

Public Relations Council of Alabama 2008 Chapter of the Year Competition Guidelines

Situation

Each year for more than two decades, the Public Relations Council of Alabama (PRCA) has honored its top overall chapter as measured in the areas of programs (educational value); membership recruitment, retention and participation; promotion of public relations internally and externally; projects; community involvement and other special events; and accreditation and professional development.

In recent years (circa 2000), Chapter of the Year guidelines were revamped to streamline the competition, focus on quality of chapter programs, and eliminate a “war of the binders” in terms of size and production value. However, the new guidelines have received much criticism with large chapters feeling penalized in some categories and small chapters feeling handicapped in other categories – specifically in the areas of membership retention/recruitment and accreditation. While judges used the same rating system for each chapter, small chapters just couldn’t compete with large chapters in some areas (accreditation), and vice versa (membership participation).

Challenge

To create new Chapter of the Year Competition Guidelines that allow for equality of chapters both large and small

Proposal

Modeled closely after the American Advertising Federation (AAF’s) Club Achievement competition, the proposed guidelines for PRCA’s 2008 Chapter of the Year competition will allow chapters to compete in and win awards in eight individual achievement categories including:

1. Public relations education
2. Communication (promoting public relations externally and internally)
3. Projects
4. Chapter management
5. Membership
6. Programs
7. Accreditation
8. Public service

Guidelines would ask that chapters state objectives in each area, how they will achieve those objectives, and their success. Additionally, a "Chapter of the Year" is chosen. The Chapter of the Year would be determined by the total score of their entries in the eight categories.

Moreover, the new competition will allow chapters to use best practices in public relations planning by setting objectives in each area, developing tactics to achieve those objectives, and measuring success by objective.

CATEGORIES OF ENTRY

Public Relations Education

Essentially, there are three areas of concentration in public relations education. These are programs for students, the general public and the profession. These programs improve the skills, professionalism and standards of current and future practitioners through education as well as provide an understanding of, and confidence in, public relations and its contributions to the community and the economy.

Communication

Collateral materials and/or Web sites produced and distributed exclusively for the chapter.

Projects

Innovative projects providing public relations educational opportunities, offering professional development, and promoting a financially-stable chapter with a goal of promoting the public relations profession.

Chapter Management

Policies, procedures and leadership development that contribute to the operations of a chapter.

Membership

Membership development is defined as activities designed to enhance local chapter membership recruitment, retention and involvement.

Programs

Quality programming that fosters actively interested membership, well-attended meetings and membership growth.

Accreditation

Educational programs, study groups, and mentoring initiatives that promote knowledge and attainment of accreditation in public relations by the Universal Accreditation Board.

Community Service

Projects that effectively use public relations to support local, regional and/or national programs on behalf of public interests and/or for community betterment.

Chapter of the Year

A compilation of education, communication, projects, management, membership, programs, accreditation and public service initiatives by public relations practitioners aimed at furthering the profession of public relations.

Specific criteria for each category are listed individually on the category of entry sheets.

ELIGIBILITY

All chapters affiliated with the Public Relations Council of Alabama and in good standing may compete in any or all of the eight categories.

Chapter projects implemented from October 1, 2007, to December 31, 2008, qualify for the 2008 competition.

Entry Format & Content

Entries must be submitted in a PLAIN three-ring binder provided by the local chapter. Affix a completed official category achievement entry form to the outside cover of each binder. This is all that should be on the outside of the binder; no artwork, colored paper or other material may appear on the cover, spine or back of the binder.

To ensure equitable judging of all entries, the *outside* measurements of the binder may be no larger than 11" x 12" or exceed 1.5" in width at the spine. In addition, when full, the width of the binder on any side may be no more than 1.5".

Please note: Many manufacturers of three-ring binders refer to the size of the binder by its ring size. Therefore, the outside measurements of binders with ring sizes of 1.5" may in fact measure 2" and exceed the maximum width requirements. PRCA recommends that your chapter the outside measurements of entry binders prior to purchasing them.

BINDERS EXCEEDING 1.5" WILL BE DISQUALIFIED. Submit *only one* binder for each category.

