

# SUCCESSFUL MEDIA STRATEGIES FOR BUSINESS: HOW FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT AND JOHN CURTIN WON JOURNALISTS' SUPPORT©

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## ABSTRACT

*At the height of the Pacific war, the American and Australian leaders communicated successfully with journalists, providing valuable business strategies on how to develop positive media relations in crises. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, in December 1941, the United States President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Australian Prime Minister, John Curtin, generated favorable news coverage about their leadership. Yet there is a lack of information on their media strategies to win journalists' support in a time of crisis. This paper shows how Roosevelt and Curtin managed to influence and persuade the news media. First, they frequently communicated to journalists in an honest, egalitarian and friendly way, increasing the number of regular news briefings between the press and the national leader. Secondly, they advanced the relatively new medium of radio to broadcast appealing, inclusive and accessible messages. Journalists repeated and amplified their radio talks in the news. Thirdly, they used practiced, forceful rhetoric and hand gestures in filmed newsreel scenes to convey their resolve and create the appearance of a direct, friendly relationship with their target audiences. These media strategies are still useful to business leaders when managing information needs in today's 24-hour news cycle.©*

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## INTRODUCTION

Just as CEOs need to communicate a unifying vision to reassure troubled markets, Franklin Delano Roosevelt used the media to bring together diverse global audiences after the Pearl Harbor bombing. During the Pacific crisis, for example, Australian people's "admiration of his personal qualities" was "unlimited", as that country's Prime Minister John Curtin declared (1945a). Why did people in Australia and around the world develop "a personal devotion" to this United States president "rarely given by a people to any statesman other than their own" (Eggleston, 1945)? While Roosevelt is known for his stirring radio "fireside chats," there is a lack of published findings on how he managed his media relations to generate positive news coverage about his resolve to end the Pacific crisis with Curtin. Likewise, United States journalists reported on "Honest John" Curtin's eloquent radio rhetoric, likening this to the words of Civil War poet Walt Whitman because it "should have roused the fight in the entire U.S. public" (*Time*, March 23, 1942, p. 27; August 23, 1943, p. 34; August 30, 1943, p. 28). Their media strategies are useful for today's businesses when communicating information needs during a time of crisis.

Effective leadership calls for personable executives skilled in the fine art of communicating across boundaries (Fombrun, 1992; Hartog and Verburg, 1997). The most successful firms provide a common understanding of a clear and consistent corporate vision (Bartlett and Ghosal, 2002). Through their frequent messages in the press, radio and film, Roosevelt and Curtin generated mainly favorable media coverage about their alliance in World War II (hereafter the war). They developed cooperative media strategies after the Japanese military government's bombing of the Hawaiian naval base, Pearl Harbor, on December 7, 1941. Roosevelt sent about 90,000 US servicemen to Australia, a country with major military bases and a population of seven million people, by August 1942 (Curtin, 1944a; Saunders and Taylor, 1995). By talking frequently with journalists, using inclusive language and practiced, forceful

gestures, they persuaded varied public audiences to coalesce and support their strategic direction. This paper identifies the lessons of their media success for today's businesses.

To achieve this aim, the next section conducts a review of previously published literature that suggests the two leaders' expanded use of the media. Yet there are gaps in our understanding of how these wartime media strategies may apply to today's corporations, when seeking journalists' support during a crisis. This paper will set out a multimethod approach, using qualitative and quantitative analyses, to discover how Roosevelt and Curtin appealed to journalists and media audiences. These methods will determine their ability to promote their messages at news conferences, on radio and in the visual media for journalists to report favorably to enhance their public stature. The conclusion will be reached that the contemporary "Great Recession" provides an opportunity for CEOs to use these established media strategies to help restore business confidence.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the literature reveals parallels in both leaders' media skills. They established a close affinity with journalists by talking about their previous newspaper experiences in media conferences. While Roosevelt enjoyed referring to his undergraduate position as the managing editor and president of his university's newspaper, *The Harvard Crimson*, Curtin discussed his former role as an Australian labor newspaper editor (Davidson, 2000; White, 1979). When Curtin visited San Francisco on April 19, 1944, for example, he said he had been a "newspaperman" at a media conference that was "the biggest and best ever held" in the city, according to a Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) commentator (Moody, 1944a, p. 1). Appealing to journalists' sense of integrity, Curtin said they were in an "honorable" profession that necessitated a "high degree of responsibility" and upholding a "code" (1944b, p. 44-45). These press conversations assisted the two men to develop a sense of a common bond with reporters.

