

# CEO's GUIDE TO *Shameless* SELF-PROMOTION

Thoughts & Observations from  
**Maura FitzGerald**  
Partner



**version 2.0**  
communications



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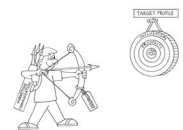
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## VALUE OF BRAND / CEO ROLE

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As CEO, you are a leader and, as such, have many responsibilities to a variety of constituencies, including shareholders and investors. While there are times when circumstances cause conflict among the various stakeholders, there is one role you play that inarguably benefits all – that of **Brand Steward**. When a CEO is the successful steward of the corporate brand, everyone wins. The value of the organization is strengthened, employees feel a pride of association, prospective partners and customers are attracted by the ensuing halo effect, and customers, both old and new, develop a sense of trust and loyalty that supports and grows a revenue stream.

Brand is more than an advertising buzzword — it is an organization's most precious asset. It is a combination of how a company performs and behaves, its reputation and that of its products, corporate culture, and the resulting experiences and perceptions of its customers, employees and partners. Time and again we see that companies with strong, admired brands are more successful in every way. Even when times are tough or mistakes are made, companies with strong brands more easily weather these storms than their lesser known (and less attentive) competitors.

As the steward and guardian of the brand, the CEO is the visible and vocal leader to both internal and external audiences. In our experience, this relationship is most clearly and effectively articulated when you play a major (read: visible) role in strategic communication. Your identification with the brand is defined by what you do and what you say and, of course, reinforced by additional executive spokespeople, who follow your lead and messaging. Among the most often cited examples of a CEO's creation and personification of a brand is Steve Jobs at Apple. Other great examples are Richard Branson at Virgin, Yvon Chouinard at Patagonia, Jenna Lyons at J. Crew and Indra Nooyi at PepsiCo.

Strategic, message-based communication delivered consistently and proactively is the best way to demonstrate your leadership role and the pride and connection you feel to the corporate brand. While not every event in a company's evolution demands the same level of CEO involvement, when a situation arises, the CEO is the face of the organization and should be familiar to key audiences. When you are a consistent, credible presence, trust develops between you and your employees, partners, shareholders and industry influencers. As a leader, that trust will be one of your most important assets.

To maintain your visibility as a leader, successfully chart a course for your organization and its employees, communicate your strategy effectively and consistently, offer perspective and opinions on marketplace events and successfully cultivate evangelists who influence perception of you and your organization – this is a tall order, especially when you have a day job running the company.



## FOCUS / CLARITY / CONSISTENCY

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The first (and arguably the most critical) step in developing an effective communication program, or any corporate or product campaign for that matter, is to craft messages that will resonate with key audiences and clearly articulate your positioning. These messages provide you, your spokespeople and evangelists with content that supports and differentiates your company's brand, drives your business strategy and enables you to speak with a unified (and amplified) voice. Too many companies ignore this critical first step, rushing into a dialog with influencers and stakeholders with messages that aren't compelling, consistent or clear enough to stick.

In the age of the Internet, content can spiral quickly and live forever, so it makes sense to take whatever steps you need to ensure that what is being said by and about you is accurate, memorable and adequately reflects the corporate (or product) brand. I can't tell you how many times I've heard a CEO complain that the press does not "get" his or her company, that the information is all wrong and journalists don't understand the CEO's business. More often than not, it's because the reporter is getting his/her information from outdated website content, old news releases, or worse, influencers (or competitors) who aren't current with the latest strategy or have a vested interest. Trust me, your story is going to be told – it's up to

you to manage what that story is and how effectively it is communicated. Here's how to do exactly that:

