



Media **CSR** Forum

Annual Report 2015

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## Participants

The 'Media Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Forum' (the 'Forum') is a partnership between 26 major companies, representing the full breadth of the media spectrum. It started as a UK-focussed initiative but participating companies now come from all over the world. Together, these companies work to define and develop responsible business practices for the media sector. This report summarises the activities of the Forum during 2015 and plans for 2016.



# Activity summary

## Stakeholder engagement

The Media CSR Forum is often approached by stakeholders wanting to know more about corporate responsibility in the media sector. Enquiries range from ad hoc funding requests, to academics needing information about existing research, to investors probing into specific areas of media sustainability. Among the more formal engagements in 2015, the Forum hosted an eight-strong business delegation from South Korea and provided input to FTSE4Good on measuring content integrity.

## Forum meetings

Meetings are usually themed around a particular challenge or topic. Carnstone invites one or two expert stakeholders to present their perspective and insights, followed by a group discussion under the Chatham House rule. The stakeholders presenting to the Forum include academics, policy makers, NGOs, think tanks, media peers and representatives from other industries. In 2015, the meetings were organised around the themes below.

### **Inclusion and social mobility**

David Johnston, Chief Executive of the Social Mobility Foundation, presented to the group about social mobility; why it is an issue and what companies can do to promote it. David pointed out that media has a unique responsibility not only to address social mobility internally (like all other industries), but also in 'setting the tone' in society as a whole. He highlighted that media companies are where banks, law and accountancy firms started out 5-10 years ago, building initiatives around visible diversity such as gender and race. Such initiatives often fail to address social mobility. It is a common problem that inclusion outreach/community programmes are typically patchy and geared towards awareness-raising rather than talent development and recruitment. Concluding his talk, David gave some guidelines as to what companies can do to increase social mobility, including restructuring outreach activities with schools to be longer term and aiming at clear outcomes; opening up sector-wide work experience programmes such as PRIME in the law sector; and recording employee data in meaningful categories, e.g. educational and economic background, to establish a sound baseline. The meeting was hosted by Virgin Media.

## Setting sustainability strategy

Hannah Harrison, Sustainable Development Manager at SABMiller spoke to the Forum about putting sustainable development into the purpose of business using 'Prosper' as a case study. Prosper is SABMiller's new-ish sustainable development strategy, setting out ambitious targets towards 2020. Hannah explained how it took two years to develop the new strategy, building it bottom-up in close consultation with all functions and regions, and involving lots of external stakeholders. This created a sense of shared ownership; a necessity in a highly decentralised company like SABMiller. She also talked about key differences between the previous SD strategy ('10 Priorities. One Future') and Prosper, particularly the desire to move away from simply reducing risk to creating positive change and getting people excited. To create a shared vision of the future that employees could buy into, Prosper framed objectives and challenges around different *worlds*, namely:

- *A thriving world*, where incomes and quality of life are growing;
- *A sociable world*, where our beers are developed, marketed, sold and consumed in a way that maximises individual and societal wellbeing;
- *A resilient world*, where our businesses, local communities and ecosystems share uninterrupted access to safe, clean water;
- *A clean world* where nothing goes to waste and emissions are dramatically lower; and
- *A productive world* where land is used responsibly, food supply is secure, biodiversity is protected and brewing crops can be accessed at reasonable prices.

Lastly, Hannah emphasised the need for rigorous measurement. To this effect, Prosper is underpinned by SAM, a reporting tool used for internal and external purposes. The meeting was kindly hosted by News UK.

## Understanding the environmental impacts of digital content

Media content is increasingly produced, accessed and shared using digital technology. Consequently, the environmental impacts of digital content are likely to get much bigger. In a broader context, data centres account for around 2% of global emissions and 60% of the global population is not online (as of 2015). In recognition of this and the fact that the digital ecosystem is constantly evolving, 2015 saw the launch of a Forum working group to explore the carbon impacts of digital media content. The kick-off meeting in Q3 featured presentations and insights from the BBC, Guardian News and Media, and Carnstone. This work will continue in 2016.

