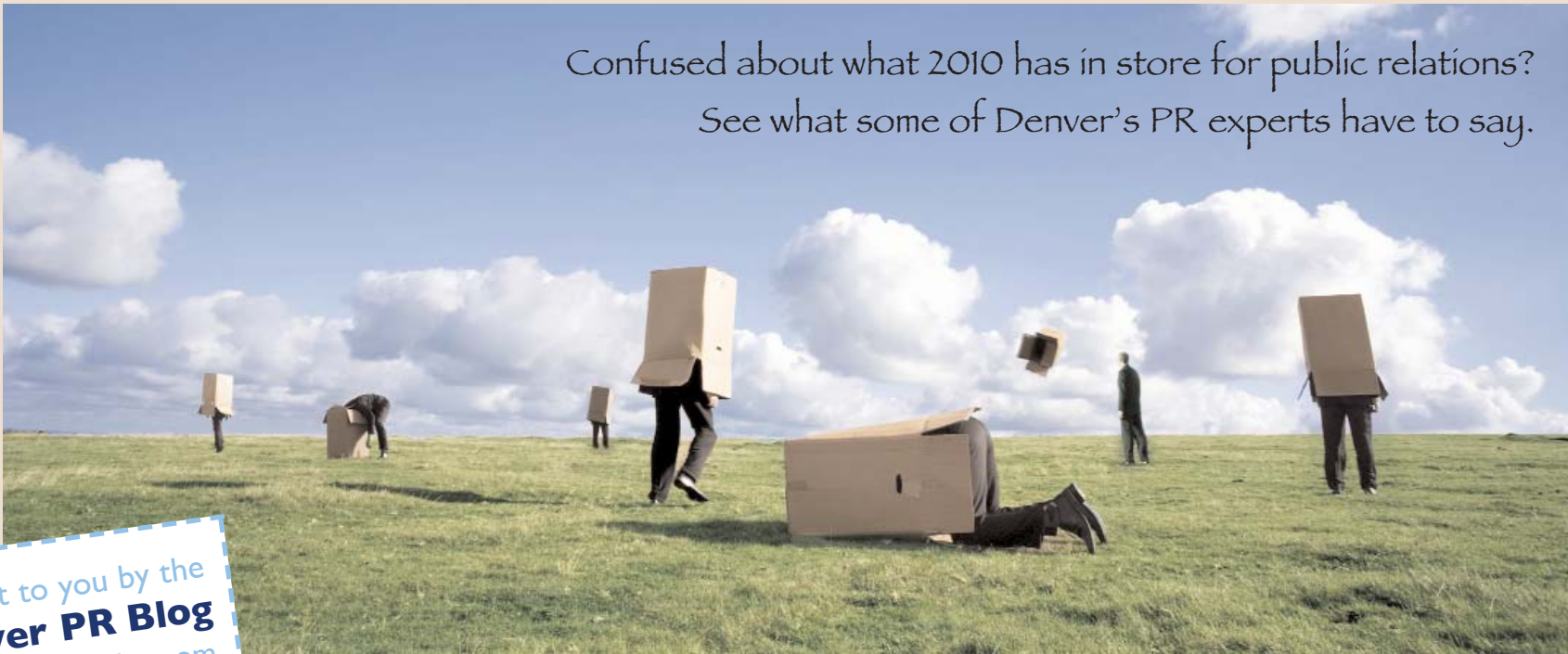


## 2010 Denver Public Relations Predictions

Confused about what 2010 has in store for public relations?  
See what some of Denver's PR experts have to say.



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**Denver PR Blog**  
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PR predictions for 2010 offered from experts at 104 West, 5280 Magazine, Aiello, Allstate, AskDaveTaylor.com, Ayers PR, Bawmann Group, Business Wire, Cactus, CIGNA, Cohn Marketing, Comcast, Denver Art Museum, Dovetail Solutions, First Data, GBSM, GroundFloor Media, InterMountain, JohnstonWells, Linhart, Metzger, MGA, Pure, Pushkin, SE2, Turner, Visit Denver, Vladimir Jones, Webb, Weise and Westword.

Edited by Jeremy Story

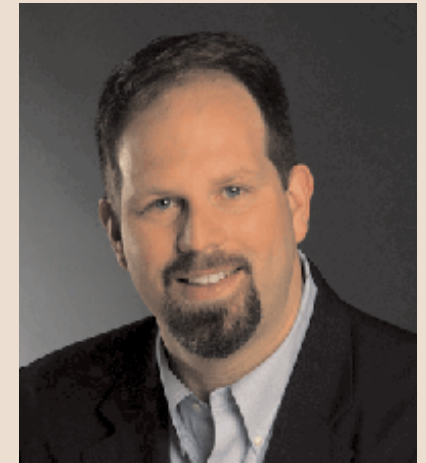
## Predicting the Future ...

One of the best parts of publishing the Denver PR Blog is that I get to meet a lot of smart, talented communications professionals. Denver may not be in the same league as Dallas, Minneapolis or Atlanta when it comes to Fortune-500 companies headquartered here, but those cities have nothing on Denver when it comes to our talent pool. There is something about Colorado that lures people here and makes them want to stay.

I'd like to thank the smart, talented people who contributed predictions for this year's compilation. As I noted last year, predictions are a lot of fun. The good ones give us a glimpse of what may come, and the bad ones give us a laugh when they prove to be comically off-base. Usually, the problem with separating the accurate predictions from the inaccurate ones is that it takes time. But in just a couple of weeks we have already seen Tracy Weise's prediction of a national championship for her Alabama Crimson Tide come true, and Pete Webb's prediction of a more civil tone from the McInnis and Ritter campaigns fall apart. The rest we'll have to wait on.

I hope you enjoy this collection, and that you will pass it along to anyone you think might be interested in it. Here's to a great 2010.

Jeremy Story



**Jeremy Story**

**Publisher, Denver PR Blog**

**Partner, Story + Welch and  
Digital Idea Media**



**Andy Boian**  
**Founder & CEO**  
**dovetail solutions**

1. Andrew Hudson and Bruce Goldberg will form a punk/folk rock ensemble that will make it into the final round of NBC's "America's Got Talent," however, they will be tainted by a Milli Vanilli-type scandal when it is discovered that all of their music (and singing) is pre-recorded.
2. People will rediscover the fact that there is no social media option that is as effective as face-to-face conversations that aren't limited to 140 characters.
3. PR firms will find a whole new revenue stream in providing services to medical marijuana dispensaries, especially with coaching these clients on

effective media interviews by staying focused for more than two minutes, not eating Doritos during the conversation, and avoiding phrases like "Hey man, it's like this..."

