ERIKA TUCKER
WRITING SAMPLES

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MARKETING/BUSINESS

PPI Student Poster Contest Blog Post

The votes are in, and we have wrapped up judging on the 2019 Student Poster Contest. Thirteen student entries were chosen to represent our industry using themes such as, "Explore the Universe of Design," "Discover the World of Print," and "Create Art You Can Touch." Entries came from all seven of the PPI member states, including several from Hawaii and Alaska. We are hard at work putting together the 2019-2020 Academic year calendar and could use your help!

The Educational Trust through ExploreVizComm.org carries our message to students and teachers at the high school and college level that print is not dead, and that there are many viable career options in the industry. By involving students early, we can secure our future workforce. We help spread the word by distributing the Academic Year calendar to all schools that offer any form of art, graphic art, printing and finishing classes in the PPI member states.

Last year we were fortunate to have PPI members donate the paper, printing of the calendar pages, binding, and mail sorting. We would love to be able to count on you again. We will be reaching out soon to ask for your help, but it would be fantastic if you wanted to give us a ring and let us know you would be interested in participating. Your company logo will be proudly displayed on the last page of the calendar, and you will have our eternal gratitude. Help us show these kids that print rocks!

PPI PrintROCKS! Entry Blog Post

The twelfth annual PrintROCKS! season is under way! We began accepting entries on May 1st and will continue to take them until July 1st. That's only twenty days away! If you have participated in the past, you know that we enter all winning a PrintROCKS! entries into the Printing Industries of America Premier Print Awards at no additional charge.

Winning a PrintROCKS! award, or indeed a Benny, goes a long way toward impressing your clients with your quality work. They're not bad for industry bragging rights as well, as all entries will be displayed at the PrintROCKS! party on September 27th so members can vote on their favorite for the People's Choice award. After the party photos of all winning entries will be displayed on the PrintROCKS! website.

So, grab your best work from 2018 and send it to us by July 1st. Please include three unmounted copies per entry. If that is not possible, give us a call as sometimes special arrangements can be accommodated. Enter as many pieces as you like, and if you are having trouble choosing a category, pieces can be submitted into more than one (additional fee applies). If during judging, the judges feel that the piece was miscategorized, they will move it for you to where they feel it belongs, so don't stress too much about categories. If you'd like a consultation, feel free to give us a call and we can make a guess for you.

Take advantage of the PrintROCKS! room block rate. Hotel reservations for the party are being accepted until August 30th at the Dossier in Downtown Portland. In addition, PrintROCKS! sponsorship opportunities are still available, and the Diamond and Gold level sponsorships include tickets to the party. Check out all the details today at printrocks.org, and we'll see you at the party!

The Value of Values

In the current climate where a multitude of people are only concerned with what they can acquire, it is the organizations that realize giving back to the community can produce great rewards that will be deemed worthy of their mandate. Many scholars agree that the core values of the organization are a key element of their identity and communicating them to stakeholders authentically creates legitimacy and builds their reputation. The core values of a company are inherently part of their identity and the foundation of their strategic vision. Management by Values is emerging as a leadership tool with extraordinary potential for practical development.

Gaining support from stakeholders for these values is imperative. Communicating the mission of the organization will ensure emotional impact, building confidence and excitement about the future. Strong values generate visions that inspire employees and improve the working environment. Employees who appreciate and identify with the vision and mission are more cooperative, perform better, and engage in desirable behaviors by virtue of their identification with the organization. Strategically communicating these values has a strengthening effect on the reputation of the organization, as reputations are co-created with stakeholders in the development of relationships.

There are many acceptable ways to communicate values, but doing so through actions speaks volumes. The concepts of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and sustainability are becoming more popular, and have can positive effects on business outcomes. However, the choice of activity should be in line with the values and ethics of the organization to avoid the appearance of hypocrisy. CSR activities that exhibit a lack of sincerity generate mistrust of motive. The organization must not appear to be participating simply to gain favor or social acceptance. Studies show that companies who conspicuously advertise their CSR can be thought inauthentic and have their motives questioned.

As far back as 1979, CSR activities have been categorized into four types: economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic. In later years new categories have surfaced to include strategic, political, altruistic motivation, and self-interest of management. Participation in some of these categories can be fundamental, such as practicing non-discriminatory hiring practices (legal) or enforcing codes of conduct (ethical). Philanthropic efforts that are concordant with the values of consumers will yield greater returns if they do not counteract product performance. Self-interest of management CSR activity would seem to communicate the personal values of the leadership, which in turn inform the values of the company at large as stakeholders often anthropomorphize organizations, judging them as a whole by the actions of their leaders.

No matter which method is chosen to express core values, the focus of efforts must be on authenticity. Living the values that are declared and exhibiting them through actions and character are the best ways to convince stakeholders that intentions are sincere, and that they are dealing with an admirable organization with whom they can confidently do business.

What Constitutes Excellent Customer Service

There's a little local shop that I frequent. Every time I go in, I'm greeted and asked if I need help finding anything. Often, I do, as their organization of items isn't exactly how I would have done it. Usually my items are located and I go to checkout. There are two registers, and if someone else is using one, instead of customers waiting in line, another employee will just jump on the other to take the next person. This all constitutes good customer service, and I enjoy shopping there. Excellent customer service requires a further step. One day I was looking for something they did not stock. I asked and was told, "no sorry, we don't carry that." If instead, they would have said, "you know we don't have that in the store but let me see if I can order that for you," that would have been excellent customer service.

When I worked at a copy shop in college, there was a principle that we operated on: Do whatever it takes to make the customer happy. This was accompanied by a policy that every single employee was empowered to do just that. If anyone ever had a problem, they never had to ask for a manager, as the employee at the counter would make it right. Sometimes this involved giving away the copies for free, but we were allowed to do that if that's what it would take. More often we would just need to re-run copies that they had made on our self-service machines on our bigger machines at no extra charge. Not every business can afford to give it's product away for free, but the empowerment of the employees creates an environment where excellent customer service is the norm and not the exception.

Occasionally a business will run into the "horrible customer." This is a person for whom nothing in the world will make them happy, and no amount of compromise or compensation will help. What do you do with this customer. My suggestion is simply to listen. Sometimes people just want to be heard. Perhaps this customer doesn't have anyone else to whom they can vent their frustrations. Maybe they are going through a difficult time in their lives. What does it cost you to take a few minutes to really listen to their complaint or concerns? Nothing but a little time. People who give excellent customer service have a capacity for empathizing with their fellow humans and a desire to want to help. These are people you want on your side.

PPI THE NW VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

printlandia

ink and beyond

Membership Newsletter

Issue 5 / October 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Announcing the 2018 PrintROCKS! Award Winners

PPI Association hosted its **11th Annual PrintROCKS! Awards & Party** on September 21, 2018 at the Melody Ballroom and Event Center in Portland, Oregon. Print manufacturing companies, agencies, and even students entered the 29 categories ranging from direct mail to catalogs to posters to packaging.

PPI received 210 PrintROCKS! Awards entries from 39 companies in PPI's seven-state region. This year's entries raised the bar as new technology and techniques expand traditional capabilities. Excellent examples of web, offset, digital, large format, folds, dies, finishing and special solutions challenged the panel of judges comprised of Sandy Hubbard—HelpPrintThrive.com, Jill Crossley—Hub and Spoke Marketing, Carl Vonder Haar—Sales Aficionado and Abe Hayhurst—Konica Minolta Inkjet. Bryan Hall, Chairman of PIA and Michael Makin, President & CEO of PIA shared the stage with PPI Executive Director Jules Van Sant to honor the top **PrintROCKS** award winners.

Go to **PrintROCKS.org** for full event details. It's never too early to start planning for next year, so start saving your best print for **PrintROCKS!** 2019!

Post PrintROCKS! Celebrations

Jeff Alexander and his winning team!

The promotion of our 2018 PrintROCKS! winners only starts at the party. We showcased winners at the WCP Solutions Paper XOXO Show on September 27th in Portland, OR.

The following week, we displayed some of the Best in the West at the Spicer's Paper Show in Salt Lake City Utah in conjunction with Design Week.

Some of our big Utah area winners were unable to attend PrintROCKS! We hand delivered seven first place awards to **Alexander's Print Advantage** along with their Mad Props crown for their Tektured self promotion series.

We then visited with **Utah Media Group** in Salt Lake City to deliver their awards and check out their enormous web press operation.

View full winners book and photo albums at printrocks.org!

PPI Ed Trust Update

PPI participates in regional high school and college career fairs and events that are funded by the **Pacific Printing Industries Educational Trust**. Our mission is to build awareness for career opportunities in the print and visual communications industry and to renew our labor pool.

THIS YEAR AT PRINTROCKS! WE RAISED

$23,000+

This will help us continue to develop tomorrow's workforce. A special thanks to those who donated and support the Ed Trust.

Where Have We Been This Month?

– We participated in the **Center for Advanced Learning** (CAL) Makers Gone Pro Career Fair in Gresham, OR and the **Clackamas Community College** Career Fair. We will be attending many more career fairs this month including **Mount Hood Community College** and **Mountain View High School**.
– We have partnered with the Hillsboro Chamber and are currently seeking a company to **host a Career Day for High School students** in November (see details below). If you have any leads on schools we can connect with in YOUR area, please let us know!

We Value Your Support! Represent your company by partnering with the Ed Trust or donate via check, credit card or on your monthly PPI invoice. The Ed Trust needs your support to continue these programs that benefit our ever changing, regional industry.

