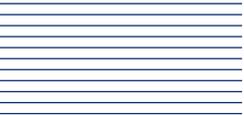


# Value Creating Communication

The world's most comprehensive  
research program for  
corporate communications



**ACADEMIC SOCIETY FOR  
CORPORATE MANAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION**

A joint initiative of leading companies and universities initiated by the  
Günter-Thiele-Foundation for Communication and Management  
within the Association of German Science Foundations

“In my view, the research program of the Academic Society provides an important basis to prepare corporate communications to meet the challenges of the future.”

Maximilian Schoeberl, Head of Corporate Communications & Politics, BMW Group

“4 modules, each 30 months, five professors – the sheer size of this project is impressive.”

Martin Fensch, Senior Director Corporate Affairs & Country Operations, General Manager, Pfizer Germany

“The research program is important in developing a more consistent image of our profession. This increases the acceptance of corporate communications.”

Elisabeth Schick, Senior Vice President of Communications & Government Relations, BASF

“We need in-depth analyses and forecasts with a scientific basis. This kind of research can support the development of corporate communications long term.”

Dr. Bernd Puetter, Senior Vice President of Corporate Communications, HOCHTIEF

“The importance of communication as a success factor is still significantly underestimated in many companies. The program Value Creating Communication intends to foster the understanding of the benefits of communicators.”

Andreas Breitsprecher, Director of Business Communications, Vattenfall GmbH

“Theory and practice with the common goal of clarifying the social relevance of corporate communications as well as its contribution to business performance: this is new!”

Prof. Dr. Christof Ehrhart, Executive Vice President of Corporate Communications and Corporate Responsibility, Deutsche Post DHL and Adjunct Professor for International Corporate Communication at the University of Leipzig

“Unlike in marketing and business management, or in natural sciences, there is no such organized regular exchange in communications between managers and academia. To set this up for the first time is something special.”

Dr. Walter Huber, Head of Group Communications, Merck

## Value Creating Communication

4 modules within 5 years +

4 universities, 5 professors, more than a dozen researchers +

More than 30 global companies +

With the support of numerous scientific and business experts +

Creating a clear vision of corporate communications +

### The most comprehensive PR research program so far

**Shaping the future of corporate communications, designing a consistent profile of the profession, emphasizing its contribution to corporate performance – these are the key objectives of the research program Value Creating Communication, initiated by the Academic Society for Corporate Management & Communication in 2015.**

Value Creating Communication will run for five years and is divided into four research modules, ranging from megatrends and performance measurement to content management and organizational questions. Eventually, the results of all individual modules will be integrated into one comprehensive framework for corporate communications.

Researchers at four German universities are working closely together with Chief Communications Officers of leading global companies as well as international experts to address key questions of every communications department.

The close cooperation between academia and business is exceptional. More than 30 leading global companies are working closely together with the Academic Society on this research program – a double-win situation for both sides.

With regard to the scope and content, the number of experts involved and the budget, this is the most comprehensive research program in the discipline of corporate communications.

The title “Value Creating Communication” refers to the creation of tangible and intangible assets through corporate communications, but also reflects the company’s values and norms as well as its stakeholders, the foundation for all communication.

## Research objectives and benefits

On the one hand, the importance of communication as a success factor is still significantly underestimated in many companies. Communicators struggle with a diffuse understanding of their roles and tasks, their contribution to business goals, and a lack of appreciation. On the other hand, scientific research in the field of communication management has grown internationally in recent years. However, it is fragmented and rarely interdisciplinary.

The research program initiated by the Academic Society intends to change this. We want to create a comprehensive and multidimensional image of corporate communications: an image that is convincing internally as well as externally. An image that provides a common understanding of the profession and its contribution to business success. An image that ultimately positions corporate communications at the top management level.

Value Creating Communication aims to add value for our business members as well as for scientific research in this area.

### Value Creating Communication

**Strengthen the internal and external acceptance of corporate communications**

**Build a common understanding of the profession**

**Showcase how corporate communications contributes to corporate goals**

**Share best practices and benchmarks**

**Deliver highly-relevant scientific results for businesses**

**Provide an orientation for university education and professional training**

**Strengthen academic research**

## 4 modules to answer key questions

The research program is set up in four integrated research modules, each running for 30 months:

### Module I

#### **How will changing social conditions and megatrends affect corporate communications?**

This module will provide an overview of influencing factors and examine their impact on strategic corporate communications.

### Module II

#### **How does communication contribute to the corporation's success?**

This module will analyse several aspects of how communication adds value to the organization, including steering mechanisms and ways of demonstrating its economic contribution.

### Module III

#### **How should corporate communications be organized?**

This module will research organizational and leadership styles, and examine ways of cooperation between communications and other corporate functions, such as the executive and supervisory boards.

### Module IV

#### **How should content be managed and communicated successfully?**

This module will analyse strategies to successfully position corporate messages and reach out to relevant stakeholder groups in the age of social media.

