

NetworkNEWS

Events round-up

Our 2011 programme continues to go from strength to strength, with a number of highly topical – and extremely well received – events having taken place recently.

In March, we held a **'Lesson in Plain English'** seminar with Robert McAllister, who has more than 20 years' experience in PR, journalism and writing, at Robert Gordon University's Aberdeen Business School.

Robert's presentation covered a host of interesting points, from perfect grammar to how to avoid jargon and key considerations when writing for the web.

April saw us host a **'Social Media Masterclass'** with Rob McNair, chief strategic officer of *mycleveragency*, at AVC Media Enterprises, Altens.

Rob – a social media guru – provided attendees, who already possess an understanding of the communication tool, with practical hints and tips on how to develop their skills in utilising social media in a business context.

We also held two events in May, with our annual **'Careers in Communication'** fayre – organised jointly with the CIPR – taking place, again at Aberdeen Business School.

With a packed programme of impressive speakers from different PR perspectives, including consultancy, third sector and in-house disciplines, the event gave student attendees from both RGU and Aberdeen College an excellent insight into what the role of a PR professional entails.

And capping an extremely positive series of events, we were delighted to have Paul Murrice – a CIPR and PRCA approved



Paul Murrice – at the **'Selling into the Media'** workshop

trainer – join us to present a **'Selling into the Media'** workshop at the Double Tree by Hilton hotel, in Aberdeen.

The event provided those who attended with valuable advice on, for example, pitch strategies and tactics, and concluded with one brave attendee being given the chance to act out the 'sweaty palm' moment of calling a journalist to sell a story, with Paul playing a gruff, aggressive hack!

We're taking a wee summer break but will be back with a bang with a social event in September, before organising a **'Multi-Agency'** event and an **emergency response-focused** seminar – stay tuned for more details.

Student re-brand project hailed a success

In October 2010, we worked with the Robert Gordon University to provide communication with PR and media students with a brief – to re-brand the Grampian PR Group.

The idea behind the potential re-brand was to broaden the group's appeal to the wider communications community, through encompassing all comms careers.

Initial efforts involved online

surveys being sent out to members to gauge their opinions on a proposed re-brand. With 55 responses received, the general consensus was that it would be beneficial, particularly due to the fresh networking opportunities that it would provide.

The students then provided the GPRG committee with a detailed proposal, which covered a range of tactics,

including the creation of a new logo, following a name change.

Three name suggestions were put to members and a passionate response followed. With just under 100 responses, the majority of respondents were against any major changes, instead voting for minor improvements.

Whilst a full re-brand is no longer on the cards, the committee has decided that an updated group name and

refreshed logo is required.

The students' project was successful in that it determined that most members were not in favour of a radical re-brand and highlighted the benefits of a two-way symmetrical communication model.

The project provided the students with a great, practical project to cut their teeth on.

SNP wins plaudits for social media campaign

One recent campaign which caught our attention – for all the right reasons – was the Scottish National Party’s social media drive in the run up to the Scottish Parliamentary Elections, in May.

Through utilising a range of social media tools, the party was able to innovatively deliver its messages and significantly gather and enhance support.

For example, the SNP achieved a world-first when it put the Nationbuilder.com site to work. The computer package, which was designed and built by members of Obama’s 2008 campaign, enabled the party’s web team to integrate Facebook and Twitter within a new snp.org party platform.

Also, the organisation’s SNPstudios.com allowed

supporters to showcase their talents in film, photography, graphic design and podcasting, and upload their work onto the site.

From there, top contributions were selected and shared on the SNP’s official Youtube, Audioboo and Picassa channels, helping to ensure ordinary voters felt their voices were being heard and listened to.

The SNP’s ground breaking efforts highlight once again how political campaigning – and indeed wider media relations – is increasingly set to be conducted in the months and years ahead.

A day in the life of... Alaina Donald

Following on from Michail’s ‘Day in the Life’ feature in the last edition of Network News, here’s a selection of insights from the other half of our co-convening dream team – Miss Alaina Donald.

Remember you can see the full version on our website grampianprgroup.co.uk

What does a typical day for you involve?

There isn’t really a typical day. I do however start and end every day by catching up on emails. Each day is a mix of

meetings, call and managing client projects. I try to get to the gym most nights, which helps me relax and switch off.

What do you do in your spare time?

I enjoy catching up with friends over a glass of wine. I also really enjoy hill walking, camping and mountain, biking particularly on the West Coast of Scotland.

What’s your favourite restaurant?

Le Reminet in Paris

What’s your favourite film?

Crash



What’s your favourite singer/band?

Oasis

What’s your ideal job, other than this one?

Fashion designer although

I would need to learn to draw, so maybe an actress – I do like a bit of drama!

What’s your biggest extravagance?

Shoes and handbags

CONTACT US

Grampian PR Group is run by a committee of volunteers comprising:

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Interested in coming onboard?

We’re always keen to further bolster our committee with fresh communications practitioners and would love to hear from anybody interested in coming onboard.

Perhaps you have a particular interest – or expertise – in event management and would like to become actively involved in devising our programmes of seminars, media visits and workshops?

Or perhaps you’re eager to have a direct say in generally steering the group in the coming period – whatever the reason, please drop us a line.