## Media and climate change

Craig Bennett, Chief Executive of Friends of the Earth, returned to present to the group on the topic of media and climate change. Having presented once before, in 2009, this was an opportunity to take stock and comment on how the discussion has developed since. Craig holds the view that when it comes to climate change, the primary impact of media is in its content impacts ('brainprint') rather than its operational footprint. He noted that the sector has become more aware of its content impacts e.g. with initiatives like 'Rainforest Rescue' (Sky), 'Keep It In The Ground' (Guardian News and Media) and the Forum's publication of the report 'Mirrors or Movers: framing the debate about the impact of media content'. He argued that many companies remain stuck in sustainability reporting when they should be examining their business models or engage in other more meaningful activities. He posed a challenge to media companies to counter environmental stereotyping (e.g. representing climate change merely as a tale of doom and gloom) and to provide inspiration in the fight against climate change. The meeting was hosted by MTG.

## Mirrors or Movers III

2015 saw the third edition of the Forum's Mirrors or Movers conference, a one-day event bringing together media professionals and interested stakeholders to learn about the link between sustainability and content impacts. Free to attend and open to the public, the event was hosted by RELX



DAN Future Proof @DANFutureProof - Jun 3  
Exploring "frugal innovation" and how we can use it in media with Jaideep Prabhu at #MirrorsOrMovers

Group in central London. It attracted 90 delegates, including representatives from 30 media companies worldwide and media specialists from the investment community. Mirrors or Movers III featured presentations from eight subject experts in a highly interactive setting. The day was organised along three key themes: innovation, intrusion and inclusion.

## Innovation

The keynote speakers were:

- Colin Mayer, author of 'Firm Commitment: Why the Corporation is Failing Us and How to Restore Trust in It';
- Peter Moores Professor of Management Studies, Saïd Business School, University of Oxford; and
- Jaideep Praphu, co-author of 'Frugal Innovation' and Professor of Marketing and Indian Business, Judge Business School, University of Cambridge.

The presenters were asked to respond to the question,



**Katrina Crossley** @kbccrossley · Jun 3

How many media companies have an alignment of ownership and purpose? Without it, no effective governance. #MirrorsOrMovers

'If you could start from scratch, how would you design a media company to stay in business for the next 100 years?' The session emphasised the need for companies to operate with purpose if they are to thrive in the long run. It also



**Media CSR Forum** @MediaCSRForum · Jun 3

Financial capital is just one of six capitals making firms successful. For media, social and intellectual capital is key. #MirrorsOrMovers

featured a meticulous discussion of how media companies can

successfully integrate the four core attributes of frugal innovation into their innovation process: affordability, simplicity, quality and sustainability.

## Intrusion

The experts were:

- Alistair Dent, Head of Product Strategy, iProspect;
- Renate Samson, Chief Executive, Big Brother Watch; and
- Colin Strong, MD, Verve Ventures at Verve.

This session focused on how media companies can understand and act



**Mari Vonen** @marivonen · Jun 3

Question of the day: Why do I trust Google more than I trust the (UK) government? #privacy #MirrorsOrMovers

on the rapidly developing norms around privacy. The experts all agreed that media content is becoming increasingly personalised and data-driven. The experts also conceded that there is no 'silver bullet' when striking a balance



**Rauno Heinonen** @RaunoAHeinonen · Jun 3

#Dataprivacy from a consumer perspective is a now messy system, comments Verve's researcher Colin Strong at #MirrorsOrMovers

between privacy concerns and commercial

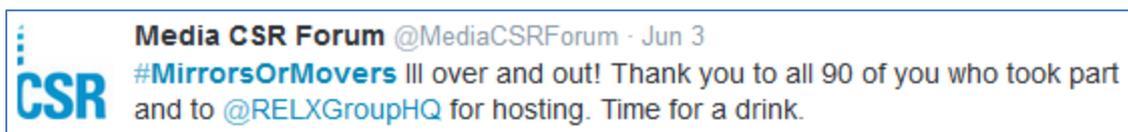
interests. Public perception of the topic remains unformed, and there may well be 'nasty surprises' ahead.

