TRENDSPOTTING

Edelman 2021 Survey of the Private Equity Industry

As the United States continues to transition to a post-COVID world and adjust to the priorities and tone of the Biden Administration, a level of uncertainty remains over where the new equilibrium will end up. As the environment shifts, many in the private equity industry have been adjusting their communications programs to keep pace with the change.

To gather specific insights on the challenges and opportunities facing the industry, Edelman surveyed over 60 private equity firms on how these trends are shaping their communications priorities.*

Here are our main takeaways.

*The survey included investor relations, marketing and communications professionals and was conducted from March 17, 2021 – April 2, 2021.

MEDIA

PRONOUNCED SHIFT TO MORE CONTROLLED PLATFORMS

Over one year into the pandemic, respondents noted the following areas as very or somewhat important contributors to the success of their communications programs:

- Conferences & Events: 88%
- Owned Content: 64%
- Social Media: 67%
- Online/Print Media: 72%

Only 28% say broadcast media is very or somewhat important in contributing to the success of the communications program, and even more (38%) say it is not important at all.

ESG

CATCHING UP TO EVOLVING EXPECTATIONS

- are very or somewhat concerned about addressing ESG in the communications strategy in 2021: 87%
- actively communicate about ESG initiatives externally: 67%
- actively communicate about their DE&I initiatives externally: 43%
- do not have a DE&I initiative but are planning to develop one: 20%

PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

TAKING ACTION TO STEM CRISSES AND IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS

More than ever, reputational issues at portfolio companies have a direct impact on GPs:

- are very or somewhat concerned about the impact of portfolio company crisis issues on their communications strategy: 67%
- already have a portfolio company crisis preparedness plan: 69%
- plan to build on their overall portfolio company communications program: 70%

WASHINGTON DC

ROOM TO ENGAGE

- think policymakers have at least a good impression of PE: 90%
- think policymakers have a poor impression of PE: 13%
- Yet, only 12% plan on using their communications program to engage more with policymakers on issues related to PE.

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Tim Quinn
Senior Vice President
+1 (646) 258-2308
Timothy.Quinn@edelman.com

Renee Calabro
Executive Vice President
(917) 640-2100
Renee.Calabro@edelman.com

Katrina Allen
Executive Vice President
+1 (917) 640-2753
Katrina.Allen@edelman.com

Edelman Financial Communications & Capital Markets

www.EdelmanFinComm.com