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# Reputation

## TODAY

A magazine for Public Relations and Corporate Communications Professionals

### FOCUS

LEGENDS IN INDIAN PR  
CONSULTING



### LEAGUE OF LEGENDS

Those who earned their badge of honour.

### INTERVIEWS

#### Arun Sudhaman

In India, under-valuation of Public Relations remains the biggest challenge.

#### K S Narahari

Empathy, consistency, leadership and ethics are some of the qualities that make a legend.

#### Ophira Bhatia

Governance and citizenship are the key pillars for a solid corporate reputation.

INSIDE  
30 Top Corporate  
Communications  
Teams

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## TEAM

Shree Lahiri, Senior Editor

Anubhuti Mathur, Content Director

Roshan Alexander, Business Head

## DESIGN



## CONTENTS

- 02** Top Corporate Communication Teams
- 04** Replay: Innovation First Communications Conclave
- 06** Replay: Influence Now Communications Conclave
- 08** Cover Story
- 14** In the League
- 16** Guru Speak: K S Narahari
- 18** Tribute to Irfan Khan: Debasis Ray
- 20** Media Speak: Arun Sudhaman
- 22** Debate: Nandita Lakshmanan & Paresh Chaudhry
- 24** Communicator Speak: Ophira Bhatia
- 26** Replay: Fulcrum Awards 2017
- 30** Looking Glass
- 31** Engaging Strokes
- 32** Taking Pride

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Cover Page Caricatures By: Vibhuti Vaish



(L - R) M L Kaul, Sunil Gautam, Sunil Agarwal, Shiv Reddy, Roger Pereira, Rajiv Desai

This is the tenth issue of the magazine, we created little over two years ago. We have come a long way along with the online portal which publishes one new article every day. This edition is special because it celebrates the legends of Indian Public Relations. These are pioneers who started the initial set of PR consulting companies and then exited the organisations to pursue other businesses. Most of them started another smaller company or went ahead and did something else. There are other legends too, who came in as the next generation in the 90s and are still at the helm of the firms they created or have launched successful firms.

As legends 1.0 we chose Rajiv Desai of IPAN, Shiv Reddy of Corporate Voice, ML Kaul of MelCole, Roger Pereira of R&P Consulting, Sunil Gautam of Hanmer & Partners and Sunil Agarwal of 2020 Media.

The next set of legends are Madan Bahal and Rajesh Chaturvedi of Adfactors, Prema Sagar of Genesis, Dilip Cherian and Bobby Kewalramani of Perfect Relations, Nikhil Khanna of Avian Media, Atul Ahluwalia of Corporate Voice, Bela and NS Rajan of Sampark and Ameer Ismail of Linopinion.

The third generation we have not featured here include the likes of Amit Misra, Nitin Mantri, Rishi Seth, Nandita Lakshmanan and Archana Jain, among others. There are also two women who after long stints at PR firms chose to move into corporate communications - Amrit Ahuja and Meenu Handa.

The aim of the cover story is to place on record the contribution of the founding fathers (not intended to be sexist) of Indian Public Relations and continue to offer inspiration to PR professionals. We may have missed someone who you think is a legend. Please let us know as we can always include them in the online version of this article, if they make the cut.

This edition contains our regular series of interviews. In this issue we feature Arun Sudhaman, KS Narahari and Ophira Bhatia. You will also see the list of the Top 30 corporate communication teams and how we arrived at it, in the inside pages.

We also are gearing up for the seventh edition of PRAXIS to be held in Hyderabad. PRAXIS is the birthplace of this magazine. The upcoming summit will witness for the first time global corporate communication leaders delivering keynote addresses at PRAXIS. We urge you to not miss this one. Register at [bit.ly/PRAXIS2018](http://bit.ly/PRAXIS2018)

The School of Communications & Reputation (SCoRe) based in Mumbai, which the magazine supports, is looking for its third batch of aspiring PR rockstars. If you know someone who is looking at a career in PR, kindly direct them to [www.scoreindia.org](http://www.scoreindia.org)

Enjoy this edition of the magazine and share your feedback with us at [team@reputationtoday.in](mailto:team@reputationtoday.in).

# 30 TOP CORPORATE COMMUNICATION TEAMS



There are over a thousand companies in India that have a communications leader. This is a back-of-the-envelope estimate. Even if the Top 25 firms had an average of 40 clients, we would reach a four-digit figure. These companies include listed companies, private limited companies and multinational companies. There are at least 300 companies that have a communications team, which means two or more people managing this function on their own or with the help of a PR firm. Around a dozen teams have gained prominence in the last couple of years for the great work they do, the amazing campaigns they run, the sheer number of awards they win and the magnitude of the mandate they have. It was time to recognise these teams and we chose to zero in on 30 of these and make this an annual list. In addition to recognition, this list will also help achieve the following objectives –

- a) Appreciate great teams who are working to build brands using the power of Public Relations
- b) Put the spotlight on men and women who work behind the scenes so that more and more companies hire communication teams
- c) Offer inspiration to teams that did not make it to the list this year

## How was the list arrived at?

We invited nominations from teams on social media and on our portal in the month of April. Over 50 teams

submitted information that was collected and sorted by the content team. Based on the data that the teams shared, they were scored on various parameters. Thereafter a four-member jury independently evaluated the Top 30 teams and gave a score out of 10 each. The total was then tabulated to arrive at the ranking of the Top 30 teams. There were several teams that tied at similar scores.

We thank the jury that consisted of senior corporate communication and marketing professionals **Farheen Akhtar, Moushumi Dutt, K S Narahari** and **Lloyd Mathias**.

Our gratitude to Kaizzen Communications and its leader **Vineet Handa** for supporting research on this list by a generous grant.

## What we looked for in the teams?

Size did not matter as long as it was a team, which meant two or more members. We looked for the following while evaluating the teams:

- Award-winning work in the previous year and campaigns that stood-out
- Reporting structure of the Team Lead
- Budgets that the team had, to carry out its campaigns
- Different aspects the team managed, other than media relations (CSR / digital / internal communications)
- General perception of the organisation

Only teams that submitted a nomination by filling out the questionnaire were considered. So, there could be teams that deserve to be there but did not feature only because they did not participate. There is always the next year.

## What's next?

In addition to the honour of being listed and celebrated on social media, teams that feature here may get rewarded by the management of their respective companies. Teams may look forward to two other key initiatives in the year, including **40 under Forty** and the **Fulcrum Awards**. We will also run a series of articles contributed by members of the 30 Top Teams to offer them visibility on our portal.

To those who made the cut, our heartiest congratulations. To those who did not, there's always a next time.

**To view the list for 2018**, visit: [bit.ly/RT30TCCT2018](http://bit.ly/RT30TCCT2018)

**To view the list for 2017**, visit: [bit.ly/RT30TCCT2017](http://bit.ly/RT30TCCT2017)

## 2018 Stats:

**15** Companies featuring for the first time in 2018

**15** Companies that featured in 2017 and 2018





Top Corporate Communication Teams

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## THE 2018 LIST



← Same as 2017   ↑ Up from 2017   ↓ Down from 2017   ● New entries in 2018



**Vishal Wanchoo**, President and CEO, GE South Asia



**Arun Sudhaman** (The Holmes Report) in conversation with **Vishal Wanchoo** (GE South Asia)



(L - R) **Jaideep Gokhale** (Tetra Pak), **Paroma Roy Chowdhury** (SoftBank), **Ishteyque Amjad** (Coca Cola India), **Ajay Davessar** (HCL Technologies), **Shefali Sapra** (Danone India) and panel moderator **Arun Sudhaman** (The Holmes Report)



**Dilip Yadav**, Founding Partner, First Partners



(L - R) **Shrutidhar Paliwal** (Aptech), **Sarita Bahl** (Bayer), panel moderator **Pranjal Sharma** (Author & Journalist), **Arun Arora** (Cairn India), **Jyotsna Ghoshal** (MSD India), **Senjam Raj Sekhar** (Flipkart)



**Vijay Menon**, Author, Innovation Stories from India Inc



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# INFLUENCE NOW COMMUNICATION CONCLAVE REPLAY



**Vivek Gambhir**, MD and CEO, Godrej Consumer Products Ltd talks about influencing by leading from the front



**Dr Radhakrishnan Pillai**, Chief Mentor, Chanakya Aanvikshiki discusses what we can learn about influence from Chanakya



**Tanvi Bhatt**, Entrepreneur and Personal Brand Strategist talks about building an iconic personal brand



**Chandramouli Venkatesan**, Author, Catalyst shares the ultimate strategies on how to be influential



**Yangchen Yonzon**, Managing Director, Meltwater India shares tips about measuring influence



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Godrej and Reputation Today present Influence Now Communication Conclave powered by Viacom18 and Adfactors PR - Thank you Partners



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*There hasn't been a year yet when I haven't been inspired by something I heard here. Some of those insights have contributed profoundly to the evolution and success of our agency and our business*

*M Booth chief executive Dale Bornstein*

**Valid until October 1, 2018**





## COVER STORY

# LEAGUE OF LEGENDS

Those who earned their badge of honour.

