



# The Ten at the Top

USING AN ESTABLISHED CUSTOMER SATISFACTION PROCESS ADAPTED FROM *CR MAGAZINE'S* SISTER PUBLICATIONS, WE IDENTIFIED THE TOP PLAYERS IN THE PR SPACE, USING DATA AND FEEDBACK FROM YOUR COLLEAGUES AND OTHER READERS. THANKS TO THE RESPONDENTS OF THIS YEAR'S SURVEY.

BY ELLIOT CLARK

Ranking service providers is a new and ongoing feature of *CR Magazine*, designed to improve the practice of corporate responsibility. We have implemented strict survey protocols developed in our HR publications that are described below.

Service providers are an important tool in the arsenal of the Corporate Responsibility Officer. One key partner is the communication firm. Being a good citizen is paramount, but to maximize the benefit of good citizenship you need to communicate with customers, shareholders, and employees.

Corporate Responsibility Officers, or CROs, are at a point of evolution similar to where human resources leaders were prior to 1980. HR was then known as personnel, or, in unionized companies, labor relations. The professional association was the American Society of Personnel Administrators, with barely 3,000 individual members. In 1989 the group changed its name to the Society of Human Resources Management, or SHRM, a change that rapidly professionalized the HR practice. Today SHRM has 250,000 global members representing companies with an estimated aggregate budget of over \$200 billion. Yet, even in the HR market, there existed no reliable independent ratings of HR service providers, a fact bemoaned by HR leadership.

In 2002, *CR Magazine's* sister publications *HRO Today* and *HRO Europe* began ranking several categories of HR service firms in what are known as Baker's Dozen Customer Satisfaction Ratings. Since 2007 the Baker's Dozen lists have been based on a highly successful customer satisfaction survey methodology. Practitioners in the HR field have actually produced our rankings in post-RFP bid meetings and asked the bidder about why they scored well or poorly in our survey. Our customer satisfaction-driven approach has become the gold standard in vendor evaluation. So, why introduce it to *CR Magazine*?

The CROA is much younger, representing about 200 companies and about 1,200 individuals. But these executives now own rapidly growing budgets totaling billions of dollars. Communications firms are among the recipients of this new spend. Yet the CROA's members tell us that sourcing the best services in this emerging field is highly uncertain because no reliable ranking program exists.

In response to this market need, in each of the next three issues of *CR Magazine* we will scientifically rank the Top Ten providers in three categories: energy-environmental technology service and legal, account-

ing compliance/governance advisors.

In the following pages, you will find the first of these three Top Ten Rankings—PR, Communications and Advertising firms. We trust they will make your sourcing work more objective and data-driven.


We solicited the input of current CROs as well as marketing/communications executives to rank the top PR and communications firms in the space. We surveyed more than 10 firms, but only 10 made the final list.

Ranking Methodology: Current customers were asked to participate in an online survey regarding their experience with their current provider (their identities are strictly confidential). The survey instrument measures three dimensions. The first is "Breadth of Service," which is the subset of services provided. The next dimension is "Deal Size," a reflection of divisional or geographic reach or size of company, etc. We only offer deal size as a comparator for you to measure a potential provider against the scope of a program you may wish to put out to bid.

The final component of the index and the most important is "Quality of Service." This is based on a series of questions that examined the performance, relationship, and trust between provider and customer. We used a five-point Likert scale with answers ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." Each answer was ascribed a point value and the points were totaled, averaged, and the mean was calculated into the overall quality score. We then weighted each dimension for the "Overall Score."

We allow providers to refer customers, but they do know the weightings of questions or the dimensional categories in the final index. We keep this information secret so known customers cannot be coached to focus on certain questions. We perform spot verification of respondents using two different methods. We also solicit respondents from our own lists so our sample is not only generated by the provider referrals.

This is the respected and standard methodology used in all of our Baker's Dozen customer satisfaction surveys. Once again, *CR Magazine* ranked only providers for which we were able to compile enough respondents to have statistically valid customer data.

We hope that the *CR Magazine's* Top Ten Customer Satisfaction Ratings in Communications helps you identify the most appropriate partner for your needs. 

## Overall Rankings for Firms

Firm	Breadth of Service	Size of Deals	Quality of Service	Overall Ranking
Weber Shandwick	5.00	7.50	34.50	84.70
MS&L Worldwide	2.33	3.00	34.17	77.12
Cause Consulting	3.63	2.25	33.13	76.21
Ogilvy PR	2.33	3.00	32.67	73.97
Cone	1.83	3.83	32.67	73.85
Burson-Marsteller	1.33	3.67	20.33	47.13
Ruder Finn	2.00	4.50	18.50	44.80
Abernathy McGregor	1.00	3.50	13.50	32.20
Edelman	2.00	5.50	12.00	31.85
RF Binder	1.50	2.50	7.50	19.60

## Company

## URL

**1. Weber Shandwick**[www.webershandwick.com](http://www.webershandwick.com)

Weber Shandwick is a leading global public relations agency. The firm's success is built on its deep commitment to client service, creativity, collaboration and harnessing the power of advocates—engaging stakeholders in new and creative ways to build brands and reputation.

