

communicators'



network

Calendar

Thursday, May 9

May Luncheon

11:30 a.m. networking

12:00 – 1:30 p.m. program

"Bulletproofing Your Career: Panel of SV-IABC Presidents Bares All" At Michaels at Shoreline Restaurant in Mountain View.

Tuesday, May 28

May Independents' Roundtable

6:30 p.m. networking & light dinner

7:00 – 8:30 p.m. program

"There's More to Life than Hi-Tech." At The Lookout restaurant at the Sunnyvale Golf Course.

One-Day Seminars from IABC

Get details and register at:
www.iabc.com/store

Wednesday, May 22

Webinar

"Mergers and Acquisitions, the Human and Communication Dimension," sponsored by IABC Research Foundation, with Pat Whalen, Ed.D., Northwestern University; and Jim Lukaszewski, APR. For details, visit:
www.krm.com/iabc

THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

Bulletproofing Your Career: Panel of SV-IABC Presidents Bares All

It's been quite a roller coaster ride in Silicon Valley and beyond over the past year or so. And this recent version of the 'Drop Zone' has had an impact on all of us—directly or indirectly. We've either lost our jobs or lost our colleagues, or know someone who has. How has this economic cycle changed your thinking or actions? At the least, it has raised a lot of questions.

For the May Program we've enlisted the help of a panel of seasoned communications professionals to speak frankly about the challenge of today's marketplace. They'll share personal career choices, good moments and bad, and present short and long-term strategies for staying employed while keeping your career on track. Our panel includes three former SV-IABC chapter presidents, with more than 60 years of combined experience. It promises to be a lively discussion with topics including career survival tips, managing cycles of boom and bust, advice on professional development and candid responses to any and all questions coming from the floor.

If someone you know could benefit, bring them along and join us for what promises to be an engaging spontaneous session tackling the challenges of career management head on.

About the Presidents Panel

Brad Whitworth

Brad served as president of SV-IABC in 1981 after being on IABC's international board for seven years (including a year as chairman in 1989-90). He is an IABC Fellow and a frequent speaker at IABC and Conferences Board meetings around the world. Brad joined Hewlett-Packard Company in 1980 and has held a number of senior management positions in international communications, public affairs and employee communications. He is currently the external communications manager for HP's Computing Systems organization. Brad is responsible for the media and analyst relations programs for all of HP's computers including servers, technical workstations and software and storage products.

Molly Detwiler

Molly served as president of SV-IABC in 1991 and spent a total of three years on the board. She has

spent the last four years as an independent writer and editor specializing in feature articles, brochures and annual reports for such clients as Adobe Systems, Lunar Design, Palm and Seagate Technology. From 1991-1998, Molly worked for Adobe Systems Inc. as a manager in several divisions. Earlier career experiences included positions at Oracle Corporation, Neale-May & Partners, Raychem and the Georgia Chamber of Commerce.

Terilyn Monroe

Terilyn served as president of SV-IABC in 1996 and spent a total of seven years on the board. She is currently senior communications manager for Nortel Networks where she counsels presidents and their teams in organization-wide employee communications issues and efforts. Terilyn spent two years at Bay Networks as employee communications program manager/trainer. From 1991-1997 she worked for Amdahl Corporation as senior corporate relations specialist, employee communications.

Lunch Program

When: Thursday, May 9, 11:30 a.m. networking; 12 – 1:30 p.m. program

Where: Michaels at Shoreline Restaurant, 2960 N. Shoreline Blvd. in Mountain View. From 101, take Shoreline Blvd. toward the amphitheater, enter Shoreline Park and follow the signs to the restaurant.

Price: \$25 members, \$40 non-members* (No-shows will be billed.)

RSVP: By Monday, May 6. Use the SV-IABC Web site (www.sv-iabc.org), call the hot line at 408-746-3545 or e-mail Jenny Carless (jenny@jennycarless.com). Be sure to include your meal choice — breast of chicken, Portobello or grilled vegetable brochette with wild rice.

*We are offering a Membership Month discount to non-members who are accompanied by members. See "Join SV-IABC and Broaden Your Horizons" on page 3 for details.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Membership
Month



Photo courtesy of Anne Knudsen

Think back to the time when you joined IABC. Maybe it was just a few months ago, or perhaps it was a few years ago. Or maybe it was ten, 15, even 20 years ago! Whenever it was, think back to that time and ask yourself *why* you joined? What helped make that decision for you?

