

THE CONFERENCE BOARD



# Corporate Communications: Driving the Business Forward

March 6 – 7, 2025  
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# Corporate Communications: Driving the Business Forward

March 06 – 07, 2025 | Brooklyn, NY

## CONFIRMED SPEAKERS

- ⑩ Danielle Badler, Program Director, Corporate Communications Strategy II and Internal Communications Councils, The Conference Board
- ⑩ Jan Botz, Program Director, Internal Communications Council, The Conference Board
- ⑩ Denise Dahlhoff, PhD, Director, Marketing & Communications Research, The Conference Board
- ⑩ Matthew DiGirolamo, Chief Corporate Affairs & Engagement Officer, North America, L'Oréal Groupe
- ⑩ Greg Efthimiou, Vice President, Public Relations, GoDaddy
- ⑩ Katie Hill, Senior Vice President of Communications, National Football League
- ⑩ Lisa Kaplan, Founder & CEO, Alethea
- ⑩ Kevin Kilduff, Director, Global External Communications, Mondelēz International
- ⑩ Laurie Korinek, Co-Founder and Chief Creative Officer, PartnerComm
- ⑩ Greg McCullough, Chief Communications Officer, Thrivent
- ⑩ Mandy Mooney, Director of Internal Communications, Prologis
- ⑩ Makini Nyanteh, SVP, Chief Communications Officer, American Institutes for Research
- ⑩ Allyson Park, Chief Communications Officer, Walmart
- ⑩ Meera Pattni, Chief Communications Officer, Semafor
- ⑩ Scott Payton, CEO and Senior Consultant, Bowen Craggs
- ⑩ Beatriz Perez, EVP and Global Chief Communications, Sustainability & Strategic Partnerships Officer, The Coca-Cola Company
- ⑩ Ivan Pollard, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, The Conference Board
- ⑩ Terry Rasmussen, President and Chief Executive Officer, Thrivent
- ⑩ Michele Sharp, Ed.D., Vice President, Communications and Corporate Social Responsibility, Purdue Pharma
- ⑩ Ben Smith, Founder, Editor-in-Chief, Semafor
- ⑩ Ramon Soto, Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, Northwell Health

# Corporate Communications: Driving the Business Forward

March 06 – 07, 2025 | Brooklyn, NY

## DAY ONE

Thursday, March 6, 2024

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**8:00 am – 8:45 am**

### **Registration and Breakfast**

**8:45 am – 8:50 am**

### **Welcome and Introductions**

**Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, The Conference Board

**8:50 am – 9:15 am**

### **Latest Research on the CCO Role**

How do CEOs and CCOs see the communications function advancing business strategy? What skills in the latter role will be needed more than ever? What crises should communicators expect to tackle in 2025?

We'll share fresh research on these topics as well as what else may await communications teams in 2025 based on research from The Conference Board, including its annual survey of CEOs and members of the C-Suite from businesses around the world.

**Denise Dahlhoff, PhD**, Director, Marketing & Communications Research, The Conference Board

**Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, The Conference Board

**9:15 am – 9:30 am**

### **Networking and Cross-Pollination**

We will kick off our event by meeting one another to share our most important priorities and accomplishments since we last convened. Our Chair will then take the stage to gauge attendees' sentiment on the most pressing challenges confronting the function in 2025.

**9:30 am – 10:05 am**    **General Session**

### **The State of the Function: How Corporate Communicators Will Drive Business Forward in 2025**

In 2024, this session was introduced with the observation that “upheaval has become daily fare” – and yet even that feels like an understatement today. How has the function continued to evolve in response, and what further disruption is positioned on the horizon in 2025? In this discussion with communications leaders spanning sectors, we will discuss some of the most significant changes they have seen throughout the evolution of the function, the biggest challenges and opportunities lying ahead, and the strategies and tools they will need to employ to address them.

**Allyson Park**, Chief Communications Officer, Walmart

**Beatriz Perez**, EVP and Global Chief Communications, Sustainability & Strategic Partnerships Officer, The Coca-Cola Company

**Moderator: Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, The Conference Board

# Corporate Communications: Driving the Business Forward

March 06 – 07, 2025 | Brooklyn, NY

**10:10 am – 10:40 am**    **General Session**

## **Media on Media**

From the slow demise of print journalism to the rise and fall of blogs, the race for digital traffic, and now the rise of artificial intelligence, the news media industry has experienced lightning-speed generational change. Semafor Co-Founder and Editor-in-Chief Ben Smith and Semafor Global Head of Events and Communications Meera Pattni discuss how the media navigate these changes, covers itself, breaks through the noise to create a robust reputation among an ever-growing number of peers, and stays relevant in a rapidly changing media environment.

**Ben Smith**, Founder, Editor-in-Chief, Semafor

**Meera Pattni**, Chief Communications Officer, Semafor

**10:40 am – 10:55 am**

## **Networking Break**

**10:55 am – 11:25 am**    **General Session**

## **The Bridge Between Your Internal and External Brand: How Recruitment Communications Fit In**

In this session, we'll dive into a recruitment campaign case study that shows you how it connects to internal and external branding. What does the bridge between the two look like? How are your recruiting communications connected to your overall company positioning? What do you want candidates to take away from their experiences with your organization? You'll learn ways to connect your recruiting communications to your company culture, and which communication methods will reach your target audience.

