrounding its brand in the past few years, a trebling since September 2011. So it is no wonder that social media are considered to be quite influential. But what impact does information posted on social media actually have on consumers and reputations? And how trustworthy do consumers find this information? These questions were reason for ING to hold a large-scale survey on the subject among 1,500 consumers. This survey was used by Mr. Reusken for his master thesis 'The Impact of Social Media.'

INFORMATION POSTED ON SOCIAL MEDIA ALTERS OPINIONS, PREFERENCE AND BEHAVIOUR MORE OFTEN

As the use of social media continues to grow, consumers find the information posted there increasingly trustworthy. Consumers still find information posted in traditional media such as television and newspapers to be the most reliable, but the impact of social media is growing. The impact of information on financial services for example posted on social media is high and more often results in a change in consumer behaviour. The impact of traditional media drops sharply the more the consumer uses social media. This shift means that organisations will feel the need to invest more and more in new media in the near future.

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA 2012 #SMING12

ING

IN CONTACT WITH FINANCIAL NEWS

1/3 of all consumers come into contact with news about **financial markets on social media** at least every week.

19%

19% of the respondents come into contact with **news about ING** on social media at least every week.

PERCENTAGE OF CONSUMERS WHO AFTER DAILY USE CAN RECALL FINANCIAL NEWS

65%	50%	48%	38%	21%
Facebook	Newspaper websites	News websites	Hyves	Twitter

BUT HOW RELIABLE DO CONSUMERS FIND THIS NEWS?

RELIABILITY OF NEWS IN TRADITIONAL MEDIA IS HIGHEST

Traditional   **Online**   Social Media

THE TONE OF THE FINANCIAL NEWS THAT CONSUMERS REMEMBER IS:

25% 33%	34% 25%	25% 20%	26% 16%	28% 16%
42%	41%	56%	58%	56%

Positive   Neutral   Negative

RELIABILITY OF NEWS IS HIGHER AMONG DAILY SOCIAL MEDIA USERS

DAILY SOCIAL MEDIA USER – RELIABILITY OF NEWS ON SOCIAL MEDIA JUST AS HIGH AS ONLINE MEDIA

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF FINANCIAL NEWS ON ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA?

Highly reliable

Neutral

Unreliable

Never use social media

Use social media daily

Social Media   Online Media

Difference in reliability between online and social media news **disappears among highly frequent social media users.**

CONSUMERS VIEW INFORMATIVE TV PROGRAMMES AS HAVING THE MOST IMPACT

Informative TV Programmes
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
Social Media
10
11
12

The perceived **impact of social media is low** when we ask consumers to **compare it with other types of media.**

BUT FINANCIAL NEWS ON SOCIAL MEDIA MORE OFTEN LEADS TO A CHANGE OF OPINION, PREFERENCE OR BEHAVIOUR

22% Facebook	26% Twitter	19% Online news		22% Facebook	25% Twitter	14% Online news		20% Facebook	17% Twitter	13% Online news		20% Facebook	17% Twitter	12% Online news

Opinion changed **negatively**   Opinion changed **positively**   Choice **confirmed**   **Change** of bank

DAILY SOCIAL MEDIA USER

3.5x MORE IMPACT

MORE TRUST IN SOCIAL MEDIA

2.75x MORE IMPACT

Extremely reliable

Absolutely unreliable

FREQUENT SOCIAL MEDIA USER – IMPACT OF TRADITIONAL MEDIA DECLINES

Television   Newspapers

YOUNG PEOPLE

1.5X MORE IMPACT

3.75
18 - 44

2.85
45 and older

For more info: web: www.ing.nl/nieuws · twitter: @INGnl_Nieuws · mail: pers@ing.nl

Crowdsourcing: Marketing or Innovation Tool? The Effect of Crowdsourcing (through social media) on Corporate Reputation

Crowdsourcing is the targeted use of the wish of a group of people to participate, with creation of value for the initiator (Van Meer and Meuleman, 2011). This is an interesting concept. But it also raises a number of questions. What is the relationship between corporate reputation and crowdsourcing? Does crowdsourcing have influence on the reputation of the organization? And when a company asks a group of consumers to participate through social media, are they more willing to cooperate than when the company asks them the question through 'traditional' media? These are questions to be answered within this thesis.