Want to help out?

Let us know as soon as possible if you are able to host High School Students for the **Hillsboro Chamber Career Day.** We have tentative dates available at the end of November. We are also in need of hosts for the Spring dates of March 6, 13 or 14th. Please call or email Erika Tucker at erika@ppiassociation.org if any of those dates work for your company. We have proposed agendas available to let you know what kind of things the students are expecting and what activities would qualify for their 1/2 credit requirement. These are a total of 15-16 hour visits, and can be spread over two consecutive days, or a few hours a week over a longer period. You can set the size of group that visits you, and these are juniors and seniors who have specifically requested a tour in YOUR industry.

Contact info@PPIAssociation.org or call 503.221.3944 for more information

NEW!!!

Konica Minolta National Buying Program

Konica Minolta is pleased to become a premier member of the Printing Industries of America's (PIA) National Buying Program. Building on the existing partnership of the two organizations, **Konica Minolta will now offer considerable discounts to all current PIA members**. The Konica Minolta Program offers negotiated discounts and promotions on:

- The entire suite of Konica Minolta Accurio Digital CMYK and B&W Presses highlighted by the IQ 501.
- The portfolio of Konica Minolta Accurio Wide Format products highlighting UV LED Technology with roll and direct to substrate capability.
- The InterTech award winning Konica Minolta MGI Industrial Print Products which features foil, embellishment, 2D and 3D varnish plus label.
- Unique specialty products such as Duplo, Colex and the EFI uv LED Wide Format Products.

Konica Minolta is known for world class production offerings, pre-press and post press solutions and advanced Cloud Technologies. PIA Members can now take advantage of end to end solutions featuring efficiency, productivity and profitability.

What differentiates your business in the graphic communications industry? Is it high quality imaging or consistent color? Benchmark service levels? Emerging products and services? Konica Minolta can help you achieve all of these with products like our Accurio line of production print devices. The name is derived from the word "accurate" and it reflects the advanced, automated and precise nature of our graphic communications business solutions. It's also a great place to begin your differentiation in a very competitive market.

Visit printing.org > Buying Program > Konica Minolta and log in to see brochures, videos, member specific discounts and pricing. For more information or questions please contact Brian Steck, Konica Minolta Business Solutions U.S.A, Inc. at bsteck@kmbs.konicaminolta.us or info@ppiassociation.org.

For all member benefit programs visit ppiassociation.org > Resources > Benefits & Buying Power Program

How to Get Students Interested in Print

By John Berthelsen, VP-Development, Print & Graphic Scholarship Foundation, PGSF.org

Companies throughout the industry (and this includes suppliers) are facing a common problem. They have an increasing number of employees who are reaching retirement age and are wondering where they are going to find replacements for these skilled workers. While this has always been somewhat of an issue for our industry, today it is becoming mission critical. A 2018 industry survey listed the top three business challenges as 1) Finding skilled sales personnel (65%), 2) Finding skilled production employees (42%), and 3) Recruiting and retaining employees (38%). How we address this going forward is of vital importance to the future survival of the graphic arts community.

Read more at http://bit.ly/GetStudentsInterested

Read more at ppiassociation.org > News > Printlandia: the Blog

REVIEWS

REVIEWS

Worldclass views right in my neighborhood
Review of Powell Butte Nature Park, Portland, OR

There are a multitude of choices of paths you can take up and down the butte depending on your starting point, so if you're bad with cardinal directions, make sure you take a cellphone to get a ride back to your start if you get lost. There's a visitor center if you enter from the north side, but you can literally hike up or down any side of the butte which is pretty long on one side. Great shaded hike for the summer but watch out for bikers as they go pretty fast on the downhill.

The best recommendation we had the whole trip
Review of Arthur Mayne's Wine Bar, Cork, Ireland

We would never have found this place if we hadn't wandered into The Bodega after 10pm one night looking for food. They gave us the "historical pubs" brochure and recommended Arthur Mayne's as they serve food until 1:30am. We didn't feel like walking that far that night, but we made sure we made it down there for dinner the next night and boy were we glad we did. Not only is it a fascinating place to look around (used to be an apothecary and still has all the old bottles on the shelves) but it was the single best waitress we've ever met. She seemed like she just loved what she does, recommended the perfect cheeses for my cheese plate, and I just can't describe how nice she made our visit. Plus French Syrah

Best B&B of the whole vacation
Review of Abercorn Guest House, Edinburgh, Scotland

While Google Maps directions will not get you here, if you can find your way to Portobello High Street on your own, the Abercorn Guest House is easy to spot. Though "included parking" is not immediately available (you can pull in after you check in), on-street parking was not hard to find even on a Saturday. Our initial reaction to this place was one of despair, but not because of the place, but because Hotels.com had completely failed to book one of our rooms. Traveling as a family, we had booked two rooms and only one of the reservations was made. All the rooms were completely booked that night, and the proprietress offered to call a place down the street to check availability there. They did have one twin room that was suitable for my sister and her son, so off they went. I was still pretty miffed at Hotels.com that we could not stay at the same location, but since my husband and I were allowed to stay (even though it was MY reservation that got lost) and the room was so big and bright I was soon pacified. Of the 4 B&Bs we stayed in on our trip, this one by far had the largest room, softest sheets and towels and nicest breakfast presentation.
I would stay here again in a heartbeat, but I certainly would not trust Hotels.com with my reservation and would contact Angela directly.

Helluva view! But make sure you know what you are getting...
Review of Rostrevor Hotel, Barbados

It's rare that you get exactly the room advertised, but if you ask specifically for a "Superior Ocean View Suite with A/C", that's what you get. I have never had a view quite that nice. We were on the 4th floor and the elevator was swift and always available. We were on the off season, though, so I don't know if that made a difference. I would have rated this hotel as excellent, but they were lacking in a couple little ways - there were no complimentary shampoos or anything like that, just a bar of soap. The kitchen was pretty well stocked with dishes and stuff, but no dish soap so we had to wash them with just water all week (not sure how sanitary that was).

When they tell you that it's in the middle of St. Lawrence Gap, the heart of the night-life on the island, they mean it. There is no way to drown out the noise from the street when the bars start competing around 10pm. It goes on at deafening volumes until 2am. And not even the crashing waves and the air conditioner can drown them out. So if you stay in the gap, make sure you want to party all night. Every night.

The beach was tiny, but private (important) and that time of year the waves make swimming difficult, but their pool was small but lovely.

Some of the staff were very nice and would remember our room number (you have to drop off and pick up your key everytime you leave the property) but others didn't seem to give a hoot if we were there or not. The rooms were exceptionally clean though. I very much appreciated that. It's hard to keep an all white room looking that clean.

HUMAN INTEREST/LIFESTYLE

The Aquatic Side of Boyle's Law

When you took your Open Water SCUBA certification, your eyes glazed over when they got to the technical part. Now that you are considering getting an Advanced certification you think maybe you ought to know what it was you learned. Boyle's law is simply this: the pressure of a given mass of an ideal gas is inversely proportional to its volume at a constant temperature. What does that mean to you, the SCUBA diver? This means that the volume of air you take underwater with you, will no longer be that volume when you get to depth. Think about that for a second. If you take a full tank down to 99 feet (to make the math simpler than 100), you will have a third of a tank (minus whatever you were breathing on the way down there).

How does that work? Air is compressible in a way that water is not. That's why we can have compressed air, and hydraulic brakes. The science is based on the fact that a one-inch column of air from sea level to the top of our atmosphere (62 miles or 100 kilometers) weighs 14.7 pounds. We call this one "atmosphere" or ATM. Not all of the earth is at sea level, as we well know there are places on earth that are far closer to the top of the atmosphere than others, like the tops of mountains. Did you ever travel above 10,000 feet and get altitude sickness? That's because your body is used to having that full 1 ATM compressing the air in your lungs. Another example is when your ears pop in an airplane. This is your body adjusting to the lower pressure of the cabin. They are pressurized, but not to the full 1 ATM.

Inversely, when you go underwater, you have more pressure exerted on you, but since water is denser than air, it only takes 33 feet of water to equal the pressure of 1 ATM. Now, let's apply that pressure to the air in your tank. The walls of the tank do not "protect" the air, it is still subject to the same laws of physics. Since we know that matter can neither be created nor destroyed, what is happening to the air? It's getting denser. If you compressed it enough, it would be as dense as water. That would never happen in your tank, because water is about 800 times denser than water, but you get my point.

Here's the thing though, and the reason you were taught never to hold your breath on ascent. When you rise in the water column, the air expands again. You could have next to nothing in your tank at 100 feet (don't ever do this), but if you rose to 50 feet you would have "more" air. It's not technically more, it's that the air you had expanded to take up more space in the tank, and thereby more space in your lungs. The air in your lungs does the same thing when you surface. The air you breathe at depth is now that compressed air and will start to expand as you go up.

Anytime you are breathing, your body is passing tiny particles of air into your veins. The body can only use the part of that air that is oxygen, so the nitrogen just hangs around and eventually is release in an exhale or in the toilet. Seriously. If you surface too quickly, you allow those tiny particles of harmless nitrogen in your body to expand, and they can come out of solution and become bubbles. If you've ever seen a doctor tap the side of syringe before giving a shot, they are trying to make sure there are no bubbles in the liquid. That's because bubbles in the body are bad. They can cause all kinds of trauma, from Pneumothorax or collapsed lung to barotrauma to decompression sickness or the bends.