**Laurie Korinek**, Co-Founder and Chief Creative Officer, PartnerComm

**11:30 am – 12:05 pm**    **General Session**

## **Vision Meets Voice: The Essential CEO-CCO Connection**

The relationship between a company's CEO and CCO is pivotal in achieving business success. And today's CCO role has evolved far beyond traditional media relations, encompassing a broader strategic perspective, and influencing decision-making and business outcomes. Together, CEOs and CCOs champion a cohesive message across all platforms grounded in the company's vision and purpose, ensuring consistency and transparency that resonates with stakeholders. In this conversation, learn how a CEO-CCO partnership rooted in trust is crucial in times of transformation and crisis, when issues management and change communications can safeguard a company's reputation and drive success.

**Terry Rasmussen**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Thrivent

**Greg McCullough**, Chief Communications Officer, Thrivent

**Moderator: Jan Botz**, Program Director, Internal Communications Council, The Conference Board

# Corporate Communications: Driving the Business Forward

March 06 – 07, 2025 | Brooklyn, NY

## 12:10 pm – 12:40 pm General Session

### **Building a Corporate Brand: How L'Oréal Established Its Reputation as a Leader in Tech**

In 2024, L'Oréal Groupe CEO Nicolas Hieronimus delivered the first-ever keynote from a beauty company at the 2024 Consumer Electronics Show. We welcome L'Oréal North America's Matthew DiGirolamo to share with us a decade-long journey to communicate the stories of L'Oréal's tech ambition and advancements, transforming the image of a cosmetics company to that of a tech innovator. We will explore what it takes to develop a new side of a legacy brand from scratch and the impact it has had on the business.

**Matthew DiGirolamo**, Chief Corporate Affairs & Engagement Officer, North America, L'Oréal Groupe

## 12:40 pm – 1:40 pm

### **Networking Lunch**

## 1:45 pm – 2:15 pm Concurrent Session

### **Misinformation and Polarization: Measuring Reputation in a Volatile World**

Many companies neglect a key resource in their communications arsenal, their corporate website, even though it can have a powerful and measurable impact on corporate reputation. In this session we will learn how leading communicators leverage this invaluable resource to measure and improve reputation, especially in response to crises and reputational risks.

**Kevin Kilduff**, Director, Global External Communications, Mondelēz International

**Scott Payton**, CEO and Senior Consultant, Bowen Craggs

## 1:45 pm – 2:15 pm Concurrent Session

### **Communications that Enable Change**

Amidst dynamic business environments that can make change a matter of survival, corporate change initiatives still often fail. Learn what it takes for communicators to help drive change initiatives that succeed. We will discuss new research and expert practitioner insights on strategies to engage and empower employees through transitions.

**Makini Nyanteh**, SVP, Chief Communications Officer, American Institutes for Research

**Michele Sharp, Ed.D.**, Vice President, Communications and Corporate Social Responsibility, Purdue Pharma

**Moderator: Jan Botz**, Program Director, Internal Communications Council, The Conference Board

## 2:20 pm – 2:50 pm Concurrent Session

### **KPIs, Dashboards, and More: Measuring and Acting on Communications' Impact**

Even in organizations that are already well aware of the importance of communications internally and externally as a driver of business success, there can be a lack of actionable KPIs and accessible measurement tools. In this session, we will explore a variety of tools for measuring communications impact and consider how to use those tools to shape communications strategies and tactics as well as how to use metrics to make the business case for the function to the C-Suite and to the Board.

## 2:20 pm – 2:50 pm Concurrent Session

### **Communications on Well-Being: What Makes a Difference?**

Since the pandemic, we have witnessed a better appreciation of the importance of mental as well as physical well-being. What messages and what channels are still making a difference in engaging employees, enhancing their experience, and improving their health?

# Corporate Communications: Driving the Business Forward

March 06 – 07, 2025 | Brooklyn, NY

**2:50 pm – 3:10 pm**

## Networking Break

**3:10 pm – 3:50 pm**      **General Session**

### Townhall: AI

As we convene in early 2025, it will have been almost two and a half years since ChatGPT became available to the public. Led by distinguished AI and communications leaders, we will share honest evaluations from members of our audience members on the impact generative AI is making in their organizations so far. What practices have made the biggest difference on their everyday work? What investments have yet to yield dividends? And how have these new tools caused the communications function to evolve? We will deploy live polling and interactive exercises to share insights among peers.

**3:55 pm – 4:25pm**      **General Session**

### Beyond Sustainability Reporting: Storytelling at Scale is Key to Demonstrating Impact

With tens of thousands of companies required to provide disclosures in 2025 under the EU's Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), many multinational companies are struggling to communicate their sustainability efforts in an engaging and impactful way. This session focuses on a successful formula that's been employed at Henkel, where the North American business unit engages in year-round storytelling on environmental and social impact topics. Henkel's Olivia Lawrence, strategic communications manager, will be interviewed by Dave Armon, vice chair at 3BL, on story mining, measurement, coordination across the enterprise and support from partners.