4. Due to the "financial derivatives" effect, PR professionals will be held to a new standard where they must be able to clearly explain and understand the products and services of their clients and the tangible value they provide.
5. Accenture will decide to replace Tiger Woods with Vince, the ShamWow guy, in an effort to bring some credibility back to its brand.
6. Mayor John Hickenlooper will hold the world record for the "longest wheelie" when he kicks off the Denver Bike Share program in spring and travels the length of the 16th Street Mall (eight times) balancing on one wheel and conducting three conference calls in the process.
7. Certain agencies will toy with the idea of using raw, honest quotes in press releases instead canned sound bites. This will put grins on the faces of reporters and increase the rate of heartburn among agency owners. It will also last approximately three weeks.
8. Clients will focus on measuring their efforts in community investment when new research shows that certain data can be quantified in financial terms such as a child's smile is equivalent to an ROI of approximately \$1,760.
9. The Denver business community will continue to shine in the national spotlight when additional surveys rank it as the #1 city in categories such as "Best Place to Conduct a Meeting Outdoors," "Best Job Market for People Who Prefer Fleece Jackets Over Navy Blazers," and "Best City to Blame Hangovers on the Altitude."
10. The demand for good writing and solid journalism will gain momentum as the popularity of reality television starts to decline. Adults over the age of 50 will be barred from forwarding emails claiming to expose how Obama is not a U.S. citizen. People will engage in more philosophical debates and crave learning the truth about things rather than believing online blog posts. Hey...it could happen.

- Following the complete collapse of the journalism industry, public-information officers and official spokespersons will band together to start their own radio stations, TV outlets and newspapers, so at least they'll have someone to talk to. Should be easy, since most of them are former journalists.
- The *Denver Post* will start charging for online content — and Dean Singleton will go door to door to collect.
- In an attempt to increase revenue, *Westword* will cease publication and become a medical-marijuana dispensary. This bud's for you.

**Michael Roberts**  
**Media Critic/Blogger**  
**Westword**





**Joe Hodas**  
**Senior Vice President of Brand Communications**  
**Vladimir Jones**

As I did my reading of last years predictions, I was reminded of the fact that I can't say much about social media changing PR, or about the need for relationships, or about traditional media disappearing or about being open to changes and evolution. So, as I sit here, breathing in the smoldering fumes of a year that reminds me of that picture of a nuclear mushroom that flattens everything within sight in a matter of seconds, I scratch my head and wonder how I can possibly sound even remotely clever trying to predict what will happen next year. But, as I am never one to shy away from the opportunity to look like a buffoon, here goes:

First off, I predict that Bedpost will become the hottest new social media tool, replacing the trajectory set by Facebook and then Twitter. However, it will have a tragic and unexpected impact on new social media developments in that the losers who evaluate their "audience" by how many followers or "friends" they have, will suddenly feel exposed by this new tool and will be forced to reckon with the fact that somehow, some way, they must differentiate between relationships and marketing.

Employee communications will continue to lead the next wave of communication investment. More and more it seems that companies are forced (and I chose that word intentionally) to realize that their employees are their brand. Sounds cliché, but, the companies that will achieve marketing/communications success in the coming year(s) will invest in an inside out strategy. Once the employees are on board, understand the message and live/breathe the brand, all else will fall in place. Don't get me wrong—there's still a need to tell the story via traditional channels, but, that story wont resonate without employee buy in. And if there are any disconnects between the marketing and employees, it will show itself quickly and damagingly. In other predictions, I predict that I will create several new words in 2010, like damagingly or relationshippery.

Having misinterpreted the expression "any press is good press" the makers of the Zhu-Zhu pet, seeing all the coverage they received from the potential recall due to children licking the fake hamsters, decide to put out a line of edible hamster products. With the tag line, "you can play with them OR eat them" they figure they have all their bases covered until it is discovered that the tasty fur on the edible hamsters doesn't pass FDA standards and the product is held responsible for the death of a dozen dogs.

The term "PR" will continue to be diluted and absorbed into broader nomenclature such as "communications" or "relationshippery". It's inevitable simply because our role as "PR practitioner" is changing so rapidly and our adaptation to those changes is pulling us in new and more non-traditional areas. If all you know how to do is create "messages" and pitch media, you might have a tough time of it. At the end of the day, we were always communicators, weren't we?

Full disclosure—this is a veiled client plug. But I do think its true. . This will be the year that "green" becomes more than a movement or a political opinion. Green will move into the consumer mainstream consciousness this year. We've already seen it in some of the most simplistic of ways, such as the "green" dishwashing detergent on the same shelf, at nearly the same price, as more "mainstream" detergent. But this year will take us to bigger and better heights. The average consumer will make an easy choice about CFLs vs. traditional bulbs; a simpler decision regarding which is the more energy efficient dishwasher to replace the old one that just broke; or how we can lower our energy bills with simple changes to our insulation or thermostats. I don't know about you, but I already feel ridiculous about that draft in my house that I cant seem to get rid of. Seriously. I need to take care of that. Maybe in 2010.

Finally—I predict that all those companies that are trying to tap into the "less is more" and "back to basics" messaging because they think it's so "strategic", will suddenly realize that by doing so, they are actually reinforcing a message that negatively impacts their bottom line. In a total and complete panic over declining revenues, these same companies (probably in Q4 of next year), will launch massive campaigns to tell us all about the things we must have in order to make us feel fulfilled and happy. And in the reverse reaction, all of those who shunned material goods and commercialism will feel happy once again, understanding their place in the world, rather than feeling like they have to prove to everyone that they were always in the "less is more" camp.



**Steven Silvers**  
Principal  
GBSM

A key theme in 2010 will be information command and control:

- Millions of people will stop using free social media services as they realize that those revenue-hungry companies are giving or selling access to their profiles, posts, pics and friends lists.
- Court cases will reaffirm that employee use of social media during working hours is not protected speech, adding to intense monitoring and far more stringent policies by employers.
- “Agenda media” will continue to grow as more formerly ad-supported news outlets become funded by interest groups, politically leaning foundations, single corporations and even government.
- Public interest and watchdog groups will try to put teeth on the FTC’s new rules requiring full transparency in all marketing, promotion and publicity.

