

PR pros will need to adjust to the changing MO of the CMO

MaryLee Sachs

PRWeek OpEd

June 01 2011

The principal analyst in marketing leadership at Forrester, Chris Stutzman, recently spoke at the CMO Club Spring Summit and echoed many findings from the white paper he created for his organization, *CMO Mandate: Adapt Or Perish*. According to Forrester research, a staggering 75% of marketers plan to reorganize their function by the end of 2011.

Not surprising, given the rate of change and the rising importance of reputation. According to a 2010-2011 white paper by Prophet, *Reputation Winners and Losers*, there is a clear relationship between reputation and brand: "Actively managing your reputation will ensure you are not negatively impacting your brand's value. It also suggests that brand and reputation strategies should be highly linked and not be kept in separate silos to achieve optimal results for a company overall." So expect some silo-busting as the convergence of brand and reputation disrupts the traditional marketing model as never before, driving a more holistic approach to marketing, which includes PR.

For CCOs and in-house teams, this signals a movement toward CMOs owning PR - at least the communications aspect that engages with consumers, business customers, staff, and wider audiences in some cases. Will CCOs' reporting lines shift to marketing in the coming months? From talks I've had with CMOs, I'd say definitely.

PR pros who find "PR as part of the marketing mix" blasphemous will worry because they see PR as a much broader management discipline that should report directly to the CEO in all cases. At the same time, some marketing executives are professionally jaundiced towards PR, considering it only tactical or, at best, an imprecise, hard-to-measure practice. So a closer alignment could serve to promote PR from within the organization and bring a greater awareness by colleagues regarding the power of PR.

The CCO who embraces the new world order could end up in a better position, with greater access to larger marketing budgets and an array of powerful analytics and metrics able to provide better justification for PR's engagement. But it must be a team effort. Aristotle said, "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts." That could be a new mantra for breaking down internal silos.

MaryLee Sachs was most recently US chair and worldwide director of consumer marketing at Hill & Knowlton. Her new book, The Changing MO of the CMO, How the Convergence of Brand and Reputation is Affecting Marketers, debuts this month.

SENIOR MARKETING CONSULTANT
SPEAKER & AUTHOR



M • +1 917 478 8744

E • marylee@maryleesachs.com

T • [@maryleesachs](https://twitter.com/maryleesachs)

www.changingMO.com