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Ten years ago, when the definitional article "Corporate Communication as a Discipline: Toward a Definition" (Argenti, 1996) was commissioned by *Management Communication Quarterly*, the field of corporate communication was relatively new to business schools and transitioning in the business world from the media-oriented field of public relations to 'corporate communication'—a more integrated, organizational function focused on multiple constituencies. Today, changes in the business environment, coupled with unprecedented technological changes, have significantly affected how the corporate communication function is defined, taught, and implemented in the United States and throughout the world.

This article will focus on those changes with a particular emphasis on how technology has shaped the field of corporate communication. It will focus on number of questions including: how has the increase in internet use and access to information challenged corporations as they communicate with their vast array of constituents such as employees, customers, and investors? How has an increasingly mobile workforce presented challenges for corporations? What opportunities does technology present to communications professionals?

The article will first reflect on key changes in the discipline over the last decade, then discuss the most significant challenges to corporate communication resulting from new technologies (such as the proliferation of new uncontrolled media outlets like web logs), the opportunities these challenges create for both academics and practitioners (such

as the ability to measure and integrate the function), and how those challenges help us to rethink the focus of our research and teaching about the field of corporate communication.

Changes in the Discipline of Corporate Communication

Over the last decade, much more has changed from the practitioner's point of view than from the academic's perspective. Corporate communication, with its focus on how organizations communicate with external and internal constituents, has not developed as an independent discipline as quickly as it should or could have because the academic field is still wed primarily to business communication and management communication in business schools, which focus primarily on how individuals communicate. Perhaps the most important change among practitioners has been the realization that business schools are the appropriate venue for training leaders in the field and that communication and journalism schools remain better at the tactical training necessary for execution at a lower level in corporations and public relations firms. More business schools are teaching some corporate communication as a result, and this has lead to more strategic communication functions, and the possibility of real integration, as more practitioners have a solid business backgrounds. Given its importance to the success of corporations, however, the field has not progressed as quickly as one would have expected.

Academic Developments

Perhaps the most important change in terms of the academic development of the discipline, however, was the intense focus of a diverse group of academics on the field of Reputation. Part of this focus was due to the eponymous book (Fombrun, 1996) and part

of it was the result of a group of academics coming together from different disciplines, under the aegis of the Reputation Institute, at a number of conferences at New York University's Stern School of Business and Erasmus University in Rotterdam.

At the invitation of strategy professor Charles Fombrun from NYU and corporate communication professor Cees Van Riel from Erasmus, professors from the fields of strategy, marketing, and communication began to meet annually, starting in the late 1990s, along with practitioners from around the world to discuss issues broadly defined under the umbrella 'Reputation'; much of the focus, however was on the function known as corporate communication. During the same time period, James O'Rourke began to annually convene a small group of academics at Notre Dame's business school to discuss issues at a conference entitled "The Conference on Corporate Communication."

Research developed slowly, however, alongside these efforts. A few articles appeared on corporate communication in mainstream academic journals such as the *Journal of Business Communication* and *Management Communication Quarterly* (see especially Tyler, 1997 and Rogers, 2000), in new academic journals (mostly in the United Kingdom) developed with a specific focus on corporate communication (see especially *Corporate Communications* and *Corporate Reputation Review* (see Argenti, 2004) from Henry Stewart Publications), in articles geared toward practitioners from journals such as *Harvard Business Review* (see Argenti, 2002), *California Management Review* and *Sloan Management Review* (see Argenti, Howell, and Beck, 2005), and in cases written as part of a case competition developed by the Arthur Page Society (see cases by O'Rourke and Argenti on the Arthur Page Society website at www.awpagesociety.com). Overall, however, the paucity of research given the opportunity is appalling.

Perhaps the biggest obstacle from the academic perspective is the lack of a clear pipeline to feed the growing need for professors with training and interest in corporate communication. Only a few new PhD programs have developed in universities, and schools use practitioners or academics with degrees in other fields to staff the positions across the world.

Practitioner Developments

While the academic world has progressed at its typical glacial speed, the practitioners who work in the Corporate Communication function have had to contend with major changes in the environment for business, in addition to those related to technology, that directly affect the field. These include an increasingly negative environment for business (Ihator, 2001) fueled by scandals at companies like Enron, Tyco, and Parmalat, the concomitant regulation (such as Sarbanes Oxley and RegFD in the US) that developed as a result, CEO pay that is by all accounts growing at a faster rate than it should (Argenti and Forman, 2002), a feeding frenzy by media more interested in the foibles of managers such as Martha Stewart (*The Washington Post,* 2004)*,* an intense dislike of business as depicted in the popular culture in the United States (Gibeaut, 2003), and in changing attitudes about the role of business in society (see especially the documentary "The Corporation"), (Achbar and Simpson, 2003).

