

January/February 2010

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER: Goals for 2010

By Lauren Libitz, President, YIABC

At the start of every New Year we are bombarded with questions about our resolutions. I don't really like making resolutions, since they seem inherently fleeting. People talk about them incessantly in January, and rarely mention them again until December when they start thinking about their new ones for the next New Year. [Read more.](#)



Ring in the New Year with a Revamped EDIT

By Linda Sanders, VP Communications, Yankee IABC

It's a new year and a new EDIT! In our 2009 member survey, you told us that you wanted us to reduce the amount of email we are sending you. We heard you — and we're moving to a bi-monthly schedule for EDIT. [Read more.](#)

Let's Get Social: Yankee IABC's Social Media Strategy

By Manya Chylinski, Director of Networking, Yankee IABC

Like so many organizations, we realized that Yankee IABC needs a formal social media strategy, so we can help our members successfully navigate these waters. [Read more.](#)

Heritage Region Conference Recap

By Sara Bruya

The IABC Heritage Region Conference, held recently in Cleveland, OH, was an event clearly packed with valuable information for business communicators. As a fairly new member of IABC and a grad student in Communication Management at Emerson College, I found much to learn at the conference about the most pertinent issues facing business communicators today. [Read more.](#)

Learning and LUVing It

Yankee IABC Members and Guests Learn About Employee Engagement and Social Media at Southwest Airlines

By John Klingenstein, VP Learning Opportunities, Yankee IABC

[Read article.](#)

Don't Forget Your 2010 Professional Development Plan

Yankee IABC can help. [Read more.](#)

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At the start of every New Year we are bombarded with questions about our resolutions. I don't really like making resolutions, since they seem inherently fleeting. People talk about them incessantly in January, and rarely mention them again until December when they start thinking about their new ones for the next New Year.

Instead, I like to set goals for myself, both personally and professionally. Labeling them as "goals" makes them seem more actionable and measurable. To help track my progress over the course of the year, I set specific targets for reaching each one, which greatly appeals to my love of making lists and checking things off to feel accomplished.

I also try to make sure I'm setting goals that are achievable — being realistic about what I can REALLY accomplish in one year helps make them seem less daunting.

I also think it can be incredibly motivating to see how others are planning to challenge themselves professionally over the next year – whether it be to gain experience in a new area, keep up with trends, learn a new skill, explore a new career or attend a [Yankee IABC event](#) to reconnect with others in your profession (shameless plug, I know.)

With that in mind, I started [a conversation in our Yankee IABC LinkedIn group](#) asking you to share your goals for 2010. I shared mine and encourage you to do the same. I hope this starts your new year with renewed motivation and inspiration.

I wish you much success and happiness in 2010.

Best wishes,

Lauren

P.S. Next issue I'll tackle one of the other social media tools I discussed in my Fall column – Facebook!

Ring in the New Year with a Revamped EDIT

By Linda Sanders, VP Communications, Yankee IABC

It's a new year and a new EDIT!

In our 2009 member survey, you told us that you wanted us to reduce the amount of email we are sending you. We heard you — and we're moving to a bi-monthly schedule for EDIT.

Don't worry. EDIT will still be a valuable resource for you to keep in touch with other members. It also provides local information in a convenient, easy-to-read package. And you'll still find unique articles by volunteers, recaps of past events, details about upcoming events and information about the benefits and rewards of IABC membership.

And the Yankee IABC mission is still to connect you to other business communicators. To do this, we are leveraging a myriad of other communication vehicles including the [Yankee IABC Web site](#), [LinkedIn group](#) and emailed invitations to events. These channels, in addition to communications from IABC headquarters, allow Yankee IABC members to connect with each other on a real-time basis.

With our new design and a new, every-other-month, publication schedule, EDIT makes it easier than ever to stay connected with Yankee IABC members, news and events.

[Email your comments](#) and let us know what you think about the changes.

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Let's Get Social: Yankee IABC's Social Media Strategy

By Manya Chylinski, Director of Networking, Yankee IABC

Like so many organizations, we realized that Yankee IABC needs a formal social media strategy so that we can help our members successfully navigate these waters. We will also be posting this information to our [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#) groups.

If you haven't joined us on LinkedIn or Facebook yet, please do. We'd love to have you in this part of our community.

The Yankee IABC social media policy applies to the chapter's LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Our objectives:

- Building awareness of Yankee IABC and our content
- Developing and maintaining connections and relationships with our members and potential members
- Establishing Yankee IABC as a leader in the communications industry
- Encouraging membership participation

What is acceptable to post:

- Job openings (in LinkedIn only in the Jobs section)
- Looking for connections
- Requests for communications or vendor resources and recommendations
- Discussions on communication ideas and concepts
- Current trends/news in communications
- Local (New England) communications-related events (subject to removal if not appropriate)
- Introductions to the group and elevator pitches when you personally are looking for work
- Single links to blog or Web sites, with a small amount of text. You are welcome to post a synopsis of a post with a link at the bottom of the post.

