

2018 PRSA Paragon Awards – Call for Entries

The PRSA Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter's annual Paragon Awards recognize the exceptional practice of public relations professionals throughout Southeastern Wisconsin. The following document includes:

- General Information
- Categories
- Entry Preparation Guidelines
- Judging Criteria
- Entry Form



GENERAL INFORMATION

Who is Eligible

Entries may be submitted by PRSA Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter members or non-members. The work must be conducted and developed by a Wisconsin-based organization and the majority of the project must have been implemented between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2017.

Entry Fees

The cost per entry is \$55 for PRSA Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter members and \$95 for non-chapter members. Payment for all entries must be received before 5 p.m. on Tuesday, April 10, or entries will be disqualified.

Deadline for Entries

Entries and entry fees must be submitted electronically before 5 p.m. CDT on Tuesday, April 10. Entries received after this deadline will not be considered. Entries are to be e-mailed to Meghan Abbott at mabbott@affirmagency.com and entry payment should be made at www.PRSAWIS.org.

Presentation of Awards

Winners will be notified on or before Monday, May 7. Awards will be presented at the Paragon Awards banquet from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 16, at Potawatomi Hotel & Casino. To purchase tables or tickets visit www.PRSAWIS.org. Paragon Awards will be judged and selected by members from another national PRSA Chapter.

Questions

Questions regarding the entry process or entry categories may be directed to PRSA Administrator & Entry Coordinator Meghan Abbott (mabbott@affirmagency.com) or Sara Rude, PRSA Board Member and Immediate Past President (srude@c-k.com).

ENTRY CATEGORIES

PROGRAMS

1. **PR Programs (Media Relations)** – A comprehensive, stand-alone media relations program (not part of an integrated campaign) to promote awareness or understanding of an issue, product or service.
 - A. Business / Industry
 - B. Government / Nonprofit
2. **Social Media Campaign (Ongoing)** – Use of at least two social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. as part of a public relations program designed to achieve specific public relations and / or business goals and reach targeted audiences. The social media campaign must be at least three months old. Submission may include URL links as long as they can be viewed without a password and images such as screenshots, metrics, etc. to support results.
3. **Community Relations** – Programs that seek to win the support of, cooperation of, or aim to improve relations with people or organizations in communities where the sponsoring organization has an interest, need or opportunity. “Community” refers to specific geographic location.
4. **Content Marketing** – Programs that effectively demonstrate a strategic program that includes creating and distributing valuable content to attract, acquire and engage target audiences. Include examples and metrics.
 - A. Business / Industry
 - B. Government / Nonprofit
5. **Influencer Marketing to Expand Awareness** – Program that focuses on using paid and/or unpaid spokespeople and/or industry or company leaders to increase awareness and drive your brand’s message to a larger market.
6. **Public Affairs** – Programs designed to influence public policy and / or affect legislation, regulations, political activities or candidates at the local, state or federal government levels.
7. **Issues Management** – Programs that promote a cause or social issue.
 - A. Business / Industry
 - B. Government / Nonprofit
8. **Public Service** – Programs that advance public understanding of a social issue, problem or concern.
9. **Crisis Communications** – Programs undertaking to prepare for or deal with an event that has the potential for or had an extraordinary impact.
 - A. Business / Industry
 - B. Government / Nonprofit
10. **Integrated Communications** – Programs that exemplify creative and effective integration of public relations tactics with at least one other marketing communications tool such as advertising. Evidence of integration of strategies, budget and evaluation should be provided. Advertising costs should not exceed one-third of budget.
 - A. Business / Industry
 - B. Government / Nonprofit

11. **Marketing Consumer Products / Services** – Campaigns that promote products or services towards a consumer audience.
12. **Marketing Business to Business** – Campaigns that promote products or services to a business audience.
13. **Grassroots Marketing Program** – Programs that connect with existing and prospective customers through non-mainstream media methods such as word of mouth, field marketing, brand ambassadors, buzz marketing, crowdsourcing, etc.
14. **Internal Communications** – Programs targeted specifically to special public allied with an organization (members, employees, affiliated dealers or franchises).
15. **Multicultural Public Relations** – For any type of program including institutional, marketing and community relations that is specifically targeted towards a cultural group.

