

Research Report:

The New Generation of PR Professionals

A Global Student Survey

Moonlight Media Ltd.

June 2011

FOREWORD



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With the increasing reliance on technology and, in particular, social media taking centre stage, clients and practitioners could be forgiven for thinking effective public relations is now simply a matter of talking about strategic engagement, dialogue and outreach, etc., etc., a few keystrokes, a Google search and it's job done – well there's still a little more to it than that.

No matter if it's an agency or an in-house function, the reality is good PR requires a combination of traditional and new media techniques and continues to be reliant on good people trained in PR and communications. A good public relations professional will know their client's business and understand their markets, enabling them to communicate effectively.

We have always believed in the importance of helping future generations of PR professionals. At Moonlight Media this is achieved primarily via our internship programme for graduate and post-graduate students and we are proud to have helped a number of international students go on to build successful careers in PR. However, we were keen to understand what motivates a student to choose a career in the PR industry, what they think this involves and why they think it is the career for them.

Following up on this, we conducted a survey amongst students currently on PR courses to help research "The future generation of PR professionals". The initial results of our ongoing research are now published.



Introduction

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This Research Report has been produced by Moonlight Media Ltd., using data from Moonlight Media's 'The New Generation of PR Professionals' Survey 2011, conducted via Survey Monkey in June 2011. The survey was completed by PR/Communications students worldwide studying in Europe, North and South America.

The report provides a brief overview of the attitude and preferences of the future PR professionals. The data was obtained by asking questions which examined the students' motivations for studying PR and their perceptions of the PR industry prior to joining it.



Methodology

The platform, Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com), was selected and a questionnaire, consisting of 9 questions was issued in June.

Moonlight Media sent requests to a number of international universities, asking them to distribute the survey. The universities sent the link to their PR & Communications School's students by email or put the survey's link on their webpage.

Students completed the online survey voluntarily and independently.



Keypoints

294 PR students responded and completed the survey.

Demographics:

- 27.7 % - were 20 years old or less.
- 68.2 % - were between 21 and 25 years old.
- 4.1 % - were older than 25 (the oldest was 35).

Geography:

The respondents came from 17 different countries:

- Europe: UK, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Turkey, Latvia, Spain, Switzerland, Estonia, Bulgaria and Romania.
- North and South America: USA, Brazil and Colombia.
- Asia: Vietnam.
- Africa: Cape Verde and Egypt.



Key Points – contd.

The respondents were being educated in 27 different countries:

- Europe: UK, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Sweden, Turkey, France, Ireland, Austria, Denmark, Switzerland and Estonia.
- North, Central and South America: USA, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia and Costa Rica.
- Asia: United Arab Emirates, China.
- Africa: Cape Verde and Nigeria.
- Oceania: Australia.

Experience:

60% did not have previous experience in PR or Communications.

40% had previous experience in PR or Communications.



Results at a glance

PR industry perception (factor behind a student's decision to choose a Public Relations course):

- 32% - the prestige of the industry
- 27% - the potential for high earnings
- 26% - curiosity

The top four dream destinations (where students would go for PR career development if they had a choice):

- 47% - US
- 29% - UK
- 8% - France
- 5% - Australia

Internship opportunities (where students would like to gain work experience):

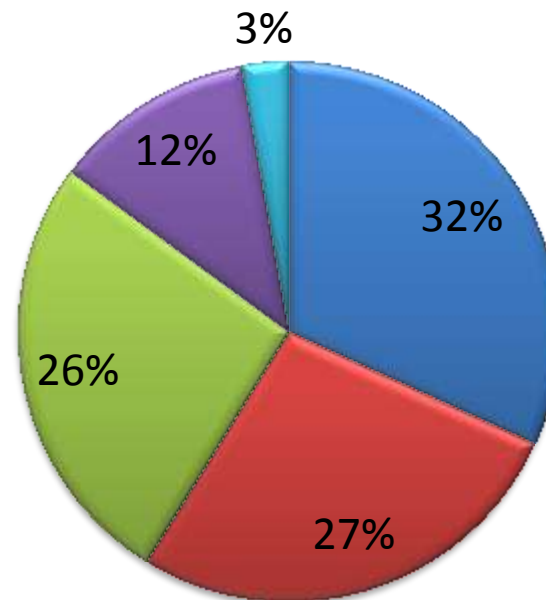
- 50% - a PR agency
- 19% - an in-house PR department
- 31% - no preference



