



iPRS NEWS AND VIEWS

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Memories from PRISM AWARDS 2006

Happy New Year!

PRISM AWARDS, the "Oscars" of the local PR Industry, is just around the corner. We hope that you have successfully submitted your projects and nominations for the awards. The closing date for the entries is over!

We've had a good response this year with well over 100 entries from Corporations, Agencies and Government Bodies. Evaluating and determining the winners is going to be very challenging for the judges who will gather in mid-January to review and finalise their award submissions. This year's judging panel includes a number of international guest judges and well as well known industry leaders from Singapore.

Each of the categories, including the many new ones, are all well represented. They demonstrate the depth and breath of talent in the local PR industry. Though not

all submissions can be award winners, all of us are joint winners as collectively, we demonstrate the dynamic and effective contribution which PR makes to our economic and national growth.



PRISM Awards 2008 Gala Dinner

Tickets on Sale NOW!

The PRISM AWARDS 2008 Gala Dinner where the winners will be announced takes place on 14 March 2008.

In honour of the tenth Prism awards we will be hosting this year's event in the grand ballroom at the recently opened and prestigious St.Regis Hotel, which promises to be a fitting venue for our biggest awards night ever.

IPRS is proud to announce that President S R Nathan is the invited Guest-Of-Honour.

Tickets for the event are selling fast! Priced at \$200, the VIP Gold seats are located next to the VIP table and close to the stage. Other tickets are priced at \$170 (Non-Member) and \$145 (Member). Those who purchase a full table (10 seats) are entitled to a 5% discount.

Hurry, book your seats now! Contact us at +65 65341841.

IPRS e-News and Views Lookout for the IPRS e-news and views in January at www.iprs.org.sg. The monthly e-newsletter will update readers on the current issues in the industry and upcoming IPRS events. Readers can post comments and suggestions and it will be published in the following issues.

The New IPRS Council 2007 - 2009

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Global Business Communicator Award for IPRS President

It has been a bright beginning for IPRS this year as our President Ms K Bhavani has been awarded the Global Business Communicator Award by the Association of Business Communicators of India (ABCI). Attended by over 500 practitioners from the industry, the Awards Ceremony Gala Dinner took place at the Taj President Hotel in Mumbai on 11 January 2008.

ABCI is an esteemed organisation constituted by business communication professionals and experts from elite corporate companies for the purpose of encouraging professionals in communication and for upgrading knowledge and skills in the area. There were 47 awards contested this year, out of which 6 were Individual Elite Award Categories. The Global Business Communicator Award was one of the Individual Elite Awards introduced for the first time since ABCI's inception 47 years ago. The Award is to acknowledge business communicators in the Asian region.

Ms Bhavani's contribution in promoting PR in Singapore and the neighboring countries was the key reason behind her win, according to the President of ABCI, Mr Yogesh Joshi. The Jury was made up of key personalities in India's media and communications industry and had highly recommended Ms Bhavani for this award.

Under her leadership, Ms Bhavani had

contributed to the growth of IPRS by developing programmes for the local industry and by strengthening ties with IPRS' International counterparts through Memorandums of Understanding, Joint Conferences, Internship programmes and other platforms. This has ultimately helped local practitioners to explore opportunities outside Singapore.

As the Chairperson of the Federation of ASEAN Public Relations Organisation (FAPRO) from 2002 till 2006 Ms Bhavani also organised a regional conference in 2003 and held many meetings to foster cooperation within the ASEAN Public Relations community.

Ms Bhavani said, "I am very honoured that India's communications industry has nominated and selected me for this award. This award is a great endorsement of initiatives that IPRS has undertaken to bring the regional PR fraternity closer together."

"IPRS mission is to promote Singapore as a regional hub. We will continue in our efforts to enhance close ties between Singapore's communications industry with those in India and other Asian countries. We have built strong ties with the regional PR associations over the years. For the next few years, we will look into further expanding our ties with various cities in India, for example Bangalore, as well as countries such as US and UK," added Ms Bhavani.



K Bhavani being acknowledged



Receiving the Global Business Communicator Award



With the Individual Elite Award winners

Singapore's Yellow Ribbon Project Lauded At the Asia Pacific PR Awards 2007

The Yellow Ribbon Project was created in 2004 in response to the 11,000 prisoners who are released from Singapore prisons on completion of their sentences, each year.

