

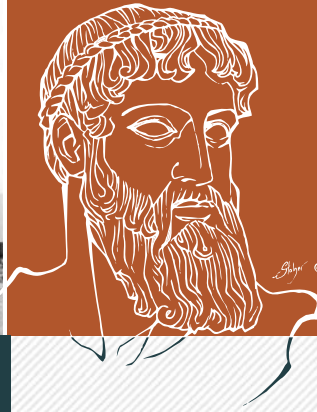


When thinking supports action



“ The first of prizes is good fortune;
The second is to be well spoken of;
But a man who encounters and wins both
Has received the highest garland. ”

Pindar (Pithian 1) 470 B.C.



North America: The added value Comes can provide to you

Starting a business or investing in France is not only a question of financial strength or industry competence. Success depends on many varied criteria, one of the most important being tailor-made, effective communications.

Many French communication agencies could put together communication programs based on international standards. However, few are able to lead a communication strategy that would answer English-speaking needs for core content while accommodating the French spirit. Vectors and messages must be adapted to a specific environment. For that, a deep understanding of cultural, societal, and psycho-sociological criteria is essential.

Taking into consideration the reality of our clients' competencies, *Comes* proposes to adapt the communication strategies of North American companies to French sensibilities. Although communication leaders, educated in the best North American business schools, exist in France, an efficient penetration of the French market demands subtle communication vectors, consistent with the French frame of mind.

Such an approach covers:

- > Precise and beautiful language, rich with chosen words
- > That preserves and enhances French identity
- > Based on accurate historical and cultural references
- > Through a structured message
- > That provides insights and references
- > Meaningful to local decision-makers.

With branches in Paris and Toronto, *Comes* proposes complex and customized communication solutions. By translating North American efficiency into the flowing requirements of the French spirit, *Comes* builds original and substantial bridges for thought and action to meet across the Atlantic.

WHO ARE WE ?

At the junction of communication and influence strategies

In Latin, *Comes* means travelling companion, associate, or member of the entourage.

Created in 1999, *Comes* is a communication company working at the junction of communication strategies and economic intelligence.

Our excellence is in shaping identities to establish strong, long-term, public recognition.

Comes develops public recognition strategies for companies by implementing influence vectors. We create intelligent communication—with intelligence implying the comprehensive collection and optimized treatment of information.

Our objective is to combine analysis and pragmatism, depth and long-term effectiveness. We do it by providing a meaningful reference framework to the developed vectors by means of top-notch messages, different from conventional discourses. We enable an identity structure and influence the target market by observing emerging ideas, matching them with a current events perspective, and integrating these ideas with our client's issues.

For *Comes*, effectiveness is the standard. This is why, far from being limited to counseling, we guide our clients through a complete cycle from initial thoughts and analysis to the development of final documents.



PUBLIC RECOGNITION AND IDENTITY

Initial observation: Communication about your expertise is relevant, but often insufficient

Consumers do not buy a product or a service only for its intrinsic value, but also for its attached imagery and relevance, its confidence and credibility. Hence, beyond the development of their core expertise, organizations must emphasize their own identity, shape it, maintain it, and differentiate it.

Failing to do so results in losing control of your own image and being exposed to unfair and biased opinion. It is truly ineffective to only embrace trendy topics or to repeat the same empty words in all possible variations. Sound public recognition is built over the long run. It starts with the unambiguous statement of a precisely defined and clearly accepted identity. Benefits from a strong identity do not come from loose improvisation. It is a serious matter, paced and steady, controlled by executive strategy.

A widely-applicable approach

Any company or institution, whatever its size and its industry, can make this choice. The key, indeed, is to address only the stakeholders. Thanks to IT, fairly modest and targeted tools can suffice; provided that a relevant and coherent message is delivered, the originality of the sources and the value of the editorial content is maintained. Under these conditions, a strong identity becomes the foundation for an authentic influence strategy.

REFERENCE FRAMEWORK AND MEANING

Promote your industry with relevance

Any industry, even the most technical, can be considered part of a bigger picture. Organizations do not live in isolation. Beyond the simple creation of wealth, they provide true services to their customers and to the whole community. From this point of view, they also generate meaning. It is this aspect of their activity, too often neglected, that should be emphasized.

