

**Newsletter, July 2017**

In this newsletter, you will find current announcements, upcoming conferences, and a summary of the articles found in this month’s issue.

**Announcements**

*Seeking Research Collaborators*

The Department of Business Communication at the Marshall School of Business is seeking research collaborators in a teaching project that involves undergraduate students from across the globe working in virtual teams. Dubbed the “Virtual Business Professional Project” and co-sponsored by IBM, the six-week assignment gives students real-world experience using communication and collaboration technologies employed in today’s corporate environment. Using the IBM Connections platform, students plan and hold virtual meetings, co-author and collaboratively revise documents, use project management tools, and create online presentations. Researchers are currently gathering both quantitative and qualitative research from students to learn more about how they use technology in teams, intercultural communication, and leadership. To learn more about the project, please contact Jolanta Aritz at aritz@marshall.usc.edu.

**Upcoming Conferences**

#### The **82nd Annual International Conference** of the Association for Business Communication will be held October 18–21, 2017 at the Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin, Ireland. The theme for this year’s conference is **“Shaping and Expanding the Landscape of Business Communication.”** For more information, visit http://www.businesscommunication.org/page/2017-annual

# *IJBC* Notes

*IJBC*’s current average time from submission to first decision is 40 days. Its average time from submission to final decision is 63 days.

**2014 Web of Science® Estimated Impact Factor** is 0.706

**2015 Ranking:** 2015 SJR (SCImago Journal Rank) Score: 0.312 | 87/269 Economics, Econometrics and Finance (miscellaneous) | 110/285 Business, Management and Accounting (miscellaneous) (Scopus®)

**Featured Articles from July 2017**

**Drawing from Available Means: Assessing the Rhetorical Dimensions of Facebook Practice** *Mark Hannah and Chris Lam*

A company’s presence on Facebook plays an important role in engaging its customer base. However, little empirical work has fully examined the nature and impact of corporate Facebook posts on engagement. In this study, the authors analyzed 680 Facebook posts collected from a sample of six companies over a period of 12 months. They examined variables including post frequency, content type, illocutionary act, linking style, and media. They found that entertainment posts were more engaging than operational news and innovation posts. Educational posts were also more engaging than innovation posts. With regard to illocutionary acts, expressives, or posts that express the writer’s emotion, were more engaging than all other illocutionary acts. Additionally, representative posts were more engaging than directive posts. For linking style, the authors discovered that posts containing no link were actually more engaging than posts with an external link. We also found a significant interaction between content type and linking practice, which indicates that linking style influences the effectiveness of some content types in engaging audiences. Finally, they found that companies overwhelmingly relied on the use of text and images in their posts over video and image galleries. The authors speculate that content that removes a user from the Facebook “universe” (e.g., a link or a video) actually may demotivate a user to engage with the original content of the post. They discuss these results from a rhetorical perspective and provide insight for corporate Facebook practices.

**A Corpus-study of Bank Financial Analyst Reports: Semantic Fields and Metaphors**

*Winnie Cheng and Janet Ho*

This corpus-based study compares financial analyst reports, collected during the Eurozone financial crisis in 2011, of the BNP Paribas and Bank of China (Hong Kong), which differ in corporate history and backgrounds. The study aims to describe, first, salient semantic and pragmatic meanings characteristic of salient topics in the financial analyst reports of the banks and, second, the patterns of use and function of metaphors specific to key semantic fields of each corpus to shed light on how the genre was exploited by respective banks to achieve organizational, professional, institutional, and sociocultural goals. Metaphors in each corpus were identified and meanings interpreted in the co-text of concordances, following the steps detailed in the metaphorical identification procedure (MIP). The website METALUDE (Metaphor at Lingnan University, Department of English) was used as a source of reference. Analysis of key semantic fields shows that the two sets of reports were composed of different topics. Concordance analysis of frequent lexical words in the key semantic fields further reveals semantic and pragmatic meanings. Major findings include BNP Paribas using more empirical research and survey findings in its financial analyst reports to promote its professional image and sense of responsibility to stakeholders, and frequent use of human traits metaphors, depicting different aspects of health, motion, mobility, and injury, revealing the way and extent to which financial analysts describe different business and financial market performance and activities.

**Social Media Adoption in Business-to-Business: IT and Industrial Companies Compared**

*Celine Veldeman, Ellen Van Praet, and Peter Mechant*

This article investigates Belgian business-to-business (B2B) companies’ perceptions of and attitudes toward social media, matching the findings with existing U.S., U.K., and Dutch research. Using survey data from a nonrepresentative judgment sample of 92 Belgian B2B companies, the authors show that 85.9% of Belgian B2B companies that participated in the study use social media to ensure their influence on target groups. The survey also reveals that 40.8% of IT companies implement a social media strategy against only 26.7% of industrial B2B companies. Relying on the technology acceptance model, the authors argue that IT companies are more inclined to adopt social media because they evaluate social media’s usefulness higher than industrial enterprises. Qualitative follow-up research (in-depth interviews with 11 B2B enterprises) further explains the observed differences and similarities between both sectors, analyzing perceived benefits and risks, social media knowledge, and strategies. They conclude by listing various suggested actions that can help B2B companies effectively leverage social media.