The Project was led by Burson-Masteller which had been appointed by the Singapore Prison Service to conceptualise and oversee the campaign that was aimed at giving ex-offenders a second chance in society by encouraging society to accept them. The project received an honorable mention at the 2007 United Nations Grand Award. Last November, Burson-Masteller and the Yellow Ribbon Project was again lauded, this time at the Asia Pacific PR Awards that was held in Hong Kong.

At the Awards, Burson-Masteller clinched the Public Social Campaign of the Year Award with the Yellow Ribbon Project which encouraged the community to accept ex-offenders. As part of the project, the families of the ex-offenders and employers were brought together through jobs, charity events, campaigns and concerts. Launched in 2004, the project has successfully helped about 1200 former inmates to obtain jobs on their release. Besides winning praise from the UN and the PR fraternity, the Yellow Ribbon Project received widespread media coverage from around the globe.

When asked to comment on the win, Ms Serene Lim, Senior Public Affairs Officer of the Singapore Prison's Service said that The Community Action for the Rehabilitation Ex-Offenders (CARE) Network has spearheaded the Yellow Ribbon Project successfully for four years and will continue to help deserving ex-offenders find their foothold in society.

She said, "It is an honour to receive both accolades within a span of a few months and this is testament to those who have, in one way or another, contributed to the results of the campaign".

Serene added that through the Yellow Ribbon Project, more Singaporeans have understood the need to give deserving ex-offenders a second chance and have shown their support for ex-offenders through their participation in the Project's activities. Many employers have also come forward to provide employment opportunities to help ex-offenders reintegrate into society. More ex-offenders are also now willing to step out and share their testimonies of how they overcame societal challenges to remain drug and crime-free. The encouragement and support by the community will have a great impact on the self-esteem of the many other unseen and unheard ex-offenders.

"We have been very encouraged by the public response to the Yellow Ribbon Project thus far and we hope to build on this momentum and continue to 'Help Unlock the Second Prison' for more ex-offenders," said Serene.

Other Singapore winners/finalists at the Asia Pacific PR Awards were the following:

1. Comms DNA
 - New Consultancy of the Year (Finalist)
2. Weber Shandwick (netted the most awards)
 - Asia Pacific Public Affairs Campaign of the Year 2007 (Media)
 - Asia Pacific Best Use of Research/Measurement 2007 (Media)
 - Asia Pacific Consultancy of the Year (Runner-Up) 2007 (Media)
 - Regional PR Campaign of the Year (Certificate of Excellence) 2007 (Media)
3. Edelman Singapore - Gold Consultancy of the Year (Finalist)



From Left: Ian McKee, Walter Lim, Preetam Rai, and Melvin Yuan

Panelists:

- Melvin Yuan - Independent Blogger
- Preetam Rai - Educational Technologist and Independent Blogger, Ngee Ann Polytechnic
- Walter Lim - Director of Corporate Communications, National Heritage Board
- Ian McKee - CEO, Vocanic

The Speakers shared many interesting aspects about their individual experiences and knowledge. It was interesting to know that not many among the participants blogged or were not even thinking about doing so for their organisation. Nonetheless, almost all present wanted to know how blogging worked and why this was so. Few wanted to miss out on this new media that has topped several recent polls on new media communication tools! Finally, there were some participants who wanted to be assured that they were using blogs correctly and effectively rather than just an endless rambling of private lives.

Melvin Yuan, the moderator, said that social networking sites like Facebook or new school mediums such as You Tube were becoming message portals for people to share their personal and business interests. Panelist Preetam Rai seconded that with an example of how the Police Force in Makati, the Philippines, had adopted the You Tube Strategy to help create a greater awareness in the fight against crimes. In the video-clips, which were eventually posted on the Net, police officers acted out scenes depicting how crimes were committed and how the police were able to nab the criminals. Such YouTube videos not only helped the Police in their fight against crime but enhanced the good image of the Force.

Preetam Rai, who reads over 2000 blogs per day, believed that knowing and reading blogs would help one gain a clearer perspective on what to say and what not to say in the blogosphere. He shared with the participants some interesting links (listed below) and identified some influential bloggers such as Dina Mehta and Beth Kanther.



