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Portland Metro Chapter Public Relations Society of America



1996-1997

Directory of Consultants



William W. Marsh, APR
1915-1996

In February of this year, the Portland public relations community lost a founding member whose career flourished for 40 years and who dedicated himself to his clients, his fellow professionals and his community. In keeping with his spirit, the PRSA board of directors has decided to dedicate the first Directory of Consultants to his memory.

Bill Marsh made lasting impressions as a colleague, counselor, friend and teacher. He worked for Western Airlines and White Stag manufacturing before founding the W.W. Marsh and Associates public relations firm in 1954. In 1970, he merged with Jay Rockey Public Relations of Seattle to establish Rockey/Marsh Public Relations. He cultivated long relationships with his clients—28 years with Pan American Airways and 20 years with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.

In 1986, the Columbia River Chapter of PRSA created the William W. Marsh Award to recognize a career of distinction. Of course, Bill was the first recipient. In 1983, Bill received the prestigious Paul M. Lund Public Service Award from PRSA national.

Marylhurst College established the William Marsh Public Relations Forum and the William Marsh Public Relations Scholarship Fund.

He was a charter member of the Portland Metro Chapter of PRSA and served as president. Bill established the Public Relations Certificate Program at Marylhurst College and taught classes from 1986-1993.

With affection and admiration, we called Bill "Oregon's Dean of Public Relations." He will be greatly missed.

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Portland Metro Chapter Public Relations Society of America Directory of Consultants 1996-1997

PRSA Directory of Consultants

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PRSA has created the Directory of Consultants to facilitate the positive use of Portland area consultants and consulting firms. All listings are run as submitted. The consultants listed in this directory have a wide range of experience and skills. We encourage prospective employers to determine the level of expertise that will best meet their need.

Advertising and Distribution

For information about advertising in the 1997-1998 Directory of Consultants, please contact Woloshin Communications at 452-0625.

The PRSA Directory of Consultants is available for purchase for \$5 from PRSA. Please send your request to Sandra Caldwell, PRSA, 9360 SW Taylor Street, Portland, OR 97225. Your order should include \$2.00 for postage and handling.

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JOHN A. KITZHABER
GOVERNOR



May, 1996

To the Oregon Business Community:

I am pleased to introduce you to the first Directory of Communications and Marketing Consultants.

Published by the Portland Metro Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, this guide will enable businesses in the Portland Metropolitan Area to develop relationships with members of local professional organizations who are dedicated to offering comprehensive and competitive services in diverse areas from advertising and graphic design to public relations and marketing.

I am excited to see Oregon businesses working together. As a team, we can forge a business arena that is both committed to high standards of professional practice and able to experience continued economic growth. I wish each of you luck in this venture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John Kitzhaber".

John A. Kitzhaber, M.D.

JAK/jc



Portland Metro Chapter

May 1, 1996

On behalf of the Portland Metro Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, I am pleased to welcome you to our first Directory of Consultants.

This directory came to life as the brain child of our immediate past-president Patty Farrell. We had gathered at a board goal-setting session and were seeking ways to better serve our members, especially those with long-term experience who, for lack of a better title, we call 'senior' members. After conducting a survey, we found that about one-third of our membership consists of independent public relations practitioners and small, mid-size and large firms.

This directory was born.

Each month, the Portland Metro Chapter of PRSA receives several inquiries about hiring public relations firms via its voicemail service. As organizations in Oregon recognize both the effect public relations can have on the bottom line and how managing their reputations is an investment in growth and quality, public relations practitioners will be in even greater demand. This directory can help organizations search for the practitioner whose counsel will help them realize their goals.

Pass this directory onto businesses and other organizations who hire consultants for communications challenges, and let any consultants who aren't included know about this guide. We'll be back next year with another.

Sincerely,

Gail Dundas, APR
1996 President, Portland Metro Chapter, PRSA

All about this directory

How to use this directory

The 1996-1997 PRSA Directory of Consultants has been designed as an easy-to-use, simple guide that will assist Oregon businesses in selecting and developing satisfactory relationships with communications professionals in public relations, marketing, advertising, fund development and related fields.

The book is in alphabetical order with a cross-referenced index by areas of specialization.

Two brief articles on developing relationships with consultants which begin this book and the PRSA Code of Professional Standards offer guidelines for successful business practices.

How Much Do Consultants Charge?

Rates vary widely, and many consultants have different rates for different services. It is a good idea to ask for a proposal and/or an estimate of fees before entering into a business relationship. Consultants' hourly rates may seem high at first glance, but often cost your business much less than using an

employee to do the same work. This is because:

- Consultants are specialists, they work faster, with more proficiency and with specialized contacts developed by years of experience and research.
- Consultants are responsible for paying for their own health insurance and benefits.
- The consultant's work is often time-limited and easily evaluated.
- Consultants are extremely concerned about maintaining their credibility and reputation and tend to operate with extremely high standards for performance.