- First, involve the people who will be speaking on the company's behalf. These include your stakeholders, the people who play a key role in your business strategy and have a valuable perspective on your positioning and messages. Their perspective will not only help shape great messages but their participation will ensure that you have their buy-in on the finished product. Once you go through the process, you want evangelists who will deliver the messages with clarity and authority. Including them in the process is the best way to do that.
- Second, understand the information needs/interests of your audiences. When you are addressing analysts, press, employees, customers or partners, their information needs may be different. By creating a dialog that addresses their primary areas of interest first, you'll stand a much better chance of capturing – and holding – their attention.
- Third, evaluate your competitors and the current market climate. While it's important that your messages are not reactive, it's key that they be discussed and developed in the context of the competitive landscape and the trends that provide a backdrop for customer decisions.
- Fourth, use a methodology or process to guide your messaging discussion. At Version 2.0, we facilitate a customized half-day to full-day workshop with clients to create a suite of messages that provide a foundation for strategic communications. Clients complete "homework" in advance of the session which serves as the basis for a lively and informed discussion as we work together through a set of exercises designed to lead us to actual creation of key messages. Almost every client engagement we undertake begins with this workshop. While we view ourselves as client "partners," our role as outsiders enables us to infuse the process with discipline, ensuring that the resulting messages are real, credible and defensible.
- Fifth, implement. Once you and your team are happy with your messages and your story, document them and weave these messages into all discussions, presentations and interviews. The content of your corporate website must reflect what you are saying internally and externally and a corporate blog is a great place to amplify those messages and revisit them as you opine about trends and events in your industry. Industry analysts and influencers can be a useful sounding board as you work to "bullet-proof" your messages. Their perspective as third-party observers of trends and competitors can often lead to insights that you may wish to incorporate in your final suite of messages. Creating an internal FAQ (frequently asked questions) document will help demonstrate to spokespeople and evangelists how to weave their messages into responses to questions asked by influencers, stakeholders and other key audience members. Archiving this for internal use will ensure that, as you widen your circle of spokespeople, the messages will stay consistent and compelling as you grow.
- Finally, as your business strategy and vision evolve, it's important that your messaging evolve as well. It makes sense to revisit your messaging at least every six months to make sure that it maps to your current direction and perspective.



## CEO AS GUARDIAN OF THE BRAND

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It isn't enough to be an individual with **provocative ideas** and an **interesting viewpoint** if you aspire to be a thought leader. Those characteristics are a prerequisite if you want to generate a following with **credibility** – the third leg of the thought-leadership stool (and arguably, the most important). Becoming a thought leader requires vision, commitment and a willingness to take risks. It also takes patience and communications skills as you test messages and channels to drive awareness and build a following. Creating and implementing successful thought leadership campaigns are a lot of work but the rewards are manifold, both for you, your personal brand and the organization you lead.

Well-executed thought leadership campaigns have obvious benefits to personal and corporate brands. They also are extremely useful in generating and maintaining awareness during periods when there is little or no news to drive communications – and to establishing credibility that will serve you well when facing the inevitable challenges. Beyond that, the ability to influence followers or generate and shape interesting and lively online discussions around trends or news events casts you in a leadership position that creates a positive cache around you and your company and keeps you in the forefront of discussion in your industry.

Thought leaders don't push their companies or their products. They push ideas and points of view that represent out-of-the-box thinking and challenge the status quo. People are interested in what thought leaders have to say because they find their opinions or perspectives educational, visionary or provocative – or all of the above. Successful thought leaders with loyal followings are in an enviable position. They move beyond shaping just their own brand and that of their



organizations. Their informed commentary on markets, trends and customer behavior can also shape the public perception of their industries and their competitors.

So what does it take to become a respected (and credible) thought leader?

- First and foremost, you have to be passionate about the topic(s) that you address. It's impossible to be interesting and eloquent when you don't really care about the subject matter. What interests you most about managing your own business? Finding talent, keeping customers, figuring out a succession plan, managing investors, product development, creating a category, beating your competitors – these are all topics that will interest your peers, all of whom are eager to understand how other CEOs are tackling—and solving—these issues.

Perhaps you'll find your inner evangelist by identifying current market trends and sharing broad strategies for riding those waves. If you have a strong intuition for what's going to happen next in a tumultuous environment, put it out there as a prediction and be prepared to defend it. What's interesting isn't whether you prove to be right or wrong – it's the reasoning and thought processes that lead to your conclusion.