Questions from the floor

Panelist, Walter Lim (National Heritage Board), said that although blogging could be used to convey thoughts and opinions to others on a large scale, people were still afraid to blog openly in detail because they were unsure as to who might have access to their blogs. Walter also noted that some bloggers were not too bothered in using the "polished style" when producing a blog. According to Walter, some of the best selling blogs were not necessarily perfect in content but rather, they scored high in style and touch. This was contrary to how Public Relations work, where content, accuracy and grammar were much more important than style or delivery.

Sincerity while blogging is an essential characteristic, said panelist Ian McKee, the CEO of Vocanic. Ian recommended that instead of creating content (websites) and bringing people to read it, it was much better to create elements of content and to post it where people were. This, was more cost effective and a more credible platform.

Ian also shared that bloggers should add a little personal touch while blogging because despite the advancement in technology,

IPRS Lunch Talk: Blogging for Business: An Open Conversation on Approach, Value and Ethics

About 40 PR practitioners showed up on 14 November 2007 at the Geek Terminal, 55 Market Street in Raffles Place for an IPRS Lunch Talk on "Blogging for Business". The participants were not only exposed to a new and totally wired, cosy venue, but were treated to a line-up of very experienced and interesting speakers.

people still preferred some mode of verbal communication. Ian also noted that a unique selling point and newsworthiness in terms of content would appeal to the public and meet people's wants and needs. This would then translate to positive word-of-mouth communication that could help portray and pass on the positive image of the company.

Ian also dished out the following important advice:

- Be careful while blogging especially when it comes to sensitive topics
- Instead of jumping into blogging, it was better for companies to first track blogs and see what people were saying about their organisation before putting their foot in the door
- It was not essential for CEO's to blog. However, Ian said that it was more important for the CEO's ideas to be brought forward in a company's blog.



Participants sharing some thoughts with the Panelists

The more an organisation controlled the readability of it's blog, the chances were that fewer people were likely to read it. We no longer controlled our brands anymore but that the market place did.

As far as ethics was concerned, Ian advised against writing fake blogs. One should only present honest opinions. Ian, did however, add that sometimes it was hard to distinguish between what could and what could not be written.

Ian's parting shot caught the attention of most of the participants:

"The world does not need another website! What was needed now was effective blogging in order to promote the good image of the business." 🗣️

Interesting Links

Philippines Police Using Youtube
<http://www.youtube.com/user/chiefgilbertcruz>

Using Google Alert to track blog conversations about your products
<http://preetamrai.com/weblog/archives/2007/11/15/using-google-alerts-to-track-online-conversations/>

Dina Mehta - Social Media, Low Cost Qualitative Research

Blog Herald - MySpace for Marketers, Facebook for PR

Spinfluencer Podcast - A podcast on how marketing, advertising, public relations, the news media and emerging technologies influence perceptions.

Naked Conversations, How Blogs are Changing the Way Businesses Talk with Customers - The book and the blog.

(transcript of an audio interview with the authors available here)



IPRS HOSTS INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME FOR INDONESIAN PR STUDENTS

For the fifth year, IPRS has organised an Internship Programme for students from the London School of Public Relations (LSPR), Jakarta, Indonesia. Fourteen students from LSPR were in Singapore in October for a week-long Internship Programme during which IPRS found placements for them with local employers. This enabled the students to experience Singapore's PR culture and working environment.



Students being treated to some snacks at Fig & Olive upon their arrival in Singapore

During their Internship, the students were exposed to various PR activities that were undertaken typically by PR practitioners in Singapore. Apart from basic PR skills, the students also learnt how to move around in Singapore, how to manage their time better and how to embark on research.

It was a rather challenging experience for some of the students as they had to sometimes work independently, to plan their daily schedules and to work hard with their colleagues so as to produce results. The internship programme contributes a major part to the LSPR examinations.

During their stay, the students attended specially-arranged workshops by IPRS on Marketing Public Relations and International Media Relations.



LSPR Students concentrating during K Bhavani's lectures

One of the visits that was arranged for the LSPR students was a visit to the Indonesian Embassy.



