

EDITOR'S NOTE



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Guest Editor



Dear reader!

Should communication management for organisations be evidence-based? And if so, is it possible? These questions have been on my mind for a long time, ever since I worked as a practitioner in communication management and even more so since I am a researcher in communication science. Evidence-based practice is a term often used in the context of healthcare where it means that practitioners carefully, explicitly and judiciously use the existing evidence to take decisions about action to be taken to solve problems. Evidence-based practitioners are able to link their own observations and interpretations to scientific knowledge. This seems a very plausible way of working, not only for healthcare professionals, but for all professionals regardless of their field, including communication management professionals. Healthcare professionals can find their scientific knowledge in medical science, communication management professionals in communication science. Over the last decades communication science has developed into a rich discipline where a lot of research is done from all kinds of perspectives. There is a lot of evidence to be found in communication scientific research, evidence that can be used to take decisions in practice and to improve the management of communication in organisations, especially evidence from research that is done with an empirical-analytical approach.

In this third issue of Communication Management Review we collected five studies with such an approach with a variety of topics and methods, two studies used quantitative content analysis, two used a survey and one a vignette based experiment.

The first study, on the influence of communication leadership qualities on the crisis preparedness strategy of an organisation, shows that there are international differences in the way communication leaders implement crisis preparedness strategies around the globe. Communication leaders in North America, Europe and a combination of Asia, Middle East and South America differ significantly in that.

The second study shows that so-called astroturfing, when lobbyists sponsor an interest group that pretends to be a grassroots movement, is negatively perceived. The results indicate that stakeholders perceive an astroturfing organization as barely trustful and authentic, even less so if the practice is perceived to be used more frequently. Astroturfing triggers negative

associations of manipulation and it damages organizations' trustful relationships with their publics.

The third study, also on online communication, demonstrates that nonprofit organisations (NPOs) are more focused on technical and design aspects of their social media while true stakeholder dialogue and relational maintenance strategies are barely applied. Stakeholder dialogue though positively influences stakeholders' interest and engagement in the NPOs. Using a conversational human voice as a relational maintenance strategy on social media positively affects stakeholders' engagement.

The fourth study provides evidence that an organization's online media reputation can be positively influenced through sponsoring a brand community online. The Dutch beer brewer Heineken created a major brand community by facilitating the Holland Heineken House during the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro in 2016. A content analysis of Heineken's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram posts before, during and after the Games shows that the promotion of the Holland Heineken House positively influences Heineken's online media reputation merely on Twitter.

The fifth study, a survey among employees of a healthcare organization, shows that feelings of competence in using an internal social media platform to share knowledge are positively related to online knowledge sharing behavior. Employees who share their knowledge more actively online also claim that an internal platform makes them more competent and autonomous at work, and improves their relationship with co-workers.

I hope that you enjoy reading the articles in detail, that they give you valuable insights for further research or that they enable you to connect with communication scientific knowledge to make decisions in the profession more evidence-based.