As Roosevelt answered journalists' impromptu questions, his interviews represented a significant departure from the more formal, structured briefings provided by his predecessors, Herbert Hoover and Woodrow Wilson (Perloff, 1998; Truman, 1945; Winfield, 1990). He generally conducted twice-weekly news conferences during his four presidential terms. This amounted to 998 interviews during slightly more than 12 years, from March 8, 1933, to April 5, 1945 (Perloff, 1998). Likewise, Curtin generally held twice-daily media briefings, well timed at noon and the early evenings to coincide with reporters' deadlines including weekends (Lloyd, 1988, Lloyd and Hall, 1997). Furthermore, he conducted at least three major media conferences in San Francisco and Washington DC in 1944 (Campbell, 2008; Curtin, 1944c; Great Britain Foreign Office, 1944). Just as Roosevelt was the first president to employ a full-time press secretary, Stephen T. Early, in 1933, Curtin appointed Australia's first full-time prime ministerial press secretary, Don Rodgers, in 1941 (Levin, 2008; Rodgers, 1971). While Curtin and Roosevelt benefited from the wartime censorship policies, and a few newspaper publishers disagreed with their ideologies, they developed mainly respectful, egalitarian relationships with journalists (Day, 1999; Serle, 1998; Steele, 1985).

Both leaders enthusiastically used the relatively new media of radio and wartime newsreels (Bonner, 1963; Day, 2000; Link, 1955; University of San Diego, 2008; Ward, 1999). Scholars have described Roosevelt's radio "fireside chats" as setting "the gold standard for American political oratory" because of his ability to project a warm, fatherly persona to US audiences (Bonner, 1963; Lim, 2003, p. 438; Link, 1955). As historical accounts vary, it is believed he gave between 25 and 31 radio "fireside chats" during his presidency (Lim, 2003). Similarly, Curtin gave radio talks from his country to US listeners (John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library, 2007). By early 1944, he and Roosevelt had developed a "very friendly and cooperative relationship" (Black, 2001, p. 225).

Likewise, the leaders' wives, Eleanor Roosevelt and Elsie Curtin, used news conferences to promote their wartime alliance, as well as to support women in business and leadership. On March 6, 1933, only two days after her husband's inauguration, Eleanor Roosevelt began weekly interviews to try to persuade US news organizations to employ at least one female journalist each. She conducted 350 women-only media conferences in the White House from 1933 to 1945 (Beasley, 2000; United States Library of Congress, 2006). Just as Eleanor Roosevelt gave media talks during her visit to Australia, Elsie Curtin conducted news interviews in Washington DC (Campbell, 2008).

As US correspondents portrayed Roosevelt's death as a shock to Americans, similarly many Australians were reportedly astonished by the loss of Curtin. Both nations' citizens seemed genuinely surprised by the news because journalists had cooperated with the two leaders and censorship policies by avoiding publishing detailed medical diagnoses of their health problems (Coatney, 2011; Evans, 2002). Curtin wrote to Eleanor Roosevelt and the new US President, Harry S. Truman, that Australians were deeply "shocked" by his death during his vacation in Warm Springs, Georgia, on April 12, 1945 (1945b, p. 34.). Similar statements were made about Curtin after he died in Canberra on July 5, 1945. Few Australians "were prepared" for the tragedy, with people quoted as saying they "didn't think it was so near." The news was reported as tributes on US press front pages (Coatney 2011). Journalists lauded the two men's resolve to remain as leaders to help achieve a war victory.

