

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE



## public relations

want to be. At most, they risk earning a one-way exit visa from the CEO suite and even passing a company's cologne. Thanks to a series of missteps, Firestone may be consumed by the same flames that engulfed Enron.

Why the disconnect? Some say CEOs are surprisingly naive when it comes to talking with reporters. "With the media, CEOs in general don't know how to deal," says Al Ries of Ries & Ries Focusing Consultants in Roswell, GA. "They see the press as friends or ene-

emies—and both are huge mistakes. They should see them as objective journalists trying to get their jobs done."

"By and large, CEOs don't realize how prepared for the media they have to be," says Madeline DeVries, president of New York City-based DeVries Public Relations. "They think they can talk to journalists the way they talk to their own team. Many reject media training and misunderstand the job of journalists." And, she says, many "love their companies the way we love our children. They

don't understand why everyone isn't fawning over their baby pictures."

*Communications professionals caveat.*

Some CEOs of that apply ironically. They say they want it, but they can't have it, that they'll be an article prize.

Some consider their company says James P. Y. Acher Develop MA. After you turning the ci to expect com consider the en outraged whic tive coverage efforts are neq

### Media Maestri

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← "Similarly, in 6 Johnson Cl days after Tyle five pulling 31 shelves in a \$1 eventual meal splash that B sound and TV

Surprisingly established by those, many C crisis places th Maybe Coca-paying attorn got flattened tion a decade

**correct publicity stunts with Harlem schoolchildren and crafting humble concessions to the U.S. Justice Department. New York City-based fashion critic DANNA WEISS dissects the Microsoft chairman's image overhaul.**

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**"REMEMBER** the unbrushed bowlsh-cut Bill sported for most of the '80s and '90s? This not-so-derring 'do had no known shape and more to do with bed-head than board-rooms. In 2000 Bill trimmed his shag to a respectable "suits" length and adopted a camera-perfect part. He even updated his nerdy goggles to Glasses 2000!"

**"THE Y2K BILL** pictured in the foreground is a far cry from the nerdy billionaire we used to know. Not only is he more relaxed, he's more professional. This suit has shape, giving him a manlier and GUI-ier quality. The few pounds he's added to his main-frame actually fill out his jacket, while the crisp white shirt and stout simple double Windsor knot certainly make him look more pressed and polished—right down to his teeth. That's a smile, not a smirk. Go Bill!

### Oh, Make ME OVER

In 1987 Bill Gates was a programming punk plotting a heist of IBM's operating system market share. Many years of mind-boggling success and absurd wealth followed. Then came charges of market belligerence. Judges and reporters began calling Bill sullen...  
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correct publicity stunts with Harlem schoolchildren and crafting humble concessions to the U.S. Justice Department. New York City-based fashion critic DANNA WEISS dissects the Microsoft chairman's image overhaul.

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1987

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