

» Communicating Corporate Social Responsibility or ceasing to exist

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Do companies adopt a Corporate Social Responsibility approach to take strategic decisions? Are enterprises promoting a sustainable corporate engagement with their various stakeholders? Are companies enhancing their *storytelling* from the core of their business and building confidence at the same time? If the answers to the previous questions are affirmative you can feel satisfied about your company or the enterprise that you intend to set up; its survival is guaranteed to a great extent.

In the **new paradigm of Capitalism** in which players want to establish relations with responsible companies, that is, organizations which implement a responsible management in their businesses and do not merely act in a responsible manner in the way they spend their income, CSR will be instrumental. In this new context the only option is **being responsible or ceasing to exist**, and consequently, companies will need to communicate this new responsible corporate behavior or will cease to exist.

Several companies have understood that the rules of the game have changed and are now adapting their production processes and communication strategies to this new context. The objective will be to achieve a distinguishing feature that sets them apart in their industries. There is no final answer to this question, but common aspects can be identified in most successful cases.

Responsible companies have businesses which **work in an integrated manner, generating value for third parties and identifying gaps and business opportunities from an integrity approach**. Responsible companies have short, medium and long term strategies in which they address 5-6 key aspects for the interests of their stakeholders throughout each stage and control their progress thanks to KPIs (Key Performance Indicators). Responsible companies **sense what is going on in society and how it could affect their companies by being proactive and modifying their behavior and even influencing the political and legislative agenda**.

But, how does a responsible company communicate? A responsible enterprise communicates its objective as an organization in a credible manner. It develops its own **storytelling conveying honest stories with key points which focus on building confidence** and bases its **contents in making known its corporate values**. The internal communication of values helps build a corporate culture, while external communication contributes to the creation of a responsible and reputed brand identity. Every non-measured element does not exist and everything that is not told must be interpreted. The problem is that CSR communication is not attractive. Thus, it is necessary to convey a **credible story**. As the saying goes: **tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn**.

The **duties of the Communication Director includes conveying stories and working with perceptions**, since what matters is not what companies tell, but what people perceive. **CSR Directors are an important part of the story and must take risks to meet the expectations of millennials** who seek to work for organizations which have a positive impact on society and the environment.

CSR Directors play a critical role, since they need to be intra-entrepreneurs, must take risks to go beyond their companies to achieve an internally credible storytelling and help CEOs leave a legacy within the corporation after their departure. Communicating ultimately implies explaining how the company shall promote a responsible business and how this will affect and improve society.

Particular consideration should be given to Sustainability and CSR Reporting. The responsible company carries out its **reporting in an integrated manner with the business, as a starting point for communication** and not an end in itself. Now, we need to identify risks and opportunities, connect the plans of various corporate areas and have as much information as possible to implement an optimal decision making.

Lastly, CSR should be conveyed through **multi-channels** (*Brand film, Brand journalism*, infographics, statements, opinion pieces, social networks, etc.) in order to **explain the context, invite further parties to join the conversation, emphasize the value of the lessons learned and connect various public objectives**.





Goyo Panadero is Partner and Senior Director at LLORENTE & CUENCA Spain. He has extensive professional experience in the world of big multinational companies' communication. He has worked in such diverse sectors as finance, professional services or infrastructure. In recent years, he has led the Direction of the Global Communications and Corporate Reputation Department of Deloitte, Ferrovial and BBVA, companies belonging to the Global Fortune 500. In 2013, after more than two decades in the world of large corporations, he focused his career on the research of senior management leadership and transmedia storytelling. He founded with Ana Folgueira Impossible Tellers, a small consulting firm specialized in projects and communication strategy consulting, transmedia storytelling and change management for managers.

gpanadero@llorentecuenca.com



Georgina Rosell is Head of Corporate Social Responsibility and Foundations Area at LLORENTE & CUENCA Spain. University Degree in Political Science from the UAB, Post-Graduate Degree in International Relations from the Katholieke Universiteit de Leuven, Master's Degree in CSR from the University of Barcelona and Post-Graduate Degree in Business and Communication Management from the Instituto de Empresa (IE). Director of Fundación USP Hospitales and CSR Director of USP Hospitales. Georgina has over 15 years of experience developing CSR programs for CaixaBank, Unilever, Amgen, Intermón Oxfam, Cruz Roja, DKV Seguros, Sanofi, Fundación Crèdit Andorrà, Coca-Cola, Volkswagen, L'Oréal and Telefónica.

grosell@llorentecuenca.com



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