

BOOK OF GRADUATES

— 2023 —

Research Abstracts

Part-time Executive Master of Science
in Corporate Communication



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Research Abstracts 2023

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Disclaimer This Book of Abstracts is a collection of the original executive summaries of the final theses from the graduates of the MSc in Corporate Communication Programme in 2023. Please note that differences in writing style, spelling or referencing style may occur as a result.

Preface

This year we celebrate the 25th graduation of the Part-time Executive International Master of Science in Corporate Communication Programme (MCC) at Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University. The programme continues its mission to enhance the academic and professional growth of communication professionals, empowering them to manage communications and reputations and lead with impact.

*Ten new graduates have officially been awarded the **Master of Science in Corporate Communication** degree as a result. With pride, we present the abstracts of the thesis projects completed by this year's MCC graduates.*

The MCC programme has brought forth 360 graduates, including this year's cohort. Their hard work and determination, combined with the knowledge, insights, and skills gained from the programme, have helped many alumni achieve significant career advancements.

The current graduates have been pushed to excel through challenging coursework, case studies, role plays, management games, cutting-edge academic theories, and guest lectures from renowned professors and industry professionals from various universities and companies across the globe. These experiences have equipped them to become even more successful communication professionals.

The new Master of Science in Corporate Communication graduates are: Gladys Afam-Anadu, Tareq Al Bitar, Claire Francois, Rima Kamal, Martijn van de Koolwijk, Melina Kotrotsou, Karin Ooms, Brandon Palmers, Peter Stanners, Michelle Willemse.

We hope that our graduates have gained much from their time in the programme, not just from our education but also from their peers and colleagues in the corporate communication field. On behalf of the entire teaching staff, we can say that we have learned a great deal from them as well. Their eagerness to share real-world situations and challenges from their own organisations and connect them to the topics covered in lectures was both inspiring and energising.

The new Masters of Science in Corporate Communication are:

- Gladys Afam-Anadu
- Tareq Al Bitar
- Claire Francois
- Rima Kamal
- Martijn van de Koolwijk
- Melina Kotrotsou
- Karin Ooms
- Brandon Palmers
- Peter Stanners
- Michelle Willemse

Part-time Executive Master of Science in Corporate Communication

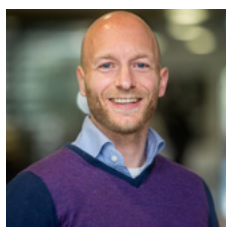
In more than twenty years of the Master of Science in Corporate Communication programme we succeeded in creating an international programme that presents all leading experts in a teaching role. We would like to thank the following people (teaching staff) who contributed tremendously to the success of this programme: Paul Argenti of Dartmouth College U.S.A.; Jaap Boonstra, ESADE Business School, John Balmer of Bradford University UK; Jean-Philippe Bonardi, HEC Lausanne; Peggy Simcic Brønn, BI Norwegian Business School; Michael Etter, King's College London; Carola Hillenbrand, Henley Business School; John Hayes, Leeds University Business School; Mark Hunter, INSEAD; Oriol Iglesias, ESADE Business School; Rita Linjuan Men, University of Florida; Michael Pratt of University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign; Davide Ravasi of Bocconi University; Majken Schultz of Copenhagen Business School; Bob de Wit of Nyenrode Business University; Ansgar Zerfass, University of Leipzig and from our Faculty: Cees van Riel, Guido Berens, Pursey Heugens, Gui Liberali, Florian Madertoner, Lucas Meijs, Ton Roodink, Lonneke Roza, Erik van 't Klooster, Ingrid de Vries, Yijing Wang all working at the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University.

It is also with great pride that we welcome Professor Emeritus Cees van Riel to award the 'Cees van Riel Award for Excellence and Impact in Corporate Communication' for the most impactful thesis in the field of Corporate Communication. The award is created in recognition to the founder of the Master of Science programme, Prof. Emeritus Cees van Riel. 'The Andreas Award for Innovation in Corporate Communication' is presented by Ing. Dries (Andreas) van de Beek, Former Chairman of the Board of CCC BV, to the author of the most innovative thesis. The winners of the awards in of the graduates of 2023 are announced during the official graduation ceremony.

We extend our warmest wishes for a bright future and successful careers to all the graduates and wholeheartedly congratulate them on their fantastic achievement.



Marijke Baumann
Executive Director



Prof. dr. Joep Cornelissen
Academic Director

Part-time Executive International Master of Science in Corporate Communication programme

Rotterdam School of Management
Erasmus University

Gladys Afam-Anadu

Dealing with resistance to energy transition in oil dependent economies

A structural approach to communication issues

Over 85% of current Nigerian energy needs is met by fossil fuel and the over reliance on fossil fuels is a serious concern because of its negative impact on the environment and depleting source of revenue. Nevertheless, the country has the capacity to transit from a fossil fuel dependent energy source to hydrogen, hydropower, solar energy, or wind energy, among other sources. This research study therefore explored the subject of dealing with resistance to energy transition in oil dependent economies like Nigeria using a structural approach to communication issues. The study was guided by four research questions and four corresponding research objectives.

I explored the involvement of stakeholders in the energy transition programme as well as the role of communication in creating awareness and galvanizing involvement, participation, and contribution of stakeholders for the energy transition programme. Through the review of academic publications, newspapers, Focused Group Discussion and interviews, this study answered the research question:

“How can effective communication enable the actualisation of energy transition programme in oil dependent economies like Nigeria?”

The study found that effective communication is crucial for elevating awareness and fostering a deeper understanding of energy transition’s necessity and benefits. It concludes that greater awareness about renewable energy, supportive policy frameworks, incentives and increased investment in renewable energy infrastructure are required to accelerate energy transition plan in Nigeria.

The study recommended among others that, the Nigerian government in collaboration with relevant stakeholders should carry out comprehensive public awareness campaigns to educate the populace about energy transition importance to Nigeria.

Biography

Gladys Afam-Anadu



Gladys Afam-Anadu is a seasoned professional and the Senior Corporate Relations Adviser at Shell International. With a rich and diverse career spanning over 15 years, she has been a driving force in Corporate Relations within the oil and gas industry.

Gladys started her professional journey as a journalist in Nigeria, lending her expertise to leading media organisations. Her transition into the oil and gas sector saw her flourish as a company spokesperson, marking the inception of her remarkable career in Corporate Relations.

Gladys has been an integral part of various disciplines within Corporate Relations in Shell in the last 15 years, including media relations, government relations, issues management, crisis management, and stakeholder relations. Her proficiency lies in developing and executing comprehensive communication strategies that safeguard the company's licence to operate while fortifying its reputation. She is adept at implementing impactful external and internal communication campaigns that resonate with diverse stakeholders.

Earning her degree in Mass Communication from the University of Nigeria Nsukka laid the foundation for her illustrious career. She has advanced her knowledge by obtaining an MSc in Corporate Communications from the esteemed Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University. Gladys is a certified and active member of both the Nigeria Institute of Public Relations and the Nigeria Institute of Management, showcasing her commitment to professional excellence.

Beyond her professional endeavours, Gladys actively engages in philanthropic work, contributing her time and resources to several charitable causes in Nigeria and the Netherlands. Her passion for driving positive change within her social spheres reflects her dedication to making a meaningful impact.

Gladys Afam-Anadu embodies a blend of expertise, commitment to excellence, and a fervent drive to create positive societal transformations, making her an invaluable asset within the corporate and social communities.

In her leisure time, Gladys finds joy in sports, particularly as an aspiring golfer.

Tareq Al Bitar

Awareness level of corporate sustainability programs and initiatives at telecom companies and their impact on the environment and their role in facing climate change

In the backdrop of Jordan's rapidly evolving technological landscape, the telecommunications sector emerges as an essential facet of its citizens' daily lives. As the global community marches towards heightened sustainability and corporate responsibility, this sector in Jordan has developed many of initiatives aimed at sustainability. Yet, a deep question arises about the awareness and acceptance of these initiatives by the Jordanian public. This study focuses on this important issue, asking: "How effectively are telecom companies in Jordan communicating their corporate sustainability initiatives to the public, and what factors influence the public's level of awareness and perception of these efforts?" This research question, while straightforward, unravels the complex relationship between the telecom companies' communication potency and the diverse factors that sculpt public perception and awareness.

