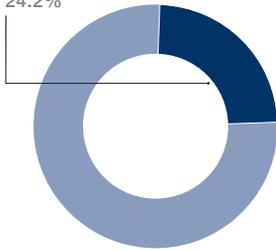


# Under the spotlight, but not at the table: A Study of Senior Communications Executives in the FT 500

At a time when social media and mobile devices shift brand control from company to customer, senior communications executives play an increasingly critical role in advancing the business agenda. But has this growing importance translated to a seat at the senior decision-making table?

To provide some quantitative insight into this question, the highly regarded **European Association of Communication Directors**, the **University of Amsterdam's School of Communication Research (ASCoR)** — the largest communication science institute in Europe, and **Russell Reynolds Associates**, a leading global executive search and assessment firm, have come together to analyze the executive committees of the Financial Times Top 500 companies to see how often the organization's top communications executive was included. The results show that at most organizations, communications executives have yet to make it into the innermost circle. The following are preliminary key findings from the research. We look forward to sharing additional insight into the results of this study in the coming months, and to engaging in further conversation about both the challenges and the opportunities facing today's senior Communications executives.

Executive Committee Membership  
24.2%



## Executive Committee Membership is Still Rare for Top Communications Leaders

Only 24.2% of FT 500 companies include their top communications executive as a member of the executive committee.



## Top Communication Leaders More Likely to Attain Executive Committee Seats in North America than in Europe

In North American companies, 33.8% of top communications officers hold an executive committee membership; in contrast, only 23.5% of top communications officers at European companies hold a seat on the executive committee.



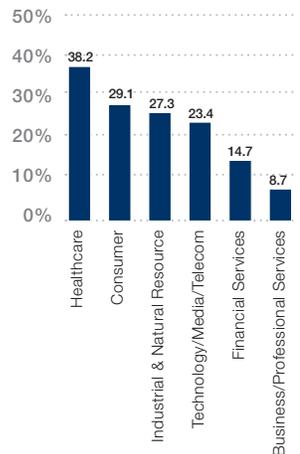
### Executive Committee Status (Surprisingly) Not a Function of Company Orientation or Regulation

Instead, It is likely a function of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) preferences and Chief Communications Officer (CCO) capabilities: Compared to BCB firms, B2C companies are not any more likely to reserve an executive committee seat for their top communications officer. Indeed, the likelihood of a top communications officer sitting on the executive committee is effectively identical across both B2B and B2C firms. Likewise, as compared with lightly regulated industries, heavily regulated industries were not meaningfully more likely to have a top communications officer on the executive committee. Taken together, these findings suggest that the likelihood of attaining executive committee membership is likely more a function of individual company dynamics (e.g., culture) and individual executive dynamics (e.g., profile of the CCO; preferences of the CEO) than structural dynamics (e.g., level of regulation in sector; B2B vs. B2C).

	CCO-Yes	CCO-No
CMO-Yes	10.9%	23.3%
CMO-No	13.2%	52.4%

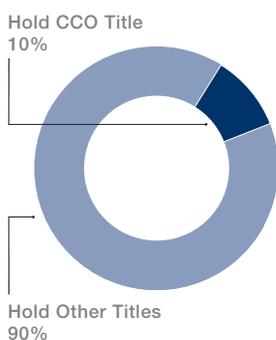
### A Majority of Companies Include Neither a CMO Nor a CCO on the Executive Committee

If only one of these executives sits on the executive committee, it is far more likely to be the Chief Marketing Officer.



### Likelihood of Chief Communications Officer Presence on the Executive Committee Varies Significantly Across Sectors

In certain sectors, Chief Communications Officers (CCO) are far more likely to maintain a presence on the executive committees of their firms. CCOs hold an executive committee seat in 38.2% of healthcare firms, 29.1% of consumer firms, 27.3% of industrial and natural resources firms, and 23.4% of technology/media/telecom firms. In contrast, CCOs hold an executive committee seat in only 14.7% of financial services firms and 8.7% of business/professional services firms.



### The Chief Communications Officers Title is Used More Often in the Trade Press than in Executive Suites

Only 10% of the top communications executives in the FT 500 hold the title of Chief Communications Officer.

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**The European Association of Communication Directors (EACD)** is the leading network for communication professionals from all fields across Europe with over 2,000 members. The non-partisan association lobbies for the profession, establishes common quality standards and promotes the advancement of professional qualification by organising events and providing services and material. [www.eacd-online.eu](http://www.eacd-online.eu)

**The Amsterdam School of Communication Research (ASCoR)** is the research institute in Communication Science at the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, University of Amsterdam. It is the largest research institute of its kind in Europe and is among the largest worldwide. More than 50 senior researchers are permanently associated with ASCoR, and its English-language PhD program hosts 34 students.

**Russell Reynolds Associates** is a global leader in assessment, recruitment and succession planning for Chief Executive Officers, boards of directors, and key roles within the C-suite. With more than 300 consultants in 41 offices around the world, we work closely with both public and private organizations across all industries and regions. We help our clients build boards and executive teams that can meet the challenges and opportunities presented by the digital, economic, environmental and political trends that are reshaping the global business environment. [www.russellreynolds.com](http://www.russellreynolds.com). Follow us on Twitter: [@RRAonLeadership](https://twitter.com/RRAonLeadership)