The average hourly rate for an individual consultant in the Portland area is \$70 per hour. Agencies, which also provide consulting services, charge approximately \$100 per hour.

Protecting Your Interests

We encourage businesses who use this directory and the consultants listed in this directory to write and sign contracts specifying fees and the scope of services before commencing work.

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Choosing the best PR counsel:

Knowing who your organization is and what its needs are can expedite and simplify the process.

Successful management is turning increasingly to public relations counseling and the techniques of professional public relations to help their enterprises communicate effectively.

How To Begin the Process

The first step in the search for a public relations firm is to identify and prioritize your organization's own corporate goals. Your public relations counselor will use these to develop objective strategies and tactics specifically oriented to your needs.

An excellent goal-focusing exercise is to construct an informational background that outlines:

- the history of your organization (when founded, size, etc.);
- your mission/aims;
- public relations needs;
- public relations expectations;
- any special public relations skills and/or resources sought;
- any other public relations efforts;
- any requirements for collateral materials, advertising, etc.;
- budget commitment/parameters if any.

Developing this information will help to clarify the scope of

your public relations program which, in turn, will help to pinpoint the qualities and strengths to look for in a public relations counsel.

Finding the Right Fit

Talk with peers — find out if their organizations retain public relations firms. If so, which ones? Are their performances satisfactory? Would they recommend them? What do they know about any other public relations firms in the area?

Call local newspaper, television, or radio reporters and trade publication editors who cover your organization's field and ask about the public relations firms from whom they receive the most accurate and professional information.

What Next

After polling peers, professional associations and media, you have begun to hear certain firm names several times. Contact these counselors by telephone or letter. Describe your organization and its public relations needs as you see them. Ask if the firm would be interested in talking with you. (If it is, check to make sure it does not already

- represent a client who might be a conflict of interest.) Ask the principal to send a letter with:
 - the firm's general background and any experience in your organization's area;
 - its range of services;
 - the professional qualifications of the firm's principals and staff;
 - specialized skills or resources such as market research, or in-house design capabilities;
 - a current client list;
 - the firm's policies on charging for its counsel and services.

The Final Steps

After reviewing the responses, select those which seem to best fit your organization's public relations needs and set up a meeting at the offices of each firm to get further acquainted. During this first visit look for:

- A general capabilities presentation from the public relations firm, but with some information directed to your organization's needs as outlined earlier.
- Familiarity with the issues and trends of your industry.

Narrow your search to the top two or three firms, and request that each set up a meeting for you with the principal player(s) of your organization's account team. Treat this meeting as you would an interview. Ask questions including:

- how long will it take to get up to speed?
- what reporting/measurement methods will be used?
- who will be the account execu-

tive?

- who is the backup key person when he/she is not available?
- does this key person understand your organization's needs and ask intelligent questions?
- does this key person appear to have the supervisory ability to lead the account team?
- does he/she have any experience in your organization's field?
- and, of high importance, how is the chemistry between you?

If You're Still Not Sure

Send each of your top candidates a request for a written proposal outlining how it would provide the public relations services your organization needs to achieve its goals and objectives.

Once You've Decided

When your decision is made, discuss fee arrangements and initial length of contract with the selected firm and have it send you two copies of a signed letter of agreement recapping these terms. As soon as you return a copy with your signature, your organization's newest management asset will go to work.

*Compiled from **Selecting a Public Relations Firm**, published by the PRSA Counselors Academy.*

Personal Chemistry is the key:

Experience is a key factor in hiring a consultant, but personal chemistry can make or break a relationship.

Personal chemistry must be considered an important part of selecting a public relations consultant. For that central reason, then, we suggest you keep these personal measurements in mind.

Questions To Ask Yourself

Do I find it easy to talk to this group? Do they find it easy to listen to me?

Do they grasp the issues and are they receptive to our own, in-house, up-front assessment of what we think needs to be done?

Is it comfortable to sit down and chat with these people?

Do I feel welcome when I visit their location? Do they mix well with my staff?

Would I feel perfectly comfortable calling my account supervisor at 3:00 a.m. on a Sunday morning?

But, of course, all is not personal. Some of the decision must be made on the basis of the firm's track record.

The Track Record

What have they done that has worked?

Have they taken a public communications problem and literally turned it around?

It is important to know if they have the skills and the contacts

necessary to reach with effectiveness and believability the target audiences that you, as a client, must reach.

In short, have they made a difference?

Have they moved minds and shaped issues?

Have they won causes and converts?

Have they gone to the front lines and done real battle with decency, honesty, bravery and integrity?

You need to ask for specific case histories within those guidelines—because public relations is, first and foremost, a matter of successful public communication.

The Hard Questions

And, along this line, ask your prospective choice if they have ever bombed.

