Celebrity Treasurers: Why You Should Become the Go-To Expert in Your Field

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Writing & Speaking
What I Need to Read

EURO
FASB 133
Patriot Act
SWIFT
SOX
FBAR
EBAM

AFP® Annual Conference
What I like to read
“Aha Moments”

Out of Africa Cover: Courtesy of Universal Pictures
Source of Karen Blitzen photo: http://binged.it/17NtnpO

AFP® Annual Conference
Why do it?
Why do it?
When you start looking for stories they come looking for you
How to find time for writing?

How to leverage it professionally

What bosses & peers think?
Thought Leadership is NOT!

• An advertorial or sales pitch
• Brand specific information
• Position or management role
Our Thought Leadership
Definition

• Your expertise, presented or written for a specific audience
• Study and promotion of best practices
• Presentation of original ideas – a basis for change
• Credible and focused
• Changes how your audience views the topic... and you
• Can only be “granted” by those who you seek out

• Articulating your experiences in treasury and finance as original, innovative insights to further your profession, your employer and your career – Ira Apfel, AFP
TL for the Right Reasons

**Who:** Audience

**What:** Message

**When:** Schedule

**Where:** Medium

**Why:** Strategy

**How:** Implementation
What can it do for you?

- Self Promotion
  - Personal Brand
  - Professional Reputation
- Marketing or as an alternative to SALES!
- Positioning as a trusted advisor / consultant
- Opportunities to simultaneously promote clients/vendors
- Supplemental Revenue

Do you have the support you need? Position TL as a win/win/win for your company/manager/you
Why Become a Thought Leader?

- Become the “expert”
- Create change and improvement
- Spotlight your topic
- Focus on what you are passionate about
- Get promoted or add more value
- Get recognition from colleagues / managers
- Gain clients, market share

**Company**
- Increase sales
- Brand Awareness
- Recognition
- Industry Standard
- Patents, Trademarks

**Personal**
- Education / Academia
  - Thesis, Dissertation, Degree, Professorship, Certification
- Name Recognition
- Awards, Honors
- Work-Life Balance

**Career**
- Go into Business/Consult
- Advancement: Job, Company
- Board Appointments
- Validation of knowledge
- Bonus / Perks
- Editorial Board
Multimedia Exposure

Print:
- Newsletters
- Newspapers
- Periodicals
- Industry Pubs
- Alumni Magazines
- Byline articles
- Whitepapers
- Books / Manuals

Events:
- Conferences
- Webinars
- Focus Groups

Communities:
- Industry Organizations / Boards
- Editorial Advisory Board
- Profnet
- Speakers’ bureau

Electronic:
- eBooks
- Social Media

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New Media Opportunities

- Blogs
- SlideShare
- FaceBook
- Twitter
- Google
- Yahoo
- eHow
- Wikipedia
- TravelAdvisor
- LinkedIn . . .
- Vine/Video
- Apps
Where to Begin: Tell A Story. A Success Story

- **Situation**
- **Opportunity**
- **Achievement**
- **Result**
Why Write?

“Writing challenges and focuses me to think about my business processes with more precision than if I just went to lunch and chatted with a colleague.” – Head of Financial and Business Analytics
Why Write?

“Part of a talent management strategy:
• Writing about what we are doing allows us to network with treasury professionals and get feedback/ideas from other companies
• Building communication skills for the treasury team
• Retaining and acquiring talent: Visibility in the treasury community and positioning ourselves as thought leaders.” – Vice President and Treasurer, Fortune 500 Company
Barriers to Entry

No Time
No Resources
No Outlet
No Skills
The Creative Process

Ideas (Case Study or Thought Leadership?)
Targets
Pitch

“Hello my name is Sassan Parandeh and I am treasurer of ChildFund International, a $350M organization with offices in 30 countries. I wanted to know if you’d be interested in publishing an article about verifying payments in developing nations. Many of your readers face this challenge and I could offer best practices and anecdotes.”
The Production Process

Details
- Deadline? Length? Graphics?

Clearance!
- Management
- Corporate Communications
- Legal
The Writing Process

Tell a Story
Chronological
Just the Facts
Get it Down on Paper
Sidebar?
Headline
Get Feedback
The Editing Process
The Editing Process

No Supervendorman!
The Result

International MYSTERY

It was a huge check. But was it real?

Susan Panek, CFP

As an international nongovernmental organization, or NGO, ChildFund International had for 75 years received generous gifts from sponsors and philanthropists and used them to improve the lives of impoverished children around the world. But, in its corporate treasury department, one particular donation looked very suspicious and was immediately targeted for careful monitoring.

Why the suspicion? Instead of a normal check or an international wire transfer, this donor had paid ChildFund International by cashier's check. Normally, donors go out of their way to positively identify themselves and seek to assure their donation as proof of their tax exempt contributions. But, a cashier's check leaves no trace of the original donor, as it is issued by a third party bank, signed by a bank employee, and has a bank branch address on it.

Since the bank that issued the cashier's check was a national institution with which ChildFund International already had an existing relationship, staff contacted the issuing branch in Arizona to verify the cashier's check. Unfortunately, the bank agent insisted that due to privacy laws, he was unable to verify anything other than to indicate that the account was active. When asked to confirm the signatory name printed on the check, the banker vehemently declined. The banker noted an internal policy which prohibited their staff from disclosing signatory names and went on to stipulate that the only way ChildFund International could assure the cashier's check was authentic was to deposit it.

To the shock of ChildFund International's treasury staff, the bank's response was echoed by its local corporate bank relationship manager in Washington, D.C. So, the cashier's check was forwarded to ChildFund International's faction for processing.

The plot thickens

The very next day ChildFund's vice president of marketing and fundraising received a call from the donor. The donor indicated that the $80,000 check was issued in error and that his true intent was to only pay ChildFund International $80,000. According to the caller, the excess $50,000 was supposed to have gone to an Asian heart institute. As such, the donor authorized ChildFund International to retain $50,000 but requested that the excess be transferred to his intended beneficiary. In return for ChildFund's immediate cooperation he promised progressively larger gifts in future years.

When this request was shared with ChildFund's treasury group the gravity of the situation was clear. We knew that the decision was risky regardless of our decision. If this donation was from a real benefactor and corporate treasury did not seize the refund immediately, ChildFund might lose all of its future support. Moreover, treasury would negate the efforts of its donor development officers who had obviously cultivated a valuable relationship. Were all, treasury action could damage the reputation of ChildFund International.
Writing Tips for Non-Writers

Get an idea – successful project or accumulated wisdom
Get to the point – a brief pitch
Get the details – deadline, length, etc.
Get clearance – management, legal, media relations
Get it down on paper – avoid writer’s block
Get feedback – show it to colleagues
Get answers – why should readers care?
Get tough – accept red ink and rejection
Get it publicized – LinkedIn, Twitter, resume
Get a copy – PDF, URL