

INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS OF SINGAPORE

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President's Message

Yes, another year draws to a close, making us wonder where the time goes! It has been another busy year for IPRS, and the industry. In the past two months, we concluded the 6th Run of the Workforce Skills Qualification (WSQ) Place and Train PR Apprenticeship, which has produced many fresh entrants into the industry, and provided more opportunities for IPRS Accredited Members to train fresh recruits to the industry.

Are you an Accredited Member and interested in providing training? If so, please contact the Secretariat and let us know.

We've also hosted a rich variety of Lunch Talks and networking nights, to keep you informed about latest developments in our industry.

If there are speakers you'd like to hear from in 2014 and 2015, please let us know! We are also preparing for the launch of our biennial PRISM Awards. Stay tuned early 2014 for further details!

A special congratulations go to all our newly Accredited Members! We look forward to having you with us at events, and to see you further increase your contribution to the PR profession.

On behalf of the IPRS Council, thank you to all IPRS Members for your continued commitment to IPRS. We count on your continued ideas and support. I wish you and your loved ones all the best for happy holidays, Merry Christmas to those who celebrate it, and a promising New Year. Together, we will make 2014 another successful year!

Stephen Forshaw
President
IPRS Council 2013/2015

Conclusion of the 6th Run of WSQ Place and Train PR Apprenticeship Programme

Last month, 29 Singaporeans including six from five PR consultancies (Absolute PR, NBS Consulting, PR Communications, The Hoffman Agency and The Boutique Agency), successfully completed PR training under the WSQ Place and Train (PnT) PR Apprenticeship Programme.

Since its inception in September 2012, IPRS has, with support from the Singapore Workforce Development Authority (WDA), conducted six runs of the PnT Programme. To date, 80 companies have sponsored a total of 111 participants for the PnT Programme.



WSQ Trainer (Media Relations), Robert Conceicao (Vice President, IPRS), with participants from the 6th Run of the PnT

A strong supporter of the PnT Programme is IPRS Accredited Member, Ms Marine Lim, Director, Absolute PR Pte Ltd, who has sent not one, but three employees to the Programme. "I found that after the PR training, my team members were able to apply what they had learnt in the PnT to their work. For instance, they are now capable of identifying good news angles and are confident enough to pitch stories to the right media. I'm even surprised by some of their creative ideas. In a nutshell, they are competent, resourceful and confident, thanks to the PnT training!"

Look out for the next run of the PnT Programme which is tentatively scheduled to be launched in early 2014. For more details on the PnT: <http://www.iprs.org.sg/wsqa-place-and-train-pnt-pr-apprenticeship-programme>

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23 October 2013 – LunchTalk: “The Relevance of Traditional Media in a Digital World” by John O’Callaghan

In a session moderated by Immediate Past President, Mr Ng Wei Joo, Mr John O’Callaghan, Asia Editor for Lifestyle & Entertainment, at Thomson Reuters, shared insights into the big shift that’s taking place in terms of where people are getting their news, how they’re sharing it and how news media like Reuters, are responding.

Key points from the session were:

- Among the mainstream media, while television is still popular, radio and newspapers are in decline.
- Press release journalism is all but dead.
- Most of Reuters’ subscribers (mainly from the financial sector) are being served with ‘real-time’ news.
- Reuters is more discerning as to what their journalists cover. Quality rather than quantity is what matters. For example, even though the Reuters team followed closely US Vice-President Mr Joe Biden’s two-day visit to Singapore in July, they did not run anything as Biden did not say anything new.
- While citizen journalism offers great possibilities, there are questions regarding its accuracy and credibility.



Mr John O’Callaghan (L) and Mr Ng Wei Joo (R)

29 October 2013 – Networking Night: “Digital Technology Trends that will Affect the PR Industry” by Dane Anderson



A guest, Ms Rachel He (Global Business Media Group) (L) with Mr Dane Anderson (R)

Digital communications has become part and parcel of every PR practitioner’s everyday life. Mr Dane Anderson, Vice-President of Forrester Research, shared his take on how digital technology has and will continue to affect Public Relations.