## METHODOLOGY

To discover how the two leaders were able to develop positive media relations, this study has conducted a multimethod approach. First, a new examination is made of primary sources, some of which are rarely viewed, to identify the successful strategies developed by Roosevelt and Curtin in their media conferences. Secondly, through a limited content analysis, this paper investigates the keywords they emphasized to persuade audiences. Thirdly, the simplicity, accessibility and appeal of their words will be examined. The Flesch Kincaid score will be used for this purpose. This formula ranks documents on a school grade level. The recommended Flesch-Kincaid score for most public documents is about eight, close to the reading level of "middle-brow" newspapers and suitable for an eighth-grade student (Day, 2008; Lim, 2003). Rudolph Flesch first developed his readability formula as a doctoral thesis in 1943 at Columbia University's Teachers College in New York City (Sirico, 2008). Certainly, Roosevelt and Curtin were aware of the need to speak distinctly in national broadcasts (Curtin, 1941a; Ryfe, 1999). Expert recommendations have varied on the optimal pace of public speech, with some scholars advising a languid pace of one hundred words each minute (Lim, 2003) while other authors advocate 125 words a minute in a business setting (Nichols and Stevens, 1957). These formulas will be applied to a sample of Roosevelt and Curtin speeches to glean an understanding of whether their media messages were targeted effectively to global audiences.

Fourthly, it is important to discover whether these messages were reproduced favorably in the news. This analysis is based on the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism formula (2008) that a news article is deemed "positive" if two-thirds of the statements appear to support a leader (Public Broadcasting Service, 2009). Fifthly, while public opinion polling was new in the wartime era, these surveys indicate general support for the two leaders (Gallup, 1972; *The Courier-Mail*, August 14, 1942, p. 4; *Time*, August 23 and 30, 1943). By investigating their ability to promote their values and visions, this study will identify the secrets of their success as media communicators.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Managing the News

Although Roosevelt and Curtin cultivated good-natured relationships with journalists, they delivered their main messages forcefully to the media. For example, the president joked with the nation's newspaper financial editors at the beginning of an interview, when he said: "Of course, very few newspapermen know the difference between a dollar and a dime, anyway. But then, on the other hand, very few Presidents do. So we start even" (1942a). Yet he knew how to persuade journalists to focus on his messages. At one of his White House media conferences, he sought to influence correspondents to report on the US economic agreements with Australia. He announced: "We have been receiving from Australia enough beef and veal, practically, to feed all of our troops that are based in Australia." This "reverse lend-lease process" enabled US meat producers to send about the same amount of beef and veal to troops in Europe. "I didn't know it until this morning," he told journalists. "I grabbed hold of it and said that's the thing that has been overlooked." He also encouraged them to publish the news by saying: "That is a real headline. In the long run that is something that the country doesn't know" (1943). As a result, the press reports supported the US-Australian military alliance (Coatney, 2011).

Roosevelt's innovative news conferences perhaps influenced Australia's prime minister to hold more frequent, two-way discussions with journalists. Curtin's news interviews were unprecedented in their frequency, openness and informality in Australia (Coatney, 2011). At his San Francisco media conference, "pressmen" applauded and laughed when he joked that neither he nor Roosevelt "could get outside of the law of natural attraction" as American servicemen married Australian women (1944d, p. 35; Moody, 1944b). Despite these seemingly spontaneous interactions, Curtin was prepared to direct the content of these international media talks. When he visited Ottawa in 1944, the Canadian Prime Minister, William Lyon Mackenzie King, observed: "He seemed to attach great importance in the morning to the press interview. He came with material prepared for distribution, welcomed questions, etc" (June 1, 1944, p. 565). Just as Roosevelt had persuaded reporters to promote his "real headline," Curtin focused journalists' attention on his prepared information.