They are all as painful as they sound, and the only real treatment is time in a hyperbaric chamber where they put you under pressure again to shrink the bubbles back into particles, and then very slowly raise the pressure so the nitrogen does not become bubbles again. This is why most proper dive planning takes you to the deepest part of the dive first, and then slowly rises to different depths so the particles never have the chance to expand all at once. It is also the theory behind the 15-foot safety stop, and the surface interval. It's a chance for your body to safely expel some of that excess nitrogen. There is anecdotal evidence that drinking lots of water after a dive can help as well, since dehydration thickens the blood making gas exchange or "off-gassing" more difficult. Dehydration is actually a much bigger problem than you might think, but that's a topic for another article. Hopefully, your eyes didn't glaze over this time, and you've learned a thing or two about physics and why the lessons you are taught in class are important.

Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary, How Does Your Garden Grow?

Every time I plant a garden, I am somehow amazed when things grow and become food. It’s not that I don’t know how it works, it’s that…well, maybe because I don’t really know how it works. I know seeds plus sun and water make food, but how exactly? I could look it up, read some vastly complicated scientific explanation involving chlorophyll and converting energy into sugar or carbohydrates, but that wouldn’t help me envision what is happening inside the seed after I put it in the ground. I assume that for a couple days at least that it does nothing. It spends several days just warming up. I read somewhere that a seed has to achieve a certain internal temperature to bust open and start growing. I’m not sure what the water does. Maybe it absorbs it and that softens the seed casing to make it easier for it to break open. At this point I would forgive you if you just opened a browser window and looked it up for yourself. I would have.

It’s not possible to really watch something grow, as it happens too slow to perceive in real time, but I do have a bulb in a glass of water that you nearly could watch grow. The speed with which it sprouted was astounding and the plant is now around 2 feet tall. I was similarly impressed with how fast the potato plants in my garden grew. I wasn’t really sure they even would. I didn’t use proper seed potatoes; we just had a few soft potatoes in the cupboard and I decided to cut them into pieces, keeping an “eye” in each piece. I didn’t even bother to set them out in the sun and let them cure, like the internet suggested. I just popped those suckers straight into my garden bed where I had a little extra room—no rows, or hills or proper spacing—just shoved them a few inches under the soil. And you know what? They grew. I had tiny little green potato plants faster than any of the other seeds I planted.

I shouldn’t have been that surprised, I mean, I’ve seen the Matt Damon movie, The Martian. In fact, I’m re-watching it right now so I could try to judge how long it took for his plants to grow. They show him planting them on Sol 31, and it’s Sol 54 when he sees the first shoots. I looked up my credit card statement and determined that I planted my garden on March 31st. I didn’t happen to record what date I saw the first shoots, but it’s May 11th and the plants are 10 inches tall. I don’t know about you, but I call that impressive. I just can’t help but wonder what it looks like when that starts. There’s no clear soil, so you can’t see through it. Perhaps the answer to my query is hydroponics. I just looked up to see if that was possible and read a whole page about how potato plants grow twice as fast in a hydroponic system. While I have room in my yard for a garden, I sadly don’t have room in my house for a proper hydroponic system, so I may never get to see this for myself. Though I might be able to rig up a tiny experimental version with one potato.

Mikey likes it, but will I want to eat it?

It's a challenge cooking for any dietary requirement or avoiding allergens but doing it within the further restriction of a particular calorie count is daunting. My particular allergen is soy, and when I first became intolerant of it, I was astounded by how many foods contain it. The first big blow was chocolate. Almost all the chocolate in this country contains soy. I haven't had a Girl Scout cookie or a Snickers bar in over two years. That's another thing: baked goods. Bread, rolls, pie, cakes, cupcakes – everything in the bakery department at the grocery store contains soy. The majority of any processed frozen food, canned soups, frozen tv dinners—all of these things contain soy. So, in order to not starve, I had to become a really good cook.

Did you know you can make something similar to a Thin Mint yourself? It does involve locating some form of soy-free chocolate, and I'll tell you that's not easy. You are pretty much restricted to expensive, small batch dark chocolate. And I bet you couldn't even find that outside a major city. I have yet to figure out how to reverse engineer any form of candy bar, so I'm pretty much out of luck there. I have to bake my own pies, cakes, cookies—but you know what? A lot of the time mine is better anyway. But I'd still kill for an Oreo.

And I can't even tell you the last time I got Chinese take-out. To be safe, I assume that all Asian food contains soy, simply because every recipe for Chinese or Thai food that I've made calls for it. I do still make some Asian food, but instead of soy sauce I use something called Coconut Aminos. Don't kid yourself, it doesn't taste like soy sauce, but it's better than nothing when you're stir-frying a bunch of fresh vegetables.

I got by this way for a couple of years and assumed that since I couldn't eat candy or processed foods that I would lose weight. Well, that didn't happen. Apparently, my cooking is too good, and I forgot to account for portion size. And measuring the calories in every single ingredient in homemade food and then calculating the total calorie count is a royal pain. Heck, measuring the ingredients at all is tedious. I became the kind of cook who could just throw things together and they would end up tasting great. Well, I finally admitted that I would have to start paying more attention.

I have a cookbook from Betty Crocker in which all the recipes have 300 calories or less per serving. The problem is that a lot of them have an outrageous number of servings, and most of the time we feel like they are too small. Plus, I don't want to be eating the same thing for a week, especially if I didn't like it the first time. I had to dismiss any recipes that call for a processed ingredient (you'd be surprised how often they appear in modern recipes), and any that had more than 8 servings. The rest I could divide in half to make 2-4 servings. Then I had to discount any that had broccoli or seafood ingredients, as my spouse won't eat them. From what was left, I choose a week's worth of recipes.

I was actually a bit surprised by how many of them not only tasted pretty good but were also fairly filling. I then expanded our repertoire by purchasing a magazine with recipes of a moderate calorie count and made several of those. To be fair, most of them involved a lot of spices and roasted vegetables, and it's hard to go wrong there. I even got my spouse to admit that he liked the one with roasted cauliflower which he didn't previously rate much higher than broccoli. However, any recipe that tries to pass off cauliflower as something that it's not (it's not pizza crust and it's not rice) is terrible. I'm all for reducing calories by adding vegetables to a dish, but not in a sneaky, imitation way like that. Life is too short for that.

It took a while, but I finally found some ranch dressing without soy, so salads aren't out of the question any more. I just have to figure out a way to take it with me to restaurants. In the meantime, I will continue to have them for lunch so that I have a few more calories to spend on dinner. That's how I think about them. Available calories are like capital. Or in the terms of a disability metaphor, they are like spoons. You only get so many a day. You can't really save them up and they are use or lose. But in this case, if you don't use them, you really do lose—weight. And that's the secret of life, right there. And unlike spoons, you can earn more by exercising. Some people are currently trying to propose theories that what you eat and what time of day you eat it makes any difference to your weight, but I don't buy it. The math of calories in/calories out has always worked for me. You can eat a heck of a lot more vegetables than cake so you will feel fuller afterwards, but sometimes, you just have to eat the cake.

Where does it stop?

When you purchase a home, a lot of the time you are buying it for the location, or the style, or the “bones.” In that case, there are usually at least a few upgrades or changes that you want to make. I’ve always done the obvious, painting, because who doesn’t want a bit of color after years in drab, beige apartments? This time around, we went full out. Sure, we started with paint, because that’s just where you usually start. From there, it was new vinyl windows and a tile backsplash in the kitchen. The backsplash, however, we did ourselves. We had never done one before, so there was a bit of a learning curve and more than a little fine scraping of dried thinset off glass tiles, but in the end, it looked fabulous. To complement it, we had granite countertops put in, and a new double wide sink. We gradually invested in new stainless steel appliances to complete the look. After that, we set our sights on the bathroom.

I’d never used a sledge hammer on ceramic tile before, but it was a little cathartic. Ripping down the walls around the old mauve bathtub was great. We had someone come in and remove the tub itself and set the base of our new walk-in shower. Then we were ready for more tiling work. Having made what we thought were all the mistakes in the kitchen, we started laying twelve inch porcelain floor tiles. It quickly became apparent that we were not going to get through this without a tile saw. Since the thinset was already mixed, I started laying them while my spouse ran to Home Depot to rent one.

By the time he came back, I’d already laid all the full-size tiles and was having quite a hard time not stepping on any of them. That’s when I realized that tile spacers are not reliably the same width, as they are compressible. Not many people would notice, and none of my guests have, but the row of full size tiles isn’t spaced exactly evenly. We made some adjustments and laid the rest. Then we started on the walls around the shower.

Let me just say right now, putting large, heavy tiles on a wall is really difficult. Remember the spacer compression problem I told you about? Imagine all the wall tiles above the bottom row are successively putting more and more pressure on the bottom spacer, because thinset does not dry right away, and there’s a little thing called gravity. Add to that, the difficulty of the math required to calculate the precise angle that the shower tray slopes down to the drain. Not to mention, we made the hilarious mistake of doing an accent row of glass tiles and completely forgot to measure how far down (or up) the row would fall, and it’s about two inches lower than the similar accent row on the niche shampoo inset box. Then we tiled the floor of the shower. Laying diagonal, herringbone pattern tiles in a smallish rectangular space takes a fair bit of talent with a tile saw. I am now very talented with a tile saw. After that, it was just a matter of lifting very heavy glass panels up to install the shower doors. Add a new toilet, medicine cabinet, towel bars and granite counter-top and you’ve got a pretty swanky bathroom.

