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# Using Messaging and Communication to Influence and Inform: Insights From the Private Sector

*A Virtual Think Tank (ViTTa®)  
Report*

**Subject Matter Expert  
Biographies**

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## Subject Matter Expert Contributors

**Paul Astorino** (Senior Vice President, Global Merchandizing, Clarks), **Catherine Chapman** (Founder and CEO, Parenthetic), **Cyndi Coon** (CEO and Founder, Labratory5 Inc.), **John DeBello** (President and Chief Creative Officer, Loma Media), **Bill Heater** (Creative Executive, Real Life Creative), **Dr. William McEwen** (Advertising Executive and Consultant, Independent), **Dr. Jay Rosen** (Author and Associate Professor of Journalism, NYU), **Shari Rosenfeld** (Senior Vice President of International Social Impact, Sesame Workshop), **Dr. Don Stacks** (Professor Emeritus, Public Relations, School of Communications, University of Miami), **Al Teller** (Music Industry Executive, Independent), **Sherrie Westin** (President, Sesame Workshop), **Two Anonymous Gaming Industry Executives**.

### Paul Astorino

Senior Vice President, Global Merchandizing, Clarks



Paul Astorino is a writer, holder of an MFA in Creative Writing from Lesley University, and a business, product creation, and marketing executive. He has led product teams at the world's leading sports and outdoor brands including NIKE, adidas, asics, Reebok, Burton Snowboards, The NorthFace, Clark's and rabbit running apparel.

He is the only person who has won the prestigious Runner's World Editor's Choice awards at five different brands and teaches creative writing Tool Box Session on a seminar basis at Lesley University.

### Catherine Chapman

Founder and CEO, Parenthetic



Catherine Chapman is the Founder and CEO of Parenthetic, a communications firm working on innovative, fast-paced data-driven solutions to the hardest problems in the influence and information operations space. Chapman applies her expertise in strategic communications to advance the way influence campaigns are developed, discovered and measured. She has worked at every stage of the communication development cycle, providing services in strategy and design; audience, competitor and communication landscape analysis; message content creation and assessment; and quantifying campaign effects. At Parenthetic, she leads teams for public and private sector clients

developing new techniques and technologies to tackle difficult challenges with global impact. Her team is focused on pioneering fail-fast R&D projects that bridge science and the art of influence. Prior to starting Parenthetic, Chapman worked for communications consulting firms where she built teams and designed projects to assess and develop business, marketing and communication strategies for Fortune 500 companies, non-profit organizations and U.S. Government agencies. Chapman also taught at Yale University on information warfare and related methods for analysis.

## Cyndi Coon

CEO and Founder, Labratory5 Inc.



Cyndi Coon serves as the Chief of Staff at the Threatcasting Lab, Producer at ASURE Applied Research Lab, Producing Director at the Weaponized Narrative Initiative, and a producer for the office of the president at Arizona State University. She is on the board of directors of the People Centered Internet. Cyndi is the Founder and CEO of Laboratory5 Inc. where she is an ecosystem producer, writer, and rule-bender for good for government agencies, military, higher education and nonprofits.

Cyndi is the author of Thrive! Creative Guidebook to Professional Tenacity (Cognella, 2019) and co-author of the upcoming book Threatcasting (Morgan & Claypool 2021) She is a speaker on the topics of inclusion, information shaping, Threatcasting and human ecosystems.

## John DeBello

President and Chief Creative Officer, Loma Media



John DeBello has produced, written and directed an impressive variety of strategic communication campaigns, initiatives and projects for major brands, diverse public agencies and leading institutions.

The quality of his work is underscored by the scope of Tier One organizations that have repeatedly called upon him to deliver exceptional results. These include AAA, Callaway Golf, Dell, DirecTV, Discovery Networks, Disney, DXC Technology, EA SPORTS, Google, the Mountain West Conference, Qualcomm, SAIC and SRI International.

His notable accomplishments include creating the live multimedia event for

Motorola that introduced digital HDTV to North America; a customer acquisition campaign for DirecTV that achieved the best results in company history; a direct response broadcast strategy for Dell that tripled anticipated response; and a TV ad for GameStop named “TV Spot of the Week” by AdAge.

DeBello has developed client outreach strategy and produced compelling content for major events and trade show presentations at CES, CTIA, SBCA, the Super Bowl, the Olympic Games, and in international stadiums and arenas. He’s written & directed the video portion of presentations that have resulted in the award of 3 Super Bowls and the US Open.

Utilizing Loma’s VisionCapture™ methodology, John’s produced major communications programs and projects for federal agencies including the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Department of Transportation (DOT), the Defense Advanced Research Products Agency (DARPA), the Intelligence Advanced Research Products Agency (IARPA), SPAWAR, and US Naval Special Warfare.

