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EUROPEAN CHIEF COMMUNICATION OFFICERS SURVEY 2013

Managing CEO positioning and international communication:
Insights from interviews with corporate communication leaders

Ansgar Zerfass, Dejan Verčič, Ángeles Moreno, Piet Verhoeven, Ralph Tench & Joachim Klewes



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This report presents the most important findings of the ECCOS study.

Additional information on the background of this study and the cooperation between EUPRERA and Ketchum is available on pages 41-43.



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Outline of the study

Overview and research questions



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Key challenges for corporations in the global media environment

- International outreach: More companies operate in more countries than ever – challenges of new markets and new stakeholder demands have to be met. As a consequence, new approaches are needed to manage communications along global value chains.
- Positioning top executives: Organisational reputation is heavily influenced by the performance and authenticity of CEOs (chief executive officers) and other leaders (managing directors, presidents, etc.), both in the media and in social networks.
 - » Which strategies are used by global heads of communications to master these challenges? What can be learned from leaders in the field?
 - » What is the status quo of CEO positioning and communication in European corporations and what are the challenges of international communication?

Insights based on a qualitative and quantitative study

- ECCOS 2013 is research based on thorough academic standards, combining qualitative interviews with 43 chief communication officers (CCOs) of global corporations and a quantitative survey among 579 CCOs across Europe.

Qualitative interviews



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Methodology

- Sample: 43 global heads of communication (CCOs) in multi-national corporations based in 12 European countries
- Corporations: both listed and private, active in at least five countries in-/outside of Europe, Ø 67,000 employees
- CCOs: 72.1% male; 27.9% female
- Questionnaire: eight open-ended questions, evaluated with inductive content analysis
- Data collection: June – August 2013; personal invitations based on lists of the largest corporations in key European markets



Logos show examples of participating organisations. More well-known global brands participated, but chose to stay anonymous.

Quantitative survey

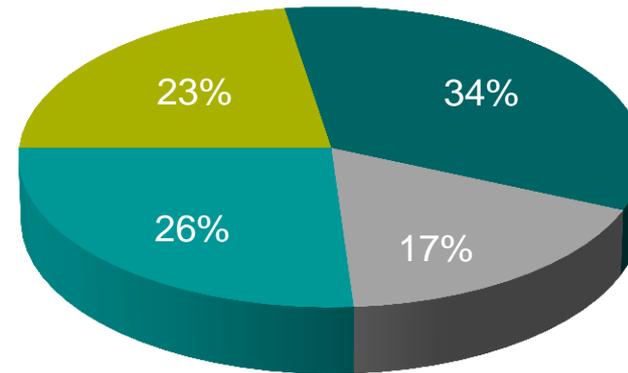


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Methodology

- Sample: 579 chief communication officers (CCOs) of corporations based in 39 European countries
- Corporations: both listed and private
- CCOs: 45.4% male; 54.6% female; 72.5% with more than ten years job experience; average age 43.2 years
- Questionnaire: nine closed questions as part of a larger web-based survey, evaluated with descriptive and analytical statistics (SPSS)
- Data collection: March 2013; e-mail invitations based on the largest database of communication professionals in Europe

Home country of participants



- Northern Europe
- Western Europe
- Eastern Europe
- Southern Europe

Participants of this study are based in all parts of Europe – with a focus on markets with a highly developed communications profession.

Based on a recoded subsample of the European Communication Monitor 2013 conducted by EUPRERA & EACD, www.communicationmonitor.eu

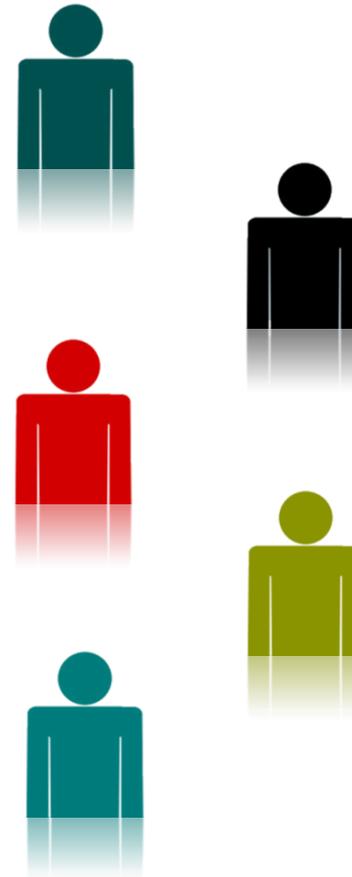
Relevance of the sample interviewed



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Individuals in this study shape the future of corporate communications

- The quantitative survey analyzed the views not just of communication professionals, but of those who are responsible for decision making on strategies and budgets: Chief Communications Officers both of listed and private companies.
- The qualitative survey made a deep dive to look at the views of those CCOs who are responsible for corporate communications of global companies headquartered in Europe. By the nature of their professional role, these professionals oversee communications with an international perspective. They are responsible for global strategies and decisions, including international staff decisions and budgets.