Petra Sommer is a senior communication consultant and founded her agency Sommer Communicatie in 2006. Her focus is mainly on corporate communications, supporting organizational change processes, citizen participation and governmental communication. Petra is also one of the consultants within the Communicatiepool of the Ministery of General Affairs.

Before starting her own agency Petra worked for different companies like Randstad, TPG Post and Rijkswaterstaat. Her challenge and drive is to tackle those topics which need immediate attention, strategic view combined with hands on mentality, and with a broader scope than the communication field. Nowadays her clients are mostly governmental organisations like the National Crisis Centre of the Ministry of Safety and Justice and municipals like Zoetermeer, Leiden and Katwijk. At this moment Petra works as strategic communications advisor for the new National Police.

Design and art inspires her. Petra studied Design & Communication at the Ichthus Hogeschool in Rotterdam and completed the NIMA C study. Petra lives together with Eugène and they raise two daughters: Julia and Thirsa.

Interested? See www.sommercommunicatie.nl

CROWDSOURCING

Crowdsourcing has been around for hundreds of years, taking its shape and form in various ways. It really generated mainstream interest after Wired magazine published the article: "The Rise of Crowdsourcing" in 2006 by Jeff Howe. There are several ways to crowdsource. One way is through social media, for example using the fans of the company on Facebook or groups on LinkedIn.

There are many examples of companies that use crowdsourcing, for different reasons. Examples are Wikipedia, Pauw and Witteman, KLM, LEGO, and Lay's chips. Reasons for crowdsourcing are that problems can be explored at comparatively little cost, often very quickly, tapping a wider range of talent than might be present in the own organization, and gaining insight in their customers' desires. A growth in sales as a result of using crowdsourcing as a marketing tool can also be a reason. The subject of crowdsourcing can be very diverse. It may involve ideas about a new product or product line, about new services, marketing, ideas to innovate, to become more efficient in processes, to become (more) sustainable, or to develop more alignment internally.

CROWDSOURCING AND REPUTATION

According to Van Riel and Fombrun (2007) corporate reputation is an aggregate perception by stakeholders of an organization's ability to fulfil their expectations. The theories show that corporate reputation can be of influence on supportive behaviour of people. Individuals who perceive companies as having a better reputation may be more likely to pursue behaviours that support these companies, as they are more likely to have a fit with these companies (eg. Kristof, 1996; Newburry et al., 2008 in article by Lichtenstein et all., 2004). Does crowdsourcing have influence on the corporate reputation? In addition, what will be the influence on the corporate reputation when a person is excluded from cooperation in a crowdsourcing initiative?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The research objective is to gain more insights in the effect of crowdsourcing on corporate reputation. When is a company's reputation better: when a select group of people can participate or when the company works it all out by itself? Or when consumers can give ideas themselves, rather than when a select group of consumers gives their ideas?

RESEARCH METHOD

To test the hypotheses an Internet based experiment was developed and performed focused on ideas for a new product. To start an experiment concerning crowdsourcing it is important to ask the right questions to a large group, hoping that as many people as possible are willing to join. There was the introduction of Frans Mooimans, a virtual person being a 'small grocer' who had to work hard in these times of crisis to keep his head up, competing with the large grocery stores around. He asked for ideas to develop a savings campaign.

There were three scenarios, and therefore three questionnaires:

- ➔ Q1: The grocer has worked out a savings campaign on his own, no help needed anymore;
- ➔ Q2: A group of people has provided ideas (crowdsourcing by others) for the savings campaign, no help needed anymore;
- ➔ Q3: Please help and give ideas (crowdsourcing), help needed; Offered through www.thesistools.com in a carousel.

In total 146 respondents filled in these questionnaires. In this experiment the reputation of the grocer has been analysed by using the attitude research and the Attitude model of Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), using the attributes sympathy and distinctiveness.

Findings, conclusions, recommendations As a result from this experiment it appears that the corporate reputation is better when the grocer has worked out the idea by himself, compared to a select group of people having the opportunity to join and give ideas. However, the corporate reputation is better when the respondents can give ideas themselves, than when a select group of people can give ideas.