LSPR Students on their trip to the Indonesian Embassy in Singapore

Another exciting stop for the LSPR interns was Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) where they were briefed on reporting, producing interesting news stories and crisis management by Berita Harian Deputy Editor, Mohd Zulkifli Rahmat. The interns had a close-up look at Berita Harian's news desk and copies of early issues of the newspaper from way back in 1957. Each intern was presented with a souvenir and took pictures with the Berita team before the farewells. Thank you Berita Harian for being such a fine host!



Students being briefed on procedures by En Zulkifli, Deputy Editor of Berita Harian



Berita Harian Newsdesk

A Group Picture NOV 1 2007

The next stop for the LSPR interns was Bloomberg News at Capital Square. The interns were briefed on the financial data provider by its Deputy Bureau Chief for South East Asia, Mr Linus Chua. The students were shown the various methods that Bloomberg used to access information, its reporting and analysis and how it distributed financial news speedily and more accurately. After refreshments and photo-taking it was time to say farewell and a big thank you to Bloomberg for a wonderful visit.

Interns at IPRS Secretariat

Two LSPR students did their internship at IPRS where they learnt how the Institute operated and helped out with the day-to-day work which included designing, writing, researching and organizing events. One of their tasks was to assist in organising the Farewell Dinner for the LSPR team on 1 November at Tepak Sireh, a traditional Malay Restaurant.



LSPR Students performing the medley of a traditional Indonesian Dance

A LSPR representative presenting IPRS' President, K Bhavani with a bouquet

Katrina Tan, Director of Corporate Communications, LSPR receiving a token from K Bhavani

IPRS Honorary treasurer, Daphne Liew with the two winners of Ms Cheerful

The LSPR Farewell Dinner was held at Tepak Sireh, a traditional Malay restaurant at Sultan Gate. Some of the employers of the interns during their stay in Singapore turned up for the evening. The highlight of the evening was an entertaining traditional dance item by the students which showcased a medley of dances from six Indonesian islands namely Bali, Sunda, Kalimantan, Sumatra, Betawi and Irian Jaya. There was also a Personality Contest in which the students walked away with a host of titles ranging from Miss Public Relations, Mr IT Wizard, Miss Shopaholic, Miss Vain to Miss Cheerful.

At the dinner, the students were presented with Certificates. The LSPR interns and their mentors left for Kuala Lumpur the next day. 🌐

Indonesian PR Students Get an "Insider's" view of IPRS

IPRS housed two students from Jakarta's London School of Public Relations (LSPR) during a recent Internship program that LSPR conducted for 14 of its students in Singapore from 21 October to 1 November 2007.

Here's what the two students had to say of their Internship at IPRS.



Dita Komala Putri
Course: Public Relations
London School of Public
Relations, Jakarta

"Public Relations (PR)? The first time I heard this word, I did not understand what exactly it meant. I just knew that PR is about forming new relationships with people. This Internship Programme eventually helped me realise the many other meanings of PR.

The reason I decided to take up a PR course is mainly because a close friend of mine encouraged me to do so. So I enrolled at the STIKOM London School of Public Relations - Jakarta and chose to major in PR. Every year in the course, I gained new knowledge that increased my interest in PR. This is why I decided to join this Internship Programme in Singapore.

The eight days that I spent working at the Institute of Public Relations of Singapore was certainly one of the most unforgettable experience in my life. Things were very different from my life back in college where I just studied, played and hung out with friends. At IPRS, I was taught to adapt to a new environment, meet new people, and work as a team. Initially this sent shock waves through me as I was totally new to this and had never worked before. But I managed to go with the flow and learnt to enjoy my job. I believe that if we loved our job, we'll work with all of our heart.

There is no specific difference between PR in Indonesia and Singapore as I realised that PR is about two-way communication, feedback, making people understand and building relationships. PR also helps build and retain the image of a company.

I would like to thank IPRS for providing this International Internship in Singapore. Though a relatively short duration, I had good work experience and new knowledge on PR." 🌐



Fitriana
Course : Marketing
London School Of Public
Relations, Jakarta

"First of all, I'm glad to have been in Singapore. For me, it has been a good opportunity to work at the Institute of Public Relation of Singapore (IPRS). I joined this internship program, because I wanted to know more about PR. I also wanted get PR experience in an overseas organisation. Besides that, I also wanted to know how I could relate PR to marketing.