Reasons for studying PR/Communications

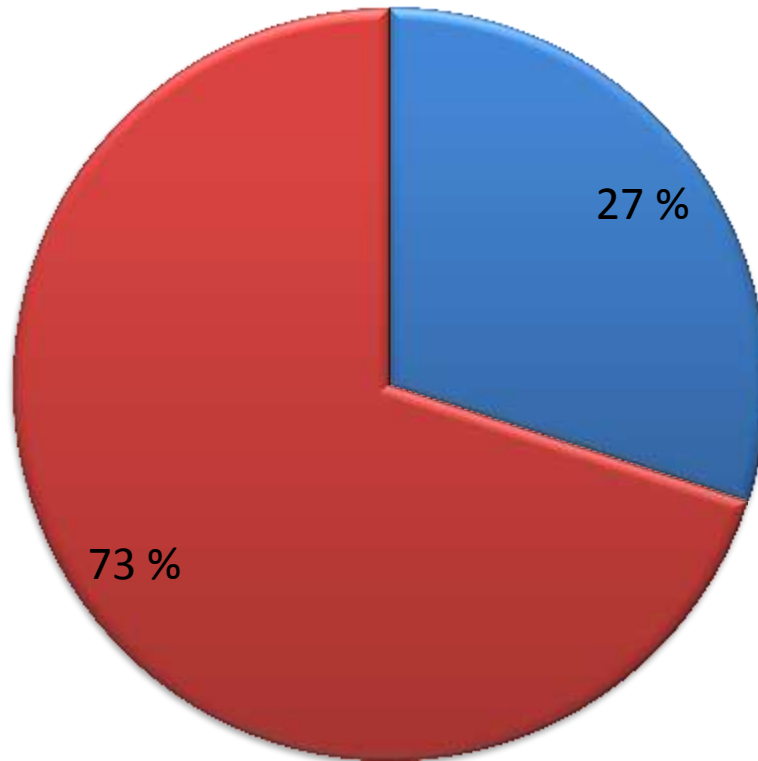
Students were asked: 'Which factor was the most important in choosing a PR course?' and provided with the options below in a tick box format.

Which factor was the most important for your choosing a PR course?	
<u>Answer Options</u>	<u>Response Percentage</u>
Prestige of the industry	31.8%
Potential for high earnings	27.0%
Curiosity	26.3%
Previous experience	12.1%
Don't know	2.8%



- Prestige of the industry
- Potential for high earnings
- Curiosity
- Previous experience
- Don't know

