



## Newsletter, January 2015

### Happy New Year from the IJBC Staff!

In this first newsletter of 2015, you will find current news, announcements, and a summary of the articles found in this month's special issue on strategic communication edited by Gail Fann Thomas of the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA and Kimberlie Stephens of the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles as well as a preview of the articles that will be published in April 2015.

#### *IJBC News*

*Thanks to Geert Jacobs!*

**Geert Jacobs** has served as associate editor for *IJBC* and its previous iteration as *JBC* for the past five and one-half years. Jacobs has recently been named head of the department of linguistics at Ghent University, Belgium, where he is a full professor of language for specific purposes. He is also regional vice president for Europe, Africa, and the Middle East of the Association for Business Communication. With these important responsibilities, Jacobs will be stepping down from his role as associate editor for *IJBC*, but he has been a significant player in shaping the direction of the journal and will continue to serve as part of its editorial board.



*Welcome to Stephen Bremner!*

**Stephen Bremner** will take on the role of associate editor vacated by Jacobs. Bremner is an associate professor in the Department of English at the City University of Hong Kong. His research is concerned with the nature of workplace communication, in particular the activities surrounding the construction of written texts. He is also interested in how students make the transition from the academy to the workplace and has published on these topics in journals such as *English for Specific Purposes* and *Written Communication*. He studied Arabic and Turkish at St John's College, Oxford, and has an MA in Education from the



University of London. He went on to do his PhD at City University of Hong Kong, where he now teaches courses relating to genre studies and English for Specific Purposes, as well as business and organizational communication. He is co-editor (with Vijay Bhatia) of the *Handbook of Language and Professional Communication* (2014, Routledge). He has worked in Egypt, Russia, China, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom.

*and Welcome to Ashley Patriarca!*

**Ashley Patriarca** will serve as *IJBC*'s new media manager and will be working to enhance the journal's presence on social media and other digital platforms. Patriarca is an assistant professor of English at West Chester University in West Chester, PA. Her research interests include International business writing, crisis communication, organizational use of social media, risk communication, and grant writing. Patriarca has a B.A. in English and communication studies from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, an M.A. in English with a concentration in technical and professional writing from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and a Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Writing from Virginia Tech.



### ***IJBC* Announcements**

#### *Seeking International Editorial Board Members*

*IJBC* is seeking to expand its editorial board internationally. Editorial board members' chief duty is to act as an ambassador of the journal, informing colleagues, scholars, and researchers of its focus, scope, and reach and seeking and recommending empirical research articles for publication. Interested persons or those seeking to nominate colleagues to the board should contact [rcwalker@marshall.usc.edu](mailto:rcwalker@marshall.usc.edu).

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### ***IJBC* Notes**

*IJBC*'s current average time from submission to first decision is 39 days. Its average time from submission to final decision is 63 days.

**2013 SJR (SCImago Journal Rank) Score:** 0.789

**2013 Ranking:** 41/236 in Economics, Econometrics and Finance (Miscellaneous) (Scopus®) | 43/267 in Business, Management and Accounting (Miscellaneous) (Scopus®)  
Source: SCImago 2013 Journal Rankings

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## Featured Articles from January 2015 Special Issue on Strategic Management

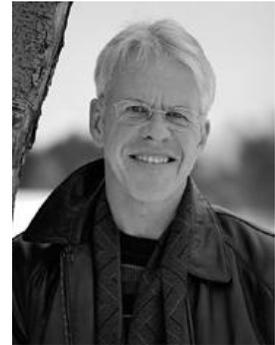
Editors: Gail Fann Thomas and Kimberlie Stephens



### **The Role of Employee Identification and Organizational Identity in Strategic Communication and Organizational Issues Management about Genetic Modification**

*Alison Henderson, George Cheney, and C. Kay Weaver*

This paper examines the organizational identities and strategic communication of two New Zealand primary export organizations as they managed intense public debate surrounding the potential impacts of genetic modification (GM). The authors examine the similarities and differences in identifications at multiple levels in these organizations, illustrating the value, and, by implication, policy positions held simultaneously by individual organizational members, groups, and the organizations as collective entities. These positions also serve as points of reference in public discourse about GM. This analysis reveals the roles played by employee identification and organizational identity formation in strategic communication and organizational issues management about controversial public policies. The analysis makes important connections between “the organizational voice” typically represented in issues management and individual members’ identifications, and offers evidence for how the latter might be taken into account in the development of strategic communication.



