

For Immediate Release

**Institute of Communication Agencies announces
2010 Masters Certificate in Brand Communications (MCBC)**
*New brand identity created by Ogilvy in support of the formal program
launched to the advertising community at large*

April 9, 2010 – Toronto, Ontario – The Institute of Communication Agencies (ICA) announced the formal launch of the Masters Certificate in Brand Communications (MCBC) at a thought-provoking executive breakfast event today, in Toronto. The high profile, invitation-only event featured thought leaders and internationally renowned industry brand-builders, Brian Fetherstonhaugh, chairman and CEO, OgilvyOne Worldwide and Stephen Graham, chief marketing officer, Maple Leaf Foods.

Building holistic leaders who can navigate rapid change and complexity

The launch event itself underscored the vision of the 2010 MCBC program: To refine idea development skills and shape leaders of brand innovation, where a wealth of ideas advance rapidly and agile brand communication solutions are created.

“To be masterful in brand building in our light speed marketplace we must be skilled in idea leadership and agile in our innovation approach,” explained Suzanne Filiatrault, director of professional development, ICA. “Bringing agility to brand solutions is based on building a profound understanding of the drivers of a brand’s value with consumers and then layering on top flexible idea creation that remains true to the brand’s DNA. To be truly agile, ideas need to be easily prototyped, rapidly test-marketed and ultimately refined in-market based on continuous results feedback.”

The MCBC program is unlike any other executive education program available in Canada -- exclusively designed for brand communication practitioners whether they hail from the creative, media, business or planning disciplines. Acceptance standards are stringent with an initial requirement of a minimum of 8+ years work experience in the marketing communications industry. This is a program for professionals who are passionate about branding and ideas and who are currently operating in management leadership roles within an agency or consultancy practice.

Propelling an idea-driven industry to innovative heights

The design approach of the MCBC program reflects a continuous learning philosophy and a unique leadership development perspective.

"In our initial effort with an exclusive pilot program involving ICA members last year, we learned what the most valuable skills and perspectives are in developing the leaders in our industry. During group discussions a disturbing 'idea factories' perspective was identified, where the value of ideas becomes commoditized," notes Carolyn Meacher, industry director of the MCBC program. "We committed to addressing the serious issue of idea devaluation in designing the program's curriculum. We intend to arm industry leaders with the tools they need to transform the value of ideas, to embrace our marketplace as a complex ecosystem that thrives on experimentation, and to derive greater innovation from ideas that are truly valued for the business equity they create," she added.

One unique element of the curriculum is that the content will be guided by an accomplished advisory group including Bruce Philp, founding partner and president of GWP Brand Engineering and John Wright, recently president of Wunderman, Canada. The faculty for the 2010 program is currently being confirmed based on bringing the best ideation minds together to ignite the learning. Currently under consideration, to name a few potential faculty participants, are: SynecticsWorld, a Boston-based leader in creative innovation practices, renowned branding design thinker, California-based, Marty Neumeier and Toronto consultant Tim Hurson, author of the award winning book "Think Better: An Innovator's Guide to Productive Thinking."

The curriculum design is based on a 15+ day instructional experience scheduled over three 5 day in-class sessions and a set of half-day workshops to apply the program learning to a real branding challenge presented by select not-for-profit clients. "Within the MCBC program we want to foster the development of more transparent and collaborative leadership practices not only in dealings with co-workers, but importantly at the client's strategy table, and ultimately at the C-suite and Board level," Ms. Filiatrault adds. "By setting up a real-world branding challenge to address, we give participants both a chance to put their new learning into practice and also an opportunity to give-back to the community," she concludes.

Inspiring identity reflects strong vision

The introduction of the 2010 program is being supported through a branding identity and communications material launch in April, generously created by Ogilvy of Toronto. An inspiring logo, print collateral and a microsite, www.mcbcprogram.ca, are designed to fully support the unique branding identity.

Application is now open for the 2010 program. Early Bird rates are in effect until August 31st. The program commences in October and closes with final case presentations in April 2011. Full information regarding deadlines, course dates and fees can be found at www.mcbcprogram.ca

About the ICA

The Institute of Communication Agencies (ICA) represents Canada's communications and advertising agencies. ICA members collectively account for over 80 per cent of all national advertising in Canada, with an economic impact worth more than \$20 billion annually. ICA serves as a leading source of information, advice and industry education, promoting thought leadership, best practices and the elevation of professional standards.

ICA-led initiatives include thought leadership events, such as *FutureFlash* and *Advertising Week*, professional development forums such as *Ad Women of Toronto* and certification programs, such as the *CAAP* accreditation and the *Master's Certificate in Brand Communications*. More information about the ICA and its initiatives can be found at www.icacanada.ca.

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