2015

Modules **I** and **II**: start in early 2015, to be completed by summer 2017

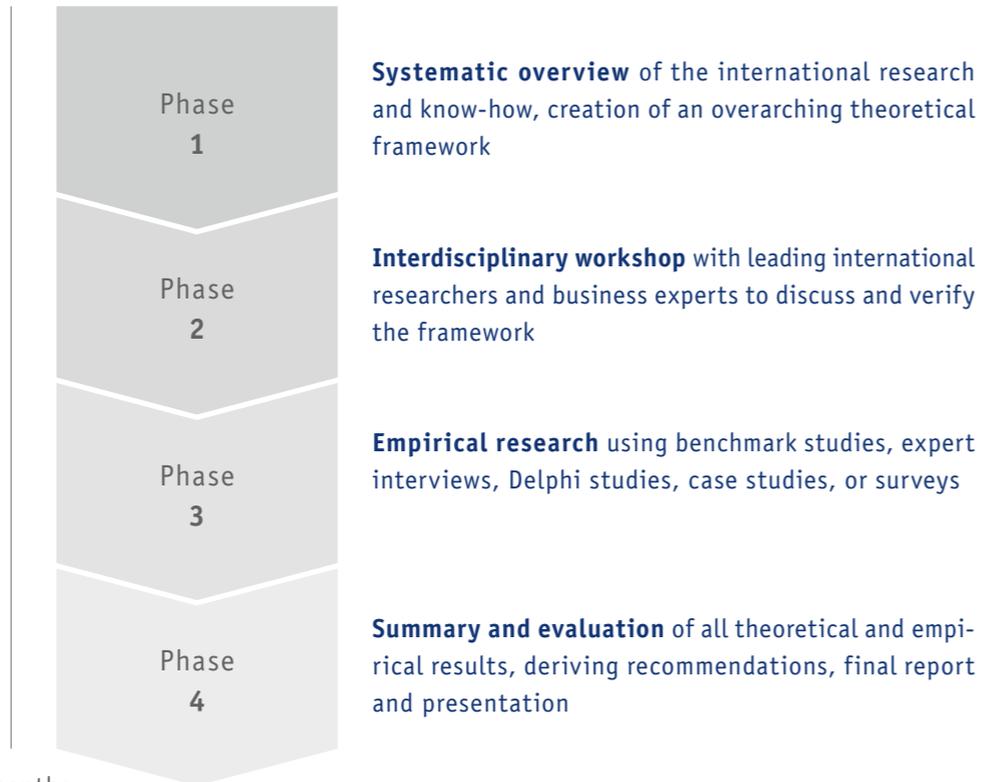
2017

Modules **III** and **IV**: start in the summer of 2017, to be completed by the end of 2019

2019

## Independent, basic research in 4 phases

Each module is divided into four phases that follow the same research process:



30 months

Value Creating Communication is a basic research project from the Academic Society for Corporate Management & Communication in cooperation with the chief communications officers of more than 30 German and international companies. Regardless of the individual focus of researchers or companies, the program intends to clarify basic principles of successful strategic communications and generate a common understanding of the profession. This can only be achieved by academia and business working closely together.

## About the researchers

The research will be led by five professors from several of the outstanding faculties for communication and business management in Germany:

### **Claudia Mast**

Professor and Chair for Communication Science and Journalism, University of Hohenheim (Stuttgart)

### **Ulrike Roettger**

Professor and Chair for Communications, University of Muenster

### **Ansgar Zerfass**

Professor and Chair for Strategic Communication, University of Leipzig

### **Guenter Bentele**

Professor emer. for Public Relations, University of Leipzig

### **Joachim Schwalbach**

Professor emer. for International Management, Humboldt University Berlin



National and international researchers from different disciplines (i.e. communications, marketing, business management) will contribute their expertise to the research program as well.

To ensure that the results of Value Creating Communication are highly relevant for businesses, each module is supported by an advisory council of communications directors. Furthermore, all business partners of the Academic Society will contribute their expectations, insights and expertise to the project.

## About the Academic Society for Corporate Management & Communication

The Academic Society for Corporate Management & Communications is a joint initiative by businesses and universities with the aim of actively shaping the future of corporate communications through joint research and knowledge sharing. The initiative was founded in 2010 by the universities of Leipzig, Stuttgart-Hohenheim, Muenster and the Humboldt University Berlin, as well as leading German and global corporations. To date, 33 companies have become supporters of the Academic Society. In the past five years, about a dozen research projects on different communications topics have been carried out – among others, about communication and leadership, the role of corporate responsibility, communication ethics, and the reputation of CEOs. With Value Creating Communication, the Academic Society has now initiated the most comprehensive research program for strategic corporate communications worldwide. The Academic Society is an initiative by the Guenter-Thiele-Foundation within the Association of German Science Foundations.

Further information can be found at [www.akademische-gesellschaft.com](http://www.akademische-gesellschaft.com).

Contact: [info@akademische-gesellschaft.com](mailto:info@akademische-gesellschaft.com)