To unravel the answers, this research adopted a comprehensive approach. I embarked on a quantitative journey to gauge the depth of public cognizance regarding the sustainability endeavors of Jordan's leading telecom entities. Probing further, I discerned the pivotal channels that shaped public perception, ranging from direct company communications to the pervasive influence of media and the age-old power of word-of-mouth. Lastly, a critical eye was turned towards the communication strategies these telecom giants employed, seeking to uncover their effectiveness.

Our quest yielded helpful results. I extracted a significant awareness gap among the Jordanian public regarding the sustainability steps taken by their telecom providers. This revelation not only flagged potential lapses in the communication strategies adopted by these telecom behemoths but also spotlighted other influential variables, notably, the omnipotent grip of social media and certain demographic nuances.

Drawing from these findings, this study extends crucial recommendations. I advocate for a holistic re-evaluation and amplification of the sustainability

communication stratagems by telecom firms in Jordan. An integrated, clear, and resonant communication blueprint is the need of the hour. Further, a harmonious collaboration between policymakers and these telecom entities can craft robust communication paradigms, magnifying the reach and resonance of sustainability messages. A keen focus should be directed towards demographic cohorts identified as less aware, ensuring that no segment remains untouched by these vital narratives.

In essence, this study stands as a beacon, illuminating the way forward for telecom firms, policymakers, and sustainability champions in Jordan. By bridging the prevailing awareness chasm, we can jointly usher in an era where every Jordanian citizen is not only aware of but actively participates in the sustainability initiatives of their telecom service providers.

Biography

Tareq Al Bitar



- Director of Corporate Communications and Sustainability department with a successful track record in driving organizational success through effective communication strategies and fostering sustainable practices.
- Played a pivotal role in enhancing Zain Jordan's position in the local telecom market and strengthening its reputation as a leading telecommunications provider.
- Demonstrated exceptional skills and expertise, leading to increased responsibilities and appointment as Director in 2011.
- Extensive experience in the field of Public Relations and Corporate Communications.
- Holds a Bachelor's degree in Banking and Finance and pursued further education in Mastering Public Relations & Communications Practice.
- Currently pursuing an Executive Master of Science in Corporate Communications at Rotterdam School of Management – Erasmus University.
- Actively involved as a board member in esteemed organizations such as the Children Museum Jordan, the Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists in Jordan, and the Sport Federation for Companies and Establishments.
- Valued member of the Board of Dentistry College at the University of Jordan.
- Passionate about Corporate Communications and Sustainability, driving organizational success through strategic acumen and dedication.

Claire Francois

Preparing for and responding to a cyber-attack

A study on the role of communications professionals

The purpose of this research is to analyse effective strategies for communications professionals to prepare for and respond to crises caused by cyber-attacks.

Cyber-attacks are becoming an increasingly prevalent risk for large companies (Ryan et al., 2022). A cyber-attack can have significant effects that go beyond financial loss. The attack can lead to loss of intellectual property, regulatory penalties, legal liabilities, and damage to customer and stakeholder trust. Such attacks can disrupt business operations, leading to productivity loss and the inability to deliver upon commitments. Furthermore, a cyber security event can create a crisis for an organisation due to the potential for damage to its reputation (Knight and Nurse, 2020). Overall, the impact of a cyber-attack can be significant and long-lasting.

Therefore, organisations must be prepared for these events and have effective strategies in place for responding to and managing them. Communications professionals play a critical role in this process, as studies have shown that effective crisis communication is essential for minimising the impact of a crisis and protecting an organisation's reputation (Coombs and Holladay, 2005). However, there is limited research available on best practices on how communications professionals prepare for and respond to crises caused by cyber-attacks.

Communications professionals tackling the fallout of a cyber-attack grapple with unique challenges, from the inherent uncertainties around the cause, impact, and containment along with mounting pressures for timely and accurate communication. They navigate complexities, from diverse stakeholder demands to threat actors' extortion attempts, while managing intertwined operational, legal, and regulatory requirements across jurisdictions.

This study includes a review of the academic literature as well as the creation of case studies. Additional data collection occurred through interviews with professionals who have experience in this field. The results were interpreted and structured using qualitative data analysis. The objective is to provide insights for organisations looking to improve their crisis communication preparedness and response strategies for a cyber-attack. The primary aim is to gain a deeper understanding on this subject, while also providing communication professionals with practical knowledge.

To better prepare for such events, organisations should integrate crisis management and emergency protocols with cyber-specific strategies. Recommendations are summarised in two models that outline 1) Communicating During a Cyber Crisis; and 2) Preparing Communications Response to a Cyber Related Crisis.

Biography

Claire Francois



Claire Francois is a communications professional with over 18 years of experience in delivering innovative and impactful communication strategies for Shell. She started her career as a Communications Project Manager, where she managed the deliver of internal and external communications for various projects and initiatives. She then held roles in Technology Marketing and Change and Engage lead for Shell's group digital strategy. She is currently the Corporate Relations Advisor for Digitalisation Innovation and IT, where she shapes Shell's brand and reputation to demonstrates how digital technology is a key enabler for the companies strategy. In this role Claire manages the emergency response and crisis communication following cyber incidents and is responsible for developing processes, messaging and driving continuous

improvement. This experience was the inspiration for her Masters thesis for her study of Science in Corporate Communication at Rotterdam School of Management Erasmus University. This degree complement's Claire's Bachelor of Design from the University of New South Wales. She also holds several certifications in change management, brand management and project management. Claire is an expert in managing multiple, complex multi channel communication projects simultaneously with an agile approach, adept at navigating ambiguity and uncertainty. She is experienced in leading natural teams with a diverse range of international suppliers and cross-business stakeholders. Claire balances her professional achievements with her role as a mother to two teenagers and her love for gardening and exploring new places.

Rima Kamal

Best practices of sustainability communication

As told by corporate social media platforms

The why's and how's of sustainability communication (SC) are captivating the attention of academics, businesses, and policymakers alike. This is no wonder as communication about an organization's commitment to sustainability is growing increasingly central to organizational reputation and success.

What is SC?

Sustainability communication (SC) is a rather recent term that links to messaging pertaining to sustainability. Its roots can be found in different discourses, including environmental, risk and science communication. As consumers begin to take interest in more sustainable products, and in companies that make a difference for their wider society, more and more businesses are pro-actively engaging in different forms of SC. This SC is happening on owned corporate platforms as well as earned or paid platforms. This thesis explores the characteristics of the SC of businesses perceived as sustainable with the aim of advancing a set of best practices that can serve communication practitioners.

Relevance

At present, two-thirds of privately owned companies are already engaging in some form of SC (Navex 2021). While this communication is largely driven by communication professionals, many admit to being uncertain about the specificities that guide SC. With two new European directives on sustainability communication coming into force in the next two years (Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive and Green Claims Directive), increased regulations on companies' SC are looming. By advancing a set of best practices that can guide communication professionals in their SC, this thesis contributes to a better understanding of the specificities that characterize SC. As this thesis also

recognizes a clear distinction between communication of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Corporate Sustainability (CS), it also adds to the growing academic research on SC, as a stand-alone field.

Methodology

With social media platforms singled out as the most important vector for addressing stakeholders in 2022 (European Communication Monitor 2022), this thesis takes a specific interest in SC on corporate social media platforms. Using a mix of qualitative and quantitative content analysis of 723 social media posts published on Instagram, LinkedIn, X and Facebook, between 01st January – 31st March 2023, this thesis first maps the characteristics of the SC of seven Swedish businesses perceived as sustainable by consumers. It thereafter uses the findings to propose a set of best practices that can guide communication practitioners in their SC.