Willingness to work abroad after graduation

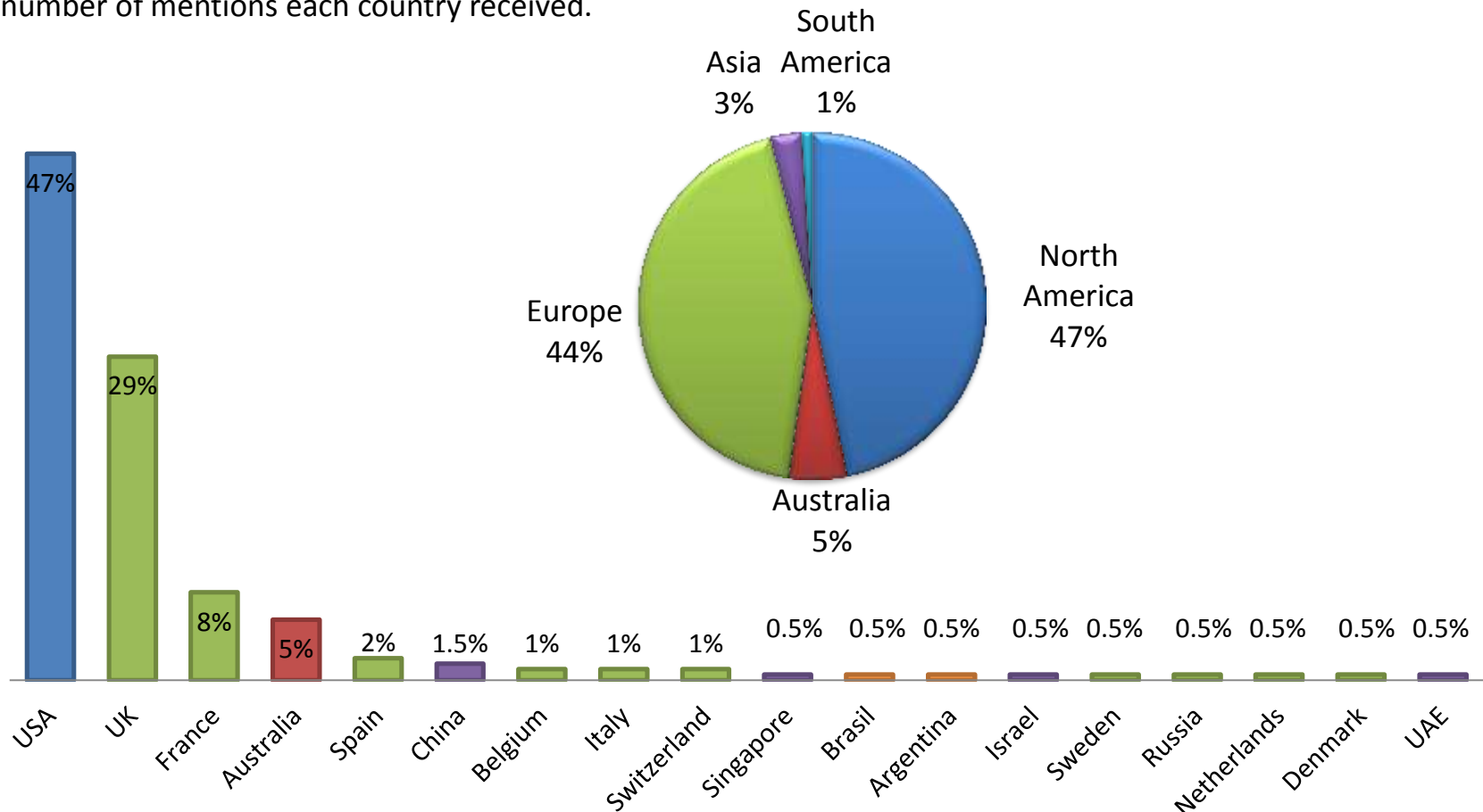


- Respondents who would prefer to stay in their own country
- Respondents willing to work abroad