- Once you have identified your platform(s), you have to be consistent and engage broadly in your communication about your viewpoint. This is where many aspiring thought leaders fail. You are not going to make an impression or create a following without diligently pursuing your audience through a variety of channels. One of the best ways to do this is to leverage all content created to support your campaign by editing it or adapting it for various channels.

For example, an op-ed piece is an excellent vehicle for communicating your opinion to a wide audience. That op-ed can be reformulated into a speech or edited into a post for your personal or corporate blog. Reading and following journalists who write about topics related to your thought-leadership platform(s) is a must. Following up with them and providing your reaction to their articles or posts will get you involved in a dialogue and initiate an ongoing relationship that is at the heart of good media relations.

- Socialize your messages. Social media is a channel that is designed for thought leadership. Blogs and Twitter feeds provide a fantastic outlet to broadcast your thoughts, feelings and opinions on events or trends in way that is provocative, timely and can quickly build a following.
- While thought-leadership campaigns aren't designed to generate leads, they have a big impact on your brand and that impact can (and should) be measured. Tools like Simply Measured provide insight into the potential reach of your blog post or tweet based on engagement (clicks, shares, retweets, etc.) and depending on your following. With the potential of reaching so many people, there is even more incentive to supply original and inspired content to help build and evolve your personal and corporate brand.



## CONTENT IS STILL KING

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With Google celebrating its 10 years of dominance and BuzzFeed netting another \$50 million to expand its empire, the feeling is that search and quick-hit lists are the new norm for delivering your message. But when you look beyond search and lists, it's clear that **content is still king**.

Google built its empire on search, but continues to increase its domain by delivering superior copy. BuzzFeed built its reputation by delivering pop culture lists through social media, but over the past few years has added more traditional stories and is breaking more news and delivering more hard-hitting journalistic works.

Every company has the ability to tell a compelling story by keeping its audience in mind. By following these basic tips, your company can rise to the top of the most read and shared content heap:

### **Tip 1 – Think about your audience first: address their problem or market need**

The best stories address a solution to a customer need. Will this product/technology ease administrative burdens? Will it help my company gain an edge over my nearest competitor? Being the fastest with the most features is secondary to customer needs and wants. Think about your target audience and the issues and challenges that are most relevant to them.

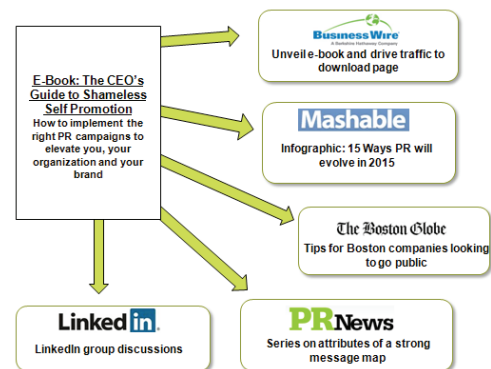
### **Tip 2 – Validate your content**

Whether you are writing a press release, blog or eBook, citing a third-party source provides instant validation. It's one thing if your company states that they have the latest and greatest product, but it's more impactful if a neutral, reliable expert source says it. Whenever you can, back up your claims by adding a customer or influencer quote or a reference to compelling research.

### Tip 3 - Be strategic about your content

Make this the year that you and your team become very strategic about one of your most important assets – your content. Blog posts, white papers, case studies and testimonials, collateral, speeches, news releases, surveys, news articles, interviews – the various formats represent an opportunity to use key knowledge assets to attract and retain customers, establish and drive thought leadership perspectives and promote your brand.

