



The Global IR Revolution – Key Drivers – Future Opportunities

Oskar YASAR - Broome Yasar Partnership - Managing Partner

An Introduction:

As Managing Partner of Broome Yasar Partnership, which is today regarded as the global leader in IR and corporate affairs executive recruitment with more than 500 senior level appointments, I am incredibly passionate about the role, growth and the potential of IR and it's new positioning at the board table.

Having started my career working for the world's leading IR and financial communications advisory firm and advising some of the world's largest companies on their IR and communications strategies, I could see more than 20 years ago the first green shoots of a growing need and demand from boards and their advisors for a more sophisticated, ambitious and forward-thinking IRO; a significantly different character from the previous 'back-office' functionary roles. I knew intrinsically that I could help companies to (re)-position the need to build a new sophisticated IR approach and programme and so I moved to create an IR executive search function helping to grow it to become the world leader in this space.

This belief and confidence in our profession made me want to help in its growth and development and this has come to fruition because we have, quite simply, seen a revolution in investor relations, with not just the emergence of a more powerful, ambitious and all rounded 'Power IRO' but the realization from the board of the importance of the role and the significant role it now plays.

The Revolution...

We have all come a long way. In investor relations today, we are more influential, more financially strong and more rounded strategic communications professionals than at any point in our history.

The best of us have not just boardroom access but are considered essential to the machinery of strategic decision making. Many are now transitioning into senior business leadership roles including CEOs and CFOs, as highlighted by our numerous studies at <https://broomeyasar.com/insights/> and a number now sit on boards of listed companies as independent directors.

Core findings from a number of our industry thought leadership studies have shown that; compensation for senior leaders have increased dramatically, even in recent years; budgets have increased beyond all recognition from even a few years ago; reporting lines have been strengthened and there has been an emergence of a more powerful IRO who is being tasked with taking on other roles including strategy, corporate development, M&A and in so many cases now corporate affairs. Again, we've come a very long way.

This revolution is real and continues to be seen throughout the financial capital markets landscape. Our soon to be published book, *The Global IR Revolution*, will help to showcase just that. The '**Key Drivers, Future Opportunities**' is a *pioneering and critical assessment of the new dynamics in IR , where we are as a profession, and the measures needed to further strengthen its reputation.*

But a key hurdle remains if we are to make that next step: interconnectedness. Most of us work in small teams, many as sole IROs. So our sense of being parts of a collective profession can easily get lost. Country IR associations bring us together locally but, at a global level, we still often lack a sense of ourselves as a recognized profession – an established, consistent international discipline, with shared goals and universal competencies.

We believe this is an obvious impediment to IR's professional growth. Sharing best practices, ideas, and solutions to common challenges is how every profession grows. On such matters hinge the next steps of IR's development. That's what The Global IR Revolution study is all about.

After all, investors are global; markets are global; most of our organizations are global; and, increasingly, we ourselves are global entities in the international talent marketplace. The Global IR Revolution Study wraps its arms around the full sweep of investor relations around the world – where it has come from as a profession; how it has developed into a sophisticated executive function; its challenges and its abundant opportunities.

With the involvement of IR societies and associations on five continents, along with numerous high-profile IROs, association heads, advisors, and other senior business leaders, and interview answers from more than 1,000 interviews with leading global IROs, we believe this significant undertaking represents our industry's first ever "Global State of the Nation."

The arrival of a 'Power-IRO'

All of that tells us something else, from a talent perspective. To fulfil that new, authoritative role, we are witnessing a change in the talent profile – the arrival of a more powerful, more astute and more sophisticated IRO.

Many are now armed with CFAs, ACAs and MBAs. They bring sophistication and credibility. They bring different backgrounds (often sectoral experience, rather than communications or financial expertise). More than that, they bring ambition. One thing we are quick to ignore is what an attractive profession the world of IR has become.

Our advice to the IR industry:

To those in investor relations; put quite simply, truly believe that we are now a powerful and influential 'industry'. The more we come together and shout about how great we are and bang that drum as hard as possible, the more people will listen. We have to all become members of the IR association even if you think you're not getting anything out of it – it's what you put back in that is going to make all the difference to your career because of the strength of the army behind you. It's an easy equation and we're confident that our industry will continue to strengthen and, ultimately, that we will see many more examples of former IROs becoming the next major business titans.

As we regularly say to all our senior candidates, our careers are only limited by our own ambition. Onwards and upwards!