Key findings

The study findings reveal that SC is a central theme in the communication and positioning of businesses perceived as sustainable. Most of the SC happens on social media and is centralized to LinkedIn where SC makes up 15-20% of the content posted. The messaging focuses on specific actions (claim-specific) and incorporates metrics and external links to substantiate the specific claims made (evidence-based). It also appears as authentic and transparent, acknowledging

current limitations and avoiding exaggerations. The environmental pillar is often the overriding one, amounting to 90% of the SC content in total.

Best practices of SC

- Identify the sustainability issues that are central to your business and to your supply chain and prioritize action and communication in relation to these issues.
- Communicate frequently. Don't sit around and wait for breakthroughs in your company's sustainability journey. Smaller sustainability initiatives are also worthy of communication.
- Use LinkedIn as the main platform for your company's SC messaging. Engage with followers and answer to their questions. Revert to your sustainability department, if need be, to coordinate the answers.
- Be claim specific. Don't speak about your company's commitment to become sustainable or its vision to achieve net-zero. Communicate instead about the actual initiatives your company is undertaking to become more sustainable.
- Substantiate your claims by incorporating informative metrics that contextualize the actions taken and enable readers to understand their impact.
- Use visual assets. Photos are most common. In-house smartphone imagery is good enough. Avoid photo-shopped pictures of nature and greenery.
- Simplify your language. Don't shy away from using emojis and colloquial idioms.
- Get to know the three sustainability pillars and find ways to communicate about all three.
- Use other content categories to tie into your ongoing sustainability work (e.g., recruitment campaigns, corporate branding, thought leadership, etc.)
- Make sure you walk the talk. To be able to communicate about sustainability in an authentic and transparent manner, sustainability must be part of your company's business strategy.

Biography

Rima Kamal



Rima Kamal is a multilingual communication and management professional with an interesting career trajectory and background.

She has worked in eight countries to date including some with highly mediatized conflicts. Between 2007 and 2020, she held various roles at the International Committee of the Red Cross, including the role of spokesperson and head of communications in Syria, Yemen as well as Israel and the Palestinian Territories.

In 2021, she moved back to Europe and transitioned into the corporate sector, where

she is now working as a communications manager for a global MedTech company.

Beyond management, Rima has a strong track record in crisis communication, digital communication, and sustainability communication. She adds her MSC in corporate communication to a previous master's in political science.

Rima is of Palestinian descent and lives together with her partner Marco and daughter Julia in Gothenburg, Sweden as of late 2021.

Martijn van de Koolwijk

'In your face!'

Effects of skin advertising

No, this research subject isn't about the latest advertisement of Gladskin or Oil of Olaz and has nothing to do with humans largest organ. Although the words 'skin advertising' might suggest that. This research has everything to do with that - relative new phenomenon – in digital advertising.

What is skin advertising?

Anyone who opens a Dutch news website on a desktop computer or laptop, probably immediately sees a 'skin ad'. Nearly every Dutch news website uses skin ads. Skin advertising has everything to do with the space on a news website that is traditionally blank, mostly above, left and right of the central column, which is filled with advertisements of one organisation. Publishers emphasise the advantages of this type of digital advertising, with overcoming banner blindness and co-branding with the reputation of the publishing site as core arguments. Prices can move up to around EUR 100.000 a day, depending on the website(s).

Methodology

But still a lot of widely agreed information on the effects of skin advertising is missing. Therefore the research question in this research thesis was: *What are effects of skin advertising on Dutch consumers?* A multi-method approach consisting of three research components was set up. Two expert interviews were held, a questionnaire was distributed to almost two hundred respondents (N=184) and a focus group among four consumers was held as well.

Most important factor

Taken together, all the three research components show that the relevance of a skin ad is the most important factor of influence that determines the effect of a skin ad. That's important to know, because the focus group and the quantitative research show

that the annoyance of a skin ad is higher compared to banners. The focus group confirms the importance of relevant ads, to lower the chance of annoyance. Experts state that as well, for example by pointing out on the importance to personalize ads.

Comparison

The quantitative research and the focus group not only show that the Pulse – an overall evaluation of the feeling of an advertiser/product – determines if a skin ad is annoying, skin ads do not change the Pulse of an advertiser better than banners.

The third factor of influence for annoyance of skin ads, is the size. The quantitative research shows that, as well as the focus group. One of the respondents describes its first reaction on a skin ad as *"too much in my face"*. At last, despite using skin ads, consumers still see the difference between a fake news website and a serious news website. All three research components confirm that conclusion.

Striking

The results of the expert-interviews indicates that skin ads are preferably used within a marketing communication strategy, and not solely for product promotion to increase revenues. This is striking, because most of the advertisements which are seen on news websites nowadays and are used in this research, are product advertisements.

New definition

Since a widely agreed definition was missing, a definition for skin advertising was suggested after the research. The definition is formulated as: *'A skin ad is an advertisement of one advertiser that uses all the available advertising space on a website, it aims to claim a very prominent place in the mind of a visitor and preferably the different spaces visual interact with each other.'*

Scientific contribution

This thesis research contributes to the scientific literature in two areas: digital advertising in general and consumer responses to advertisements. It gives suggestions for further research and has some insights for marketing and communication professionals who consider working with skin advertisements.

Biography

Martijn van de Koolwijk



Martijn van de Koolwijk (1982) is an all-round corporate communications professional, with a specialization on spokespersonship and crisis communication. He now adds an MSc in Corporate Communication from Erasmus University Rotterdam to his curriculum vitae. He also holds a Master of Arts in Business Communication, Culture and Organization from the Radboud University of Nijmegen and a Cum Laude Bachelor of Arts in Marketing & Communication from Notenboom University of Applied Sciences in Eindhoven.

Martijn currently works as a spokesman/communication manager for Royal Heijmans, a large listed construction company in The Netherlands. He started his career as a public- and press informer at the national

liberal party in the Dutch Parliament, worked internationally for the Dutch Central Agency for the reception of asylum seekers (COA), followed by jobs as a senior communication advisor and spokesman for a market regulator and a large cooperative in funeral insurances and caretaking.

He believes strongly that communications is about 'creating connections' between people or between organizations and people, a playing field that has become more interesting due to the rise of digital communication.

Martijn lives with his wife and two kids in Uden. He is an avid sports fan and co-owner of a small vineyard. He can be reached via LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/martijnvandekoolwijk1/

Melina Kotrotsou

Unveiling greenwashing

Exploring how consumers differentiate genuine sustainability from deceptive claims

This study explores a central research question: “How can consumers discern genuine sustainable practices from instances of greenwashing?” In the contemporary business landscape, various stakeholders, including investors, consumers, government bodies, and corporate clients, place a strong emphasis on transparency and ecological sustainability. In response, companies have incorporated social, environmental, ethical, and human rights considerations into their operations with some adopting Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies. However, the proliferation of “greenwashing,” where companies disseminate misleading environmental claims, presents a substantial challenge. Consumers struggle to differentiate authentic environmentally responsible practices from deceptive ones, potentially impeding progress towards global sustainable consumption.

To address this question, a comprehensive literature review was undertaken, scrutinizing the attributes of green advertisements and their correlation with consumer awareness, company transparency, and company credibility. Subsequently, a scenario experiment was devised to assess the impact of “executional greenwashing” on consumer perceptions and the role of nature-themed imagery in shaping these perceptions. A statistical analysis of survey responses was executed to gain insights into how nature imagery and environmental knowledge influence consumer perceptions of greenwashing in advertisements.

The literature review unveiled three pivotal factors that significantly influence consumer perceptions of greenwashing: consumer awareness, company transparency, and company credibility. The non-significant impact of nature-evoking imagery on shaping consumer perceptions, challenging the assumed positive influence. Environmental knowledge, however, emerged as a key factor. In the analysis of Hypothesis 2, which investigated the interaction effect between environmentally friendly visual representation and

consumer knowledge on perceptions of greenwashing, environmental knowledge emerged as a pivotal factor. Contrary to our initial expectations, in the case of both high and low-knowledge consumers, the t-tests demonstrate an absence of substantial evidence that would indicate noticeable distinctions in the influence of nature images.