If they say "no" look for another firm at once. You can't be in this business without losing

upon occasion. Good public relations requires daring and derring-do and sometimes the wings fall off. The kind of public relations firm you'll be able to live with comfortably is the one that can be honest with you and do so in a spirit of good humor.

You might also consider asking the candidate if he or she has ever resigned an account because of ethical, temperamental, judgmental, creative, or other touchy reasons. Most agencies have. In discussing this aspect—though it may seem negative—you will be able to uncover much of its emotion and intellect—the fabric of this firm-in-question.

The Usual Criteria

Who are the current clients and the former clients?

What do these past and present clients have to say about their relationship with your candidate? Most PR firms will be very happy to let you talk to clients and former clients. If not, be wary.

Staff backgrounds. What have your potential team members done with their lives so far?

In addition to this job, what have they liked and championed and cheered and treasured?

Who are their heroes and why?

You're going to be in close cahoots with these people in the days ahead—you'd better find out now if you think liking them is

possible. Again, most PR firms are proud of their staff biographies. After all, they aren't selling steel ingots—they're selling talent—and that's a people matter entirely.

Don't Jump the Gun

You can't meet too often before making up your mind. Don't hesitate to ask questions and listen carefully to the answers. If the candidate seems to know about your problems and needs immediately - back off and take a good, hard look. Most candidates for a public relations assignment are not quick to start spitting answers and theories and projects. They want to look and listen and confer and ponder very deeply and carefully because they don't want to come up with a disaster; they want to come up with a sturdy, practical, well-conceived, carefully developed plan. A plan that will work.

So keep those conversations going. And also examine what they write in their proposal very carefully. And trust your intuition.

This is a delicate relationship and the best partnerships are made in compatibility of spirit as well as in technical detail.

Excerpted from On Choosing a Public Relations Firm by Ron Schmidt, of Pihas, Schmidt, Westerdahl. Schmidt, one of Oregon's foremost practitioners, died in 1992.

"Conducting a public relations consultation becomes a very personal and very direct—and very sensitive relationship..."

PRSA Code of Professional Standards

Members of the Public Relations Society of America base their professional principles on the fundamental value and dignity of the individual, holding that the free exercise of human rights, especially freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of the press, is essential to the practice of public relations.

In serving the interests of clients and employers, we dedicate ourselves to the goals of better communication, understanding, and cooperation among the diverse individuals, groups, and institutions of society, and of equal opportunity of employment in the public relations professional.

We pledge:

To conduct ourselves professionally, with truth, accuracy, fairness, and responsibility to the public;

To improve our individual competence and advance the knowledge and proficiency of the profession through continuing research and education;

And to adhere to the articles of the Code of Professional Standards for the Practice of Public Relations as adopted by the governing Assembly of the Society.

These articles have been adopted by the Public Relations Society of America to promote and maintain high standards of public service and ethical con-

duct among its members:

1. A member shall conduct his or her professional life in accord with the public interest.

2. A member shall exemplify high standards of honesty and integrity while carrying out dual obligations to a client or employer and to the democratic process.

3. A member shall deal fairly with the public, with past or present clients or employers, and with fellow practitioners, giving due respect to the ideal of free inquiry and to the opinions of others.

4. A member shall adhere to the highest standards of accuracy and truth, avoiding extravagant claims or unfair comparisons and giving credit for ideas and words borrowed from others.

5. A member shall not knowingly disseminate false or misleading information and shall act promptly to correct erroneous communications for which he or she is responsible.

6. A member shall not engage in any practice which has the purpose of corrupting the integrity of channels of communication or the processes of government.

7. A member shall be prepared to identify publicly the name of the client or employer on whose behalf any public communication is made.

8. A member shall not use any individual or organization pro-

fessing to serve or represent an announced cause, or professing to be independent or unbiased, but actually serving another or undisclosed interest.

9. A member shall not guarantee the achievement of specified results beyond the member's direct control.

10. A member shall not represent conflicting or competing interests without the express consent of those concerned, given after a full disclosure of the facts.

11. A member shall not place himself or herself in a position where the member's personal interest is or may be in conflict with an obligation to an employer or client, or others, without full disclosure of such interest to all involved.

12. A member shall not accept fees, commissions, gifts, or any other consideration from anyone except clients or employers for whom services are performed without their express consent, given after full disclosure of the facts.

13. A member shall scrupulously safeguard the confidences and privacy rights of present, former, and prospective clients or employers.

14. A member shall not intentionally damage the professional reputation or practice of another practitioner.

15. If a member has evidence that another member has been guilty of unethical, illegal, or unfair practices, including those in violation of this Code, the

member is obligated to present the information promptly to the proper authorities of the Society for action in accordance with the procedure set forth in Article XII of the Bylaws.

16. A member called as a witness in a proceeding for enforcement of this Code is obligated to appear, unless excused for sufficient reason by the judicial panel.

17. A member shall, as soon as possible, sever relations with any organization or individual if such relationship requires conduct contrary to the articles of this Code.