Reputation Today traces the early beginnings of the PR business and hones in on the pioneers of the business in India: **M L Kaul**, Founder, Director, MelCole PR; **Sunil Gautam**, Ex-Chairman and Founder, Hanmer MSL & currently Co-Founder Pitchfork Partners; **Roger Pereira**, Founder, Roger Pereira Communications Pvt Ltd and currently Director, Turning Point Brand Consulting, Pereira Communications and India Partner of Chartwell Partners, UK; **Shiv Reddy**, CEO of Corporate Voice; **Sunil Agarwal**, Founder, 20:20 Media and **Rajiv Desai**, Chairman and CEO, Comma Consulting.

What does it take to make a legend? An all-consuming passion? A brilliant idea or dream? A great team's support? Perhaps, it is all of those things put together. But most importantly, what it takes, is belief. A belief that makes you fight for the chosen purpose. It is really amazing how many large companies have such humble stories of starting up with nothing more than a founder's dream.

We capture messages and insights of some founders in the PR business, who definitely qualify to be legends of our times, as they share their journey and the secrets of their success stories. Undoubtedly, it's a proud roster of respected leaders, whose work has strengthened the public relations practice in our country.

The great Irish writer and poet, Oscar Wilde said that *"Some cause happiness wherever they go; others whenever they go."* Our early founders are people who spread their influence on others, wherever they went, under any circumstances.

Read the stories of these pioneers, who not only made a mark for themselves, but created history and they continue to inspire us even today!

### The early beginnings: Understanding the reason for starting PR firms

The inspiration that drove these success stories are many. M L Kaul, founder of MelCole PR recalls that he was heading the PR division of a major Indian public sector and realised that much of what he was doing was probably the first of its kind in India. In those days PR in corporate parlance was passed off as liaison work and did not enjoy the credibility it does today.

Sometimes your calling in life can hit you by a twist of fate. Like it did for Roger Pereira, Chairman & MD of the firm he created - Roger Pereira Communications Pvt Ltd. It was by "pure accident", he said. Starting his career in advertising, he was appointed the CEO of the ad agency he had joined, at age 32. Probably, the youngest at the time. "My 25 years in advertising were a dream

run. I enjoyed every minute of it. I had a wonderful team – we were a family", he recalls. They did some path-breaking work that picked up awards across the country and from South & Southeast Asia. But during



*"It became a sort of mission for me to establish the importance of PR. That said, public sector companies had a more evolved sense of the importance since they were answerable to Government and Parliament. But the private sector was way behind the curve. The idea stayed with me until I sought voluntary retirement to set up India's first independent PR firm."*

M L Kaul, Founder MelCole PR



his last four years, he was suddenly confronted with unfortunate challenges that made it impossible for him to continue (if he wished to keep his value-system intact). Finally, he decided to quit. He was relieved after almost a year, but there were a series of conditions imposed - one of them being that he did not continue in advertising! As the story goes, he took that sportingly. Several offers poured in from International Development Agencies, which he started accepting. At first, it was fun working with international teams, but he soon got bored. "I was spending 85% of my time writing reports that no one read!" he felt.

Opportunity struck when he was invited for coffee by the legendary JRD Tata, in Mumbai. It was in connection with a 'Status of Women' TV Serial that he was planning. "He immediately recalled the ads I helped create for Air India whilst I was at JWT and for Centaur Hotel whilst I was at Shilpi!" he exclaimed. While the business icon was surprised he had moved away from advertising, as Pereira shared his "sob story", it was he who suggested Public Relations! He immediately recalled the faith the late Mrs Gandhi had in PR during the 1965 war and during the National Food Crisis that followed. In fact, she invited the erstwhile PR guru - Prasanta Sanyal, all the way from Kolkata, to mentor him during his volunteering stint with the I & B Ministry in New Delhi!

For Sunil Gautam, who calls himself a "serial entrepreneur and strategic communications veteran" - the connect with PR existed from the beginning. The first consultancy, which he co-founded in 1985 was Clea Advertising, and then he set up Clea PR in 1995. Hanmer & Partners (full service firm including PR) was founded in 1999, and then Pitchfork Partners (Strategy Consulting with PR being a part of it) in 2015 and then the acquisition and rebranding of a PR firm, Archer Frères Communications, which is now part of the Pitchfork family. Presenting the reasons behind his moves, he stated that all the firms he had founded/co-founded, were launched



*"With mentorship from the best and the backing of the doyen, I decided to take the plunge. Don't forget, I had the backing of Mr. JRD Tata - and Tata Sons!"*

*Roger Pereira, Chairman & MD, Roger Pereira Communications*

at a specific time when the market was changing. The mid to late-90s was a time when the economy had just opened up and it was a whole new world for PR as a discipline. On the other hand, the reason for co-founding a Strategy firm several years later, was due to the changing need in the communications landscape, which involved moving from silos to a seamless approach and from commoditised services to strategic services.

Putting forth his story plain and simple, was Sunil Agarwal, founder, 20:20 Media. He shares that his job and management background helped in putting together an organisation in which PR professionals could create a business and they did an outstanding job of it. "I quit when I had no value to add apart from wanting to engrave my name on the door," summarises Sunil Agarwal. Now we can spot his cartoons in The Times of India (which he co-creates with Ajit Ninan), which are a telling comment on the evolving times today.

A pioneer in the communications profession, Rajiv Desai, Chairman



*"I don't consider myself to be a legend in PR. If 20:20 was successful it was because of Chetan Mahajan, Amrit Ahuja, Kiran Ray Chaudhury, Viju George and Ian Sequeira. They are PR professionals."*

*Sunil Agarwal, Founder 20:20 Media*

and CEO, Comma Consulting, established India's first Public Affairs consulting firm, IPAN, in December 1987 when he relocated to Delhi after having spent the best part of the 1970s and 1980s in the United States. In 2005, he set up Comma Consulting to address the emerging field of communications management. Another point to note is that in the 17 years that he steered IPAN, he played a key role in promoting many prominent brands.

Another early founder in Public Relations is Shiv Reddy, who was associated with Corporate Voice, which was set up in the mid-1980's as a PR advisory firm initially to engage internal audiences of business corporations before evolving into a full-service PR firm. "Cliched as it sounds, the audiences and constituencies to address now, honestly are widespread and universal." was his observation.

### Change is the only constant

The business of PR has grown and evolved with the times. It was interesting to get their take on the current scenario.

The business has evolved dramatically. From a sleepy, side-line activity it has assumed crucial importance and one that can make or break a company – was M L Kaul's observation. Initially, when he started, the progression was very slow, and they moved to associations that had issues with policy, to burgeoning sectors such as IT which had new found importance and success and thereafter, about a decade later, "PR is finally becoming an equal partner in the boardrooms in India", states M L Kaul.

"Well, skilled professionals are required, even more so than earlier. That's what I see from the super success of former colleagues," said Sunil Agarwal. "It all seems like a see-saw from where I see things. There are very few firms who have been able to break away and differentiate themselves," according to Sunil Gautam. The bulk of the PR business today is owned by global conglomerates who seek to enforce homogeneity, says Rajiv Desai, "PR is about news and homogeneity is the antithesis of news. We can only hope that some of the sharp independent firms making waves today will survive and thrive."

Every coin has a reverse side. That's what Roger Pereira pointed out. Unfortunately, it's too tactical, he said. And this is simply because creative people choose advertising over PR -- just like it was when he entered the business in 1987, which was what "disillusioned the legendary JRD Tata".

### The approach they took to exit

Some founders had to take the route of selling out. Pereira was nearing 70 and had dreams that he had been nurturing for several years. "Dreams for my city, my community, my country. My partners had other ideas. There was a lot of heartburn", he admitted. He had built a firm which had the most enviable roster of clients. There were, as they say, irreconcilable differences. So, they decided to part, and he sold out.