- Companies will increasingly look to hire communications talent that clearly understand how to use the ever-changing array of tools available to communicate with audiences in 2010. More importantly, they will look to hire talent that can combine that knowledge with the ability to think strategically and understand their clients’ or organizations’ businesses.
- Shiny Object Syndrome will continue when it comes to social media, but smart organizations will continue to tie results of their online efforts directly to business objectives.
- Traditional mass media outlets will continue to look and sound more like activist organizations with political agendas, making it more important than ever for organizations to use digital communications and social media tools to tell their own stories.
- Local and national economies will continue to improve and spending on well-thought-out, original communications efforts that take full advantage of both traditional and new tools will increase when compared to 2009.
- All of our professional sports teams will, once again, not win championships, yet an entire section of the Denver Post and nearly 15 minutes of 10 pm newscasts will be dedicated to telling their stories and I will continue to consume that media in its entirety.
- City and state governments will continue their budgetary struggles and will look to any and all methods to increase revenue – meaning I will likely rack up thousands of dollars in parking and speeding tickets and may be looking for rides to and from work.



**Larry Holdren**  
Partner  
Pure



**Sharon Haley Linhart**  
Managing Partner  
Linhart Public Relations

At the risk of pointing out the obvious, the world has really changed the way it communicates. I predict business will continue to adapt to and adopt new interactive media and digital communications for everything from customer service to crisis management to employee engagement. Organizations will seek to bypass the traditional news media and interact one-on-one with key audiences as never before. The smart strategists who know what, why, when and how to communicate will rule this new world and the question of “what’s the ROI of social media” will finally be put to rest.



**Ashley Boyden**  
**PR Director**  
**Cactus**

I had to laugh looking back at last year’s predictions. First out of the gate, Laura Love’s read “PR agencies that survive and thrive in 2009 will vehemently disregard the old saying “the more things change, the more they stay the same.” She was spot on that change was in store for PR agencies. But I argue that the more things change, the more we, as PR practitioners, should strive to keep them the same.

In many ways, going back to our PR roots as bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, ready-to-conquer-the-world college grads can help us achieve success today.

- While we’ve become adept at fitting a pitch’s top three messages into a 140-character tweet, having a smartly crafted story to back it up is still essential to fighting for headlines, airtime and column inches.
- Building fruitful relationships is just as important as it was on Day One. Beyond peers, clients, partners and media, we now have increased demand to build authentic relationships with citizen journalists. In 2010, mass communication will continue to evolve into more personalized individual conversations that help businesses grow relationships with citizen journalists.
- I graduated from KU’s inaugural strategic communications program with an optimistic view of integrated communications in the real world, to say the least. A decade later, I’m still fighting to blur the lines between advertising, marketing, PR and social media. And, I remain optimistic that in 2010 more businesses will see the value of well-rounded, integrated communications, work toward long-term visions and follow through with strategic plans rather than glob on to the social media trend du jour. A girl can dream right?
- Clipping reports used to be fun – let’s make them meaningful again. Long gone are the days of measuring influence by column inches and ad-space equivalencies. Yet, as executives relinquish more control to social media programs, PR professionals will face increased pressure to demonstrate the ROI of social media efforts through data-driven measurement and analytics.

- Remember when making a difference was more important than collecting a paycheck? In light of hardships witnessed all around us, in 2010 people will do more good. I’ve already seen it. I’m in awe of the generosity of my peers and fellow advertising and PR firms who, even when hit by the recession personally, remain dedicated to doing good for the community. I’m confident and inspired that this trend will grow in the coming year.

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- A major “name” firm will close its doors, burdened by overhead and a shaky corporate client base.
  - A long-time TV anchor will leave the set.
  - Fox31 will trim its photo staff and use Skype for live interviews.
  - “Green” will continue to be the elusive “next trend” for PR firms chasing the rainbow.
  - The *Denver Business Journal* will reinforce its 3pm newscast to become even more of a threat to the *Post* business page.
  - Media-rich news release strategies will be more in demand as TV struggles to get video and print struggles to get details.
  - At least one Denver TV station will abandon the “Denver pool” and decide it should be deciding where to devote its crews and photojournalists.
  - “Social media,” “New media,” whatever it’s called in the current blogs, will grow as a pitching strategy. We’ll never have to pick up the phone again; just Twitter the 22-year old on the desk, and if she’s not busy arranging her evening out, we’ll get a call back with interest in the story.
  - The McInnis-Ritter campaign will try to elevate the tone of political debate in Colorado, but obscure 527s and the nasty progressives and right-wing fringe will continue to roll grenades down the aisle.

**Pete Webb**  
**Founder**  
**Webb Public Relations**





**Wendy Aiello**  
**Principal**  
**Aiello Public Relations & Marketing**

Forging and maintaining relationships will continue to be the bedrock of a successful public relations agency. We must utilize every person and their skill set at our agencies to find our new media relationships. The truly successful firms will discover and become sources for all credible media outlets – both traditional and “new.”

The birth of smaller agencies continues. With the massive shift in the media market more people will hang their public relations shingle in 2010. A prediction for 2011 – fewer small shops. It's not as easy as it looks!

More consortiums of public relations and marketing professionals will physically band together. It gets lonely working remotely. Great ideas are born when face-to-face communication takes place. The “old” model agency may not be viable for many PR pros, but coming together with other individuals in the field will continue to provide new business, media leads and contacts and a greater quality of life.

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#### **Evolution Kills Some, but Breeds Others**

Traditional media continues to contract and many iconic publications such as Editor and Publisher, the *Rocky Mountain News* and *Gourmet Magazine* ride off into the sunset leaving us a little parched and missing something that we knew for so long. Today, we must adjust our strategies slightly to take advantage of the power of real-time information and connect with our communities and advocates. We are seeing more traditional media adjusting their business models to compete in the new landscape and employing things like Twitter as a tool for dissemination of news and to drive Web traffic to their sites. As we embark on 2010 and further bridge traditional and social media tools, we should remember not to wander completely astray from the genesis of our profession by remaining true to our roots and being real and transparent.

#### **Oh, the Possibilities . . .**

We saw some of the possibilities this past year and how quickly news can spread through social media – who did not follow the “Balloon Boy” hoax unfold on Twitter, or keep up with news about Michael Jackson’s death on Facebook? And who didn’t Retweet photos of the Hudson River crash after someone they follow posted it? Personally, I am excited to see what new social technologies will take-off in the coming year, or at least become more of a reality than science fiction or vaporware. The speed at which things are changing is unprecedented, so keeping up will continue to be important as well as a challenge for the public relations industry. Luckily we have a plethora of tools at our fingertips to guide us and inform us as we sail along this changing media landscape in 2010.



