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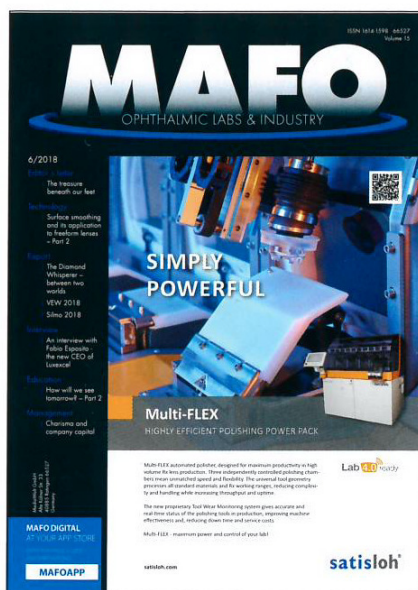
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Tracked in Las Vegas – VEW 2018

Between September 27th and 29th, many innovations were on display at Las Vegas. The Vision Expo West celebrated its 30th birthday and thus attracted even more opticians, optometrists and lab staff than usual to this dazzling world metropolis.

The Vision Council reported a double digit increase in visitor numbers over 2017, and even the machine manufacturers – whose impressions do not always coincide with general visitor numbers – were extremely satisfied overall. This could also be due to a new tracking system.



Surface smoothing and its application to freeform lenses – Part 2

There are situations where the smoothing of the whole surface is not needed or can yield unwanted results. Thus the most suitable approach is to smooth just a specified region of the surface, leaving the rest unchanged.

This kind of smoothing is called fairing. Fairing is a smoothing approach accomplished by minimization or the so-called variational approach.



Charisma and company capital

For a long time the saying "No press is good press" held true. But today, we live in different times. Online, everything can and will be discussed, judged and - if need be - also condemned.

Currently, every CEO, manager, director, or business executive is almost under constant observation. If an 'unfortunate' statement is made, you can find it quickly on the social-media channels, on news portals or even in print media. Very quickly the reputation of the CEO suffers and thereby that of the whole company.

Charisma and company capital

If the CEO's reputation suffers the whole company suffers too

For a long time the saying 'No press is good press' held true. But today, we live in different times. Online, everything can and will be discussed, judged and - if need be- also condemned. Currently, every CEO, manager, director, or business executive is almost under constant observation. If an 'unfortunate' statement is made, you can find it quickly on the social-media channels, on news portals or even in print media. Very quickly the reputation of the CEO suffers and thereby that of the whole company. It is high time to focus on the CEO's reputation and to manage it.

By Sereina Schmidt

But what has changed? The fact is that our society has become a society that wants to have its say in everything. The increasingly stronger socialization online leads to persons communicating on social media, who otherwise would never meet. So if I disagree with a company, a product, a service or even only with the statement of a CEO, I can 'discuss' this with thousands of other people on the social media channels. And what has meanwhile become terrible routine for us all is that the more damaged the reputation, the faster and the more people are ready to verbally 'thrash' the company or its CEO.

Who is behind the company?

Another fact that has changed in the last years is the strong personalization. Today, you want to know who is behind a company. You want to

communicate with individuals and not neutrally with 'the company'. Everything is becoming more transparent and more personal. If today a customer is not satisfied, he can explain this in detail on Google. So when somebody is looking for us, they will not only find our website, but also comments from (hopefully) satisfied customers.

Special platforms like kununu.com make it possible to rate a company in even greater detail. This situation causes difficulties for many companies, because they have to completely change their (internal and external) communication. And there is no alternative! Today, no company can afford any longer to firstly NOT integrate reputation management into the company strategy and secondly, not specifically manage the reputation of its own CEO.

Perception beats performance

You can break it down into a simple formula: reception + behavior + communication =

reputation. It is still often said that a CEO is to deliver a certain performance. To be sure, his or her performance must be up to par. But what is actually important is the effect, namely which perception his or her behavior has on the company and thereby on the customers. But if you ask, "What are we being taught in our training and education?" in this context, the answer surprisingly still is, "Performance and knowledge"! How to optimally present the hopefully positive effect resulting from this, however, is usually not part of the material taught.

Keep the reputation in mind

Fostering reputation is work and has to do with your own behavior and communication. Of course the communications department can specifically support you in this, but the main dynamism comes from the CEOs themselves. Additionally, the CEO has to take the perspective

of customers and co-workers time and again and ask which expectations they have from him or her? He or she has to 'manage' these expectations, as well.

