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Call for Entries - CAPIO 2010 Excellence in Communications Awards

The Excellence in Communications Awards are presented by CAPIO each year to honor outstanding public agency information and communication programs. Awards will be presented on Thursday, April 15th at CAPIO's 2010 Annual Conference in scenic Santa Barbara.

These awards recognize the most creative and effective efforts in the areas of communication and marketing campaigns, newsletter production,

CAPIO launches new brand

Organization refocuses with new brand promise, updated look, modern logo

By Jenny Peterson, CAPIO President



As professional communicators, we all know that a brand is more than just a snappy logo, clever tagline or slick ad campaign. A brand is a promise to our customers and associates, and that promise must be delivered on consistently with every interaction.

During the second half of 2009, the CAPIO Board of Directors took a good look at its organization and decided it was time to refine our brand. More than just a simple overhaul of the logo, board members took an in-depth look at the essence of the organization itself.

Through a unique exercise called a "brand intensive," board members were able to more clearly define CAPIO's role and purpose. Part of the process included defining who we are for, what we do and why we do it. The board members working on this project came up with the following points for CAPIO's brand platform:

WHO WE ARE FOR: California public sector professionals who engage communities through honest and transparent communication.

WHAT WE DO: Provide California-focused education and networking that helps our members and their agencies develop and advance.

WHY WE DO IT: Because we believe that good government requires good communicators.

I believe we were able to uncover the heart of CAPIO's brand through this process and provide much-needed focus for our

photography, special events, writing, Web site development and video production. Projects must have been completed by December 31, 2009 to be eligible.

For more information and to upload your entry electronically, please visit www.capio.org/excellence.

Entries must be received by 5 p.m. on February 26, 2010!

Annual Conference, "Vintage with a View," April 13-16

Save the Date! The 2010 CAPIO Annual Conference is scheduled for April 13 - 16, 2010 in beautiful Santa Barbara. Plan now to join us to keep up on the latest trends in new media, sharpen your skills in PR basics and crisis communications, and network with your peers and colleagues throughout California. This year's conference theme is "Vintage with a View...using our experience to move forward." Please visit [CAPIO's conference web page](#) for complete information.

Regional Workshop with Marty Boyer Set for Feb. 25 in Sacramento

Join us on Thursday, Feb.

organization's future.

This platform was used to develop CAPIO's brand promise, which was adopted by the board of directors in November 2009. This promise will be used to drive our decisions about CAPIO's programs, projects and services from here on out. The brand promise is as follows:

Because we believe that good government requires good communicators, CAPIO provides California-focused education and networking that helps our members and their agencies develop and advance.

To complement the brand platform and promise, a new visual system - including a redesigned logo and Web site - was implemented.

The new logo was designed by Davis Communications and is meant to abstractly demonstrate collaboration and connection while illustrating how information travels through different points. The blocks above the "i" in CAPIO artistically represent the different delivery mechanisms of communication used to by PIOs.

The concept also marries well to the idea that while members are individuals, we are united by our common desire to improve our communities through better communication.

CAPIO's new Web site blends both the new brand platform and visual system together and combines that with some new functionality that will make the site more user-friendly for members. I sincerely hope you are excited about and embrace this new era for CAPIO. As always, I welcome your feedback.

Special Thanks

A very special thanks to Brand Endeavor and Davis Communications, our two in-kind sponsors who made this brand refresh possible:

[Brand Endeavor](#)
Christie Harper
Marina del Rey, CA
(213) 400-1202

Davis Communications
Tracey Davis
Lancaster, CA
(661) 948-5336

Judges Needed for CAPIO Awards

25 for a half-day CAPIO training workshop to help elevate the art of public information. Marty Boyer of Communication Advantage will present a practical, low-cost approach to strategic communications planning using a case study based on a successful local ballot measure. Boyer has also promised a "menu" of other topics to be covered as time and group interest warrant including: effective presentations, use of social media, interview techniques refresher, recent crisis management examples, and/or crafting great key messages.

Date: Thursday, February 25, 2010

Time: 12:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Location: 777 12th Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

Cost: Members \$50/Non-members \$70

For information: contact CAPIO's Northern California Director Jamie Arno at (916) 874-4812.

[Click here for the registration form.](#)

Interested in judging a CAPIO award category? Professionals with a wide-range of experience in public information and communications are needed to judge several CAPIO categories, including writing, new media, newsletters and special events. Awards will be presented at the 2010 CAPIO Annual Conference held in April in Santa Barbara. If interested, [email](#) CAPIO First Vice President Rachel McGuire or call 760-434-2960 by Feb. 22.

New Look, New Website!

Have you visited www.capio.org lately? This year's CAPIO board has been working hard to provide our membership with better resources and tools. A key part of that effort includes a redesigned and rebranded Web site for members and potential members.

The new site is easier for CAPIO board members and staff to update, so you can look forward to more fresh content as well as new blog-like features that allow users to print, email and share certain updates via social media tools that have become a crucial part of our profession. We've added features that were not available with CAPIO's previous site, including an active discussion forum that will make it easier for members to collaborate on issues and share ideas and information. We've also simplified the navigation to help you find what you want faster.

