

Motivation

Swiss companies maintained a presence in public and private spaces throughout the 20th century. Their promotional or publicity practices, which we understand as synonyms, encompassed activities using various tools and methods, which spread and supported companies' products, values and image to wide or targeted audiences. Propaganda, advertising, marketing, public relations, communication and even lobbying were all terms and categories used at different times, by different players, sometimes as synonyms, sometimes to refer to distinct practices and materialities. Nevertheless, they all served to promote or improve businesses' publicity. They contributed to their growth and participated in their global commercial and political strategies. In that regard, this conference aims to explore promotional practices of companies and multinationals operating in Switzerland in the 20th century.

Since the early 2000s, corporate publicity has been covered by a variety of approaches in several disciplines (media history, political history, media sociology, marketing history, etc.). However, the topic remained largely uncharted by Swiss historiography, except for content analysis of specific campaigns. By contrast, we wish to address the functions and organisation of corporate publicity within Swiss businesses. This conference examines the structures and evolution of promotion departments within companies in various sectors (pharmaceuticals, banks, food, tourism, etc.) or interest groups (such as business associations). It seeks to highlight their global strategies, infrastructures and day-to-day practices. The goal is to map out the players involved in promotion and their roles, whether it consisted of partnerships with commissioned companies (PR agencies, graphic design studios, film production companies, etc.), networks formed within employers' associations or ties with media institutions (press, radio, television). The focus is on both internal factors, such as company organisation and restructuring, and external factors, including available technological processes and economic, political or cultural frameworks. In this perspective, it seeks to understand in what ways Swiss companies adapted, modified or discontinued their publicity policies. Researchers are encouraged to integrate analysis of the financial and accounting aspects of publicity departments, and to examine interactions between media, technologies and strategies, as well as the content and medium of campaigns.

Practical information

Keynote speaker	Marie-Emmanuelle Chessel (Sciences Po, Paris)
Working languages	French and English (speakers are invited to have slides in the other language)
Location	The conference will be held at the University of Lausanne. If speakers' home institutions cannot cover travel and accommodation costs, partial or full support may be available depending on the number of requests. Please submit an explicit request for this funding.

Submission procedure and important dates

5 March 2025	Abstracts (max. 500 words) should be submitted in Word or PDF files, together with a selective bibliography and a short biography. Abstracts should be sent to arthur.michelet@unil.ch
Late March 2025	Notification of acceptance after a selection process
Early September 2025	Publication of the conference program
26 September 2025	Conference at the University of Lausanne, followed by <i>apéritif</i>

Selective bibliography

ARTZ, Lee, « Transnational Media Corporations and Global Division of Cultural Labor and Consumption », *Les Enjeux de l'information et de la communication*, vol. 17/2, n° 2, 2016, pp. 25-38, en ligne, <<https://www.cairn.info/revue-les-enjeux-de-l-information-et-de-la-communication-2016-2-page-25.htm>>.

BAKIR, Vian et al., « Organized Persuasive Communication: A new conceptual framework for research on public relations, propaganda and promotional culture », *Critical Sociology*, vol. 45, n° 3, mai 2019, pp. 311-328, en ligne, <<https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920518764586>>.

BORGE, Jessica, « According to Plan: Strategic Film Production at the London Rubber Company », *Cahiers d'histoire du Cnam*, vol.12, 2019, pp. 71-110, en ligne, <<https://hal.science/hal-02933984>>.

CHESEL, Marie-Emmanuelle, *La publicité : Naissance d'une profession (1900-1940)*, Paris : CNRS Éditions, 1998.

COHEN, Yves, « Une école de liberté historiographique », *Critique*, vol. 843-844, n° 8-9, 2017, pp. 700-711, en ligne, <<https://www.cairn.info/revue-critique-2017-8-9-page-700.htm>>.

