

## Consultancy Practice Guidelines 01/2009: Fake Media

The incidences of individuals masquerading as media have risen, with the use of blogs as the avenue for 'publication' and as justification for their 'legitimacy'.

Tell-tale signs include unwillingness to provide name cards, claims that they work for Singapore titles or gathering market intelligence before commencement of publication, and coming late to gain easier access to events. Some of them carry name cards with legitimate-sounding company names and titles while most of them carry cameras.

These individuals seem or claim to do this for free food and door gifts.

The Association is of the opinion that such individuals provide little to no value to your clients as their blogs may not reach the targeted audiences of clients or they do not actually publish any news in physical or online formats. In addition, they deplete the supply of media kits, could disrupt media conferences with questions (relevant or otherwise), and even approach clients for donations or to purchase items.

Hence, the Association discourages the admission of such individuals at your clients' events. However, the decision to allow or disallow entry to such individuals rests with your clients.

As your clients' events are not public events and are 'by invitation only', your clients have the prerogative to decline entry to any individual who is not accredited or a legitimate member of the media or blogosphere.

The Association recommends the following course of action:

1. Counsel your clients on the existence of such fake media and their lack of value and return on investment, and possible disruption of clients' events.
2. Agree with your clients on how they would like to manage these individuals. Some possible recommendations include to:
  - bar their entry altogether;
  - provide media kits and gifts to individuals with proper accreditation, legitimate media name cards or on the invitation list only;

3. Alert your employees of such individuals to ensure that they are monitored and managed so as not to disrupt your clients' events or to harass your clients, should your clients still decide to admit them to their events.

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