Then we started tackling the other floors. This involved pulling up 30 year old carpet and padding. Do you have any idea how much dirt and things I don’t want to think about are in and under carpet? I will say this, anyone who's ever pulled up their own carpet will likely never install it again and insist on something else. We decided on hardwood floors. First was my office as the test case. Watching YouTube videos to learn how to install hardwood floors does you no good if the wood you happen to choose is bamboo. Why? Because the nailer or stapler or any other method of securing them to the floor won't work because bamboo is one of the hardest substances on earth. Not really, but it really is one of the hardest of hard woods. An industrial nail gun, loaded with eighteen gauge nails makes a huge, scary noise, looks like it has the same muzzle flash as a real gun, and the nails wad up on the bamboo like used chewing gum. They simply cannot get through.

After consulting with every authority on the subject we could find, we decided we would screw them down. But you can't just screw them down. First you drill a hole. Then you drill a countersink. Then you vacuum up all the sawdust. Only then can you install the screw. And it takes one every six inches to keep it from squeaking. Measure your standard room and figure out how many that is. It took 3 days over Christmas break to do my ten by ten office and it's attached closet, and that was using two different drills.

We took about a year off from home improvements after that, but the very next Christmas we bought a third drill and were at it again, starting in the bedroom. We got a little sloppy and spaced the screws out too far, trying to finish quicker. We should not have done that, and yes, the floor squeaks. We ran the wood out the door of the bedroom, into the hallway, matched it up with the doorway of the office and bathroom, and out to the edge of the sunken living room. Getting the angle correct for the stairnose at the end took cutting the board five times. Having to measure the angle with a paper protractor that we printed off the internet, and the precision that a $99 compound miter saw can produce are no way to go through life. After that, the living room was much easier, though it was the largest room we'd done. We didn't skimp on screws, so it's near perfect. But we had one more big project we had to complete before we could finish the floor—the entryway.

Our 1982 split-level came with orange, wood railings between the living room level and the front door. We decided we'd rather have a half-wall and took the railing out. That meant we had to build a half-wall. Having never framed or built a wall before, this was more new territory. We did some measuring (ok, a lot of measuring) and managed to get the frame attached to the subfloor fairly sturdy and straight. The side facing the living room we decided to shore up using plywood instead of drywall. The door side, we decided to create little built-in nooks as an aesthetic feature. We drywalled around them, painted them inside and added trim to frame them nicely. The problem with new drywall, is that it's smooth. None of the walls in our house are smooth. They have that orange peel texture to them and smooth spots stick out like a sore thumb. This meant we had to add the orange peel texture. It apparently comes in a can, that requires a whole lot of shaking, and the stuff spits out in a complete mess and you have to spray it on in a particular way to create a random pattern of texture. It also takes a lot of it to cover a half-wall. Three cans later, and we had a wall that reasonably matched the rest of them. We added a nice cap board on top to cover the drywall and plywood and called it good.

One would think that we’d be over hardwood floors by this point, but there was the matter of the stairs. Besides being troublesome to vacuum, they were in the worst shape of any carpet in the house so they had to go. Learning the ins and outs of stair building is exhausting. For one, you have to start at the bottom stair, which meant if we were going to do the stairs going up, we would have to decide right then if we were also going to do the stairs going down. Split-level, remember? We decided it would look terrible to do only half of the stairs, so we tore up all the carpet, and proceeded to cut the noses off all the treads. This was necessary to make sure the new stair noses would sit flush against the risers. If you don’t know your tread from your riser from your nose, don’t worry. Neither did we when we started this. And don’t even get me started on the discussion that took place about wood flooring versus painted risers. In the end, we went with painted risers to make the math easier.

The landing in front of the door was a wood parquet that was a strange, dated pattern so it had to go as well. With a wonder bar and a hammer, I tore it up in an hour, but hurt my shoulder so badly that it took six weeks of physical therapy to make it right. After that, the rest of the stairs were pretty uneventful, and we even figured out a nice way to finish the noses on the open side, as the stairs going up only had a wall on one side. With those completed, we only had to wait for someone to custom manufacture new stair railings which only took a few weeks.

All the work we did was definitely worth it as we saved thousands doing it ourselves, I’m not entirely sure that had I known how much work it would be that I would have been so adamant that we do it ourselves. And I’m not sure our dogs will ever forgive us for taking away their carpet. One day we may swap out the vinyl floor in the kitchen, but not anytime soon. Does this ever stop?

How much is that doggie in the window?

To some people, dogs are pets. To others they are so much more. Long ago, my spouse and I decided not to have human children. So, when we got a tiny, black, Pug puppy, she took up that spot in our hearts where a baby would have been. We named her Leeloo (after the character in the movie Fifth Element), and she was so adorable that we spoiled her rotten. We failed to do all the things they say you should do when they're puppies—trim their toenails, brush their teeth—so it would be easier when they are adult dogs who really need it done. She got away with everything…until the night she peed on the bed for the second time. It wasn't in her sleep either. We were just going to bed, the light was still on, and she looked me square in the eye and squatted on the bed spread. Well, that broke the spell a little bit, and we made her up a little bed under the pantry shelves just outside the bedroom door and put up a baby gate to keep her from wandering. It took a little getting used to, but once we went ahead and got her a real crate, she just kind of knew that it was her domain and that's where she would sleep.

After a while, we decided that Leeloo needed a playmate. We weren't up for raising another puppy, so we decided to look at rescues. At first, we were thinking French Bulldog, or Pekingese. We even went to see one to see if they would get along, but the Pekingese was far too docile for our rambunctious baby. Then, when she was 7 months old, we took her to her first Pug Crawl. If you are a fan of Pugs and ever find yourself in the vicinity of Portland, Oregon on the third Sunday in May, you owe it to yourself to attend a Pug Crawl. Hundreds of people, most with at least one Pug each converge on a local brew house in town for the Humane Society fundraiser and costume contest of the year. There's beer, food, vendors and the aforementioned costume contest. There is always a theme, and the costumes are quite spectacular. At this particular Pug Crawl, we wandered over to the Pacific Pug Rescue booth to see if we could find Leeloo a friend. And there was Luna.

I had only asked if any of the ones available were female, and she handed me this frightened, little darling 3-year old black Pug, who lay cradled in my arms, looking at me with a hopeful, wide-eyed stare. We had found our dog. We had to go through the process, which took a little time. We filled out the adoption form, only to learn that another family had already chosen Luna. We were crushed, but they had another young fawn Pug for adoption, but she was a special needs baby. At around the same age as Leeloo, the little ball of fluff was only three quarters of her size and didn't move around much. She was deadly cute, but we were afraid that Leeloo would hurt her. We said we would think about it. Before we were able to give our answer, we got word that the other family had passed on Luna, and did we still want her? We gave them a resounding yes, and Luna joined the family.

The following year, I decided that our girls would be in the costume contest for the Pug Crawl. I had forgotten that there were themes, so when I came up with the idea of all four of us going as characters from the Wizard of Oz, it seemed like the greatest idea. I had found a pattern at the fabric store and got busy sewing. Yes, there are in fact patterns for dog costumes at the fabric store. Little Leeloo was our Tin Man, complete with a hat made from a tiny funnel that we spray painted silver. Luna, appropriately was our Cowardly Lion, my spouse was a sport and agreed to be the Scarecrow, and I made myself the cutest little Dorothy costume, complete with lace trimmed white apron. We didn't win the costume contest, although over 30 people had individually told us that we would and dozens more had taken our photo, but we did appear as the lead photo in the Humane Society magazine above the article about the Pug Crawl.

The years that followed, I kept sewing fantastical costumes—Thing 1 and Thing 2 and me as the Cat in the Hat, fluffy white sheep and me as Little Bo Peep, the Xenomorph and Chestburster from Aliens—but we never won until the year I decided that we would conform to their theme. That year happened to be "sports." We are not sports fans in this house, but by golly we were going to try. The idea I came up with was tangentially related to sports, in that it was car racing. But the reason we won, is because my spouse took a Barbie Dream Car (the kind that little kids can ride around in), redesigned the body like a formula one car, complete with circle decal on the side, and made it remote controlled. I fashioned Leeloo a helmet from a Styrofoam ball, and went about training her to sit still and ride in a moving car.

You can imagine the reaction from the crowd, when a Pug in a helmet seemed to be driving a race car down the parade route. My spouse was cleverly hidden in the crowd so nobody knew he was doing the driving. I was walking backwards down the parade route, keeping eye contact with Leeloo and holding the treat bag to make sure she stayed in the car. She stood up a few times, but I was able to get her to sit back down and continue the ride up to the judges' tent. We were pretty proud of ourselves, so it wasn't a huge shock when we took home First Place. What was a shock, was how much swag and goodies came with first place! The sponsors had really outdone themselves with the treats and toys, gift certificates and even a night's stay at a doggie hotel. Our favorite, however, was the trophy. They had mounted a ceramic Pug head on a plaque and decorated it with the event name, the year and the First-Place designation. We have it hanging on the wall of our dining room, right over our doggie door.