He’s led community relations and public service initiatives for the City of Austin, the City of Sheffield, England, the City of San Diego and many others. His work for more than 20 major universities has included multiple engagements on behalf of Harvard, Stanford, Northwestern, SDSU, UCLA, UCSD and the University of Virginia.

Fresh out of college, John directed, co-produced, and co-wrote the cult-classic comedy Attack of the Killer Tomatoes. He also directed and co-wrote three sequels, served as co-executive producer of the top-rated Fox animated series, and wrote the famous Killer Tomato theme song—an international favorite in its own right, from frat house sing-alongs to a “universal” broadcast from the space shuttle Atlantis.

He has also written and directed numerous award winning documentaries, including The Story Behind the Spectacle, an inside look at the making of the revolutionary Los Angeles Olympics; Beat the Baja, the official story of the world’s most famous off-road race; The College Game, a celebration of American football starring legendary sportscaster Keith Jackson; and X-Carriers, a Discovery special that explores the science of America’s next generation aircraft carrier. He is currently writing and directing “A Soldier’s Journey” for the US World War I Centennial Commission, slated to debut during the nation’s official ceremonies commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Armistice. A graduate of the University of California San Diego with a degree in American History, John’s been inducted into the Silver Circle by the National Association of Television Arts & Sciences (NATAS), Pacific Southwest chapter, in recognition of 25 years of special achievement in television.

## Bill Heater

### Creative Executive, Real Life Creative

Bill Heater is a creative executive currently consulting with agencies and clients on their brand advertising. His clients include: PricewaterhouseCoopers, TD Ameritrade, Morgan Stanley, DuPont, HighTower Investments and Johnson & Johnson. From 1994-2000, Bill was president and creative director of Heater Advertising in Boston. The agency's clients were Reebok Int'l., Anheuser Busch and Scudder Investments. He was also partner in The Heat, a minority-owned youth/urban-oriented agency also based in Boston. Bill created two of the most memorable campaigns of the 1980's and 90's. In 1988, he wrote John Hancock Financial Services' "Real life, real answers" campaign. The campaign won the Grand Prix at The Cannes Film Festival. In 1992, he wrote and directed the advertising that introduced the Infiniti Q45 to the United States. His spare, minimalist ads for the luxury car division of Nissan are considered some of the most memorable in automotive advertising. Bill has also been a creative consultant on such brands as: Nike, Microsoft, Coca Cola, Mercedes Benz, Ford Motor Company, American Express and many other blue chip advertising clients. He has also worked on three presidential campaigns and, outside of advertising, as an independent screenwriter. He has served on the board of directors for VinFen Corporation, Massachusetts' largest private mental health services organization, and is past president of the Milton Academy Lower School Parent's Association. He and his wife, Kathi, have five children.

## Dr. William McEwen

### Advertising Executive and Consultant, Independent



Bill McEwen is an independent brand and marketing consultant, currently working with a variety of leading marketers in categories ranging from auto manufacturers and hotel chains to B2B marketers and commodity marketing organizations. He was previously Global Practice Leader at The Gallup Organization, in charge of its worldwide Brand Management Practice. As team leader, he spearheaded the development of programs tasked with building brand relationships in locales from Sydney to Sao Paulo and from Washington to Wiesbaden. These programs have been successfully applied to a broad range of marketing and messaging challenges — including department stores and banks, as well as packaged goods brand marketers.

Bill's perspective derives from a singular scope and depth of experience in advertising, marketing education, brand consulting, and marketing management. His extensive background in brand marketing includes shampoos and snacks — but also mortgages and microprocessors, grocers and gas stations,

data transmission services and department stores. He has worked with brands that include Kraft, Coors, and Nestlé — as well as Wells Fargo, Wal-Mart, Intel, and Gap Inc.

Bill came to Gallup in 1994 with more than 20 years of experience in senior strategic planning and account management roles at multinational ad agencies with outstanding brand-building credentials — Leo Burnett, FCB, Needham, D’Arcy, and McCann-Erickson. His ad agency background combines with his client-side product management experience and his academic expertise as a former tenured Associate Professor of Communication Sciences at the University of Connecticut.

Bill received his Ph.D. in Communication from Michigan State University, where he was an NDEA Fellow. MSU recognized him with its Outstanding Alumni Award for 2004. He is the author of “Married to the Brand” (Gallup Press, 2005) and has been a frequent and prolific contributor to advertising and marketing journals, a regular speaker at industry events, and has also served as an editorial board member for two marketing and advertising journals. He has been an American Marketing Association keynoter, President of AMA’s San Francisco chapter, and an AMA Executive Fellow in Residence.