**Cara Crifasi**  
**Director of Communications**  
**First Data**



**Tracy Weise**  
**President**  
**Weise Communications Inc.**

There are two kinds of PR pros: Those who move at the speed of a nanosecond (I predict they will do well) and those who still have the Rocky Mountain News on their media lists (I predict they will soon be applying to MBA programs).

The news, and the not so newsworthy news, is reaching us all at the speed of 140 characters per posting. This means that product and service providers, corporations, politicians, athletes, and all those other entertainers/public figures who have private lives we don't really need to know about but still do, need to be on top of their images every day, every minute. As PR professionals, it is our job to manage those images in nanoseconds.

Public relations professionals have incredible opportunities to promote our clients in new and innovative, and quite frankly, fun ways. We have not had to rely on old school practices of op-eds, newsletters, published profiles or speaking opportunities to develop the image of our clients or promote services and products. Now we have blogs, casts of the pod and video varieties, tweets and flicks and so many more opportunities to publish content, react to breaking news, manage messages and craft identities. PR professionals who are taking advantage of the chance to own their messages without journalists as gatekeepers, will propel their clients to new heights. But those individuals (or agencies) not up to speed in this 140-character world, will be stuck reacting to community perception instead of owning media messages.

Not only do we need to embrace the ever expanding world of social communications, but we must continue to pull our clients to it as well. Posting apologies on personal Web sites, ala Tiger Woods, is clearly not engaging or effective communications. CEO's blogging about the good, the bad and the ugly on a regular basis, ala Paul Levy of Beth Israel, are in the game to control and own messages. What type of communication program will you advocate? It is amazing how many times I heard during the past year, "We don't need to Twitter." Or, "I am the CEO, I don't have the time to blog." I promise you, during their next crisis communication moment (and they will have it), these same people are going to wish they had been participating in online communications for months.

I also predict that the traditionally academic motto "publish or perish" is no longer just for those seeking tenure. Getting good, optimized content online will be a new PR 101 lesson. In addition, I predict that Oprah will continue to find some way to haunt our PR nightmares. Finally, and most importantly, I predict that The University of Alabama will be the 2010 National Champions in College Football. Roll Tide Roll.



**Nicole Alley**  
**Spokeswoman**  
**Allstate Insurance Company**

After such a wild year in 2009, which included the election of a new president, the economy hitting rock bottom and experimental weather balloon hoaxes, I predict that things will calm down and get back to basics in 2010 but it will still be a bumpy ride. While we continue to see signs of recovery, corporations, small businesses and consumers will proceed with cautious optimism.

Transparency will be king and corporations with a strong social responsibility platform will thrive. New media will continue to transform the way we do business. Not only will corporations embrace social media into their strategies, but social media positions will crop up en masse.

- It will still be economy, economy, economy and budgets will be tight. Creating public relations programs with value tied to productivity and profitability will be critical.
- Social media will not be all the rage, it will be required. Social media is becoming an integral part of most programs and will join the other list of public relations tactics expected from our profession. The focus for this next phase needs to be on developing organizational social media engagement policies, clear integrated strategies and measurement processes linked to business goals.
- Mobile technology is moving to center stage in communication. Speed and true 24/7 connectivity and will create incredible opportunities for developing and enhancing relationships with our target audiences. The smart use and development of applications will be a valuable capability to add to our public relations arsenal.
- In-person exchanges, special events, community meetings, etc. are not becoming obsolete, but rather more important, in part, because of the wide-spread use of technology. We need to use both wisely.
- User-generated content is foundational to the Internet. However, actions like the FTC rule requiring bloggers to reveal when they have been paid in some way for blogging about a product or company may start a trend toward more transparency and validation about information posted on the web. Perhaps there is a future for editors, let's hope.
- Online advertising is no longer about a simple click through. There will be increasing incentives offered to motivate people to click on the ad. Coupons anyone?
- Survey Monkey is making everyone a researcher – public relations/ communications professionals should become the gate keepers of the validity of the information.



**Jeff Julin**  
**President**  
**MGA Communications**



**Eric Anderson**  
**Principal**  
**SE2**

#### **Top 10 PR predictions for 2010**

10. CBS4 Assignment Editor Misty Montano's Twitter followers exceed total CBS4 viewership.
9. Denver TV news station hires first anchor who hasn't actually finished high school yet.
8. Colorado public official sends minute-by-minute tweets revealing content of closed-door executive session.
7. Westword becomes insert placed inside weekly 60-page medical marijuana advertising circular.
6. Inspired by Mad Men, communications professionals try drinking at lunch only to discover that when they sleep at their desk they drool on important papers.
5. New LinkedIn app lets bosses monitor satisfaction of employees based on how often they update their profiles or trade recommendations. (More updates/recommendations=employee is desperate to escape.)
4. Breakthrough electronic format allows men to comfortably read online news in the bathroom. Paper newspapers begin final death spiral. Women report not seeing husbands for days at a time.
3. Peter Boyles loses last shred of credibility. (Oh, wait, that already happened.)
2. Pulitzer committee admits error, retroactively gives Public Service award to *Glendale Cherry Creek Chronicle* for two-part investigative series on cougar bars.
1. Jeremy Story figures out why Penny Parker keeps ignoring his pitches.



**Daniel Brogan**  
**Editor & Publisher**  
**5280 Magazine**

Let's be honest: New Year's predictions tend toward wishful thinking. So while I'm as tempted as the next guy to forecast an improved economy and rejuvenated marketing budgets (or at least come up with something funny), I'll instead go with something I can say with far more certainty: For better or worse, 2010 will be the year that magazines seal their fate.

The year ahead is likely to see a variety of shiny new gadgets, all promising to provide new publishing platforms that are well suited to what magazines do best. The question is what we'll do with them.

If we follow the example set in the last decade by newspapers, blindly following every trend that came down the digital pike (Free content! Podcasts! Blogs! Citizen journalism! Facebook! Twitter!) without giving any real thought to sustainable business models, we will surely slide into irrelevance, just as they have.

