

96% of surveyed PR consultancy heads expect stable to increased revenues in 2012

Pricing and profitability present the biggest challenge

BARCELONA, 31 January 2012 – Just over half of PR consultancy heads internationally expect the business to grow in 2012 compared to 2011. Another 41% expect stable conditions, while only 4% believe their business will shrink. This according to the Q1 Trends Barometer survey from the [International Communications Consultancy Organisation](#), in which 18 countries from Europe and Asia-Pacific participated¹.

PR Service Areas

Top projected disciplines for growth are: Digital (cited by 68%), Crisis & Issues Management (65%) and Corporate Communications/Strategy (59%). Reputation Management was also cited by more than 50% of respondents as a growth area for this year.

Least likely to grow overall are Event Management and Technology services, each cited by only 10% of respondents.

Client Industries

A majority of respondents (59%) expect clients from the Energy & Environment sector to increase their spending on public relations. 43% predict that IT/Technology clients will increase their PR budgets, and 39% believe new business will come from the Health & Wellness industry.

The least promising industries for 2012, amongst those included in the survey², include Manufacturing, Automotive and Retail – all of which were mentioned by fewer than 8% of respondents as likely to boost investment in public relations.

Challenges Ahead

When asked to choose the single most important challenge facing PR consultancy this year, survey respondents ranked “pricing & profitability” first (38%). Second came “client budgets/expectations” (28%), while “competition from outside PR” and “staffing” tied for third (at 13% each).

Additional challenges mentioned include “global recession” and “innovation in PR services”.

Tracking Global Trends

Also according to the Trends Barometer survey, consultancy heads rely upon a wide variety of sources when looking for data on growth and trends in public relations. Most often cited

¹ Participating countries (18 in total), from which heads of PR consultancies were surveyed during January 2012: Australia, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK

² Automotive, Construction/Infrastructure, Energy & Environment, FMCG, Food & Nutrition, Health & Wellness, IT/Technology, Internet/Telecommunications (ICT), Luxury Goods, Manufacturing, Pharmaceuticals, Professional Services, Public Sector, Real Estate, Retail, Tourism

were national PR trade associations and well-known trade publications along with academic journals, social networks, major business media and individual blogs from PR professionals.

-- ENDS --

About ICCO

The [International Communications Consultancy Organisation](#) (ICCO) is the voice of public relations consultancies around the world. The ICCO membership comprises national trade associations in twenty-eight countries across the globe: from Europe, Africa, Asia, the Americas and Australia. Collectively, these associations represent close to 1,500 PR firms.