I understand that communication is a very important tool. So, while I learnt marketing theories and practices at college, I also needed to learn PR. IPRS is an excellent organisation that creates awareness for the PR Industry in Singapore. I learnt a lot from IPRS during my stint there as an intern. I enjoyed the work environment and the hospitality of the secretariat staff.

One of my tasks was to handle the designing of the IPRS Christmas and Chinese New Year e-vites. I was also required to research for venues on the internet for the IPRS Annual Christmas party. The trust that IPRS bestowed upon me to manage their activities for the event, enhanced my self-confidence. I was excited, because they trained me to be a professional. My partner (Dita) and I also managed the IPRS Farewell party for LSPR students. We brainstormed some ideas for games and were in charge of photography for all the activities we had throughout our stay. This had been a quite an experience and we learnt many other things too.

My expectations of the International Workshop Experience (IWE) 2007 was to learn a lot of interesting things and to meet many people. I've achieved this! I had nice supervisors who accepted me with open arms. Throughout this program, I not only gained much knowledge and work experience but also learnt about Singapore's culture and built new relationships. I also improved my English and my attitude towards work.

I now understand that every country has its own PR system. PR in Indonesia is more focused on crisis management. In Singapore, PR creates more awareness through corporate imaging and event management. PR organisations in other Asian countries could learn a lot about PR from Singapore.

Lastly, I would like to say thank you to LSPR and IPRS for giving me to this lovely opportunity and introducing me to the regional PR community." 🌐



Young PR '3' Nite

The Young PR Council has once again brought out another successful social networking session for both senior and junior PR practitioners in the industry. This time round it was at the J Bar in M-Hotel, which drew more than 40 participants. PR '3' was the theme for the night, as the

Young PR Council wanted three generations of PR practitioners - the past, the present and the future, to meet and brainstorm views and ideas on how the younger generation can contribute more in the PR industry.

Here are some light moments from the networking session



One for the album

Participants enjoying the cosy corner at J Bar while catching up on news

Captured!

Last shot of the night

Young PR Council Chairperson, Ben Wightman, thanking the participants for supporting the networking sessions.

IPRS Honorary Treasurer, Daphne Liew (right) and colleague Nur Jannah Ismael

It Rained Great Fun at the IPRS Christmas Party 2007

Outside it was pouring cats and dogs. Inside the fashionable Rogues Bar at Market Street, PR practitioners, young and old, gathered in an annual IPRS tradition to wish one another well wishes for the season and to catch up with old friends and to welcome the 'new faces'.

up at the party with presents for the gift exchange. The party livened up when it was time for the Lucky Draw with prizes that were kindly sponsored by the Meritus Mandarin Hotel, M-Hotel, Asia Pacific Breweries and Citibank.

The December north-east monsoon downpour did nothing to dampen the pink and gold-themed party as more than 40 IPRS members turned

Below are some memorable moments from the party!



Members having a good time

Catching up on latest news

More prizes!

IPRS Council Member, Albert Tan (right) arriving at the event

Members enjoying their chat

The Young PR Council among the participants

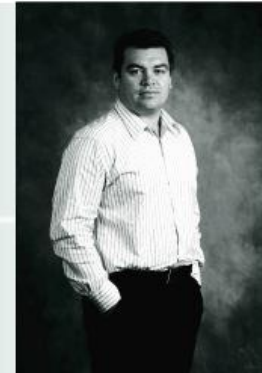
Enjoying a light moment!

Personality Profile

Newly Accredited IPRS Member

John Kerr

Director-South East Asia
Edelman Public Relations Worldwide, Singapore.



1. Congratulations on becoming an Accredited Member of IPRS. Tell us how you feel about it.

Now that I'm a member, I'm intrigued and excited about what happens next. I'm looking forward to spending more time with peers and talking about how we can work together to drive the industry forward - at a time when the rewards (and risks) have potentially never been higher.

2. When and why did you join IPRS in the first place?

I became a member in June 2007 and joined because I believe that if you want to affect positive change, you need to be in the centre, rather than sniping away outside or on the side.

3. Why did you decide to be accredited?

I was urged by another senior IPRS member who told me about the responsibility and work that the team does, who made a compelling case for me to become more active.

4. Do you think PR practitioners should consider getting accredited? Why?

You need to understand why you're getting accredited and what you're hoping to give back. If you're doing it for the extra letters behind your name, then I would say not to bother.

