



## E-Interview with Timothy Singer for the Virtual Roundtable: Analyst Relations: Added Value for Your Company?

**Interview Title:**

Analyst Relations: Added Value for Your Company?

**Name:**

Tim Singer

**Function/Division:**

Corporate Marketing, Analyst Relations

**Organization:**

IDS Scheer

**Dear Readers,**

Communications managers are finding themselves in the midst of a (r)evolution: new communications tools such as blogs, wikis or podcasts allow for a more efficient and targeted contact to communicate messages quickly and efficiently:

At the same time, the dialog with market experts (analyst relations) has become an important component of corporate communications in technology companies; interest in analyst relations is also increasing among software and hardware vendors, IT service providers and telecommunications firms in Europe.

IT market analysts have a major influence on the evaluation of IT products and services that might have a great impact on the buyers' behavior in the market. An exchange of opinions and information with analysts may prove a decisive success factor for technology companies. After all, buyers of technology strongly rely on the industry analysts' surveys and statements as part of the opinion-forming process. The Kensington Group estimates that 40 to 60 percent of IT revenues are influenced by IT analysts.

The media are another key group that has a close contact to industry analysts. Before publishing a technology-related article, journalists resort to analyst know-how to inform themselves on products, strategies and market shares of IT and telecommunications vendors.



Analyst relations are becoming an independent corporate discipline; an increasing number of communications service providers have specialized in analyst relations.

How do companies benefit from analyst relations, which strategies are applied, and how important is the integration of AR with corporate communications? Various experts and leading corporations will participate in this virtual roundtable discussion on the Competence Site.

Enjoy reading!

Edith M. Horton

Axel Oppermann



Dear Mr. Singer,

**Question 1:**

Which priority do analyst relations have in your company? Please specify the level of priority on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 = highest priority, 5 = lowest priority).



For IDS Scheer, Analyst Relations is a new area of concentration, so it has a lot of visibility at all levels of the organization globally. Much of my day to day activities involve educating my colleagues on how to effectively use industry analysts in their planning and development efforts. Another large area of concentration is determining areas of focus of our efforts. Which firms and which analysts should we focus our attention? What will give us the most exposure for our efforts?

**Question 2:**

Do you think that AR is only relevant for large technology companies? Please provide reasons for your opinion.



No, I don't think that analyst relations is relevant for only large technology companies. On the contrary, for smaller firms, having a seasoned analyst relations professional is key to raising the company's profile in the marketplace. In the year since I have been at IDS Scheer, there has been a large increase in the awareness of the breadth and depth of our solutions within the analyst community. This increased awareness is a direct result of my position in the company because I have been able to concentrate on reviewing research agendas, analyst events, etc...and recommending those that correlate with our overall solution strategy.

**Question 3:**

How would you describe the difference between public relations and analyst relations?



Public Relations covers topics at the surface level. Journalists typically look for soundbytes on topics, not the details necessary to understand the entire impact. This is where analyst relations is vital to the marketplace. Industry analysts' core competency is to fully understand a solution, event or company to assist their clients in making effective decisions. This is why so many reporters call on industry analysts to provide "substance" to their articles.



Analyst relations and public relations have specific focuses and serve the same audiences in different capacities. Analyst relations' use is often a result of a successful PR campaign. For example, an article is published and/or press release is issued on a particular topic that "grabs" the interest of the reader. He/she may go to an analyst firm site to get more detailed information on the subject of the article/press release.

**Question 4:**

Do you work with more than one analyst firm? If yes, please specify the reasons as well as potential advantages and disadvantages.



We work with about 6 firms that vary in size and influence. This helps us emphasize different solutions with different firms. There are many advantages and some disadvantages to this approach. The advantages are obvious: greater exposure, more opportunity to be mentioned in client conversations and research, more opportunity for analyst interaction.

Some disadvantages include "spreading our message too thinly" – meaning we are not focusing on 1 firm or size of firms to ensure our message is resonating.

**Question 5:**

Which are the competitive advantages enjoyed by companies that are actively engaging in AR and how can you measure these advantages [how are these advantages perceived]?



The primary competitive advantage in actively developing and executing an AR strategy is building relationships with key analysts that can be maximized for mutual benefit. When something "big" occurs in our industry, being able to call an analyst directly to get their view (without having to schedule a formalized briefing) is the result of a successful analyst relations program. Relationships are the key to a successful program, because analysts will be more direct in their feedback along with more forthcoming in recommendations for improvement.



**Question 6:**

What is your assessment of the future relevance of AR?



Analyst relations is evolving because of the increased use of bloggers and the surge in boutique specialty firms. These new entrants are forcing AR professionals to change how they work with traditional firms, allocate resources and budgets. This evolution will change the relevance of AR into a profession for seasoned communicators who provide guidance on how to effectively navigate this marketplace. All these changes ensure the need for analyst relations in all sizes of organizations.

**Thank you very much for the interview!**