Preferred foreign country of work after graduation amongst those willing to move

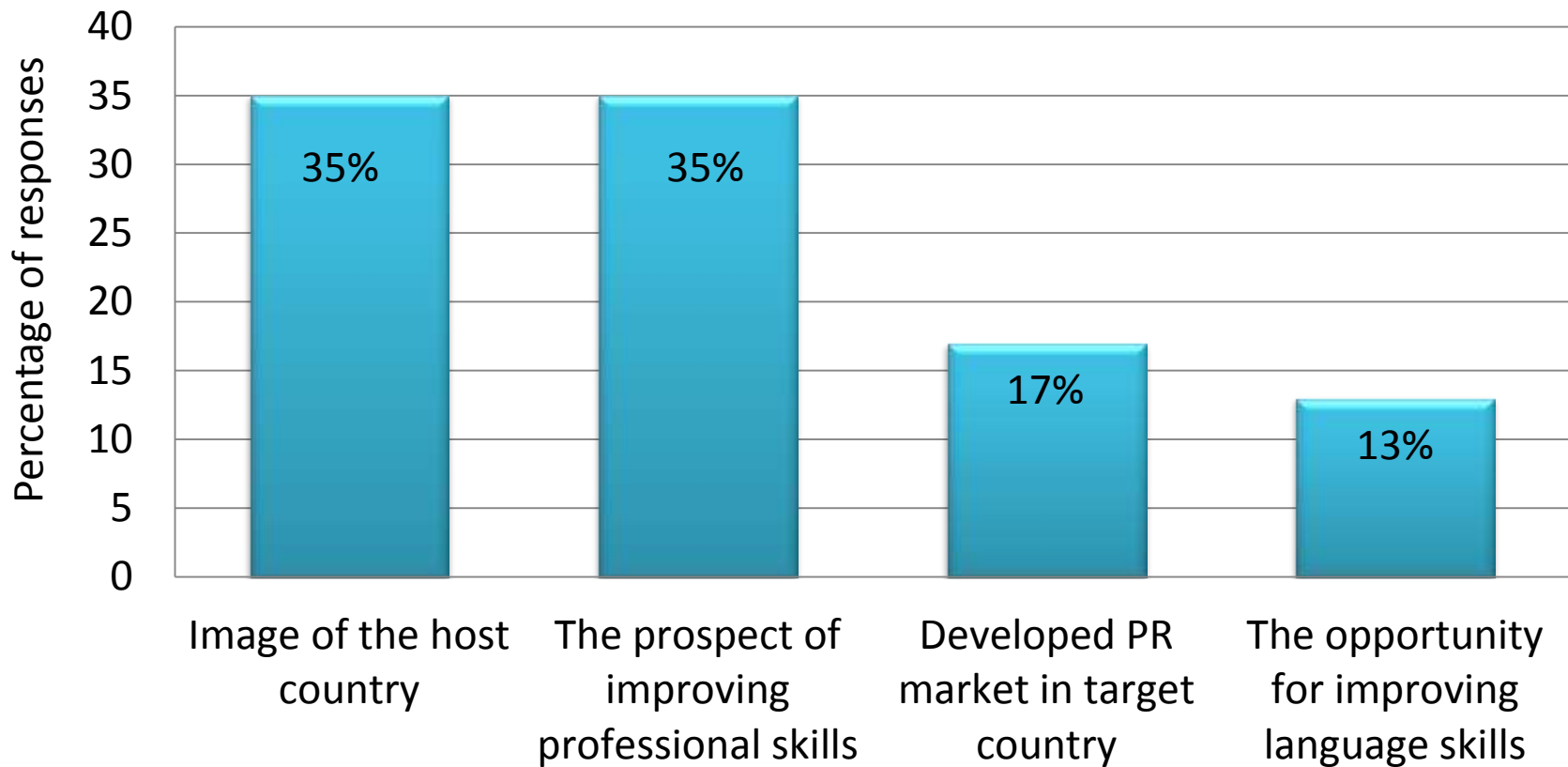


Students who answered the previous question and had indicated their willingness to move countries were then asked: 'Which country would you prefer to go to after graduation?' The space for their response was left open for more than one country, therefore this data is based on the number of mentions each country received.