### **Defining Distinctiveness: The Connections between Organizational Identity, Competition and Strategy in Public Radio Organizations**

*Sandra Evans*

Because of disruption stemming from digital media products and services, radio stations across the country are enacting organizational changes to provide digital content while maintaining a strong radio broadcast presence. This study asks: How do views on organizational competition correspond with organizational identity discourse? And, how do cognitive competitor networks differ among public media organizations and among people in similar roles across different organizations? Theories of organizational identity, networks, and strategic groups are applied to interview data from 75 people in 14 organizations. The way individuals perceived competitors encapsulated the connection between organizational identity and strategy. Descriptive network analysis of cognitive competitor networks showed that people in similar departments across organizations had similar views about competitors, but there was divergence among these role-based groups. This study demonstrates how views about competitors inform organizational identity discourse and produces dialectical tensions with regard to strategy that, if ignored, can potentially hamper innovation.

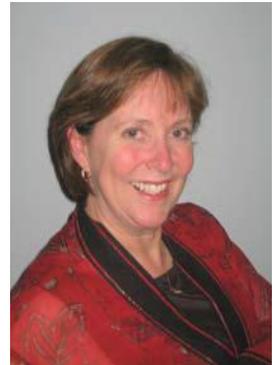


**Organizational Disruptions and Triggers for Divergent Sensemaking**

*Matthew S. Weber, Gail Fann Thomas, Kimberlie J. Stephens*



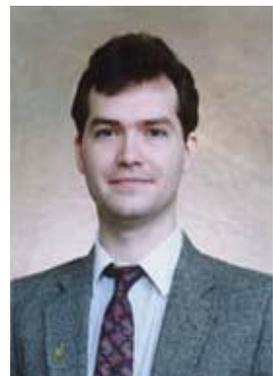
In recent years, scholars and practitioners alike have sought to better understand the emergent communicative processes involved in the implementation of strategic organizational initiatives. In response, this article builds on sensemaking and sensegiving theory to understand the interactions that developed between internal and external stakeholders in response to a post-9/11 change in the Maritime Transportation Security Act. A detailed, emergent account of a failed initiative was derived from public comments in the *Federal Register*, transcripts from public meetings, newspaper articles, and semi-structured interviews with key internal informants. In-depth analysis of these data allowed the authors to examine a divergent sensemaking process and identify four critical triggers that led to a communication breakdown. From a strategic communication perspective, the study's findings demonstrate the importance of taking a broad perspective of the legitimate participants in a sensemaking process, as well as reconciling sensemaking trajectories to avoid contradictions between perspectives.



**Strategic Vision and Values in Top Leaders' Communications: Motivating Language at a Higher Level**

*Jacqueline Mayfield, Milton Mayfield, and William C. Sharbrough III*

This study extends motivating language theory (MLT) to clarify how top leaders can construct and transmit strategic vision communications and related values messages to improve organizational performance. The propositions and models configure MLT's utility for transmitting vision and values through CEO language and also expand the existing MLT framework to include multi-level and external communication. One of the proposed models presents a cybernetic feedback process that embraces external and internal organizational stakeholders. Top leader examples of motivating language (ML) in practice are also examined. This paper contributes proposed frameworks for organizational level ML implementation, diffusion, and future empirical analysis of MLT in leader strategic vision and related values communications.