The results do not definitively indicate that the level of knowledge plays a significant role in shaping consumer perception when exposed to advertisements incorporating nature images. Drawing upon the t-test results, the study implies that the presence of nature images may not wield a substantial impact on the perceptions of individuals across different knowledge levels. Nevertheless, the experiment also shed light on the increasing consumer criticality and awareness of greenwashing, with some individuals categorizing specific sustainability initiatives as greenwashing. This phenomenon has given rise to ‘greenhushing,’ where companies, fearing accusations of greenwashing, opt for silence regarding certain sustainability initiatives, leading to a lack of transparency.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that organizations prioritize transparency and credibility in their environmental communication endeavors. Companies should substantiate their claims with tangible and meaningful impacts, align their messages with various organizational functions, verify the authenticity of their claims through reputable third parties, and ensure clarity and transparency in their sustainability communications. Additionally, given the limited impact

of nature-evoking images in shaping positive consumer perceptions of green advertisements and companies as per the experiment results, organizations should be especially attentive to these aforementioned aspects. Moreover, efforts should be directed towards educating consumers on authentic sustainability practices and enabling them to differentiate such practices from instances of greenwashing, thereby fostering a more sustainable business environment.

Biography

Melina Kotrotsou



Melina Kotrotsou, born and raised in Athens, embarked on an academic journey at Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, earning a Bachelor of Arts in International, European, and Area Studies. Melina began her professional journey as an intern at the Embassy of Greece in Budapest, diving into data compilation, report production, and administrative duties. This early exposure set the stage for her subsequent roles at the European Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Action and the Permanent Representation of Greece to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. Here, Melina honed her skills in organizing seminars and workshops, conducting research on human rights, and contributing to the broader humanitarian discourse.

Transitioning into the corporate landscape, Melina became a vital part of Europcar SA, assuming the roles of Sales & Social Media Coordinator and Customer Service Specialist, managing social media accounts, promoting B2B collaborations, and

handling complaint management. Keywe Business Solutions marked a significant chapter as a Marketing & Communications Officer. Here, Melina crafted and executed digital marketing campaigns and developed comprehensive marketing and communication strategies, bridging the gap between creativity and strategy.

The journey continued to Alfa Pastry Greece, where Melina thrived as a Social Media & Digital Expert, overseeing digital strategy, managing social media accounts, and engaging in influencer partnerships, becoming a linchpin in the brand's online presence. Beyond the professional sphere, Melina dedicated herself to volunteering at "Alma Zois" – the Hellenic Association of Women with Breast Cancer, showcasing a commitment to social causes that extended over a significant period.

Melina enjoys spending her free time on pastry making and traveling as well as dancing classical ballet.

Karin Ooms

Engaging stakeholders in co-creation processes to drive environmental sustainability

A case study exploring stakeholder engagement through the lens of the Sustainable Flight Challenge

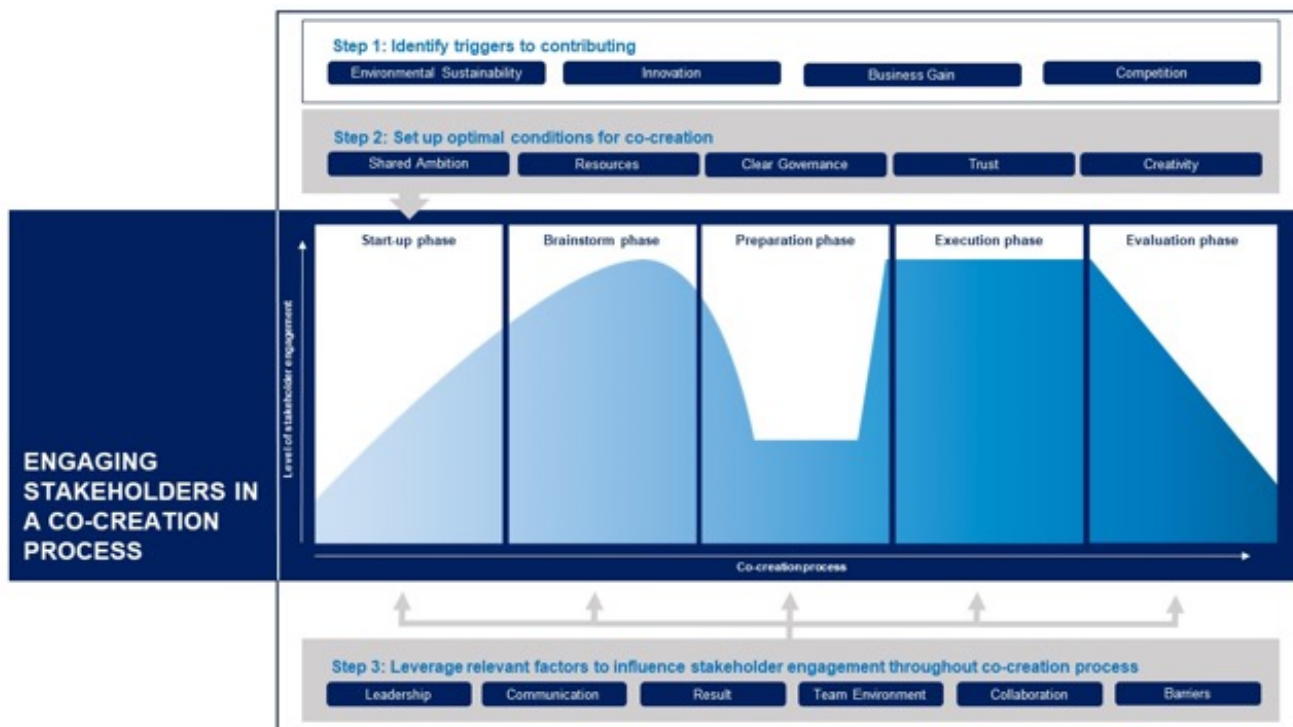
In an increasingly interconnected world, complex challenges such as climate change demand innovative solutions. Worldwide, more and more organizations have been actively working to reduce their environmental impact in recent years. To make significant changes, it is crucial to adopt a value chain approach in which organizations across diverse industries assume broader responsibility and collaborate actively with a wide array of stakeholders. This study explores how companies can leverage co-creation to engage stakeholders within their value chain to reduce their environmental footprint.

Stakeholder engagement and co-creation, two intertwined academic concepts emphasizing collaboration and participation in value creation, form the foundation of this study. The research centers on a single case study within the aviation industry, specifically examining KLM Cityhopper's participation in the Sustainable Flight Challenge, a co-creation initiative driving environmental change through friendly competition. Qualitative research based on a grounded theory approach and thematic analysis addresses the central research question. Semi-structured interviews yielded valuable insights that integrated the concepts of stakeholder engagement, co-creation, and environmental sustainability, resulting in the development of a conceptual model.

This model highlights three critical points in a co-creation process at which organizations can effectively engage stakeholders. First, organizations should identify and play into the triggers motivating stakeholders to contribute to sustainability initiatives. Second, they should establish optimal conditions at the start of the co-creation initiative to address stakeholder requirements. Throughout the co-creation process, stakeholder engagement is dynamic and influenced by level of involvement, pressure to deliver, and momentum. Finally, the study identifies several factors that can positively or negatively influence stakeholder engagement throughout the process. These factors can be leveraged to maintain stakeholder interest and maximize their contributions to the initiative.

This study establishes a strong foundation from which researchers and practitioners can progress toward a more stakeholder-driven approach in co-creation processes for fostering environmental sustainability.

It also identifies potential areas for further research, such as quantitative studies to validate the conceptual model and an adoption phase in which co-created ideas are effectively adopted within value chains or even industries.



Biography

Karin Ooms



Karin Ooms' journey in the world of aviation and communications is a tale of passion, dedication, and professional growth. Her love for aviation ignited at the young age of 21 when she embarked on a career with KLM as a cabin attendant. During her time soaring through the skies, Karin's ambition for academic advancement remained undeterred, as she successfully completed a Bachelor of Communication. After a decade of flying around the globe, Karin made a strategic shift into the communications sector.