Hanmer & Partners was amongst the



*"With the current plethora of media and the ubiquitous internet-enabled social media, the profession is now multi-fanged, and increasingly used to deceive. That is how PR is different now. That said, good honest PR will always be valuable."*

Shiv Reddy, CEO, Corporate Voice



*"I hope the future of Indian PR bright! Frankly, we have a long way to go. Ironically, we have all been saying this for over two decades so I reckon it's up to the next generation to now really take the business forward. Having said this, I am an eternal optimist and so I am certain the Indian PR business will grow from strength to strength."*

Sunil Gautam, Ex-Chairman and Founder, Hanmer MSL & currently Co-Founder Pitchfork Partners

first group of PR firms to be acquired in India, observed Sunil Gautam. At the time, they believed that it was important to have a long-term approach to the business and had great chemistry with MSL (Publicis Groupe) and had been their affiliates for several years. "By 2007, Hanmer & Partners had reached a significant size and we needed to ensure long term security for our staff, irrespective of whether I was there or not! And to ensure this permanency, the best approach was to have our firm acquired. The proof is in the pudding even now, several years later," he commented.

### Envisaging the future of Indian PR

Expressing hope, Sunil Gautam states that there is the ray of sunshine over the horizon.

"The future of Indian PR will be phenomenal, with the advent of digital communications," Roger Pereira expressed. But, he had a doubt - do our practitioners have the creativity and vision to exploit it? Digital communications today is so much like what advertising was 75 years ago – so uncreative! And that's where the opportunity is! Both, for

### Advertising and PR!

The business is indeed tracking huge growth patterns. This is what M L Kaul had in mind, when he said, "More and better, is how I see this business growing". More new consultancies will come up, multinationals will want an imprint in India, "professionalisation and specialisation" will increase, competitive strategies and state-of-the-art technology will determine who thrives and who dissipates.

But looking through the tunnel vision, M L Kaul expressed a word of caution, "Most importantly, I expect a shake-out that will happen under the current stressed economy here in India and, as it always does, the stronger ones will survive and the rest will either merge or exit". What PR in India needs, is a standardisation of services and a basic un-breachable levy system so that there is no undercutting. PR cannot be brought under the category of a commodity and so the trend of picking up consultancies that charge lower is a self-destructive trend. Hopefully, the firms will themselves sort this out by



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*"PR is an evolving profession; it is like the pulse of the nation, which is constantly changing. The business needs to reflect that. For that you need truly disruptive, path-breaking leadership - a fountainhead of ideas and ideals; sensitive to changes in the needs of clients, media and employees."*

**Rajiv Desai**, Chairman and CEO,  
Comma Consulting

establishing best practices benchmarks for the business.

The world loves PR. That's what Sunil Agarwal had to say on the future of PR - "As an observer of online behaviour, it appears like every individual loves PR and is his/her own PR manager! Career PR professionals should turn that into a business. Some with individuals and others with small, medium, large organisations".

### Sharing client stories

Sharing some interesting client stories was M L Kaul who recalls two major incidents - One is the ONGC Bombay High blowout, which in many ways was a cardinal factor in him starting out on his own. It was a major public disaster, but they were able to not only defend themselves, but also convert the incident to an illustration of resilience of the company. The result was that the oil major was congratulated by the Government on its handling of the business, he explains.

The other was more an incidence of securing for the then-nascent IT



industry its rightful place as a stand-alone sector, with special needs and future potential. We were able to work with the IT association to press for recognition of the sector, within the government. The result was that IT boomed after the exemptions offered to it during the formative years, says M L Kaul.

Recalling a case about the Cement Marketing Association led by the late J R Birla and Ramesh Verma, Roger Pereira shares - The Union Budget had proposed a crippling increase in duties on the cement industry. Interestingly, I used newspaper advertising to present our case! Mr Birla did question: "You are using advertising for what you advised is essentially a PR issue? Anyway, you are the expert!" I had no choice because of the shortage of time. The principal point is that we were successful! According to me, it's never a case of advertising versus PR. The advantage of PR is that it can employ any tool of communication so long as it is the most cost efficient and successful!

Remembering his past, Sunil Gautam states, what's been really interesting is how many of the smaller companies I started working with 30+ years ago, have gone onto conquer the world and in some cases, emerge as best-in-class companies in their respective spaces.

There is nothing better than seeing your clients' success and even if a very small part of it is because of the work I did for them over the years, I believe I have done my job! Rajiv Desai recalls a story about how hard it was in 1980s India to explain the concept of PR consulting. In one exchange with a public-sector executive he cited examples from his work in the US. Just when I thought I may have succeeded in getting through to him, he nodded as if to signal an end to the meeting and asked: "So of which company you want to be PRO?"

These inspiring stories show how passion and purpose are keys to success. The legacies that these legends pass surely reveal - they had an idea, they believed in it and most importantly, they started!

These are the legends who created companies that hundreds of professionals work at and we can call them Legends 1.0.

The next set of legends emerged in the mid to late 90s and they are still at the helm of the firms they founded though 10 out of 12 of them have sold out, they continue leading from the front. They are indeed in the league and we acknowledge them as stalwarts who made an impression on staff and clients alike.



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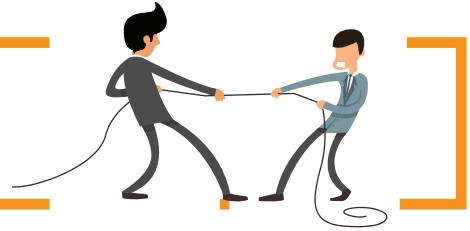


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# IN THE LEAGUE



**Rajesh Chaturvedi**, Chairman and **Madan Bahal**, Managing Director founded Adfactors PR in 1997. Today, it is India's largest PR firm, serving over 300 retained clients across 40 cities in India. Together they lead the firm to maintain their track-record of successfully delivering on complex and challenging PR briefs, winning multiple accolades and customising solutions for their clients based on robust problem definition.

**Prema Sagar**, Vice Chair, Burson-Marsteller, Asia Pacific & Principal/Founder, Genesis Burson-Marsteller founded Genesis PR in November 1992 when the profession was at a nascent stage. Since then, the company has mirrored the journey of India's public relations and public affairs landscape. Today, Genesis Burson-Marsteller (after the acquisition in 2005), is a full-service integrated communications firm, delivering innovative and integrated solutions across multiple geographies and practices.



In October 1992, two veterans of business journalism in India, **Dilip Cherian**, Editor of Business India, and later co-founder of the Observer of Business and Politics and **Bobby Kewalramani**, who was part of the top management of leading print media outlets like - The Times of India, The Sunday Mail and the Observer, entered India's nascent Public Relation business. Dilip Cherian along with Bobby Kewalramani, co-founded Perfect Relations. It has now been acquired by Dentsu Aegis Network.

**Bela Rajan**, Founder Director and **N S Rajan**, Global Partner and Managing Director founded Sampark PR in 1994. Sampark PR, was one of the leading PR networks in India, and after it was acquired by Ketchum, it evolved into Ketchum Sampark Public Relations providing greater inroads into India for Ketchum's roster of international client businesses and global brands. This power couple is involved with various philanthropic activities.



**Nikhil Khanna**, Founder and Executive Chairman started Avian Media in 2004 with one client and was joined by **Nitin Mantri**, Group Chief Executive Officer and Business Partner in 2006. While Avian Media started small in a tiny apartment in Delhi, their aspirations were skybound. They were focused on building the right kind of firm, that was strong on growth and high on values - knowledgeable, ethical, committed and passionate. After WE Communications acquired a majority stake in Avian Media earlier this year, it was rebranded as Avian WE.

**Rishi Seth** and **Zach James** are Co-founders and Partners of Six Degrees, which they founded in 2009 and aims to be the most respected PR consultancy in the country and the partner of choice to organisations who believe in the power of public relations. In 2015 Cohn & Wolfe, acquired a majority stake in Six Degrees and its content and integrated marketing subsidiary Alphabet Consulting. The new firm, Cohn & Wolfe Six Degrees, delivers integrated marketing solutions to regional companies, as well as multinational clients looking to expand in India.



**Archana Jain** is the Founder and MD of PR Pundit, which was founded in the year 1998. Today, PR Pundit is a full-service dedicated public relations company offering an exhaustive range of services to meet strategic communication needs in a challenging operating environment. Practicing PR since 1990, Archana Jain continues to steer the company to offer a value proposition of efficiency, creativity and innovation.