Most important of all, however, is the effect that changes in technology have had on the field of corporate communication. At a macro level, the discipline has had to endure the morphing of constituencies that has developed as a result of instant access to information, the need for increased transparency in a world in which messages are delivered and received instantaneously, and the scrutiny that has increased among all

constituencies as a result. Companies also must try to integrate the corporate

communication function as a result of changes in the environment, and technology has

allowed that to happen more easily in global corporations.

Challenges for Corporate Communication Created by Technology

While technology offers many opportunities for the field of corporate

communication, it also presents new challenges that are of interest to researchers

studying the field. This section will use the framework on corporate communication

strategy, originally presented in the definitional article (Argenti, 1996), as a construct for

discussing technological changes, new and shifting channels of communication that

developed as a result of those changes, new information (messages) available to

constituents through multiple channels, changing audience and constituent dynamics that

have developed, and other challenges that must be considered beyond the technological

ones addressed in this article.

Technological Changes Affecting the Field of Corporate Communication

In 1996 when the definitional article (Argenti, 1996) was published, less than

15% of Americans were online. Today, over 60% of Americans have Internet access

(Pew Internet & American Life Project, 2005). On a typical day at the end of 2004, over

70 million American adults logged on the Internet to communicate using email, read the

news, access government information, look at health and medical information, participate

in online auctions, make travel reservations, and engage in a variety of activities that

would have been considered preposterous a decade ago (Pew, 2005). According to the

Pew Internet & American Life Project, that usage represents a 37 percent increase from

the 51 million Americans who were online on an average day in 2000 when they began their study.

People also communicate with corporations directly and indirectly through a growing list of websites, online chat rooms, and web logs, or "blogs". On a typical day, over 17 million people post or share some kind of material on the Web through their own blogs or other content-creating applications.

Today, use of the Internet is a normal part of everyday life in America. Given that most people are now a part of that technologically-linked community, those who are outside of the community represent an ever decreasing share of the population. All of this has come about as a result of the availability and adoption of high-speed Internet access. In addition, the cost of using the Internet both in terms of hardware and access to the Web has continued to decrease, creating a more democratic and interactive constituency base for all corporations. This increasingly interactive constituency base presents multiple challenges to corporations, but, one of the most pressing is the speed with which a company's reputation can be attacked.

New communication tools that are now commonly used as opposed to ten years ago include email (many Americans now have multiple accounts), instant messaging (favored by teens and some corporate workplaces), corporate intranets (which allows the dissemination of all kinds of new information to employees), knowledge sharing and management systems (most useful for global enterprises), electronic employee management systems such as PeopleSoft (used primarily by HR professionals), and technological surveillance systems (which create problems for the corporate image). All

of these changes have created challenges for corporations that didn't even exist a decade ago.

New and Shifting Communication Channels

Corporate communications now occur as real-time dialogues as opposed to unidirectional announcements from faceless managers. This two-way, interactive approach to communication presents multiple challenges for corporations who are much more used to being senders and primary sources of information rather than being forced to react to demands for information.

Corporations are much more comfortable talking about their own needs and wants and delivering them to an audience rather than first discerning what that audience wants to know. In the past, most corporate messages were thus developed to inform the audience (a "tell style" of communication according to Munter, 2005) or to persuade them to do something that the corporation particularly wanted to accomplish (Schulte and Kitchen, 2004).

Today a dialogue occurs in real time between companies and their constituents with the company in a position of having to react to the public's dialogue (Ihator, 2001) rather than set the stage by presenting its own version of reality. This poses several problems for corporations. First, corporations must package information carefully to meet the needs of multiple constituents. Most of the time, this packaging must be done under extreme time pressure. Accordingly, organizations need better understanding of their constituents so they can tailor messages more carefully and understand what is the best means of reaching a particular audience.

As a result of technological changes, we see less dependence on mass media to spread corporate messages, but corporations also have far less control over most channels of communication. The Internet allows companies to present their viewpoints directly to key constituents, which creates a more level playing field in how messages get relayed. Unfortunately, this has advantages and disadvantages for corporations (Ihator, 2001). For example, a communication directed at employees from a senior manager can be spread to multiple constituencies who were not supposed to see that same message. Investors and analysts following the financial markets can hear customer complaints intended for the corporation, at the same time as the corporation, which can have an effect on the value of the firm.