Likewise, Eleanor Roosevelt created a "delightfully informal atmosphere" and made her main points emphatically at a media conference in Canberra, Australia on September 3, 1943. Afterwards a senior Australian journalist, Joseph Alexander, wrote in his diary: "She is the greatest woman in public life that I have ever met" (September 4, 1943). Furthermore, Eleanor Roosevelt's candid media talks in Australia might have influenced Elsie Curtin's interview techniques when she visited Washington DC in 1944. Elsie became a popular media personality, who assisted her husband's US mission. Shortly after Curtin announced his trip, *The New York Times* (April 4, 1944, p. 14) and *The Washington Post* (April 6, 1944, p. 9) publishers praised Elsie's decision to "break a tradition" and travel with her husband. Eleanor promoted a firm friendship with Elsie (Eleanor Roosevelt 1944). At her first US news conference, Elsie accentuated themes of kinship by saying Australian and American women had "a good deal in common" and she would continue to support their "prominent" work in "public affairs" (1944). After her interview with Washington DC's leading female journalists, she was praised for her "honest opinions of matters American and Australian" (*Republican*, May 5, 1944; *The New York Times*, April 26, 1944, p. 20; *The West Australian*, April 28, 1944; *Valley News*, May 6, 1944). Elsie extended her US visit, resulting in *Washington Post* stories about her "busy time" as an "honor guest at luncheons" and her speech to the American Association of University Women (May 12, 1944, p. 12; May 15, 1944, p. 3). Subsequently the two women pioneered direct relationships between a national leader's wife and international journalists.

Along with their candid press briefings, Roosevelt and Curtin were adept in diverting media attention from controversies. One day after the US declaration of war against Japan on December 8, 1941,

Roosevelt announced new censorship rules at his press conference. In a persuasive manner, he added: “It is going to work out all right.” Yet one White House reporter questioned: “Will there eventually be a censor who we can get our teeth stuck into?” The president replied: “It is awfully hard to answer it. Talk to Steve [Early] about this” (1941a). By referring the journalists to his press secretary, Early, he managed to forestall more negative questions. Ultimately, reporters were willing to accept a voluntary censorship system because it was preferable to punitive war secrets laws and they recognized the popular support for fighting totalitarian enemies (Hammond, 2001).

Similarly, Roosevelt was keen to prevent undue media attention of Curtin’s visit because he was secretly resting at his advisor Bernard Mannes Baruch’s hunting and fishing lodge in Hobcaw Barony, South Carolina. Before the meeting, Eleanor confided to Elsie: “The President may still be away on an enforced holiday due to complete weariness” (1944). They kept Roosevelt’s secret. Curtin did not give details of his forthcoming trip when he spoke to 80 leading journalists at Blair House, Washington DC on April 24, 1944. Instead, correspondents positively portrayed his views on peace talks (*The New York Times*, April 25, 1944; *The Washington Post*, April 25, 1944). While detailed records do not exist, Roosevelt seemed to have enjoyed Curtin’s visit because on the same day, he cabled Churchill to confirm: “Everything goes well here in my vacation residence. The doctor agrees with me that I am better” (1944a). Early’s media release indicated only that the Curtins had accompanied Eleanor on a one-day return trip to Roosevelt’s “vacation residence in the South” (Early, 1944, p. 15). This abstruse message was repeated in newspapers and an official photograph of the cheerful visitors was published (*Republican*, May 5, 1944; *The Daily Mirror*, May 1, 1944; *The Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, April 27, 1944; *The Sydney Morning Herald*, April 25, June 27, 1944). In fact, Roosevelt revealed his “vacation hide-out” to White House correspondents only when he invited them to an interview at Hobcaw Barony on May 6. Imploring them to maintain confidentiality, he said: “I have been very comfortable down here. I want to come back” (1944b).

Their press strategies are useful for businesses when conducting media conferences and news interviews. While cultivating direct, candid and forceful communications to journalists, they knew when to divert attention quickly from potential controversies. Although they gave the appearance of informal, spontaneous press interactions, they were prepared to focus on their main messages by distributing written material and persuading reporters to accept what they considered to be a “real headline” (Roosevelt 1943).

