



26th International Public Relations Symposium BledCom 2019

July 4, July 5 and July 6, 2019

TRUST AND REPUTATION

BledCom is an annual gathering of scholars and practitioners in public relations and related disciplines to discuss contemporary communication and management problems. Organized annually since 1994, it is the oldest conference in our field that is not affiliated with a professional or academic association.

So far, eight books and nine special issues or sections of peer-reviewed journals have been published based on previous symposia (www.bledcom.com). We attribute this success to the hundreds of colleagues who have participated over these years and of course our sponsors. We thank you all for sustaining this boutique conference for a quarter of a century.

Conference dates:

The 26th International Public Relations Research Symposium (BledCom) will be held on **July 4, 5, & 6, 2019 in Rikli Balance Hotel (formerly Hotel Golf) Lake Bled, Slovenia.**

Location:

Picturesque Alpine Lake Bled in Slovenia

Conference Theme: Trust and Reputation

Trust is a foundation of social (and organizational) order and also serves as the underpinning of healthy relationships, exchanges and transactions. There is a growing concern globally that social and organizational trust is eroding, and that it has become harder for organizations to build and protect relationships with stakeholders many of whom themselves seem to be in conflict. Digitalization and globalization have contributed significantly to changing the world order, leaving many people confused, disoriented and perhaps even scared. This has also contributed to people's lack of trust in basic social institutions. Conspiracy theories are on the rise on a variety of topics. The ultra-rich are preparing for an apocalypse and building bunker-homes in New Zealand. In many countries there appears to be increasing support for authoritarian leaders because of their promise to protect against a disruptive future. In this respect, one is reminded of Bob Dylan's song: "The times they are a changin'."

In such a challenging environment, how does/should public relations (re)build trust and reputation to help us function as social beings operating in harmonious societies?

The following are a few of the many topics subsumed in this theme:

- What is trust and what is reputation?
- How does (should) communication and relationship management help individuals and organizations build trust and reputation?

- How do different stakeholders (such as employees to investors) experience, and perceive, trust and reputation in organizational settings?
- How relevant is it for us to talk about *engagement* in a world with diminishing trust?
- How do trust and reputation affect organizational and social success, or decline?
- How are 21st century social processes such as digitalization and globalization affecting trust and reputation?
- How are media affecting trust and reputation?
- What benefits can organizations and the society get because of higher trust and reputation?
- How can communication management help us build reputation in a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) world?
- How is the rising inequality, within and between, societies affecting trust and reputation within and between societies, and with what effects?
- Are there similarities in the problem of lack of trust and reputation globally, or do they differ from one part of the world to another?

Call for Abstracts and Panels:

We invite abstracts that are between 500 and 800 words (including title and keywords) with up to 5 references. Please use the following guidelines to present your abstract and kindly supply the word count at the end of the submission.

We also welcome panel and poster proposals.

Please note that as has been the norm in the past, BledCom welcomes ALL papers that are relevant to public relations and communication management beyond papers that discuss the conference theme.

Format for the Abstract:

Please note that the chances of your abstract being accepted are enhanced if you observe the following format in preparing it:

Introduction and purpose of the study (and research question if there is one) – helps summarize the purpose and rationale of your study. **Literature review** – Helps place your work in context with the existing body of knowledge. **Methodology** – Define the main method used for gathering data including sample size, and state the rationale for using this method. **Results and conclusions** – Helps summarize the answers to the research questions while also outlining the implications of the results. Also summarize the limitations of the study and offer suggestions for future research. **Practical and social implications** – Offer the potential implications both for practice and society. Also provide us with **3 to 5 keywords** that highlight your study. Abstracts should come as blind copies without author names and affiliations, who are to be identified on a separate cover page. Please use the suggested headings to structure the abstract. A list of literature is not necessary, but if it is provided it is included into the word count.

Panel proposal are also welcome. The proposal should describe the title and focus of the panel, name of the chair of the panel, and names of every member of the panel and title or focus of each presentation.

Deadline:

Paper abstracts and panel proposals should be submitted via email to **bledcom@fdv.uni-lj.si** no later than **14 January 2019**. Decisions will be made by 4 March 2019 after peer review.

Full papers not exceeding 6.000 words will be due by 16 September 2019. The organizing committee will serve as guest editors of a special issue of *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, based on papers presented at BledCom 2019. A separate conference proceedings will publish the remaining papers.

Program Committee:

- **Krishnamurthy Sriramesh**, University of Colorado Boulder, USA
- **Dejan Verčič**, University of Ljubljana & Stratkom, Slovenia
- **Ana Tkalac Verčič**, University of Zagreb, Croatia