Karin's professional landscape over the last 10 years is marked by a diverse range of roles in communications. From being a Community Manager to a Communications Advisor, and from a Transition Consultant to a Business Partner Communications. Her career trajectory reflects a constant quest for growth and learning. 2017 marked the beginning of another academic endeavor for Karin – the Executive MSc program in Corporate Communications. Despite the challenges

posed by COVID, which prolonged her studies, she emerged with enhanced knowledge and skills, ready to tackle broader and more senior roles (in communications). In her current role as an Executive Assistant, Karin has stepped outside the communications realm to broaden her perspective on business management.

Describing Karin can be encapsulated in a few keywords: enthusiastic, driven, structured, an organizational talent, and a people person. These traits not only define her professional demeanor but also but also extend into her personal life. Karin is a dedicated mother to her son, with whom she resides in Zoetermeer. True to her passion for travel, she cherishes exploring the world in her free time and enjoys the pleasures of good food in the company of friends and family.

For those interested in connecting with Karin, please visit her LinkedIn profile at: www.linkedin.com/in/karinooms

Brandon Palmers

What do shareholders say about corporate purpose?

In the intricate mosaic of human existence, the pursuit of purpose has perennially occupied a central role, intricately woven into the fabric of our personal, societal, and professional lives. The aspiration to discern the profound “why” underscoring our actions significantly influences motivations, values, and ambitions. The discussion on corporate purpose is not new; Friedman (1970) posited that a business’s primary social responsibility is profit maximization. However, cases like Enron and Worldcom demonstrate the potential pitfalls of a singular focus on profits, leading to negative consequences and contributing to economic downturns. As societal expectations evolve, businesses face increasing pressure to address environmental degradation, inequality, and mistrust. According to Apco Worldwide’s insights study, 92% of respondents believe a company’s mission should contribute to society, and 90% agree that companies should actively address social issues. Corporate purpose is now seen as a strategic function, allowing firms to tackle societal challenges while pursuing ethical profits. This study aims to explore the financial correlation between corporate purpose and share prices, considering broader perspectives on purpose and examining how companies communicate these benefits to shareholders. Porter and Kramer (2006) proposed a positive link between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and financial performance, suggesting that strategic CSR activities can optimize a company’s impact.

The primary research objective is to contribute to and expand upon existing literature on corporate purpose, examining the relationship between shareholders and “purpose-driven” companies. The study seeks to address key questions: How is the tension between profit and societal benefit managed? What factors contribute to successful management, and conversely, what leads to failure or friction? The research analyzes firms’ purpose statements and evaluates shareholder reactions, rooted in the efficient market hypothesis, assuming that asset prices promptly incorporate publicly available information, including a company’s purpose statement.

The literature review covers diverse perspectives on corporate purpose, from Friedman’s profit-centric view to Birkinshaw et al. (2014) and Mayer’s (2019, 2021) perspectives, emphasizing purpose beyond mere profit generation. The study formulates hypotheses asserting that purpose impacts returns, serving as more than a signal disregarded by investors. Depending on alignment with Friedman’s view or broader purpose definitions, non-profit-generating activities could be perceived either negatively or positively.

The formulated hypothesis (H1) posits that the announcement of a purpose statement leads to

abnormal returns, with the assumption that this impact could be either positive or negative. Conversely, the null hypothesis (H0) suggests no significant impact on abnormal returns. Proving H1 true implies increased gains in share prices, indicating a positive reception and potential endorsement of corporate purpose by shareholders.

Moreover, the literature review introduced ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) concepts and the MSCI rating as a tool to evaluate a company's risk management and dedication to purpose. Using ESG ratings to screen companies for their commitment to purpose. ESG and corporate purpose share a connection in terms of societal outcomes, leading to the hypothesis that companies with purpose statements should have high or increasing ESG ratings. In the search for two opposite case companies, Koninklijke Philips N.V. (Philips) represents a company transitioning to a purpose-led approach, but with a declining ESG rating from A to BB. The study will analyze Philips's handling of shareholder relationships and strategic vision.

On the other hand, Unilever exemplifies a purpose-driven company with an increasing ESG rating from A to AAA. This case aims to explore how Unilever manages the assumed tension between profits and societal outcomes. The literature suggests such tension exists, but details on its management are lacking. This research, focusing on Philips and Unilever, seeks to fill this gap and understand how companies navigate the relationship between profit and societal impact within the context of their purpose-driven strategies.

This research demonstrates that the effectiveness of corporate purpose strategies can significantly influence shareholder perceptions and, subsequently, impact share prices. Drawing insights from the cases of Philips and Unilever, the analysis underscores the pivotal role of communication in shaping outcomes

related to corporate purpose. In comparing the two companies, it becomes evident that Unilever's success in implementing and communicating a purpose-driven strategy directly to shareholders has contributed to positive outcomes. Unilever's clear articulation of its purpose, especially during the challenging context of the COVID-19 pandemic, allowed the company to capitalize on opportunities related to personal health and hygiene. This proactive approach aligns with the theoretical framework emphasizing that purpose-driven companies seek profitable solutions to societal problems (Handy, 2002; Mayer, 2021; Mayer et al., 2019). On the other hand, Philips faced challenges in fully realizing its transition to a personal health company. The research highlights that inconsistent communication about its purpose and a lack of explicit links to financial outcomes contributed to Philips not emerging as a winner during a health pandemic. This divergence in outcomes between Unilever and Philips provides tangible evidence of how strategic communication of corporate purpose can significantly impact a company's trajectory. The role of leadership, particularly the CEO and CFO, emerges as crucial in promoting and effectively communicating corporate purpose. The findings suggest that the tone and consistency of purpose communication play pivotal roles in shaping shareholder perceptions. This research investigates whether the announcement of purpose statements or strategies can influence a company's share price, revealing that disclosing purpose statements can positively impact share prices, contingent upon strategic implementation. In conclusion, this research not only unveils the divergent outcomes of corporate purpose strategies in the cases of Philips and Unilever but also sheds light on the broader implications for corporations. It emphasizes that successful implementation and communication of purpose-driven strategies directly to shareholders can be a key determinant in navigating challenges, leveraging opportunities, and positively influencing shareholder perceptions and share prices.

Biography

Brandon Palmers



Brandon Palmers (1992) is a driven and optimistic corporate communications professional with a dedication to positive change and effective communication. Being originally schooled in marketing management at the Hogeschool van Amsterdam Brandon's original focus was creating engaging marketing content. However, during his studies he found that he enjoyed thinking about strategic communications, which led him to start his career at Tesla as part of the marketing and communications team.

He started the MsC program in 2021 whilst managing one of Tesla's most vital sales programs including internal newsletter, website, dealings

with media, and employee engagement. Choosing to enroll in this Masters program at the RSM was a decision aimed at refining his skill set. This program has played a key role in the refinement of his strategic competences as it imparted a profound understanding of corporate communication principles and practices.

The culmination of his academic journey was marked by a thesis on corporate purpose, reflecting his dedication to aligning corporate strategies with broader societal impact. This research represents his commitment to making a positive contribution in the corporate world.

Peter Stanners

How do communication departments in higher education research institutes contribute to implementing and developing their organization's strategy?

The purpose of this research project is to deepen the understanding of how communication departments in higher education and research institutes (HERI) contribute to the implementation and development of their organization's strategy. Seventeen HERI communication professionals, largely in the Nordic region, were interviewed and surveyed for this research project. The interviews were designed to identify the scope of their role, the sophistication of their communication strategy, the extent to which it is aligned with their organization's strategy, and their impression of how highly communication is valued by the scientists, academics and leaders they work with.

RQ1: What strategic and operational contributions do HERI communications departments make?