New member-specific account features will help members maximize the site's content and features. Please [visit this link first](#) to create a unique member account for yourself. This link is only being provided to members. Once you complete the registration form, you'll receive a confirmation email with your user name and password (you can change it later if you like). Your user name and password will allow you to search the member roster, view job opportunities and enjoy other members-only benefits.

Once logged in, you can customize your profile to receive emails when certain pages are updated. Simply browse to the pages you are interested in, click your name in the upper right corner and choose "Subscribe to page updates." You can subscribe to the [discussion forum](#) and receive an email when new topics are posted, or subscribe to individual topics to be notified when responses are added. Try subscribing to the home page, job opportunities - anything that catches your interest!

We hope you'll check out the new site soon and let us know what you think. Don't forget - please visit the [member registration page](#) to create your member account. This self-registration feature will only be available for a limited time!

Cabral Named PIO of the Year in PublicCEO Awards

CAPIO Member Joseph Cabral was recently named Public Information Officer of the year, as part of PublicCEO's First Annual Local Government Awards. Cabral has served as communications manager for the City of Lancaster since 2008. He was recognized for transforming and overhauling Lancaster's communications efforts including the city's Web site, cable channel, e-newsletter, social media efforts and more. Congratulations Joseph! Read more about his accomplishments at the [PublicCEO website](#).



December CAPIO Workshop Draws Top Journalists, PIOs to Downtown L.A. To Discuss 'Brave New World' of Media Relations

In the age of dwindling newspaper circulation, fragmented audiences and an ever expanding digital landscape, what is a public information officer to do to get the message out?

"Figure out what you want to be and be it," veteran journalist and USA Today Reporter Chris Woodyard (shown in photo) told the nearly 50 CAPIO members and guests at a December 10 workshop "the Brave New World of Media Relations" in downtown Los Angeles.



The event, held at the elegant Metropolitan Water District Headquarters near Union Station, offered insight from working journalists across the media spectrum, including Woodyard's basic tenet that agencies must first look inward. He explained that agencies must have a clear understanding of who they are and what they represent, because messages are more effective when they come from a known quantity.

"Build an image for your organization," said Woodyard, the event's keynote speaker. Woodyard, who writes and [blogs about the auto industry for USA Today](#), agreed that the Internet and its impact on the media presents unique challenges for media relations. The audience and by extension journalists have much shorter attention spans. PIOs must become adept at standing out from the crowd. It was a lesson echoed by other journalists who participated in a panel before Woodyard's keynote speech.

The panelists included Megan Garvey, Los Angeles Times County Government and Data Projects Manager; Steve Gregory, KFI Radio reporter and anchor; Christian Berthelsen, Daily Journal Associated Editor; Seth Lubove, reporter for Bloomberg Markets magazine; and Eilene Zimmerman, a freelance journalist whose work has appeared in the New York Times, San Francisco Chronicle, Wired and others.

Among the advice the journalists shared:

- **Know who you are dealing with.** Know the medium and know the reporter. "There is nothing wrong with Googling somebody," Garvey said. Before contacting a reporter or blogger, find out what he/she has written before. A writer for a business publication or Web site will not be interested in the same angle as a general news reporter for the local daily.

- **Get to the point.** Staffing at traditional news outlets such as newspapers, radio and television are dwindling fast and reporters and editors are stretched thin. "If your subject line is boring, I'm not even opening your email. It is an automatic delete," said Gregory. Understand that in most cases you have a split second to grab a reporter or editor's attention.

- **Whenever possible use videos and photos.** Visuals are the quickest way to grab someone's attention. If you have a compelling photo or video, use it often and use it prominently.

- **Follow trends and offer fresh angles.** Nothing is more boring to a reporter than something that already has been covered. "I'm always interested in what new ways people are doing old things or something interesting that no one else has written about," said Zimmerman.

- **Embrace new technology.** Blogs and social media networks like Facebook and Twitter are simple, low cost ways to keep your target audiences informed about your organization. They also keep your agency in the radar of reporters and provide them with background. But "do not just blog, promote," warned Woodyard. In the digital din of the Internet, optimizing your chances of grabbing your audience is key. Your tweets should remind your followers about your Facebook page, your Facebook page should direct people to your Web site and your Web site should advertise your blog and mailing lists.

- **No news is bad news.** When responding to a media request following an emergency or catastrophic event, always have something. At the very least, provide a timeframe for updates. Reporters understand that situations can be fluid, but saying "there is nothing to report" gives a sense that the agency is oblivious. "We are gathering information and will have an update in 30 minutes" is a better response, even if in 30 minutes you still have little to report. Regular updates control the flow of information and assure reporters they are not being shut out.

Change always brings challenges as well as opportunities, the group of journalists agreed. "In many ways, this is a golden era," Woodyard said.

Workshops are a valuable benefit offered by the California Association of Public Information Officials. Stay tuned for future events.



The CAPIO Communicator was relaunched in 2009 as an electronic-only version to bring CAPIO members regular news and information about the organization. Our goal is to keep members up-to-date on CAPIO events, workshops and conferences, as well as provide professional growth and development opportunities. Please contact CAPIO Secretary [John Pope](#) to submit an article.

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