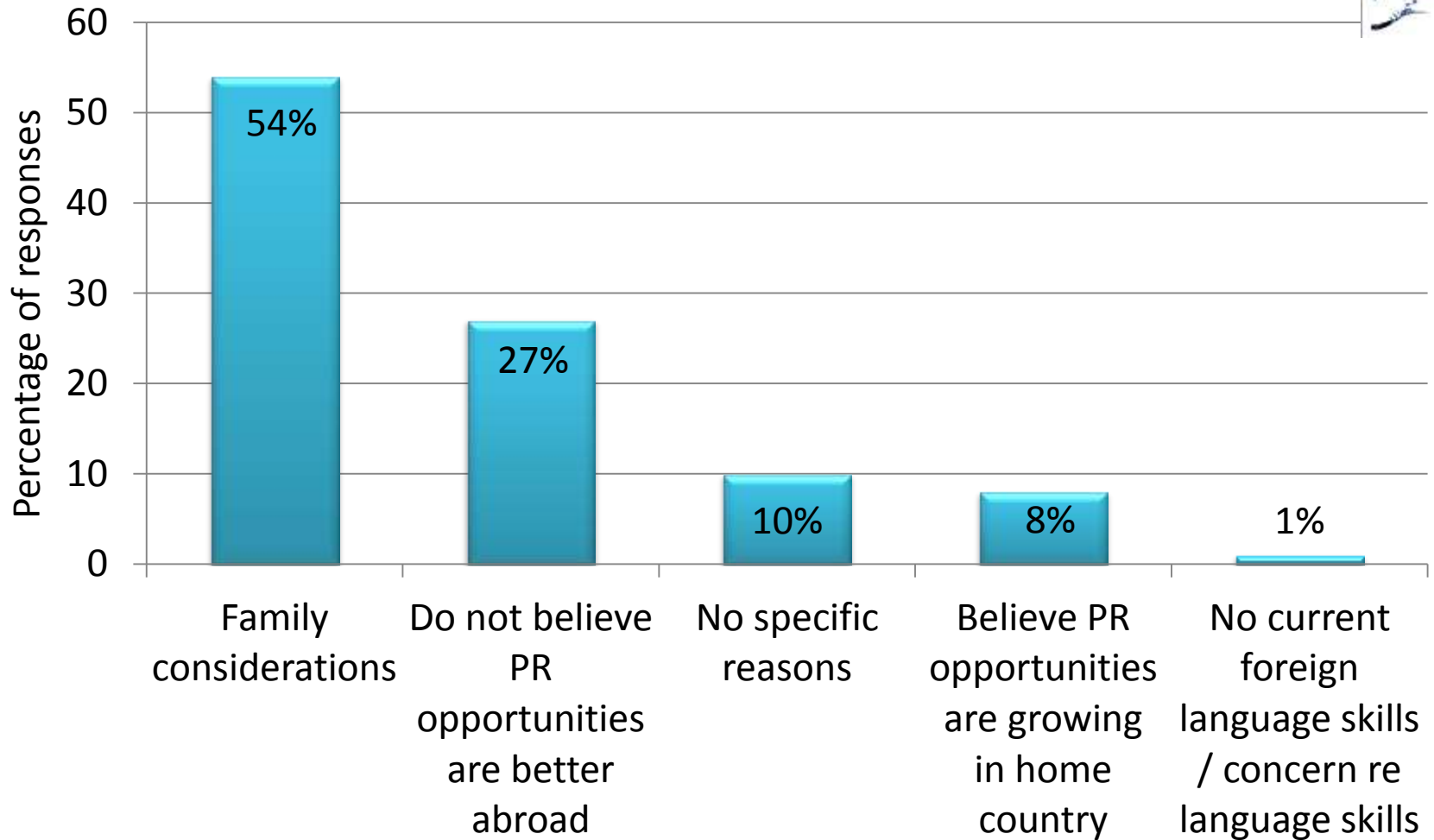




Reasons given for preferring to go abroad after graduation



Reasons given for not wanting to move after graduation

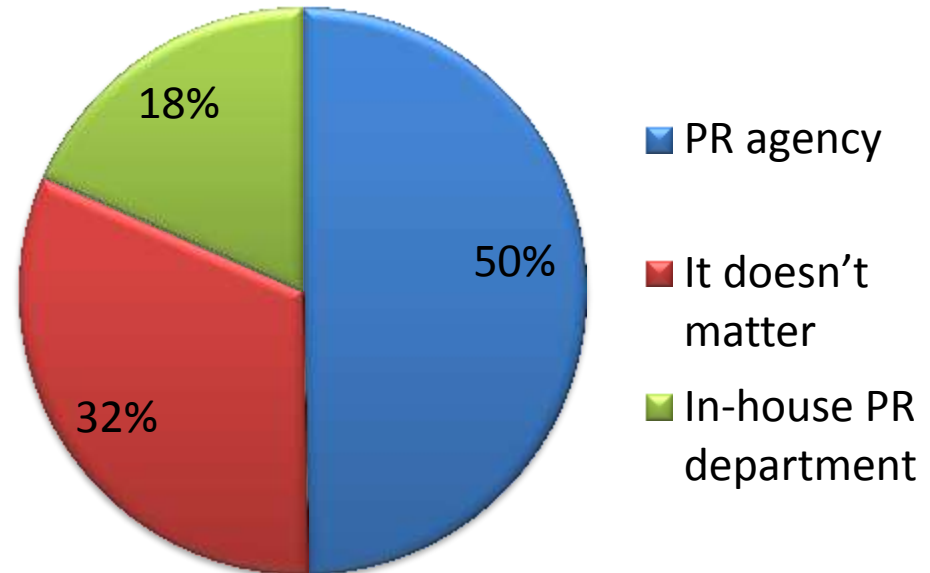


97.2% of students believe that an internship is an important step in a PR career



Preferences for internship placement amongst those who believe an internship is important

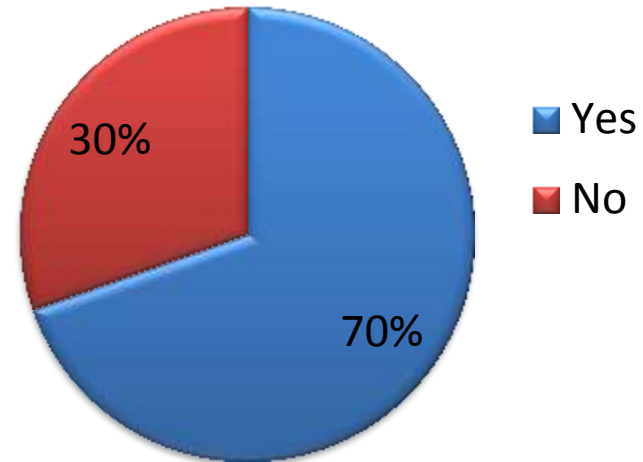
Where would you prefer to have an internship?	
Answer Options	Response Percentage
PR agency	49.7%
It doesn't matter	31.9%
In-house PR department	18.4%





Willingness to undertake an unpaid internship amongst those who believe an internship is important

Would you apply for unpaid internship?	
Answer Options	Response Percentage
Yes	69.6%
No	30.4%



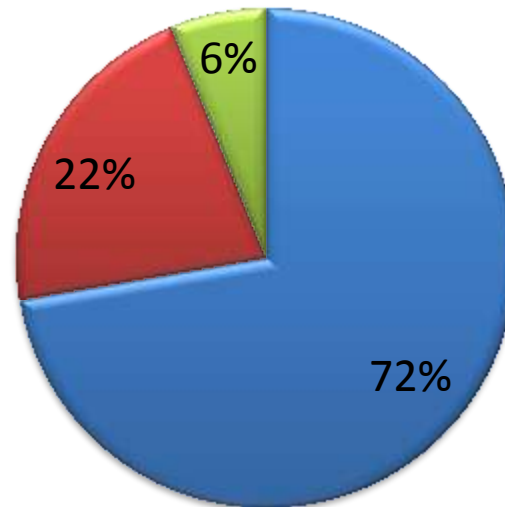
Previous experience of PR did not affect willingness to undertake an unpaid internship.



98.3% of students believe that knowledge of social media was important for professionals.

Place of Social Media communications tuition within a PR course amongst those who believe knowledge of social media is important

Should Social Media communications be taught separately from traditional PR?	
Answer Options	Response Percentage
No	72.3 %
Yes	21.5%
Don't know	6.2 %



- Taught together
- Social Media taught separately from traditional PR
- No opinion

Summary

This research report has been produced by Moonlight Media Ltd. using data from the student survey conducted in June 2011.

The survey was completed by PR/Communications students in universities across Europe, North and South America.

The report provides a brief overview of the attitudes and preferences of tomorrow's global PR professionals.

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Availability: This document is available to download by following the link below or by writing to:

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