### **On the Dark Side of Strategic Communication**

*Ron Dulek and Kim Sydow Campbell*



Although clarity holds a privileged place within the field of business/management/corporate communication, adopting a strategic perspective suggests that ambiguity, and even deception, may be appropriate choices, depending on strategic intent. This paper builds a framework for analyzing the dark side of strategic communication from both a strategic and a linguistic perspective and then applies it to four business scenarios involving corporate finance; three involve public pronouncements from



executives about future stock offerings, while the fourth involves a private statement made by a CEO to an important client and reported to the authors in an interview. The analysis of these scenarios leads the authors to propose that the intentional use of strategic ambiguity occurs along a continuum better represented by multiple shades of gray than a single hue of black.

### **Upcoming: April 2015**

#### **The Use of Visualization in the Communication of Business Strategies: An Experimental Evaluation**

*Sebastian Kernbach and Martin Eppler*

#### **A Preliminary Examination of Perceptions of Social Influence in Group Decision-making in the Workplace**

*David Henningsen*

#### **Corporate Social Responsibility Communication through Corporate Websites: A Comparison of Leading Corporations in the U.S. and China**

*Lu Tang, Christine Gallagher, and Bijie Bie*

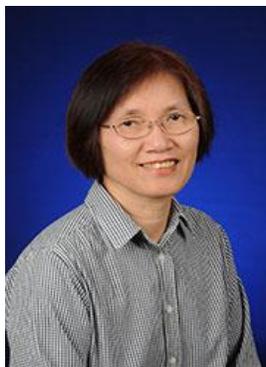
#### **It's Not What You Say, It's the Way that You Say It: The Mediating Effect of Upward Influencing Communications on the Relationship Between Leader-member Exchange and Performance Ratings**

*Lisa Arculus, Susan Geertshuis, and Rachel Morrison*

## IJBC Editorial Board

Each newsletter profiles a selection of editorial board members for our readers.

**Patrice M. Buzzanell** is professor of communication in the Brian Lamb School of Communication and professor of engineering education by Courtesy at Purdue University. Author of three edited books and over 130 articles and chapters, her research centers on the everyday negotiations and structures that produce and are produced by the intersections of career, gender, work-family, and communication such that people construct resilience and career aspirations, particularly in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). Her work has been published in journals including *Communication Monographs*, *Human Communication Research*, *Communication Theory*, *Management Communication Quarterly*, *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, and *Human Relations* as well as in handbooks on organizational, professional, family, conflict, ethics, and gender communication and proceedings in engineering education.



**Nittaya Campbell** is a senior lecturer in management communication at the Waikato Management School in Hamilton, New Zealand. Campbell has a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Waikato, an MA in linguistics from the University of Hawaii, a diploma in Teaching English as a Second Language from Victoria University of Wellington, and a Ph.D in communication from the University of Waikato. She has taught at the tertiary level in Thailand, worked in the banking industry in New Zealand, and been a court interpreter in Hawaii. Her research and teaching interests include business communication, professional and public relations writing, intercultural communication, and information/communication technologies.

**N. Lamar Reinsch, Jr.** is professor of management at Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business (MSB). Reinsch currently serves as academic director of the MSB's Master Degree in Leadership. Reinsch frequently writes and speaks on issues of leadership, crisis management, and organizational communication. His recent publications include "Multi-communicating: A Practice Whose Time Has Come?," "The Business Communicator as Presence Allocator," and "Ari, r u there?" Recent book chapters include "Multi-communicating" and "Episodic Presence in Computer-Mediated Communication in Personal Relationships." Reinsch is a former president of the Association for Business Communication and a fellow of that organization.

Reinsch has received a number of awards for research and teaching, including the Alpha Kappa Psi award for a distinguished publication in business communication and the Outstanding Teacher award in Georgetown's Executive MBA program.





**Graham Smart** is associate professor of applied linguistics and discourse studies at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. His research interests include writing in academic and workplace settings, genre theory and genre analysis, interpretive ethnography, and environmental discourse. Smart has had a number of chapters on discourse, ethnography, and research published in various handbooks. Before coming to Carleton, Smart worked at Purdue University and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Smart worked in banking before entering academia.

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## **Fostering Excellence in Business Communication**

The Association for Business Communication (ABC) is an international, interdisciplinary organization committed to advancing business communication research, education, and practice.