TACTICS

1. **Best Sponsorship Activation** – Sponsorships represent alignment of shared values and goals and can be profitable marketing opportunities for building harmonious partnerships. Activation requires a deep understanding of brand synergy. Show how an activation leveraged sponsorship investment beyond the included sponsor elements.
2. **Events and Observances** – Includes programs and events, such as commemorations, observances, openings, yearlong anniversaries, celebrations or other special activities. Events that took place for longer than a one-week period should be entered in “A: More Than Seven Days” and events occurring within a time span of one week or less should be entered in “B: Seven or Fewer Days.”
 - A. More Than Seven Days
 - B. Seven or Fewer Days
3. **Press Kit** - News releases, photographs or other background information compiled into one packet to promote an organization, product or issue. Submit .jpg photography of kit and / or PDFs of contents. If it's an online or electronic media kit, please provide a URL link.
 - A. Product
 - B. Services / Events / Other
4. **Direct Mail** – Mailed communications designed to solicit a specific immediate response by the target audience. Can be a single communication or a series. Quantifiable, specific actions by the target audience resulting solely from the sponsor's communication should be detailed in the summary. Include PDF and / or .jpg.
5. **Newsletters** – Publications designed, written and published periodically to provide brief and timely information to audiences while supporting an organization's overall objectives. Include a PDF and / or .jpg.
6. **Annual Report**
 - A. Publications which report on an organization's annual performance.
 - B. Financial shareholder annual reports of publicly held companies.

7. **Social Media** – One tactic designed to engage audiences through peer-to-peer communications tools such as social networking sites, blogs, blogger outreach, social media events or content creation. Entries with online components should include the site’s complete URL link and / or screen grabs for those elements that are not able to be viewed publicly. Entries should indicate results / metrics.
8. **Online Communications -**
 - A. Website (internal or external) – External or internal website. Include screen grabs and / or a URL link to the live site to support your summary. Please note that traffic should be measured in unique visits.
 - B. E-News – Information designed, written and delivered via email periodically to provide information to target audiences while supporting an organization’s overall goals. Include visitors, open and click-through data if applicable.
 - C. Mobile – Use of mobile technology to generate awareness, influence behavior, and allow individuals and groups to collaborate and share knowledge and experiences online (including apps).
 - D. Blog – Web-based journals, or blogs that communicated to a target audience. Include rationale for blogging strategy, target audiences and statistics, or other means of quantifiable measurement. Screenshots and as well as the actual URL of the blog must be entered.
 - E. Webinar/Live Press Conference – Use of the Web to communicate information via seminar, live press conference, etc.
9. **Video(s)** – Pre-produced videos to inform target audiences of an event, product, service, issue or organization. Include link(s) to the videos, usage statistics or other means of quantifiable measurement to support the identified objectives.
10. **Online Newsroom** – Also known as a pressroom, media room or media/press center is a website, web page or website section that contains distributable information with the intent of being used by the media about a corporation or organization.
11. **Other Creative Tactics** – Innovative, unconventional and creative tactics used as part of a PR program. Documentation of how the tactic specifically contributed to measurable results of the campaign should be included. (Photographic and/or video representation should be included)
12. **Miscellaneous** – Any public relations project that does not fit into one of the previous categories including but not limited to speeches, ghost-written articles and pitch letters.

PARAGON SUBMISSION CONTENT OVERVIEW / GUIDELINES

The Paragon Awards Committee reserves the right to disqualify any award that does not meet entry guidelines. Note that if you include a URL link for viewing an online example of your work or an uploaded video, test to be sure the links work properly. If the judges cannot access the link, they cannot judge your work and your entry will be disqualified.

ENTRIES TO INCLUDE

- **Objective:** Describe the entry's purpose and goal or intended result. Include identification of the target audience and specific time period to achieve the goal.
- **Research / Planning:** Summarize the primary and secondary research used to identify the problem or opportunity.
- **Outline the plan:** Describe the budget and its application to the program or project. Entries are not judged on budget size, but on the best use of the available budget.
- **Execution:** For complete programs, describe the elements or components, the techniques used, and the strategies or tactics undertaken. For individual projects or tactics, describe how the project was executed, how it meets the objectives and how it addresses the audience(s).
- **Evaluation / Results:** Demonstrate how the program met or exceeded its original measurement methods when available and appropriate to the entry. Media impression figures are not recommended as the sole quantitative measurement.

JUDGING CRITERIA

Each entry will be evaluated using the criteria that are the prime tenets of public relations: research, analysis and planning, communication action, implementation and evaluation.

- **Objectives:** Purpose, time period and intended result (goal) clearly stated. Target audience(s) clearly defined.
- **Research:** Thorough advance research or analysis, including determination of issues and needs.
- **Planning:** Complete and comprehensive planning. Appropriate use of available budget.
- **Creativity:** Creative approach / appropriateness of the communications methods and/or medium.
- **Quality:** Overall image and professional appearance including design, photography, electronic production, paper selection, typography and audiovisual production. Quality of writing.
- **Evaluation / Results:** How well the entry addresses the target audience and meets the stated objectives. How well results correlate to research findings and strategic objectives.