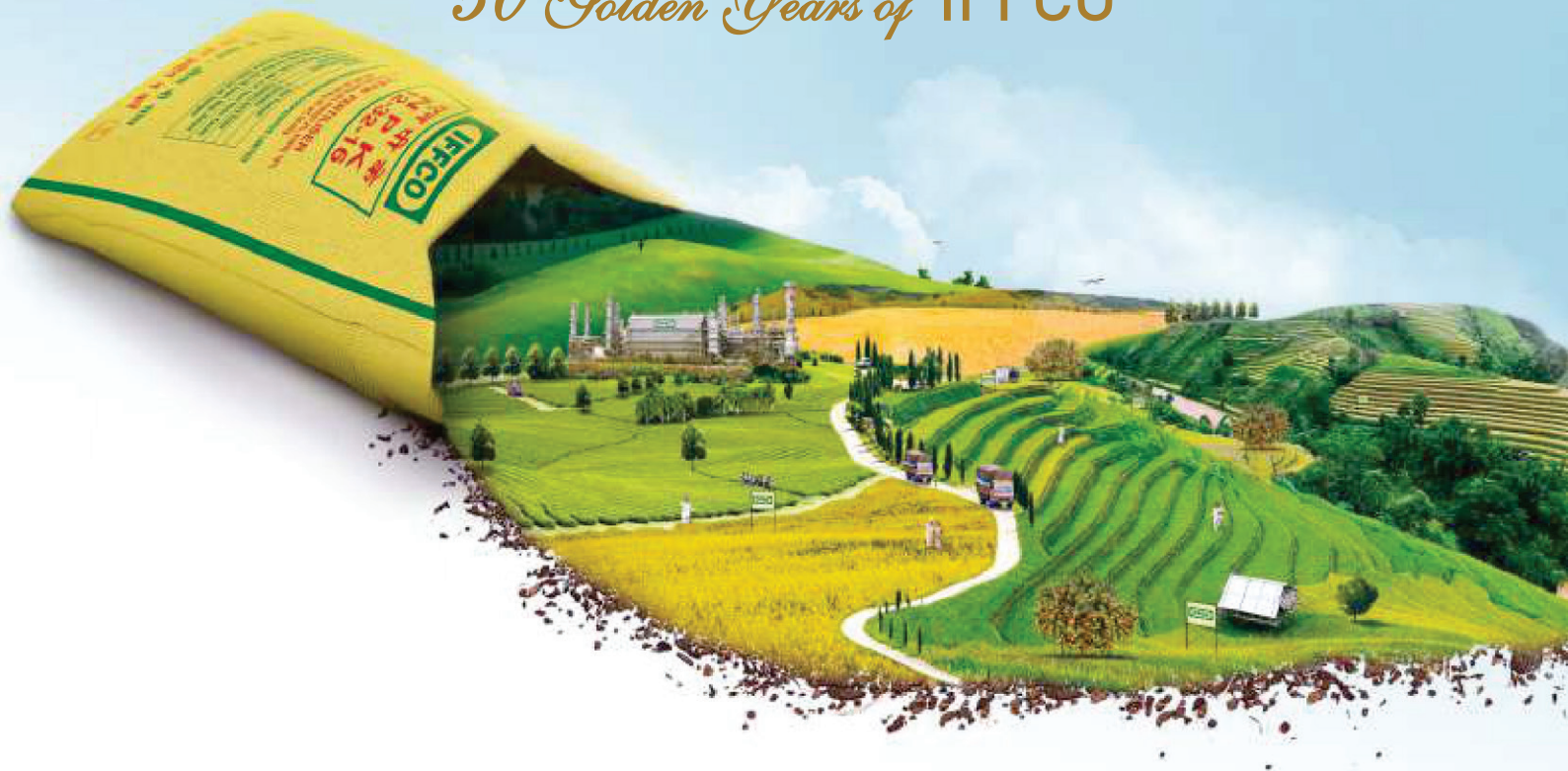


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# GURU SPEAK

*Empathy, consistency, leadership and ethics are some of the qualities that make a legend.*

**K S Narahari**, Veteran Corporate Communications Executive



*K S Narahari began his career in 1979 and has spent considerable time in the IT sector, where he had a presence in Corporate Communications at Wipro, IBM, Dell and Texas Instruments and managed many global initiatives. He represented Wipro GE Medical Systems on the GE Medical Systems Asia Communications Board. He was named the PRCI "PR Person of the Peninsula" for 1994-95 and was also inducted into their "Hall of Fame" in 2011 for his significant contribution. Currently he is Chairman of the Marketing & Communications Forum of National Association of Software & Services Companies (NASSCOM) in Karnataka and teaches Corporate Communications at Symbiosis School of Media & Communication and Mount Carmel College in Bengaluru.*

**RT: You received the Fulcrum Lifetime Achievement award in 2017. What was running through your mind when your name was announced?**

KSN: The Fulcrum Lifetime Achievement Award is the biggest that I have received in my career. That I was selected by a high-level jury comprising of senior peers from the business is very satisfying. When the anchor began reading the citation, I started guessing about who would fit the bill. But, as she continued reading, I began to wonder if it was me! The career path of the award winner and that of mine seemed so similar...that was the moment when I said to myself, "How I wish she'll call out my name!" When she did so, I was simply ecstatic. I just could not believe what I heard. It took a long time for reality to sink in.

**RT: How did you get into Public Relations?**

KSN: I had a flair for writing from my school days. I would contribute

articles for my school newsletter. In college, I started writing letters to the editor of Deccan Herald and then 'graduated' to contributing 'middles' (short stories) on interesting experiences in the mining town of Kolar Gold Fields, where I grew up. This background got me a job as Copywriter in the pharma company - Smith, Kline & French (SK&F) in 1979. Apart from writing copy for their medical products and producing their inhouse journal, I also coordinated visits of medical and pharma students and the company's participation in conferences and seminars. This was, in a way, my initiation into Public Relations. But, my career as a PR professional really took off in 1986 when I joined HMT as their PR & Sales Promotion Officer in the Watches Division where I handled advertising, media relations and product launches. From 1992 onwards, when I joined Wipro, I made PR my core competency and never deviated from the profession.

**RT: As a seasoned corporate communications professional with over 36 years of experience in the field of communication, how would you describe your journey?**

KSN: It's been a memorable journey. Looking back, I really feel I had a fruitful and satisfying career. I was lucky to belong to a working generation that experienced how business was conducted in the country before 1991 and how things changed dramatically after liberalisation, particularly with the advent of MNCs in the technology sector. I got the unique opportunity to launch and lead the corporate communication function at Wipro and IBM. I got the chance to mentor bright young people, many of whom are heading the communications' function in leading companies today. I got to learn from close quarters how successful leaders managed their business and people. As I gained experience, I realised the importance of hard work, ethics,



credibility and consistency to succeed in one's profession. All of these helped me immensely when I progressed in my career and held leadership positions in Dell and Texas Instruments later on.

**RT: As Chairman of the 'Marketing and Communications Forum' of NASSCOM in Karnataka today, what is the contribution that you are making?**

KSN: Being the Chairman of this Forum helps me to keep in touch with the trends and developments in the technology industry. I get the opportunity to work with bright young PR and marketing communications professionals from the IT industry in Karnataka. We get to meet and exchange thoughts and ideas on a formal basis. The Forum gives members an opportunity to network with one another. With the help of a dedicated team, we have organised lectures, seminars and panel discussions involving industry leaders as well as our members. The Forum provides avenues to share and introduce best practices in our respective organisations. More importantly, it provides visibility to the PR and marketing functions to senior leaders in the business.

**RT: What is that special quality that helps identify a legend in business?**

KSN: In my view, a legend is one who has achieved proven success in his/her profession and is looked up to with respect and admiration by peers and society. Empathy, consistency, leadership and ethics are some of the qualities that make a legend. Above all, he/she should be a good human being and carry people along with them.

**RT: Can you share one or two legendary stories from your life as a PR professional?**

KSN: That's a difficult question to answer. I can recall the way we managed the workers strike at Wipro's Fluid Power division from a

communication perspective in the early 1990s. We proactively worked with the media to generate reports that objectively portrayed the union and management positions in their endeavour to resolve the differences. This helped position Wipro as a responsible organisation in the minds of the public and facilitated meaningful discussions between the management and the employees.