- Entries are divided into two sections: narrative and collateral. The narrative section is used to describe the activities or projects pertinent to the category, and the collateral section contains printed material in support of the narrative. All collateral material must have been produced since October 1, 2007. Layouts are NOT permissible.
- The narrative section cannot exceed eight double-spaced, typed sheets of paper (one side) or four double-spaced, typed sheets of paper (two sides). The narrative may be at the beginning of the book (all together) or integrated within the collateral section.
- Each narrative must also be submitted as a Word document, saved to a PC-formatted CD or flash drive. Use a separate CD or flash drive for each category entered. The Word document on the CD or flash drive must be single-spaced and in 12-point Times New Roman font. Clearly label the CD and tape it to the inside cover of the binder.
- A total of three (3) minutes of audio or visual material is allowed as collateral in the Public Service category ONLY. Submit radio and television spots together on one half inch VHS video cassette or DVD.

Judging

PRCA secures a separate panel of judges for each achievement category of the competition. Each panel is composed of individuals who have professional expertise in the category that they are judging. Each judge reviews and scores all entries using the following criteria and point values.

A. Outline and relevance of objectives	10 points
B. Tactics/methods used to achieve objective(s)	25 points
C. Measurement of objectives	30 points
D. Degree to which the collateral material documents the narrative description of the project or activities	35 points

Total possible points equal to 100 points

Awards

First-, second- and third-place awards will be designated within each category at the discretion of the judges. A Chapter of the Year Award is given to the chapter whose accomplishments, based on the first-, second- and third-place awards it receives, are outstanding. In Chapter of the Year, each first-place award a chapter receives equals 50 points; each second-place award received equals 30 points and each third-place award received by a chapter equals 20 points to yield a total score for each chapter.

Ties will be broken at the discretion of the judges.

Special Awards

THE PUBLIC RELATIONS EDUCATION AWARD

Cash awards will be given to the first-place winner in the Public Relations Education category.

THE PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

Cash awards will be given to the first-place winner in the Public Service category.

THE COMMUNICATIONS AWARD

Cash awards are given to the first-place winner in the Communications category.

AFFIX A COMPLETED COPY OF THIS FORM TO THE OUTSIDE FRONT COVER OF EACH ENTRY BINDER. THIS FORM MAY BE DUPLICATED.

**2008 Public Relations Council of Alabama
CHAPTER ACHIEVEMENT COMPETITION
OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM**

Name of chapter: _____

Population of city or metro area served by chapter (#): _____

Total club members at date of entry (#): _____

CHECK APPROPRIATE CATEGORY:

- Public relations education
- Communication
- Projects
- Chapter management
- Membership
- Programs
- Accreditation
- Community service

CHAPTER CONTACT

Name: _____

Company: _____

Street address: _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Entry Fees

- \$65 for the first entry; \$10 for each additional entry.
- Make checks payable to the Public Relations Council of Alabama.
- **Entry fees must accompany entries.**

Entry Deadline

All entries must be postmarked by December 31, 2008. Entries will be returned to chapter contacts at the annual PRCA state conference. Those entries not picked up will become the property of PRCA.

Send entries to:

Kay Yarbrough - Public Relations Council of Alabama
c/o Copperwing
3158 Parliament Circle
Montgomery, AL 36116

Questions concerning the 2008 Chapter Achievement and Chapter of the Year Competition should be directed to Jennifer Jenkins, APR at 251.591.4974 or Kay Yarbrough, APR 850.450.5302.

Official entry form on back.

PRCA CHAPTER ACHIEVEMENT COMPETITION

CATEGORY OF ENTRY – PUBLIC RELATIONS EDUCATION

Definition: Essentially there are three areas of concentration in public relations education. These are programs for students, the general public and the profession. These programs improve the skills, professionalism and standards of current and future practitioners through education as well as provide an understanding of, and confidence in, public relations and its contributions to the community and the economy.

1. State your chapter's education objectives in the following areas:
 - a. Public relations education for the profession
 - b. Public relations education for students
 - c. Public relations education for the general public

2. Explain how you achieved these objectives by describing:
 - a. Event details
 - b. Target audience
 - c. Strategy
 - d. Execution/Tactics

3. Describe, in detail, the results of education program(s).

Rules: The narrative section of the binder, expanding on the above, must be limited to eight (8) one-sided, double-spaced, typed sheets of paper or four (4) double-spaced, typed sheets back-to-back. The narrative may be at the beginning of the book (all together) or integrated within the collateral section. Each narrative must also be submitted as a Word document, saved to a PC-formatted CD or jump drive. The Word document on the CD must be single-spaced and in 12-point Times New Roman font. Clearly label the CD and tape it to the inside cover of the binder. The remainder of the binder must be produced collateral or supportive material relevant to the category.

All collateral material must have been produced since Oct. 1, 2007. Layouts are NOT permissible.