The reasons you joined — which are probably not that different from why most of us joined IABC — are the core benefits of IABC membership. Those benefits, which include great networking opportunities, power-packed programs, helpful career development tools and this awesome online newsletter, are the focus of our annual Silicon Valley IABC membership drive in May.

Like the old American Express commercial said, “Membership has its privileges.” For SV-IABC members, the “privileges” include some fabulous prizes simply for bringing in new members during the month of May. We’re allowing members to bring non-members to our May program at the member price. It’s all about exposing IABC membership and the values that membership brings to a broader group of people. Have you ever talked with a friend or co-worker and mentioned IABC to them? That’s all it takes, a few minutes on the phone or a brief e-mail to invite one of your co-workers to a program.

We all benefit from new members, because they help build a larger, more diverse IABC community. Ultimately, they bring new ideas and different ways of looking at issues and solving problems. The diversity helps our organization thrive.

You can get more details about our membership drive from e-mails that we’ve sent to all of our members, or contact Cari Class, our vice president of membership, at cari@designdiva.net, or by phone at (831) 724-2400.

Erika Powelson
President, SV-IABC

Effective Communications Gets the Message Across

By Lori Maupas

At the April SV-IABC luncheon program, attendees were treated to a presentation on Messaging Strategy by Dr. James R. Forcier, managing director at Bay Analytics, an economic strategy consulting company. Forcier calls his business “analytics agnostic,” because it takes a multi-disciplinary approach to accessing its clients’ economic strategy. Methods include microeconomics, operations and behavioral research, communications theory, and some proprietary methodologies like interest analysis™ and decision rationality.™

Forcier asserts that the success of any business initiative depends on communicating the correct messages to the right parties at the right time. Citing his own business as an example, he said, “What’s key for Bay Analytics is to articulate our clients’ business initiatives to stakeholders in such a way that they’ll understand and pay attention to it. It’s the only way the client will implement our recommendations.”

To prove his point, Forcier offered two case studies, one in which the challenge was to create “messaging in a vacuum” with unclear goals and objectives, and another in which a company wanted to transition brand value to a spin-off while establishing a distinct corporate identity. Both scenarios illustrated some important lessons for developing and communicating effective messages.

Messaging in a Vacuum

When dealing with creating messaging in a vacuum, Dr. Forcier recommends the following approaches:

Obtain the assistance you can: Assistance can come from individuals who may be able to answer key questions, or external consultants and third parties who might be able to develop a required process or generate an answer. “This requires you have the time and resources and authorization to secure internal or external help—and you may not have that,” he noted.

Maximize your odds of success: Make your client your ally in the project’s outcome and provide supporting arguments for your requests for help. Sometimes it requires pointing out what can go wrong if you don’t succeed at obtaining clarity. “The concept of ‘ready-fire-aim’ is alive and well in the corporations we work for,” said Forcier. “It only works if you have two shots, and most of the time you don’t.”

Forcier recommends explaining the cost and outcome implications of poor preparation and the potential damage of communicating the wrong message or targeting the wrong customers.

Forcier explained that regardless of the amount of assistance you receive, use what you have to the best advantage and align draft messages with business goals and market situation. The most important thing is to obtain confirmation to minimize personal risk. “Sometimes, you’ll have to push back,” he said.

Maximizing Brand Value

The physical components of branding include images, logos, colors, designs, and anything that helps consumers identify a company’s products or services. However, brand is more important today because business value is increasingly derived from intangibles. “Today business value emanates much more from conceptual rather than physical assets,” said Forcier. Those intangibles must be conveyed in brand-related communications such as talking points for the sales force; value propositions for investors; and explanations for employees and assurances for suppliers, creditors and partners.

By maximizing brand value, a company can increase its amount of consumer surplus—the additional amount buyers will pay for a product or service above the required selling price. “The stronger the brand, the greater the incremental return,” said Forcier.

Forcier said that all messaging should be driven by the business objectives. “Every different stakeholder needs a slightly different message based on his or her interest or objective,” he said. “But there’s a limit. Prioritize your messages based on your resources and your ability to deliver.”

Forcier provided a detailed messaging development matrix that offers a breakdown of each task involved, along with information on how to test the outcome, develop a fall-back plan of action and other useful tips. The matrix is still in development. If you attended the luncheon and have comments or feedback on Dr. Forcier’s Messaging Developing Matrix, please send them to jforcier@bayanalytics.com.