- Start by assessing your content inventory. What do you have as source material and are your deliverables creative, provocative and interesting to your audiences? Is your messaging clearly articulated, consistent and documented? Are there gaps that your marketing team can help fill? Ask yourself (and your sales team) what your prospects and customers respond to. What are their pain points, and how can you re-purpose – or create new content – to better educate them? Even content as straightforward as product collateral should convey your key messages and differentiators so that you're maximizing its usefulness and effectiveness.
- Develop a plan. Where you've identified gaps in your existing inventory, develop a plan for creating new content, keeping in mind the interests of the audiences you want to reach. It makes sense to leverage your significant investments in every (promotional) weapon in your arsenal. Make sure your communications plan includes a strong content development component and identifies owners (both internal and external) who will produce (and refresh) that content. Let your team know that you place a high priority on content that is adaptable and leverageable across multiple channels. Don't be afraid to include third parties in your quest to develop compelling, interesting content. Incorporating influencer opinions, customer feedback and relevant trend articles and blog posts is a great way to enhance your internal content and increase your reach.
- Leverage your assets. Now that you have a great store of assets, it's time to leverage them. Social media offers excellent distribution channels for your content. Your content can be leveraged across your blog, promoted on Twitter and posted to LinkedIn. Not to mention how it can be used to support your presence at tradeshow and leveraged in your lead generation efforts and sales cycle. Don't be afraid to try a variety of formats (email, an eBook, video or infographics) and delivery platforms like social media and electronic delivery as you test to see what works best with your audiences and what is most effective in helping you maximize exposure, value and results as you achieve your business objectives.
- Lastly, remember that this is an ongoing long-term commitment. You need to give your content program time to grow and evolve, to learn what works and what doesn't and to sustain interest through the sales cycle. Don't lose momentum after a few months. Test various formats in manageable pilot programs, evaluate the results, modify and adjust, do more of what's working and keep it going.



Most communications plans that Version 2.0 creates for our clients have aggressive content marketing programs developed and managed by our teams. We know that our clients want the best value and results from their communications programs and strategically leveraging content assets is key to delivering exactly that.



## MEDIA & INFLUENCER RELATIONS

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While social media has made it possible for brands to communicate directly with their customers and partners, it has not diminished the role of the more traditional influencer in shaping perception of companies and products.

There are three major categories of influencers – first is **media**, the reporters and writers whose articles are published in traditional print and broadcast outlets ranging from the **Wall Street Journal** to **Bloomberg TV**. Next are the industry analysts, those experts who advise big corporate buyers (and sellers) on where a specific category, technology or product is heading and what they must do to stay competitive. Inclusion in their various reports, quadrants and waves are prized by companies who often pay tens of thousands of dollars as the price of admission just to cross their radar screens. And finally, don't forget the emerging influence of popular bloggers and other digital media pundits, who, while not always governed by the professional journalists' "rules of the road," have thousands of followers who take their written words as gospel.

This is a big universe with varying degrees of professional experience and expertise (both technical and market). ***It is important to understand who the key influencers are in your world, how they impact one another and to be clear on their sphere of influence and relative importance to you and your brand.*** Talk to customers, read key publications, follow online communities, and use your agency experts and investors to help you document the influencer landscape.

Ensuring that key members of the media and analyst communities know your company, understand your business strategy and recognize where and how you fit in among the competition will help

you with other important constituencies: namely, your prospects, customers and partners. ***Cultivate a small group to start and update them on a quarterly basis to demonstrate the progress you are making in achieving your business goals and gaining market traction.*** When they are knowledgeable fans, analysts who are willing to be quoted by press will serve as impartial third-party corroborators of your strategy. When journalists are learning about a market or getting perspective on the market leaders and trends, they often start with the analysts who have a birds-eye view of all that goes on in their sectors. Either way, keeping them briefed can be extremely beneficial.

Great, consistently implemented media relations is key because journalists serve as a megaphone for your messages and your story with your target audience. A balanced story in a popular publication or broadcast segment will increase your credibility and attract customers, prospects, prospective employees, partners and shareholders. Landing that story requires that you get to know the interests of the journalist (read them and follow them on Twitter) and are able to shape your story and key messages to dovetail with their interests. Offering up industry analysts as knowledgeable commentators and customers who have experienced your products and partnership firsthand will enhance the story and amplify the benefits in a way that press releases or media interviews cannot.