Innovative positioning

Credibility requires expressing clear objectives in a social context. Interests that define today's economic competitive landscape do not rest only on commercial or financial parameters. They must also integrate cultural and traditional variables, ideas, and representations of the world. The approach suggested by *Comes* is precisely at this nodal point where the development of influence strategies meets the recognition of economic challenges.



“ By trusting the intelligence of your addressed market, you can convince the media of the authenticity of your approach. ”

“ It is the best interests of organizations to consider those parameters as a key element to be integrated into their general strategy. This is where the referents and parameters of tomorrow’s debates are shaped. ”

IDEAS AND INFLUENCE

The Comes approach

Comes builds bridges between communication strategies and influence strategies. This is an innovative position that asks clients to be open to three critical issues:

- > Be aware that the purpose of in-depth, and thus effective, communication is not only to pursue immediate results, but rather to subtly contribute, through the development of a structured and qualitative message, to a gradual modification of the target’s response parameters.
- > Consider not only the strategy but also the substance of the communication vectors, the editorial content, the relevance of sources, and the diversity of approaches. By trusting the intelligence of your addressed market, you can convince the media of the authenticity of your approach.
- > Economic intelligence professionals must widen the spectrum and operational methods of influence strategies. Economic intelligence should not be confined to controlling and securing information flows in order to enlighten decision-making processes. It should be an *influence projection strategy*.

Benefits of this approach

Far from following the trends and behaviors in a marketing or consumerist manner, far from riding the wave of traditional tendencies (as some do perfectly well with strong and consistent methods), we must consider communication from another angle.

As we fully enter the knowledge economy, where the weight of a company’s intangible capital proves to be a critical factor in its value, executives must understand that there is, in the development of new and positive influence strategies, an authentic and still unexploited source of richness. It is the best interests of organizations to consider those parameters as a key element to be integrated into their general strategy. This is where the referents and parameters of tomorrow’s debates are shaped.

METHODOLOGY

Because of its insistence on consistency and effectiveness, *Comes* is not limited to only providing recommendations, but proposes full project support along three successive phases that lead to the implementation of tangible communication vectors:

I - Preliminary study

- > Identify, beyond the sole criterion of technical expertise, the company's identity features likely to be intelligently used and emphasized
- > Open new areas of investigation to give a second life and a higher dimension to the existing communication strategy
- > Define communication targets and the client's specific objectives in the short, middle, and long term.

This preliminary phase, through joint discussions, aims to validate fundamentals that are necessary for the successful implementation of the communication strategy :

- > Refine the project
- > Specify its purpose and its objectives
- > Define its framework
- > Decide its rhythm
- > Gain a better understanding of information sources and articulations to emphasize
- > Validate methodology and procedure.

II - Monitoring and research

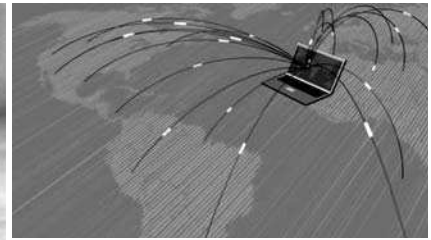
- > Create monitoring and analysis cells to provide timely reports :
 - Monitor images that explain, illustrate, and promote the client's identity traits
 - Monitor relevant ideas to propose themes and openings for communication services.
- > Develop current and future trend spotting through the observation of media and vectors, both specialized and diffuse.

III - Execution

We will suggest tangible leads, and create new communication vectors, to develop the company's image both internally and externally. Through its posture to the world, its participation in the debates of ideas, its outward will to open new ways of thinking, and its positioning as a platform for intelligent exchanges, the company will offer its image under new illumination.

Positive influence generating tools will facilitate the deployment of an *intelligent communication strategy*. The objective is to create long-term public recognition through a subtle promotion of the *noble* aspects of the company.





OBJECTIVES

To strengthen the ties between the organization and its stakeholders: customers and partners, decision makers and media, transmitters of opinion, including those regarding the civil society. The objective is a careful positioning as a serious, solid, and responsible partner with a strong identity.