### Connecting with New Media Audiences

During their global media broadcasts, Roosevelt and Curtin deliberately selected inclusive language of unity and appealed to ideals that evoked shared meanings among different cultural groups. When Roosevelt began his Pearl Harbor announcement and his “fireside chats,” he always welcomed his media audiences with some variant of a greeting to “My Friends” (Lim, 2003). One day after the bombing in Hawaii, he attempted to instill hope in his listeners by talking of “righteous might,” “absolute victory,” “confidence,” “determination,” and “triumph” (1941b). As Curtin broadcast the first prime minister’s radio talk from Australia to American listeners, he greeted “men and women of the United States” particularly those who were “fighting,” “sweating in factories and workshops,” and “making sacrifices.” His frequent use of “we,” “us” and “our” contributed to his reassuring tone (1942a). Curtin’s appeals to freedom, democracy, and liberty were familiar in Roosevelt’s rhetoric. More than half of the “fireside chats” were published on *The New York Times* front pages, with the full texts of the speeches continuing inside the issues (Lim 2003). Such prominent news columns indicated press endorsement for Roosevelt in his home state as he was a former governor of New York. Furthermore, when he mentioned “Australia” occasionally (1942b, 1942c and 1942d), his speech was often favorably promoted on Australian newspaper front pages (e.g. *The Argus*, April 30, 1942; *The Canberra Times*, February 25, 1942, September 9, 1942). Curtin broadcast his US radio talk to more than 700 radio stations connected to the National Broadcasting Company of America, as well as to the British Isles, Canada, Europe and

South America (1942a; *The Age*, *The Canberra Times* and *The West Australian*, March 16, 1942). He received positive US press coverage and London reporters praised his “fighting message to America” (*The Age*, March 16, 1942, p. 2; *Time*, March 23, 1942). Thus, they established a semblance of a friendship with their audiences that reinforced each one’s media image as a “man of the people” (ScreenSound Australia, 1945).

Despite their theme of unity, the two leaders tried to marginalize and isolate their critics. Roosevelt “assailed his opponents ... as often as he greeted his friends” in his “fireside chats” (Lim, 2003, p. 449). During his broadcast to celebrate George Washington’s birthday, he described foreign policy isolationists as those who “wanted the American eagle to imitate the tactics of the ostrich.” He added: “Now, many of these same people, afraid that we may be sticking our necks out, want our national bird to be turned into a turtle.” Roosevelt reassured his listeners, however, that “we prefer to retain the eagle as it is - flying high and striking hard” (1942e). Likewise, Curtin branded his critics, who were opposed to his military draft policy, as “the mischief-makers outside” the government, and “abusers” whose “quarreling” would not hinder “those who have the responsibility of conducting the war” (1943a, p. 592-596). Newspaper editors copied his speech, focusing on his description of the “mischief-makers” (*The Age*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The West Australian*, February 12, 1943). Yet both leaders took care to make impersonal references to “Japan,” “the enemy,” and the war. It was necessary to avoid verbal “assaults” on Japan’s revered Emperor Hirohito, according to the US government. By the first half of 1942, Roosevelt and Curtin removed official anti-emperor and racist statements that might consolidate Japanese people’s support for their military government and could become counterproductive to Allied efforts in the Pacific (Brands, 2005; Curtin, 1942b; Mowell, 1942). With the aid of speechwriters, as well as adding their personal written flourishes, they were able to portray their opponents as removed from public opinion.

Moreover, Roosevelt and Curtin advanced the use of relatively new media to aim their messages appropriately to their target audiences. Roosevelt made about nine radio talks each year during his presidential terms. Curtin broadcast about 12 significant prime ministerial radio addresses a year. In terms of the accessibility of their words, Roosevelt’s “fireside chats” were suitable for audiences with a ninth-grade reading level. A selected sample of Curtin’s radio talks was generally appropriate for tenth-grade listeners. Although the prescribed standard was for a public document to be targeted to an eighth-grade student, it appeared that they still aimed their major radio broadcasts to a predominantly lower secondary school level. This was suitable for the era, when the average level of education was eight years of schooling in the US and nine years in Australia. The Roosevelt and Curtin radio talks were accessible to global media audiences (Coatney, 2011; Day, 2008; Lim, 2003; U.S. Census Bureau, 1942).