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Managing CEO communication

Challenges and trends in CEO communication



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The ECCOS findings support other survey results that the CEO role is of utmost importance both for corporate reputation and success.

The study presents five important aspects (as shown on this page) to highlight the specific role of CEOs – with a focus on international communication.

Questions on CEO communication



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Q1

Based on your professional experience, how important are the communicative assets of the CEO (= the highest representative of an organisation) for the overall success of an organisation? Positioning of the CEO, ... [Quantitative survey; rating based on a 1-5 scale; important = top 2 scores]

Q2

What was the most important communicative situation for your organisation during the last 12 months, in which the reputation of the CEO was crucial for success? It was in the area of (marketing, financial, ...) communication. [Quantitative survey; choose one item]

Q3

What is the biggest challenge today for the CEO of a global company to bring his or her message across? [Qualitative survey; open answers]

Q4

Does your organisation pursue any of the following activities? Positioning of the CEO, ... [Quantitative survey; choose one or more items]

Q5

Which one of the following dimensions is at the centre of the positioning and communication strategy for your CEO? Functional, ... competencies [Quantitative survey; choose one item]

Q6

Positioning the CEO in different markets is a major challenge. What strategies and activities would you recommend for CEO communication in: The country where the company headquarters is based? Countries where the company is predominantly active with production or sales today? Emerging markets with the highest growth rate in the industry? Would you recommend a differentiated or a uniform positioning? [Qualitative survey; open answers]

Q7

Which long term trends in CEO communications do you see on the horizon (think of the next decade)? [Qualitative survey; open answers]

Questions are combined from the quantitative survey and open-ended qualitative interviews. Each result shown on the following pages indicates the corresponding question in the legend.

Importance of CEOs for corporate reputation



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CEOs communication skills as immaterial assets

- According to the chief communication officers interviewed, the performance of the highest-ranking top executive in interpersonal and small group meetings (93.1%) as well as his/her capability to deal with the media and large audience (92.2%) is important for the overall success of the corporation.
- Interestingly, knowledge of strategic communication was rated lower at 81.7%. This resembles insights from a recent study among German CEOs, who value the impact of their personal communication activities on organisational success higher than the work of their communication departments. Cf. <http://bit.ly/ukom2013>

Chief Communication Officers without any doubt highlight the importance of their CEOs for their companies' success ...

Important factors for the overall success of an organisation



Q1 / n = 579 CCOs

Importance of CEOs for corporate reputation



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Different impacts of CEO reputation

- The reputation of the CEO is most important when communicating with employees, i.e. when building corporate culture and managing change.
- Analysts and investors are most important for CEOs in listed corporations, while leaders in private owned companies are valuable ambassadors in society and customer markets.

Most relevant areas of corporate communications in which CEO reputation is crucial for success

	Joint stock companies	Private companies	Overall
Marketing communications	6.1%	18.6%	11.6%
Financial communications	25.1%	11.8%	19.3%
Internal communications	24.0%	25.5%	24.6%
Political communication	11.8%	21.3%	11.6%
Public and community relations	17.5%	23.0%	19.9%
Crisis communications	15.6%	9.8%	13.1%

... however, they have a very specific view as to which area of communications benefits most from what the CEO does: Internal communications is the subfunction mentioned most often in this context.

Q2 / n = 467 CCOs

Biggest challenges for CEO communication



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Reduction of complexity

- CEOs articulate and symbolise what their organisations are and what they stand for. They are ultimately responsible for authentic and integral, clear and focused, consistent and transparent, yet culturally and politically sensitive communication in a world of increasing cultural, economic, financial, investor, linguistic, media and political complexity.

Getting attention

- Changing communication habits, proliferation of media channels, degradation of journalistic standards and audiences' preference for infotainment over facts are posing communication problems to corporate CEOs. This is a challenge faced by politicians for more than a decade – their responses have often led to questionable results, resulting in a lost of trust for the whole system.