Another instance that comes to mind is the launch in the 1980s of "Fieldman", a monthly journal exclusively for SK&F's 500-strong medical representatives spread across India. Stories on their varied experiences with doctors and chemists, working in remote areas, traveling on rugged and dusty roads, negotiating steep mountainous slopes on their motorbikes, and highlighting their challenges and successes helped motivate them and bond with one another. I remember 'following' medical representative Adil Govadia in the journal when he undertook the unique journey from India to the US on a bicycle to witness the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics through a column titled "Globiking with Govadia".

Of course, many remember even today the installation of a huge IBM signage on the building that Wipro had rented on MG Road in Bengaluru after I moved from Wipro to IBM and the introduction of cheer leaders for the first time in India to promote IBM's education program at an India-Pakistan limited overs cricket match in Chennai in the 1990s.

**RT: What would you say were your three main achievements in the span of your career?**

KSN: 1. Initiating the Corporate Communications function and setting up the teams at Wipro and IBM in the 1990s.  
2. Mentoring young people and helping them to emerge as future leaders in the profession.

3. Enhancing the brand image of the companies I worked for and positioning senior executives as thought leaders.

**RT: You also teach corporate communications. How do you find the new generation of communications professionals who are entering the PR business today?**

KSN: Teaching communication students is a very satisfying and fulfilling experience, providing me an opportunity to give back something to my profession. I find the new generation of professionals coming out of communication schools extremely focused and clear about their future career. Thanks to technology and social media, they know exactly what they want to study and how to set up career milestones. They have the passion to acquire knowledge and the aggression to succeed in a highly competitive environment. They are highly confident and do not hesitate to question the status quo. The communications business can look forward to exciting days ahead!



# A TRIBUTE TO THE LEGEND **IRFAN KHAN**



*The late Mr Irfan Khan was conferred the Fulcrum Lifetime Achievement Award in 2016. He started his career in 1957 as a reporter and went on to work with the Press Trust of India, Hindustan Times, Sunday Times London and The Indian Express, among others. In 1975, he moved to Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) as a communications manager. He later became the vice-president, corporate communications, at HUL and retired from the firm in 2000. Subsequently, Mr Khan joined the management committee of Coca Cola as the vice-president of corporate affairs. He left Coca Cola in 2003. Later, he became the chairman of Mumbai-based firm Sampark Public Relations.*

## **An Ace Professional**

A communicator's core responsibility is to create, convey and sustain the narrative which makes the organisation reputable. Mr. Khan did it for Hindustan Lever. This was when MNCs in India were non-grata. In 1974, the government legislated that required MNCs to reduce their stake to 40% or leave India.

While many did, Unilever demurred. Ever since 1931, it was wedded to India, in its practices and principles. On joining HLL in 1975, it was Mr. Khan who shaped and gave voice to that narrative through the media and varied influencers. It eased HLL leadership's task to convince the government to eventually allow Unilever in 1982 to keep an equity of 51% in HLL.

A decade later in 1991, on being selected by HLL, I was breaking the news to an extended family gathering. An elderly relation, I vividly remember, reacted, "Khoob bhalo, sarkari company! (Very good choice. A government company after all)." I laughed off that reaction. But, once into the organisation, I realised, it symbolically reflected Mr. Khan's work. What Unilever's avowed objective was and the fact that it had completely Indianised itself - was barely known. It was Mr. Khan, who surfaced the till then unknown aspects to construct that narrative. Ever since, HLL, now Hindustan Unilever, has lived by it. When one's

idea gets perpetuated, one becomes a legend.

## **A Fair Boss**

I was just about a month old in the company, and made a faux pas, not being conversant with the inter-personal workings of a structured organisation, compared to that of the world of journalism that one came from. Mr. Khan was livid and told me to leave the project in Bombay and get back to my base, Calcutta, that evening itself. I somehow calmed him. Eventually the project ended as scheduled, and I went back.

A few days later, I received an envelope from Mr. Khan. It contained the outcome of the project and a brief note from him: "I told the chairman about your sterling contribution and have recommended your next promotion."

## **A Compassionate Man**

Mr. Khan walked into my office one morning, and said, "Jaante ho kya hua." He had just come back from a visit to the Columbia Journalism School. The Dean had told him that a talented young journalist from Bombay had got admission but did not have funding. Mr. Khan had decided that he would go and meet the company's owner. The previous evening, he had, and had arranged full funding from the owner. I remember asking him what if he had

been dismissed to which he promptly replied, "At least I would have tried."

## **An Ever-concerned Guide**

On October 24, 2016, the organisation I work for asked me to handle a situation, which later that night acquired some proportion. The next morning Mr. Khan called. His voice was faint, and he said: "I know what you are going through. I just wanted to call you." I said: "I am deploying all that I have learnt with you, sir." He expressed his trust and said, "You will do it."

Mr. Khan passed away on January 22, 2017. To me, he is irreplaceable – a lifetime's life coach.



*"To me, he is irreplaceable – a lifetime's life coach."*

## **Debasis Ray**

Head - Public Affairs & Spokesperson,  
Tata Trusts



# ONLINE OFFLINE



**Shalini Singh**  
Founder, Galvanise PR

## An open letter to those keen to enter the Communications Business

Welcome to an exciting journey of being part of the Communications' Business. It's a fun roller coaster ride. I write this open letter to address a few myths which I have personally come across while interacting with young professionals aiming to enter the communications business.

To read the complete article, please visit:

[bit.ly/OnlineOfflineShaliniSingh](http://bit.ly/OnlineOfflineShaliniSingh)



**Raghavendra Rao**  
Regional Head - South, Media Mantra

## Attributes for becoming a legendary Public Relations professional

Having been around the PR, Corporate Communications business for a while, I believe I have a good understanding of the personal characteristics that are commonly found in a successful PR professional. Here are some traits that will help a PR professional stand out and shine bright.

To read the complete article, please visit:

[bit.ly/OnlineOfflineRaghavendraRao](http://bit.ly/OnlineOfflineRaghavendraRao)

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# MEDIA SPEAK

*In India, it seems that the biggest challenge remains the under-valuation of PR.*

**Arun Sudhaman**, CEO and Editor-in-Chief, The Holmes Report



*Arun Sudhaman's rich experience spans across his roles as journalist and digital content specialist, analysing media, marketing and communications industries; it also involved coverage and analysis of reputation and leadership issues in countries across the world - US and UK, Russia, China, India and South Africa.*

*In his current role, Arun oversees the Holmes Report's global content offering, including its analysis and insight into reputation, public relations and communications trends and issues. Effectively, he led a comprehensive relaunch of the title's content platform and also implemented expansion of the Holmes Report's coverage into Asia-Pacific and other emerging markets. Significantly, he has helped steer the company's international events programme, particularly the Global Public Relations Summit.*

*Prior to joining the Holmes Report, Arun spent more than seven years with Haymarket Media in Hong Kong, Singapore and London. In 2015, Arun was inducted into the ICCO Hall of Fame.*

**RT: What are some significant trends in the Public Relations business that you can spot this year?**

AS: The more significant trends include the integration of earned and paid media; the rise of purpose as a differentiator for corporate reputation management; and the pressure on communications budgets.

**RT: How are PR firms tackling the talent crisis globally?**

AS: Most are not. Those that are having success are investing in workplace culture, diversity and inclusion. They are also hiring from beyond the PR pool rather than cannibalising competitors. And they are developing robust career paths for people who may not end up

managing a P & L — but who bring valuable specialist skills to the equation.

**RT: What are critical tools in building brand reputation today?**

AS: Your ears, so that you listen. And your brain, so that you understand what people are saying.

**RT: Who, according to you, is the biggest legend in the PR business worldwide?**

AS: It's hard to look beyond Harold Burson. For many years, he has embodied the global PR business, and he played a pivotal role in the development of the global PR consultancy model. But it's equally hard to name just one person and overlook the accomplishments of

people such as Al Golin, the Edelman family, Margery Kraus, Lord Chadlington, Oscar Zhao and Alan Parker.

**RT: Name two PR legends from India.**

AS: Prema Sagar has played a pioneering role in the development of India's PR business, and it is notable how many current leaders emerged from Genesis. Meanwhile, Madan Bahal has built the country's biggest consultancy, remaining true to his independent, homegrown model and aspiring to a level of global relevance.

**RT: You have played a pivotal role expanding the Holmes Report's coverage into Asia-Pacific and other**



**emerging markets. How has the experience been?**

AS: Tiring. And a lot of fun. When I joined the Holmes Report it was effectively two people and we are now eight across North America, EMEA and Asia-Pacific. It's still a small (and very agile) team, but we will operate events in eight markets across the world this year, including the US, Europe, Dubai, South Africa, Singapore, China, Brazil and, of course, India. So that's a tribute to the remarkable work of the team we have at the Holmes Report. Underpinning all this expansion is our passion for quality content — we remain journalist-owned and journalist-led, and those principles are never compromised.