5. Do you think accreditation gives you an edge over the rest? How so?

Not really - there are some super-smart un-accredited practitioners out there. It will require a legislative or market framework that demands accreditation that will give the initiative true meaning.

6. Can you share with us your background in the PR Industry?

17 years in marketing and PR, based in New Zealand, the UK, Singapore, Japan and the USA. 11 years in agency, 6 years in-house. Bachelor of Commerce and MBA, both in marketing.

7. How much do you think the PR industry in Asia has evolved over the years as compared to the West?

PR in Asia is more varied and vibrant than in North America (NA) - this is a factor of budgets (big in NA) more than anything else, which is why I'd characterise NA PR as expertise-deep, while Asia is expertise-wide. You need to be a skilled multitasker and varied relationship builder in Asia.

8. Do you think we are lagging in any way?

Smaller budgets means less risk and experimentation in PR programs. Great example of this is social media, where clients in Asia know they need to undertake programs, but have so many other things to do as well, or are too concerned by the potential risks. In NA you can take a small amount of budget from a campaign (which would sustain large campaigns in Asia) and be more programmed.

9. What has been your biggest challenge in this region?

Balancing the diversity of geography, with the web of stakeholder relationships to be credible counsel for clients with varied business objectives and different stakeholders of importance.

10. How have you been able to overcome such challenges?

Ours is a people and learning business - if you're not willing to ask for help and (most importantly) listen to that help, then you're in deep trouble!

11. What are your plans for the year ahead?

Be challenged, learn and grow, be challenged, learn and grow...

Newly Accredited Members

Eight IPRS members came forward for accreditation in November 2007. It is a positive sign that more IPRS people are coming forward and recognising the importance of being accredited.

The Newly Accredited Members are:

1. Rachel Thong
Oliver Wyman

2. Ben Wightman
Marcom Manager
SAP Asia Pte Ltd

3. Margaret Cunico
Senior Vice President
Weber Shandwick Worldwide Singapore

4. Sheila Rasu
Business development Director
Fulford Public Relation

5. Winnie Tan Wei Nee
Lecturer
Temasek Polytechnic

6. Magdelene Tan
Assistant Vice President
Deutsche Bank AG

7. John Kerr
Director-South East Asia
Edelman Public Relations Worldwide, Singapore.

8. Vincent Cosgrove
Communications Manager - Asia Pacific/Middle East
Shell Eastern Petroleum



INDUSTRY BUZZ



The International Public Relations Association (IPRA) is calling for entries from local, regional, national and International PR programmes carried out or completed in 2007/2008 for the Golden World Awards 2008. Deadline for entries is 1 February 2008 and the Gala Dinner will take place in London in June this year. Details can be obtained at www.ipra.org/detail.asp?articleid=331

Rachel Thong has just joined Oliver Wyman, a leading management consulting firm as Head

of Marketing Asia Pacific. She was previously with ABN AMRO as Head of Communication for the Singapore office. Rachel was with ABN AMRO for over four years where she was responsible for marketing and communication for the transaction banking business before she moved to her role as Head of Communication. Rachel has over 13 years experience in corporate communication, brand and client management, planning and implementation of marketing and communication programmes in the banking and advertising industries. At Oliver Wyman, Rachel will be responsible for all marketing and communication efforts in Asia Pacific.

Chitra Rajaram, Regional Managing Director SEA for Gollin Harris is leaving the agency as of February 2008. She joined Gollin Harris in 2005, prior to which she was with SPH for 7 years as the Tamil Murasu Editor.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DATE	PROGRAMME	
January 2008		
23 - 25 January	Course	Introduction to Public Relations
29 January	Lunch Talk	Global Communication: Mind & Message
February 2008		
14 February	Lunch Talk	Managing Links and Pings: A Look at How Social Media Can be Used to Alleviate Crisis
11 February	Course	Diploma in Public Relations and Mass Communication
TBA	Workshop	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
March 2008		
14 March	PRISM AWARDS 2008	
27 March	Annual General Meeting	
April 2008		
8 & 9 April	Workshop	Who Says Writing a Speech is Tough?
May 2008		
8 May	Workshop	Ace the Media Like a Pro

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