Compressed time

- Time is a very limited resource for CEOs. However there is an increasing need for them to show personal presence – alone and in teams of top executives. This becomes ever more complicated when operating in different time zones.

In the qualitative deep dive, CCOs of global companies identified three key challenges for CEOs which have an impact on their communicative actions.

Q3 / n = 43 CCOs

Biggest challenges for CEO communication



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» *It is the complexity of communication. There are now more audiences interested in what companies have to say; with companies under ever increasing levels of scrutiny; with regulators demanding higher levels of disclosure and transparency; and many more channels from which to disseminate your message.* «



Head of Corporate Affairs, UK

» *Huge amounts of information available to people, making it hard to cut through the noise and be heard. Trend towards 'infotainment' and expectation of audiences to be wowed by websites, apps, videos, etc.* «



Head of Corporate Communication, Switzerland

Insights from global communication leaders

» *Time – to be present on all time zones and to choose relevant media to target.* «



Global Communication Manager, Denmark

» *CEO needs to be able to address large audiences with simple messages and at the same time he/she needs to be a great leader of the business in question. These characteristics don't always go hand in hand.* «



Senior Vice President Corporate Communication, Finland

Original and representative quotes from the qualitative part of the study are shown for illustrative purposes.

Q3 / n = 43 CCOs

Practices of CEO communication



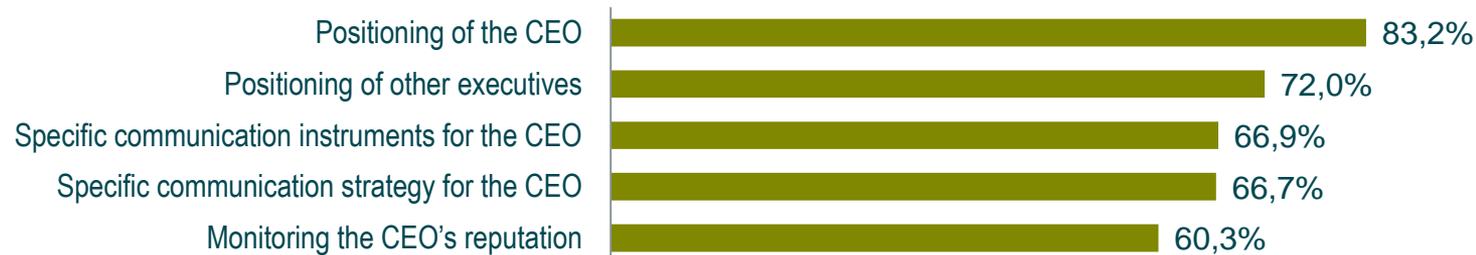
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Positioning without monitoring – a blind flight?

- Despite the high relevance of the CEO for corporate success, nearly every second organisation in Europe has not established any monitoring routines to evaluate his/her reputation. Nevertheless 83.2% try to position their CEO within the public sphere, i.e. by defining an image and key messages. A lower number has defined specific communication strategies or instruments to reach these goals.
- Joint stock companies are significantly more active in CEO positioning (87.0%) than private companies (78.7%); they are also ahead in reputation monitoring (65.4% vs. 54.4%) and CEO communication strategies (72.0% vs. 60.4%).

While not all global heads of communication monitor their CEO's reputation regularly, they clearly give strategic attention to managing the CEO's reputation and also apply specific tactics and instruments to bring the strategy to life.

Activities pursued by corporate communication departments



Q4 / n_{min} = 557 CCOs

Messages used to position the CEO



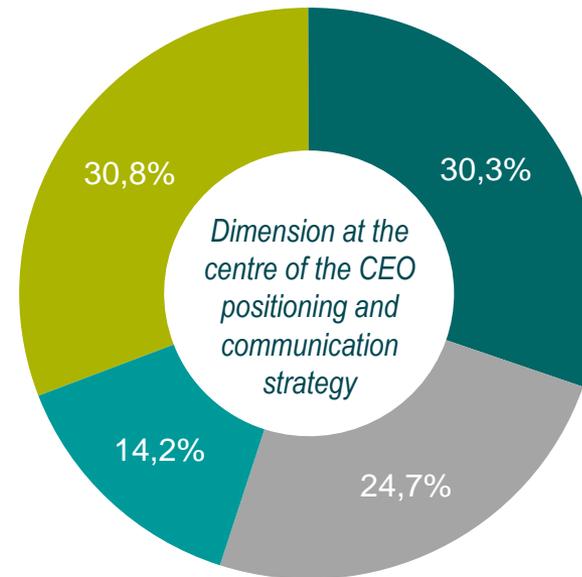
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Focus on performance and responsibility

- Most communication leaders who position their CEO emphasize predominantly either functional or ethical competencies.
- Interestingly, personal assets are highlighted less often in corporate communications.
- Cognitive competencies like knowledgeability and intelligence of the CCO are more often employed by private companies (30.2%) than by listed corporations (20.3%).