On the other hand, if we give careful attention to re-inventing ourselves in ways that truly serve readers and advertisers alike – you may have already seen this example, but a far more thoughtful exploration is here – we stand a real chance of thriving in this new decade.

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Sorry, creationist crowd, but the last two years provided ample evidence that Darwinism is alive and well in the PR market – natural selection weeded out those who couldn't compete and strengthened for the long run those who adapted and made it through the Ice Age. What will 2010 offer beyond more evolution? Here are my barely-educated guesses:

First, the latest in gadgetry and new media applications – e.g., using the cell phone implanted in your keychain to post a tweet that promotes the podcast you just recorded on your waffle iron and linked to from the blog on your Facebook page – will only get sillier before it reaches its full strategic potential.

The marketplace of companies that invent this stuff will begin to settle much as the dot.com industry did so many years ago, with a wave of mergers and acquisitions and, yes, more culling of the weak to protect the overall health of the herd. PR practitioners will have to: (a) stay on top of this constantly changing landscape; (b) not over-commit to any one particular tool – you'd hate to put all your faith in the rock as your primary pounding implement just as others are discovering the hammer; and (c) have as their foundation a smart and viable communications philosophy that can endure and drive the program regardless of the tactics and technologies at their disposal.

Second, even as the available wizardry evolves many organizations will rediscover some of the more quaint (but effective) methods of communicating. Particularly in a retail public relations and public affairs market like Colorado, we will see a renewed emphasis on bypassing both old and new media channels and speaking directly to audiences through more “old school” tactics such as public meetings (the original social media), neighborhood and small group forums, presentations to the Elks Lodge and even one-on-one dialogues with critical stakeholders. In theory anyway, you never control the message as well as when you're delivering it live and unfiltered out of your very own mouth.

Third, crisis management will be the next area of focus as the PR industry continues its life-long struggle with how to calculate the ROI of good communications. As credibility and reputations get destroyed with a few keystrokes in this hypersensitive media environment, those visionaries capable of thinking and looking beyond the next news cycle will figure out how best to measure the value of crisis avoidance – counting the ships that missed the rocks thanks to the lighthouse instead of counting the ones that ran aground.

Finally, I predict – as I have every year since 1967 – a World Series title for the Boston Red Sox. (Hey, I've been right twice...)



**Drew Kramer**  
**Director of Strategic Communications**  
**InterMountain Corporate Affairs**



**Doyle Albee**  
**President and New**  
**Media Practice Director**  
**Metzger Associates**

2010 will be "The Year of the Cheetah." While I don't think that's really one of the animals to choose from on the Chinese calendar, I've chosen that headline for my predictions because I think next year we will see substantive changes happen at light speed — or maybe I should say cheetah speed. Why? Social media is starting to mature. We've already seen major shifts in leadership that few predicted, like Facebook displacing MySpace as the largest social network in the U.S. and the site's continuing rapid growth. We've also seen some dramatic results and impacts to companies from social media activity — I'm thinking situations like the Motrin Moms and United Breaks Guitars — and we've only seen the tip of the iceberg.

**In 2010, The Year of the Cheetah, I think we'll see the following fast changes:**

- Continued consolidation of social media networks. In this arena, that means more networks will begin to cross-interact (updates from one community sent automatically to other communities, for example) and more communities will either fail or be acquired/merge with others.
- Many major media outlets will make bold moves — some of which will work, many of which will backfire — to generate revenue from their content in non-traditional ways. I believe this will fundamentally disrupt online news delivery and news search for the short term while everyone tries to figure out how best to make content profitable. I think we'll see things implemented quickly and, if unsuccessful, pulled just as swiftly.
- I believe a major media outlet will try some sort of micro-payment system to allow users to access only what they want if they choose not to pay for an all-access subscription — maybe a nickel for a single story, for example. Interesting, but there could be a dark side. Widespread adoption could cause the business operations of news outlets to exert influence on reporters to write what's profitable rather than what they believe to be the most important stories on a case-by-case basis.
- Online video will continue to grow, and I believe Hulu will offer a premium, ad-free paid service as well as expand their content offerings as a result of the Comcast acquisition. Also in video, the ability to watch more kinds of programming — like news and live sporting events — with higher quality feeds online will begin to take off, putting additional pressure on traditional broadcast and cable models.
- More news stories from major outlets will appear in Twitter feeds and Facebook updates (for example) while more reporters will provide personally branded analysis of the news — as opposed to simply top stories — in private, premium, paid feeds from their news organization. As a result, we'll see

more basic headline-type feeds in more places from recognized brands for free, but details and analysis will be what we pay for, making news personalities possibly more important than ever.

- First music, then movies and in 2010 book publishing becomes a major battleground for how content will be distributed, paid for and consumed.
- AT&T will drop more of my calls than they complete until the exclusive contract ends (rumored to be by Q3) and my iPhone brethren and I can flee to someone else (read: anyone else).

Finally, I'd like to extend the warmest of wishes to our community for a prosperous and successful 2010. I look forward to again working with our talented community.

I suspect 2010 will be every bit as challenging for our industry as 2009 was — if not worse. For 2009, many of those budgets were established in 2008 before the crash ensued. For 2010, many companies have planned for a more defensive and conservative approach...hoping things will turn.

"We'll spend money when the economy turns," they say. Good luck with that.

If Time Magazine is right — and we've just survived the "decade from hell" — I'm excited to see what innovation, creativity and wondrous discoveries lie ahead.

If I had to bet on it, I think we'll continue to see a proliferation of folks going it alone, more challenges for larger firms, and a new 800-page book on the power of Facebook, just like its 300-page baby brother on the power of Twitter's 140 characters.



**Brad Bawmann**  
**Principal**  
**Bawmann Group**



**Sydney Ayers**  
**Principal**  
**Ayers PR**

The world as we know it is in transition. There has been a change in government, a revolution in technology, an increase in environmental concern and an erosion of trust. Most importantly, there has been a major shift in where financial power is held. No longer is Wall Street in charge. Washington, D.C. now controls our financial fate.

The result for public relations counselors is an economic reality that has forced our clients to recalibrate. Now more than ever, they are looking to their public relations firms to bring them big ideas – ones that move beyond the

expected and into the innovative. Social media certainly is one part of that equation but it is not the only solution available. Smarter and more modern ways of using traditional media must also be considered.