Both Allied war leaders knew how to deliver their oratory at the right pace for their target audiences. When announcing the Pearl Harbor tragedy, Roosevelt spoke for six minutes and was reportedly interrupted by “wild and thunderous applause and cheers” in the joint session of Congress (1941b; *The Argus*, December 10, 1941, p. 5). Therefore, he spoke 86.6 words a minute; his pauses emphasized the drama and import of his words during the broadcast. In his radio talk on the same day, Curtin spoke 119.4 words per minute, which some scholars would consider an acceptable pace (1941b; Nichols and Stevens, 1957). After developing a reputation as a very fast speaker, Curtin talked calmly with Australians in like manner to Roosevelt’s reassurance that the invasion of Pearl Harbor was “a date which will live in infamy” (Roosevelt, 1941b; *The Herald*, October 4, 1941). According to different scholarly estimates, the president’s average pace was between 105 and 117 words per minute in his “fireside chats” (Bradenburg and Braden, 1958; Lim, 2003). Based on a selected sample, Curtin spoke an average 139.46 words a minute, faster than the recommended levels of 100 to 125 words (Curtin 1941b, 1942a, 1943b). Yet at the start of the Pacific crisis, both leaders spoke more slowly than they normally did to emphasize their keywords about hope, unity and a strong defence.

During his “fireside chats” newsreels, Roosevelt spoke directly to the camera at eye level, with his hands placed on the table before him to signify his straightforward manner and a close connection with his audiences. The president was framed in close-up and medium shots to convey a personal relationship with US moviegoers (Universal Studios, 1933, 1934). In a 1934 scene, for example, he removed his pince-nez glasses and looked straight at the camera to criticize “a timid few people” opposed to his policies and to emphasize his words: “I believe in practical explanations and in practical politics” (Universal Studios, 1934). In like manner to his newsreels, filmmakers started a pattern of intimate, close-up scenes that signified Curtin was leveling with the public. Filmed rehearsals showed Curtin’s determination to perfect his messages as he uncomplainingly waited for the director’s clapperboard and the call for “action!” His practice film scenes indicated he refined his memorized rhetoric, gestures and camera delivery to build “a closer relationship between the Australian and American peoples,” as he declared in a public statement. During one of his stand-ups to the camera in “take three,” for example, Curtin pointed his finger, moved his head from side to side, looking like he might be addressing an unseen audience, and said: “We know that our destinies will go forward hand-in-hand and we are proud and confident in that association.” The camera zoomed in closer during “take four” as he embellished his statement to add, “we will stand or fall together” and “we are proud *and happy* in that association [emphasis added.]” As in his other newsreels, he did not refer to notes (Coatney, 2011). Roosevelt’s innovative use of relatively new media may have influenced Curtin’s radio and film strategies. Both leaders seemed to have approved of film techniques that emphasized their direct communications and strong, decisive gestures to reassure international audiences.

They worked hard to look like skillful media performers, providing useful tips to business communicators. Their strategies included rehearsing in practice sessions so that later, they would appear to be using new media effortlessly. Moreover, they approved of close-up, eye-level visual images of themselves to establish a sense of a personal relationship with their audiences. They used assertive hand gestures to emphasize their main messages, such as when Roosevelt deftly removed his pince-nez glasses and Curtin pointed his finger as they affirmed their statements. Their unifying, inclusive language appealed to shared ideals that brought different groups together. At the same time, they portrayed their opponents as isolated from mainstream public opinion. Furthermore, they took care to use impersonal words to characterize foreign enemies so they would not alienate overseas populations. They spoke more slowly to appear calm and reassure people in a time of crisis, and selected accessible words that were appropriate for their target audiences. Their rhetoric, media images, and gestures are applicable for today’s business leaders when needing to articulate a clear vision to increasingly multicultural audiences.