The CEO's functional competencies
(having skills to accomplish the job, being capable)

The CEO's ethical competencies
(holding personal/professional values, being responsible)



The CEO's personal competencies
(behaving appropriately, being smart)

The CEO's cognitive competencies
(processing relevant knowledge, being intelligent)

There is clearly a potential to position CEOs in a much more personal and colourful way than today – the human dimension can have a greater focus in the messaging.

Q5 / n = 458 CCOs

Positioning the CEO in different markets



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One company, one CEO, one positioning

- The majority of global heads of communication recommend a uniform positioning strategy for the CEO in different markets, i.e. the home country, countries with major production and sales activities today, and emerging markets. Contrary to predictions of social media promoting diversity, CCOs see the global flow of information – together with the importance of employees – as the main reason for a consolidated image of the CEO.

The general trend towards uniformity in messages and strategies does not stop when it comes to CEO positioning.

Differentiation

- Some corporations prefer different positioning strategies for their CEO in different countries, empowering people on the ground with intrinsic understanding of local circumstances.

Glocalisation

- A route to follow, but difficult to implement in communication practice is glocalisation. Some CCOs recommend a combination of uniform and differentiated approaches by defining global general principles that are locally and specifically applied, depending on organisational needs and environmental circumstances.

Q6 / n = 43 CCOs

Positioning the CEO in different markets



break through

Insights from global communication leaders

» It all starts local. The image of a company in the local press is essential before going global. Finding a company's differentiator is another important step. What is it exactly that the company does better than everybody else and how – if at all – does the CEO personally reflect this? ... a uniform positioning is to my belief the best approach. A differentiated approach may include the risk of mixed signals which with today's integrated global communication rapidly will be discovered and scrutinized. «



Head of Corporate Communication, Denmark

» Definitely a differentiated positioning. «



Head of Corporate Communication, Austria



Senior Vice President
Corporate Communication and
Government Relations, Germany



» Consistency across all markets but not uniformity – 'translation' into local cultures by local communicators is a must. «

Head of Group Communication, Germany

Original and representative quotes from the qualitative part of the study are shown for illustrative purposes.

Long term trends in CEO communication



break through

The humane CEO

- Times of a distant, nearly invisible authority are gone and corporations are witnessing an increased interest in who is running them, what they believe in, what they stand for – in short, in CEO personalities.

Branding of CEOs

- A stronger personalisation of company stories is demanding CEOs to develop “personal brands”. Communication leaders are asked to support this, and to synchronise CEO brands with corporate brands.

Politicization – the CEO as “first citizen” of the corporation

- Companies have to define and defend their position in societies by defining corporate citizenship strategies. So do their top executives who find themselves in a delicate situation: they have to become *political personae*, while at the same time publics expect business leaders not to interfere directly in political life i.e. by pursuing too close contacts to parties and governments.

The importance of communication for CEOs is certainly growing – as are the challenges and opportunities for communicators who plan and organise CEO communication.

Q7 / n = 43 CCOs

Long term trends in CEO communication



break through

» *More integrated communication (Marketing comms, corporate communications, CEO communications). The CEO is gonna be a brand. «*



Chief Communications Officer, Switzerland

Communications Director, Croatia

» *A more personal approach with a human face. All communication should include storytelling – numbers are desirable, but not enough «*



Vice President Corporate Communications, Germany



» *A stronger orientation towards corporate citizenship: The CEO as the 'first citizen' of the corporate citizen. «*

Insights from global communication leaders

» *The arrival of the human CEO – what social media has allowed is for any consumer or employee to be able to level the playing field. CEOs of the old days were considered remote and very inaccessible to the common man. As they engage more online, both employees and customers want to know the person more and more as a human being: What do they like? What are they doing? And finally: Can they be trusted? In a sense a CEO will become like a politician – managing his constituencies, approval ratings, reputations more directly and with more and more of a human touch with the ground level. «*



Chief Communications and Marketing Officer, Belgium

Original and representative quotes from the qualitative part of the study are shown for illustrative purposes.