These are the main results of the research until this point. The research and literature lead to more questions to be answered. For example, in the group who saw Q1 there are much more female participants than in Q2 and Q3. Will the outcome be different when the ratio of women-men is reconciled ? Surprisingly it appears that there is no significant difference in the outcome when the number of female respondents is manipulated in Q1, as well as when the number of male respondents is reconciled in Q2 and Q3.

There are even more questions coming from this experiment, presented to encourage the reader to think about crowdsourcing in a wider context. When there are more attributes measured in a new experiment, what will be the outcome on the corporate reputation? When will somebody be more interested in participation: when the company is (well) known or also when it concerns an unknown company? Can crowdsourcing be compared to subjects like Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Thought Leadership? Is crowdsourcing a marketing tool or an instrument for innovation? And what will be the future of crowdsourcing? These are points of discussions as a result of this thesis.

Literature

1　Howe, J., (2008/2009), Crowdsourcing, Why the Power of the Crowd is Driving the Future of Business, Three Rivers Press, New York

2　Laaksonen, S.M., Falco, A., Salminen, M., Aula, P., Ravaja, N. & Ainamo, A., (2011, 2012), Reputation as emotional experiences – the use of psychophysiological measurements in corporate reputation research

3　Lichtenstein, R.D., Drumwright, E.M., Braig, B.M., (2004), The Effect of Corporate Social Responsibility on Customer Donations to Corporate-Supported Nonprofits, Journal of Marketing, Vol. 68, 16–32

4　Meer, R. Van & Meuleman,T., (2011), De C2B Revolutie, 7 stappen & 19 Praktijkvoorbeelden van crowdsourcing, 2011, BBP bv

5　Newburry, W., (2010), Reputation and Supportive Behavior: Moderating Impacts of Foreigness, Industry and Local Exposure, Department of Management and International Business, Florida International University, Miami, Florida, USA, Corporate Reputation Review, Vol. 12., No. 4, pp. 388-405 , Macmillan Publishers Ltd., 1363-3589

6　Van Riel, C.B.M, Fombrum, C.J, (2007), Essentials of Corporate Communications, implementing practices for effective reputation management, Routledge

7　Surowiecki, J., (2004), The Wisdom of the Crowds, Why the Many Are Smarter Than the Few, New York, Doubleday

8　Porter, M.E., Kramer, M.R., (2006), Strategy & Society, The Link Between Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility, Harvard Business Review, p. 78-92

Building Effective Reputations for Pension Fund Brands: Success factors in the diffuse Dutch market

Ingrid Vleeskens (1965) works for Stichting Pensioenfonds ING in Den Hague where she runs the corporate and pension communication as senior communication manager. Colleagues know her as an enthusiastic and experienced marketing communication professional, skilled in running strategic projects within the financial industry and engaged with the people involved. Her competences are concept development, teambuilding and project coordination, always putting the client first.

Ingrid has held several positions at ING in the area of internal communications, marketing communications, quality management, account and change management for the Dutch and international network. She has been responsible for strategic change projects and executing integrated campaigns within ING, for instance in the field of international payments and cash management. During these years, she headed functional teams applied with the implementation of effective marketing communication programs while she coached the people involved. In her current job at Pensioenfonds ING, she is able to apply her years of experience gained at the commercial part of ING to the challenges of the pension sector.

Prior to her master study at the Erasmus, Ingrid studied Cambridge Proficiency (South London College), Economics and Communication (HEAO Utrecht) and Marketing Communications and New Marketing (SRM). In 1999, she won an award for best graduate for her study in marketing communication at SRM, case study tourist industry in South Africa. The driving force behind joining the master program at the Erasmus University Rotterdam was to further professionalize her knowledge and skills in the area of corporate communication and reputation management.

Her decision to choose 'building effective reputations for pension fund brands' as topic for the master thesis is based on her interest to build strategic alignment with in- and external stakeholders of the company she currently works for. Now Ingrid has arrived at the final point of graduation, she looks for new challenges to take corporate communication at Pensioenfonds ING to the level that fits the expectations of in- and external stakeholders.

