

PRGN makes big gains

Founded in 1992, the Public Relations Global Network is the newest of the “big four” networks. PRGN’s combined revenues in 2010 were \$110 million, a healthy recovery from 2009’s recession-resulting slip to \$100 million, which itself was a fall from their combined total revenues of \$110 million in 2008.

For their 2011 role call, PRGN now boasts 43 total independent member firms in 65 different offices, which accounts for about 900 PR professionals and approximately 1,000 different clients worldwide. This is a slight gain from their previous roster of 42 partners, which the network held for the past two years.

PRGN President Francine Robbens said a network comprised of independent agencies is designed for fast recovery because its constituents have long established contacts in their respective markets. When the markets recover, business follows.

“We are all doing our own thing, operating within our own markets. We know the culture, we know the media landscape. We have a bit more long-term vision,” Robbens said. “The multi-nationals have one brand and one culture they’ve imported into various markets, along with their Chief Executive.”

Robbens is also the President of Public Relations Partners, in Brussels, Belgium. PRGN’s heavy public affairs offerings makes Brussels a likely hub for the network, a city that holds an estimated 28,000 lobbyists. Brussels was also home to PRGN’s most recent semi-annual meeting.

“Lobbying and public affairs is a type of specialization where we have found a great deal of success with our peers,” she said.

Robbens also said the network is currently looking into China and Indonesia as potential places for future growth.

“We are still also looking at our present markets, and that means GDP is important. We need to be in those important markets, we need to establish very clear lines,” she said. “We are entrepreneurs. We want to be independent and we are operating in our individual and cultural environments, but we know the markets are global. It’s for the best that we want to be part of a network.”