Q7 / n = 43 CCOs

CEO communication: Insights and recommendations (1)



break through

Strategic recommendations for Chief Communication Officers

- One company, one CEO, one positioning: Allowing country or sub-group specific facets in the CEO picture will lead to stakeholder confusion both internally and externally.
- The CEO as a brand: Positioning the CEO as a personality to be remembered and trusted needs careful planning.
- CEO messaging: Exploit the potential of going beyond figures and spreadsheets. Most stakeholders do not trust a remote and inaccessible top executive – showing the picture of a humane CEO will improve credibility.
- Storytelling is key to make stakeholders listen to the CEO – it is not just about content, but about how messages are being delivered as well. Empowering the CEO in storytelling may be a strategy for success.
- One should not forget to position other members of the executive team – in fields clearly defined for their specific roles and aligned with CEO communication.

CEO communication: Insights and recommendations (2)



break through

Practical recommendations for Chief Communication Officers

- Supplement monitoring routines with a systematic evaluation of the CEOs' reputation – analysing both media coverage and personal views of the most important stakeholders.
- Consider the development of specific instruments or formats for CEO communication to make his or her voice heard. Check formats which allow stakeholders to experience the CEO in more than just a rational or cognitive dimension (events, videos etc.).
- Organisation: Several companies have assigned specific communication managers to cater the communication needs of different members of the executive team. This might be a feasible option for large corporations.



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Managing international communication

International corporate communications



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With globalisation becoming more and more relevant even for smaller companies, planning and organising international communications gains in importance.

The ECCOS study presents a selection of strategic and operational insights in this field.

Questions on international communication



break through

Q8

How challenging are the following aspects when communicating internationally, especially in non-European countries? Developing communication strategies ... [Quantitative survey; rating based on a 1-5 scale; agreement = top 2 scores]

Q9

What are the main challenges for international communications, when trying to be sensitive for different social, cultural and political environments? [Qualitative survey; open answers]

Q10

In your daily job, do you communicate internationally with different countries and markets? How many countries do you deal with in your communication role? [Quantitative survey]

Q11

Understanding stakeholders and monitoring public opinion in various cultures is difficult – are there any approaches you would recommend? [Qualitative survey; open answers]

Q12

How should the communications function in a company with international outreach be organized? Would you prefer a central structure with everybody reporting to headquarters, do you value de-centralised approaches with independent national communication units, or would you recommend focusing on the headquarters setting standards and policies (to what extent), or anything else – what is your view? [Qualitative survey; open answers]

Q13

Many international companies rely on local communication experts for their teams in various countries – but hiring and leading them is often difficult. What would you recommend to solve this problem? [Qualitative survey; open answers]

Q14

Regarding how global companies will be organized in the future, how they will manage their communications function and how they will communicate strategically on an international level: Which long term trends do you see on the horizon (think of the next decade)? [Qualitative survey; open answers]

Questions are combined from the quantitative survey and open-ended qualitative interviews. Each result shown on the following pages indicates the corresponding question in the legend.

Importance and major issues



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International communication is important – and will be more important soon

- 75.8% of the CCOs interviewed state that international communication is important for their corporations and the same number says that communicating internationally will become even more important within the next three years.
- Major issues to be dealt with when communicating across countries are the development of sensitive strategies, monitoring publics, and understanding media systems. Management structures for communication are another challenge.

Chief communication officers highlight challenges related to the strategies in international communications. Managerial aspects seem to be less important.

Major challenges for international communication in non-European countries



Q8 / n_{min} = 450 CCOs

Challenges and solutions



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Cultural diversity

- Global heads of corporate communications underline individual and organisational change going along with companies going international and getting in touch with other cultures – geographically, but also ethically and socially. Sensitivity to cultural identities is growing in importance.

Languages

- Many European corporations operate in 50+ countries with even more languages. This makes communication complicated. The introduction of (quite often bad) English as the business *lingua franca* is only a partial solution to the problem – often the majority of employees in production and even more customers and other stakeholders are not able to communicate in English.

Identity and change

- Increasing sensitivity to other cultures and languages may bring about the danger of decentering one's own key values. This makes managing communication even more complicated. Developing resilience and preparing their team and the whole corporation to operate in this complex environment is a challenge for global CCOs.

European CCOs responsible for communications on a global level present themselves as self-reflecting and aware of complex cultural challenges.

