

Public Relations Institute of Ireland
Annual Conference 2008

Battling Against the Tide...

Staying in Control of Your Communications Agenda

Conrad Hotel, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2
Friday 09 May 2008



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The best-laid plans...

We've all encountered it at some point or another. You've planned your project thoroughly but an unexpected crisis – or often simply the grind of day-to-day events – throws you off-course and very possibly off-message.

Battling Against the Tide is set against this familiar backdrop. It encapsulates the experiences of people and organisations who often find themselves at the forefront of the news agenda and who, as a result, are driven to move from issue to crisis management mode on an all too regular basis. These are true communications firefighters – professionals who are literally working flat out to stay in control of their PR and marketing strategies.

Topping and tailing our 2008 conference are sessions examining the market economy that will dictate the direction of our efforts over the next 12 months; and exploring the online tools that can enhance our campaign plans and help us prepare in advance for that inevitable dark day ahead.

It is an impressive line-up indeed, I hope you'll agree. Please, do join us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin Green".

Justin Green, MPRII
PRII President

Programme for the day

Conference Chairperson: Miriam O'Callaghan, Broadcaster

8.30-9.20 Registration

9.20-9.30 Justin Green, MPRII, President PRII
Opening address

9.30-10.05 Pat McArdle, Group Chief Economist, Ulster Bank

Should we be worried?

The optimists say we're talking ourselves into a recession, the more cautious tell us it's inevitable. Either way, how should professional communicators be preparing financially for the year ahead and beyond?



Pat McArdle has worked in Ulster Bank since 1996, where he is responsible for forecasting and analysis of the Republic and Northern Ireland economies. Prior to that, he was chief economist at NCB Stockbrokers and also served as a public servant in the Department of Finance and the European Commission.

Pat is a Fellow of the Institute of Bankers, Council member of the Foundation for Fiscal Studies, and member of the Securities Institute, the Royal Irish Academy and the Financial Regulator's Consultative Industry Panel. He has a Masters degree in Econometrics from University College Dublin and is a Qualified Financial Advisor (QFA).

10.05-10.40 Chris Giles, Economics Editor, *The Financial Times*

How the mighty have fallen

From Société Générale and Northern Rock to Bear Stearns, the international banking sector has seen its solidity crumble in the past six months. How well has the fallout been communicated by the organisations in question and their respective regulators? And what are the branding implications for the financial services sector as a whole?



Chris Giles has been Economics Editor of the *Financial Times* since autumn 2004. He writes on micro and macro economic issues affecting leading economies but has a particular focus on the UK. He was previously the economics editorial writer for the paper.

He won the 2008 Royal Statistical Society prize for excellence in journalism.

Before joining the FT in 2000, Chris was an economics correspondent at the BBC. He started his career in research, spending seven years as an economist for the Institute for Fiscal Studies.

10.40-11.10 Coffee, Sponsored by Mediacontact.ie

11.10-11.45 Enda Corneille, MPRII, Corporate Affairs Director, Aer Lingus

Change is in the air

The Big Cat has been tamed by the harsh realities of commercial pressure. But just

how difficult is it to sustain your change management programme when you have inherited the traditions and the disputes that accompany a former State-owned organisation?



Enda Corneille, MPRII, was appointed Corporate Affairs Director at Aer Lingus in November 2007, with responsibility for internal and external communications including media relations and corporate and government affairs, together with all aspects of Aer Lingus' branding, marketing and customer services. He also has responsibility for the Group's investor relations communications.

Enda has over 20 years' experience in total with Aer Lingus, having joined the airline in 1986. He has held a number of positions including as commercial director, with responsibility for all aspects of commercial operations, and head of European sales.

11.45-12.20 Niall Mellon, Founder, Niall Mellon Township Trust

Building houses and building trust

Only five years into its existence, the Niall Mellon Township Trust was controversially approved for €5m in aid by Irish Aid in December 2007. Why has this charity succeeded in attracting so much attention so soon? And what must it do next to keep the momentum – and the funds – flowing?



Niall Mellon is a serial entrepreneur. Born in Dublin in 1967, he has a range of business interests in Ireland, the United Kingdom and overseas and has launched numerous successful business ventures in a number of areas including financial services, software, hotels, construction and, more recently, the media.

In the UK, he has been recognised for his efforts towards the renewal of urban working class areas and was awarded the UK Best Practice in Regeneration Award in 2006 for his City Park development in Glasgow which created almost 3,000 new jobs.

In 2002, Niall changed his direction, and founded the Niall Mellon Township Trust after a holiday to South Africa where he witnessed at first hand the dire conditions in which the people of the country's townships were living. In just five years the charity has implemented innovative solutions to help eradicate this urban poverty and is now the largest provider of low cost homes for the poor in South Africa.

Conferred with an Honorary Doctorate of Philosophy by the Dublin Institute of Technology, he has also received a People of The Year Award for his charity work in South Africa and was recently named *Irish International Philanthropist of the Year*.

12.20-12.55 Jim Glennon, Project and Communications Consultant, & Fintan Drury, Chairman, PLATINUM ONE

Can Irish sporting bodies re-engage effectively with fans?

The IRFU, FAI, GAA: They've all taken blows and felt the pain of failure in 2007 and 2008. Who will be first to win back public confidence – and how?