Ingrid lives in the Netherlands with her family. She is married, has two daughters (18 and 16) and she enjoys an energetic life of exploring new horizons in travelling, sport and education.

The Dutch pension system is unique and widely admired outside the Netherlands. It is seen as efficient, it provides certainty to participants and it preserves cohesion and solidarity among employees and pensioners.

The system is based on:

➔ First pillar (50% of total): governmental basic pension income existing of AOW (Algemene Ouderdoms Wet) and Anw (Algemene nabestaanden wet);

➔ Second pillar (45% of total): occupational pension income exising of enterprise pension funds (Ondernemingspensioenfondsen), industrial branch pension funds (Bedrijfstakpensioenfondsen) and professional group pension funds (Beroepspensioenfondsen);

➔ Third pillar (5% of total): additional savings like life insurances.

The Dutch pension market is also a market under pressure due to financial (low interest rates and volatile stock markets), economic and socio-demographic (graying population) changes that touch citizens state of welfare after reaching the retirement age.

PROBLEM DEFINITION

The master thesis focuses on the enterprise pension funds of the second pillar. The conditions for pension fund brands and their related parent brands to build effective reputations is the subject of the thesis. The problem definition is the research question divided into sub-questions:

'How can a pension fund brand use reputation management to position itself as an independent brand in a diffuse market where the corporate parent brand dominates.'

The accompanying sub-questions are:
➔ 'How does co-branding affect industry reputations?'
➔ 'What are the characteristics of pension fund brands and their related corporate brands?' A brand is the set of intentions to considered by customers to believe and trust the fund.

➔ 'What spill-over affects from corporate brands towards pension fund brands can be identified that affect reputation?
➔ 'What are the components of reputation management adding value to restore trust in the pension fund market?
➔ 'How can a pension fund pension brand differentiate itself successfully from the corporate brand?'

The process involved is:
1 What are the pre-conditions to develop reputation management strategy for co-brands?
2 What are the steps to be taken to define and develop an effective pension fund reputation management dashboard?

The following hypotheses give answer to the sub-questions:

Corporate brand and pension fund brand

1 Reputation of the corporate brand influences the reputation of the pension fund brand more than vice versa
2 Reputation management of pension fund brands proves to be driving trust and esteem

Pension fund brand

3 Differentiated positioning of pension fund brands increases corporate identification
4 Strong pension fund brands seem to segment their target groups on social, demographic and psychological aspects/benefits

METHODOLOGY

To answer the problem definition, sub-questions and test the hypotheses, the relationship between a Dutch parent brand and pension brand has been researched. Step 1 was to conduct desk research regarding the branding and reputation of both brands (parent and co-brand). Step 2 was the field research consisting of a semi-experimental set-up of quantitative data gathering. Step 3 was to validate the findings of step 2 by means of a reference research with peers from other enterprise pension funds.

The experimental aspects were to research:
A = the corporate brand
B = the pension fund co-brand
R = Reputation

➔ What is the reputation of B in the context of A?
➔ Till what extend does A influence B?

The quantitative research aimed to analyze the drivers and experiences of primary target groups (employees and pensioners) with the corporate brand (A) and pension fund co-brand (B) with four angles:
➔ A compared to Reputation
➔ B compared to Reputation
➔ Ba compared to Reputation
➔ Ab compared to Reputation

For the purpose of the thesis, the brand model of Customer-Based Client Equity (CBBE) and reputation models of core dimensions (visible, distinctive, authentic, transparent and consistent) and reputation drivers (financial policy, social responsibility, quality of products and services, leadership and clear vision) have been applied to detect drivers and

consequences of building successful brand reputations in the Dutch pension fund market.

RESULTS

The research findings lead to a strong impression that pension fund brands can find a way to build effective reputation in the diffuse Dutch market. By adopting the models of branding and reputation management and bringing them into practice, they are able to strengthen brand meaning (strength, favorability and uniqueness), brand responses (quality, credibility, considerations and feelings) and brand relationships (level of identification with the brand) which on their turn drive reputation.