Drawing on the Communications Contributions Framework (Zerfass & Volk, 2018), the interviews and surveys discovered that HERI communication advisers typically provide operational services, which were not always guided by a communication strategy aligned with the organisation's strategy. Communication advisers in departments typically reported to administrative leaders who often perform strategic communications roles for their department, despite lacking a communications background. On the central level, HERI communication advisers and leaders were more likely create and follow a communication strategy aligned with their organisation's strategy. However, they were not invited to participate in the development of HERI strategy.

RQ2: How do HERI communications departments add value to the organisation, and what corporate goals do they support?

Drawing on the Communications Value Circle (Zerfass and Viertmann, 2017), the interviews discovered that HERI communication departments tend to add value through publicity, branding, and attracting students and staff, which supports the corporate goals of building tangible and intangible assets. They supported to a much lesser extent the corporate goals of providing opportunities for development and room for manoeuvre.

RQ3: How do HERI communications departments add value to the organisation, and what corporate goals do they support?

The interviewees confirmed that their HERI possess the qualities of being loosely coupled organised anarchies (Schwetje et al., 2020), which places significant limitations on HERI communication departments.

Communication leaders and advisers often reported being regarded as mere operational service providers. Communication advisers in departments reported being siloed and without communication leadership or colleagues. Communications leaders at the central level attempt to resolve both issues by increasingly reducing the number of communication advisers in departments, who were relocated into the central communication department. While this approach strengthened the central brand, interviewees warned that academics and scientists require communication advisers in close proximity to support their public relations and science communication needs.

This research project identified a range of novel insights despite the small sample size. To deepen these insights, the research could be repeated on a national basis and with a greater number of interviewees. This may identify best practices that could be translated between national HERI sectors. A further limitation is that only HERI staff with a communication-related job title were selected for interview, though other academic research support staff also perform communication functions for their organizations. Investigating the full scope of communications contributions by all staff within an institution would add necessary detail to the strategic and operational communications contributions that are made within HERI. Finally, the tools and frameworks that were used in RQ1 and RQ2 were developed for the private and for-profit corporate sector, and may not apply to the public, non-profit HERI sector. Research that can adapt these tools to apply more directly to the

unique qualities of HERI, could more effectively support strategic communication at HERI communication departments.

This research project outlines a number of further recommendations for HERI communication advisers and leaders.

- HERI communication advisers and leaders can raise their status within the organisation if they gain the respect of their academic leadership. This means they must demonstrate to their leadership that they understand the 'business' of their HERI.
- Siloed communication advisers in departments would benefit from developing stronger professional networks with communication professionals within and outside their organisation to share best practices.
- University leadership should balance the benefits of strong centralised corporate communication departments that ensure aligned communications across the organisation, with those of decentralised communications functions who are in a better position to assess the communication needs of their department. A hybrid model is in which communication staff serve and report to their local level, while remaining an integrated network. The hybrid model allows stronger communication leadership for siloed communication advisers in departments who play a vital role in supporting the public relations and science communications efforts of the researchers they serve, while ensuring consistent and vertically-aligned communications across the organisation.

Biography

Peter Stanners



Peter Stanners (born 1984) is a dual British-Danish citizen, currently residing in Copenhagen, Denmark. He is Strategy and Communications Officer at the Novo Nordisk Foundation Center for Basic Metabolic Research (CBMR) at the University of Copenhagen, an academic research Center where scientists carry out fundamental research into cardiometabolic health and disease. He obtained a BA in Philosophy from the University of Sheffield in 2006 and an MA in Photography and Urban Cultures from Goldsmiths College, London, in 2008. In addition, he obtained a Diploma in Professional Photography from the University of the Arts London in 2007, and an NCTJ Diploma in Newspaper Journalism from News Associates in 2011.

Between 2014 and 2018, after several years as a features writer, news reporter and photojournalist, he co-founded The Murmur newspaper and served as Editor-in-Chief. The English-language print publication provided in depth news and features about Danish politics, society and culture, with a

monthly distribution of 15,000 issues across 200+ locations. In 2018, he co-founded the folk high school Designhøjskolen Højer, where he served as Head of Communications. During this period, he also served as Head of Communications at Mino Danmark, a member's organisation seeking to improve the outcomes for minority youth in Denmark, hosted TEDxCopenhagen and the Index Awards, launched a podcast about Danish politics, and coached CrossFit at CrossFit Copenhagen (now ARCA).

He joined CBMR in 2019 and is responsible for the Center's strategic communications and supports the Center Leadership Team with strategic management of the Center's impact framework. After recognising that academic research environments face unique challenges in implementing effective strategic communications, he chose to investigate in his thesis how communication departments in higher education research institutes contribute to implementing and developing their organization's strategy.

Michelle Willemse

A smile is worth a thousand words

The role of internal communications in nurturing an emotional culture of joy at work

“Joy at work” is becoming less of an exception and more of an expectation. Since the Affective Revolution at the end of the 20th century, researchers have been taking a closer look at the many emotions people experience at work – among them, the emotions that lead to happy, engaged employees who genuinely care about their work and the future of their organisation. Internal communications play a vital role in shaping workplace culture, but few studies have investigated the link between internal communications practices and an organisation’s emotional culture of joy.

An **emotional culture of joy** is a positive emotional culture that is characterised by humour, cheerfulness, friendliness, fun, happiness, excitement and enthusiasm, and has been identified in the literature as being instrumental in employee flourishing, performance and resilience (Barsade & O’Neill, 2014; Hartmann et al., 2020; Men & Robinson, 2018; Yue et al., 2021). Joy at work has benefits for productivity, teamwork, customer loyalty and organisational commitment, making it much more than a “nice-to-have”. It is no wonder that – in popular media, research studies, and organisational policy alike – increasing attention is being given to joy at work as a fundamental component of a workforce motivated to perform their best.

Although scholars are now looking more intently at the relationship between positive emotional culture and **internal communications**, studies have been infrequent. The word “joy” is hardly ever captured in the literature on the role of communications professionals. Yet, internal communications practices are critical for developing a workplace culture where joy, fun and happiness are felt – by instilling corporate values and beliefs, acculturating employees, fostering relationships, strengthening sense of community, and building trust, shared identity and loyalty (Men & Bowen, 2017). These aspects matter for the ways in which employees

feel, perceive and express joyful emotions. In this regard, the role of internal communications in optimising an organisation’s emotional culture of joy should not be underestimated.

Research question and objectives

This study is the first of its kind in focussing on the role of internal communications in nurturing an emotional culture of joy at work. Three research objectives guided this study:

1. Explore the contribution of internal communications professionals to an emotional culture of joy.
2. Identify challenges for internal communications professionals in nurturing an emotional culture of joy.
3. Recommend strategies and tactics for internal communications professionals to nurture an emotional culture of joy in the workplace.

Methodology

As a predominantly inductive study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with two samples: 10 internal communications professionals, and 10 employees in non-communications functions, resulting in a total of 20 interviews altogether. The participants were of different ages, genders and years of experience, and worked at a variety of organisations from a total of nine different countries (Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland, Spain and Switzerland).

Findings

The research findings support the limited previous studies that have indicated a positive link between certain communication practices and positive emotional culture (e.g. Men & Yue, 2019; Yue et al., 2021).

The findings demonstrate that joy at work stems from meaningful and fulfilling factors beyond simply frivolous behaviours. For instance, having a connection to the company, important work, or good manager-employee relations are antecedents to joy. However, the concept of joy at work is somewhat stigmatised, placing internal communicators (who also suffer from an immature understanding and appreciation of the full scope and value of their role) in a difficult position to argue for greater prioritisation and resources.

Internal communicators are, along with managers, seen as having a responsibility to foster joy at work – and while this responsibility does not rest with them alone, communicators' multifaceted skill sets and unique organisational position gives them the ability to rally others around strategies to improve workplace culture. In a highly digital and globalised world, it is important that communicators employ a varied mix of strategies that account for different audience preferences – particularly following the recent surge in remote working and resulting changes in the ways employees meet and forge connections. Communicators' strategies to nurture an emotional culture of joy can be catered to different company requirements, and should consider methods that appeal to needs and interests at the individual, group and organisational levels. Appropriate strategies include:

- authentic, symmetrical and transparent communication
- responsive and motivating leadership language
- role modelling and incentivising behaviours conducive to joy

- enhancing employee understanding/acceptance of company purpose and direction
- empowering employees with their own channels and networks to stimulate better workplace interactions and relationships
- facilitating employee inputs to create more pleasant working environments.