To reinforce the enterprise culture stickiness. Many studies show that employees' engagement and loyalty are largely correlated with the perceived direction, vision, and sense given to their work. Also, a consistent message carrying direction and meaning, going well beyond the simple concerns related to the industry, leads to an increased exposure to networks that evaluate and make reputations. Such an approach appears essential for recruitment. It reinforces an organization's attractiveness to employees with talent and high potential.

To increase the company's value. Part of a company's capital is intangible. Its expertise, its knowledge, the quality of its employees, the energy of its image, the power of its identity, and its strategic vision fully count in its actual valuation. For that reason, it is critical to develop superior communications for the attentive observers of a company's development. They are likely to provide an opinion that will be strongly communicated and amplified.

VECTORS

A large spectrum of customized vectors

By suggesting innovative themes and mining new information sources not directly related to the client's technical expertise (social, historical, cultural, philosophical, sociological, geopolitical, etc.), *Comes* will propose a broad-spectrum media strategy.

Strategy elements can be for internal or external use, in paper format or, more often, in a digital format produced at defined intervals and conceived for optimal reception (weekly, monthly, or quarterly magazines, etc.).

The most popular vectors are:

- > Magazines, letters, and periodicals
- > Early warning notes and analytical papers
- > Speeches, articles, messages, scenarios, and books
- > Websites, blogs, and wikis
- > Conferences or videoconferences
- > Training programs referring to communication themes
- > Think tanks and foundations
- > Symposia, seminars, meetings, etc.

SUCCESS STORIES

Return on investment

Obviously, extreme discretion is required to communicate in the field of influence. The cases presented below (without attribution, of course) capture some of the services delivered by *Comes* to its clients. Here are examples of return on investment resulting from targeted actions for:

- > **A group involved in an M&A:** provided a strong identity through monthly newsletters and cycles of conferences that explored an original communication ground for this industry. **ROI:** innovative positioning allowed this group to acquire a strong identity, strengthen its position at the negotiation table, and ensure its survival in the resulting entity.
- > **The president of a large company:** a book, a blog, articles, and papers contributed to elevate and explain the company strategy. **ROI:** a deeper understanding of challenges, reinforcement of individual recognition from stakeholders (managers, customers, suppliers, decision makers, etc), peers, and media.
- > **A farmer, producer of "bio" products:** targeted communication media, based on themes such as legacy, tradition, identity, and quality. **ROI:** acquisition of solid public recognition, especially from distribution channels, co-operatives, and customers, that justified price increases.
- > **A foreign laboratory:** deployment of a market penetration strategy based on socio-cultural rather than technical issues. New definition and mapping of centres of interest and messages. **ROI:** a clear recognition by industry professionals of a newly-arrived player in the French market.
- > **An outplacement company:** Design of a communication strategy based on the analysis of human resource issues that companies face, deployed through a digital publication, conferences, and debates. **ROI:** regular contacts with HR departments.
- > **A business consulting company:** In the delicate landscape of a fragmented market subject to strong tensions, regular digital vectors produced a strong, trusting relationship among traditionally hostile stakeholders. **ROI:** peaceful business relationships and a new credibility, acquired in an industry that never before looked at non-technical subjects.
- > **A European NGO:** defined an influence strategy that was deployed through a high-level message about strategic and geopolitical questions using digital monthly newsletters, meetings, and conferences. **ROI:** a reinforced and perennial recognition from media and decision makers.
- > **A consulting company:** A monthly newsletter demonstrated that, beyond their core competences, consultants have a 360° vision of both current and future issues for the company and for the community as a whole. **ROI:** acquisition of a strong identity allowing differentiation from multiple industry rivals.
- > **An industrial federation:** created a club, along with digital communication vectors (books, warning notes, etc) targeting executives and members, offering thoughtful commentary on current and emerging subjects. **ROI:** reinforcement of internal exchanges and connections; shaping of a common culture, improving federation cohesion.

Other examples are available on our website:

www.comes-communication.com



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Communication & Influence The Newsletter

Communication & Influence is a monthly electronic newsletter that will combine technical information and analysis. A platform for thoughts, this vector will open innovative perspectives at the junction of traditional communication and influence strategies. Edited by *Comes*, this tool is dedicated to executives in charge of a company's general strategy as well as communication professionals curious about exploring new approaches for thinking and action.

Subscription: www.comes-communication.com, section "publications – newsletter"



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