## Dr. Jay Rosen

Author and Associate Professor of Journalism, NYU



Jay Rosen has been on the journalism faculty at New York University since 1986; from 1999 to 2005 he served as chair of the Department. He lives in New York City. Rosen is the author of PressThink, a blog about journalism and its ordeals ([www.pressthink.org](http://www.pressthink.org)), which he introduced in September 2003.

In 1999, Yale University Press published his book, *What Are Journalists For?*, which is about the rise of the civic journalism movement. Rosen wrote and spoke frequently about civic journalism (also called public journalism) over a ten-year period, 1989-99. From 1993 to 1997 he was the director of the Project on Public Life and the Press, funded by the Knight Foundation.

Since 2017 he has been the director of the Membership Puzzle Project, which studies membership models for the support of public service journalism.

In 2008 he was the co-publisher, with Arianna Huffington, of OffTheBus.net, which allowed anyone who was interested to sign up and contribute to campaign coverage for the Huffington Post.

As a press critic and reviewer, he has published in The Nation, Columbia Journalism Review, the Chronicle of Higher Education, The New York Times, the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, The Guardian, the New York Review of Books Daily and many others. In 1990 he and Neil Postman (friend, colleague, mentor) hosted a radio show on WBAI in New York called “The Zeitgeist Hour.”



In 1994 he was a fellow at the Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy at Harvard University, and in 1990-91 he held a fellowship at the Gannett Center for Media Studies at Columbia University.

A native of Buffalo, NY, Rosen had a very brief career in journalism at the Buffalo Courier-Express before beginning graduate study. He has a Ph.D. from NYU in media studies (1986).

## Shari Rosenfeld

### Senior Vice President of International Social Impact, Sesame Workshop



Shari Rosenfeld is Senior Vice President of International Social Impact at Sesame Workshop, overseeing the development and execution of high impact transmedia educational initiatives that help young children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, grow smarter, stronger and kinder.

Rosenfeld manages Sesame Workshop's international offices and expansion efforts in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, harnessing the power of media and Muppets to deliver impact on areas such as early education, gender equity, resilience and WASH. Over her 25 years at Sesame, Rosenfeld has been instrumental in developing groundbreaking programs in Israel, Jordan, Palestine, Kosovo and Northern Ireland that promote mutual respect and understanding. She launched Sesame's first international subsidiary office in India, and has since established offices in Bangladesh and South Africa. Currently, she is overseeing Sesame Workshop's partnership with the IRC to launch an early childhood development intervention in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Syria, to address the needs of children affected by the Syrian conflict.

Rosenfeld holds a BA in Political Science from Tufts University and an MBA from Yale University. She currently resides in New York with her husband, four children and dog.

## Dr. Don Stacks

Professor Emeritus, Public Relations, School of Communications, University of Miami



Dr. Stacks received his Ph.D. in communication studies from the University of Florida. He has earned numerous academic and professional awards for teaching and research. At the University of Miami his awards include “Professor of the Year” and “Provost’s Award for Scholarly Activity.” His professional recognitions include the three highest awards an academic can get from the public relations profession: the “Pathfinder Award” for programmatic research, the “Jackson Jackson and Wagner Award” for applied research, and the Public Relations Society of America’s “Educator of the Year” award. He was also named as a “Measurement Maven” by The Measurement Standard. In addition, Dr. Stacks was recently inducted into the first Research Fellows of the Institute for Public Relations, was elected an Eastern Communication Association Research Fellow in 2007 and most recently elected as an Eastern Communication Association Teaching Fellow in 2008, both awards are based on life-time accomplishments in communication.

Dr. Stacks’ background is based primarily in corporate/governmental public relations and consulting. He has authored and edited numerous books, book chapters, and articles. His most recent works are in the area of public relations measurement and evaluation and include the Primer of Public Relations Research (Guilford Press, now in its third edition) and the Dictionary of Public Relations Measurement and Research (three editions), which has been translated into several languages.

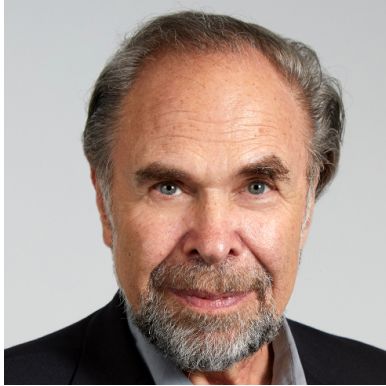
Dr. Stacks serves on a number of academic and professional review boards. He has served as a Trustee for the Institute for Public Relations, an elected member of the International Public Relations Association, and chaired the Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication’s (AEJMC) Elected Standing Committee on Research and served on the AEJMC Board of Directions. In addition, he has served as a member of the national Commission on Public Relations Measurement and Evaluation and former research chair for the Commission on Public Relations Education. He currently directs the nation’s largest public relations research conference, the International Public Relations Research Conference. He served as a senior advisor to Echo Research, an international public relations/corporate communications research company, has consulted for top Fortune companies in matters ranging from communication audits to crisis management to marketing research, and serves as a Trustee of the Arthur W. Page Society.