No surprises

The research reveals the core needs of the primary target groups who are depending on the pension fund for their current and future financial welfare. In essence, they don't want surprises. They expect a reliable fund with predictable performances in the areas that matter to them most: securing return on pension investments and (future) pension income by all means. Those pension funds that succeed to fulfil these core needs are seen as trustworthy. Those who fail suffer from reputation damage.

License to operate

In the perception of their primary target groups, living up to expectations and being accountable for the results are conditions for pension funds to keep their license to operate. Legitimacy is key for pension fund brands as it increases stability, loyalty, trust and esteem.

Spill-over effects

When primary target groups see less fit between the co-brand and their expectations and experiences, the brand becomes more vulnerable for spill-over effects from the corporate brand. In other words, people start to fill the gap or mismatch by projecting meanings of the corporate brand towards the co-brand. These effects diffuse the branding promise of the pension fund brand and also becomes visible in the fund's reputation.

Ageing affects on identification and reputation

Bonding with pension funds increases alongside with ageing. As younger employees have little or no personal contact or experience with the fund, they feel more connected to their employer. As of the age of 45 years, this pattern changes gradually as employees start to think and worry about their future pension income. But identification with the employer remains key, the pension fund is often seen as 'an administration' office at distance. Because of the differences in target groups and the ageing effect, it is recommended to segment them on social, demographic and psychological aspects/benefits.

Close the reputation gap

Finally, the research detects areas of reputation gaps in the case of enterprise pension fund brands, namely vision, leadership and social responsibility. Today, reputations of pension fund brands are mainly based on the reputation drivers financial performance and quality of services. If one or two of these reputation drivers get under pressure, there is little compensation room from the other blocks to secure a good reputation.

A good reputation matters to pension fund brands as they incorporate the likelihood of supportive behaviors from all of the brand's stakeholders. Authentic communication to stakeholders is key as well as permanent measurement and evaluation of the progress. Therefore it is recommended that enterprise pension funds in the Dutch market adopt reputation management as a strategic tool (reputation dashboard) to fully utilize the opportunities of the model to build an effective reputation and to act pro-actively when reputation research indicates deficits in the field of financial, social responsibility, leadership and vision and emotional appeal performances.

It is recommended to further develop this model alongside the implementation of reputation management within the sector. The research findings clearly diagnose the gaps to be cured in order to position the pension fund brand as strong, reliable and independent from the parent brand and by that neutralizing the sometimes negative spill-over effects from the corporate towards the co-brand (from A to B).

Future research

This master thesis has been written to determine the success factors of building effective reputations for pension fund brands in the Dutch market. The research has focused on one part of the pension fund market, namely the enterprise pension funds (co-brands) and their parents

(corporate brands). The reference research amongst peer enterprise pension funds has shown that there is room for additional validation research of the findings of this thesis in this part of the Dutch pension sector. Also subject to future research may be to research the causes and consequences amongst industrial branch pension funds (Bedrijfstakpensioenfondsen, VB) and professional group pension funds (Beroepspensioenfondsen, UvB). A final recommendation for future research is to focus on how reputation differs for other stakeholder groups like advice, control and decision making bodies, regulators, media and society at large.

Literature

1 Aaker, David A., Joachimsthaler, The Brand Relationship Spectrum, The key to the brand architecture challenge, California Management Review, Volume 42, No. 4, summer 2000

2 Amalric, Franck, Pension funds, corporate responsibility and sustainability, Ecological Economics, Volume 59, Issue 4, October 2006, pp. 440– 450, Elsevier

3 Argenti, Paul A., Fast Forward MBA Pocket Reference, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, second edition, 2002

4 Bengtssona, Anders, Co-branding on industrial markets, Volume 34, Issue 7, October 2005, pp. 706-713

5 Bosch, Annette L.M. van den Jong, Menno D.J., How corporate visual identity supports reputation, Corporate Communications, Volume 10, number 2, 2005, pp. 108–116, Emerald Group Publishing Limited

6 Brown, Tom J., Corporate Associations in Marketing: Antecedents and Consequences, Corporate Reputation Review, Volume 1, No. 3, 1998, pp. 215-233

7 Fombrun, Charles J., Riel, Cees B.M. van, 2003, Fame & Fortune, 'How Successful Companies Build Winning Reputations', FT Prentice Hall