## Inclusion

The experts were:

- Danuta Kean, Analyst, Writer and Media Commentator;
- Elizabeth Pollitzer, Director, Portia Ltd; and
- Amanda Ariss, Executive Director, Creative Diversity Network.

The speakers were asked to respond to two questions: 'What is the role of media companies in creating inclusive societies?' and 'does it pay to be an inclusive media company?' Between them, the speakers laid out the state of affairs and challenges within three distinct segments of the media; broadcasting, book publishing and scientific publishing. Mirroring the conclusions from the previous conference, it became clear that diversity in media is about more than gender and ethnicity. Does the culture in media companies allow for a range of personality traits to thrive? A quick survey among the conference participants revealed that three quarters believe the media sector is behind other industries when it comes to inclusion.



## Online

Between them, the **Media CSR Forum website** and the **Mirrors and Movers website**, created for the report and conference of the same name, attracted around 5,900 unique visitors in 2015.

The Media CSR Forum website holds all research published to date by the Forum, a complete list of participating companies and other relevant information. The Mirrors or Movers website hosts reports and videos, and features information relating to the three conferences held to- date. It also provides a home for future work on this subject by the Forum.

The Twitter feed, established in 2010, has 1065 followers to date, up 13% compared to last year.



# Plans for 2016

## Forum meetings

The Forum plans to organise forum meetings and specialist sessions addressing some of the following themes in 2016:

- Diversity – in the workplace and outwards, particularly social mobility;
- Data privacy – regulatory, social and technological developments;
- Content – managing and measuring impacts; media’s role in mainstreaming and translating sustainability concepts, connecting with content colleagues;
- Environment – especially understanding the environmental impacts of digital content and communicating sustainability;
- SDGs – what do they mean for media companies?;
- Supply chain – social and environmental issues across the value chain;
- Responsible advertising – ethics and governance;
- Regulation – Modern Slavery Act, EU directives, etc.; and
- Accessibility – social and technological developments.

## Mirrors or Movers III

The Forum plans to host a fourth conference in 2016. It is likely to be a one-day event open to the public and will further address how media content influences society.

# About the Forum

## Objectives

The Forum is a project by Carnstone Partners LLP, bringing together media organisations on a regular basis to explore and discuss corporate responsibility and sustainability issues relevant to the sector.

The Forum was established in 2001 in recognition of the fact that the practice of sustainability for media companies has many unique features that set it apart from other business sectors. Our objectives include:

- Developing an understanding of the implications of CSR for media organisations;
- Identifying areas for focus;
- Sharing best practices;
- Engaging with stakeholders; and
- Running collaborative projects on key issues.

The Forum produces an Annual Report on its activities. This is the Report for 2015.

## Participating in the Forum

Participants benefit from an open environment in which to discuss, under Chatham House rules, the sustainability issues faced by the sector. The Forum is able to use its collective size to engage with a range of key stakeholders on the most pressing issues, both through internal meetings and through public events. Lastly, the Forum produces original research into and on behalf of the media sector, which participants use to inform their own strategy. Participation is restricted to large media companies. The participation fee for 2016 will be £2,000.

## Income

The Forum budget comes entirely from participation fees. Having previously been organised as separate entities, in 2015 the Nordic Media CR Forum (Nordic) merged with the Media CSR Forum (UK).

	2013	2014	2015
UK	£28,250	£36,600	£45,000
Nordic	£8,000	£8,200	NA
<b>Total</b>	<b>£36,250</b>	<b>£44,800</b>	<b>£45,000</b>

## Governance

The Forum is a multi-client project by Carnstone Partners LLP, managed on a day-to-day basis by Christian Toennesen and chaired by Simon Hodgson, both of Carnstone.

Carnstone meets on a 1:1 basis with participants at the end of each year to gather feedback on how the Forum is meeting their needs and to discuss potential topics to be addressed in the following year. Actions and initiatives arising from this review are then discussed and agreed by participants in a consensual manner.

Christian Toennesen is the first point of contact for stakeholders and new participant enquiries:

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