



Press information

International Communication with Strategy

oha communication comments on the findings of the European Communication Monitor 2013

Stuttgart (Germany), July 3, 2013 – For eight out of ten PR pros, international communication is daily practice – and its importance is increasing. Yet, less than half of the respondents of this year's European Communication Monitor (ECM) can rely on sufficient information, structures and strategy to optimize their international communication efforts. However, approaching this topic is not necessarily rocket science, says Oliver Hahr from oha communication.

It is not really surprising that the majority of organizations in Europe communicate across borders today. 73 per cent of the communication managers believe that the importance of this discipline will continue to rise within the next three years. But only 47 per cent feel sufficiently prepared for the challenge, as the *European Communication Monitor 2013* states. 2,710 PR managers in 43 countries had participated in the industry's largest survey worldwide.

Complexity is the challenge: 43 per cent of the respondents said they were handling communication in more than five countries. 34 per cent were involved in up to 20 and 23 per cent in more than 20 markets. While cooperation with local agencies is mostly not an issue, more than half of the PR managers have difficulties in establishing suitable in-house structures, planning and evaluation processes – especially outside Europe.

“International PR needs more management and more competencies”, says Oliver Hahr from oha communication. “Roles, processes and responsibilities have to be defined and goals require key indicators. In addition, comprehensive services provided by the headquarters can qualitatively support local PR work. Most importantly, however, PR managers have to ensure internally, that executive managers and sales value strategically led communication.”

„It seems critical that multinational PR managers apparently do not analyze their markets sufficiently”, says the consultant

specialized in mid-sized companies. "More than two thirds of the respondents said they have a lack in understanding how the stakeholders and media systems in the target markets tick. The basis for considering locally relevant aspects of society, politics and culture in an overarching strategy is therefore missing out."

The communication expert advises to examine the target markets within the framework of the situation analysis that should always precede strategy development. Basic information can be found in the [CIA World Factbook](#) or the [BBC country profiles](#). By using [Geert Hofstede's country profiles](#), cultural aspects can be approached. International databases, such as [Vocus](#), [Cision](#) or [DWpub](#) support in media relations.

"These tools can help to close knowledge gaps. They strengthen the competencies of the headquarters' and local PR managers", Oliver Hahr says. "Complemented by internal information on target groups, market position and corporate positioning as well as the potential communication occasions, topics and players, the picture becomes clearer. On this basis, tailor-made structures, processes and strategies can be developed. These can be optimized through standardization towards efficiency and via differentiation towards effectiveness."

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Photos: Oliver Hahr from oha communication supports mid-sized companies in optimizing their international communication with strategy. Source: oha communication

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oha communication is a consultancy and agency for international public relations. The team supports companies in attracting the attention of selected target groups, in particular in the fields of design, technology and healthcare. The services include profile development, strategic and country-specific PR advisory as well as the coordination and implementation of PR activities. oha communication was founded in 2007 by Oliver Frederik Hahr and is headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany.
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