An example that illustrates the blurring of messages from one constituency to another is that of Dell and the infamous blogger Jeff Jarvis. On his blog, BuzzMachine, Jarvis spent months in the summer of 2005 chronicling his negative experience with Dell's customer service, corporate communications, and the head of marketing. Traffic to his site doubled to over 10,000 hits per day during his ordeal, and, the media and investors took notice of the situation, calling into question Dell's customer service (BusinessWeek, 2005).

Corporations are also challenged by the multiplicity of channels for communicating with customers. As a result of technology, the number of customer facing channels have grown. Corporations now interact with customers through web sites, mobile phones, kiosks, ATMs, and even gas pumps. The growth of these diverse and geographically dispersed channels has largely been driven by corporate efforts to reach customers more cost effectively. As corporations continue to refine what channels

they will use to serve customers, and especially as the cost efficiency of channels changes

over time, they will need to consider how they must communicate most effectively

through these new channels (McKinsey Quarterly, 2004).

New Messages for the New Channels

One of the most interesting challenges posed by technology for corporations is the

ability for an organization to display information in a nonprose format such as a

multimedia presentation for an annual report instead of a static book that would sit on a

coffee table. As Rafferty has said: "The information age may be ushering in 'document

literacy'—the ability to interpret and use information from different kinds of nonprose

formats, such as forms, charts, graphs, maps, and other visual displays, in which

information is not arranged in sentence or paragraph form. Another form of literacy

which the information age may be encouraging is 'tool literacy'—the use of images,

graphics, video, and audio to present information," (Rafferty, 1999).

In addition, transparency resulting from increased regulation has become a key

driver of new information and messaging for corporations. Transparency is both a

strategy and a condition. It is a condition in that in the process of meeting the need to be

more transparent, companies actually have become so. Corporate information gets

disclosed in the public sphere by third parties, such as nongovernmental organizations

(NGOs), and it is mandated by regulation such as RegFD, which requires companies to

share information with all constituencies at the same time, and Sarbanes Oxley, which

has forced managers to be more responsible and accountable for their actions

(Christensen, 2002). RegFd would not be possible without the incredible changes in

technology that have actually allowed companies to release material information to all constituents at the same time.

There is also much more permanence to information today as a result of technology. Records of what a company does and says, as well as what is said about a company is potentially, and most likely, permanent and searchable by anyone on the internet. The recent documentary "The Smartest Guys in the Room" about Enron is a cautionary tale for all corporations (Gibney, 2005). In this movie, actual documents and footage are shown creating an indictment far more damaging than whatever the courts have handed down to the executives in question.

Rumors, as opposed to actual information, can also be posted on blogs or other online sources, and they too will become part of the public record. Years from now, who will know what was the truth and what were comments posted by unedited and unregulated bloggers seeking to discredit corporations?

Finally, sites like www.archive.org archive versions of web sites such that you can research multiple years and see compete prior versions of company websites. Indeed an illustrative example can be pulled from www.archive.org. In 1996, the AFL-CIO web site was primarily text based with broad basic sections such as policy statements, press releases, research reports produced by the AFL-CIO, information on the AFL-CIO newsletter and information on organizing, as well as their 'boycott' list. Clip art type graphics were used to add color to an otherwise white screen.   See below a snapshot of the 1996 homepage.

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (LZW) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

By 2005, the web page had expanded substantially. It featured a "legislative"
alert center, along with congressional voting records, color photographs of union
members, interactive education tools, including a way to look up total compensation of
senior executives, games and puzzles, an online union shop, a search engine, and a place
to sign up for email alerts. Perhaps the most telling change in the website is that in 1996
the website had two major updates and in 2005 it had 122.   See a snapshot of the 2005
website below:

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (LZW) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

In addition to giving us a window into the dramatic changes in technology in the past decade, we can also see the possibilities for further research that technology itself provides. Clearly there is more at work in the changes between these two sites than merely technology. We can also see the morphing and increasing sophistication of the constituents by merely examining the links; in 1996 there was no mention of a global labor movement. In 2005, it is an integrated part of the website.   There is more to examine here than the scope of this paper allows, but researchers interested in this phenomenon should visit the site for further information.

In addition, search engines are able to "cache" pages, which means that old information can still be accessed even when it has been changed or corrected. This

creates multiple challenges for corporations and huge opportunities for researchers interested in pursuing information about corporations.