**Key clients in 2009:**

- American Airlines
- Honeywell
- Milk Processor Education Program
- VeriSign
- Electrolux
- KFC
- U.S. Army
- Yum! Brands
- General Motors
- Microsoft
- U.S. Census

**CR-related services:** Planet 2050 is the firm's global corporate responsibility and sustainability group and works with our social innovation colleagues drawing upon corporate responsibility expertise. We prepare clients with strategy, stakeholder engagement, benchmarking, consumer marketing, digital communications, and media relations.

- Profile raising of CSR/sustainability programs
- CSR vision/strategic mapping
- Advice on stakeholder engagement and NGO partnerships
- Clean tech
- Digital CSR
- New product launches
- Internal and external CSR communications
- Issues monitoring and management
- Research

**Number of dedicated staff members assigned to CR-related assignments:** More than 20

**2. MS&LGroup**[www.mslworldwide.com](http://www.mslworldwide.com)

MS&LGroup is a marketing communications firm that provides marketing, communication and events services to global clients in fields such as consumer products, healthcare and business services. MS&L also has specialties in its ECO Network, which focuses on environmental practices, and Social Activism Marketing, focusing on CSR.

**Key clients in 2009:**

- Procter & Gamble • General Motors • Home Depot • Best Buy • Eli Lilly • Sanofi Aventis • Roche • Coca-Cola • Underwriters Laboratories
- 3M

**CR-related services:**

- Financial Communications: Investor relations, sustainability, and environmental communications.
- Consumer Marketing: Cause marketing and CSR
- Corporate Communications: Government relations, corporate brand management, philanthropy and foundations
- Public Affairs: Advocacy

**Number of dedicated staff members assigned to CR-related assignments:** 168

Company

URL

### 3. Cause Consulting

[www.causeconsulting.com](http://www.causeconsulting.com)

Cause Consulting is a business and CSR strategy firm that integrates citizenship, marketing, and business disciplines to help companies meet a range of communications, branding, and operational objectives. Our seasoned team of professionals works with Fortune 500 companies to simultaneously strengthen business and impact society.

#### Key clients in 2009:

- Adobe Systems
- ARAMARK
- eBay
- HP
- AMD
- Boston Beer Company
- Fidelity Investments

#### CR-related services:

- Corporate citizenship/CSR strategy: Work on a range of CSR issues including environmental sustainability, philanthropy, employee practices, supply chain, and governance.
- Signature program development and enhancement: Create CSR, strategic philanthropy, community relations, employee volunteerism, cause-related marketing, and sponsorship programs.
- Positioning, branding and marketing/communications: Brand, package, and communicate CSR programs, and develop and implement integrated marketing and communications plans for internal and external audiences.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Use the power of CSR programs to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders by mapping and prioritizing audiences, facilitating communications, forging alliances, creating volunteer initiatives, and tracking results.

**Number of dedicated staff members assigned to CR-related assignments:** 100 percent

### 4. Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide (Ogilvy PR)

[www.ogilvypr.com](http://www.ogilvypr.com)

Ogilvy PR is a global, multi-disciplinary communications company operating in more than 70 markets. Named Large Agency of the Year by The Holmes Report and PRNews, Ogilvy PR blends proven PR methodologies with cutting-edge digital innovations to craft strategic programs that give clients measurable results.

**Key clients in 2009:** •Ford • SunPower • World Economic Forum • American Chemistry Council • Chevron • Molson Coors • Unilever • DuPont • CDW

#### CR-related services:

- OgilvyEarth: Global sustainability offering ensures a consistent yet locally relevant approach to sustainability from market to market. The agency brings insights about the shifting environmental communications landscape and combines knowledge of sustainability with expertise to help corporations reach stakeholders. The approach helps clients navigate this complex and changing environment through a variety of services including strategic planning and development, partnership identification and outreach, and internal and external communications.

**Number of dedicated staff members assigned to CR-related assignments:** More than 200

## Company

## URL

**5. Cone**[www.coneinc.com](http://www.coneinc.com)

Cone is a strategy and communications agency engaged in building brand trust. Cone creates stakeholder loyalty and long-term relationships through the development and execution of corporate responsibility, cause branding<sup>SM</sup>, brand marketing and crisis prevention, and management. The firm works with credible brands to create programs that engage stakeholders, build awareness, enhance reputation, and drive customer loyalty. Cone is passionate about building trusted brands that maximize their market success and make a positive social impact.