Nurturing an emotional culture of joy takes time, and requires communicators to draw from their versatile skill sets to work with others in devising more creative and engaging approaches that do not always require extensive resource investment or in-person presence, but nevertheless bring people together and forge real connections.

Further research

This study has made an early contribution to the literature on the role of internal communications in developing positive emotional culture, specific to the emotional culture of joy. Further research would be valuable in testing and validating the findings of this study – in particular, quantitative research methods using a broader sample of internal communications professionals and employees; longitudinal studies comparing workplace culture before and after the implementation of communications strategies; and case studies as well as manager interviews to provide greater detail into the factors that affect the success of planned strategies. Efforts should also be made to better quantify levels of workplace joy, and develop a more comparable method or tool for both within and across organisations.

Biography

Michelle Willemse



Originally starting her career in urban and environmental planning, Michelle Willemse has extensive experience in multi-disciplinary stakeholder engagement, community consultation, and strategic advice. Holding a Bachelor of Environmental Planning with First Class Honors from Griffith University, Australia, Michelle worked for Australia's largest local government for almost 10 years, analysing and advising optimal land-use outcomes for the city of Brisbane.

The skills she gained in collaboration and mediation gave her a strong foundation to launch her career as a professional communicator in 2017, when she joined the global communications headquarters of one of the world's largest insurance and asset management companies. In her role as Communications Manager at Allianz SE, Michelle led a variety of projects in employee engagement, strategy communication, change

communication, social media, and the CEO's internal communications. Michelle is now proud to have successfully completed the Master of Science in Corporate Communication at the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University.

Michelle is originally from Brisbane, Australia, and moved to Munich, Germany in 2016 to take on new challenges and explore professional opportunities. Experiencing other cultures has always interested Michelle, who speaks German and some Danish in addition to her native English. Michelle wants to use her communication skills to motivate and inspire others around her – to achieve things they did not think were possible! Her thesis about the role of internal communications in nurturing joy at work is a topic that Michelle is excited to contribute to – and is a step towards optimising workplace practices so that both business and employee needs are met more efficiently and harmoniously.

The thesis coaches and co-readers of the 2023 graduates



Joep Cornelissen

Professor of Corporate Communication and Management
Academic Director MSc. Corporate Communication
Rotterdam School of Management

Joep Cornelissen is Professor of Corporate Communication and Management at the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University. The main focus of his research involves studies of the role of corporate and managerial communication in the context of innovation, entrepreneurship and change, and of social evaluations of the legitimacy and reputation of start-up and established firms. In addition, he also has an interest in questions of scientific reasoning and theory development in management and organisation theory. In the Executive Master of Science in Corporate Communication programme, he teaches the 'Purpose, Leadership and Communication' masterclass.

His work has been published in the *Academy of Management Review*, *Journal of Management Studies*, *Organisation Science* and *Organisation Studies*, and he has written a general text on corporate communication (*Corporate Communication: A Guide to Theory and Practice*, Sage Publications) which is now in its fourth edition. He is an Associate Editor for the *Academy of Management Review*, a Council member of the Society for the Advancement of Management Studies, a former General Editor of the *Journal of Management Studies* (2006-2012) and serves on the editorial boards of the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Management*, *Journal of Management Studies* and *Organisation Studies*.



Paul A. Argenti

Professor of Corporate Communication
Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth
United States of America

Professor Paul A. Argenti has taught management, corporate responsibility, corporate communication, and healthcare management starting in 1977 at the Harvard Business School, from 1979-81 at the Columbia Business School, and since 1981 as a faculty member at Dartmouth's Tuck School of Business. He has also taught as a visiting professor at the International University of Japan, the Helsinki School of Economics, Erasmus University in the Netherlands, London Business School, and Singapore Management University. In the Executive Master of Science in Corporate Communication programme, he teaches the 'Crisis Communication' masterclass, the 'Leadership and Communication' masterclass, and the 'Corporate Responsibility' masterclass. He currently serves as Faculty Director for Tuck's Leadership and Strategic Impact Program, and Tuck's executive programs for Coach.

Professor Argenti's textbook, *Corporate Communication, Seventh Edition*, was published through McGraw-Hill/Irwin in 2016. He also published the first edition of a seminal work in 2016 entitled *Corporate Responsibility* for Sage, which focuses on corporate values, shared value, corporate character, and the purpose of the corporation in modern society. Argenti co-authored (with Courtney Barnes) *Digital Strategies for Powerful Corporate Communication*, published by McGraw-Hill in 2009. Some of his other books include: *Strategic Corporate Communication*, published in 2007 by McGraw-Hill, *The Power of Corporate Communication* (co-authored with UCLA's Janis Forman), published by McGraw-Hill, and *The Fast Forward MBA Pocket Reference* (several editions), released through Wiley. Professor Argenti has written and edited numerous articles for academic publications and practitioner journals such as *Harvard Business Review*, *California Management Review*, and *Sloan Management Review*.

Professor Argenti also blogs regularly for publications such as *Harvard Business Review*, the *Washington Post*, and *US News & World Report* and appears frequently on radio (NPR and APM) and television (CNBC Fox Business) commenting on topics related to management, communications, reputation, and corporate responsibility.

Professor Argenti is a Fulbright Scholar and a winner of the Pathfinder Award in 2007 from the Institute for Public Relations for the excellence of his research over a long career. The Ethisphere Institute also listed him as one of the most influential people in Business Ethics. He serves on an advisory board to the President of the World Bank and the Board of Trustees for the Ethisphere Institute. He has also served on advisory boards to CEOs globally for a variety of companies. Finally, he has consulted and run training programs in communication for executives at hundreds of organisations over the last three decades including General Electric, The Detroit Lions, Mitsui, Novartis, and Goldman Sachs.



Guido A.J.M. Berens (PhD)

Assistant Professor

Rotterdam School of Management

Guido Berens is Assistant Professor at the Corporate Communication Centre (department Business Society Management) of 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 communication, corporate social responsibility, and issues management. His research has been published in the *Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Management Studies*, and *Journal of Business Ethics*, among others. Guido teaches Research Methodology as well as Communicating Sustainability in the Master and PhD programmes at RSM.



Dr. Nicholas Ind (Phd)

Professor

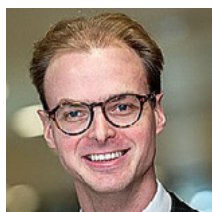
School of Economics, Innovation and Technology

Kristiana University College, Oslo

Nicholas Ind is a Professor at Kristiana University College, Oslo. Previously Nicholas ran Icon Medialab's brand consultancy arm in Sweden, had his own consultancy in the UK, was a Director of a design group and an Account Director in an advertising agency. In the Executive Master of Science in Corporate Communication programme, he teaches in the 'Corporate Branding' masterclass next to the leading lecturer Dr. Oriol Iglesias.

Nicholas is the author of thirteen books that have been published in 9 different languages, including *The Corporate Image* 1990, *Terence Conran – The Authorised Biography* 1995, *The Corporate Brand* 1997, *Living the Brand* 2001, *Brand Together* 2012, *Brand Desire* 2016, *Co-creating Brands* 2019 and *In Good Conscience* 2022. He was the editor of *Beyond Branding* 2003, *Brands with a Conscience* 2016 and *The Routledge Companion to Corporate Branding* 2022. He has also written articles for *California Management Review*, *Business Horizons*, *Journal of Brand Management* and *Industrial Marketing Management*. Nicholas has undertaken consulting projects for such organization as adidas, The Economist, Telenor, Telia, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Vlisco, Greenpeace International and WWF. Nicholas has a BA, an MBA, and a PhD from the European Graduate School in Switzerland. He is a former Director of the Design Business Association (UK), a member of the advisory board of Corporate Reputation Review and the editorial board of the *Journal of Brand Management*. He was formerly non-Executive Chairman of a Swedish design consultancy.