- COLONEL, Audrey, « Promouvoir l'entreprise dans la presse technique : l'exemple de la revue Ganterie dans l'entre-deux-guerres », *Images du travail, travail des images*, n° 12, 2022, en ligne, <<https://journals.openedition.org/itti/2153>>.
- CRAWFORD, Robert, « Seeing the Bigger Picture: Why Market Research History Matters? », *International Journal of Market Research*, vol. 64, n°2, 2022, pp. 187-199, en ligne, <<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epub/10.1177/14707853211067701>>.
- CURTIN, Patricia A., « Fred Harvey Company public relations and publicity (1876-1933) », *Journal of Communication Management*, vol. 12, n° 4, 2008, pp. 359-373, en ligne, <<https://www.proquest.com/docview/232933752/abstract/2B5EEFAE9EA4C3DPQ/1>>.
- DEBLUË Claire-Lise, *Exposer pour exporter. Culture visuelle et expansion commerciale en Suisse (1908-1939)*, Neuchâtel : Alphil, 2015.
- DELLEY Christophe, *La Suisse, pays de vacances des peuples 1930-1939 : étude des stratégies publicitaires et des médiums déployés par le Service de publicité des CFF en faveur du tourisme en Suisse*, Master's thesis, Lausanne : University of Lausanne, 2005.
- DI JORIO, Irene et Véronique Pouillard, « Le savon, le président et le dictateur. Publicité et propagande en Europe des années 1920 aux années 1960 », *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, vol. 101, n° 1, 2009, pp. 3-8, en ligne, <<https://www.cairn.info/revue-vingtieme-siecle-revue-d-histoire-2009-1-page-3.htm>>.
- DI JORIO, Irene, « Propagande commerciale ou publicité politique ? L'émergence d'une "culture publicitaire" en Italie de la Grande Guerre au Fascisme », *Sociétés & Représentations*, vol. 54, n° 2, 2022, pp. 99-122, en ligne, <<https://www.cairn.info/revue-societes-et-representations-2022-2-page-99.htm>>.
- EICHENBERGER, Pierre et Matthieu Leimgruber, « Monied politics and business influence. The Swiss Wirtschaftsförderung, 1942-2000 », Conference paper, Lausanne : Université de Lausanne, colloque « La Suisse, espace privilégié du néolibéralisme ? », 2024.
- HEDIGER, Vinzenz, Florian Hoof et Yvonne Zimmermann, *Films That Work Harder: The Global Circulations of Industrial Cinema*, Amsterdam : Amsterdam University Press, 2023.
- HEDIGER, Vinzenz et Patrick Vonderau (dir.), *Films that Work: Industrial Film and the Productivity of Media*, Amsterdam : Amsterdam University Press, 2009.
- HEIZMANN, Andreas, « Rudolf Farner und die Anfänge der professionellen Public Relations in der Schweiz 1940-1960 », Lizentiatsarbeit, University of Zurich, 2008.
- HUGHES, Kit, *Television at Work: Industrial Media and American Labor*, New York : Oxford University Press, 2020.
- HUGUENIN Régis, *L'univers visuel de Suchard (1945-1990). Des images de l'entreprise à l'image de l'entreprise*, Neuchâtel : Alphil, 2014.
- MARCHAND, Roland, *Creating the Corporate Soul: The Rise of Public Relations and Corporate Imagery in American Big Business*, Berkeley : University of California Press, 1998.

- MARTINO, Valentina et Alessandro Lovari, « When the Past Makes News: Cultivating Media Relations Through Brand Heritage », *Public Relations Review*, vol. 42, n° 4, 2016, pp. 539-547, en ligne, <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0363811116300911>>.
- MARX, John et Mark Garrett Cooper, *Media U: How the Need to Win Audiences Has Shaped Higher Education*, New York : Columbia University Press, 2018.
- PINEDA, Antonio, « ¿Todo es propaganda?: el panpropagandismo o monismo propagandístico como límite superior de la teoría de la propaganda », *Comunicación*, vol. 5, n° 1, 2007, pp. 415-436, en ligne, <<https://idus.us.es/handle/11441/11671>>.
- POUILLARD, Véronique, « American Advertising Agencies in Europe: J. Walter Thompson's Belgian Business in the Inter-War Years », *Business History*, vol. 47, n° 1, 2005, pp. 44-58, en ligne, <<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0007679042000267460>>.
- , « La publicité transnationale en Europe : le cas de Radio-Luxembourg, 1933-1960 », *Revue du Nord*, vol. 387, n° 4, 2010, pp. 967-980, en ligne, <<https://www.cairn.info/revue-du-nord-2010-4-page-967.htm>>.
- , « The Reception of Ernest Dichter and the Resistance to Motivation Research in Francophone Europe », dans Stefan Schwarzkopf et Rainer Gries (dir.), *Ernest Dichter and Motivation Research : New Perspectives on the Making of Post-war Consumer Culture*, London : Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2010, pp. 205-219, en ligne, <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230293946_12>.
- ROSS, Corey, « La professionnalisation de la publicité et de la propagande dans l'Allemagne de Weimar », *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, vol. 101, n° 1, 2009, pp. 9-26.
- RUDIN, Dominique, « Tele-Visionen. Roche und "Neue Medien" um 1970 », dans Georg Kreis, Mario König et Beat von Wartburg (dir.), *Chemie und Pharma in Basel : Beiträge zu einer vielseitigen und wechselhaften Geschichte*, vol. 2, Bâle : Christoph Merian Verlag, 2016, pp. 330-335.
- SOUZA DE CURSI, Hugo, Valérie Durieu et Piergiorgio Bruno, « Agir par l'invisible. Pour une histoire du "bégaiement" des cultures de l'influence (XIXe-XXIe siècles) », *Communication & Organisation*, vol. 60, n° 2, 2021, pp. 21-42, en ligne, <<https://www.cairn.info/revue-communication-et-organisation-2021-2-page-21.htm>>.
- XIFRA, Jordi, « Public Relations and Corporate Propaganda », dans Paul Baines, Nicholas O'Shaughnessy et Nancy Snow (dir.), *The SAGE Handbook of Propaganda*, London : SAGE Publications, 2020, pp. 137-151.
- ZIMMERMANN, Yvonne (dir.), *Schaufenster Schweiz. Dokumentarische Gebrauchsfilme 1896-1964*, Zürich : Limmat Verlag, 2011.
- ZIMMERMANN, Yvonne, , « Target Group Oriented Corporate Communication : Geigy Films », dans Janser, Andreas et Barbara Junod, *Corporate Diversity, Swiss Graphic Design and Advertising by Geigy 1940-1970*, Baden : Lars Müller Publishers, 2009, pp. 48-57.