Q9 / n = 43 CCOs

Challenges and solutions



break through

Insights from global communication leaders

» A main challenge is the ability to make some cross-company priorities for communication and avoid getting lost in that everything is local. For most companies, markets still have more in common than they are different. So by picking a few key themes/positioning points the company is able to organise an international communications effort; of course with due respect for local differences. «



Head of Global Corporate Positioning, Denmark

» Incorporating multiculturalism as a core value is the best approach to international communication. Training leaders and communication professionals is the challenge. «



Global Communication Director, Italy

» Different needs of different groups (production vs. office workers). Best available IT technologies for internal communication. Different languages – English is not understood everywhere in the world (esp. in production). «



Senior Vice President Communication and Government Relations, Germany

Original and representative quotes from the qualitative part of the study are shown for illustrative purposes.

Q9 / n = 43 CCOs

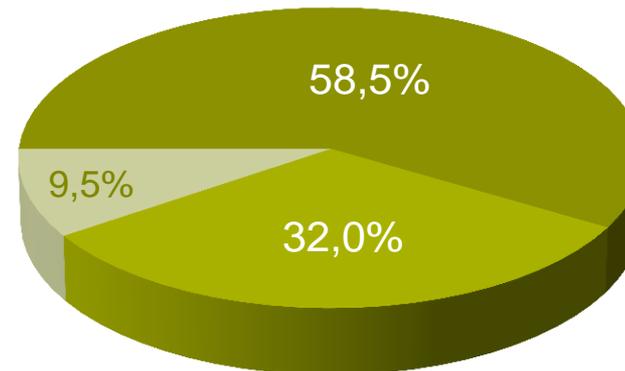
Weak organisational structures

- Despite the relevance of international communication, only 55.4% of the CCOs interviewed report about solid structures and strategies for this field in their companies
- Listed corporations (61.1%) are significantly ahead of private companies (48.7%) in this respect

High personal involvement

- International communication is part of the daily business for the vast majority (90.5%) of CCOs in Europe
- Almost one quarter (22.9%) deals with more than 20 countries internationally

Chief communication officers in Europe who communicate internationally with different countries and markets in their daily job



■ Regularly ■ Sometimes ■ No

At this point of time, international communication in Europe seems to be highly relevant, but still in development. When it comes to structures and strategies the next few years will probably realise increased professionalisation.

Q10 / n = 579 CCOs

Understanding stakeholders internationally



break through

Control

- Global communication leaders articulate their need for control. They point out that corporate communications needs tools for monitoring and evaluating what is going on among stakeholders in various countries and which effects corporate operations and communications have on the ground around the world. Mostly, they are not aware which tools already exist to respond to this need.

Trust

- As an alternative and complementary concept, CCOs highlight the importance of direct insights by having trustworthy own staff on the ground who are capable of intercultural translation to headquarters.

Dialogue

- Global CCOs say there is a need to institutionalise direct dialogues with local stakeholders in major countries of operation to supplement the processes of monitoring and having trusted staff in the region.

Answers in the qualitative study reveal that global CCOs in Europe still feel uneasy with the challenge to understand and manage what is going on abroad – though they interact with international stakeholders on a frequent basis.

Q11 / n = 43 CCOs

Understanding stakeholders internationally



break through

Insights from global communication leaders

» We developed a tool called *Corporate Reputation Analyzer*, which gives us a clear picture about how the six relevant stakeholders think about us, compared with our competitors, and how they are influenced by whom. That's a fantastic information and the basis in order to start the dialogue with our relevant stakeholders. And we have focus groups in our divisions. «



Senior Vice President
Corporate Communication,
Germany

» Implement monitoring on a local level, never do it global. «



Director of Communication,
Spain

» Dialogue – local personal presence is required. Use the whole toolbox – from content analysis to questionnaires and psychological deep dive interviews. «



Head of Communication Services, Switzerland

» Use your colleagues on the ground. Get on an airplane and spend time with them so you understand the challenges they face but also to build the relationship with them. So there is mutual trust and you can rely on their advice. There is no substitute for spending time on the ground. «



Head of Corporate Affairs, UK

Original and representative quotes from the qualitative part of the study are shown for illustrative purposes.

Q11 / n = 43 CCOs

Organisation of the communication function



break through

Centralised structure

- According to the global CCOs interviewed, there is a strong tendency to keep communication in control of the corporate headquarters – with communication being responsible for vision, mission, values and other “soft” building blocks of a corporation. Loosing control over them could endanger corporate identity and consequently reputation.

