



Inspiring Excellence  
in Communications  
Worldwide

International Advertising Association  
ITALY CHAPTER

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## Press Release

# *Advancing Marketing Communications and Education in Europe*

Milan, November 16<sup>th</sup> 2007 - The IAA European Education Conference, organized on November 16<sup>th</sup> 2007 in Milan by the IAA Italy Chapter in collaboration with the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, proved a great success and attracted a consistent flow of public. The Conference marked the 25-year-long collaboration between the IAA and The Catholic University of Sacred Heart in Milan.

The aim was to verify if the courses of study offered by Universities and Professional Institutes at the present time meet the requirements of the business communications market. Are training and education at school adequate to what the working world needs or is there room for improvement? The list of panellists that debated these questions, included top company and communications agency managers as well as outstanding academics, who all outlined the actual scenery on the bases of their experiences.

In the first part of the Conference, Professor Edoardo Brioschi, IAA Italy Chapter President, underlined the fact that *"there is still a gap between the theoretical approach and the practices of the everyday world in the companies. That situation can be summarized in the expression of "myth and reality". The goal of education in the field of business communication will be to train students to become professionals in total business communication.*" Professor Brioschi went on by discussing the results of various surveys conducted by the IAA Italy Chapter between 2006 and 2007, focusing in particular on the "Education Survey" conducted in October 2007. A sample of 250 companies was selected for answering the survey, with the technical support of the research partner "Nextplora". The results highlighted that *"the winning form of training is a kind of education that includes a solid general culture and a natural predisposition to relationships (whatever the type: interpersonal, interfunctional etc.). As for the improvements in field of education, the most important one is to stimulate the future communicator to consider his/her job under a functional point of view, which means in terms of planning and control"* declared Professor Brioschi. The survey also pointed out that agencies and companies are actually looking for a new professional figure: "the knowledge manager", a person who should be able to manage the complexity of the information flow in the company. Last but not least, the most notable finding is that the employer is expected to take part in training programmes on continuous basis.

The morning went on with two round tables: the first one featuring top managers of different companies, the second one with top managers from agencies and media. The participants of the first round table *"Communication and Employment: which roles and competences for communicators in the companies?"* were: Giorgio Del Mare (Methodos), Luigi Ferrari (People-The Research Partner), Armando Marchi (Barilla), Filippo De Caterina (L'Oreal), Alessandra Teruggi (Vodafone Italia) and



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Giorgio Preda (Publitalia '80) as the moderator of the debate. The conclusion on which they agreed on is that the role of communication within a company should be both strategic and operative. A good course of study in this field should provide both a basic managerial culture and highly specialized knowledge: that will help future communication managers to choose among a constantly growing variety of instruments the most suitable to their needs.

The second round table "*Changing Environment & New Professional Skills in the Market for Communication Services*" featured the following panellists: Andrea Bertini (Aegis Media), Vittorio Bonori (Zenith Optimedia), Daniela Canegallo (MS&L Italia), Maurizio Sala (Art Directors Club), Neil Eddleston (JC Decaux), Dominic Lyle (EACA) and Salvatore Sagone (ADV Express) as the moderator of the debate. The participants, leading personalities from prestigious companies in the field of marketing and communication services, discussed what are the fundamental skills and the necessary instruments to be successful in this fast moving environment. They ended up in agreeing on the fact that the evolution of communication, together with the introduction of the new media and the technological developments strongly require a re-thinking of the traditional roles inside companies and agencies. This revolution forces the "good communicator" to have strong technical knowledge in order to master the use of new professional tools. A sort of "holistic and neutral knowledge" of the media environment is highly recommended, too.

The second part of the Conference, during the afternoon, counted outstanding academics that touched on a variety of issues concerning education. John Holmes, IAA Director Education &Alliances, talked about the professional development inside the IAA, by pointing out the features of the various programmes of education and training inside the Association and by underlining its highly international nature.

Gordon Miracle, Professor Emeritus at the Michigan State University, focused in his speech on the important contribution of the academic research in advancing marketing communication practices and in supporting a continuous update of knowledge.

Lastly, various experiences in education modelling were presented, thanks to the contributes of a variety of noteworthy speakers from around the world: Donald Nekman (Past President IAA Denmark), Bernd Reuter (IAA Germany Chapter President), Yasuiko Kobayashi (President of the Japan Advertising Academy), Jurgen Faust (Chief Academic Officer, Istituto Europeo di Design - IED Comunicazione) and Boris Eremin (Professor and Chair, International Institute of Advertising, Moscow). It was pointed out that different levels of education exist beyond the basic one. Talking about education in the marketing communication field the leading school is certainly the American one, although two schools are now emerging and offering their valuable contribution: the European and the Japanese ones.

The Conference closed with an important announcement by Gordon Miracle: the launch of the IAA-MSU International Internship, which started off in September 2007 on pilot basis. That is an internship program operated by the Michigan State University in collaboration with the International Advertising



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Association. The latter serves as a partner with the University, particularly to serve the students of its accredited institutes as well as the interests of its professional members who may be interested in providing internships for promising students. This program focuses on providing a meaningful international work experience for students interested in a career in advertising, marketing communication and related fields. Participating employers will have the opportunity to host interns from a number of countries and markets of interest to them and to identify potential future employees. On the other hand qualifying students will gain practical international professional experience, as well as the cross cultural skills necessary for an international career.

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### International Advertising Association

The International Advertising Association (IAA), headquartered in New York, was founded in 1938 to champion responsible marketing. The IAA, with its 56 chapters in 76 countries, is a one-of-a-kind global partnership whose members comprise advertisers, media, advertising and public relations agencies, media companies, and academics. The IAA is a platform for industry issues and is dedicated to protecting and advancing freedom of commercial speech, responsible advertising, consumer choice, and the education of marketing professionals. For more information please visit [www.iaaglobal.org](http://www.iaaglobal.org).

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