The following year, we had suffered the devastating loss of another pet, so I wasn't up for sewing costumes, but happened to run into one of the Pacific Pug Rescue's foster moms at the vet. She was making a big float and costumes to resemble Dream Girls for the Broadway theme that year but needed to "borrow" a couple black pugs to complete the look. We agreed, and she fitted them for their "dresses" and we took an afternoon to train them to stay on the float. The best part, was training them to lick peanut butter off the microphones she had set up to make it look like they were singing. Naturally, she took first place that year, and we were happy to be involved. We took the next year off, deciding to just enjoy the spectacle, but this year we are back at it. The theme is Game of Thrones "Pugs are Coming." Luna is going to be Bran, we are reworking her wheelchair from the year she went as Oracle/Batgirl, and Leeloo is going as the three-eyed raven.

ACADEMIC

A closer look at intangible assets

Part of the financial value of a company can be found in its intangible assets. Intangible assets are non-physical sources of economic value that an organization can use to their advantage. Corporate image, while not a line item on a balance sheet, is valuable in itself[14]. Strategic communication is also a valuable commodity, as it increases the sustainable competitive advantage of an organization[8]. Even the reputation of an organization has value as an intangible asset as well as databases, contracts and trademarks, future earning potential, communication competencies, skills, the experience and knowledge of the staff, environment, and the relationships and consumer engagement created through strategic communication [1—6, 8, 11—13].

Intangible assets, in some cases, are actually calculable. Differences between balance sheets and market value of an organization along with several recognized valuation methods, including *The Balanced Scorecard*[10], indicate that the value may in fact be up to 20 times that of its tangible assets[7].

Ernst and Young also indicate that up to 45 percent of market value can be related to non-financial performance, with the top drivers being human capital alliances and management quality. *Investor Relations Business* believes that this figure should be higher stating that intangibles account for up to 85 percent of perceived value[9].

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Identity is nothing if the public does not find it authentic.[24,31] According to *Time*, "authenticity is one of 10 ideas that is changing the world."[3] Many scholars agree that pursuit of authenticity is a fundamental element in contemporary marketing.[2,14,17,18,26,31] Identity and reputation are interrelated.[13,16,22] Reputation is the way an organization is perceived over time and is a direct reflection of what stakeholders think of their actions.[6,11,22,29] The observer participating in the creation of the reputation suggests that reputations may vary depending on who is judging them.[22]

Legitimacy, reputation and values are all dependent on a policy of symmetrical communication with stakeholders and help identify quality organizations.[5,8,21,27] Strategically communicated visions, values and missions can construct a superior reputation for some organizations which "attracts more talented employees, builds their pride, and draws external stakeholder support."[8,23,28]

However, according to Cornelissen[4] "reputation is not simply given, as a position to be taken up or protected by communicators." It is an intangible asset that is co-created with stakeholders by establishing relationships with them. He goes on to make the point that reputations are not static, rather they are being created constantly by the actions of the organization and that companies enjoying strong reputations share five traits: visibility, distinctiveness, authenticity, transparency and consistency.

An organization must remain committed to their values or their authenticity comes into question which may damage their reputation. This "valuable, intangible asset," must be protected for the organization to retain legitimacy.[9,10,12,22,32] Stakeholders' impressions of the activities of the organization are a direct reflection of their perception of the organization's ethics record, or reputation, and may impact purchase intention.[1,7,12,15,25,28,30]

Reputations are not without risk, however. In times of crises their value is multiplied and can become a double-edged sword; trust is a big part of that reputation and if broken may never be repaired. A well-established company with a good reputation is more likely to be forgiven for poor financial performance or faulty products[29] and can expect substantial gains in terms of employee morale.[5]

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Cadbury's Sad Demise

Cadbury had a long tradition of caring for the communities in which they operated. In the "chocolate box" village of Bournville, England, they not only built a manufacturing site, but also housing and recreational facilities for the factory workers and their families. They believed in the social rights of their workers and felt they had a responsibility to them. Cadbury was very engaged with the local communities, and that earned them strategic and reputational advantages. After expanding their global operation, they also kept up good community relations in India, partnering with cacao farmers and doing their part to reduce their footprint—even before it was popular. This shows their commitment to the triple bottom line.[2] But that was the 1800s.

Jerry Blackett, Chief Executive of Birmingham Chamber of Commerce stated in an interview for *Financial Times* that recently Cadbury had been abandoning their founder's Quaker roots and disengaging with the community. He says, "it was frustrating to engage with Cadbury, they had their London based operations and global agenda" and that they were leaving behind their history of civic leadership and local community support.[6] This deviation from their social agenda was "visible as early as the late 1960s" when Cadbury merged with Schweppes[5] and was perhaps a catalyst that eventually led to the takeover.

In a possible pro-business agenda, the *Financial Times* may have framed the interview of Jerry Blackett to favor Kraft, as he claims that after Kraft took over Cadbury, they had re-engaged the community.[6] Cornelissen suggests otherwise, stating that "Kraft [was] initially reluctant to engage with any local communities and has since gone on the PR offensive."[2] If Kraft had no intention of keeping certain UK factories open, or found it necessary to cut jobs, they should have refrained from making promises to the British government that UK jobs would be protected before they closed the Somerdale factory, and moved Bournville jobs to Poland.[2] In a final betrayal of the community, Kraft stopped using fair-trade cocoa beans.[5] Corporations are expected to demonstrate a certain amount of accountability to society and Kraft wasn't living up to its promises. The September 24, 2010 issue of *PR Week* magazine that ran a story about Kraft foods employing a consulting firm for advice[4] about boosting their reputation following the takeover, but it does not appear that they took the advice. David Deephouse (2000) quotes Barney (1991) pointing out that "imperfect imitability" makes it difficult for another corporation to build the same reputation, as all media coverage is unique. Kraft has shown they are determined to ruin the reputation of Cadbury, which is not in their best interest, as "what they've bought is a series of brands."[6] It will take time, but they need to rebuild that reputation, brand perception, and the trust of the communities if they hope to be successful.[2] A good first step is the recent investment in upgrades at the Bournville factory and returning the production of Dairy Milk to the UK last year.

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IBM's Comeback

The IBM layoffs in the 90s had depleted whatever values their employees previously shared. Their trust in their employer was at an all-time low having experienced so much job instability. Fortunately, Sam Palmisano, who became CEO in 2002, realized that downward communication was not going to work for them because an organization that "controls its members through top-down command and delegation" thwarts the employees' need for "autonomy, creativity and sociability".[3] In order for them to rebuild the communication climate to strengthen organizational identification,[5] they would have to find a way to facilitate dialogue between all[4] and help them build relationships. Employees who highly identify with their organizations are more likely to take actions and make decisions that are in line with the organization' s mission.[2] Involving the employees and soliciting participation in upward communication regarding the company values gave them a voice and the opportunity to shape their organizational identity and help "craft the IBM story," which was successful because not only did the employees participate, their voices were heard.[3] Palmisano's proactive engagement in building relationships parallels two-way symmetrical communication[4] which has been shown to be most productive and to increase job satisfaction and employee performance.[1]

As Palmisano himself said, "if you are going to build a business based on continual innovation and new intellectual capital, you are signing up for total dependence on the creativity and adaptive skills of your workforce."[3] I think this pretty much indicates that any business that is focused on innovation will have similar challenges, and therefore would potentially be able to utilize similar solutions. Palmisano saw value in his employees creating communities of practice on their intranet, that along with the mutual creation of the new values-based initiative was healing the rift in IBM caused by the turmoil of the 90s. Popularized by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, defining communities of practice as a group of people "informally bound together by common interests" applies to many arrangements of this type.[3] The stronger social connections between disparate divisions, departments and levels of employees were able to facilitate collaboration, innovation, development and learning within their boundaries which, if they are allowed to remain flexible, would be useful to any enterprise. The direct access to their intranet, allowing all users to publish content, would "facilitate knowledge sharing and encourage debate and peer-to-peer collaboration."[6]

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Stakeholder Communication
Barclays vs. Starbucks

In *Corporate Communication*, Joep Cornelissen says "having a legitimate stake is inclusive…this inclusiveness implies that organizations ideally communicate and engage with all of their stakeholders."[2] And further that all stakeholder interests have some intrinsic value. In a normative sense, this would lead to a boost in revenue and may also help develop a reputational buffer in case of crisis. These advantages become sustainable if strong ties are developed with established stakeholders. However, the benefits must outweigh the costs, and organizations no longer determine the boundaries of their own communication.[1] Information that they publish is only a small portion of the message which includes also how well their products perform, how they treat staff, how they treat natural resources–even the behavior of the CEO and which political party they align with sends a message to consumers.

"Consumers are more mature and savvy today and thus more difficult to reach, let alone manage,"[1] so the manner in which they are communicated with is important. For the creative receiver, an integrated message's consistency is not merely in the message but a product of active evaluation by the receiver.[3] Receivers have their own experiences and baggage that they bring to the table with which they interpret the message, making the strategy even more difficult to narrow down. Stakeholders may begin to perceive the organization as one-dimensional and patronizing[1] if one-way communication is utilized with definitive or expectant stakeholders as was the case in 2003 when Barclays rolled out their disastrous ad campaign.[2] A better way to communicate with top tier stakeholders would be a two-way process of meaning-construction such as the rich exchanges of dialogue strategy that can be accomplished using social media to send a message in a manner that allows for interpretation, or give consumers a direct voice like Starbucks does with their website "mystarbucksidea.com."[2] Their practice of bridging, while meant as persuasive communication to more important stakeholder groups, has the unintended benefit of speaking also to dormant stakeholders

As we attempt to measure organizational reputation, the first thing that must be done is to determine who matters. Take for instance the stakeholder salience model.[2] The definite, dangerous and dependent stakeholders are critical groups with which a company like Starbucks will want to engage all the time, in dialogue format if for no other reason than to take their pulse on issues that come up to determine if crisis avoidance is necessary (or even possible). The groups in the outlying regions of the model are the ones that can be pacified with informational communication such as the occasional newsletter, and the 3rd group a happy medium between the two, but each group must be communicated with in a way that is appropriate for their classification.

