

# UK PR INDUSTRY BLIGHTED BY QUALITY CHASM

Submitted by: Speed Communications

Wednesday, 14 January 2004

---

PR agency staff polarised between the good and the 'muppets', according to UK media

PR agencies in the UK are polarised between the competent and the plain awful, according to Rainier PR's 2004 Journalist/PR Relationship Study, the results of which are published today.

The study, which surveyed more than 80 journalists across the UK broadcast, business, national, trade and regional media during November and December 2003, examined six different areas of the PR agency/journalist relationship, ranging from pitching stories through to provision of photography and quality of materials.

Quality was not the only issue that influenced PR success, as 44 per cent of respondents confessed that being pitched to by a member of the opposite sex could sway them and 82 per cent were tempted by 'exotic press trips'.

The Rainier PR Journalist/PR Relationship Study revealed that 35.8 per cent of journalists found PR agency staff were 'muppets' with little knowledge of either their needs or their own client. By contrast, just 19.8 per cent respected PR professionals as an aide to developing stories.

"A two-tier league of PR agencies has emerged with poor agencies giving the industry as a whole a bad reputation. Many seem unable to grasp how journalists work and communicate, whilst others can be a truly valued source of news and information," said Stephen Waddington, managing director, Rainier PR.

Much of the feedback criticised PR agencies for failing to train staff in the basics of their clients' business, its industry sector and the media.

But the importance of PR agencies as a source of stories was highlighted by the fact that 46.9 per cent of journalists said that the source was the factor most likely to persuade them to write a story, while 33 per cent said they used press releases as a primary source of stories.

According to the study, 52.4 per cent of journalists said the quality of written materials produced by PR staff was 'okay' with the main story angle typically outlined in the headline or first few paragraphs of the press release. But 42.7 per cent said they found the majority of press releases were little more than 'corporate wallpaper' containing news only of interest to the company itself.

In developing the 'The Journalist/PR Relationship 2004' study, Rainier PR has drawn responses and comment from 82 journalists across the UK. A white paper outlining the key findings is available at [www.rainierpr.co.uk/journalist](http://www.rainierpr.co.uk/journalist).

- ends -

#### About Rainier PR

Rainier PR is a leading business-to-business technology PR agency. Based in London, it employs 10 people and had 2003 revenues of approximately £1.1 million. In 2002, the company was wholly acquired by its management team. Rainier PR is a top 40 UK technology PR consultancy as well as a top 100 UK PR consultancy (PR Week magazine). For more see [www.rainierpr.co.uk](http://www.rainierpr.co.uk).

Media contact:

Sarra Mander

[smander@rainierpr.co.uk](mailto:smander@rainierpr.co.uk)

Rainier PR

+44 (0)20 7494 6570