So many firms and practitioners have been focused on surviving this last year but “survival” equals “slow death” in this environment. In 2010, it will be imperative for us to connect with our clients as never before. Serving as a trusted business advisor, we must strive to become a client’s breaking news portal, to be proactive in communications, to manage results and not time, to synchronize with client rhythms and to set new standards for responsiveness. All are required for us to take the place at the table that is rightfully ours.

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I think that one of the greatest changes we’ll see in public relations in 2010 is the weakened and reinventing economy. That might sound a bit odd, but most of the trends we’ll see in PR this year are just a continuation of what we saw in 2009, 2008 and so on. Yes, there’ll be more emphasis on social media and that any PR person worth their salt will figure out how to work with the Facebook and Twitter communities and how to create an engaging and beneficial blog, but that’s not a prediction. That’s easy stuff, just as it’s easy to say “we’ll see print media continue to struggle.” D’oh, yeah.

What I’m thinking is more about how the economic problems of 2009 didn’t so much reflect a weak economy but rather one that is reinventing itself to match the modern era. In some sectors unemployment is alarmingly high, but in other sectors – like tech – business is booming. Smart programmers are writing iPhone apps and making a good living, while the clueless are wondering what happened to their cushy DoD contracts.

This will push PR in new directions because consumers (the “public” in public relations) are going to become both more skeptical and more demanding of the relationship that they have with vendors. As the dollar becomes scarce, the urge to be thoughtful in spending it will increase. PR won’t have the leeway to be clumsy any more and I predict that some fairly big companies will flame out spectacularly due to major PR missteps.

Public Relations professionals are going to have to really learn how to listen to the customer and to the public, not just try and manipulate the marketplace for the benefit of their clients. And that might make this a great year for PR in the long run.



**Dave Taylor**  
**Social Media Expert**  
**AskDaveTaylor.com**  
**and**  
**Metzger Associates**



**Gina Seamans**  
**Senior Counselor**  
**JohnstonWells**

My predictions for 2010 are drawn from my experience of leading the PRSA Colorado Chapter during 2009. They are geared toward the people, rather than the business. I predict that even more PR professionals will seek membership and involvement in strong professional organizations like PRSA, where they can receive professional development and connect with people who will help shape their careers. Our chapter will be invigorated by another year of membership growth, record levels of member involvement and demand for the strongest professional development schedule ever. All this invigorated activity is driven by three realities:

1. The practice of public relations is evolving and smart professionals must stay on top of all points in the broad continuum of communication options.
2. The job market is tight, so successful career movement depends on having an expanded network that can lead to meaningful introductions, referrals, and references.
3. A successful professional must be willing to invest in themselves. This is the new normal, so professionals must grow and change, and be ready to move forward rather than look back.

What typically is a slow time of year, the fourth quarter of 2009 was an absolute whirlwind. New business pitch after new business pitch to bringing on and kicking off new clients. When I looked up and it was Christmas... That leads me to my one and only true PR prediction for 2010...

**My One True PR Prediction**

Budgets will return. Spending will increase and there will be more jobs in PR. I do, however, have a few other predictions on how our industry will change in the coming year:

**Social Media will not be a Separate Discipline Anymore**

Social media will become an integral part of the overall marketing and communications strategy and not an effort unto itself. Frankly, social media should NEVER have been a separate discipline. Social media presents several advantages to reach and engage with a target audience over traditional media but it's simply another channel to leverage to meet a businesses goals and objectives.

**A Social Shakeout**

While we've seen a number of businesses (and agencies) leave social media to the younger generation (i.e. interns and recent college grads) who "know social media", this will and must change. No offense to these guys and gals, but they don't have the deeper, strategic understanding (yet) on how to reach and engage people to truly change behavior. Additionally, there are a number of issues that arise in PR that only those with years of experience know how to handle. It comes back to understanding how to look at the big, long-term picture verses the short-term.

**Newspapers Won't Die**

We know newspapers are in a state of transition (or a 'state of figure it out or go away'). In 2009 we saw a number of outlets close but there were also a handful that went to online versions only. This will be more of a trend in 2010. More newspapers will also begin to charge fees for their online content. While I'm not too keen on paying for the content, I do understand why they need to charge for it. I'm hopeful the industry figures out how to create a model that actually works and will be adopted but I think there will be a lot of trial and error until they get it right...

**Privacy More of an Issue**

Privacy has and will remain an issue in 2010. People will be most sensitive to data gathered on social network sites since this information is extremely personal. We witnessed this last month when Facebook changed its privacy settings. We all freaked out since more of our personal information was now open for anyone and everyone to see – especially advertisers and marketers. I wouldn't be surprised to see the government put some kind of federal legislation in place this year that limits website tracking.

**Google Wave**

People will figure out how to use Google Wave effectively for real-time collaboration. I'm pretty excited about this one...



**Elaine Schoch**  
**Director of Emerging Media**  
**104 West Partners**

We're looking forward to 2010 as the year that social media earns a well-deserved seat at the proverbial table. We all witnessed social media hitting the mainstream in 2009, as organizations embraced tools like Twitter and Facebook as part of their strategic communications plans. It will be no surprise to see social media as a respected formal "PR tool" in the overall strategic communications mix in 2010. That being said, we see a few trends emerging in the New Year including:

- Companies will have social media guidelines in place for employees, similar to the standard HR policies.
- HR Directors will not extend an offer until a complete background check is conducted, including an in-depth scan of social media sites and personal blogs of each candidate.
- Attorneys specializing in social media laws and regulations will increase and PR agencies will work hand in hand with legal teams as laws shift and the industry evolves.
- The viral nature of social media will lend to increased issues and crises for companies to deal with (think Dominos Pizza), and organizations will need to have social media crisis response plans in place, similar to the traditional media response plans they have had in place (or should have) for years.
- Social media monitoring tools like Radian6 and SM2 will become even more commonplace as companies monitor both their social and traditional media coverage.

### Laura Love and Ramonna Tooley GroundFloor Media



### GG Johnston

**Public relations will continue to lead the way in teaching organizations how to build relationships. In 2010, more executives in the C-suite will pay attention.**

In one year, there has been more change in the nature of how companies relate and engage with their stakeholders than even the best predictions led us to believe. We choose where and when we get our information through online news sites and RSS feeds, we fast forward through commercials as we watch TV through the DVR filter, we're on no-call lists and we want to be entertained at every turn. It's becoming harder, and more annoying, to cram "messages" down the throats of the people companies want to support them. So, it's back to the basics. Get to know, understand and appreciate what your employees, customers, clients and stakeholders care about. Then, genuinely engage them in ways that are meaningful.