1. Christensen, L., Firat, A & Cornelissen, J. (2009). **New tensions and challenges in integrated communications**. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 14 Iss 2 pp. 207 – 219.

2. Cornelissen, J. (2017). *Corporate Communication*. Sage pub.

3. Shultz, M. (2005). **A cross-disciplinary perspective on corporate branding**. In Schultz, M, Antorini, Y. & Csaba, F. (eds), *Corporate Branding: Purpose/People/Process*. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press, 23-55.

The Royal Bank of Scotland - The Fiasco After the Crisis

The Royal Bank of Scotland failed to consider the public as a salient[7], only a problematic one when they made their decision.[4] Overpayment of executives was already a latent issue that had reached codification in the public arena. Media attention following the bailout made it active and RBS tried a buffering strategy, pretending that the bonuses weren't an issue. When that didn't get them anywhere they tried advocacy, but the public cannot be convinced the RBS position on this issue is "both rationally acceptable and morally legitimate."[4] Their management of stakeholder expectations was deficient in their managerial frame.[6]

John Varley, former CEO of Barclays attempted a cultural frame analogy for the situation using premiership football. Unfortunately, the salaries in professional sports are themselves under fire as being exorbitant. The technical translation[7] of what bankers actually do to earn their bonuses is not universally known, and if former French president, Nicolas Sarkozy, is correct in his supposition that the excessive rewards created risks then they are to blame for the cause of the banking crisis. I do not believe that there is a frame they could have used that could change the views of the taxpayers who had to pay for their mess.

RBS was looking for actional legitimation when they attempted to demonstrate the legitimacy of their actions. They should have been aware that their bonus policies would generate controversy and that they must generate "legitimating discourse."[2] If RBS had employed issues management, it's possible the public would not even have noticed the bonuses, as "successful issues management tend to remain invisible"[5]

Though payment of the bonuses can be classified as a *faux pas*, the culpability of the bankers who receive them makes the banking crisis itself a transgression. The crisis can also be called "organizational misdeeds" as defined in Coombs, Hazleton, Holladay, and Chandler's (1995) eight crisis types.[3] Much like the ABN AMRO senior management, they were "completely out of sync with public opinion" and their "managerial arrogance" made them blind to the potential backlash.[4] To evade blame, the RBS crisis managers employed the rhetorical strategy of denial[1] and distance, which is futile in cases of transgression as they are intentional acts.[4]

1. Benoit, W. (1995). **Sears' repair of its auto service image: Image restoration discourse in the corporate sector**. *Communication Studies*, 46, 89–105.

2. Boyd, J. (2000). **Actional Legitimation: No Crisis Necessary**, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 12:4, 341-353.

3. Coombs, W., Hazleton, V., Holladay, S., & Chandler, R. (1995). **The crisis grid: Theory and application in crisis management**. In L. Barton (Ed.), *New avenues in risk and crisis management* (Vol. 4, pp. 30-39). Las Vegas: University of Nevada–Las Vegas Small Business Development Center.

4. Cornelissen, J. (2017). *Corporate Communication*. Sage pub.

5. Gaunt, P. & Ollenburger, J. (1995). **Issues management revisited: A tool that deserves another look**. *Public Relations Review*, Volume 21, Issue 3, Autumn 1995, Pages 199-210.

6. Nord, L. & Olsson, E. (2013). **Frame, Set, Match! Towards a model of successful crisis rhetoric**. Research Article, First Published January 17, 2013.

7. Stephens, K., Malone, P. & Bailey, C. (2005). **Communicating with stakeholders During a Crisis: Evaluating Message Strategies**. Research Article, First Published October 1, 2005.

What is Strategic Communication?

According to Hallahan, the definition and essence of strategic communication is the "purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission". He later argues that the idea of influence and persuasion are the essence of strategic communica-tion and that it is "the transmission of information, ideas, attitudes, or emotion from one person or group to another… producing mutual understanding for decisions made… that includes exam-ining how an organization presents itself in society". He also gives the example that some schools with advertising and public relations programs are using strategic communication to refer to both disciplines as they share many facets. He refers to the term strategic as inclusive, conflicting and contradictory, and introduces two major models of strategic communication, transmission (one-way communication) and interactive (two-way communication) and states that interactive communication "creates meaning" between the parties involved, whether denotative or connotative, in an "ongoing process of learning".

On the other hand, Shelby asserts that we define the forms of communication by our actions and what we do. The focus of his article is organizational, business, corporate and management communication. Figure 4 shows the different types of communication and their relationship to one another (a similar boundary relationship model appears in Figure 2.2 of the Cornelissen book, however, the nomenclature of the core activities is Marketing, Advertising, Public Relations and Marketing Communication). He states "the cross-disciplinary analysis supports previous research findings that management communication is an integrative discipline, most often linking organi-zational communication to business communication."

In Strategic Communication, by Kjerstin Thorson, she calls it an "umbrella term to describe the activities of disciplines including public relations, management communication, and advertising," and a "term used to denote the higher-level concerns behind communicative efforts by organiza-tions to advance organizational mission." She goes on to quote the Hallahan article's definition in contrast to the subject's treatment by Argenti who defines "strategic communication as communi-cation aligned with the company's overall strategy, to enhance its strategic positioning."

If we take a look at corporate communication in particular, Cornelissen quotes Van Riel's definition, "an instrument of management by means of which all consciously used forms of internal and external communication are harmonized as effectively and efficiently as possible". Some of the key concepts of corporate communication as outlined in Table 1.1 of the Cornelissen are discussed in the 1997 Van Riel article. Van Riel further posits that research in corporate communication is, the both dependent on the success of the organization on one side and corporate identity, corporate reputation, and orchestration of communication on the other.

I conclude that while academia cannot fully define or categorize strategic communication, I agree that it consists of not only "purposeful communication" and persuasion as Hallahan writes, but is also reflected in our actions as suggested by Shelby. Van Riel's definition of corporate communication gets us closer to a unified theory including all the disciplines listed by Thorson, however, the Argenti definition strikes a chord of truth as aligning communication to overall strategy is the foundation of Cornelissen Chapter 6 and what I believe companies should strive to be doing.

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TRIP REPORTS

10 Days in Fiji

oh yeah. it's kinda like that.

Day 1
I thought the flight was at 11pm, so when we finally caught the shuttle to the airport at 8:30pm we were only supposed to be a little late. Turns out the flight had been changed to 10:30pm and we were cutting it close - considering the airline wanted us there 3 hours before the flight. All went ok though, and we got to the gate a full 20 minutes before it began boarding. Whew!

Day 2
While most of it was spent in flight and lost due to crossing the dateline, we'll call this the day we landed. Arriving in Nadi (pronounced Non-dee) around 7:30am, we collected our luggage and boarded the bus to Pacific Harbour. On the way we stopped in Sagatoka at a shop and were greeted with FREE BEER! Gotta love this country! Our first Fiji Bitter was welcome even at 10am, and not to be our last. I'm not sure where it started, but they became known as "Fiji Baby" after that. So after our brief shopping trip we reboarded and continued to the harbor. We boarded our boat around 11am and most of us were starving by then. A 45 minute boat ride to the island of Beqa (pronounced Beng-ga) brought us within 10 feet of shore, but we had to wade through calf-deep water the rest of the way. The Fijians on shore sang to us and gave us flower necklaces in greeting, followed by some juice and the orientation to our stay. Then we

Our Buré

were shown to our rooms. It was EXACTLY like the one in the brochure! We changed clothes and headed down to the common room for lunch. Then after unpacking, we suited up for our afternoon check-out dive (to get our weights and things situated). The water was a balmy 84 degrees and the reef directly off the beach was fantastic. When we were done, we showered and took what we thought was going to be a brief nap, but someone had to come knock on our door to get us to dinner. The food there was spectacular including a unique and special dessert every night. We turned in early (as became our custom) and slept the sleep of the dead.

Day 3
7a.m. comes early (shortly after dawn I think) and we were again awakened by a polite knock on our door summoning us to breakfast. A plate of pancakes later we were off to the dive boat. As we begin to become aquainted with the members of our group, a few personalities stick out. First there is the guy that they keep calling "Cowboy Bob," but for the life of me I can't figure out why. Turns out, back in Burbank, he is always wearing boots and a hat. Not so in Fiji. By the trip's end, he is known as Fiji Bob. Then there is the German. I'm not sure if it's really his

name, but he goes by Nino. And more recently "Destructo" or "Butu, the Bavarian Moon Fish". Construct your own visual for that one, sorry to say, I missed it and Ilene isn't sharing the pictures anymore. Then there were Josh and Sylvia, our trip leaders who were a couple clowns themselves. There is some neat video footage of them riding each other's tanks, or holding each other by the fins, taking turns at getting a free ride. Then there is Kevin #1 (we had two Kevins and two Marks on the trip). Kevin1 is almost as tattooed as I am which great work, beautiful in fact, which is amazing, since he's black. You don't usually see color like that on dark skin. He is the 3rd in the "Ipod Trio" with Nino and Josh. More amusing than their underwater antics was watching them trying to best one another in a "worst song" competition with their Ipods that they always had with them between dives. The winner I thought was the one who showed up with "Dreamweaver."

