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SUMMER 2019

Automotive Suppliers & Change Management Communications: How PR Supports Your Program

Change. It is coming faster than ever.

And, according to our informal survey of key communications and PR executives with some of the top global automotive OEM suppliers, it's the biggest issue facing their companies today, as the automotive ecosystem has turned upside-down.

Auto suppliers are shifting to new strategies as they navigate through uncharted territories driven by the new landscape being shaped by multiple factors ... electrification, autonomous vehicles, connected cars, ridesharing, the war for talent, Manufacturing 4.0, IoT implementation, competition from new mobility technology suppliers and ever-present investor pressure.



The fact is, there will be more disruption in the OEM automotive supply chain in the next 10 years than there has been in the previous 100 years.

So, many traditional automotive suppliers - as well as many new mobility technology providers entering the automotive sector - are embracing change management communication programs not only to help employees deal with these dramatic changes, but also to help their external audiences understand the changes, as well.

[Click here for the full article.](#)

CES 2020: Six Ways Auto & Mobility Suppliers Can Maximize PR



For years, CES and the North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) have been held back-to-back each January, putting strain on automotive and mobility suppliers - and the journalists who cover them - who participate in both shows. Now with the NAIAS moving to June in 2020, there will be more breathing room around CES for companies to better concentrate their news and launches.

But the breathing room ends there. The already-competitive CES could become even more competitive with automotive and mobility companies now fully focused on one large event in January to kick off the year.

The goal of standing out among the thousands of exhibitors and getting face time with key media that everyone is pitching may be getting even tougher.

While there are no guarantees for PR success at CES, after helping our clients at the show over the past several years, we can share some advice to help you maximize your efforts there in 2020.

[Click here for the six steps to consider.](#)

Check Out Our Latest "Meet the Media" Profiles

Have you seen the latest "Meet the Media" features on our blog? Twice each month, we profile a key journalist that covers our clientele. Here are the latest posts:

- [Deborah Lockridge](#), Editor in Chief, *Heavy Duty Trucking*
- [Randy Essex](#), Senior Content Director for Business & Education, *Detroit Free Press*
- [Neil Abt](#), Editorial Director, *Fleet Owner*
- [Brad Kadrich](#), Editor, *Corp! Magazine*
- [Kurt Nagl](#), Breaking News Reporter, *Crain's Detroit Business*



BPR News



PRWeek magazine, a leading trade publication covering the global public relations industry, [ranked Bianchi PR](#) #41 among top technology PR firms in the U.S. and #150 in its overall U.S. rankings.

Welcome to our intern for the summer 2019 semester, **Shannel Johnson**. Shannel is a student at Central Michigan University pursuing a Bachelor of Applied Arts degree in integrated public relations and double minoring in journalism and advertising.

Our global network, [PRGN](#) welcomed two new members, Paivi Holmqvist of Hasan Communications (L) in Finland and Bill Southard of Southard Communications (R) in NYC, at its recent meeting in Amersfoort, Netherlands.



Our New PRGN Teammate in NYC

We would like to profile one of our two newest PRGN members, Southard Communications out of New York City. Southard was accepted into our network in May at the spring meeting which took place in Amersfoort, Netherlands.



We are excited to have Southard join the PRGN family.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of Southard, having been founded in 1994 by Bill Southard. Bill has almost 40 years of agency experience. He began his career at Dorf & Stanton, a small agency that grew into a mid-sized firm and was later sold to Shandwick. Bill was part of the ownership group and stayed on at Shandwick throughout the earn-out period, leaving shortly thereafter to start his own agency, Southard Communications.



Bill Southard, Founder, Chief Executive Officer

His vision was to provide clients with the best of both worlds - the experience, capabilities and relationships of a large firm combined with the attention to detail, senior management support and entrepreneurial approach of a small agency.

The agency started with one foundational client - Sony Consumer Electronics, a company Southard worked with for more than a decade. Of note from those early days is Southard's second client, the Ohio Art Company, best known for the iconic Etch a Sketch brand. The firm worked with Ohio Art for more than two decades until it was sold.

Over the last quarter of a century, Southard has been focused on servicing a broad range of clients in a meaningful and cost-effective manner, all targeted at helping clients build business. The firm has two practices - one in business-to-consumer marketing and

communications, which represents about three quarters of its business today, and a second practice focused on business-to-business communications.

Along the way, the firm has won a myriad of awards for its work for clients, including the U.S. Military Academy at West Point (in celebration of its Bi-Centennial), Green Toys and LeapFrog, a brand which the agency launched from inception to its eventual position as one of the most successful companies in the kids learning space.

Marketing to moms and kids is a clear area of expertise, as Southard's work in the toy, game and juvenile products industry is unparalleled as they work with many of the leading toy and juvenile brands.

Besides LeapFrog this included Toys 'R' Us and Babies 'R' Us. And today, the agency works with leading toy and juvenile brands such as Green Toys, Magformers, Thames and Kosmos, EzPz, Snuzza, Alex Brands and its newest client, Elf on the Shelf.

Southard is the only public relations and digital agency with a private showcase at Javits Center during New York Toy Fair, the largest toy show in North America, held every February. On this front, Bill's relationships have helped many companies set up a U.S. operation, from manufacturing and warehousing to sales/distribution and marketing.

Southard's experience, however goes beyond toys, and includes work in the consumer electronics, health and wellness, beauty and fashion, home products, video games and food and beverage space. In recent years, Southard has expanded into the growing area of natural products and represents some of the leading brands in this space, such as Para Kito Mosquito Repellents, Olfinity, Skinners and a host of beauty and food brands in this space.

On the business-to-business side, the company has a stellar reputation of success for brands including the Toronto Stock Exchange, Bank of Montreal, American Express, CB Richard Ellis and Newcourt Credit Group, among others.

Southard's core capabilities include media relations, events, product launches, crisis communications, media training and thought leadership, as well as digital communications, social media and influencer outreach. Bill has also built a strong senior management team which includes Senior Vice Presidents Kelley DeVincentis and Scott Goldberg, both of whom have been at the agency for more than a decade.

For more information you can visit www.southardinc.com or contact bill@southardinc.com.



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