<u>Changing Audience and Constituent Dynamics</u>

Technology has fundamentally changed the dynamic between corporations and their constituencies. With an increasingly mobile workforce, an empowered employee base, a broader audience for financial information, and a power shift to constituents in general, corporations are being challenged in ways that they never have been before.

As society in the United States has changed, more employees have become interested in working independently. Technology has allowed that to happen. Today's workforce is increasingly mobile and connected by electronic means rather than physical proximity to peers and managers. This has lead to reduced opportunities for companies to communicate values, culture, and vision as easily and as clearly as they have been able to in the past (Jacobs, 2004). It has also led to the need for more control and monitoring through technology. This, in itself has lead to a decreased sense of belonging among the mobile workforce and an "us versus them" attitude about management.

Employees are also bolder than ever before as a result of changes brought about through new technologies. They can now go directly to the source of information without having to wait for management to relay to them packaged corporate messages (Ilhator, 2001). They can distribute their own information about the company electronically to outside audiences without any gate keeping. And, forums for employees to share their views—internally through intranets and externally through blogs—allow employees to share their grievances as well as organize and demand action, (Bishop and Levine, 1999)

As a result, every employee today is a corporate communication manager on his/her own and a potential publisher through the use of technology. Through emails, blogs, and social networking sites, people have more ways to share corporate information than ever before. The external world also has greater access to corporate workforces, which allows the media for instance, to look up an employee on the corporate website and communicate directly with that person through email. The same is true for recruiters trying to poach talent. The corporation must similarly deal with a broader constituency base for its financial communication activities. The number of individual investors has increased dramatically over the last twenty years (Barber and Odean, 2001). Half of the US population invests in the stock market and the number of investing households has more than tripled since 1983. Individual investors opened 12.5 million brokerage accounts between 1995 and 2000. Traditional corporate pensions are a thing of the past for most, and as a result, employees and other investors must research where to put their retirement savings.

All of this has changed the "power dynamic" with constituencies in general. Today, corporations have a different relationship with their constituents than they did a decade ago. Because all constituents have ready access to the mass media, they can tell whatever story they want from their perspective. This has made it easy for a community of antagonists to develop and attack corporations. Antagonists are not held to the same level of accountability as corporations (see Argenti, 2004 on activists in the *California Management Review*), and no policing of their attacks exist from credible third parties (editors at newspapers serve such a purpose in the media).

Constituents also have the ability to organize and protest once inflamed using technology as their primary weapon of choice: "The new information technology is also changing the nature, composition, and modus operandi of the vocal publics. It is bringing together disparate publics that stretch beyond national boundaries. Protests (sic) against organizations can now take place both online and on the streets. Because it's easy, Internet-based activism lures the previously inactive into political activity and sets the stage for their continuing involvement," according to Donna Jablonski of the AFL-CIO (PR Week, 1999). Finally, technology has created a sense of entitlement to information that didn't exist before. Constituents expect more transparency given that the technology exists to offer it to everyone at the same time. When it is not available by choice, technology has also created increased regulation from government, consumers, and those seeking increased corporate social responsibility.

Opportunities Growing Out of the Challenges Created by Technology

Despite the challenges brought about by new technologies, the field of corporate communication has more opportunities both on the practitioner side and the academic side than ever before. Two of the most important opportunities are the greater possibilities for developing an integrated corporate communication function and the opportunity to measure the function in terms of business outcomes.

Integration Allows Corporations to "Speak in Harmony"

Through a research grant from the Center for Strategic Communication at the National Investor Relations Institute, we conducted over 60 interviews with CEOs, CFOs, Corporate Communication executives, and Investor Relations officers at companies like Pepsi, Dell, FedEx, and Cendant (see Argenti, 2005 forthcoming white paper from NIRI). One of the key findings of our research is the need for a more integrated corporate communication function. The need for integration grows out of the regulatory environment, more sophisticated and overlapping constituencies, organizational growth and complexity, and most importantly, technology.

As mentioned before, the increasing sophistication of front-end communication technology (email, instant messaging) means messages can travel virtually instantaneously within an organization—and beyond its walls—further increasing the need for coordinated and consistent messaging. Internal memos, for instance, can be emailed by employees to friends or colleagues outside the company—or worse, posted to a blog— just seconds after they reach their intended internal audience, even when the company does not plan to communicate a given message or initiative to the outside world until several hours, or even days, later.