Lori Maupas is owner and Worddiva at Alphabet Soup Writing Services.

Join SV-IABC and Broaden Your Horizons

By now you've probably heard that May is "Membership Month" at SV-IABC, and we're doing everything we can to get the most out of our membership drive. But we need your support to help our chapter grow and prosper.

This month, we are providing an incentive for non-members to come and see what IABC is all about. Bring your communications co-workers, friends and associates to our May luncheon program for the member price—a savings of \$15 off the non-member price.

If your colleagues need more incentive, just tell them about the plethora of local programs — seminars, webinars and conferences covering emerging trends and issues in communications — that will be avail-

able to them once they are members. IABC offers a spectrum of career-building products, programs, accreditation opportunities and awards to help its members continually advance.

"IABC has helped me develop my management skills," said Brad Whitworth, ABC, external communications manager at Hewlett-Packard Company and member of SV-IABC. "I gained hands-on managerial experience long before similar opportunities emerged in my workplace. One of the reasons I was hired at HP was my active participation in IABC."

To make the offer sweeter, if your colleague becomes a chapter member, you will qualify to win a gift certificate from one of several popular

retailers, including Crate & Barrel, The Body Shop, Sportmart, Borders and The Sharper Image, to name a few.

We've got a great deal for returning members, as well. During our membership drive, we'll waive the \$40 fee for lapsed members, so you can begin revitalizing your professional life. Now is the time to accelerate your access to a worldwide network of top-flight professionals and link up with your colleagues at local and global events.

For more information, contact Cari Class, vice president of membership, at cari@designdiva.net for more information.

COMMUNICATORS IN ACTION

A Passing Observation Becomes Catalyst for Media Hits

By Gus Santoyo

Like many PR professionals caught in the craze of the dot com frenzy, I was charged with the PR launch of a Web portal. But in early 2000, Web portals were as common as 25-year old CEOs and overnight millionaires. Reporters and editors had heard it all before. Pitching a new Web portal in this environment was almost "e-impossible." (Didn't every word back then have an "e" in front of it?) In addition, little did we know that that the dot-com crash was looming in the distance.

Paying clients, however, don't want to hear that "your story won't get told because portals are yesterday's news." So my mission was to find a new twist on an old story and create a buzz for our client — a fledgling Internet portal catering to the Indian community called GoYogi.com.

During our planning sessions for the company's media event, I noticed that the GoYogi office, while plush and spacious, also had the feel of a college dormitory. In the CFO's office was a sleeping bag and pillow on the floor as well as an opened suitcase with clothes. In one large room were sofas and chairs with blankets where people could sleep. As a former reporter,

I took one look at the room and knew it could be great fodder for a story pitch. I made a few notes and stored the facts away for future reference.

A few weeks later, I saw a Profnet query from an Industry Standard reporter on the effects of sleep deprivation on employees at startups. I knew immediately it was the perfect forum to feature GoYogi's cozy office quarters. I wasted no time developing this pitch:

For those who work at Internet start-up GoYogi.com (www.goyogi.com) in Fremont, Calif., sleep deprivation is not much of a choice. As an Internet portal targeting 1 billion Indians worldwide, GoYogi must keep daytime hours in India as well as in the United States. Walk into the offices of GoYogi.com in the wee hours of the morning on any day and you will find employees crashed on several futons near their cubes, or weary designers collapsed in sleeping bags next to work centers. The vice-president of business development sleeps under her desk on a yoga mat to block out the light. Sleep-deprived employees easily downshift into punchy moods even in the middle of the day. In light of this overnight activity, GoYogi has installed a shower and is looking to provide lockers for its employees. And since there are no restaurants

close by, microwave popcorn has become a popular staple for these focused workers. If you need more information, please call me at (408) 975-3098. Thanks.

The pitch worked. I received an e-mail the next day from the New York-based reporter asking not only for an interview but wanting to find out about photo opportunities. The result: The story appeared in Industry Standard with a large lead-in photo of GoYogi's business development vice president underneath her desk. The story itself showed GoYogi as a hard working company steadfast in its commitment to meet its business objectives, even if it meant some personal sacrifices.

What I took away from the experience is that any nugget of information can potentially reap PR rewards for your clients. The dot-com era was filled with sleep-deprived minions dreaming of the big payday, but a vice-president sleeping under her desk on a yoga mat just stuck with me. Fortunately for GoYogi, it also stuck with the editor, landing the company one of its biggest media hits.