**The paradox of vast openness and micro-segmentation will change everything – even more.**

The power surge in user-generated content means there's so much more to know about the people who matter to companies and then, tread wisely. Once you get to know someone, you have a responsibility to use what you know to either enhance the relationship or let it wither. Making sense of the abundance of data we have about individuals and groups will require new skills and strategies. Organizations must make decisions about who matters most because engagement will become more targeted and refined. So will resources.

**The generation gaps will continue to converge with the technology divides. These imbalances in companies will create enough pain to force changes in the way we communicate.**

Don't worry, it's all good. Sometimes, pain is the only way to convince executives and shareholders to change. There's been talk about how Boomers are leaving the workplace and taking the intellectual capital with them, but few organizations are taking serious steps to address all the generational shifts and the impact they're having on the marketplace. With five generations in the workplace and technology shifts happening weekly, it's serious business to find the gaps and divides and shore them up before your stakeholders do.

*GG Johnston serves on the boards of PRSA Colorado, the Denver Metro Chamber Leadership Foundation and Friends of Manual.*



**Jon Pushkin**  
**Principal**  
**Pushkin Public**  
**Relations**

Media will pledge to stop being manipulated by phony stories and egomaniacs looking for their 15 minutes of fame. They will promise to stop following philanderers around and decide to devote their meager resources to actual news. They will decide to salvage the sliver of professional pride they have left and be journalists again. They will decide to go for substance and ban the use of the words “reality TV.” They will give us the news, not the bearded lady.

Public relations will continue to evolve. In 2009, we became the reporters, editors and producers. In 2010, we will continue the metamorphosis as more news is delivered through blogs, tweets, videos and other short bursts of information. Former journalists will continue going into PR, so eventually we will become the media and the media will become us.

Although I was wrong about this prediction last year, I will try it again until I get it right. Public relations will take on a new and enhanced role in Colorado and nationally. PR pros will craft and communicate important messages promoting commitment, teamwork, sacrifice and tolerance to all Americans. Propaganda and partisan bickering will fade away and be replaced by a new spirit of hope, innovation and confidence that will spur economic recovery and restore America’s reputation in the world community.

Business studies have shown that for every interruption one receives while trying to accomplish a task the cost is 15 minutes for that person to regain their momentum. My first prediction for 2010 is that the next interruption I receive while writing this prediction piece will prove this theory indeed correct. At its current pace this very well could be a 3.5 hour project.

I believe the quick pace of change makes the future less predictable in many respects but in turn that much more exciting. It’s my belief

that 2010 will continue to be a transformative time just as I felt 2009 would, but with an ever changing environment come ever changing thoughts and predictions:

- In 2010 people will be glad it is no longer 2009. Perhaps that is stating the obvious. In seriousness, while I personally believe 2010 will be much better than 2009 was for much of the public relations community I still firmly believe that those who overreacted in 2009, for example making panicked decisions such as shedding their tenured work force or cutting back on their communications, did indeed see negative ramifications from those shortsighted moves. I see this as only continuing for them in 2010 as we move further into recovery mode. For those who did not overreact, it will be all the work done in 2009 by those key people and their consistent communications that makes it possible for 2010 to be a good year.
- There will continue to be a convergence between social media tools and traditional tools available to public relations practitioners. However, while some continue to predict the complete demise of the traditional tools I believe you’re only going to see an evolved but continued growth in the use of those tools. I don’t see the tools in the tool box getting thrown away, just evolving and getting better.
- The mind numbing, lackadaisical misuse of words such as “their,” “there,” and “they’re” on Facebook and Twitter could cause such a tremendous backlash that those outlets actually implode upon themselves. You heard it here first, so when you see that bright flash of light over the mountains emanating from Silicon Valley think of me. Speaking of these applications, there could also be a backlash against the vomiting of one’s every thought, the use of “LOL,” etc., but that could just be me. And don’t even get me started on Farmville.
- I believe that you will continue to see the pendulum slowly swing back towards people seeking credible news sources, especially as it pertains to breaking news. While people will remain attracted to outlets such as Twitter they will seek further confirmation of important news stories from established, credible resources.
- While providing a great lesson as to why sound public relations counsel is so important, the Tiger Woods story will ultimately fade but only because he will be able to thank some other well-known man for hiking the Appalachian Trail in 2010. As predictions go this might be the prediction feel most certain about. However, to paraphrase Rick Reilly, in 2010, Tiger Woods will still remain the only person in history to run his car into a hydrant and set himself on fire.

*Note: The thoughts and opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of Business Wire.*

**Dylan Frusciano**  
**Vice President, Southwest**  
**Business Wire**





**Kristy Bassuener**  
**Communications Manager**  
**Denver Art Museum**

Working smarter in 2010: While this may not be a prediction, I think this is something we'll see more of in the coming year.

Whether we're agency, corporate or non-profit communicators, all of us made changes in the last year to get the maximum impact from the staff, dollars and resources we have to get the job done. I suspect these efficient alterations will continue as the norm, even when budgets increase.

The first way I see this playing out is in the creation of partnerships that are both low-cost and strategically crafted to yield relationships and results. Building relationships is important, and partnerships that also show growth in target-audiences, increased sales/donations or higher atten-

dance will be the ones worth the significant time and energy it takes to foster the partnership.

Now that we're past the initial jubilation over social media tools, 2010 will be the year for us to quantify the value of all our Twittering, Facebooking and blog-posting and focus more on what is (and isn't) helping us meet our goals and bringing a return on the time and/or money invested.

Finding the best way to measure the success of these tools within the scope of an integrated, strategic communications plan is an exciting prospect. In my own role, I haven't completely figured out the most effective way to overlay the digital-interaction data with attendance and revenue, and look forward to all I can learn from that connection. Anticipating the knowledge that connecting those dots can tell us about our audiences and what they most want out of their relationship with the organization is yet another reason to be excited about 2010.

The AP Stylebook will send someone to break my wrists as a means of ending my indefatigable campaign to rid the world of the two-word variant of "website." My friends, "Web site" is simply wrong, and the shadowy AP conspirators know it.

I will kickstart my graffiti career by sneaking into GroundFloor's offices and scrawling an artful manifesto onto the walls. I will end said manifesto with "####" because I take PR standards pretty seriously.

