

PR and journalism must tackle lack of diversity and build pride in their professions

Submitted by: ResponseSource

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- 63% of technology PRs and journalists surveyed believe social mobility is not a reality in their industry
- More than two thirds (68%) said unspoken biases affect hiring decisions
- Only 7% of respondents said they are proud of the current levels of diversity in their industry
- Fears exist the rising 'gig economy' will close even more doors to new talent

26 January 2017: London, UK – PR professionals and journalists working in the UK's technology sector have expressed concern about the slow progress being made towards improved diversity and social mobility in their industries.

A survey of UK Technology Journalist and PR (TechJPR) community members, commissioned by Golin, found 63% of respondents believe social mobility is not a reality in their industry. More than two thirds (68%) said unspoken biases affect hiring decisions. The same number (68%) said diversity is improving, but more needs to be done.

Only 18% said people of all backgrounds have an equal chance of finding work at present, and just 7% of respondents said they are proud of the social diversity in their industry.

Daryl Willcox, founder and chairman of ResponseSource, which curates TechJPR, said: "These numbers are really disappointing and social mobility is clearly an issue that needs to be addressed. Now we have an idea of the real scale of the issue of social mobility within tech media, we can begin to do something about it. TechJPR has well over 3,700 members and can be a great resource to help those looking for jobs and also those trying to hire so they can do so in a fair way, beyond traditional approaches."

Bibi Hilton, managing director of Golin, said: "All communications businesses need to do more to better reflect the world they communicate with. They must encourage people from all backgrounds into their businesses and do all they can to strip out unjust or unjustifiable barriers to entry, including exploitative practices such as unpaid internships which perpetuate the idea that careers in PR and the media are only open to those from privileged backgrounds."

As well as running an award-winning paid intern programme, Golin recently announced Golin B&B, a scheme to provide paid interns from outside London with a month's rent-free accommodation in the capital and further financial assistance to make relocating to London more manageable.

Hilton added: "We want to hire the best creative brains in the UK and we don't want brilliant people turning down an internship with us or being put off applying in the first place due to the cost of living. As such it is essential to our business success that we help people overcome the prohibitive costs of relocating to London where so much of our industry is based."

The survey also looked at attitudes towards the so-called 'gig economy' where employers will increasingly make use of freelance staff and contractors on short-term contracts, enabling them to manage

a more flexible workforce.

A quarter of respondents (27%) believe the 'gig economy' will not affect their role, but among others opinions are divided on whether it will affect them for the better or worse. More than half (52%) expressed concerns it will mean less job security, while 44% believe it will be used to drive down wages and 40% believe it will result in reduced employee rights. However, 33% of respondents said they expect workforces to become more flexible and there to be more opportunities for all.

For those looking to break into either industry it may not be such good news. 42% of respondents said the 'gig economy' will make it tougher for people starting out who don't have contacts to approach for work.

The results of the research will be discussed during a panel event hosted by Golin this evening, including Top Gear presenter Rory Reid, David Johnson, the Chief Executive of the Social Mobility Foundation, Nate Lanxon, Head of EU Technology news at Bloomberg, and Bibi Hilton, MD of Golin UK.

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About Golin:

Golin is an integrated communications agency with PR and digital at its core. With 50 offices around the world and 60 years of experience, Golin's purpose is to create change through brave work worthy of awe and action. "Go All In" is the agency's ethos and commitment to bravery over mediocrity. Since 2014, Golin has been named PRWeek Global's International Agency of the Year; PRmoment's Large Agency of the Year; PRWeek UK Consultancy of the Year 2015. Within its revolutionary g4 model, specialist communities drive relevance using proprietary tools to plan and execute powerful campaigns. Golin is a member of Interpublic Group (NYSE: IPG). Learn more at golin.com.

About TechJPR:

TechJPR exists to create an environment where technology journalists and PR professionals can exchange ideas in order to foster an effective working relationship, while respecting the principle of an independent media.

Founded by Andy Lim, the group has grown to include thousands of Tech PRs and journos thanks to the hard work of a number of enthusiastic volunteers over the years.

In September 2013 former technology journalist Daryl Willcox took over TechJPR. The group continues to be run by volunteers with some support from Daryl's company ResponseSource. The volunteers are always open to ideas, input and feedback from all TechJPR members, just use the links below to get in touch or post on any of the social media groups.

Join TechJPR here (<http://techjpr.com/join-techjpr>)

Contact us here

(<http://t.umbl.com/redirect?z=mailto%3Ahello%40techjpr.com&t=ZjFmYzE1NWE2Y2JINTdIODFmM2UyOTg5YWJjMWI3YjZm>)

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