

ARE YOU READY FOR THE AGM

- BEST PRACTISE IN PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.
- BEST PRACTISE IN DEALING WITH DIFFICULT QUESTIONS THEY MAY BE ASKED BY SHAREHOLDERS.
- BEST PRACTISE IN PRESENTATIONS TO INSTITUTIONAL INVESTORS.
- BEST PRACTISE IN LIVE WEBCASTING.
- MINIMIZING THE SHAREPRICE IMPACT WHEN REPORTING BAD NEWS.
- DERIVING GREATEST MEDIA & PUBLICITY VALUE FROM SUSTAINABILITY REPORTS.



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How to earn media coverage for your sustainability report

It's official: all locally-listed companies must now produce an annual sustainability report. This initiative by the Singapore Exchange was announced some years ago, in an effort to attract more international investors to Singapore companies. From January 1, all SGX-listed companies must file such a report within five months of the end of their financial year.

While some companies complain of the additional regulatory burden and cost, others see it as an opportunity to showcase their Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) credentials. Companies must go beyond clichéd stock

photos of their board of directors planting trees, and instead provide qualitative and quantitative evidence of their sustainability efforts.

But sustainability reports are not just new to companies. Journalists and analysts also need to learn what to do with them.

Here are the five steps companies can take to ensure their sustainability reports receive the attention they deserve.

1. **Be honest.** People are more likely to trust someone who acknowledges their short-comings. Investors are likely to smell a rat when reading sustainability reports in which everything is rosy. Publish targets, and don't be afraid to admit if you are not there yet. It's a journey. Also, anyone reading your sustainability report should not have to look up sophisticated jargon just to understand what's going on. Tell 'em straight, and your readers are more likely to be convinced. To this end, I recommend [this article](#). For an example of how this can look in practice, check out Patagonia's latest [B-Corp report](#), especially the sections marked "Challenges".
2. **Go deep.** Give the reporter something to sink their teeth into. Better to tackle the biggest ESG issue confronting your company head-on and go into detail, than to generalise about a broad range of initiatives and activities. Consider [partnering with an NGO](#) to achieve maximum impact – both in terms of sustainability and with the media.
3. **Tell the story.** Say your company places particular emphasis on gender diversity, or recycling. Explain your motivation for doing so. Use corporate storytelling to give specific examples of who will benefit. Go "[all in \(as Adidas shows\)](#)"...
4. **Nominate a senior spokesperson.** Ensure your Chief Sustainability Officer – or whoever was responsible for putting the document together – is ready to field questions from reporters. But ideally, your CEO or Chairman would also be prepared and available for interviews. This demonstrates your company understands that sustainability goes beyond feel-good platitudes and box-checking the SGX's listing rules.
5. **Make infographics available for publication.** Leading producers of sustainability reports master the art of simplifying and visualising often complex issues to ensure that the core message is not lost in often inevitable detail. Work with your design

agency to produce stunning infographics and increase the chance of coverage by giving media organisations a Creative Commons license to use them.

Companies which truly understand that sustainability is a way of doing business, not a PR exercise, will make every effort to ensure shareholders and analysts read and understand them. We will soon see who is serious about it – and you can be sure that your investors are paying attention.

We are inviting Heads of Investor Relations and other communications and finance professionals to discuss this and other topics at our forthcoming workshop "Are you ready for the AGM?"

With peak AGM season coming up, Hong Bao Media is teaming up with **Paia Consulting** to run a limited number of communications workshops for Heads of Investor Relations, Boards of Directors and Senior Leadership Teams.

Topics covered:

- Attracting media interest in sustainability reports
- Best practise in presentation of financial statements
- Best practise in dealing with difficult questions they may be asked by shareholders
- Best practise in presentations to institutional investors
- Best practise in live webcasting
- Best practise when reporting bad news

Click [here](#) to register.

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Our three core businesses are:

1. Media skills and executive presence training and coaching for senior business leaders

2. Live webcast production from our green screen studios, or on-location
3. Active investments in a portfolio of blockchain and fintech start-ups

We operate two Integrated Communications facilities, one in Singapore's Central Business District and another in Kuala Lumpur's Central Business District. These consist of green screen television studios for on-camera recordings and webcasts, adjoining training facilities for small groups of senior executives.

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