Dr. Stacks’ research interests include crisis management, public relations theory and methodology, nonverbal communication, persuasion, intercultural communication, listening in the corporate environment, and biosocial/neurocommunication research.



## Al Teller

### Music Industry Executive, Independent



Al Teller has been a major figure in the worldwide music industry for over four decades. Tapped to run his first major label, United Artists Records, at age 29, he subsequently rose to run two of the world's largest music companies, CBS (now Sony) and MCA (now Universal). Among the earliest executives in the music industry to recognize the profound impact of the Internet, he served as its representative on the National Information Infrastructure Advisory Council created by President Bill Clinton to develop public policy regarding the Internet. He currently consults on corporate, technology and marketing strategies and serves on the Board of Directors of On Stage Enterprises after serving on the Boards of Department13, developers of cutting edge software and communications systems, INgrooves, a leading media digital distribution company, and GT Interactive Software, publisher of entertainment gaming software.

In his capacity as Chairman and CEO of the MCA Music Entertainment Group, he managed MCA's worldwide recorded music, music publishing, and live concert businesses. Under Teller's leadership, MCA became a global force in the music business. He oversaw the acquisition of the Geffen and GRP labels and executed the fastest international expansion ever undertaken by a music company, launching operations in twenty-four additional countries over a two year period.

After MCA, Teller led two venture capital-funded businesses, Atomic Pop LLC and Red Ant Entertainment, both widely regarded as innovative milestones in the growth of the digital distribution of music through the Internet.

Teller has guided the careers of many world class artists, including such stars as Bruce Springsteen, Billy Joel, Elton John, Tom Petty, The Rolling Stones, Paul McCartney, The Grateful Dead, Pink Floyd, George Michael, Kenny Rogers, Michael Bolton, Electric Light Orchestra, Meat Loaf, George Strait, Reba McEntire, Vince Gill, Marvin Gaye, Julio Iglesias and Wynton Marsalis. Teller was the first major label head to enter the rap music genre, signing Def Jam Records to a deal with Columbia Records.

Teller has been deeply involved in shaping the major initiatives of the music industry, having served on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and the Board of the International Federation of Phonogram and Videogram Producers (IFPI) as well as a Board Member and Trustee of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Teller graduated from Columbia University with a BS in Electronics Engineering and an MS in Operations Research and went on to earn an MBA from Harvard Business School.

## Sherrie Westin

### President, Sesame Workshop



Sherrie Westin is President of Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit educational organization behind Sesame Street.

Westin leads the organization's efforts to serve vulnerable children through mass media and targeted initiatives in the United States and around the world. She serves as Sesame Workshop's chief mission ambassador, raising awareness, developing strategic partnerships, and cultivating philanthropic support to further the Workshop's mission to help children everywhere grow smarter, stronger, and kinder.

Previously Westin served as Sesame Workshop's President of Social Impact and Philanthropy. In that role, she spearheaded a partnership to create the largest early childhood intervention in the history of humanitarian response, bringing critical early education to refugee children in the Syrian response region. Working with the International Rescue Committee, she led Sesame Workshop's efforts to compete for and win a historic \$100 million grant from the MacArthur Foundation to fund this work. With an additional \$100 million grant from the LEGO Foundation, this initiative has expanded to Bangladesh. She also oversees Sesame Street in Communities, Sesame's comprehensive initiative designed to give children the tools they need to overcome traumatic experiences.

Westin was named a "Leading Global Thinker" by Foreign Policy Magazine and one of Fast Company's "100 Most Creative People in Business" and was recognized with the Smithsonian's "American Ingenuity Award". A staunch advocate for addressing children's needs, she regularly appears on major media outlets on the value of investing in early childhood development, especially for the most vulnerable children.

Westin has held leadership positions in media, nonprofit, and public service. She was Assistant to the President for Public Liaison and Intergovernmental Affairs for President George H.W. Bush, Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and held senior positions at the ABC Television Network and U.S. News & World Report.

Westin serves on the board of directors of the U.S. Fund for UNICEF, the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, Communities in Schools and Vital Voices Global Partnership. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the U.S. Afghan Women's Council, and the Early Childhood Peace Consortium Advisory Board and serves on the Executive Leadership Council of the Early Childhood Development Action Network (ECDAN).

Westin is a graduate of the University of Virginia and holds an Honorary Doctorate from Concordia College in New York.

## Two Anonymous Gaming Industry Executives

Two gaming industry executives contributed to this effort under the condition of anonymity. As such, their names, biographies, and organizations have been withheld from this report.