



THE VOICE OF FOOD RETAIL

Feeding Families  Enriching Lives

DRAFT
Minutes
Food Marketing Institute
Communications Committee Meeting
The Fairmont Pacific Rim – Vancouver, BC, Canada
Thursday, October 16, 2014
12:30 pm-2:00pm

Present;

Tres Lund, Chairman, Laurie Youngquist, Vice Chairman, David Ball, Kevin Davis
Ed Crenshaw, Wesley Eubanks, Jerry Golub, John Lucot, Frans Muller, Gary Rodkin,
Randy Skoda, Stephanie Skylar

Absent:

Rob Bartels, Mike Bozzuto, Sandy Douglas, Oscar Gonzalez, Paul Grimwood, Anthony
Longo, Brandt Louie, Richard Smucker, Judy Spires

Others Present:

Greg Calhoun, Jerry Garland, Christy Spoa, Brian Wright

Staff:

Sue Borra, Leslie Sarasin, Dagmar Farr, George Green, Jennifer Hatcher

Proceedings:

The Meeting was called to order at 12:35 pm by the Chair, Tres Lund.

The FMI Antitrust policy was reviewed by George Green.

Tres Lund welcomed the group to the inaugural meeting of the Communications Committee. He thanked them for serving on the committee and thanked Laurie Youngquist for serving as Vice Chairman. He noted that this committee was formed as a result of the FMI Strategic plan that determined FMI's role as the "Voice of Food Retail" was a core proposition and a top priority for the Association. Leslie Sarasin shared her vision for the group to help prioritize, strengthen and guide FMI's representation of the retail food industry to our key audiences, including suppliers, government, advocacy groups and other associations.

Tres reviewed the FMI Strategic Plan strategic priority #1: Strengthen the Core Proposition in the areas of Voice of Food Retail and Emerging Issues.

Sue Borra reviewed a flow chart of FMI communications to FMI member and external audiences, noting that this committee would be very instrumental in identifying the emerging and priority issues and to prioritize external target audiences we wish to influence and educate about the retail food industry. She also shared the FMI staff communications team make-up and structure.

Tres reviewed the draft charge to the committee and the areas of potential committee focus:

- Committee Charge

Provide key input to the planning and review of FMI's Communications activities in the execution of FMI's role as the Voice of Food Retail, and in effectively representing the retail food industry to key audiences including suppliers, government, advocacy groups and other associations.

- Areas of Committee Focus

- Support FMI in fulfilling our role as the Voice of Food Retail.
- Enhance crisis communication management and resources for FMI members.
- Provide leadership in ensuring FMI has strong brand recognition with our key audiences.
- Lead the emerging issues effort so FMI can be at the forefront of identifying and prioritizing industry issues and opportunities.
- Ensure that FMI has a robust research agenda to benchmark industry trends and to forecast future issues.
- Identify Board policies necessary to enhance FMI's position as the Voice of Food Retail.
- Ensure that the FMI Information Service supports FMI's role as the Voice of Food Retail by collecting, maintaining and sharing its unique knowledge base of food retailing resources.
- Provide guidance for FMI to engage in new communications technologies, especially through social and digital communications.
- Be the Board advocate for communications issues.

The group agreed that this served as a good foundation for the work of the Communication Committee.

Discussion:

- While this Committee will be focused primarily on external communications with key target stakeholders, there was a good deal of discussion of how to enhance communications and engagement with members. It was mentioned every department at FMI had responsibilities for member communications and engagement and that the FMI Communications team worked to enhance communication approaches throughout the organization.

- The need for food retail industry data is crucial for FMI to serve as the credible voice of food retail and there was a discussion about the acute need to strongly encourage FMI members to participate in FMI Surveys. In particular FMI needs members to participate in the annual *FMI Speaks* survey that provides the retail food industry with important operational and financial benchmarks ranging from sales and profits to shrink, turns and differentiation tactics and much more.
- Tres suggested that a continuous improvement process audit of the communications function at FMI could be a valuable assessment tool and may result in improved communications effectiveness and may potentially drive efficiencies.
- There was a discussion of the potential for FMI to expand its role as the voice of food retail to consumer audiences – particularly on food safety issues. It was recognized that to expand the FMI reach to consumer audiences would require a large amount of additional resources and there was not agreement of this as a current priority.
- The topic of promoting the retail food industry as an attractive career option to prospective employees was raised as a potential FMI campaign. It was noted that it would be helpful for the entire food industry—from suppliers to retailers—and that the target audience could be youth who are considering career options. It was mentioned that FMI was currently involved in a Retail Management Certification program. The Committee concurred that this was a good program, but that they could also benefit from a campaign to attract future talent for the workforce.

The next meeting of the Communications Committee will be held at the Midwinter Board meeting in January.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:58 PM.

Susan T. Borra, RD

Senior Vice President, Communications and Strategic Planning