What is not acceptable to post/tweet:

- Selling, trading or bartering anything: sports tickets, CDs, DVDs, online events, relationship advice, personals, etc.
- Introductions or elevator pitches for another person — not a member of Yankee IABC — looking for work
- Posting the same item more than once

Anyone breaking the rules may be deleted without warning from the group.

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact Manya Chylinski, Director of Networking (manya@alley424.com).

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Check out upcoming IABC Conferences:

[IABC Global Communication Conference, Hong Kong, April 7-9](#)

[IABC 2010 World Conference, Toronto, Canada June 6-9](#)

Heritage Region Conference Recap

By Sara Bruya

The IABC Heritage Region Conference, held recently in Cleveland, OH, was an event clearly packed with valuable information for business communicators. As a fairly new member of IABC and a grad student in Communication Management at Emerson College, I found much to learn at the conference about the most pertinent issues facing business communicators today.

What I found most striking were conversations about how both the field, and the skills required to do the job, have changed dramatically since the advent of social media tools. I was also struck by the dilemma that many communicators face in creating and implementing social media strategies, where none have existed before. Many communicators seem overwhelmed with the additional responsibility of catching up and keeping up with the latest developments in online communication, which according to keynote speakers such as Shel Holtz and Gerard Braud, are changing the game.

Holtz addressed the challenges facing organizations in this rapidly evolving era of public participation in company message-creation through social media. In his presentation, entitled "Tactical Transparency," Holtz suggests that increased "access to information and the ability to spread information quickly through social media leave companies no option: they must adopt cultures of transparency."

He encouraged companies to embrace employee use of social media on behalf of the organization, and to assume that all company information is subject to going public. On this point, he quoted recent IABC EXCEL Award winner Brian Dunn, CEO of Best Buy. "There isn't anything I send to employees that I wouldn't be prepared to have published on the front page of the newspaper," Dunn said. "...[S]ocial media, the explosion of technology, has just amplified the folly of the notion of internal versus external voice. I don't think there's such a thing anymore."

Although Dunn is an enlightened CEO regarding social media, the challenge of educating upper management about public-information in an online age was a recurring theme at the conference.

Another speaker, Robert Hastings, former acting assistant secretary of defense for Public Affairs, insisted that communicators in this position need to consider the C-suite as their primary target audience. If necessary, the communicator needs to create a campaign targeting management on some of the critical issues for which their decision-making affects the company's communication strategy.

Hastings suggested that many companies are now including communication professionals at the top level of decision-making, recognizing that consistent communication is critical to operational efficiency and bottom-line success.

The conference also included dynamic keynote presentations by some of Cleveland's most prominent communicators including Mark Crowley of Sherwin Williams, Terry Stuart of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Bob DiBiasio of the Cleveland Indians.

For me, the Dine-Around was probably the most enjoyable experience of the conference. It provided an opportunity to meet and talk more intimately with conference attendees, presenters and even some other students like myself — cementing new friendships that I will keep as souvenirs of my enjoyable IABC conference experience in Cleveland.

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Learning and LUVing It

Yankee IABC Members and Guests Learn About Employee Engagement and Social Media at Southwest Airlines

By John Klingenstein, VP Learning Opportunities, Yankee IABC

Spend any time on a Southwest Airlines flight, see a Southwest ad on television, experience Southwest on one of any number of social media channels, or speak with a Southwest employee and you instantly know that the company has an engaged work force that strives to provide the best customer service experience possible.

On October 7, 2009, almost 50 Yankee IABC members and guests heard first-hand about employee engagement efforts at Southwest Airlines.


Millie Richter, Employee Communications Specialist for Southwest Airlines, presented "Employee Engagement & Social Media on a Low-Fare budget." The event was held in the Providence, Rhode Island office of RDW Group, Inc., New England's largest independent communications agency, which also has offices in Boston and Worcester, Massachusetts.


Millie outlined the history of Southwest, which officially became airborne on June 18, 1971, servicing the "Texas Triangle," of Dallas, Houston and San Antonio. Now, more than 38 years later, Southwest has over 500 aircraft that fly more than 3,200 times a day to 66 cities and services over 100 million passengers a year.


"We are a customer service business that happens to fly airplanes," explained Millie. "Our fun, family-oriented culture helps us maintain our competitive advantage."


Communications, including an array of social media tools plays a key role in employee engagement and promotion of a "Fun Loving Attitude," which permeates every aspect of the Southwest Culture.


Employee communications at Southwest Airlines takes place each day, each week and each month through a variety of means, including:


 Today@SWA, a one page newsletter on company and industry news that is posted on dedicated bulletin boards at every site. (Many Southwest employees do not have daily computer access; the same information is distributed via company email.)

