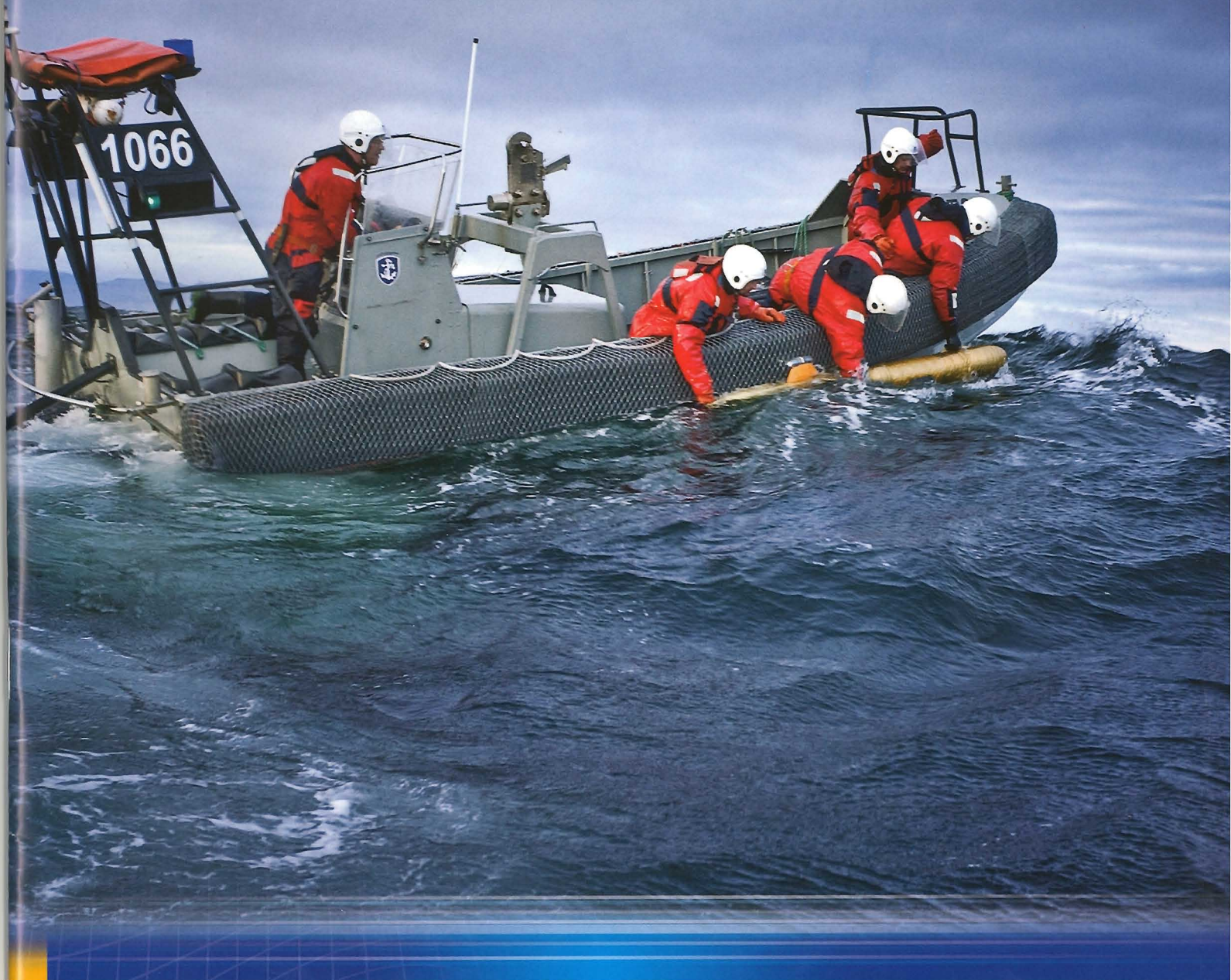


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Corporate communicator

For Amy Brown, director of corporate communications at US-based underwater light and connector specialist BIRNS, Inc., a creative and agile mind is key – a tidy desk less so

IOS How would you describe yourself in three words?

Enthusiastic, driven, irreverent.

IOS What was your first job in the industry?

Working for about five years as director of public relations for a large, fully integrated marketing, advertising and PR agency that handled a wide range of marine technology clients. I travelled – a lot.

IOS What does it take to be successful in your chosen field?

A creative, agile, open mind – and the ability to leverage those traits to achieve and maintain fresh perspectives to effectively market in such a rapidly evolving industry. And a thick skin, as everyone may not think your brilliant ideas are on target every time.

IOS Which person do you most admire in the industry?

There are so many influential leaders – it's difficult to choose just one. However, I think that Dr Margaret Leinen has had an amazing career. From her early paleoceanography and paleoclimatology research to her dedication to engaging underrepresented groups for careers in geosciences, she's already accomplished what it would take some people several lifetimes to achieve.

IOS What has been the most embarrassing moment in your career so far?

Again, how to choose just one? Actually, I've been fortunate to have had only a few. But I still have plenty of time to make up for that. I'd have to say that one of the highlights of my personal career blooper reel was during a major press event for our biggest client at my former position. We had more than 200



members of the media in attendance at a critically important, expensive Safari-themed product launch event for the military market that had taken our team seven months to plan and execute. After a performance by an African dance troupe, the head drummer stood up and hijacked my microphone during what he perceived as a lull in my presentation, and launched into a lengthy diatribe/sales pitch for his business, as I watched in horror from the podium. I could see the angry gesticulations of my client's marketing director, who clearly expected me to crowd-surf over the heads of the 40 people between myself and the new master of ceremonies, and regain control of our PA system. The longest three minutes of my professional life, although the audience finally laughed, except for the client's team, a company not known for having much of a sense of humour.

IOS What is the first thing you do when you get to work in the morning?

Email, coffee, snack. Repeat as needed. Or

far more than needed, come to think of it. Especially those last two – I fear I may be getting repetitive stress disorder from too much on-the-job sipping and chewing.

IOS What is the most exciting aspect of your job?

I love the challenges – determining how to position our company in the industry with a powerful, ongoing marketing strategy, setting and achieving measurable short- and long-term goals, and seeing them pay dividends – it's incredibly rewarding to take a plan from theory

to successful conclusion.

IOS And what do you least enjoy doing?

Filing efficiently – my desktop is usually an embarrassment.

IOS Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?

I just joined the team here at BIRNS in 2009 – but the company has been around for more than 50 years, so I'd like to believe that I can spend the next decade helping contribute to keep it in the black. ■

Career path

2000 Public Relations Account Executive, Eileen Stein Communications

2002 Senior Editor/Public Relations Manager, Drizen Dohs Corporate Communications

2004 Vice President of Corporate Communications, DataRemote, Inc

2005 Director of Public Relations, Bear Marketing Group

2009 Director of Corporate Communications, BIRNS, Inc