



## Vegas PR News

### May Luncheon Seminar - What's up their sleeves? A look into the future of the Las Vegas Strip

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[prsalasvegas.com](http://prsalasvegas.com)

Book your space now for this month's luncheon seminar. We have an all-star cast of panelists to give us their insight into the future of Las Vegas tourism and its impacts on our community. Marketing approaches have changed over the years and our community is changing, too. Even if you don't work in the gaming industry, your public relations efforts are probably affected by some element of our tourism economy. How will Vegas stay ahead of the game? What role will high-rise condos play in tourism and our community? What will the impacts be to our community infrastructure and what should we be doing to anticipate those demands?

#### In This Issue...

Hear from some of the most prominent voices in Las Vegas tourism and Strip development including:

- **Vince Alberta**, APR, Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority
- **Alan Feldman**, MGM MIRAGE
- **Richard Lee**, First American Title Company

#### ☐ May Luncheon

#### ☐ Luncheon price increase

#### ☐ Chapter Q & A

#### ☐ Free one-year membership offer

#### ☐ The Power of Two program

#### ☐ The President's report

The luncheon will be held **Friday, May 19** at Lawry's The Prime Rib, 4043 Howard Hughes Pkwy. The cost is \$25 for PRSA/PRSSA members before the deadline; \$30 for non-members before the deadline; \$35 after the deadline for members and non-members, and at the door. Register on-line at [www.prsalasvegas.com](http://www.prsalasvegas.com).

### Luncheon price increase to take effect in June

For the first time in about three years, prices for the PRSA-Las Vegas Valley Chapter luncheon seminars will increase for both members and nonmembers.

Beginning with the June 23 luncheon seminar, members will pay \$28 each in advance while nonmembers will pay \$33 each in advance. The at-the-door and late RSVP price will remain at \$35 each for members and nonmembers.

"The increase fee is in line with the rate of inflation," said Shaun Sewell, the chapter's vice president of finance. "Lawry's increased their rates this year. We are raising prices to ensure our luncheons do not lose money."

According to chapter President-elect Nancy Syzdek, APR, the Luncheon Committee is investigating alternative venues. However, at this point, Lawry's prices appear to be the median rate for events of our size and type.

The increased prices will also allow the chapter to provide lunches to three Association of Students in Communications members who volunteer to check guests in at luncheons.

### Chapter Q & A

#### Political campaigning at chapter functions

This month's question: "This is an election year and some chapter members and non-members alike are working on political campaigns. What are the chapter's rules about promoting campaigns at luncheons and other functions?"

Tom Bradley, the chapter's president for 2006, said the Board of Directors recently approved a new policy pertaining to campaigning at chapter events. "The important thing to remember is that chapter luncheons, mixers and professional development seminars are politically neutral," he said. "We prohibit candidates and political organizations from sponsoring chapter events, and discourage guest speakers or panelists who are seeking elected office from using our events to solicit votes."

"To further preserve our political neutrality, we have developed a policy that prohibits attendees from distributing campaign literature, business cards, and so on at our events. However, they are still permitted to state for which candidate or political cause they may be working during attendee introductions, just as other members and non-members announce their job titles and employers' names. We believe this is an impartial policy that will prevent overt electioneering from creeping into our chapter's events without completely muzzling those attendees working on political campaigns." The full policy is available for review on the chapter's Web site, [prsalasvegas.com](http://prsalasvegas.com).

*Is there something you want to know about the chapter or the Vegas PR community? Please send your questions to [president@prsalasvegas.com](mailto:president@prsalasvegas.com). Each month, we'll select a question and provide a response in new section in Vegas PR News to answer some of the common questions asked of Board members. Identities will be kept anonymous unless otherwise requested.*

## **Join PRSA today for a free one-year membership in the Las Vegas Valley Chapter**

If you're not yet a member, let this offer spring you to action: New members who join during the months of May and June will have their first-year chapter dues (a \$45 value!) paid for by the national PRSA office. For full details, please visit PRSA's site at <http://www.prsa.org/membership/main/2006SpringAhead.asp>.

Don't forget to designate the Las Vegas Valley Chapter on the application so you can receive local chapter discounts on luncheon seminars and professional development programs. Questions? Please e-mail [membership@prsalasvegas.com](mailto:membership@prsalasvegas.com).

## **Be part of the "Power of Two"**

In an effort to channel the specific skills of public relations professionals in times of crisis, PRSA and the American Red Cross joined forces to create "The Power of Two", a partnership designed to recruit, train, and use public relations professionals to help manage disasters on local and national levels. Since 2001, hundreds of PRSA members have become registered members of this national database of communications professionals who are ready to serve if disaster strikes. Our chapter is seeking area professionals interested in participating in a local training session later this year.

For more information, contact [Nancy Syzdek](#), APR..

## **The President's Report**

For public relations professionals, the year 2006 marks a milestone anniversary for a tool of the trade that we all sometimes take for granted; for it was in 1906 that Ivy Ledbetter Lee, a former Wall Street reporter turned PR counselor, invented the modern press release.

Following a major accident on the Pennsylvania Railroad, Lee not only convinced his clients to distribute a press release to journalists before they heard rumors about the crash, he also arranged for a special train to take reporters and photographers to the scene. Instead of stonewalling the press (as was the time-honored practice of railroads back in the day), the transparency spurred by Lee earned the Pennsylvania Railroad kudos from newspapers and elected officials for its openness and apparent concern for the safety of its passengers.

Fast-forward to 2006: While the press release remains an important element in disseminating information to the media, the ever-changing 21st century technological landscape is providing myriad challenges to a new generation of Ivy Lees. Nowhere is this more evident than with the advent of the Internet, the mind-boggling growth of blogs, and the world public's 24/7/365 accessibility to news. These and many other PR challenges were the focus of the PRSA Western District Conference, held April 28 in Los Angeles.

Presently, there are anywhere from 33 million to 37 million blogs on the Internet—a figure that is expected to double in the next six months. Meanwhile, the audience for podcasts that stood at about 840,000 people in 2004 is expected to reach 56 million by 2010. As keynote speaker Kirk Stewart, executive vice president of APCO Worldwide and former vice president of corporate communications for Nike, stated, "There are no more local news stories." What a blogger posts in Las Vegas about your company or your client—positive or negative—is available almost immediately to many millions of potential readers around the globe.

Increasingly, blogs and the Internet are the first choice of news for the 18-to-54 age bracket. Eighty-eight percent of economically-active Americans are on-line either at home, at work, or both. Meanwhile, 98 percent of journalists go on-line daily, with 92 percent searching for articles, 76 percent seeking new sources and experts, and 73 percent attempting to find press releases. Simultaneously, the growth of blogs and on-line news services has led to the loss of about 72,000 media jobs over the last five years.

The ramifications to the public relations industry are staggering, and require a new way of thinking. The days of sending a puffy press release to the city desk and hoping for a "positive piece" are ancient history, made obsolete by armchair journalists who can undermine all your best PR efforts with a simple click of a mouse.

Proactively staying ahead of the story is an even more monolithic challenge than it was 10, even five years ago. It may even be impossible. To that end, the importance of transparency in an increasingly Web-centric news world is

heightened in an era of corporate misdeeds and mistrust. To ignore these principles is tantamount to placing our industry on track for a train wreck the likes of which Ivy Lee would have never seen coming.

~ Tom Bradley Jr.  
PRSA-Las Vegas Valley Chapter President  
[president@prsalasvegas.com](mailto:president@prsalasvegas.com)

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