I will meet you for coffee, where we'll discover we have loads in common. Same industry, same thoughts on social media, friends in common, equally attractive (i.e., hot like a feverish volcano). But our budding romance will wither away when you discover I'm not a member of PRSA.

In a rare moment of lucidity, we'll all realize that social media or emerging media or new media or digital media or whatever media will make a fool of some and a pharaoh of others. We'll realize that learning how to use it (instead of merely trumpeting that you're an expert without any tangible evidence) will inform, empower and vivify our silly goose of an industry. This rare moment will be fleeting, mind you. Many of us will shudder seconds afterward and go back to business as usual. But not everyone will do so. For those of you who look forward to that 2010 moment, understand that I'm right there with you. Holding your hand and eating some bundt cake.

I still won't take you seriously. Nor will I take myself seriously. Let's dance forever.



**Ef Rodriguez**  
**Emerging Media**  
**Account Executive**  
**Turner Public Relations**

Like any business owner, my hopes and dreams for 2010 include a much improved economic landscape in 2010 for us all. As I've thought about what this year may bring, I predict PR, traditional, online, social media, will be a leading initiative for companies in 2010. As companies reengage and begin to think about activating their marketing efforts, perhaps some that have been on the shelf for months, PR represents a solid way to reemerge into the marketplace.

Why? Consider these thoughts:

**PR Offers Significant ROI** – In 2010, PR programs will continue to generate returns well beyond the cost of the campaigns themselves and beyond other marketing strategies. Companies who have traditionally focused their attention on traditional advertising campaigns are already beginning to see that they can expand the reach of their marketing programs through PR strategies and are reallocating budgets accordingly. We all know we won't be seeing Pepsi advertise at this year's Super Bowl, right? I think we'll see more of this in 2010 with companies shifting to integrated online and PR efforts.

**PR is Driving the "Listening Initiative"** – Gaining customer insights by listening to online and offline conversations is becoming critical to the success of a brand and provides tremendous value from a product development and customer service perspective. In 2010, PR will continue to drive this "listening initiative" through the monitoring of social media, blogs and traditional news outlets. The information gathered will be critical to developing marketing campaigns that are relevant and impactful and that generate results.

**PR Provides Customer Engagement Opportunities** – Brands that are focused on engagement with target audiences will be successful in generating new customers as well as keeping the old. Online PR provides tremendous opportunities to engage with customers and develop relationships with those customers. We started to see some of this in late 2009 (i.e. the fantastic Colorado Tourism Office's Snow at First Sight Campaign and I believe there will be more of this to come.

As an integrated brand marketing and PR company, I remain excited and bullish on PR as a key strategy in building the brand, one that I think will see real growth after the first quarter of 2010 and into 2011. And that bodes well for all of us in this field.



**Jeff Cohn,**  
**CEO and Chief Brand Strategist**  
**Cohn Marketing**



**Kate Wilson**  
**Public Relations Manager**  
**CIGNA HealthCare**

1. In this continued tough economy, smart companies will double down on ridding themselves of waste and inefficiencies by embracing technology, and taking their 'direct-to-consumer' discussion online with the communications department running the show.
2. Some level of health reform WILL pass causing changes in way companies look at their benefits; including: how their benefits can improve the productivity and health of their employees, as well as help recruit and retain top talent.
3. Mobile applications will be further integrated into business, empowering consumers to choose applications (and companies) that will make their lives easier. Expect health companies to move more aggressively into the mobile information market.

4. Social media will change individual's jobs, work habits, possibly creating new roles or revamping current roles, resulting in more business staff fully committed to their online customer service and reputation management.
5. Relationship-building will be integral in securing media coverage and partnership opportunities for our companies and clients. While there are fewer available traditional media outlets and "news holes" to fill, there is a larger, interconnected, online network; and it's imperative that we bring information that's of value to our media friends.
6. "Website" will finally be ONE word and the Ohio State Buckeyes will win a national championship.

PR is in desperate need of some PR right now. Many of us have heard corporate clients and executive committees tell us, “PR is worth a thousand ads.” And, it can be if it’s the right message with the right motivation in the right mix of disciplines. That said, a hostile economic climate changes and even blends the PR/advertising dichotomy greatly. When outlets are hemorrhaging advertising space and value-adds, we find the two separate disciplines are on a more equal playing field. Now is the time to be working with your ad department to ensure you maximize media buys, but also to avoid unclear or inconsistent messaging.

Everything has changed since I entered the profession at 22, save for one thing:

relationships. That is the basis of what we do. That is the “how” and “why” we develop products and services. And if we’re not careful, this creative – at times attention-depleted – industry will end up focusing on what we’re not doing as opposed to what we should be doing. Social media! Guerilla tactics! iPhone apps! I’m not the first to observe that, as people, we just don’t want to miss an opportunity. But c’mon. Working with a limited (even reduced) budget means a brand can’t work every new vehicle

and still be successful in its communication. PR practitioners need to pick up the phone and talk to media.

We need to worry about creating a way for consumers to communicate with us and we need to respond to them. Not every consumer is on Twitter and not every person wants to interact with a brand over Facebook. Your Youtube channel might not generate the type of interest originally thought. There is what a brand thinks it excels at, and what the audience thinks the brand excels at – and they usually don’t align. So, research and test and take time to develop the social media Trifecta, but don’t forget about the nuts and bolts of public relations.

Think outside the ad-equivalency box. If I were brilliant – and there is someone out there who is miles ahead of me – I would come up with the next metric for measurement. What is two minutes of a consumer’s time worth to a brand? How intimate is their interaction with the brand? Determine what is important to you in one year v. three years v. five years. How do you want to evolve your brand over that time? In thinking now about my 2010 goals, all I can muster is what increase over 2009 is realistic. Using my narrow-mindedness to your advantage, I recommend thinking about what tools, vehicles and nontraditional tactics you’ll use to reach those goals – or maybe, change them all together.



**Paul Raab**  
**Senior Vice President & Partner**  
**Linhart Public Relations**

PR firms and practitioners that insist on delivering the set of services historically referred to as “PR” will die. PR firms that deliver value as defined and continually re-defined by the client will thrive.

Public Relations and Marketing will need to continue to define their roles as the lines between social media communication and interactive marketing increasingly blur and it will become increasingly important to use social media in a manner that’s transparent and humble.



**Jen Elving**  
**Senior Public Relations Manager**  
**Visit Denver**



**Cindy Parsons**  
**Vice President, Public Relations**  
**Comcast Mile High Region**