

COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Department helps members maximize the benefits of their connection to the Council and makes the Council's work more relevant and useful to the public. Encompassing the websites, newsletters, brochures, the annual report, photography, press releases, and other products, this new department is the focal point for information about Council activities and products for members, the media, and the general public.

The Communications Department is instrumental to the Council's achievement of two of its main goals: adding value to the public debate on international affairs and turning the Council into a truly national organization. Through electronic, verbal, and printed communication, this department connects the Council to its members and to the public.

Electronic communication is an efficient and exciting way to open the Council to its members across the country and the interested public around the world. The Council's main electronic interaction is through its four websites for the public, individual members, corporate members, and *Foreign Affairs* readers. These recently re-developed sites are maintained and updated by the Communications Department and offer Internet users a profusion of information and analysis on international affairs. For example, at www.cfr.org one can download the text of hundreds of Council publications, including independent task force reports, articles and op-eds by Council Fellows, rapporteurs' reports of selected meetings, summaries and chapters of Council books, *Foreign Affairs* articles, congressional testimony by Council Fellows, and several other items. By publishing on-line, the Council is able to bring specialized texts to important new audiences, especially overseas.

The Council's website has received rave reviews; among others, the Dow Jones Business Directory gave it

a nine on a ten-point scale. The site also maintains its top ranking on the major search engine Lycos.com, which advises that "a visit here is vital to anyone serious about studying America's role in the global society."

Other Communications projects that help the Council reach a more diverse and national audience include creating and disseminating a monthly members' newsletter, publishing guides to staff policy experts, and acting as the principal Council spokesman by explaining the substance of Council activities and products to the press and the public.

The department also plays a role in adding value to the public debate on international affairs by organizing press conferences and media events, promoting Council publications to journalists and others, acting as a conduit to magazines and newspapers for op-eds and articles written by Fellows and research associates, and providing press support for the Council and *Foreign Affairs* magazine.

In this era of global communications, the Council is leveraging technology to maximize the utility of its research and analysis for its members, the country, and the world. By communicating with people everywhere through its websites and on-line discussion groups as well as through more traditional methods, the Council stands poised to boldly enter the next millennium.

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