**Inclusive Language Use in Multicultural Business Organizations: The Effect on Creativity and Performance**

*Jakob Anders and Anders Klitmøller*

Few studies have dealt with inclusive language use in multicultural organizations. This is unfortunate because it has been hypothesized that such organizations will be more creative and will perform better than mono-cultural organizations if communication issues are dealt with correctly by managers. In this study, the authors test the general hypothesis that inclusive language use by managers and employees in formal and informal situations will increase creativity and performance in multicultural organizations. Using responses from 676 individuals employed in privately owned multicultural companies, the authors found that management common language communication was strongly associated with performance but not with creativity. Openness to language diversity among employees, however, had strong relations with both creativity and performance. This indicates that management communication may provide information and a shared identity that can increase the performance of an organization. Yet in order to increase creativity, there is a need to also facilitate inclusive group processes. The findings provide new insights into the theoretical idea that diversity leads to creativity and performance if communication is managed correctly.

**Commentar**y: **A Space for Place in Business Communication Research**

*Deborah C. Andrews*

Many corporate leaders believe that the physical environment of the workplace can play a major role in fostering the interdisciplinary collaboration they link to organizational innovation and in creating a brand that attracts and keeps highly talented employees. Their belief aligns with a recent materialist turn in scholarship that addresses the mutual creation of objects and subjects. Taking advantage of ubiquitous communications technology, the open plan design of these new workplaces offers a variety of settings, created more through furnishings than architecture, to support the four modes of 21st-century work: collaborate, socialize, learn, and focus. In this flexible, “mobile” workplace, people and things mutually reconfigure themselves as projects and preferences change. A tension exists, however, between group-oriented communication conducted face-to-face and private, individual thinking. Exploring the fit between the rhetoric of what space can do, especially enhancing collaboration and achieving innovation, and results on the ground, is an inviting, largely untapped, area for business communication research.

**Upcoming Articles in October 2017**

**Communicating Organizational Trust: An Exploration of the Link between Discourse and Action**

*Slavia Kodish*

**The Mediating Role of Charismatic Leadership Communication in a Crisis: A Malaysian Example**

*Jamilah Jamal and Hassan Abu Bakar*

**An Examination of the Effects of Self-Regulatory Focus on the Perception of Media Richness: The Case of Email**

*Vicenc Fernandez, Xavier,Armengol, Pep Simo, and Jose Sallan*

**Nationalism vs. Animal Rights: A Semantic Network Analysis of Value Advocacy in Corporate Crisis**

*Aimei Yang and Shari Veil*

**From Listening to Leading: Towards an Understanding of Supervisor Listening within the Framework of Leader-member Exchange Theory**

*Karina Lloyd, Diana Boer, and Sven Voelpel*

**IJBC Editorial Board**

Each newsletter profiles a selection of board members for our readers.

##### Paula Lentz, Ph.D.**Paula Lentz** is an associate professor and academic program director of the Business Communication Program at the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire. She earned her Ph.D. at the University of Minnesota, St Paul. Her teaching interests are business writing and presentations. Lentz’s research interests include organizational discourse communities, writing pedagogy, genre theory, online/distance learning, and health literacy.

**Augustine Pang** is an associate professor at the Wee Kim School of

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at the University of Missouri. His research interests include crisis

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chapters to *the Handbook of Crisis Communication and Public Relations*

(2010), *the Handbook of Communication and Social Responsibility* (2011),

*Research on Crisis Leadership in Organizations* (2013), and *Handbook of*

*International Crisis Communication* *Research* (2016) as well as published articles in a number of

peer-reviewed journals. Gus has won several research given by such organizations as the

International Communication Association, Corporate Communications International, the

Association of Educators in Journalism and Mass Communication, and the International Public

Relations Conference.

**Richard David Ramsey** is professor of General Business and acting director of the Internet Resource Center at Southeastern Louisiana University.He earned his Ph.D. from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. His research and teaching interests include technical and business communication, international business, and communication problems in accounting. He has published book chapters and articles in various peer-reviewed journals.

# https://www.edhec.edu/sites/www.edhec-portail.pprod.net/files/styles/professeurs/public/anne_witte.jpg?itok=JELdwMUnAnne Witte is professor and Assistant Dean of the Intercontinental Honours Track & International Academic Affairs Program at the EDHEC Business School in Nice, France. Her research and teaching interests include cross-cultural management, globalization and culture, critical thinking, topics in French business, research methods, and values and cooperation. She has published materials in such peer-reviewed journals such as the *Journal of Management Enquiry*, *Management Education*, *International Journal of Education for Business* and *International Journal of Business Communication*, her current focus involves applying the methods of anthropology to analyzing changing consumer, citizen and generational values in a globalizing world.

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Contact Editor-in-Chief Robyn Walker at rcwalker@marshall.usc.edu with research news or announcements that you would like included in the next newsletter.

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**Fostering Excellence in Business**

**Communication**

The Association for Business Communication (ABC) is an international, interdisciplinary organization committed to advancing business communication research, education, and practice.