



## Respond to Your Investors' Needs

**Ugh!** That's what most of us have been saying when we hear the results of the day's trading on the stock market. And, each night we lay awake wondering if we should have sold all of our stock to cut our losses and prevent another downslide in our retirement accounts.

If that's what you've experienced, translate it to your company's entire shareholder base. They are probably just as anxious as you.

That means that we have an opportunity to attract investor attention now more than at other times.

If we don't provide added information and perspective on company strategy and actions, we can be sure that our investors will search for it online or plug in to rumor mills. Here are some of the questions that may be on investors' minds.

- Will the company make it through the roller coaster market?
- Does it have the investment capital to keep products and services competitive?
- Is it generating sufficient visibility and differentiating itself to current and potential customers?
- Are there any new benefits or features coming soon to keep the products or services competitive?
- Are our executives living up to their resumes and big salaries?
- Are we at risk of losing any top executives to a competitor?
- Is our customer base sufficient to keep us going?
- Do we know if our products do what the company claims?
- How does the company's sales, product, manufacturing and distribution experience compare to others in the industry?

In times of uncertainty, what we say, when we say it, and how it is communicated does affect our relationships with our individual and institutional investors. The time is ripe to update corporate investor communications plans for this fiscal year and strengthen those bonds.

## More than Financials

Don't wait for the annual report. In tough times **more** of the **right** information is important. Some companies think that investors are only interested in hearing from them once a year or quarter.

There are numerous communications strategies and tools that can help the company communicate with this often large and very important audience. You can do this fully within SEC requirements. The trick is to anticipate investor needs and not leave them in limbo.

- ✓ Hold a CEO forum online and invite all investors to participate and submit questions
- ✓ Hold scheduled online chat sessions with key executives who can comment on subject matter that may be interesting to investors like marketing, product development or your financials
- ✓ Issue special investor bulletins by email, mail and on your website addressing questions on investors' minds and providing perspective on company strategy
- ✓ Hold regional investor meetings around the US or in key overseas cities
- ✓ Disseminate information about product promotions, events, trainings, etc. that individual shareholders could participate in
- ✓ Disseminate investment strategy tips from respected third party investment professionals

Whichever approach you pursue, it is critical to consult with counsel and investor or public relations officers to be sure that you comply with disclosure laws and provide information consistent with recent and historic company statements.

While heading down this path creates additional communication and compliance work, it is important to take your investors seriously and do something more or better than before to help them navigate through this period of uncertainty.