 Gary Kell's News Line — Chairman and CEO Gary Kelly records a news line each week on a variety of topics ranging from stock performance to company milestones. Each week a different employee receives a "shout out" from Gary

 RedBelly Radio, BlogSouthwest.com — a blog on a variety of topics

 SWA TVA — Video programming for employees with how to topics, ads and leadership messages

 Pulse Point Surveys — Weekly employee surveys with topics ranging from FUN to the Informative

 LUVLines — a full-color 32-page magazine distributed to all employees. Includes monthly employee feature and an employee number imbedded to win two passes

In addition each quarter in LUVLines the Southwest Scorecard is printed, which provides employees an overview of 13 metrics across five areas that affect performance. In addition to his annual State of the Union address, Gary typically records a mid-year business DVD, although this year he has



is from a Southwest Airlines ad campaign promoting online notifications for ticket sales and is a play on the sound heard before the Southwest tag line "You are now free to move about the country."

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emphasized face-to-face communications and has visited more than 35 work locations across the country.

Employee engagement is evident in external social media tools including the company's *Nuts About Southwest* blog (blog 2.0, the new site, was launched in May 2008 and was named Best Blog for 2008 for the second year in a row by PR News) that features more than 30 employee bloggers from all corporate sectors who connect customer to the Southwest Culture. The company also has its own Southwest Airlines You Tube Channel, more than 7,000 daily followers on Twitter and a presence on Facebook in which airline operations status is updated daily along with marketing messages, news updates and typical Southwest fun.

"Our approach is that everyone is a reporter," said Millie. "Twitter and other social media tools provide opportunities for us to set the story and the tone versus waiting for someone else. Some of the things we have learned related to communications are to establish channels before a crisis, to not be afraid to join the conversation, to act fast — don't wait to be perfect and to build a strong team.

"Culture is so important at Southwest, and through our spirit incentive program, Operation Kick Tail, we regularly reward employees for helping us achieve our corporate goals of low cost, customer satisfaction and employee spirit. But it's more than that. Through communications we emphasize Living the Southwest Way, of having a Warrior's Spirit and a Servant's Heart. We expect employees to follow the Golden Rule, which is to treat others as you expect to be treated. We want you to take your job seriously but not yourself; we want your spirit to shine through.

It's clear from listening to Millie that the Southwest Way continues to work well.

"It's been a fun ride," add Millie. "Where else can you be yourself and be encouraged to come up with some many fun and different ideas."

Don't Forget Your 2010 Professional Development Plan

By Pat Masterson

Why do you volunteer? When volunteers are asked why they do more than read the Yankee IABC newsletter or attend events, many say they find that more participation builds their professional network, their resume, their skill base and their knowledge. As your thoughts turn to a new year and new beginnings, an item on your list may be professional development. And Yankee IABC can help.

As a leading association in organizational communications, IABC is in front of communications best practices and trends. This draws top-of-the-pack communicators who are thinkers, influencers and creators. When these individuals get together to plan, develop or implement, the results are dynamic. Yankee IABC has some of the most influential communications leaders in its ranks, and they take the time to participate in making the association relevant. Why not you?

Yankee IABC can offer you a variety of opportunities for 2010. In fact, we will customize a volunteer opportunity to fit your time and your goals.

Opportunities

- **Greeters and Welcomers** at events — gives you the opportunity to meet and network
- **Writers** — expand your portfolio



IABC INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATORS

Yankee

The **Yankee Chapter** of the **International Association of Business Communicators** (IABC) connects more than 220 communications professionals from Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Contact us via email at info@yankeeiabc.org or visit us at www.yankeeiabc.org to learn about networking, professional development, job opportunities, volunteering, membership, and other Chapter-related business.

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- **Researchers** — add this important skill to your resume (immediate needs include preparing a report on Yankee IABC competitor groups, a plan for presenting webinars, a report on member usage of social media, a report on membership demographics)
- **Event Team** — boost your planning skills by getting involved with teams, venues and programs

Volunteers Impact Progress (VIPs)

- Jessica Faulkner, a fairly new member who works at Teradyne, jumped right in when she joined Yankee IABC. She has helped with events and as a greeter for networking activities.
- Nancy Wright, a long-time member who owns her own consulting practice, helped grade Silver Quill entries this year.

Let us know how we can help get you started on your 2010 professional development plans. Contact Pat Masterson, ABC (617) 872-5046.

Upcoming Events*

March 14-19 & 21-26: During Boston's Restaurant Week, Yankee IABC board members will host "Dine-Arounds" at several restaurants in the New England area. This is an opportunity for you to connect with members in a smaller, more personal environment. Details and registration coming in February.

April (date TBD): Personal branding seminar led by a leading personal branding and social media expert. Details coming in March.

May 11: Learn about best practices in communication and hear case studies of award-winning communications work from an expert panel. Details and registration coming in April.

May or June (date TBD): An "independents panel" — [join the discussion on our LinkedIn group](#) to share your thoughts.

**Events listed are those currently being planned by the chapter. Please know they are subject to change based on interest and finalizing logistics.*