Just as technology has forced companies to deal with a proliferation of new communication channels and challenges, it has also provided opportunities for enhancing integration. Email group lists, intranets, and enterprise software, for example, have made it much easier for communications professionals (and employees in general) around the globe to stay tapped into what is going on in the organization. Satellite broadcast systems like the digital FedEx Television Network (FXTV) are a powerful communication

channel to reach employees around the world. Companies can also create online or networked libraries of communications-related materials for employees to access from anywhere. Harley-Davidson, for instance, created a company message library that various departments could turn to for key corporate messages (PR Week, 2003).

Technology can also be a critical tool for measuring the effectiveness of communications or communications programs: through online employee surveys or audience response system (ARS) polling, for example, companies can quickly determine whether a particular message has been heard and understood by employees so that they can re-calibrate messages or re-communicate them if necessary. The same technology, needless to say, can be used to determine the effectiveness of communications with all key constituencies.

Measurement Allows Corporate Communicators to Prove Their Value

As critical as integration is and will continue to be, measurement is the true holy grail among corporate communicators. Technology has created the possibility to measure the effectiveness of communication programs, which in turn will underscore the importance of the function and create mounds of data for researchers to ponder for decades to come.

Most communications professionals know intuitively that effective, strategic communication drives revenue, profits, brand value, customer loyalty, employee retention and other important contributors to business value. But until now, most communication measures have focused on measures of the quantity or efficiency of communications output, like the amount of media coverage generated or changes in

audience attitudes, rather than on changes in performance outcomes that matter to senior managers and reflect the value communications creates within a business.

New approaches being developed in a collaborative effort between academics and practitioners use traditional communications data in a new way to demonstrate the specific value communications adds to any organization. This new approach depends on technology to measure specific communications activities, such as the tone and content of a specific message appearing in the media, and then uses regression analysis to look at thousands of pieces of information to determine the value of that communication on a business outcome such as market share or profit. In time, researchers will be able to look at the entire corporate communication function from this perspective and analyze the effectiveness of a corporation's employee communication efforts versus its media relations efforts, or more importantly, for the credibility and future of the profession, to look at the value of corporate communication in comparison to marketing communications such as advertising programs or promotions.

Rethinking the Teaching and Research of Corporate Communication

While practitioners must find ways to deal with the challenges presented by technology and reap the benefits it creates in terms of a more integrated function and new measurement tools, academics should look upon these challenges and opportunities as exciting possibilities for teaching and research.

Teaching

In terms of teaching, academics interested in teaching corporate communication have access to more information than ever before. Case writing, for example, has become much easier with access to so much corporate information. What used to take

months to gather through a painstaking process of interviews and onsite document review, is now easily available on the Internet.

Similarly, materials for the classroom are also available to look at instantaneously. Students interested in learning more about Nike's approach to labor do not have to go to the library for information; rather they can log onto the company's website and look for themselves at how the company positions itself and how opponents position themselves. Annual reports, press releases, video-taped analyst and employee meetings, speeches, and a host of other information is now at the teacher and student's fingertips both in and out of the classroom.

Technology also allows us to bring the corporation into the classroom through videoconferencing, audioconferencing, and webcasting. Most executives are willing occasionally to visit a campus, but as a result of technology, they are much more likely to do so electronically.

Finally, technology allows us to offer insights into corporations through "virtual visits." Faculty members can ask students to view company websites to learn first hand how a company is positioning itself.

For example, I recently asked my MBA students to review the Body Shop website to determine how the company positions itself in terms of social responsibility.

To my surprise, students discovered that the US website focused more on beauty with traditional pictures of models, while the UK website had a heavy emphasis on issues of social responsibility.

The real excitement, however, is for those academics who are looking for new research challenges. Changes in technology have allowed unprecedented access to corporate information, which presents researchers interested in the field of corporate communication with a rich vein of information to mine on virtually any subject. The following are just a few of the possibilities available through technology as an addendum to the research opportunities discussed in the original definitional paper published a decade ago.

Corporate Reputation

Rather than gather pounds of newspapers, magazines, and books in our offices, today we have access to all of the information we need through our computers. This offers researchers an opportunity to explore corporate reputation in great detail. We can search for new identity programs, study how different constituencies view the image of an organization, and gauge the reputational risk factors more readily with an internet search.

With so many different reputational rankings in major business publications, such as *BusinessWeek* and the *Wall Street Journal*, researchers also have access to data that can be analyzed to determine how effective corporate communications activities are in terms of real business outcomes.