Dane also shared examples of how companies were focusing more on areas such as ‘Social Listening’, ‘Media Optimization’, and ‘Branded Digital Content’ and less on traditional mediums such as ‘Untargeted emails’ and ‘Static 1-way advertising’.

9 November 2013 – IPRS Shares Communication Skills with Grassroots Leaders

Ms Farah Abdul Rahim, Honorary Secretary, IPRS, and Senior Director, Media & Research Division of MCI, was the second speaker to be invited by the People’s Association (PA) to share communication experiences and skills to PA’s grassroots leaders, under a strategic partnership that was signed by IPRS and PA in September 2013. Under the partnership, IPRS will provide seasoned PR practitioners to share their experiences with grassroots leaders under the “IPRS-PA/NACLI Public Communication Series”.



Ms Farah Abdul Rahim (L) and Mr Dave Teo (R)

Farah’s talk at the National Community Leadership (NACLI), titled, “E-Engagement: How We Should Engage?”, provided valuable and interesting insights on how grassroots leaders can (and should) better engage the community online.

In a lively Question & Answer session that followed Farah’s talk, grassroots leaders agreed that social media is a crucial ‘must’ to better engage, interact and communicate with all segments of the community today. The session was moderated by Mr Dave Teo, PBM, SCM Director, Thales Solution Asia Pte Ltd.

31 October 2013 – Media Visit: Thomson Reuters

IPRS Members got exclusive ‘behind-the-scenes’ look at how Thomson Reuters works recently. Our Members were brought on a newsroom tour by Ms Sarah Edmonds, General Manager. They got to meet Mr Darren Schuettler, Head of Editorial Learning for Asia, and Ms Emily Kaiser, Editor of Asia Company News, who shared tips on how to deal with journalists.



Ms Sarah Edmonds (R) briefing our Members

Goodbye 2013, Hello 2014!

About 50 IPRS Members made a bee-line for the Piano Bar (Grand Copthorne Waterfront) for the IPRS Year-End Soiree on 4 December. In his address, IPRS President Stephen Forshaw thanked the Members and partners including Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), Singapore Press Holdings (SPH), MediaCorp, and the Defence Ministry (MINDEF), for their support for the Institute during the year. Stephen called on everyone to continue to support IPRS in 2014, in particular, the prestigious biennial PRSIM Awards.



IPRS Council with MINDEF partners

There was good cheer all round as guests reflected on the year that went by and crystal gazed the year ahead. Christmas came early with the goodie bags courtesy of our sponsors: a tea set from Hong Leong Finance and spa vouchers from Atos Wellness. Ms Seraphim Cheong from Ruder Finn Asia had the biggest smile that evening as she walked away with a G.H.Mumm bottle of champagne in the lucky draw!



From L to R: Mr Stephen Forshaw, Ms Seraphim Cheong and Ms Lin Liangmin (Emcee)

18 November 2013 – LunchTalk by Chua Chin Hon, Deputy Foreign Editor, The Straits Times

Mr Chua Chin Hon shared insights into the operations of ST’s Foreign Desk and a peek at what’s to come. Just back from a stint in Washington DC, Chin Hon admitted having had relatively little contact with Singapore PR practitioners. He added that there’s much room for closer interaction between PR practitioners and the Foreign Desk as it moves towards a more integrated and online system.



Ms Farah Abdul Rahim (L) and Mr Chua Chin Hon (R)

Key points from the session, moderated by IPRS Honorary Secretary, Farah Abdul Rahim, were:

- Foreign news takes up between 30% to 40% of news coverage in The Straits Times
- Four deputies at the Foreign Desk run the foreign coverage out of Singapore
- Ten active bureaus with 20 full-time correspondents: eight in South-East Asia; eight in East Asia; two in the US; and one in India and Europe. An ad-hoc network of correspondents covers the Philippines and Australia
- More resources and effort are being put into stasiareport.com which currently has about 120,000 page views per month. Its audience is mainly Singaporean, with some from Malaysia and the US.
- The Foreign Desk is interested in both Singapore and International clients that PR practitioners work with.
- Topics that are of interest to the Foreign Desk are: politics, elections, disasters, international controversies, economic and major business issues affecting China and India.