**Key clients in 2009:**

- CVS Caremark
- EMC
- Hannaford
- Reebok
- Disney
- General Mills
- Mattel
- Starbucks
- eBay
- Guayakí
- Nestlé Waters North America
- Timberland

**CR-related services:****CR Strategy**

- Vision and leadership positioning
- Risk and gap assessment
- Issues and risk management
- Stakeholder mapping and engagement
- Partnership development
- Philanthropic alignment
- Eco-Marketing

**CR Communications**

- Platform development
- Communications planning
- Message development and training
- Media relations
- New media and social networking
- CR reporting
- Conferences, awards and speakers programs
- Product launches and retail marketing
- Events
- Creative services

**Number of dedicated staff members assigned to CR-related assignments:** 13

**6. Burson-Marsteller**[www.bm.com](http://www.bm.com)

Burson-Marsteller is a global public relations and communications firm that builds and sustains strong corporate and brand reputations. The firm provides clients with counsel and program development across the spectrum of public relations, public affairs, digital media, advertising, and other communications services. Clients include global companies, industry associations, professional services firms, governments, and other large organizations.

**Key clients in 2009:** N/A

**CR-related services:**

- Advance client interests on a wide range of CR and corporate reputation issues.
- Track and advise on the key CR issues, including sustainability and environmental stewardship, business and human rights, labor standards/supply chain, and reporting and transparency.
- Map CR priorities and connect them with core business objectives.
- Develop codes and guidelines, link CR initiatives to broader corporate reputation and brand positioning, and aid in implementing CR policies and programs.
- Put together strategies for enhanced CR and sustainability reporting, while identifying other means for communicating CR programs and policies to media and other key audiences.

**Number of dedicated staff members assigned to CR-related assignments:** N/A.

Company

URL

**7. Ruder Finn**[www.ruderfinn.com](http://www.ruderfinn.com)

Ruder Finn, Inc. is a privately held, family-owned public relations agency with a wide range of PR practices and services, and offices around the world. The firm specializes in communications for health and wellness, global connectivity, corporate and public trust, and life an

**Key clients in 2009:** N/A

**CR-related services:**

- Global Education initiatives
- Global Climate Control initiatives
- Global Health: Access to Medicines / Drug Donation Programs
- UN Global Compact initiatives
- Davos / World Economic Forum Platform
- UN Millennium Goals initiatives
- Disaster Relief donation initiatives
- Corporate AIDS Awareness Initiatives
- Private – Public Sector Collaborations / Studies
- Academic Research Partnerships

**Number of dedicated staff members assigned to CR-related assignments:** N/A

**8. Abernathy McGregor**[www.abmac.com](http://www.abmac.com)

The Abernathy MacGregor Group provides counsel to the senior management of business corporations and large organizations in six communications disciplines, including investor relations, transaction communications, initial public offerings, corporate and financial public relations, crisis communications, and corporate restructurings and bankruptcy.

**Key clients in 2009:** N/A

**CR-related services:** We regularly advise clients on business ethics and corporate governance issues, and on corporate social responsibility, public issues, thought leadership, strategic philanthropy, corporate volunteerism and employee engagement.

**Number of dedicated staff members assigned to CR-related assignments:** N/A

**9. Edelman**[www.edelman.com](http://www.edelman.com)

Edelman is a full-service global public relations firm with 31,000 employees in 51 offices around the globe. The company handles a wide-range of public relations functions, including brand management, employee engagement, CSR and sustainability, design, editorial, marketing, and public affairs among others.

**Key clients in 2009:** N/A

**CR-related services:** Edelman's global CSR and Sustainability practice provides counsel and programming to multi-national companies in a variety of sectors around issues management, communications campaigns, CR/sustainability reporting, management training, strategic philanthropy, public-private partnerships, and public affairs. Edelman also provides counsel and programming for multilateral organizations and global NGOs.

**Number of dedicated staff members assigned to CR-related assignments:** N/A

Company

URL

**10. RF Binder**[www.rfbinder.com](http://www.rfbinder.com)

RF Binder is a communications firm that help companies understand the opportunities as well as the challenges, the controversies and nuances involved in energy and environmental communications. The firm has experience in a range of industry sectors, including automotive, consumer products, energy and the environment, financial services, food and beverage, healthcare, not-for-profit and technology..

**Key clients in 2009:**

- Entergy Nuclear Northeast
- Repsol YPF

**CR-related services:**

Energy and environmental services cover scientific and technical issues, financial matters, issues and crisis management, branding, leadership positioning, media relations, as well as government, NGO and community relations.

**Number of dedicated staff members assigned to CR-related assignments:** N/A

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