Corporate Advertising

A decade ago, it was difficult to capture corporate ads unless you knew where to look for them. Today with hard drives such as TIVO and websites that specialize in advertisements, researchers have access to virtually every corporate advertisement that

appears anywhere. And, if you cannot locate it yourself, several providers will track it down for you. This gives researchers the luxury of examining advertisements from corporations over a long period of time, to use the ads in research with constituents to measure their effectiveness, and to then use the material in a web based publication.

Technology also presents opportunities for researchers to test advertising effectiveness. Advertisers for pharmaceutical companies regularly claim that each dollar spent returns $4.20 in earnings. What effect does corporate, rather than product, advertising have on sales?

Media Relations

In addition to the tools available for researching specific stories, which were already becoming available a decade ago, we now have access to nuanced studies of stories through media monitoring services such as Delahaye. These detailed reports give information about a specific company's media placements by topic (such as stories about the CEO), by publication (such as stories about the CEO appearing in the *Wall Street Journal*), and by tone (negative versus positive). Researchers should be looking at this data for trends about how companies are being perceived in the media and for how various messages affect the corporation's reputation or even business outcomes.

More importantly, technology allows us access to almost anything that has appeared in the media over several decades and unlimited access enriches our research significantly. This information also helps us as teachers in developing content for lectures and visual images for PowerPoint presentations.

Financial Communications

Technology has made it easier for researchers interested in financial communications to look at analysts reports, shareholder meetings, analyst updates from companies, webcasts to shareholders, and a variety of other tools distributed by investor relations departments in companies. In addition, most annual reports are distributed electronically as well as in published form, which allows researchers to determine what companies are saying about themselves to this all-important constituency.

Previous research (Rogers 2000) on CEO presentations used in conjunction with earnings announcements extends the construct of organizational genre through competing values profiling and user needs analysis.

Employee Relations

Technology has allowed companies to conduct more polls of employee attitudes, which provides data that could be used to research a variety of issues. Similarly, researchers can get access to intranets at companies to see how corporations are communicating with this key constituency and how that changes over time. Indeed, researchers can now ask "What kinds of information do most companies provide? What do they leave out?"

More importantly, researchers can conduct their own polling with employees at companies to get answers to questions related to how the organization communicates.

Community Relations

Corporations keep in touch with the community increasingly through electronic communications. This allows researchers to look at how companies are trying to reach out to communities about critical issues such as the environment, sustainability, and other critical issues of social responsibility. Many companies are also starting to release corporate social responsibility reports that are even audited (Argenti, 2004). Researchers could analyze these reports and look for similarities and differences to help practitioners know what the best approach might be.

Entire academic conferences now focus on issues of corporate social responsibility offering networking opportunities across disciplines for like-minded researchers.

Government Relations

Companies have a greater responsibility to government than ever before as a result of increased regulation surrounding the distribution of information and the conduct of senior executives. Researchers could study how this has changed the nature of communication from corporations and what approaches seem to work best among companies. Because companies must be transparent, all of the information is readily available.

Technology has also opened up government files for researchers to access more readily in conjunction with major studies.

Crisis Communication

Researchers interested in following corporate crises can do so much more easily than they could ten years ago. Access to media, the actual communications from companies, and to employee reactions, are all available online, which should be a great source of information for researchers to study.

In addition, researchers could spend more time determining which technologies seem to work best for integration, and they could also explore data that will be generated from measurement studies that are just getting underway at a handful of companies.

Finally, researchers can turn to websites such as technorati.com for a look at how the blogosphere is covering the crisis in question.

Conclusion

Much has changed in the decade since the publication of the definitional article on Corporate Communication. Today, managers face greater challenges, but also have more opportunities as a result of changes brought about by new technologies.

Opportunities for research in the area of corporate communication have never been greater. More information is readily available from companies and access to all constituencies is more possible through the Internet. In addition, more sophisticated research tools are available through computers that can process information more quickly.

With all of the possibilities available both ten years ago and even more so today, why then are so few academics taking advantage of what is available? Corporate communication is a recognized function in virtually every major corporation today. One

would think that academics in the area of business or management communication

searching for increased credibility would use this to their advantage.

This set of articles for JBTC allows researchers an opportunity to think about the

possibilities once again. Technology has changed corporate communication

dramatically; now you, as researchers, have the opportunity to use that to your advantage

and increase the boundaries of knowledge of the discipline in new and better directions.

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