8 Heugens, Pursey P.M.A.R., Riel, Cees B.M. van and Bosch, Frans A.J. van den, Reputation Management Capabilities as Decision Rules, Journal of Management Studies 41:8 December 2004, pp. 1349 – 1377

9 Jaju, Anupam, Joiner, Chritopher, Reddy, Srinivas K., Consumer Evaluations of Corporate Brand Redeployments

10 Kapferer, Jean-Noël, The New Strategic Brand Management: 'Creating and Sustaining Brand Equity Long Term', 4th ed. – 2008, chapter 7: Brand identity and positioning

11 Keller, Kevin Lane, Building Customer-Based Brand Equity: A Blueprint for Creating Strong Brands, Marketing Science Institute, Report no. 01.107, 2001

12 Keller, K.L., 'Conceptualising, Measuring, and Managing Customer Based Brand Equity' (1993), The Journal of Marketing, Vol. 57, No. 1 (Jan., 1993)

13 Keller, Kevin Lane, Building strong brands in a modern marketing communications environment, Journal of Marketing Communications, Volume 14, Nos. 2-3, April-July 2009, 139-155, Routledge

14 Leuthesser, Lance, Kohli Chiranjeev, Suri, Rajneesh, 2+2 =5? A framework for using co-branding to leverage a brand, Journal of Brand Management, Sep 2003, 11, 1; ProQuest

15 Maathuis, Onno, Rodenburg John, Sikkel, Dirk, Credibility, Emotion or Reason, Corporate Reputation Review, Volume 6, Number 4, 2004, pp. 333–345

16 Riel, Cees B.M. van, Fombrun, J. 2007, Essentials of Corporate Communication, Implementing practices for effective reputation management, Routledge, London

17 Riel, Cees B.M. van, 2012, The Alignment Factor, Building sustainable relationships, Sdu uitgevers bv, Den Haag

18 Shahri, Masume Hosseinzadeh, The effectiveness of corporate branding strategy in multibusiness companies, Australian Journal of Business and Management Research, Vol. 1, No. 6 [51-59], September 2011

19 Suchman, Mark C., Managing legitimacy, strategic and institutional approaches, the Academy of Management Review, Vol. 20, no. 3 (1995), pp. 571-610

Thesis coaches

DR. GUIDO A.J.M. BERENS

Dr. Guido Berens is an Assistant Professor at the Corporate Communication Centre (department Business Society Management) of the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University. He earned his doctoral degree in Corporate Communication from the Erasmus Research Institute of Management (Erasmus University) and Master degrees in Psychology and Philosophy from the University of Nijmegen. Guido's research interests include corporate branding, corporate social responsibility, and reputation management. His research has been published in the Journal of Marketing, Journal of Management Studies, and Journal of Business Ethics, among others. Guido teaches corporate communication and statistics in the Bachelor, Master and PhD programs at RSM.

DR. MIGNON D. VAN HALDEREN

Mignon van Halderen (PhD) is Assistant Professor Corporate Communication at RSM, Erasmus University. Besides conducting research she teaches, coaches and advises companies on a variety of topics such as: thought leadership, strategic positioning, identity management and expressions, strategic change & alignment and the (re) building of company trust or legitimacy.

Through her 10 years' experience at the Corporate Communication Centre of RSM Mignon has become skilled in taking an evidence-based approach to business problems (both qualitatively and quantitatively) and making academic models useful for a business audience. Mignon loves to constantly switch between academic thinking and intuitive creativity and pragmatism.

Mignon has developed the 3-day Master Class on thought leadership of the MCC program and facilitates in-company thought leadership training (one day or more) by using the Thought Leadership Framework™ as described in her booklet with Kym Kettler-Paddock and Craig Badings. Mignon has also published several articles on the topic (e.g., for RSMInsight, Communicatie, The Communication Director, Building Business and for the book CommunicatieNU).

As of December 1st , Mignon will start as an independent consultant, operating at the interface of corporate advice, research and (executive) teaching – with a specific focus on thought leadership. Luckily, Mignon will continue teaching and coaching our MCC students on a freelance basis!