PRCA CHAPTER ACHIEVEMENT COMPETITION

CATEGORY OF ENTRY – COMMUNICATION

Definition: Collateral materials and/or Web sites produced and distributed exclusively for the chapter.

- I. Describe your chapter's use of communication materials for any or all of the following areas:
 - a. Regular communication with members
 - b. Event or meeting promotions and announcements
 - c. Communication with non-members
 - d. Self-promotion
 - e. Others (e.g., telephone and broadcast scripts, press releases, etc.)

2. For each communication vehicle submitted, provide the following:
 - a. Goal/Objectives
 - b. Target audience
 - c. Budget recap
 - d. Distribution system
 - e. Results achieved
 - f. Sample

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Judging Considerations for Communication Achievement

This category is designed to assess the chapter's efforts to promote the image, professionalism and general awareness of the public relations profession within its local area. Key considerations in evaluating this segment include: How effective were chapter activities in promoting public relations to the local business community and general public? Did these activities appear to have a newsworthy element to them? Did supportive materials display a level of professionalism expected from the community's best public relations professionals? Were projects and other chapter activities used to promote public relations or to help others with their public relations skills? What was the extent of public or audience participation in PRCA-sponsored activities? Was the scope of the organization's public relations promotional activities challenging and innovative for the chapter membership? Was there an attempt to effectively evaluate the impact of the external publicity?

PRCA CHAPTER ACHIEVEMENT COMPETITION

CATEGORY OF ENTRY – PROJECTS

Definition: Innovative projects providing public relations educational opportunities, offering professional development, and promoting a financially-stable chapter with a goal of promoting the public relations profession.

- I. Describe at least one special event. Please explain how your chapter achieved your programming goal(s) by describing:
 - a. Event details
 - b. Target audience
 - c. Method of promotion
 - d. Average attendance
 - e. Feedback mechanism
 - f. Results

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Judging Considerations for Projects Achievement

Judges will consider the following: Did the project(s) make a tangible contribution to an organization or individuals in the public? Were the projects' objectives achieved? Was there significant participation in the project by chapter members? Was there significant participation by the public or the organization(s) supported by the project? Did the chapter make use of good public relations skills in research, planning, implementing, promoting and evaluating the project? Were the project materials and method relevant for the intended audience?

PRCA CHAPTER ACHIEVEMENT COMPETITION

CATEGORY OF ENTRY – CHAPTER MANAGEMENT

Definition: Chapter management is defined as the policies, procedures and leadership development that contribute to the operations of a chapter.

- I. State your chapter's objective(s) as they relate to:
 - a. Long-range planning
 - b. Analysis of member needs
 - c. Leadership organization and development
 - d. Fiscal management (budgeting, dues, non-dues income and fundraising)
2. Describe the methods used for achieving these objectives.
3. State/define the results of these executions.

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PRCA CHAPTER ACHIEVEMENT COMPETITION

CATEGORY OF ENTRY – MEMBERSHIP

Definition: Membership Development is defined as activities designed to enhance the local chapter in three ways: recruitment, retention and involvement.

- I. State your chapter's membership goals as they relate to:
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Retention
 - c. Involvement

2. How did you achieve these goals including (but not limited to) the following activities:
 - a. Projects/Programs
 - b. Volunteerism
 - c. Member feedback
 - d. Chapter operations

3. Describe, in detail, the results of your membership activities including membership numbers at the beginning and membership numbers at the end of the competition period.

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Judging Considerations for Membership Achievement

Judges will be asked to evaluate the chapter's success in retaining current members, recruiting new members, and attracting members and guests to regular meetings. Membership lists or other information should not be included in this section.

PRCA CHAPTER ACHIEVEMENT COMPETITION

CATEGORY OF ENTRY – PROGRAMS

Definition: Quality programming that fosters actively interested membership, well-attended meetings and membership growth.

1. State your chapter's overall program goal(s) and provide (in the collateral material) a calendar of the year's programs.
2. Describe three of your most successful programs (other than special events, awards, seminars and designated fundraising events). For each program, please explain how you achieved your goal(s) by describing:
 - a. Event details
 - b. Target audience
 - c. Method of promotion
 - d. Average attendance
 - e. Feedback mechanism
 - f. Results

Rules: The narrative section of the binder, expanding on the above, must be limited to eight (8) one-sided, double-spaced, typed sheets of paper or four (4) double-spaced, typed sheets back-to-back. The narrative may be at the beginning of the book (all together) or integrated within the collateral section. Each narrative must also be submitted as a Word document, saved to a PC-formatted CD or jump drive. The Word document on the CD must be single-spaced and in 12-point Times New Roman font. Clearly label the CD and tape it to the inside cover of the binder. The remainder of the binder must be produced collateral or supportive material relevant to the category.