**RT: What are the challenges that the PR business faces today – both globally and in India?**

AS: Globally, the biggest challenge is

that a business focused on media relations is now feeling the squeeze from the decline in media. And while public relations as a discipline becomes ever more important, the business is challenged to adapt to a new reality that requires an understanding of influence and engagement across the full spectrum of relationships. While the industry is being called on to invest and develop skills in this regard, they are facing increasing competition from advertising agencies, digital firms, management consultancies and technology platforms — all of whom are eyeing the same area and, in some cases, are better able to capitalise on the opportunity. In India, it seems that the biggest challenge remains the under-valuation of PR. Until companies start investing serious sums in reputation management, the PR business will always be viewed as a tactical afterthought.

**RT: What aspects of storytelling are important for a PR professional to bear in mind while building a campaign?**

AS: At a basic level, the truth. Credibility is non-negotiable. Beyond that, I'd argue that the range of platforms and tools available requires PR professionals to really understand how stories live and breathe in today's media environment.



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**RepTodayMag**

# DEBATE



*Can the PR business in India boast of legendary professionals? Reputation Today presents some thought-provoking perspectives here, from two professionals in the business.*

## **There are good or bad reputation managers, but not legendary in definition.**

The definition of a Legend is a person who is extremely famous or notorious in any field. There are many self-proclaimed reputation gurus in the Indian PR business. Are they Legends? There are good or bad reputation managers, but none legendary in definition.

The term Public Relation is often loosely used and badly abused. This perception has come about due to its own doing in order to seek quick-fix solutions to enhance reputation.

I am very clear that the role of a Reputation Manager stems from a very critical element of his love for the brand and its stakeholders. The manager's passion to make a positive impact on perceptions needs to be 24x7. Communications has evolved into a client-focused, creativity-led and sniper-sharp science that only a few in the business understand and practice. PR is still largely media-centric & about generating col/cm for the client.

Another point which I always debate with communication heads is the experience of understanding consumers. It is vital that an evolved PR practitioner has a significant marketing/brand management experience before diving into PR and Corporate Communication. There is a huge difference between a successful PR person and a famous PR person. For want of being politically correct, I will not cite example of famous PR people who may not be successful, ideation-led brand builders.

PR has to be daringly honest, open to scrutiny at all times, understanding the gaps in perception and relationships that are based on credibility.

If you have consistently achieved the love and respect of all your stakeholders across complex business in a VUCA world, then you could perhaps be a legend. As our aspiring young nation grows, our younger PR professionals can strive to become legends.



**Paresh Chaudhry**, Group President - Corporate Brand Custodian, Adani Group

Paresh has over 30 years of experience in Marketing/Sales, Corporate Communications & Public Relations.

## **There are professionals who are legends in their own right.**

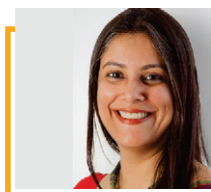
Organised Public Relations in India has been driven largely by first generation entrepreneurs who have, over a span of just 25 years or a bit more, built firms of repute and credibility. From the mid-eighties and early nineties, professionals like Roger Pereira, Rajiv Desai, Prema Sagar, and a few others ventured into the space and together created a profession which I am very proud to be part of.

The fact that this was a business which was built ground up – attracting professionals from diverse sectors, no venture capital funding, backed by progressive corporate leaders who recognised the value that public relations brought to their judgement and decision making, and having to justify its existence with Big Brother Advertising (until a decade ago), is testament that the founding members of our business had attributes we routinely associate with corporate leaders and legendary leaders.

If legends are a “body of historical and unverified stories coming down from the past about a person, event or timeline”, then imagine the number of legendary stories our profession has to tell! Confidentiality, sensitivity of issues we work on, a profession that does exemplary work for institutions and corporates (but seldom from the forefront), and at times plain inertia are reasons why we don't hear these stories. And of course, the lament we've heard for years, “The Public Relations business doesn't do enough publicity for itself”!

So, yes. There are legendary stories that our business has to tell, and behind these stories are several unsung heroes.

Also, it is interesting to note that in times where most sectors are experiencing a downturn, our business is one that has shown resilience and has grown consistently, maturing gradually but surely to challenging traditional marketing strategies.



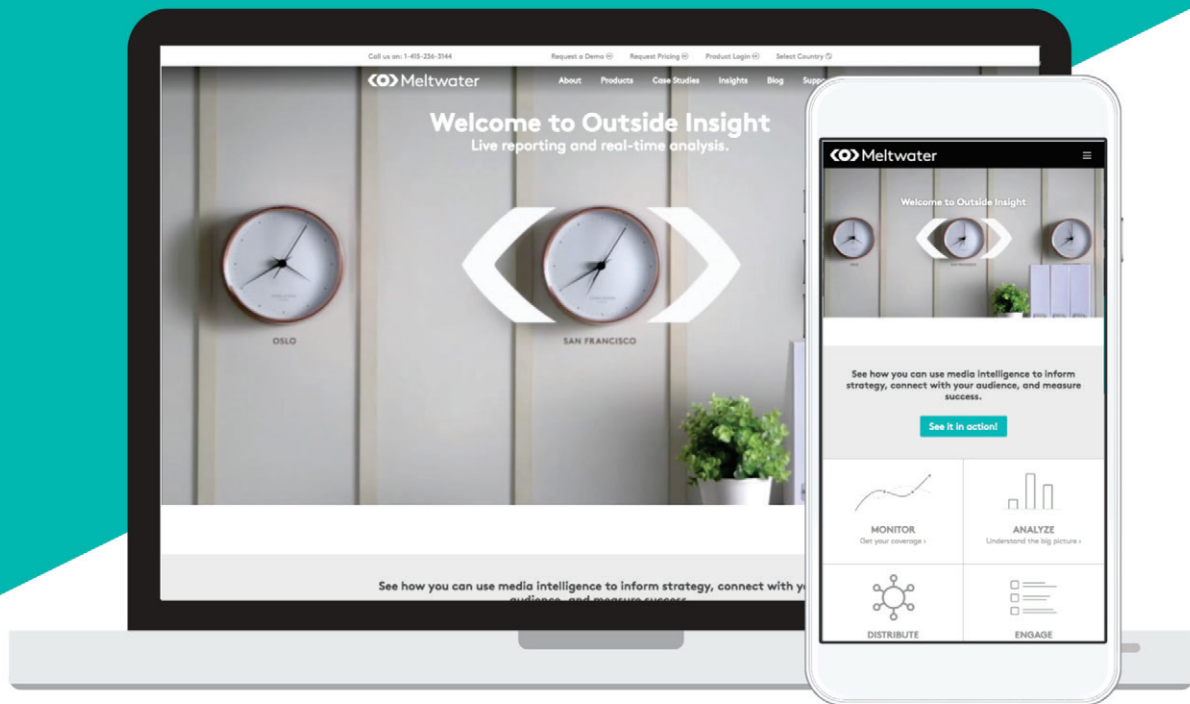
**Nandita Lakshmanan**, Founder & Chairperson, The PRactice

A seasoned PR professional, Nandita provides vision & direction to The PRactice, a firm she founded almost two decades ago.