At Version 2.0, we have a Market Influencer Program that focuses on the widening universe of bloggers who focus on particular market segments – attracting a following and sphere of influence within that market and among those who follow it. Unlike traditional journalists, bloggers don't always answer to an editor and instead answer directly to their "community"; therefore, they are less interested in a press release about a product upgrade and more interested in the story behind it – why the product was developed, how it is being used and by whom. ***The rules of engagement are similar to those that work with traditional analysts and press – read what they write, understand what interests their target audience(s), engage them in dialog, provide your perspective and demonstrate a willingness to share company and product data through customer experience.***

A successful media and influencer relations program has to be strategic and consistently implemented, always with an awareness of how these interrelated spheres of influence can work together and impact one another to your benefit. As building relationships take time and effort, you might not see the benefits overnight, but when you do, the influencer programs will help your organization truly differentiate itself in the market.



## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Social media represents a fantastic opportunity to establish and maintain a direct channel to key audiences like customers, partners and employees. It's like having virtual office hours – and allows your network to engage and interact with you in a new and interesting way. When your presence (and that of your brand) is effectively managed and leveraged, your activity on social media can be among the most high-impact marketing initiatives that you and your team undertake. It's a whole new world, and one that takes some thought and creativity to navigate.



According to a [recent report](#), only a small minority of Fortune 500 CEOs are active on social media networks. Nearly two thirds of CEOs have no identifiable presence on any of the major social networks. If you're thinking about getting social, or looking to ramp up your efforts, where do you start?

As with most journeys, the first step is to **figure out where you are**. There are terrific, cost-effective tools available to help you understand where you sit in the social media landscape. Take stock,



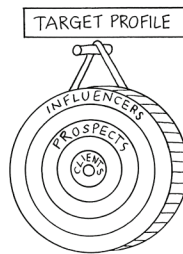
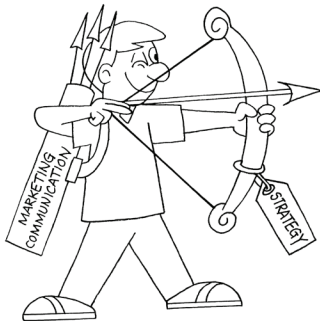
establish a baseline and then look back regularly to see how far you have come and what you need to do to accelerate your journey.

When we perform this type of audit for clients, we use a number of tools, including **Sysomos**, which provides an easy-to-understand snapshot of your overall presence in the fast-paced realm of social. **Sysomos** has a number of different features, one of which is a word cloud. This is a visual depiction of the frequency with which your search terms appear. The size and boldness of the terms are visual cues that are easy to decipher. Creating the clouds using the same terms on a regular basis is a quick and easy way for you to see progress. **Klout** is another good tool – it's free and uses simple metrics to help you gauge the quality and effectiveness of your social media campaigns. Twitter Counter is, as you probably guessed, a tool that measures growth and performance on Twitter. The key is to find tools that work for you and your budget and then to utilize them regularly to measure progress so you can adjust and re-align your strategy as necessary.

Okay, now that you know where you are, you have to figure out where you want to go. Here's a hint (one that applies to all good marketing programs): **Go where your audiences are.** For example, a presence on LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram is beneficial, but each of these channels offers discrete benefits that are tied to the content and the communities they serve. Your job is to understand their respective communities and interests, assess the intersection with your target community, and if there's a match, make sure your content addresses those interests. Each of these channels is different, and you should use each of them differently. Think of it this way -Facebook is a great forum for showcasing your company's culture, but LinkedIn is a much better place to seek out talent and air your professional perspective in one of its many forums, including relevant industry groups. Get familiar with these destinations and then come up with a strategy of how to make your presence known for each individual channel. When doing so, make sure to command a social media "voice" across all channels that is interesting, consistent with company personality and appealing to your target audience.