Aligned decentralisation

- Communication leaders and their teams at the headquarter usually accept the responsibility for defining the corporate brand and story, global corporate communication standards, and the outline of organisation of the communications function. In European companies, local communication managers and their teams are being given a lot of freedom to implement and execute these standards, adjusted to local cultures and circumstances.

Staffing and resources

- Selecting local communications personnel and defining local resources is not top of mind for the European CCOs participating in the survey.

CCOs know about the importance of central organisation in international communications – given the chance that local issues might escalate on a global scale within seconds in the digital age.

However, European communication leaders seem not to strive for managing local resources and personnel – thus not executing “real” control.

Q12 / n = 43 CCOs

Organisation of the communication function



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Insights from global communication leaders

Original and representative quotes from the qualitative part of the study are shown for illustrative purposes.

» *Aligned Decentralisation: meaning head-quarters responsible for the corporate story (vision, mission, values, global strategy, targets), corporate standards (global messages, policies such as corporate design and key-wording), while regional / national communications units should ensure aligned transformation in regional / national / local statements. However, online communications remains global due to the 'flat world' we live in.*«



Head of Corporate Communication, Switzerland



Head of Corporate Communication, Austria



Director of Communication, Spain

» *Central structure (with standards and policies) is key! The rest may be democratic, but causes chaos and unwanted 'independency' with strange strategies and statements.*«

» *My approach is a decentralized management to be closer to the business, but with clear guidelines and a lot of communication with the central.*«

Q12 / n = 43 CCOs

Strategies to internationalise the comms function



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Attract internationally experienced newcomers

- With university education becoming increasingly international along with student mobility, global CCOs recommend sourcing the best prospective potential employees based on their international experience and performance – overcoming a traditional bias towards candidates from the company's home country.

Train and acculturate excellent locals

- Working with good people and bringing them in touch with the best practices and practitioners in headquarters is expected to produce positive results – respondents see perseverance as most important for success in this respect.

Make all communication structures intercultural and global

- Global CCOs are aware of a need to rethink the whole concept of headquarters (core, home). They see developing a truly intercultural and globalised communication structure across the corporation as a significant challenge and expect positive effects both on a local and global level.

Again, results show that global CCOs are aware of strategies that should be followed to master the challenges of globalisation – and the fact that these strategies are a long way from being implemented.

Q13 / n = 43 CCOs

Strategies to internationalise the comms function



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Insights from global communication leaders

» Job rotations and short-term assignments in different markets are effective ways of building a global team with shared standards. «



Head of Group Corporate Communication, Switzerland

» Hiring can be difficult in emerging markets, but the way to get round that is to hire bright local people and train them up to the standards you expect. This is important not just for the company but also the societies where you operate, and is an issue not just for communications functions. I believe international corporations can play a pivotal role in emerging markets in this respect. «



Head of Corporate Affairs, UK

Global Communication Director, Netherlands



» Universities are becoming much more international which enables students to study abroad and improve their international skills and languages. Multinational companies need to look for these students. In the global team, often located in headquarters, it works best to have a mix of local people and global employees. Either from other countries or native English speakers. «

Original and representative quotes from the qualitative part of the study are shown for illustrative purposes.

Q13 / n = 43 CCOs

Long term trends in international communication



break through

The paradox of centralisation and decentralisation

- Global heads of communication show a clear preference for centralised communication functions today. However, they expect them not to last: there is a weak consensus expecting the dissolution of central structures.

From functional responsibilities to general management competencies?

- According to the qualitative interviews, some respondents see a tendency that communication will generalise from being a specific functional competence in organisations into a general management competence. Communication professionals may be given the responsibility to develop communication competencies on all levels of the organisation.

Change of organisational structures to support change initiatives

- Communication functions are expected to move from structures predominantly linked to stakeholders and programs to more integrated approaches. CCOs of some companies expect the communications function to support key change initiatives: communication managers will be responsible for education, training and “special projects” which need communicative support.

The paradox observed is a centralisation and dissolution of central structures at the same time.

Moreover, the responsibility of communications might be expanded into roles held by other functions like human resources, training or corporate strategy today – e.g. if it comes to leading change initiatives or re-positioning.

Q14 / n = 43 CCOs

Long term trends in international communication



break through

Original and representative quotes from the qualitative part of the study are shown for illustrative purposes.

