

ILR Communications & Marketing Annual Report, 2014-15

From the development of effective marketing communications strategy to the successful promotion of major ILR events and programs, the Communications & Marketing department this year further extended its reach and expanded its level of consultation and service across the school, breaking new ground in several key areas. Highlights and major achievements include:

Executive Master of Human Resource Management Launch. Communications & Marketing played a central role in the design and implementation of the marketing plan to generate leads for the new Executive Master of Human Resource Management program, working with the RDW Group marketing firm. Under Communications & Marketing's direction, ILR conducted additional market research, developed a brand position, conceived and tested the creative/brand positioning/message for the campaign, and designed and implemented a primarily social/digital marketing campaign. This is unlike any type of marketing effort done in the ILR School previously. The efforts have yielded a first class of 32 students, exceeding the goal of 25 for the first year. In addition, these new leading-edge marketing techniques have been introduced to other programs across the school. Some have incorporated more social and digital strategies and best practices taken from the Executive Master campaign, to help improve lead generation, more precisely measure the effectiveness of marketing strategies and reduce overall marketing costs.

Social Media Growth. Social media numbers for ILR's Facebook and Twitter pages continued to climb in 2014-2015. Facebook saw the number of followers increase from 3,087 to 3653, and Twitter doubled in size to 2,300 followers. In addition, the Communications & Marketing team is actively involved in the school's Social Media Advisory Group, which is chaired by Joe Zappala. This year, the advisory group launched the school's first-ever Instagram channel, which has created opportunities to engage more ILR students in social media activities; introduced the first-ever LinkedIn Company page for graduate programs, which has helped build a professional HR community and cultivate interest in the new Executive Master's and MILR program; made a decision to begin using Sprout Social, a social media dashboard that provides software analytics to help track effectiveness of individual posts and tweets and help ILR develop engagement campaigns; and began the process of developing a school-wide social media strategy (this should be done over the summer.) David Yantorno from the Communications & Marketing team has played a lead role in the Instagram launch and the introduction of Sprout Social.

Significantly Increased Consultation and Support for NYC Programs. This year, Stephen D'Angelo was hired, and his work focuses primarily on NYC programs, in an effort to generate more coverage of their activities and to help enhance fee-for-service program marketing efforts. In just six short months, developed good working relationships with Human Capital Development, the Institute for Compensation Studies, the Worker Institute, Labor and Employment Law Program and the Scheinman Institute, and contributed significantly to advancing their communications, public relations and marketing efforts. While attention has always been given to NYC-based programs, this department is now able to provide an even greater level of personalized communications and marketing consultation, support and service, increased coverage of NYC programs and newsworthy events, and more news and promotional writing support. Program directors and staff have expressed great satisfaction with the results to date.

Media Outreach. Under Mary Catt's expert guidance, ILR continues to share its expertise and research through international and national media outlets, which relayed it to many millions of viewers and readers in the past 12 months. More people at ILR become comfortable each year in speaking to the media. In 2015-2015, more than 75 resident and Extension faculty had placements in more than 60 media outlets ranging from The Wall Street Journal and the New York Times to the CBC, Al Jazeera America and niche outlets such as LaborLines.

As a result of the diverse and broadening pool of faculty willing to speak with reporters and producers, more ILR content on dozens of topics -- disability disclosure to the NLRB to workplace creativity to labor in China -- is distributed worldwide at no cost to the school except for a portion of time for one staff member.