The diving was great - warm, clearish water (not as clear as I remembered, but they had been getting a lot of rain) and I had one creature on my wishlist that I had not seen on my last trip. The Blue Ribbon Eel. Guess what we saw on the VERY FIRST DIVE. Not one, but TWO of these elusive, beautiful creatures! That set the stage for the rest of the trip.

Blue Ribbon Eels one and two

Upon return, we took a shower and headed to lunch. The next four mornings went exactly the same way. In the afternoons we would walk the beach, collecting shells, or one day I got a massage in my room while Mark joined the "Manly Men" for a treacherous hike up to the waterfall. A couple times we went snorkelling in the lagoon -

Lagoon reef with kayak bottom

almost a difficult feat in sometimes less than two feet of water, but we took the kayaks out to where it dropped to 12 feet and freedove the edge of the reef. The first time we took the kayaks out, we took the two seater, but SOMEONE lost his balance and tipped us over. That was the first time we lost a camera. It was his little cheapo one, so that was ok. After that we each took our own kayak. Twice on the way back in we raced another couple and the loser had to buy the "Fiji babies". Somehow I won.

The second camera was lost on a dive. Mark was videotaping and when we came across a collection of anemonefish he wanted to get some photos as well so he motioned for me to give him the camera out of my BC pocket. He took the pics, then went back to videotaping. But the camera was not clipped to his BC, so it floated away unnoticed. There was a definite current so by the time we got back on the boat, the camera was halfway to Maui we guessed so the search didn't go on long. At least he wasn't the first to lose a camera. He wasn't even the first guy named Mark to lose a camera. It was just that kind of trip.

So when our time at Beqa Lagoon was up, we headed to our next destination: Ovalau. We caught a taxi at Pacific Harbour to Suva. We had several hours to kill before our flight so we went into town to do some shopping. When we had about an hour left, we ducked out of the rain in a little bar called the Whistling Duck. We ordered a couple "Fiji babies" and were invited to join a group of people who had been partying there since 2am when they got off their shift at MacDonalds. They "taught" us how to dance, gave us beer and cigarettes and the only girl among them swears that the way you tell a boy you like him in Fiji is to walk up and whisper in his ear "I have a condom in my pocket." We had a great time with them and nearly didn't get out of there in time for our flight, but we went back to the airport and flew to Levuka. The son of the hotel owner was there to pick us up and then we drove almost an hour to the hotel where we had dinner and fell into bed.

The next morning we got up for breakfast and went to the dive shop. We were diving from a much smaller boat this time, and the currents were wicked. As we rounded a pinacle I caught sight of my first manta ray. I had stupidly decided to not bring my camera since I wanted to check out the diving conditions first, but Mark had his videocamera. I motioned for him to come see the manta, but he was busy looking at something else....turns out there were TWO mantas. He wasn't close enough to the second to see as well, so he only got "Manta Shadow" on tape, but at least he saw one. Mark's ear had been hurting him off and on for a few days, and on my last trip to Fiji several people had gotten ear infections. So after the second dive, Mark decided that the pain in his ear was pretty bad, and we stopped at the hospital on our way back from lunch. A quick, free, 3 prescription visit later, it was determined that Mark's diving days were over. At least until the infection healed.

It was a hot, muggy, and mosquito filled evening that convinced me that I'd rather be back home than finish diving without Mark, so the next day we made arrangements to go home early.

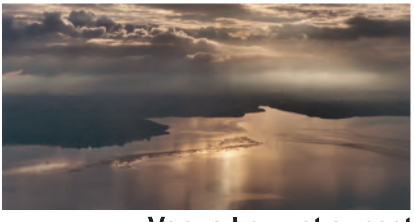
Runway at Levuka airport

We flew back to Suva and then back to Nandi where we stayed the night. Our flight to L.A. was at 11pm the next day so we went into Nandi to shop some more. That's when we got hijacked.

I call it that, but what happened is a mix of scary, silly, stupid and frustrating. A guy came up to us and told us that we shouldn't buy from the big stores that mostly get their stuff from the Phillipines anyway, that we should go to a REAL Fijian crafts store. We agreed and asked him where it was. He wouldn't say, he LED us there. Then made us take off our shoes and have a Kava ceremony. Then he LET us go into the store where it turns out everything was WAY overpriced. Mark managed to haggle, but I'm terrible at it and ended up paying $40 for a one inch carving of a fish. Then I said we had to leave because we were hungry. This didn't even get us away from the guy. He WALKED us to this place across the street, SAT us, and I swear I thought the guy was going to eat lunch with us when he finally left. We ate, then spent the rest of the day hiding out in the big air-conditioned stores that he'd pulled us away from.

I love Fiji, but shopping in Nandi I could have done without. The people of Fiji are NOTHING like the ones in Nandi. I'll remember that for sure.

Finally, it was time to go home.



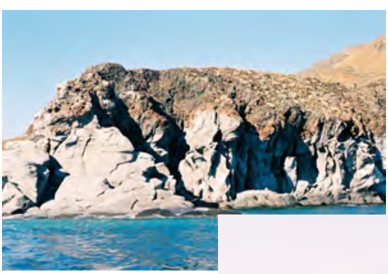
Vanua Levu at sunset

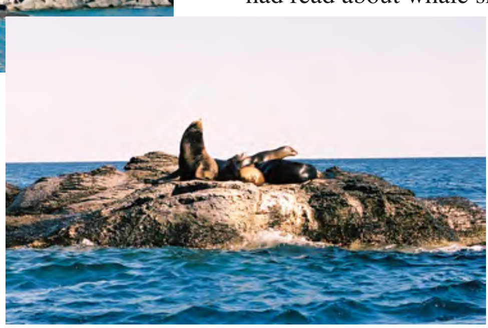
4 Days in Mexico

where you can GET beer at 10pm, just not from the store...

Thursday, 10am

After having to remove and rearrange our gear to meet the lower weight limit, we get the runaround by security whom can't seem to decide whether our dive lights pose more of a threat in our checked luggage or our carry-ons. Not even among them can they agree whether or not we are allowed to keep our batteries in them. I get so flustered by having to open my Pelican case twice that I completely forgot to remove my film from my backpack and sent it through the x-ray. A couple consoling drinks in the airport bar later, the 20 of us reconvened and chatted with old friends and got aquainted with new ones.





Volcanic formations and sealions

The flight was a short hour and a half and we stepped out into the lovely 85 degree sunshine with a cooling breeze. We admired the Perros de Policia while we waited to get through the Immigration and Customs lines. Their system was inadaquate and convoluted, but we managed to get through and boarded our Campos Travel vans to the hotel. It was nothing special, but it was right on the beach and I immediately changed and walked through the sand to the blue water. It wasn't as warm as I expected 85 degrees to be, but we soon were met by the dive shop owner, Bruce, who picked up our gear and gave us directions to the shop. After a brief dinner we walked the four blocks to the little shop and were arranged on

pair of puffers

the Ponga boats in groups of 4, 5 and 6. Another couple blocks to the marina and we got our briefing for the night dive.

Suiting up on our way to Coronado Island, I told my dive group what I had read about whale sharks. That they came to the surface to feed at night so that this was the dive we were most likely to see them since they were known to dive deep during the day to keep cool. We did our backwards roll into the dark water and slipped down to 30 feet. We cruised over to the edge of the reef and my buddy and I were the first ones down the wall. The "walls" actually looked architectural like they were carved or built. And in every crevase were eels, hogfish, trunkfish, and towards the end there was the cutest little round stingray, but if there were whale sharks nobody had a light powerful enough to catch them. "Did you see the whale shark?" actually became the running joke of the weekend.

We concluded our dive and rinsed our gear at the shop before walking a block up the street to the "Tecate store". We picked up a couple six packs (at $4.50 each) and on our way down the street to the hotel, we stopped and I picked up a few tacos at a roadside stand. They were the best damn tacos I'd ever had. We returned to our rooms and went to bed, but sleep eluded me, as I was worried I wouldn't wake up in time for the dive since I didn't have a watch or phone or anything on which to tell time.

Friday, 7am

There's a knock on my door to startle me awake, and I stumble down to breakfast and after some yummy chorizo and eggs we went to the dive shop and loaded our gear onto the boats. We headed back to Coronado Island, but further north to an outcropping with the most amazing volcanic formations and a whole mess of sealions. They see us and start piling into the water. Hmmm.... same thing I saw at the OTHER Coronados.... I wonder if it's a name thing.

We pull alongside one of the other boats and are instructed to follow their anchor line since it's a bit of a blue water descent with a slight current. Shall we say, understatement of the year? The descent wasn't bad, but the current was not only faster than I could walk, but once you turned the corner of the reef it turned into a DOWN current! As we were already at 70 feet, being suddenly pushed to 100 with the potential for deeper I began to wonder if we weren't in a bit over our heads. Literally. I got my buddy's attention and ascended to around 50 feet and took photos of a school of

the Motley Crew

puffers that were hanging out there. Yeah. SCHOOL. I'd never seen more than 2 at a time before and there were 20 or 30 right in one area all chilling and enjoying the current. At least THEY were.

