

Navigating the Waters of Sarbanes-Oxley

A panel of financial and communications executives will dive into the complex waters of The Sarbanes-Oxley Act – which has dramatically transformed corporate America in a post-Enron, post-WorldComm era – during the June 22 chapter membership meeting.

Thomas H. Lee, a former broadcast journalist and attorney with Waller, Lansden, Dortch & Davis, will moderate a panel discussion that includes James F. Blackstock, senior vice president and general counsel of Cracker Barrel (CBRL Group, Inc.); Julie K. Davis, APR, corporate communications director of Cracker Barrel; and Patrick J. Watson, senior vice president and principal of Corporate Communications, Inc.

The Sarbanes-Oxley Act is perhaps the single most important piece of legislation affecting corporate governance, financial disclosure and the practice of public accounting since the U.S. securities laws of the 1930s. Also known as the Public Company Accounting Reform and Investor Protection Act, it was passed by the U.S. Con

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Behind the Gavel - FROM THE PRESIDENT

Conduct a Google search for the term “Sarbanes-Oxley” and you’ll get back 351,000 hits. The forest of information is so dense there’s no way to see the trees.

Mention “Sarbanes-Oxley” to some PRSA members, especially those in the corporate sector, and you are liable to hear a low, guttural sigh. It has, they will attest, changed their jobs and the roles they are playing in their company.

On Tuesday, June 22, we’ll attempt to put Sarbanes-Oxley – or as it’s formally titled the Public Company Accounting Reform and Investor Protection Act of 2002 – into perspective at the June membership meeting. Joining us to discuss the implications for corporations and for the communications profession will be James F. Blackstock, senior vice president and general counsel of Cracker Barrel (CBRL Group, Inc.); Julie K. Davis, APR, corporate communications director of Cracker Barrel; and Patrick J. Watson, senior vice president and principal of Corporate Communications, Inc.

Nashville attorney Tom Lee, who will moderate the SOX panel, brings an interesting perspective to the discussion. A former television journalist-turned-attorney, Lee has been immersed in the law and counseling clients through its various implications.

“The way boards operate has changed, the way management relates to boards has changed, the way employers relate to employees has changed,” Lee says, “and – if Martha Stewart proved anything – the way all of us in business relate to the government has to change.”

Lee believes the “price of breaking these new laws is so high, that the implications for the practice of public relations are profound. PR practitioners will have to be more than communicators; they will have to become teachers and guides, as crisis communications gives way to crisis avoidance.”

I hope you will join us for what promises to be a lively discussion. Hopefully, our guest experts will clear enough trees so we can maneuver through this critically important forest in front of us.



Greg Bailey, APR
2004 President

2004 Nashville Chapter Officers & Board

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PRSA Nashville Silver Partners:



Three-year Chapter Strategic Plan On Track With Successes

The first review of the Chapter's three-year strategic plan by both the Board of Directors and Strategic Planning Committee shows that we are on track, and in some areas, we are actually ahead of schedule.

Susan Hart, APR, chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, met with members at the June Board meeting to assess the plan, specifically its action steps, strengths and weaknesses. The key objectives of strengthening the society and advancing the profession through membership recruitment and retention, finance, chapter operations, accreditation and professional development were discussed.

In some areas, such as operations and administration, the chapter is ahead of schedule, said Hart. "Our volunteer PRSA team leaders and their committee members have done an outstanding job of completing such tasks as a policies and procedures manual, updating our web site and distributing a quality electronic newsletter. In addition, the membership recruitment and retention group has taken on a number of new and different strategies to welcome guests at chapter events, maintain communications with new members and get them involved in the organization, as well as established a system of qualifying and contacting prospects," she said.

Other areas of the plan, such as finance and professional development, simply require longer lead times; however, the committee and Board are confident that the plan will meet its objectives.

The objectives of the strategic plan are to:

- Increase chapter membership by 10 percent within a three-year period
- Retain 95 percent of local chapter members
- Implement new programs to increase revenue
- Enhance awareness and understanding of the public relations profession among target audiences in Middle Tennessee
- Increase recognition of active PRSA membership as an important career enhancement among practitioners in Middle Tennessee
- Double the number of accredited members from 30 to 60 by 2007

If you are interested in volunteering to help the chapter accomplish these objectives, please contact Susan Hart, APR at 642-0800 or shart@hartpr.com.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 22: Membership Meeting - Sarbanes-Oxley Seminar Panel Discussion

The June membership meeting will be at: Adventure Science Center; 11:45 am

July 27: Membership Meeting - Michael Buckland of the Nashville Symphony

The July membership meeting will be at: Adventure Science Center; 11:45 am

Members must RSVP for the luncheon meetings by the preceding Friday; openings on the day of the meeting are offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Reservations may be made by e-mailing or calling Jackie Cavnar, Chapter Administrator (jccavnar@cs.com, 615-661-6752). Luncheon meetings are \$30 for members, \$35 for non-members; no-shows are billed.

Did you know?

Check out the calendar at www.prsa.org under "Professional Development" to find affordable training & topics via teleseminar

PR Ink

A monthly publication of the Nashville Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America

To submit comments, ideas and news, please contact *Trey Campbell* (391-2801, trey.campbell@southwestern.com) or *Todd Smith* (764-2598, todd.smith@progenymarketing.com). Submissions are due on the second Friday of each month.

2004 Apollo Award



Is your CEO particularly supportive of your role as a public relations professional? Does a member of your organization's senior management team especially recognize the value of public relations in your company? Do you know a community leader that works well with the media? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you know a candidate for the 2004 Apollo Award for Communications Leadership!

The rebranded Apollo Award for Communications Leadership is one of the chapter's premiere awards, and your involvement and support are crucial. Please contact Sue Amos, 2004 Apollo Award Committee Chair, at 862-6027 or sue.amos.@nashville.gov for more information.

Sarbanes-Oxley

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-gress in 2002. Sen. Paul Sarbanes and Rep. Michael Oxley were the main architects of the Act.

The lunch meeting will begin at 11:30 a.m., Tuesday, June 22 at the Adventure Science Center, 800 Fort Negley Boulevard. Box lunches will be served. The cost is \$15 for members and \$20 for guests. For reservations, please call 615-661-6752. You may also register online at www.prsanashville.com. Online payment using PayPal costs \$20 for members; \$25 for guests.