

The Media CSR Forum Activity Report 2012

Objectives and purpose

The "Media Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Forum" (the "Forum") is a group of media organisations developing CSR and sustainability practices for the media sector. The meetings take place in London, but our activities are increasingly international in scope.

The Forum was established in 2001 in recognition that the practice of CSR and sustainability for media companies has many unique features that set it apart from other business sectors. Members benefit from a collaborative approach. Our work includes:

- developing an understanding of the implications of CSR for media organisations
- identifying areas for focus
- sharing best practices
- engaging with stakeholders
- running collaborative projects on key issues

The Forum produces an Annual Report on its activities; this is the Report for 2012.

Membership

At the end of 2012, the members of the Forum were:

Aegis Media, The BBC, BSkyB, Channel 4, Guardian Media Group, hibu, Informa, IPC Media, ITV, Modern Times Group, News International, Pearson, Random House, Reed Elsevier, TF1 Group, Trinity Mirror, Turner Broadcasting, United Business Media and Virgin Media.

Secretariat

Carnstone Partners LLP (formerly Acona Partners LLP) continued to provide secretariat services to the Forum, and chaired Forum meetings throughout 2012. The Secretariat is the first point of contact for stakeholders and new member enquiries. Please telephone +44(0)20 7839 0182 or send an email to: mediacsrforum@carnstone.com.

Activity summary

Engaging with stakeholders

Our meetings are themed around a topical issue and always include a presentation from one or several stakeholders leading to a round-table discussion under Chatham House rules. During 2012, we explored the following themes:

Q1 – Impact of advertising

- **Kate Cox, Head of Strategy, MPG Media Contacts, a Havas company**, presented research undertaken by MPG on 'meaningful brands' and how differentiation on CSR issues can give companies a competitive advantage in a crowded marketplace
- **Guy Shrubsole, Director, PIRC**, shared the findings of the joint report with WWF, 'Think of me as evil? Opening the ethical debates in advertising'

Q2 – Partnerships

- **Gib Bulloch, Executive Director, Accenture Development Partnerships (ADP)**, gave an overview of how ADP uses the skills of Accenture's employees to broker multi-stakeholder groups to tackle development issues

Q3 – The future of media

- **Dave Coplin, Chief Envisioning Officer, Microsoft**, put forward his views on the key trends and changes in technology and the ways in which society engages with technology
- **Gerard Drenth, Director of Strategy and Scenarios, NormannPartners**, addressed how scenarios might be used by companies to address sustainability issues

Q4 – Employee engagement

- **Bianca Shevlin, Media Relations Manager, Sustainable Development, SABMiller**, talked about how SABMiller was able to engage its employees in and through sustainability with the 'Ten Priorities, One Future' campaign

In addition to our regular quarterly meetings, we hosted two lunchtime debates:

What are the material ESG issues for the media sector?

Aegis Media hosted the debate on 3rd October. It was attended by representatives of the media sector and the investor community and included the following panelists: Mike Tyrell (Editor, SRI-Connect and Chair), Dr Rory Sullivan (Ethix advisers and author of [Eurosif's Media Report 2012](#)), James Featherby (Chairman, Church of England's Ethical Advisory Group) and Simon Hodgson (Chair, Media CSR Forum and Senior Partner, Carnstone).

The debate addressed the following:

- The challenges for media companies in defining their ESG issues
- What investors look for from media companies
- The role of 'content' as the key ESG issue
- How a media company might articulate its ESG issues to investors
- What social purpose means for a media company

A summary of the debate is available [here](#).

Understanding the environmental impacts of media

Representatives from over fifteen media and publishing companies met at New World Restaurant in London's Chinatown on 15th May to debate the environmental impacts of media.

Rauno Heinonen, VP of Corporate Communications & IR at Alma Media in Finland, gave an overview of research commissioned by his company to help develop its understanding of the comparative impacts of print and online media, taking into account a range of environmental and ecological factors.

Neil Everett from [PREPS](#) (The Publishers' database for Responsible Environmental Paper Sourcing) talked about how research on environmental impacts can be put into practice by influencing the right people in the right functions and at the right levels.

Other activities

The 'brainprint' of media. As part of the research for a report on the subject, the Secretariat conducted interviews with Forum members and key stakeholders. A first draft is in progress and the final report will be published in 2013. It will seek to address key issues including legitimacy (should companies address 'brainprint?') and measurement.

Ranking media CR issues

In 2011, Dr Rory Sullivan (see Activity Summary Q2) posed a challenge to the Forum: define your material issues before someone else does it for you. Taking Rory's cue, the Secretariat has ranked the media CR issues identified in the 2008 [stakeholder survey](#) into the categories of material, strategic and operational with appropriate caveats for certain media subsectors. A first draft of the report has been circulated for feedback from member companies which we will then consult on externally. The report will be published in early 2013.

Outreach. The Secretariat continues to speak on behalf of the Forum when invited to do so. In 2012, the work of the Forum was presented at CSR events/conferences in the UK, Scandinavia and France, including the Transformational Media Summit and the World Forum Lille. The Secretariat also spoke at members' internal events on numerous occasions.

The Media CSR Forum website

www.mediacsforum.org acts as the first point of entry for prospective members and inquiries about Forum activities. We continue to receive requests for information from a broad group of stakeholders, including academics and students, media analysts and other industry professionals.

In 2013, the website attracted some 2,715 visitors from 100 countries. In response to requests for more regular Forum updates, a [Twitter feed](#) was added in 2010. The number of followers currently stands at 489.

Plans for 2013

The 'brainprint' of media report

As noted above, a report on the brainprint of media is to be published early in 2013. The objective is to write a report that will stimulate (and help frame) discussion on this emerging topic.

Ranking media CR issues report

As noted above, a report ranking media CR issues is to be published early in 2013. The aim of the report is to support a conversation between the sector and its stakeholders leading to better, more focused discussions on what issues are most important for the sector and specific subsectors.

Conference

A joint event will be hosted in 2013 for the UK, French and Nordic forums. It is expected that it will focus on the issue of content and will be linked to the 'brainprint' report. Part of the event is likely to be public facing and members will be encouraged to bring colleagues from areas of their business related to the subjects under discussion.

Governance and strategy

Following the internal 'how's it going?' exercise in 2011 to establish how well the Forum is working for members and whether the strategy needed a refresh, a further round of individual conversations with all members will be held in the first quarter of 2013. The suggestions generated in these conversations will then be presented and approved by members at the regular meetings.

Forum costs and expenditure

	Income	Of which ...		
		Administration	Projects	Other
2010	£25,600	£21,000	£2,100	£2,500
2011	£27,550	£21,500	£3,650	£2,400
2012	£27,300	£18,300*	£14,500**	£113***

* Quarterly meetings, meeting with members and other stakeholders

** Events, researching and writing reports – overspend of £5,613 contributed pro-bono by Carnstone

*** Website maintenance by external agency