Jim Glennon is the founding Chief Executive of Medisec Ireland, the first Irish company to offer professional indemnity and advisory services to general practitioners.

He was elected to Seanad Éireann in a by-election for the Industrial and Commercial panel in 2000, and to Dáil Éireann in 2002 as a Fianna Fáil TD for the constituency of Dublin North. He did not seek re-election in 2007 and since then has provided consultancy services to several high-profile projects in the commercial, media and sporting sectors.

Formerly an Irish rugby international player, a player, selector, coach and manager of Leinster, manager of Ireland U19s and manager of Ireland U21s, he is a long-established and well-respected media analyst on the game in both the broadcast and print media.



Fintan Drury is Chairman of PLATINUM ONE, Ireland's only full service sports, sponsorship and event management agency.

A former news and current affairs journalist with RTÉ, Fintan set up Drury Communications in 1989 and grew the company into the market leader in corporate communications in Ireland prior to selling it in 1999. He established Drury Sports Management in 1991 in response to the potential he saw within the infant Irish sports and sponsorship industry. Drury Sports Management acquired Beacon Conference & Incentive in July 2004 and both companies subsequently merged to form PLATINUM ONE.

Fintan was a key player in the initiative to bring the Ryder Cup to Ireland in 2006, a process that began in 1994. Since then, he has been retained as consultant to The European Tour, adding the World Golf Championship – American Express Championship in 2002 and 2004, and Ryder Cup Ltd to his client portfolio along the way.

Fintan is also Chairman of Paddy Power plc and sits on the Board of Anglo Irish Bank Corporation plc.

1.00-2.15 Lunch

2.15-2.50 Clarence Mitchell, Official Spokesman, Find Madeleine Campaign

The media: Friend and foe

Maddy, one year on. The critics have been vocal but what steps would you take in these tragic shoes?



Clarence Mitchell took up his current role in September 2007 at the request of Kate and Gerry McCann. He was first introduced to the McCanns when he was seconded to act as Media Liaison Officer for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, as part of the exceptional consular assistance extended to the couple by the British government following the abduction of their daughter, Madeleine, in Portugal on 03 May 2007.

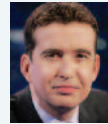
A former news correspondent for BBC News and a presenter at BBC News 24, Clarence was most recently director of the media monitoring unit at the Cabinet Office prior to becoming the McCann family's official spokesman. At Whitehall, he led a 30-strong team of information officers, providing 24/7 real-time media

intelligence to the Prime Minister's Office and to the principal government departments and public agencies.

2.50-3.25 Mark Little, *Prime Time* Presenter, RTÉ

The message maestros of the 2008 US elections

It's been followed with more interest than any other US election for the past two decades and with good reason. On and offline, this leadership battle is testing communicators on each side of the divide.



Mark Little is Presenter of the RTÉ current affairs programme, *Prime Time*.

He began his journalistic career at the *Sunday Business Post* before being hired by RTÉ as a TV news reporter in 1991. He was RTÉ's first Washington correspondent between 1995 and 2001, covering three US presidential election campaigns. He returned to Dublin to take up the post of RTÉ's foreign affairs correspondent before joining *Prime Time* in 2002.

Mark specialises in coverage of world affairs and was named TV Journalist of the Year in 2001 for his reporting from Afghanistan. He wrote and presented the documentary series *Who's Afraid of Islam?*, and has written two books about his travels, *Turn Left at Greenland* and *Zulu Time*.

3.25-3.55 Coffee

3.55-4.30 Neville Hobson, ABC, New Media Expert and Practitioner

The tools that define modern communications

For better or worse, new social media are making their mark. This adventure playground must be understood for what it is: An opportunity to nurture – and protect – brands.



Neville Hobson, ABC, is a communicator, blogger, podcaster and Second Life explorer, one of the leading European early adopters and influencers in social media communication for business. He is an accredited communications practitioner with over 25 years' experience in public and media relations, marketing communication, employee, compensation and benefits communication as well as investor and financial relations. Neville is a founding Senior Research Fellow and Advisory Board member of the Society for New Communication Research, a California – based non-profit think tank.

He has been involved with the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) since 1989 and has served as regional director in Europe, and has also been a member of the Executive Board and Executive Committee.

Neville blogs at nevillehobson.com, at the intersection of business, communication and technology. He is co-presenter with Shel Holtz of the twice weekly "For Immediate Release: The Hobson & Holtz Report", the communication profession's first business podcast started in January 2005.

4.30-4.40 Justin Green, MPRII, President PRII

Closing remarks

Registration form

REGISTER
ONLINE AT
WWW.PRII.IE

Fax your registration to 01 676 4562 *Please photocopy and complete one form per attendee*

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Please register me to attend *Battling Against the Tide... Staying in Control of Your Communications Agenda*

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Job title _____ Department _____

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Address _____

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Cancellations and substitutions. Cancellations must be received in writing and will not be taken over the phone. Regrettably, no refund can be made for cancellations received less than 10 working days prior to the conference date. Substitutions may be made at any time - please notify us as soon as possible.

* **Parking at the Conrad Hotel.** Parking on the day is available on a limited, first come, first served basis at the special rate of €10.



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