Since 2009 he has been a Visiting Professor at ESADE, Barcelona where he teaches Master courses on Conscientious Brands and Co-creation and at Edinburgh Napier University. He was a founder member of the Medinge Group - an international branding think tank.



Erik van 't Klooster (PhD)

Lecturer and consultant

Department of Marketing Management

Rotterdam School of Management

Over the past 10 years Erik van 't Klooster has been a teacher (both bachelor and master level) and a consultant on marketing strategy, marketing communications and consumer behavior. Also, Erik has coached many master theses on a wide range of marketing topics (e.g. consumer retail, b2b marketing, financial services, brand management, marketing automation, social media). Erik is experienced in both qualitative and quantitative research methods.



Florian Madertoner
Lecturer
Rotterdam School of Management

Florian Madertoner is a Lecturer at the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University. He holds a degree in Banking- and Finance. Florian's research interests include Capital Structure Theory, Behavioral Finance and the Economic History. He is responsible for the course "Economics" in the bachelor study programs International Business Administration and Business Administration. In addition, Florian teaches "Corporate Finance" and supervises bachelor theses in both programs. In the master program Finance & Investment Florian supervises Master theses. Florian teaches the elective "Finance for Communication Professionals" in the executive master program Corporate Communication and at the Rotterdam school of Management he teaches the executive training "Finance for Non-Financials". He has been awarded multiple awards for his teaching activities: the "Professor of the Year Award" seven years consecutively from 2016 to 2022 for his undergraduate course "Corporate Finance" in the programs IBA and BA. In 2020 Florian has also been awarded the "Professor of the Year Award" for his course "Economics" in the IBA program as well an award for "Best Adaptation to the Coronavirus Situation".



Prof. Rita Linjuan Men
Professor in the Department of Public Relations
University of Florida

Rita Linjuan Men, Ph.D., APR, is Professor in the Department of Public Relations at the University of Florida. Men's background is based primarily in corporate communication research and consulting. Her research interests include employee communication, leadership communication, public engagement, measurement and evaluation, relationship/reputation management, start-up public relations, and emerging technologies.

In the Executive Master of Science in Corporate Communication programme, she teaches in the 'Employee Communication' masterclass. Men is a renowned expert in employee communication. Her work has been widely published in academic journals in communication, management, and public relations. In addition to nearly 80 articles, she has lead-authored or edited three books, *Excellence in Internal Communication Management* (Business Expert Press), *Current Trends and Issues in Internal Communication: Theory and Practice* (Palgrave Macmillan), and *Strategic Communications for Start-ups and Entrepreneurs in China* (Routledge). Her fourth co-edited book, *Internal Communication and Employee Engagement: A Case Study Approach* (Routledge) is scheduled to be published in Fall 2022. Men has received 27 top paper and research awards and recognitions from national and international

communication associations and conferences. She is the 2010 recipient of the Ketchum Excellence in Public Relations Research Award from the Institute for Public Relations, a three-time Arthur W. Page Legacy Scholar, a 2017–2022 Plank Scholar of the Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations, and the 2016 recipient of the PRIDE Outstanding Journal Article Award for Outstanding Innovation, Development, and Educational Achievement in Public Relations from the National Communication Association in the United States. In addition, Men was identified as the most published scholar in internal communication (1970-2019) and in social media and public relations (2006-2020) respectively, according to two systematic review articles published in *Public Relations Review*. Men's works have been cited over 5,200 times according to Google Scholar Citations.

Men's scholarship and consulting experience have led her to serve multiple leadership roles in the field, including as an associate editor for *Journal of Communication Management*, an advisory board member for the International Public Relations Research Conference (IPRRC) and the International Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communication (AMEC) and chief research editor for the Institute for Public Relations' Organizational Communication Research Centre. She is also a member of the prestigious Arthur W. Page Society. Men earned her Ph.D. in Communication from the University of Miami. She holds an M.Phil. in Communication from Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong, and a B.A. in International Communication from Zhejiang University, China.



Ton Roodink (IR. PhD)
Assistant Professor
Rotterdam School of Management

Ton Roodink has been an assistant professor at the Rotterdam School of Management at Erasmus University Rotterdam since 1990. Ton teaches Management of Change and predominantly he gives lectures to students between the ages of 30 and 50 who attend the programme of the Part-time Master Business Administration (MScBA). In addition, he has been a member of the faculty's Examination Board for many years. As a consultant he performs organisation research, provide organisational advice, work as a mediator and give workshops and training courses. Since December 2004 Ton is a senior lecturer in courses at Sezen Academy in Wijk bij Duurstede. Graduated in Applied Mathematics, with a specialisation in Operations Research (Technical Highschool Twente), he worked as a researcher from 1979 to 1983 at the Institute for Theater Research Amsterdam. From 1983 until 1990 I was a lecturer of Philosophy of Science at the University of Twente in Enschede. His main focus areas are change management, organisational development and conflict management. He is especially interested in the use of stories as a diagnostic and interventional methodology.



Lonneke Roza (PhD)

Academic Researcher

**Department of Business-Society Management
Rotterdam School of Management (RSM)**

Lonneke Roza is a part-time Adjunct Assistant Professor at Rotterdam School of Management and she specialises in non-commercial (i.e. impact first and impact only) strategies to create positive social change. Her research is mainly focused on (employee engagement in) Corporate Citizenship & Corporate Social Investments. She published articles in renowned journals such as Journal of Business Ethics and Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly. In addition, Lonneke is the leading editor on the first academic book on Corporate Foundations, published by Springer in 2019. Her latest project is a co-edited book that will be published at Sage on employee engagement in Corporate Social Responsibility, expected in summer 2020.

Next to her research, Lonneke teaches courses and trainings for master students and professionals on Non-Profit Management, Social Entrepreneurship, Employee Engagement in Corporate Social Investments and Employer Branding through Corporate Social Investments. In addition, she works with the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, United States) and co-delivers a course on Corporate Citizenship. Next to her position at the university, Lonneke is a consultant for companies, corporate foundations and charitable organisations and works with (international) platforms, such as European Venture Philanthropy Association and RW Institute. She serves as a chair of the board of Vattenfall Foundation (corporate foundation) and on the board of Facilicom Group Foundation (corporate foundation), KPN Mooiste Contact Fonds (corporate foundation) and Lokale Fondsen Nederland (umbrella organisation for community foundations). She is frequently asked to speak at public events and conferences on the role of businesses in society.



Ingrid de Vries

Lecturer

HZ University of Applied Sciences

Research Associate

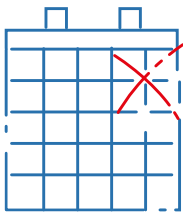
**ERIM Centre for corporate eco-transformation
Rotterdam School of Management (RSM)**

Ingrid de Vries has her Master Degree in Business Administration and her Post Master Degree in Controlling from Erasmus University Rotterdam. She currently works both at HZ University of Applied Sciences and Rotterdam School of Management (RSM), Erasmus University Rotterdam. Ingrid does qualitative research in Circular Economy, using systems thinking and soft systems methodology. She has an important role as research associate at Erasmus University's official research centre; ERIM centre for corporate eco-transformation. Other fields of expertise of Ingrid include management accounting & control, change management, green events.

The Part-time Executive Master of Science in Corporate Communication programme

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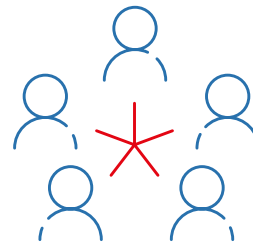
Foundation course



Starts in January or June

2

Advanced elective courses



Choose 6 from a choice of 15

3

International study trip



Visit several international leading companies

4

Master thesis



Demonstrate your analytical ability and accumulated knowledge







**Research Abstracts
2023**