ILR's approach to serving any and all media and reaching out to targeted media through personal emails, emailed tip sheets and Twitter messaging continues to pay dividends. ILR has a reputation among reporters at outlets such as the Associated Press, National Public Radio and Bloomberg BNA as a go-to school for assistance on workplace-related issues. An email to the "Workologist" columnist at The New York Times resulted in a hit for Lance Compa. See nyti.ms/1GeT990. A carefully crafted letter and email resulted in a hit for Peter Bamberger in the Wall Street Journal that helped highlight a book he and Professor Sam Bacharach published. See "**Boomers Like Traditional Drug, Too.**" Highlights illustrating the media range of ILR in the past year include:

- **The Exchange with Amanda Lang**
CBC News, May 26, 2015, Tuesday – Stephanie Thomas
- **"More than one in every 10 vehicles on the road has been recalled since January."**
The Washington Post. 23 June 2014. - Art Wheaton.
- **"Metropolitan Opera Contracts Give Unions a Voice."**
The Wall Street Journal. 20 August 2014. - Lois Gray.
- **"Doing business abroad? You gotta know the territory."**
The Dollar Business. 1 October 2014. - Joe Grasso and Steve Miranda
- **"When Working In Mixed Groups, Staying PC Boosts Productivity."**
NPR. 18 December 2014. - Jack Goncalo.
- **"You Need Food and You Deserve a Raise."**
The Wall Street Journal. 28 July 2014. - Emily Zitek.

70th anniversary planning. This department developed a plan to celebrate and promote ILR's 70th anniversary, which started by getting feedback from faculty staff and students, as well as ILR Alumni Associate leadership and others to inform goals and strategy. A working planning document was approved by the deans and began informally implementing the plan last fall with anniversary-themed ILR Online webcast programs and the November issue of Advance. Joe Zappala formed a school-wide 70th anniversary planning committee to help conceptualize and plan a celebratory day in November 2015 (the first day ILR classes were offered at Cornell 70 years ago) and to plan/execute other activities. The anniversary celebration more formally kicked off in June during Reunion with the launch of an interactive 70th anniversary website where alumni and others can post ILR reflections, a project led by Joanne Kenyon; and a panel discussion featuring ILR's former deans sharing their perspectives on the school, past, present and future. A November 6 celebration is planned on the Ithaca campus, and an event in Buffalo to commemorate the launch of ILR Extension and the contributions women have made to ILR will take place in the first quarter of 2016.

Webcasts and Video Production. The ILR Online webcast series, planned and coordinated under the leadership of Don Bazley, for fall 2014 and spring 2015 featured programs with a “past, present and future” theme, to align with Cornell University’s 150th anniversary and the ILR School’s 70th anniversary in 2015. From July 2014 through June 2015, there were three webcasts with total registrations of 2619 (873 average), total live views of 1463 (488 average) and a 53% live view rate. These numbers and percentages are among the highest since the launch of the series in 2009.

Survey responders had high ratings for the webcast content and quality: Presenters – Very Good to Excellent – 80.4%; Program Content – Very Good to Excellent – 75.4%; Overall Value – Very Good to Excellent – 93.6%.

In addition, the video/multimedia unit produced a new ILR School video this year. The video was developed with internal and external stakeholder feedback and has been very well received at various presentations, including alumni meetings across the country.

Other notable accomplishments include:

- Implementation of email marketing campaigns, coordinated by Lori Biechele, to promote Human Capital Development professional public programs and others; campaigns for HCD generated \$30K+ in revenue and achieved an 82% ROI. (Note: These numbers are probably higher and do not fully reflect email marketing campaign results, due to technical difficulties experienced during the ILR website launch and transition that disabled the tracking system for a period of time).
- Design and implementation of strategic communications plans for major school announcements including the appointment of Dean Harry Katz to interim provost, the appointment of Kevin Hallock as the new ILR dean, the Lisa Yang \$10 million gift to name the Employment and Disability Institute, among others.
- Creation and production of two issues of Advance magazine, both with a 70th anniversary-related focus, and completion of the second issue of the ILR Public Engagement publication, projects successfully led by Joan Roberts.
- Promotion of major alumni-focused events managed by Jennifer Morley, including the Groat & Alpern awards and the annual Konvitz Lecture, both of which were well-attended this year. Also helped oversee promotion for visits by alumni guests, including MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred.