

**IR**  
magazine

Guide #1

# Innovative visual frontiers



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## No experience necessary

**Q.** Everyone in our IR department is a technical novice. If we hire an outside company to handle webcasts, satellite media tours and more video content, we don't want to be involved in any of the technical responsibilities at all. Is this possible?

**A.** Yes. A good company communications partner will minimize the technical hassle at all levels on your end. Although sophisticated in itself, the technology is relatively simple to set up and operate. You will need someone to add or remove URLs as and when it suits you, but that's about as complicated as it gets.

Digital production techniques are also extremely easy to use.

The technology really should not be an issue and any partner that makes heavy weather of it is unlikely to be working in your best interests.

# IR in TV, video and webcasting

Information overload affects almost everyone these days, and companies communicating with stakeholders and investors by bombarding them with unwanted print and e-mail increasingly run the risk of devaluing their message through information overuse or lack of timeliness. Switched on players are beginning to realize this, however, and many are turning to television and video to reach out to their audiences in different ways and make their words informative, timely and *real*.

Although every company is different, much of the change in tactics is down to the advent of new disclosure and transparency standards that are compelling firms to raise their communication standards. Fortunately, new tools are now available to help make a more intelligent use of corporate communication solutions. In this sense, using video content for internet, extranet and intranet sites is a credible, often instantaneous, way of reaching staff, investors and analysts.

The creative use of webcasting, satellite media tours (SMTs) or internal staff messages can provide relevant information in a fresh, compelling way direct to a target audience, often providing instant and informative feedback. Would you like an IR announcement to reach several broadcasters in just a few hours when your CEO or CFO is tied down in one place? SMTs can be an excellent way to use television to get the IR message out to the media quickly and professionally.

In a nutshell, the use of SMTs – usually a series of television interviews delivered via satellite to broadcasters and used as a live feed or taped for later distribution – means various different business broadcasters get the information they need, but without putting too much pressure on your own executives.

Broadcasters are allocated specific time slots and can be offered, for example, one or two executives in a variety of languages on different topics, or granted exclusivity in certain markets – whatever the company IR brief requires. Before arranging an SMT, however, the IR team and your television and video communications partner should agree on the best way to tell the story relevant to broadcasters. Your partner can then contact the stations and their journalists and make all editorial and technical arrangements.

An effective provider should already have long-standing relationships with certain broadcasters, so its experience and knowledge of the market – who to talk to, who not to invest time with – is crucial. Usage can then be monitored and recorded, either for an internal record or for posting on the company web site.

## The full team

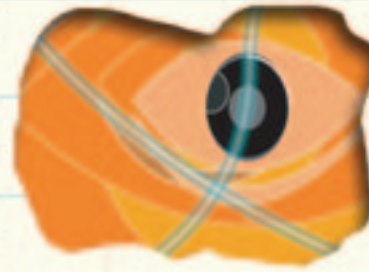
An SMT technical crew usually consists of camera, audio, outside broadcast plus satellite engineers and equipment. It may sound like a considerable organizational hassle but your communications firm should ensure all rehearsals are managed well in advance of the event and will take complete responsibility for all the technical logistics. Your production partner should then advise you on the best interview backdrop to use, which needs to be large enough to frame your speaker, and should be simply designed with the appropriate corporate branding.

It can be helpful to place the financial results highlights or key references in words or figures on a flipchart or other device in sight of your company representative but out of camera shot to act as a prompter during the live interview. It is also recommended for a senior member of your communications team to attend the live event.

Certainly, a well-organized SMT can potentially allow you to reach up to 20 interviewers in just a few hours, especially if your media partner has good relationships with well-established news services; always check this is the case as it could be crucial for gaining airtime.

Although CEOs and CFOs can be very wary of using broadcast options such as SMTs, especially if they are not confident media performers, a television partner can help with coaching and provide media training. Indeed, many business people realize that being head of a company now demands strong media skills. The ability to handle tough questions can also create a lot more interest for your company, and show that the people at the top are competent, trustworthy and understand the issues. This investment, in the long run, should repay you over and over again.

Webcasting has been around for a while but some IR departments have still to latch on to the cost-effectiveness it brings. Just about all FTSE



100 companies now use webcasts to communicate with their stakeholders and, with the vastly increased globalization of financial markets and demand for timely disclosure of financial information, webcasts have proved an indispensable communications tool.

Quick and easy to implement, webcasts also allow your audience worldwide to watch company events, both live and on-demand: financial results presentations, corporate announcements, AGMs, capital market/analyst days, roadshows and press events – all can be delivered to just about anyone using a PC, in or out of the office. And none of this requires any special technology from the user's end.

Webcasting also allows for enormous interactivity: viewers can participate online by submitting questions, filling in questionnaires or taking part in instant online polling. This allows your IR message to be transmitted far more convincingly, and makes the event more memorable and effective.

### How does streaming work?

1. Your service provider will be able to help determine the number of cameras required.
2. The service provider will check audio facilities and submit required materials, such as background papers, media press kit, speaker photos, and so on.
3. When choosing between on-demand files and live files, your provider will advise on the encoding speed and platform required.
4. Your provider will host everything for you on secure servers.
5. Via internet technology, you can distribute your message either live or on demand.
6. Your audiences can view your message at their desktops.

For example, when submitting questions during live events, viewers can send queries via an on-screen interface or e-mail to a client moderator: Questions are screened and given to the event speakers to answer during the live presentations.

### Secure access

In certain situations it is possible to restrict viewers by using user names and passwords. Passwords can be given to individual viewers or a single password can cover all viewers, and the client will have instant access to the site that provides a real-time report of who has registered and recently looked at the site.

The beauty of webcasting technology is that it provides *measurable* returns: the guesswork over just how many people you might have reached is completely taken away. Online technology used in a presentation can tell you exactly who logged in and what questions they asked – even how long they watched the presentation and what their feedback was.

Of course, every system has its drawbacks, and technology is no exception. Until relatively recently, when video webcasting was in its infancy, many companies were reluctant to use this technology because of concerns over firewalls, network connectivity, internal bandwidth and the like. But now the critical mass of important information available from webcasts means most firewalls have been reconfigured to allow streaming media; most companies enjoy high-speed connectivity and robust internal networks. Gone are the days of analysts watching small, jerky images, which means webcasts get staged in genuinely compelling television formats.

For some, the use of webcasting and video on the internet may still seem intimidating because of cost or unwieldy equipment concerns. But webcasting is now a proven cost-effective tool. It is also, as already mentioned, a facility that requires the minimum of technical effort from your end. Professional webcast suppliers should provide the entire technological infrastructure, so businesses wanting to upgrade their IR communications capability need only update their web sites with URLs linking the webcasts. Your communications partner can take care of the rest. It really is that straightforward.

### Getting what you need

**Q.** What do people such as analysts need from the technology if they're going to get the most out of it?

**A.** First, make sure all the webcast information, and any links to it, is up to date. Analysts – and journalists – hate having to trawl through a web site to find basic, simple information. Your web communications partner should be able to help advise you on making the site media or analyst-friendly.

Of course, you can take steps yourself: keeping all webcasts in the same place on your web site will help users, for example. The message here is all about consistency. Getting into the habit of sending out e-mail advisories to your contacts at intervals ahead of time should boost ratings considerably.



## Minimal disruption

**Q.** I see the value of video being accessible via our web site, but I'm concerned about the potential disruption that lots of TV cameras and lights might inflict on our routine. Is it a potential bedlam scenario?

**A.** No. Modern technology means cameras are small and compact, and corporate solutions professionals are adept at blending into the background with the technology. All the equipment used is fully portable, much of it battery-operated, so there should be minimal disruption caused to your office and routine.

The results, thanks to the advances in digital technology, are often straightforward to edit and involve a quick turnaround of a matter of hours, if necessary. You will be genuinely surprised how unobtrusive the whole process is – provided you pick the right partner.

# Cascading the IR message

**A**sk almost any City professional what he or she values most from companies and the response will probably be 'consistency of message'. Yet many firms are only just realizing the potential to send that consistent television and video message via the web – and not just to analysts and brokers, but to all stakeholders.

Usually, a concise TV/video CEO message that reviews the latest quarterly or annual results can take from five to 15 minutes. But using the technology intelligently means this message can be pre-recorded and edited, ensuring the right message is sent to your audience. The key benefit is that the message is delivered in an extremely personal way to an interested audience.

Corporate video production and business television are terrific communication tools in engaging your own staff. Topics range from imparting specific skills to general morale boosting, or quick, direct communication to staff in times of trouble, like helping stamp out market rumors.

Video and TV web programming can also be distributed to staff via a variety of methods: delivered to your employees' desktop, distributed on multi-language DVDs or videocassettes, or sent via satellite and shown in screening rooms or next door to the staff cafeteria – whatever best fits your business and its circumstances. The footage can also be reused or reedited for a variety of internal or external requirements. This means the value of the production can keep on paying for itself through multiple uses.

## Teamwork is vital

However, it's essential IROs work closely with their internal communications departments to ensure staff members are aware when an internal IR webcast viewing is available, and also that they are alerted to public screening times. Ensuring DVDs get delivered to the appropriate people internally to help any distribution issues is important, too. Your communications partner should then closely work with you to evaluate and monitor the results of your productions – who saw what, when, in what format and for how long. This will help you identify how you can improve or tweak any broadcasts for future use.

A thorough evaluation process should take

into account the whole production from start to finish: your original objectives, the production process, the finished product and audience feedback. It should also look at quantitative data such as streams served and qualitative methods such as feedback forms.

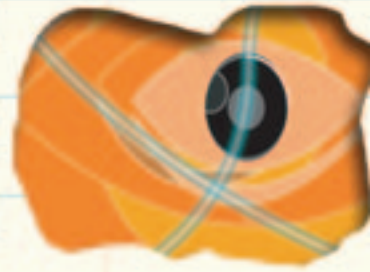
There is a human side to all this technology, though. Managers may certainly find being nominated to act as a spokesperson or representative of their company for a webcast or TV broadcast a nerve-wracking prospect. How will they handle talking directly into a camera? How will they handle an interview and potentially tough questions? What other factors are important to ensure the target audience receives the right messages?

Experienced television and web communications companies can *really* make a difference here. Partners frequently comprise former TV journalists and producers who can thoroughly brief CEOs, CFOs, spokespeople or IR managers on handling themselves in a broadcast environment. Used intelligently, a supplier involved from the start can help put together a clear brief about what needs to be said to a target audience.

Media representatives certainly will be under pressure. They have to convince the audience they are the most qualified person to deliver that message, and that it is not only believable, but also believed. Subconscious body language can give out plenty of signals: how should spokespeople hold their head, or place their arms? And where should the eyes focus? Dress code has its own implications, even simple aspects such as not wearing white or stripes. In other words, everyone can benefit from some media training in order to help him or her become better at managing and enhancing perceptions.

## Consider your audience

Although the mechanics of the story process – taken separately – may appear complex, it really boils down to how to transmit your message in the most effective way to the maximum possible targeted audience. Your audiences will be varied and all will have different wants, needs and prejudices. Making any production absolutely relevant to the audience is key editorially, as is how it's presented. You may also need help and suggestions on presentation background, as well as



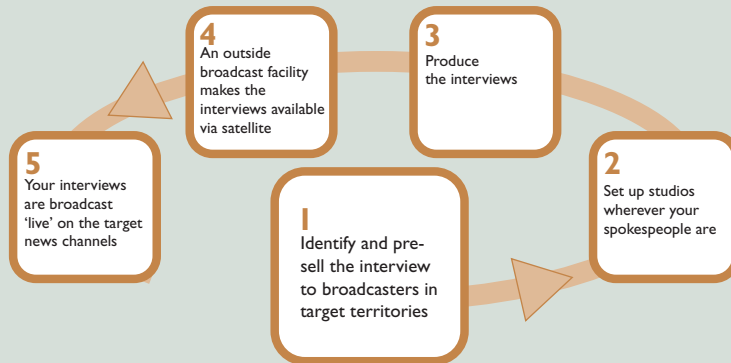
## Live safeguards

**Q.** I'm worried about our CEO or CFO appearing live and making a mistake, potentially damaging our share price. How can we avoid such a risk?

**A.** This is a regular worry for many, but there are ways of dealing with it. If you want a live appearance, rehearsals with your corporate partner's media team should help your executives enormously in terms of confidence and presentation ability. Pre-recording footage is another option, enabling you to edit a broadcast and release it when your results come out – with no risks involved.

While production for use by broadcasters has to be of the highest quality, production for webcasting is different. Typically, the bandwidth connectivity allows the picture to be shown in a smaller window, which works well for PC viewing, and allows the production to be less complex. Properly managed, this can take most of the 'this is television' pressure away from those in front of the camera.

## The SMT process



props and event management.

The audience might be geographically widespread, so you may need to discuss ways of reaching your audience in other countries and time zones. In this sense, choosing a partner with an international footprint is important. And, after the event, a solutions partner should help you with any post-production IR/PR communications issues, such as distributing recordings of material in a variety of languages or formats.

Don't forget your IR television and video footage has many uses: from the initial broadcast or online usage, to DVDs and videocassettes, large screen showings, and so on. It can then be archived and reused in future conferences, press briefings, training and investor roadshows. And once senior management gets used to using television and webcasting, the demand for more of the same will grow both from within the organization and from your target audiences.

### Evaluation

Naturally, gauging the effectiveness of any communications tool is a priority as, ultimately, that is the only aspect that matters. Positive results may take time to build initially so manage your expectations at first and then rigorously monitor all feedback. If the substance of the communication is legitimate and presented in a coherent manner, a rapid improvement in audience numbers and participation is perfectly achievable. The audience,

too, can often help you here because the growth of interactive media means feedback – welcome or unwelcome – can be instant.

Webcasts are particularly useful vehicles for obtaining and collating constructive feedback from your target audience. Webcasts can include a feedback form, which can automatically load when a broadcast ends, allowing you to find out what your audience thought of the content. Was the length suitable? How did it rate the speakers? Were the levels of interactivity appropriate?

Feedback from an SMT is just as rapid, accurate and informative. A production company should be able to give you clear feedback on any technical issues that might arise. And more qualitative information can be obtained from the broadcasters themselves: how did they feel your executives performed, for example? How well did they respond to the questions? Did they come across as open, or evasive? How were their timing, body language and camera eye-line?

You can, of course, interpret the data in a variety of ways, both in terms of the quantity and the quality of the audience. It is also important to look across your industry and benchmark the results against national and international competition. Your media partner should be able to help you analyze the data to give you an accurate judgment on the outcome, because the outcome is where the value lies. If you pick the right partner, that's value your firm can put to use immediately.



## Easy to evaluate

**Q.** How do I know that using television and web communications will *really* make a difference with our audience?

**A.** The great thing about television and video on the internet is how easy it is to evaluate their effectiveness. A webcast allows you to see how many people logged on and for how long, while an SMT clearly demonstrates how many broadcasters took your interview. The technology means there is no guesswork over whether you reached a particular analyst, what his or her comments were, and how you performed in response.

You can also send out e-mail alerts to remind people when a broadcast or webcast is going up on your site and supply them with information on how to download useful material.

Giving yourself control over the information process means you set the agenda, rather than have it dictated by outside events. That's the crucial difference.

# Choosing your media partner

If you are clear about your needs, choosing a television and web communications partner is surprisingly straightforward. The most capable companies are one-stop shops that typically reduce your overall cost base. For broadcast projects, they bring a network of external contacts and experience with them, giving input at the start of the process about how the media might regard your own business.

They can also provide an understanding about how your firm fits into its sector: what is unique about your own business, its strengths and weaknesses and how to take those elements and build them into an overall media communications package. For web-based video, they should have the production and technology credentials to ensure a seamless experience. Partners should help pull a strategy together that combines the valuation mix – results, reputation and intellectual capital – and adds a mix of media solutions to complement that information.

Outsourcing is normally vital to IR departments at most companies. An in-house team invariably will have the best knowledge, but outside suppliers offer both technical capabilities and a perspective gained from working with a number of other operations. The outsourced provider can see your investor issues in the round, from conception through to end product, using its experience and economies of scale for your benefit. An overall strategy will have many interconnecting strands so dealing with a company that can handle all the elements puts you ahead from the start.

## What to look for

When talking to possible suppliers, don't be bamboozled by terminology and technical jargon. Remember, no matter how impressive any of it may sound, you are interested only in results. That means you need a partner that can demonstrate how using television and video on the web can help you focus on your core audience. What is the firm's track record? For webcasts it should be able to tell you how many people have logged in and registered or whether there was a viewer drop-off during the broadcast. For an SMT, it should know how many broadcasters have agreed to take on interviews.

A partner must also be capable of demonstrating how it has helped other clients. This can be demonstrated by how the clients' communication strategy has improved, whether they are getting more airtime consequently – and where – how clients feel their messages have improved since working with the media partner, plus specific case studies to demonstrate the investment is paying off. Providers can work effectively with small or medium-sized companies in the same way they can with larger organizations. What matters is not the size of your company, or even its history, but the message you need to give to the market now. If that story is convincingly told, much of the communications battle is won.

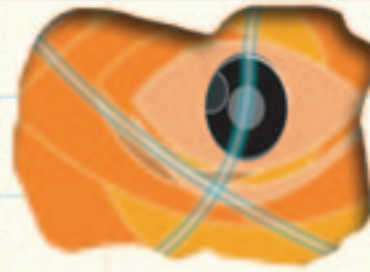
Not all providers are able to pull together the various skill sets needed here. Local or nationwide firms may not have the international reach you require. Some global companies may have a lot of international offices, but you need to check just how their global presence matches your own, and what benefits this means for you on the ground at local level.

How close is the firm to you? Is it adequately resourced for *your* needs? Does it outsource some technical crew functions to others, or is the whole operation done in-house? What is its relationship like with local media outlets? What are the differences in creating a media communications strategy from one country to the next?

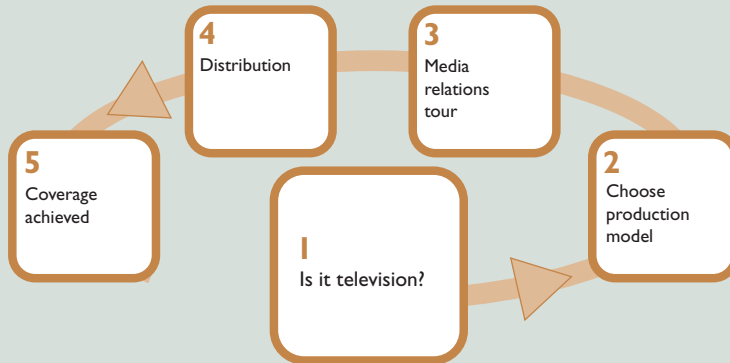
In other words, is a video webcaster fully aware of the nuances needed to interpret the message, for both television and the web? What about the local technology infrastructure? Is it reliable enough? If not, what other creative options could be used?

## The human factor

Of course, a big part of any relationship with a partner comes down to people, and whether you feel confident they know what you're trying to achieve. Commissioning a video can be quite an intimidating experience initially, but once you have a brief, your corporate communications partner should be able to help refine it and talk you through it clearly. To begin with, some hand-holding is inevitable and any company you choose as your corporate solutions partner



## Steps to television communications



needs to be able to communicate reassurance and build trust that the project will pay off.

Good media partners should be well aware that your own management members might be apprehensive about embracing new technology. Management people might even make economic arguments about the real return on investment, but sometimes it can come down to a personal decision about how they look or sound.

Showing a public face is increasingly standard practice these days, however, and media coaching should be offered by your television and web communications partner to help overcome personal insecurities.

A typical media training session will cover realistic interview subjects tailored to your actual or potential circumstances, differing interview styles used by broadcasters and advice on techniques, all providing your executives with an understanding of the TV journalist's agenda and needs. Many seasoned front-of-house business professionals don't enjoy being filmed, but they realize it is ultimately a terrific way of getting the message out clearly and effectively.

Analysts and journalists also like to read body language and see the speakers involved. Resistance to using television and the web is still there but the culture is changing, and those that embrace it are being seen as industry leaders.

As an IRO, you should expect any solutions partner to advise you on which elements of tele-

vision and web communications are most useful to you, and which are useful to the internal, PR communications or events departments, as often the projects and messages can overlap between the different constituencies. Certainly it's worth both IR and internal and external communications taking a joint look at what a television and news production partner can offer.

This also gives all internal departments a perspective on what services are offered. IR might be able to use webcasting a great deal more than PR. Conversely, PR might be able to make more use of news production options, such as SMTs. Internal communications might use business television and corporate video and event production options more than the other departments. And if all departments approach the solutions provider with a joint need, then more cost savings can be passed on.

To sum up, finding the right partner is not just about a company's technological prowess, but also concerns on-the-ground experience of handling your own IR needs. Many companies can boast of a wide range of technical support, but when it comes down to knowing and understanding *your* business, they may not have the editorial and content experience you need. Picking a partner that understands exactly where you're coming from, and how your IR needs are different to other clients, should be the start of an extremely fruitful relationship.

## Time savers

**Q.** How much of an IRO's time does commissioning television and video take up?

**A.** Using television and video on the web should ensure you and your company executives save time. A satellite media tour means your CEO/CFO can speak to numerous broadcasters from just one location – a very efficient way of reaching your target media. A webcast ensures you can speak to all your shareholders and analyst communities simultaneously, providing them with relevant information in an open and transparent manner. It also enables real-time interactivity with your audiences.

Internal webcasts and programs provide your CEO/CFO with an excellent opportunity to speak directly to all your employees, wherever they are located, thus promoting a good use of company executive time.

## Sponsor's statement

**World Television is an international corporate communications, news production, webcasting and event management company. The services we provide include webcasting, CEO interviews, SMTs, internal programming, media training, media relations, distribution, internet roadshows, live event production, video production and broadcast distribution.**

**World Television is one of Europe's largest production groups, with thousands of successful webcasts every year, and Europe's premier video webcaster, with one of the most advanced and proven webcasting technology platforms supporting external communications and investor relations.**

**Our network of offices makes possible local delivery of Europe-wide campaigns, as well as campaigns in the Asia-Pacific region from our Australian and New Zealand divisions.**

**We employ more than 80 full-time media professionals and technicians, supported by fully equipped in-house production facilities and technologies. World Television was voted production company of the year 2004-2005 at the AV Business and Industry Awards.**

**For further information, please visit [www.world-television.com](http://www.world-television.com).**

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## Getting the story across

With a 24/7 media presence continually steering investor perception, those companies that put a human face to their story and tell it professionally and smartly are already well ahead of the competition. Television and web communications options such as webcasts or SMTs effectively provide value to analysts, journalists, and investors – not to mention your colleagues and staff.

Taking this leap requires a measure of faith like any other media, but a strong television and web communications partner should be able to offer guidance on how to build a more comprehensive media communications platform quickly. The technology is impressive but the infrastructure should be taken care of by your media partner; although a minimal investment will be needed from your end.

How do you make the most of the benefits on offer? First, your partner should have a wealth of experience in dealing with other companies that have begun adopting television and web communications solutions. It should also be able to advise you on how to make the best of both good and bad news that you have anticipated. Finally, ask yourself whether it knows how to maximize the opportunities to ensure your IR message is sent out to the market with maximum clarity and purpose.

Regular contact with the market

builds long-term quality stock perception, and can buffer you from damaging fall-outs, should they happen. Your investors will also appreciate the effort you put into communicating more with them. Some companies may resist becoming more open in this way and giving their senior management a more public profile, but giving a better idea as to not just the results but also the way the story is told means greater commitment to all your investors. When broadcasters and viewers become more familiar with your company, they will take more interest in it – especially if the information is disseminated promptly and with flair.

There are few communication tools as effective as having senior executives telling your company story live on the web or on television. Issues of production and technology associated with these media shouldn't be an obstacle, and your provider should be responsible for them. What is far more important is what is actually achieved.

To find the best solution for your company, seek a corporate communications partner that can offer a broad range of services to help you deliver your message to the right people, at the right time and in the right place, whether through traditional broadcast media, event production, webcasting or via business television networks.