PROF. DR. CEES B.M. VAN RIEL

Cees B.M. van Riel (1951) is professor of Corporate Communication at the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University. He is director and founding father of the Master of Science in Corporate Communication programme (MSc degree programme) at the same business school. Further he is the co-founder of the Reputation Institute (www.reputationinstitute.com) in New York. In 2011 Cees van Riel has received the Pathfinder Award, the highest academic honor bestowed by the Institute for Public Relations (IPR) for his contribution to research in the field of corporate reputation and strategic alignment. Cees van Riel has published articles in prestige journals as The Academy of Management Journal, Long Range Planning, Journal of Management Studies, Journal of Marketing, and ten books. His best known books are Principles of Corporate Communication (1996), Fame & Fortune (2004) and Essentials of Corporate Communication (2006), The Alignment Factor (2012).

Master of Science in Corporate Communication

The Programme consists of four Building Blocks

PROGRAMME CURRICULUM

Part I begins in January and introduces the Foundations of Corporate Communication.

Part II offers a wide range of Advanced Elective Courses in which participants have the opportunity to choose a further specialisation in a specific area of Corporate Communication.

Part III is an international exchange trip to a cosmopolitan city, such as New York.

Part IV involves writing a thesis in which participants apply their acquired skills. Two prizes are awarded each year. The Shell Netherlands Stimulation Award for Excellence in Corporate Communication is awarded for the best thesis, and the Andreas Award is presented for the most innovative thesis.

PART ONE – FOUNDATIONS OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

Part I is delivered during a four-day session in January. It focuses on the latest developments, insights and models in corporate communication and business administration, and becomes the base for the rest of the programme. The first part covers the following subjects:
- ➔ Trends in reputation management, branding, positioning;
- ➔ Organisational identity, stakeholder analysis, strategic management theory;
- ➔ Research-based solutions for managing corporate communication;
- ➔ Workshops on applying competitive analysis, academic models and co-ordination mechanisms.

Successful completion of Part I, Foundations of Corporate Communication is required to obtain the Master of Science in Corporate Communication degree. Alternatively, RSM's Corporate Communication Executive Summer Course, listed in RSM's Executive Education courses on www.rsm.nl/summercourse, is interchangeable for Part I.

PART TWO – ADVANCED ELECTIVE COURSES

Each Advanced Elective Course (AEC) takes an in-depth look at one aspect of corporate communication from a business administration perspective. Each course starts with a day of lectures on the latest academic research and insights. They are followed by two days of applied sessions which train participants in the application of this knowledge in the day-to-day business environment. After these three-day courses, you will complete an assignment at home, based on selected academic literature. Day sessions are from 9:30am to 5:30pm and include lunch.

Participants must take a minimum of six AECs in order to be eligible for the RSM Master of Science in Corporate Communication degree. Each AEC is taught by expert consultants and lecturers from prestigious schools and universities such as Erasmus University Rotterdam, INSEAD (France), Copenhagen Business School (Denmark), Bocconi University (Italy) and the Stern School of Business (New York).

AECs are taught from February until June, and from September until December. If participants show particular interest in a specific subject, it may be possible for RSM's Centre of Expertise, the Corporate Communication Centre, to organise an AEC dedicated to it.

PART THREE – INTERNATIONAL STUDY TRIP

This international immersion experience is central to the programme and takes place each spring. The one-week trip will take you to an exciting city such as New York, Madrid or Vancouver for an intense programme which includes lectures by renowned faculty from local academic institutions and visits to well-known companies where you will discover and debate their corporate communication challenges. The exchange is hard work but a lot of fun, and will allow you to cement the friendships you have built with fellow participants during the programme. On your return, you will write a group paper that integrates the insights gained from the lectures and visits.

PART FOUR – MASTER THESIS

All participants are expected to write a master thesis to demonstrate their analytical ability and accumulated knowledge. The thesis is assessed and evaluated according to the same standards as the master theses of full-time MBA students. Your thesis will focus on a practical corporate communication issue in a real-life setting. Participants often choose to research a problem within their own organisation. Past subjects have included brand leadership, corporate stories, effective communication strategies, and the use and abuse of propaganda.