Trips are always more fun – and more productive – if travelers discover and appreciate the nuances of their destinations, as well as the potential pitfalls. Be sure that your employees understand the **"rules of engagement"** by creating a social media policy that guides their online behavior. It can be challenging to navigate the boundaries of personal versus professional online personas and a simple, clear social media policy for employees will help them – and you – embark on a journey that is productive and fun.

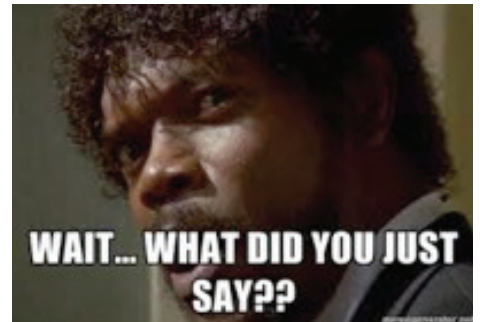
Finally, **become an experienced and frequent traveler in this new landscape** – frequency is the currency of these media. If Twitter is your thing, make sure you're tweeting daily. Identify influential people to follow and retweet their interesting observations. Add your perspective to conversations occurring in the blogosphere – and create your own voice and following. Consistency and involvement are keys to success and will add to the quality and value of your social experience!



## KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE / TARGET PROFILES

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Effective communicators know that the number one rule governing every kind of communication is “know your audience.” At Version 2.0, one of the key elements of our positioning and messaging workshop is audience identification. We developed it on the principle that it’s not enough to broadly segment between internal and external communications. You need to identify and understand the pain points or interests of every constituency you want to reach with a version of your message adapted to capture – and keep – their attention.



In addition to business and trade media and industry analysts, audiences should also include employees, investors, customers, prospects, and partners. The assumption is that while these groups are all interested in your business and brand, their prioritized interests will be different. Your messages and stories need to address those audience priorities but also be credible and consistent with the overarching messaging.

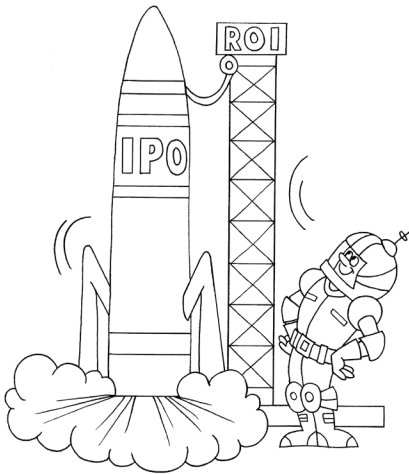


It has always been the case, but now even more so with the dominance of social media, that these groups communicate with one another. When your message is managed, what emerges from these conversations is an image of the company and brand that makes sense, is credible, and, most important, syncs up with your vision, mission and business strategy.

Create target profiles detailing the characteristics of each key target, including any demographic data that will help to describe them as well as their trusted sources, buying habits and their aspirations.

The popularity among marketers of buyer personas is indicative of how important it is to understand your audience and what they want and need to succeed. Think of it as developing a composite picture (e.g., pain points, business objectives, interests) of your target that brings her/him to life and helps you tailor your message (and the channel through which it is delivered) so that it grabs them and drives them to action.

These descriptions will not only guide your marketing and communications planning, they will facilitate your discussions with analysts and media, and guide your program choices and budget allocation.



## GETTING ROI ON IPO BUZZ

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Unless you've been totally ignoring the news, you know that the Boston area has recently been home to a flurry of the highest profile IPOs in quite awhile. Those of us who enjoyed the rocket ride that was the 90s saw these events on a daily (if not hourly) basis. Now that we are experiencing a different type of economy, a local IPO warrants front-page news.

So, congratulations to the newbies and welcome to the increased scrutiny that goes with life as a publicly-traded company. Communication – internal and external – will be more critical now than ever. Thoughtful preparation is key and flawless execution always helps. And let's not forget the role that the corporate attorneys play! For those of you whose goal is to take your company public, here are some thoughts and ideas about how to prepare your company for life as a public company. The good news is that these best practices will improve the fortunes of any organization, regardless of the course you chart, toward a long and successful future.