» We will see a move from companies that have a communication department to communicating companies.«



Head of Communication Services,
Switzerland

» 1) Communication skills and capabilities need to be made part of the skills set of all leaders in the organization.
2) Communication training and social media enablement for all employees.
3) Communication related items will have to be part of values, vision and mission. «



Head of Group
Communication, Germany

Insights from global communication leaders

» Communication functions will be shaped by general trends that affect global companies: digitalization, change of customer needs and stakeholder expectations, increased inter-connectedness, efficiency expectations as well as increasing emphasis on risk management. Communicators will act as change consultants and project managers. Communication will become more project- and topic-related. This will be reflected in the organisational set-up of corporate comms. «



Head of Corporate
Communication, Germany

Q14 / n = 43 CCOs

International communication: Insights and recommendations (1)



break through

Strategic recommendations for Chief Communication Officers

- It's all about balancing central authority (not necessary control) and local independence.
- A central definition of the framework for communications (positioning, messaging, stakeholder and channel priorities) as well as central processes (planning, resources) are key and need to be aligned with strategic priorities of the corporation as well as the overall planning process.
- Diversity and international experience are key for recruitment and composition of communication professionals in corporate headquarters as well as in decentralised communication teams.
- Preparing for the future role of international communications means that competence and authority of the communication team needs to be developed beyond traditional qualifications. This will include improvement in change management competencies as well as general management skills.

International communication: Insights and recommendations (2)



break through

Practical recommendations for Chief Communication Officers

- Establish a compulsory global planning process with a clear schedule.
- Develop global communication initiatives (both with internal and external focus) to implement key messages and counter most important global issues, using a combination of central development, aligned execution of key projects plus a broad tool box approach to be used by local communicators.
- Establish an international training initiative for communicators as well as an international selection process for communication staff.
- Encourage international exchange of best practices and creative approaches in corporate communications between countries, regions, as well as divisions and functions.
- Establish a visible international comparison of communication performance within the company.



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Background

Research partners

Ketchum – a leading global communications firm

- Ketchum is operating in more than 70 countries across six continents. Named 2012 PR Agency of the Year (PRWeek and European Excellence Awards) and the winner of an unprecedented three consecutive PRWeek Campaign of the Year Awards, Ketchum partners with clients to deliver strategic programming, game-changing creative and measurable results that build brands and reputations. Ketchum is a part of Diversified Agency Services, a division of Omnicom Group Inc. www.ketchum.com

European Public Relations Education and Research Association

- EUPRERA is an autonomous organisation that aims at stimulating and promoting innovative knowledge and practices of public relations education and research in Europe. With members from more than 30 countries – among them most universities and professors focusing on research and education in communication management across the continent – its main objectives are fostering joint research and knowledge transfer between academia and practice. www.euprera.org

Partnering for advancing the profession

- EUPRERA and Ketchum cooperate in the fields of research and thought leadership by supporting the annual European Communication Monitor www.communicationmonitor.eu and additional projects like this study.

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- Dr. Ansgar Zerfass is Professor of Communication Management at the University of Leipzig, Germany, and Professor in Communication and Leadership at BI Norwegian Business School, Oslo, Norway.
- Dr. Dejan Verčič is Professor of Public Relations at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia.
- Dr. Ángeles Moreno is Professor of Public Relations and Communication Management at University Rey Juan Carlos, Madrid, Spain.
- Dr. Piet Verhoeven is Associate Professor of Communication Science at the University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
- Dr. Ralph Tench is Professor of Communication at Leeds Metropolitan University, United Kingdom.
- Dr. Joachim Klewes is Senior Adviser at Ketchum Pleon Germany and Adjunct Professor of Corporate Communication at Heinrich Heine University, Düsseldorf, Germany.

Contact



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Ketchum Europe

David Gallagher
Senior Partner, CEO
35-41 Folgate Street
London E1 6BX, United Kingdom
Phone +44 207 611 3500
david.gallagher@ketchum.com

Ketchum Pleon

Prof. Dr. Joachim Klewes
Senior Partner
Bahnstrasse 2
40212 Düsseldorf, Germany
Phone +49 211 9541 2327
joachim.klewes@ketchumpleon.com

EUPRERA

Prof. Dr. Ansgar Zerfass
Executive Director / Lead researcher ECCOS
University of Leipzig
Burgstrasse 21
04109 Leipzig, Germany
Phone +49 341 9261652
zerfass@uni-leipzig.de



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