Note: For complete programs, circulation figures are not an acceptable means of quantitative measurement.

Winners in each category will be recognized at one of two levels based on the entry's score. The best overall entry will be named "Best of Show." The judges have the right to withhold an award in any category if the entry does not, in their opinion, warrant recognition.

Entries may be reassigned to another category or division at the judge's discretion. Entries will be disqualified if submission guidelines are not followed.

ENTRY PREPARATION GUIDELINES

All entries must be developed and submitted electronically in a PowerPoint template. The PPT template for the Paragon Awards can be found at www.PRSAWIS.org on the Paragon Awards page of the site.

Preparing your Electronic Paragon Entry

The PPT template will make the submission process simple. Follow these instructions to correctly prepare your electronic entry. The font used and suggested is Garamond. The point size is indicated in each section below for ease of judges in judging each entry, as well as ease of entry preparation. If you switch fonts or point sizes, your entry will not be disqualified; however, we strongly encourage you to follow the recommended template. Note that after you prepare the PPT, you will convert it to PDF as the final file format for submission.

Guidance on Images / Audio / Video

In supporting your entry, image quality is important; however, we need to keep the overall file size manageable for both Paragon coordinators and judges. Jpegs at 150 dpi are fine in most cases. We do not have image size requirements as we realize firms store electronic images in various formats and sizes. If you have video or audio components of your entry, please upload those files to an online platform and provide hyperlinks to those items in your slides. This will allow the judges to review those components online.

IMPORTANT: If the judges are unable to find or successfully open your file or link, they will be unable to judge your entry and it will not be eligible for award.

USING THE POWERPOINT TEMPLATE TO PREPARE YOUR ENTRY

Slide 1 –

Enter your **entry title**. Simply type over the “Project Name” (Garamond, 40pt). Enter the **name of the submitting person or firm**, as well as **city and state** in which it is located. (Garamond, 32 pt)

Slide 2 - (all Garamond, 32 pt)

Enter the **Program Category** (e.g., 1. PR Programs: Media Relations, 6. Crisis Communications, etc.). Please choose from one of the categories listed in the pages above. Enter the month and year of the **completion date** of the program / tactic.

Slide 3 - (all Garamond, 32 pt)

Basic Project Information: **Client, Total Initiative Budget and Top Level Synopsis**

Slide 4 – (Garamond, 18pt)

Project Objective

Slides 5 & 6 – (Garamond, 18pt)

Research / Planning

Slides 7 & 8 – (Garamond, 18pt)

Plan Outline

Slides 9 & 10 – (Garamond, 18pt)

Execution

Slides 11 & 12 – (Garamond, 18pt)

Evaluation / Results

Slides 13 - 17 – (Garamond, 18pt)

Images / Collateral / Video / Audio / Etc.

Provide good images that represent your project as accurately as possible. Please use HYPERLINKS to video and audio components of your project.

FINALIZING AND SUBMITTING

1. In PowerPoint, at top of screen, Select "View" and select Slide Sorter. Click on any slides that are blank or unused and delete them.
2. Save your presentation using PA14_CATEGORY TITLE/SUBTITLE_PROJECT NAME as the file name. (For example: PA14_TacticsPoster_AcmeSalesMeeting.) Now convert your PowerPoint document to PDF.

Note: There's a difference in "printing to PDF" vs. "converting the file to PDF." The "print to" function removes quality/clarity in some cases. In the PowerPoint program, go to file, save as, and select PDF or XPS in the selection bar. If you don't have this option, look for "find add-ins and other file formats" and upload the add-in for this: "Install and use the Save as PDF or XPS add-in from Microsoft," free of charge.

3. E-mail the PDF to Meaghan Hoadley at mhoadley@affirmagency.com. You will receive confirmation of receipt of your entry. You must enter your payment online at www.PRSAWIS.org by Tuesday, April 4 at 5 p.m. or your entry(ies) will be disqualified.

METHOD OF PAYMENT

Once your entries have been submitted, they must be entered and paid for in full by the 5 p.m. on Wednesday, April 13 or they will be disqualified.

1. Go to www.PRSAWIS.org
2. Visit the Paragon Awards page
3. Find the link to Entry Payment
4. Enter the required information on your entry(ies)
5. Submit payment via credit card

If you are unable to submit payment online, we will accept payment via check. Please contact Meghan Abbott at (262) 650.9900 or mabbott@affirmagency.com to make arrangements. Check payments also must be made in full by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, April 10.

NOTIFICATION OF WINNERS

All winning entrants will be notified on or around Monday, May 7, prior to the Paragon Awards banquet and will be asked to submit a single, high resolution image to represent the entry along with a two-three sentence synopsis of the project. Judges' comments will be included with each entry.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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