A legitimate question is whether the CEO has to keep in mind their reputation only for the sake of the company? No, certainly not. They are doing it for themselves. After all, they take their reputation with them - into other companies and into private lives too. Both areas, private as well as business, cannot be separated today any longer. And much less if it is about the reputation of a person. By the way, a bad reception of a CEO is more dangerous for him or her than a bad performance. According to a study by Roland Berger done in 2015, in 71% of all cases a bad perception was the initial reason for the resignation of a CEO and not the performance.

Emotion beats facts

Our values correspond to our beliefs. We stand for this, we advocate that. Customers, but particularly also co-workers today want to know 'what' the CEO stands for. They want to know what motivates them, how they tick and what they work for. Trying to communicate through a common value model is hardly ever crowned with success. Authenticity and integrity are in demand and they must be lived and be communicated, so that they are truly understood. Reputation management is about letting experience our personal beliefs, attitudes, and values. The clearer the people around us can be guided by us, the more credible, reliable and trustworthy we are, which in turn strengthens our reputation. It is a fact that there is no stable, positive reputation without clearly communicated and perceptible values. And once more, emotions beat pure communication of facts. A CEO is a human being and not a neutral machine.

Long-term beats short-term

While image is a snapshot that people have of a company ('the idea that I have') and that can also be created at short notice through active communication - reputation is what the CEO and his or her company have in general. This means, it is the entirety of impressions and images, experiences and relations. It is therefore one of the biggest mistakes to think that short-term action can 'iron out' the reputation of a CEO.

Naturally, everything has an effect, but in most cases people forget things very fast. The opposite is also true - once an opinion has been built, it takes people longer to revise it. You can see this effect particularly prior to elections. Many politicians count precisely on such short-term measures. Once a person is elected, the work on communication and reputation usually ends very quickly. A mistake that very often comes back to haunt them during the next election.

Strategy beats show

CEO-reputation is not an ego-show, but a strategic factor that has to be planned. Naturally, the personality of both the CEO and the company should be analyzed first in this process, in order to create a communications strategy. It must be noted that absolute authenticity is crucial. If you try to stage a show counting more on wishful thinking than on authenticity, you will notice very quickly that the community will usually see right through this rather sooner than later and of course they will discuss it in public accordingly.

Earnings beat investment

Admittedly, CEO-reputation costs time and money. But what if the CEO and/or the whole company suddenly become the subject of a shitstorm on Facebook? Or less spectacular what if someone looks for the CEO's name and reads two very negative comments about the company on Google? After having read these two negative comments every potential new customer will think twice whether to still contact the person or company.

And by the way, in times of increasing lack of skilled workers this is a decisive and important aspect: the good reputation of the CEO also has an effect on recruiting new employees. A good reputation is literally worth a mint- or rather- the money spent.

From the shadows into the light

Especially owners of SME-companies often used to be excellent skilled workers. This is of course very positive, because if you have 'risen from the ranks' you can often fall back on your experience. There is, however, one small side effect, namely that skilled workers want to convince through their good work or the good product. They usually do not step into the

spot-light and do not tell stories of how a certain product or a service was developed. But it is exactly these stories customers want to hear. And if a company does not tell this story, others will (whether it is the truth or not). Thus CEO-reputation also offers a certain protection from crises. But as is often true in life, unless it does not really hurt, you rarely go to the doctor. And then sometimes the only thing that helps is damage control. In other areas we all invest in insurance just in case. Why not in this area too? Particularly since building a positive reputation is not only helpful in a crisis situation, but also when there is no crisis in sight.

Many entrepreneurs think their company is too small for the worrying about reputation. But SMEs in particular could benefit tremendously from the positive reputation of their CEO. Today, a single tweet could damage the reputation of a CEO and thereby the reputation of the whole company. It is therefore a vital strategic decision to invest in the reputation of one's own CEO and thereby into the reputation of the whole company. Because only if the reputation of the CEO shines forth in the long term the company capital is shining too.



Sereina Schmidt

Sereina Schmidt, 100 per cent communications professional, is a consultant, sparring partner, and speaker who cares greatly about her customers' reputation. She is a fighter for honesty, transparency, and authenticity. She studied communication sciences at the University of Lugano to which she added a CAS in organization development (OD). Various jobs in the business form the basis of her wide range of experience. After taking over the family business, a communications agency rich in tradition, Sereina Schmidt decided to become an entrepreneur herself in 2012. Her work shows her greatest strength, namely; direct, transparent, and honest consulting and support of managers and companies. Currently, Sereina Schmidt is working on a book on the topic of CEO reputation. www.schmidt.ch