We come up over the top of the reef and see that the divemaster and everyone else are already ascending the anchor-line. We had only been down about 15 minutes so I wasn't ready to go back and I figured my buddy wasn't either so I motioned asking if he wanted to go back to the edge of the reef where the current wasn't so bad. He agreed and off we went. However, the notion that the current "wasn't so bad" was an error and I ended up hanging onto the reef while my feet trailed behind me, waving like a flag. After fighting it for a while, we gave in and began to ascend the anchor-line. Suddenly the anchor is pulled and is coming TOWARDS us! We knew it wasn't OUR boat whose anchor we were on, but we figured someone might have told them that we were still down and had been instructed to use their line. No such luck. Our safety stop was cut short and we surfaced to yell at the boat that "we were USING that!" They didn't seem to care and said they had to go.

We found out later that someone on the boat was getting sick and they wanted to get out of the chop. Upon surfacing we discovered that the once calm ocean had turned into a boil with whitecaps and waves breaking over our heads. And our boat? Nowhere to be seen. We looked around and saw two of the other boats, but not ours. My buddy and I are both pretty experienced so there was no panicking, but I've certainly been more comfortable. We finally spotted our boat and saw that my buddy's non-diving girlfriend who had been on the boat with us was missing. We board and my buddy asks our captain who's answer was "se fuera" or "she went away". It turns out she had been getting a little seasick as well and was dropped off in a protected cove to snorkel.

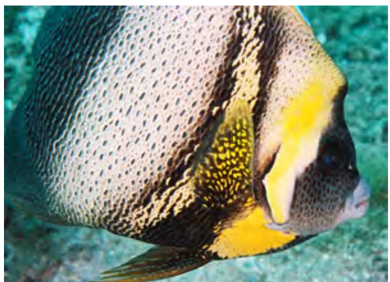
We picked her up and after a brief surface interval that included such wild sights as Kyle and Frank doing back flips off the Pongas, we hopped

unhappy captured triggerfish

in at the calm cove and swam around a finger reef teaming with eels that left us right in the cove where the sealions were playing. They buzzed us just like the ones back home, coming really close and then veering off at the last second. With about 60 to 80 foot vis it was quite a show. We ran out of no-deco time long before we ran out of air, so we surfaced and went to a beach with white sands and warm shallow water for our lunch interval. I had a bean and cheese sandwich (about as bland as it sounds) and went to play in the water. I discovered a tiny little puffer who seemed enthralled with my toes which made me a little nervous knowing that they have a nasty bite and like to eat squid. Do my toes look like squid? I don't know, but I kept my eye on the little sucker. What finally drove me out of the water were all the little jellyfish. I got a couple stings and decided I'd had enough.

Our 3rd dive was right around the corner and we were down for nearly an hour in the 50 to 20ft reef with 87 degree temps. We were pretty beat upon our return, but we showered and changed and about 10 of us joined the dive shop owner for dinner at El Taste Restaurant for some good steak. Needless to say, we slept pretty well that night.

Saturday, 6:45am
Much to my dismay, my morning knocks were getting earlier. I arrived at breakfast and ordered the fruit and granola plate. The thing we discovered about the hotel restaurant is that no matter what you order, it will come out whenever they feel like bringing it. Chorizo and eggs takes a mere 15 minutes but you could wait an hour for some toast. We could find no rhyme nor reason for it, but then discovered that the server was also the COOK! They had one guy taking orders, making the food, serving it and writing up our checks! We gave him a break after that.



Our first dive of the day was a sea mount (!) A total Blue Water descent to a pinnacle that begins around 60 feet and (reportedly) goes down several hundred feet. Perhaps it was a multi-level pinnacle, because I found a bottom (of sorts) at 120 feet. It was covered in this chartreuse colored sea grass looking stuff that we would later find out was actually black coral. Yeah. The endangered kind. So why is it yellowish green at 120 feet? This was the first dive that Bruce did with us (the other dives he was teaching) and he was swimming near my buddy and me when I saw his hand dart under a rock after a Unicorn Triggerfish. I was mortified that he would catch fish in a "no take" marine sanctuary (on the surface he had mentioned how good triggerfish taste) so I swam away. When I looked back, he was following me, with the fish IN HIS HANDS. At least he hadn't killed it like I feared, he had just brought it out to show it to us up close. I took a photo and swam away hoping he would let the poor thing go, but he held onto it till my buddy got a pic as well. Later on I saw him holding a pufferfish. I spoke to him about it after we surfaced, saying I appreciated that he wanted me to get the best pictures, but that was not how I preferred to do it.

Our surface interval was at a rocky cove below a towering cliff where we all climbed over the interesting structures and everyone but 3 of us ate tuna ceviché. I don't eat fish, Tracy doesn't eat any meat and Kyle doesn't eat mayonnaise. So we had some breakfast bars and tried to pretend we weren't hungry. There had been a sign up sheet at the beginning of the trip where you could put any special meal requirements, but apparently they had chucked it and were going by memory because there was a second bin of ceviché that didn't have tomatoes (the other item I had listed as "don't eat") but, alas, still had fish.

The last dive was a virtual aquarium with a large quantity and diversity of fish from 15 to 60 feet. My buddy and I had both gone down with only 24 exposures and were through our film before the dive was half over. Of course, on a 62 minute dive, that's not hard to do. Since that was our last dive of the trip, I asked the boat captain to drop us off at our hotel instead of the dive shop so we wouldn't have to lug our gear. Everyone else on my boat thought that was a great idea, but we didn't have a chance to inform the other boats so they all went to the harbor and walked to the dive shop. After rinsing our gear, taking a shower and dressing we met at the front desk to catch a cab to town. We were having lunch/dinner at La Terraza and then doing a little shopping. Lunch was great and soon we were off to comb the original cobblestone streets for deals.

Around 7pm, we decided to take Bruce up on his offer to come have drinks at his house and caught a cab to Nopolo, a development a few miles south of town. He has a beautiful home, but a couple drinks later we realized how tired we were and headed back to the hotel. Then a couple of the guys decided that we should all have a soak in the hot tub. After stepping into it, we decided it really needed a new name since it was so far from hot it was ridiculous. We made up a new name for Mexican hot, since we'd had the same trouble in our showers. It is now Mexican luke cold. And you get the same temperature out of the hot faucet as you do the cold. In fact, sometimes the cold is warmer.

We decided we wanted some beer around 10pm and a few of the guys set out to the Tecate store. Unfortunately, it was closed so they asked a street taco vendadora where they could get some. She points and tells Jose (the only one among us who is fluent in Spanish) to go to a house down the street (that incidentally has no lights on). They went, and knocked on the door. All the lights come on, and a guy answers. Jose explains that they were sent by the taco lady and soon after they return with 12 beers and a pack of cigarettes. What a country.

Sunday, 11:15am

Finally got to sleep in, packed up my stuff and went to get lunch. A few people sat with me to keep me company (since they had all had breakfast) and soon we were off to the airport. Another trip through security revealed that they didn't know any more than than their counterparts on the American side about batteries and dive lights and we ended up at another airport bar. Suffice to say we all got back ok and look forward to returning soon.

ABOUT ERIKA TUCKER

Erika Tucker Statement of Purpose

My higher education began in 1991 at Indiana University, where my goal was to double major in English and Art, as they had been my passion in high school. My freshman year was a whirlwind of introductory classes, during which I discovered how much history is required for an Art degree. I remained undeclared and continued to take entry level classes in a variety of disciplines. At the close of my first year, I dropped out to attempt to gain residency in Indiana so that I could re-register at the in-state tuition rate and continue my education at IU. As so often happens, plans did not go as intended, and I went back home to Virginia and enrolled in George Mason University in the fall of 1993. As each semester brought new challenges and new interests, my interest in an English degree had not waned, and I had acquired enough credits to graduate with a minor in Studio Art.

Upon graduation, I accepted my first job as an editor for the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements in Bethesda, MD. Sadly, it was not to be a long posting as six months later my new husband got a job in Los Angeles and we moved. I found a position as an image re-toucher putting together a catalog for a jeweler in Beverly Hills, based on my knowledge of Photoshop. With this experience, I found graphic design work with several companies around the Los Angeles area until I found a home at Printing Industries Association. They provided me with additional software training, and limitless opportunities to improve my skills and I grew my knowledge to include web design and programming.

After 8 years, a divorce and a remarriage, I was again moving out of state for a new husband, but my employer decided I was too valuable to let go. I retained my position and worked for them for another 11 years remotely from Portland. In early 2018, the president of the company retired and his replacement decided that I would need to return to LA to keep my job. I declined, and began working for their sister association, Pacific Printing Industries in Portland.

My position quickly grew from just graphic and web design to Marketing and Communications, as with a smaller budget begets a smaller staff, there were many more opportunities to go around. I surprised myself at how naturally I took on the roles, as I had been tangentially connected with them previously by providing the marketing materials for the programs. I was sure this was the new direction of my career, when a short 9 months later the board appointed a new Executive Director who decided to do away with my position in favor of hiring on-staff accountants.

Since the relocation to Portland, I had launched a company of my own, Little Bear Design, and had been doing freelance graphic and web design, along with selling handmade jewelry and accessories online and at local shows. I’m not comfortable working on a contract basis and desire a permanent position with a good company, so this is not a long-term solution, merely a stopgap while I look for work in the Marketing and Communications field.