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# COMMUNICATOR SPEAK

*In my mind legendary work is not just creative work. Legendary work is one that has the greatest impact on the business problem or need.*

**Ophira Bhatia**, Director, Corporate & Government Affairs, India & Southeast Asia, Mondelez International



*Ophira is responsible for the company's corporate reputation programme, internal communications, community initiatives, corporate PR, public affairs and issues management in India and nine Southeast Asia markets including Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong.*

*Backed by over 22 years of corporate affairs experience, including a stint of 15 years at Roger Pereira Communications, which later went on to become Edelman India, Ophira has consulted and partnered with a range of Indian and multinational companies across sectors and has been actively involved in work around corporate reputation management and planning, crisis management, corporate positioning, communication skills training, product launches, branding, market entry, financial communications, social engagement programs, and employee strategies.*

**RT: What are the areas that PR consultancies today need to improve upon to be prepared for the challenges of tomorrow?**

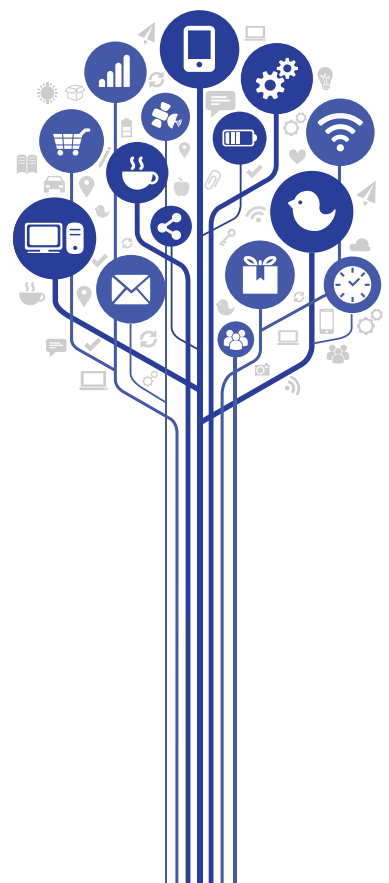
OB: Building and protecting reputation today is far more complex than it was a few decades ago. With social media, activists, evolving laws and regulations, fake news and more, companies are under intense scrutiny, always. In this environment, PR consultancies need to bring the "outside in" for companies – become the eyes and ears, so to speak, for their clients. This is especially critical for the online and digital space, where both personal and corporate reputations may be damaged in a matter of a few hours.

Reputation has a direct impact on business and is on the CEOs' agenda. Timely updates and market intelligence on what is likely to impact reputation is what will define a good consultancy in the future. To do this, PR professionals need to understand their client's business

and underlying dynamics, appreciate the key issues the company faces, understand key stakeholders, foresee regulation and trends and be able to provide counsel on how to mitigate risk.

**RT: Can you explain something you had said once - good values and good business go hand in hand?**

OB: Governance and Citizenship are the key pillars for a solid corporate reputation. And a good corporate reputation links directly to stakeholder support – from consumers who buy your product, to governments who give you the license to operate, to talent who are attracted to work for you. So, in today's transparent world corporations need to do good and do right ... and be seen as doing good and right. They need to demonstrate and live the right values – values supported by robust internal process to enhance compliance, integrity, quality, safety, CSR and sustainability. This provides





the basis of building greater belief, trust and connect between stakeholders and the company and ultimately leads to greater support from stakeholders.

**RT: How does your team create legendary work?**

OB: In my mind, legendary work is not just creative work. Legendary work is one that has the greatest impact on the business problem or need. And therefore, understanding the real issue and need, engaging with the right stakeholders internally and externally, deep research, stakeholder mapping, bringing in best practices and external case studies and creative brainstorming all lead to the best ideas and programmes. And sometimes, the most creative idea may not be the best solution – it's sometimes the simple interventions that have the greatest impact! As long as there has been a positive impact on the brief and we have managed to shift the needle – whether through a long-term programme or short-term initiatives, in my mind that is legendary work.

**RT: How important are influencers in planning communication outreach?**

OB: Reputation is all about stakeholder support and key influencers (whether online or offline) are one of the key pillars that we consider as we build outreach.

Influencers on social media today lead the charge on building conversations, leading agendas and are keenly considered as we plan any programme. This can be both, for the positive as well as negative impact they may have. Influencers in the physical world – government, regulators, key opinion leaders also drive how we roll out our messages and focus our plans.

**RT: Who, according to you, are two legends in the Indian PR business, and why?**

OB: To me, my first boss, mentor and coach for 16 years, Roger Pereira continues to be my symbol of solid communication practices, business partnering, strategic insights and someone who laid the foundation of this business three decades ago. “Mr P” as we called him at the firm, commanded the respect and admiration not only of his team but also of senior leaders in companies, as he had a special capability (way back in the 1990s and 2000s) to provide them communications solutions to business issues. At the consultancy back then, we called this Perception Management.

**RT: Where do you see corporate communication as a function five years from now?**

OB: The internal corporate communications function has already evolved significantly in the last ten years – we sit at the

management table today. Companies have realised the value of building solid reputations – it has a direct impact on the business. It impacts market valuation, talent attraction, purchase intent and license to operate. More of the CEO's time is now spent on championing reputation for their company. To keep up with this positive shift, talent needs to step up to the game and seek wider experiences, develop more strategic and business partnering capabilities, build deeper stakeholder connections and be well positioned to play the counsel and advisory role that we play today, and will be called upon to play more in the future.





# FLASHBACK FULCRUM AWARDS 2017

















# LOOKING GLASS

*Public Relations: It's time we acknowledge our  
Mad Men and Women*

**Aakriti Bhargava**, Co-Founder, BoringBrands



Even after decades of its existence, PR is still seen as the red-headed stepchild of marketing. For every great PR campaign, today, you have a marketing campaign that everyone's talking about. You can work 1,000 hours on a PR campaign, gain enormous talkability, and then see your work overlooked because a commercial did well. But unsurprisingly, countless studies suggest otherwise.

Who is not familiar with the famous award-winning series—*Mad Men*—that captivated viewers with the stories of employees working in the advertising agency of 1960s. Aired in 2007, the series took a peek inside an ad agency, its cut-throat business and glamorous lure.

But it's not the series that grabbed my attention, it was what followed soon. Multiple articles, suggestions, and listicles, guiding PR firms on what all they can learn from *Mad Men*. And that's where the problem lies...

A Nielsen study says that PR is almost 90% more effective than advertising and some reports conclude that editorial commentary (usually generated by your friendly, behind-the-scenes PR practitioner) carries far more weight than advertising.

Simply put, advertising can be great, but ultimately it is paid media, while public relations is earned media. But

ever after all this, why don't we talk about the legends in the business? Let's discover today -

## Finding PR Legends

I did a quick Google search on 'PR consultancy legends.' And, as expected, got nothing but some Google Ads suggesting 'Ten best PR consultancies in Delhi'. Then I Googled 'Advertising agency legends.' As expected, the first report was about Ogilvy and Mather's - David Ogilvy. Was I surprised? Not a bit. Was it because the article on 'PR legends' missed SEO-optimisation? Well, no.

Even after producing many greats in the business, including and definitely not limiting to Al Golin, Dilip Cherian, Rob Flaherty, Fred Cook, Walter Lippman, Edward Bernays, public relations and its people are not taken seriously as a function of business or as a profession.

But the fact is that PR is beyond press coverage, it's about creating stories, changing perspectives, bringing behavioural changes and of course controlling crises. And the above mentioned PR legends have proved it more than once.

Consider Al Golin, who's widely known for his vision that made McDonald's a success. The relationship started when Golin cold-called McDonald's founder Ray Kroc

in 1956 and eventually helped him grow the fledgling restaurant chain into one of the world's most admired brands. What started as a \$500 monthly retainer, turned out to be the longest-lasting client-consultancy relationship in PR, six decades later.

Golin's dedication led to McDonald's using its consumer-facing and corporate social media pages to memorialise Golin, who died early last year. Then there is Edward Bernays, known as the father of PR, the man behind making 'breakfast the most important meal of the day'.

## So what does it take to become a Legend?

Although 'never become the story' is one of the cardinal PR rules, work done by some of the PR legends across the globe have managed to grab some eyeballs for all the right reasons. And it's about time that we give it the status it truly deserves.

As for what does it take to become legends is concerned, anyone who can think outside the box, be a doer, cultivate a meaningful relationship and use technology to its advantage is a PR legend. We are actually heading into a future where all the PR professionals will be the new *Mad Men* and *Women*!



# ENGAGING STROKES

*Becoming a legend is all about a decision, a choice. A choice that not only helps you achieve your goals but also inspires generations to come.*

**Shree Lahiri**, Senior Editor, Reputation Today



Recently I came across a line - a player must have enough "monster power". Yes, players in all spheres - sports, education, health, politics and even professionals need to have or develop this "monster power". And, since we are focusing on legends here, without a doubt, they all possess large quantities of this monstrous power - positive power.

No one is born a leader or a legend. The lives of the legends show that in order to become a legend you need to find your purpose in life and then spend your whole life fighting for it ... like they did. People become legends when they do something extraordinary or when they create a storyline that inspires others.

What makes anyone a legend? Why are some people remembered for years after their death, by people who never actually met them? Interestingly, becoming a legend is all about a decision, a choice. A choice that not only helps you achieve your goals but also inspires generations to come. A decision that may not have been easy to take or may have led you down a path full of struggles only to eventually succeed and motivate thousands.