When I started my first company, FitzGerald Communications, I followed advice that I'd overheard as a manager on the Compaq account when I was part of a conversation between the venerable venture capitalist and Compaq Board Chairman Ben Rosen and Compaq CEO Rod Canion. Compaq was a new company, taking on IBM, and Ben told Rod, "If you want to be a big company, act like one now. Put those best practices in place now, and you'll have a much smoother path to growth and greatness." It was some of the best advice I received as an entrepreneur, even though "second-hand!"

- **Develop a compelling vision early on** that differentiates you and inspires employees and other stakeholders to join you in support of the organization you lead. Keep the vision statement simple, very high level and consistently incorporate it into all spoken and written communications, including your corporate website and social media. Your vision will be at the core of your company prospectus and will drive interest in your IPO when the time comes.
- **Create and “publish” communication guidelines governing both traditional and social/digital media for all company spokespeople.** And, make it clear that you want these guidelines observed. This document will govern behavior around news dissemination, product detail disclosure and will be critical to successful and effective interaction with influencers for your company evangelists. The time to establish these rules is when you have a handful of employees. Their training and know-how will be observed and emulated by their peers as you grow. If you wait until your company is big, it will be a much larger and more challenging task to try to manage everyone’s interactions with the media and other influencers. These days, when almost all employees interact with Facebook, have Instagram accounts and love to tweet, it is critical that they understand what you expect from them (and their public-facing selves) as employees of your company. They are all company spokespeople, albeit unofficial, and, as such, require guidance and management.
- **Maintain a consistent, steady news flow and a level of visibility through a strategic communications program** that leverages news announcements, thought leadership and other high-profile activities. This is especially crucial because you can maintain your pre-filing level of activity (and visibility) through the quiet period but you will not be allowed to introduce new activities (or any activities that might be viewed as impacting your share price) after you file. Company attorneys, in particular, become very conservative on this issue, so it’s important to have a steady stream of news and activities that you can point to that can carry you through the quiet period. You don’t want to have your IPO delayed or trading halted on your first day (just ask Facebook or Salesforce).
- As I discussed in Chapter 1, **thought leadership is critical to building and maintaining a winning brand** – both the company’s brand and your personal brand as a CEO. Cultivating a profile as a thought leader early on will generate awareness, even when you don’t have news to share, and if sustained, will enhance the value and visibility of your organization if and when your stock officially starts trading.

If your goal as an entrepreneur is to one day lead your company through a successful IPO, **start preparing for it now – it is never too soon.** You’ll have a stronger culture, brand and company as a result — and that’s success whether you’re private or public.



## MEASURE TWICE, CUT ONCE – METRICS AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

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At Version 2.0, we are big believers in a reflective approach to communications programs and goals – and it needs to be more than an annual exercise. We like to review progress with clients on a quarterly basis and use that as an opportunity to recalibrate and optimize the programs and campaigns that are driving the clients' business goals. We think measuring results on a regular basis is critical to getting the best impact and value from communications programs.

**Setting objectives at the outset of a program or campaign** is a collaborative exercise, and the goals should reflect both realistic objectives and a few that are a stretch. Without objectives, it's impossible to know whether the program has been successful. Once the goals are set, the communications team knows what needs to be achieved and the management team understands what they can expect and in what timeframe.

**Measuring results is more than just compiling statistics about coverage, share of voice and impressions.** Examining how frequently key messages are picked up and amplified is critical and there are a number of excellent tools that are designed to analyze social media results. We favor tools like **Sysomos** that allow us

to dig into data on stats like follower growth, influencer engagement, sentiment and much more, which are important to measuring the success of a social media program. As part of a measurement exercise, it's helpful to benchmark and compare communications activity against the results of at least two competitors. It's instructive to interpret results thoughtfully in the context of the marketplace, and benchmarking competitive results is a great way to do it. Analyze results using multiple key performance indicators and metrics that are tied to your specific goals and objectives, and challenge your own conclusions when interpreting data to avoid jumping to easy and incorrect conclusions.