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Judging Considerations for Programs Achievement

Judges will be asked to consider the following questions when evaluating this section:

How relevant are the program topics to public relations? If a program is not about public relations, is the reason or significance stated so as to justify such a program? (i.e., a membership-drive party or networking). Do the topics add some useful information to public relations skill development? Do the programs contribute to a better understanding of the role of public relations? Is the series of programs, taken as a whole, consistent in quality and relevance, or do they vary widely? Does the synopsis for each program provide adequate information to effectively evaluate the program?

PRCA CHAPTER ACHIEVEMENT COMPETITION

CATEGORY OF ENTRY – ACCREDITATION

Definition: Educational programs, study groups, and mentoring initiatives that promote knowledge and attainment of accreditation in public relations by the Universal Accreditation Board.

1. Explain ways in which your chapter educated members on accreditation in public relations.
 - a. Event Details
 - b. Goal/objectives
 - c. Target audience

2. Please explain how you achieved your goal(s) by describing:
 - a. Execution/tactics
 - b. Promotional materials used (documentation of use required)
 - c. Results attained (may include number of members earning accreditation or number of members in study group, or those studying individually for accreditation)

Rules: The narrative section of the binder, expanding on the above, must be limited to eight (8) one-sided, double-spaced, typed sheets of paper or four (4) double-spaced, typed sheets back-to-back. The narrative may be at the beginning of the book (all together) or integrated within the collateral section. Each narrative must also be submitted as a Word document, saved to a PC-formatted CD or jump drive. The Word document on the CD must be single-spaced and in 12-point Times New Roman font. Clearly label the CD and tape it to the inside cover of the binder. The remainder of the binder must be produced collateral or supportive material relevant to the category.

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Judging Considerations for Accreditation Achievement

Key considerations in evaluating this segment: Did the chapter conduct a program specifically on accreditation (the importance of accreditation or how to prepare for the examination)? How does the percentage of accredited members compare with other chapters?

PRCA CHAPTER ACHIEVEMENT COMPETITION

CATEGORY OF ENTRY – COMMUNITY SERVICE

Definition: Projects that effectively use public relations to support local, regional and/or national programs on behalf of public interests and/or community betterment.

I. For each public service project, explain how you achieved these public service goals by describing the:

- a. Goals of the project
- b. Target audience
- c. Strategy
- d. Execution/tactics
- e. Media/materials used (documentation of use required)
- f. Results attained (may include chapter publicity)

Rules: The narrative section of the binder, expanding on the above, must be limited to eight (8) one-sided, double-spaced, typed sheets of paper or four (4) double-spaced, typed sheets back-to-back. The narrative may be at the beginning of the book (all together) or integrated within the collateral section. Each narrative must also be submitted as a Word document, saved to a PC-formatted CD or jump drive. The Word document on the CD must be single-spaced and in 12-point Times New Roman font. Clearly label the CD and tape it to the inside cover of the binder. The remainder of the binder must be produced collateral or supportive material relevant to the category.

All collateral material must have been produced since Oct. 1, 2007. Layouts are NOT permissible.

Judging Considerations for Community Service Achievement

Judges will consider the following: Did the project(s) make a tangible contribution to an organization or individuals in the public? Were the projects' objectives achieved? Was there significant participation in the project by chapter members? Was there significant participation by the public or the organization(s) supported by the project? Did the chapter make use of good public relations skills in research, planning, implementing, promoting and evaluating the project? Were the project materials and method relevant for the intended audience?

PRCA CHAPTER OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

<u>Criterion</u>	<u>Points</u>
Entering Chapter Achievement	50 per book
Winning Chapter Achievement	50 1 st Place Category 30 2 nd Place Category 20 3 rd Place Category
Membership Percentage Increase	10 1% - 5% Growth 20 5.1% - 10% Growth 30 10.1% - 15% Growth 40 15%+ Growth
Paying State Dues on Time	50
Forwarding Current Membership List to State on Time	50
Submitting Chapter Report to State Newsletter on Time	20/issue
Submitting President's Report to State President on Time	20/meeting
Attendance at State Board of Directors Meeting	20/meeting (proxy ok)
Fully-Registered Attendees at State Conference	5/attendee
Administering and Awarding a Student Scholarship	20
Attendance at State Board Workshop	30
Attendees at State-sponsored prof. dev. workshops	5/attendee