Here are some pointers which each

one of us can apply in our personal and professional life and begin our journey towards becoming legends of tomorrow.

## **Chase what you love**

Make sure what you choose to do is something you love doing, and then chase it. There should be no lack of interest. It's hard to inspire others when the passion is missing! Moreover, when you love what you do, you enjoy the experience and that leads you to success. Stay determined and passionate about what you are doing.

## **Stay focused - look ahead**

No matter what happens, a legendary leader continues to look forward, undeterred by any barriers or hardships along the way and never disillusioned by failure. So, continue to pursue the strategy that you have chalked out, and focus on the future rather than being sidetracked by challenges.

## **Work hard and be persistent**

Success does not happen overnight but it is the culmination of intense hard work. A good leader knows success is not just about coming up with a 'big' idea. Leadership requires

action and the passion to turn that smart idea into quick revenue - for that is of prime importance.

## **Evolve all the time - reinvent**

Don't pause and be satisfied with the success achieved or discouraged by disasters. Learn from mistakes. Mistakes and failures are not the end of the road. They are critical lessons to be learned along the way. Never become complacent, even if your brand is a market leader. Stay dynamic and continually reinvent yourself.

## **Give back**

Legendary leaders like Bill Gates and Warren Buffet have always taken a selfless approach to leadership, spending vast amount of time in philanthropic efforts - to give to others. Giving back to the society is almost as important as striving to succeed. Help others grow and succeed.

Being a legend is all about driving significant change in the world and making a difference!





# TAKING PRIDE

*Our relentless pursuit of creating a new concept of measuring Public Relations by measuring Goodwill, Reputation, Engagement, Affinity and Trust does not seem to stop.*

**Amith Prabhu**, Founding Dean, School of Communication and Reputation (SCoRe)



What you have in your hand is a truly special edition of Reputation Today as it brings to the forefront over half dozen men who created the early Public Relations firms and then moved on to pursue other things. We have taken the liberty to call them legends but be assured we acknowledge others as legends too and there are a dozen of them at least. This is purely limited to the consulting world.

There are at least five things lined up between now and the end of the year that will keep us busy. But before I write about them let me share what I think are five attributes that make someone a legend.

- Pioneering Thinking – Making the first move to offer a solution or solve a problem
- Institution Building – Going beyond the self to create something that remains beyond one's time
- Tapping Potential – Ability to spot, retain and mentor talent that co-creates
- Exploring Opportunity – Looking at various avenues for growth
- Leaving a Legacy – Being remembered for doing all of the above

If you think of someone as a legend and they meet the above criteria, then you are thinking right.

Moving on to the various platforms

that are lined up in the days ahead. Coming up in September is the seventh edition of PRAXIS. This year we are taking a break from listening to global Public Relations consultancy leaders and instead focussing on global corporate communication leaders from industries as diverse as technology, crop-science, travel, automobile and investment. This will be a refreshing change from the previous editions.

As this issue of the magazine goes out into circulation we open up nominations for the 40 under Forty list for the Class of 2018. This platform has been able to put the spotlight on some amazing men and women in the last two years. Thereafter, we have the year-end party of the fraternity in the form of Super Night to be hosted in Mumbai on December 20th.

There is indeed a lot going on. Our relentless pursuit of creating a new concept of measuring Public Relations by measuring **Goodwill, Reputation, Engagement, Affinity and Trust** does not seem to stop. Therefore, you will see these five words in each of these columns.

We recently co-organised successful editions of the Innovation First and Influence Now Conclaves in Gurgaon and Mumbai. We also ran the Ace Business Communicator Prize for a young professional working in corporate communications. And the Young Pride Challenge for a team of

two young professionals from a consultancy. This is probably the biggest award a young PR person can get as the awardees get an all-expense paid trip to two of the biggest international conferences, courtesy The Holmes Report and ICCO.

We hosted two legends in Delhi and Mumbai in the past months. Elise Mitchell of Dentsu and Alan VanderMolen of WE Communications. We hope to do more of these every few months. We look forward to hearing from you about your thoughts on this edition as we work on our blockbuster for September – the first definitive list of India's 50 biggest PR firms by revenue. Watch out for that!

Lastly, all eyes are on the fresh blood of talent that is being infused into the profession through the ten-month programme at SCoRe. While two batches have joined the workforce and we take pride in them, we are ready to commence the academic year for the third batch to create true-blue professionals for the Public Relations business.

Looking forward to hearing from you. You can reach me [@amithpr](#) on Twitter.





#FulcrumAwards

An initiative of



@FulcrumAwards

#### TECHNIQUE AWARDS CATEGORIES

- 1 Best Use of Content
- 2 Best Use of Creativity and Innovation
- 3 Best Use of Event
- 4 Best Use of Digital
- 5 Best Use of Integrated Communications
- 6 Best Use of Public Affairs
- 7 Best Management of Crisis
- 8 Best Use of Internal Communications
- 9 Best New Product Launch
- 10 Best Use of Media Relations
- 11 Best CSR Campaign
- 12 Best Regional campaign

#### SECTOR AWARDS CATEGORIES

- 1 Best Hospitality and Travel Campaign
- 2 Best Automobile Campaign
- 3 Best Lifestyle, Luxury and Sports Campaign
- 4 Best Technology and Telecom Campaign
- 5 Best Healthcare and Pharma Campaign
- 6 Best Consumer Products and Retail Campaign
- 7 Best Not-for-Profit and Associations Campaign
- 8 Best Manufacturing Campaign
- 9 Best Entertainment and Media Campaign
- 10 Best Banking and Financial Services Campaign
- 11 Best Services Campaign

**20th June 2018**

Early Submission Deadline

**3rd July 2018**

Late Submission Deadline

**8th August 2018**

Shortlist Announcement

**29th September 2018**

Awards Night

#### THE JURY

**Harshendra Verdhan**  
IFFCO

**Lou Hoffman**  
The Hoffman Agency

**Manish Kalghatgi**  
Larsen & Toubro Limited

**Ophira Bhatia**  
Mondelēz International

**Pradeep Wadhwa**  
ReNew Power

**Purnima Sahni Mohanty**  
Corteva Agriscience™, DowDuPont™

**Ransom D'souza**  
GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals Ltd

**Rashmi Soni**  
Vistara, Tata Sia Airlines Ltd.

**Sarah Gideon**  
Infosys

**Seema Siddiqui**  
Schneider Electric, India

**Sheetal Singh**  
Flipkart

**Shreya Krishnan**  
Anviti Insurance Brokers

**Shrutidhar Paliwal**  
Aptech Ltd

**Shweta Munjal**  
Thomson Reuters

**Sourav Das**  
Sembcorp

**Sushant Balsekar**  
Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) India

**Tara Rogers Ellis**  
Mojo PR

**Zeenat Khan**  
Housing.com

#### SPECIAL AWARDS CATEGORY

- 1 In-House Team of the Year – Mid-size (2 – 4 team members)
- 2 In-House Team of the Year – Large (5 and more team members)
- 3 PR Consultancy of the Year – Emerging (INR 10 cr and below)
- 4 PR Consultancy of the Year – Mid-size (INR 10 – 20 cr)
- 5 PR Consultancy of the Year – Large (INR 20 – 50 cr)
- 6 PR Consultancy of the Year – Giant (INR 50 cr and above)
- 7 Lifetime Achievement Award

#### INDIVIDUAL CATEGORY AWARDS (IN-HOUSE AND CONSULTANCY)

1. Hospitality and Travel
2. Automobile
3. Lifestyle, Luxury and Sports
4. Technology and Telecom
5. Healthcare and Pharma
6. Consumer Products and Retail
7. Not-for-profit and Associations
8. Manufacturing
9. Entertainment, Media and Celebrities
10. Banking and Financial Services
11. Services

Process Reviewer

Associate Partners

Academic Partner

Magazine Partner

Association Partner

Digital Partner



# PRAXIS 2018

Public Relations and Corporate Communications India Summit

A Reputation Today Initiative

Hyderabad International Convention Centre

28th - 30th September, 2018

## The Essence of Storytelling



**Beth Roden**  
Bayer CropScience



**Brian Lott**  
Mubadala



**Jonathan Adashek**  
Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi Alliance



**Peter Brun**  
VFS Global



**Stella Low**  
Dell



**Esty Pujadas**  
Ketchum



**Matt Stafford**  
Burson Cohn & Wolfe



**Tina McCorkindale**  
Institute of Public Relations



**Sree Sreenivasan**  
Digimentors.group