Gus Santoyo is an Account Manager at The Hoffman Agency in San Jose. You can reach him at gsantoyo@hoffman.com.

THIS MONTH'S INDEPENDENTS' ROUNDTABLE

There's More to Life Than Hi-Tech

Technology is a big part of Silicon Valley, but it's only one part. This month's Independent Roundtable will feature a panel of communicators from non-technology companies who will share their insights about opportunities in the biotech, power, water and academic industries. Come learn about opportunities beyond hi-tech from people who use independents for a variety of needs.

Deb McManus is director of communications for Applied Biosystems. Applied Biosystems is focused on pharmaceutical and biotechnology research and testing, including forensic human identification, HIV genotyping, food testing and molecular medicine. The company has an installed base of more than 50,000 instrument systems in approximately 100 countries. Deb is responsible for internal and external communications.

Bill Highlander is director of public relations for Calpine, an independent power producer that builds, acquires, develops and operates modern energy centers. Headquartered in San Jose, Calpine has 64 energy centers throughout the U.S. with a capacity of 12,100 megawatts, enough energy to meet the electrical needs of 12 million households.

Marty Grimes is a Public Information Officer for the Santa Clara Valley Water District. The District is the primary water resources agency for Santa Clara County, Calif. It acts as the county's water wholesaler and its flood protection agency and is the steward for its streams and creeks, underground aquifers and district-built reservoirs.

Kathleen Much is the editor at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences (CASBS). CASBS is an independent think tank where scientists do research in social and behavioral sciences and write books. Kathleen edits their work and is also responsible for the Center's publications. She freelances as an editor and publishing consultant to researchers and independent writers who are preparing works for submission to publishers.

Independents' Roundtable

When: Tuesday, May 28, 6:30 p.m. networking and light dinner; 7 – 8:30 p.m. program

Where: The Lookout restaurant at the Sunnyvale Golf Course, 605 Macara Ave., in Sunnyvale. Take 101 to Mathilda, exit toward Sunnyvale, turn right on Maude, right on Macara.

Price: \$10 members, \$20 non-members (No-shows will be billed.) Beverages and a buffet will be served. Free parking.

RSVP: By Thursday, May 23. Use the SV-IABC Web site (www.sv-iabc.org), call the hot line at 408-746-3545 or e-mail Independents' Director Richard Brandi (richard@brandicommunications.com).

Laying Down the Law: Contract Negotiation for Independents Requires Knowledge of Legal Catch Phrases

By Lori Maupas

One of the trickiest aspects of being self-employed is the process of negotiating contracts with clients. At their mercy, we tend to agree to anything and everything, and often we feel it's not our place to question their legal department. Bringing up legal issues with a client can add tension to the relationship and potentially damage it. However, not fully understanding the agreement can lead to serious problems and misunderstandings down the road.

At the April Independents' Roundtable meeting, Janine Haines, partner at HiTech Law, offered sound advice and practical strategies for effective contract negotiation between independents and corporations.

"It all comes down to tradeoffs," said Haines. "Are you getting paid enough to accept the risks (such as non-payment by your client, giving them warranties and indemnification, etc.) that your client is asking you to take?" Such "risks," she said, can be hidden in legal verbiage within the contract that relates to non-payment, warranties and indemnifications, among other things. "Being able to identify those risks will enable the independent to make an educated business decision about whether they are willing to sign the agreement."

Among the clauses Haines recommends desirable as part of an independent's contract are clauses that establish your status as an independent contractor.

These include:

- contractor determines method, details and means
- contractor may use employees or other subcontractors
- payment terms (hourly, project-based or flat fee)
- specifications for termination or notice
- specifications for place of work

It's also important to specify payment terms in the event that work is rejected, or if there is a delay between the time work is submitted and accepted.

Among the clauses that are undesirable are those dealing with accepting risk, and those that forbid the use of work or the client's name in marketing materials. Haines recommends that independents be on the look out for clauses related to taxes, as well as phrases like "time is of the essence" and "best efforts." Such phrases have distinct legal meaning and can become grounds for denying payment.

Other areas Haines covered included copywrite issues and indemnification. She noted that by simply "expressing" an idea in the form of a design, manual, brochure, or other piece, the creator owns the piece. As the creator, you must assign rights to a client who wants to own the product or piece. "At the time you're negotiating the contract, ask for permission to use the client's name in marketing materials in exchange for



rights to the product," Haines suggested. "Think of creative ways to turn it into a win-win situation."