The frequency of their radio broadcasts, the largely positive reception towards them in the news, the mass audiences of devoted listeners and polls suggest that Roosevelt and Curtin used the media skillfully (Lloyd, 1988; Steele, 1985; *Time*, August 23, 1943). Similarly to the president, Curtin generated mainly positive news coverage of his foreign policies (Coatney, 2011; Steele, 1985). They were successful in using relatively new media to develop a close link with public audiences. For example, Australian radio listeners enjoyed Curtin’s “periodical talks to the nation” because they liked to “hear his voice, weigh his words and generally maintain that personal contact with the head of the Government which is eminently desirable” (*The Age*, January 22, 1945). At least 12 wartime senior journalists affirmed in their reminiscences that he was a great prime minister (Coatney, 2011). Likewise, public polling conveyed the leaders’ foreign policies were mostly popular among citizens. By January 1942, Roosevelt’s public approval rating was 84 per cent, according to the Gallup poll. Another survey found 73 per cent of respondents approved his handling of foreign policy in May 1943 (Gallup, 1972). The next year he was elected to an unprecedented fourth presidential term. In a survey in Australia, eight out of 10 voters said they “were satisfied or more than satisfied with Curtin’s job as prime minister” in August 1942 (*The Courier-Mail*, August 14, 1942). During the Australian federal election in 1943, he won 66.9 per cent of the votes in his electorate of Fremantle, Western Australia. At the time, this was the greatest election victory for his Australian Labor Party. *Time* reported (August 23 and 30, 1943) that 78 per cent of

Australians supported his leadership. These types of polls and news coverage indicated the leaders' mass media strategies were successful in attracting broad support.

## CONCLUSION

In a worldwide crisis, Roosevelt and Curtin provided valuable lessons on how to manage media relations. This paper has set out to identify the contemporary usefulness of these strategies for business leaders, seeking to generate favorable news coverage during a crisis. For this purpose, this study has examined rarely viewed private, officially confidential and public wartime sources to identify the two leaders' media interactions. Furthermore, the author has conducted a limited content analysis of their global media communications to ascertain their selected keywords, rhetorical emphases and oratorical pacing, as well as to discover how they targeted their messages to public audiences. Qualitative and quantitative analyses have demonstrated that, overall, journalists mainly portrayed their words favorably in the news and diverse audiences responded positively to their messages.

As today's "24/7" news forums are increasingly focusing on business executives, it is useful to understand how the war leaders used the media successfully. Roosevelt and Curtin cultivated frequent and spontaneous interactions with journalists. While they prepared thoroughly before news interviews, they showed how to create cooperative journalist relations by talking openly, rather than hiding official information from reporters, who might have discovered contentious news from other sources. Although they benefited from wartime censorship, they kept focused on promoting their main messages, directing talks from potential controversies and branding opponents as far from the mainstream. Yet they often used impersonal language when characterizing foreign enemies to avoid alienating diverse, multicultural audiences. When advancing the use of relatively new media, they selected inclusive language of unity to appeal to ideals shared by disparate populations. For the broadcast cameras, they rehearsed and cultivated close-up, eye-level images of themselves and used assertive hand gestures. These media images signified a direct, honest relationship between them and the public. Furthermore, they spoke more slowly to media audiences after the Pearl Harbor bombing, emphasizing their resolve, and targeted their words at an accessible literacy level. Their techniques are helpful to business managers as they seek to communicate a strong, unifying and memorable vision in the news.

While this paper has focused on the contemporary relevance of the Roosevelt and Curtin media strategies, the current global financial crisis provides an opportunity for future research in this area of case studies. Some seventy years after the height of the Pacific war, we have reached a new era where major forces have again converged. This includes the emergence of another global crisis, the rapid expansion of relatively innovative media and the need for skillful communicators to help restore business confidence. More research directions are opening for investigating how managers are responding to present financial challenges by using diverse media to develop positive relations with journalists.

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