



## CCI Conference on Corporate Communication 2014 The Hong Kong Polytechnic University Kowloon, Hong Kong

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Hosted by:

**CCI – The Hong Kong Chapter The Hong Kong Polytechnic University**

Featured Workshop:

**Meeting the Challenges of Communicating Complex and Conflicting Global Issues**

Presenter:



### **Stephen K. Dishart**

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Advisor, Corporate Communications International  
Adjunct Faculty, Baruch College, City University of New York  
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### **Introduction:**

The complexity of communications has grown exponentially:

- The missing plane that becomes a mystery sparks a global debate over terrorism, passport control and international air traffic regulations.
- A crisis in the Ukraine not only develops into an international diplomatic crisis, it impacts the Paralympics within a few days of a successful Olympics in Russia.
- While Nigeria is Africa's most populous nation and its oil fields promise greater growth in the continent's second largest economy, violence in Nigeria's central region remains deadly and it is largely ignored.

In these complex issues, where organizations both look to the risks and opportunities involved, what do individuals do to protect their reputations? What do corporate sponsors do to preserve their support yet demonstrate to their shareholders and clients they are

consistent with their “messaging,” – who are they and what to they authentically believe and practice? And how do NGOs ensure their missions remain on track and their supporters back them as conflicts tear apart at their ideals?

These are the issues that will be presented in Hong Kong by Stephen K. Dishart, President of Dishart Communications and Crisis Management Consultants, LLC. Steve is a 30-year veteran of news media and corporate communications leadership. Today, he is a regular guest speaker on the subject of organizational communications. Dishart developed a course for Baruch, City University of New York, titled, “Counseling the Corporation,” which examines the issues that stress organizations at the highest levels and can lead to stock price fluctuations and determine success or failure for the company.

During his 30-year career Dishart served as the head of communications for a Fortune 200 company and a Fortune 500 company, Steve has been involved in some of the most intense issues to impact our financial landscape in the past decades. From the crisis of 9/11, where Steve led Swiss Re’s management of the crisis communications and subsequent litigation, to leading communications on many mergers and acquisitions, hostile takeovers, CEO successions and financial crises, he has been at the helm of his organizations’ efforts to get the message right to protect and enhance its reputation.

### **Working Session:**

In this two-hour workshop, participants will join in a discussion of the complex environment of communications and discuss ways to manage the intersecting conflicts where missions, goals and objectives become conflicted with reality. The case study to be used in this session involves hydraulic fracturing, the latest technique in reaching previously unavailable natural gas supplies, but risks water purity. Meanwhile, the potential of “fracking” may shift the balance of energy suppliers across the globe and create financial success for producers. Further, natural gas is seen as ‘cleaner burning’ than coal, yet increased pipelines, new shipping facilities and more infrastructure will be required to transport the fuel. That’s good for many business and especially employment, but what will it mean for future of renewable resources? The future of a carbon-free world? For our world?

The questions are endless on this topic and the stakeholders are virtually everyone on the planet when it comes to energy and water supply. Taking a position today may be impacted by multinational issues of tomorrow. Our exercise will expose these conflicts and challenge participants to reach reasonable solutions between stakeholders.

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