Finally, reviewing the results of your program will highlight which campaigns and programs are working and which are not so you can recalibrate as needed. You want to be sure that the needle is moving as quickly and effectively as possible in the right direction and that the time and money you and your team are spending on marketing communications and public relations is being optimized.

***To break free from the pack, identify clear objectives and key performance indicators and measure the results of your PR program on a regular basis, analyzing and adapting your campaigns accordingly.***



## WRAP-UP

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Now that you have been thoroughly schooled in the art of shameless self promotion, it's time to assess your readiness to start implementing. The best way to start is to inventory your tools and assets and to assemble your team.

The most important tools are consistent and well-documented messaging and positioning – and a comprehensive marketing communications strategy. Assets include existing and proposed content assets – whitepapers, articles, case studies, sales and marketing collateral – as well as platforms like your website and social media.

Talking about the team that will optimize the plan, execute programs and get results gives me the perfect opportunity to shamelessly promote Version 2.0. Most clients have at least some of the resource and experience required to execute successfully internally but most rely on outside resources to supplement/compliment their staffs. Our teams in Boston and New York are experienced professionals who are smart, aggressive, creative and understand they have to earn your business every day. Whether it's in a positioning/messaging workshop, developing thought-leadership campaigns or setting up a bi-coastal tour for a CEO, our communications experts consistently impress clients with the results they deliver. And we measure those results against your campaign objectives – every quarter.

Our work is to become part of client teams to build their brand and their value – and we excel at it. While there is no typical V2 client, our clients do share some characteristics. The first is that they have an entrepreneurial culture, the second is that they have big goals and the third is that they are willing to take risks and be provocative if it helps achieve those goals. If you fit this description, we want to work with you. If you are skeptical, check with the 90 percent of our current clients who are also former clients. They keep coming back because they know we are the best at what we do.

## MAURA FITZGERALD CO-FOUNDER & PARTNER

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A seasoned professional in public relations and journalism, Maura successfully founded and grew one of the premier brands in strategic technology communications in the U.S.

After driving communications for large-cap companies including Sony, Motorola, Digital Equipment Corp. and Compaq, and running OPAs (Other People's Agencies) such as Miller Communications and Cunningham Communications, Maura founded FitzGerald Communications in 1994 to "turn corporate vision into market value." Under Maura's direction, the agency immediately became one of the fastest-growing technology public relations firms, rapidly transitioning from regional boutique to respected national brand in less than three years. After successfully building FitzGerald Communications to five offices and nearly 200 PR professionals, Maura sold FitzGerald Communications to Omnicom Corp. in 2002.

A serial entrepreneur, Maura was not content to sit back when she witnessed a market opportunity evolving. With new technology innovations flooding the market as a result of Web 2.0, green and alternative technologies and market evolution in the enterprise software and mobile computing arenas, Maura was poised to address the sophisticated communications challenges of these emerging companies. Together with Jean Serra, an experienced technology communications strategist and senior executive from FitzGerald Communications, she launched Version 2.0 Communications in late 2006.

Bringing her unique blend of communications strategy and business management, Maura has successfully counseled CEOs and senior marketing leaders from some of technology's most innovative market pioneers including USinternetworking, BBN Technologies, Sapient, Peregrine and Manugistics. Working with these industry giants from their early days as fledgling "start-ups", Maura has designed programs to establish industry awareness, bolster credibility and position these organizations for future successful liquidity events.

She continues to bring this expertise and experience to Version 2.0's clients through her direct client management and mentoring of the agency's leading account teams.

As a journalist and freelance writer, Maura's work has appeared in *The Boston Globe*, *The Fort Lauderdale News*, *The Miami Herald* and *USA Today*. She has also written for the Associated Press and United Press International.



**version 2.0**  
**communications**

500 HARRISON AVENUE, SUITE 401R  
BOSTON, MA 02118

WWW.V2COMMS.COM  
TEL: 617 426 2222