**Dave Armon**, Executive Vice Chairman, 3BL

**Olivia Lawrence**, Senior Manager, External Communications, Henkel

**4:30 pm – 5:00 pm**      **General Session**

### Weathering the Storm: Frameworks and Tools to Navigate Through Controversy

In our current highly politicized environment, controversies that can roil employees, customers, or other stakeholders will continue to emerge, and will be accompanied by calls for businesses to take a public position. How can organizations better understand their stakeholders' perceptions, concerns, or misunderstandings on hot button topics? How should they decide whether, when, and how to respond? Is "neutrality" the answer, and can it be maintained on every issue? In this discussion, we explore frameworks and tools to navigate through controversies in ways that align with stakeholder relationships.

**Greg Efthimiou**, Vice President, Public Relations, GoDaddy

**Lisa Kaplan**, Founder & CEO, Alethea

**5:05 pm – 5:10 pm**

### Day One Recap and Day Two Preview

**Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, The Conference Board

**5:10 pm – 6:10 pm**

### Cabaret and Reception

We will end our day on a (literal) high note with a live cabaret performance by one of our most popular speakers of 2024, Mandy Mooney. She will perform three original songs, inspired by her upcoming book *Corporating*, that will delight fellow communicators in the corporate world.

**Mandy Mooney**, author of forthcoming book, *Corporating*, "a user manual for rising stars in the

# Corporate Communications: Driving the Business Forward

March 06 – 07, 2025 | Brooklyn, NY

corporate world"

## DAY TWO

Friday, March 7, 2025

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**8:00 am – 8:45 am**

### **Breakfast**

**8:00 am – 8:45 am**      **General Session**

### **What if...? Roundtables**

Meet fellow practitioners and learn from their varied perspectives while discussing how corporate communicators should respond to hypothetical such crisis situations as:

- What if... a global conflict leads to major supply-chain disruptions?
- What if...the U.S. President refuses to follow a U.S. Supreme Court decision on a controversial issue?
- What if...a major cyberattack takes down the internet for an extended period?
- What if... a banking crisis results in the American economy dipping into a recession?
- What if... a company's premiere product is made harmful to consumers by internal sabotage?
- What if... extreme weather conditions make some densely populated parts of the world uninhabitable?

**8:45 am – 9:15 am**

### **Future Disruptions: Reporting Out**

Representatives from each roundtable summarize their discussion with the rest of the audience.

*Facilitator:*

**Danielle Badler**, Program Director, Corporate Communications Strategy II and Internal Communications Councils, The Conference Board

**9:15 am – 9:25 am**

### **Day Two Opening Remarks**

**Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, The Conference Board

**9:25 am – 9:55 am**      **General Session**

### **Seizing the Moment: National Football League SVP of Communications Katie Hill**

How does the NFL leverage one of the world's biggest stages each year? Super Bowl LIX in New Orleans will serve as the backdrop for our conversation with National Football League SVP of Communications Katie Hill. We will discuss how the League shapes its messages on a platform envied by brands across the globe, what made this year unique, and how other brands can use their own spotlight moments to enrich their brand storytelling and identity.

**Katie Hill**, Senior Vice President of Communications, National Football League

**10:00 am – 10:30 am**      **General Session**

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# Corporate Communications: Driving the Business Forward

March 06 – 07, 2025 | Brooklyn, NY

## Guiding a Groundswell: Lessons from Novo Nordisk for Your Product Launch Communications

In this conversation with Anna Fable of Novo Nordisk, we will explore the role of communications in the extraordinarily successful rollout of the obesity and diabetes medications Wegovy and Ozempic. Learn how communications helped the products come to market, helped them take off, and helped with regulatory issues, as well as where they're going from here. Discover what lessons were learned, and how they can be applied to product launch and shepherding communications in your own organization.

**Anna Fable**, Vice President, Communications, Novo Nordisk

**Danielle Badler**, Program Director, Corporate Communications Strategy II and Internal Communications Councils, The Conference Board

**10:30 am – 10:45 am**

### Networking Break

**10:45 am – 11:15 am** General Session

### How Storytelling Around Purpose Drives Business

Over the past several years, notable documentary series have taken viewers into the lives of medical providers and patients at crucial moments, including Lenox Hill and Emergency NYC on Netflix and One South: Portrait of a Psych Unit on HBO. Each involved partnerships with Northwell Health, and each provided an example of storytelling focused on purpose. In this conversation, we will explore a variety of opportunities for communicating on brand purpose for organizations across sectors and explore how it can drive measurable business results.

**Ramon Soto**, Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, Northwell Health

**11:20 am – 11:50 am** General Session

### Panel: Raising The Next Generation of Communicators

In our capstone conversation, we will look toward the development of the next generation of communications professionals. What are the biggest talent, retention and succession challenges facing top leadership today? Hear how today's up-and-coming comms leaders are thinking about shepherding the next generation.

**Mandy Mooney**, Director of Internal Communications, Prologis

**11:50 am – 12:00 pm**

### Concluding Remarks

**Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, The Conference Board