In terms of indemnification clauses, Haines cautioned that independents need to be wary of phrases like "negligence" or "gross negligence," which are broad and all-inclusive.

Haines recommends presenting the client with your own contract first, so it's important to have one ready. She also suggests that you work with the legal department directly to negotiate the terms of the agreement in order to preserve your relationship with your client. "Working out the details of the agreement with your client may harm the relationship," she said.

MEET A MEMBER

Richard Brandi, Owner, Brandi Communications



When I started out as a consultant in 1994 performing public relations and employee communications, I was looking for a group with which to share ideas and maybe generate leads.

I discovered the Silicon Valley chapter of IABC a few years ago while working in Milpitas. It was refreshing to see a volunteer organization produce such well-organized programs and relevant topics. I found myself going regularly, even though I live in San Francisco.

So when Michelle Garrett asked me two years ago to become the treasurer, I agreed. This year I am director of the Independents' Roundtable, a monthly meeting for independent communicators within SV-IABC. This gives me the opportunity to ask people to speak at our monthly

meetings from organizations and companies that I wouldn't otherwise have a chance to meet."

As a professional communicator, I offer strategic internal communications planning and change management services through my company, Brandi Communications, including needs assessments, audience surveys and focus groups as well as content for newsletters and Web sites. I also provide public relations and marketing communications. My business approach must constantly evolve to incorporate new trends and take into consideration current issues that affect the way we communicate with our colleagues and customers. To stay current with what's happening in the world of communications requires constant interaction with other communications professionals, and staying in business requires that I make the right connections.

SV-IABC has been my best single source for leads and a good portion of my business today is a

result of getting to know the officers and volunteers. Even if I worked for a large company, the contacts and friends I made through IABC would give me career options and a support network. When I'm working on an event, networking is easy and natural rather than a chore. Instead of searching for that elusive elevator pitch, I have a ready-made one as an event organizer.

Moreover, the professional socializing I experience at IABC meetings is valuable because most of my friends aren't in communications. I find they really aren't that interested in what I do, the challenges I face, etc. Building a network of communications professionals through IABC allows me to stay in touch with the larger world.

Visit him at www.brandicomunications.com or email at richard@brandicomunications.com

Beyond the Valley — News from IABC

The Buck Stops Here

President Truman had a sign on his desk that read, "The Buck Stops Here." Do you have a trusted axiom that guides your thoughts and actions? IABC is preparing an article for *Communication World*, "Words Communicators Live By," and is gathering the collected wisdom of IABC members in the form of serious and/or wry sayings, mottos and phrases. The slogan may adorn your wall or be nestled in a corner of your mind. It may have come from your mother or a magazine. But if it means more to you than just a casual quote, if it has significance in your daily life, send it to jtarver@richmond.edu or lisamc@texas.net.

IABC International Conference 2002 Chicago, June 9-12

Join fellow members at the IABC International Conference 2002 in Chicago, June 9-12. The conference will provide you with the inspiration, knowledge and contacts you will need to make the most of tomorrow's circumstances. You will benefit from:

- 3 1/2 days of stimulating sessions focused on professional development
- An impressive international roster of experts offering knowledge and insight
- The diversity of communication professionals from more than 40 countries

The conference schedule allows attendees to pick and choose any combination of sessions, including communication, public relations, strategy & counsel, technology, skills development or reputation and branding tracks.

For more information or to register, visit <http://www.iabc.com/events/conf2002/index.htm>

Volunteer Writers for CN

Are you a writer who is looking for another forum to display your talent? Then *Communicators' Network* would love to hear from you. We are looking to build a stable of writers we can turn to help produce the content that you see here in CN. Typical assignments might include covering an occasional lunch meeting, Independents' Roundtable, or other feature story idea.

All articles are bylined. For established writers, CN offers a perfect forum for displaying your writing ability to the rest of the membership. For new writers, we can also offer you a way to start building your clip files and mentor your fledgling talent with editing and suggestions for improving your style.

The time commitment can be as much or as little as you offer. Finally, being a CN writer/reporter can open the door to meeting other members, as you may be called upon to do interviews...another great way to take the edge off of networking!

If you're interested, contact CN's editor Lori Maupas at lori@worddiva.net.

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Communicators' Network is published monthly by SV-IABC. News and commentary are welcome.

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SV-IABC program luncheons are usually held the second Thursday of the month, and Independents' Roundtable evening meetings are typically the last Tuesday of each month. Non-members are welcome.

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