Andrew J. Hoffman (University of Michigan), member of OMT and the All-Academy Chair for next year, tells us about the opportunities in the 2009 Academy theme of "Green Management Matters".

As All-Academy Chair for the 2009 Academy of Management meetings in Chicago I want to first urge our division to look ahead to next year. The theme for 2009 is one that is increasingly important in our priorities: “Green Management Matters.” I want to encourage members of the OMT division to submit proposals that address environmental issues and are of interest to members of other divisions as well. I am particularly encouraging of proposals that are innovative and creative. We want to have sessions that will be a strong draw for all members of the Academy and perhaps even beyond. I am also looking for volunteers willing to help with the task of selecting the final sessions from among the proposals. I have created a special email address for this purpose: 2009AllAcademy@umich.edu.

In Anaheim this year the OMT Practice committee created what was a lively, provocative discussion between senior editors and communications professionals on both the academic and general audiences. The PDW was called “Who are we reaching? The real and intended audiences for business school research” and was organized by myself and Pamela Worline. Our distinguished panelists included:
R. Duane Ireland, Editor, Academy of Management Journal

Ellen Peebles, Senior Editor, Harvard Business Review

Joel Baum, Editor, Strategic Organization,

Don Palmer, Former Editor, Administrative Science Quarterly

Seth Lubove, LA Bureau Chief, Bloomberg

Ron Grover, LA Bureau Chief, Business Week

Phred Dvorak, Management Writer, Wall Street Journal

Angela Shah, Staff Writer, Dallas Morning News

Paul Gediman, Director, Office of Marketing Communications, Stephen M. Ross School of Business, University of Michigan

Victor Rogers, Director of Communications, Goizueta Business School Communications, Emory University
Attended by nearly 100 people, the discussion explored why the mainstream news sources and practitioner journals of business neglect the research that emerges from the top academic journals of business research. We examined some of the underlying obstacles that block academic research from crossing into the major outlets of practice and the general questions of translation between academic and practitioner oriented sources.

Through the discussion, many themes emerged and so is hard to summarize. There were some messages, however, that emerged. On the question of relevance, the newspaper journalists were looking for material related to current issues (like the back dating scandal, CEO compensation etc), and the journal editors defined relevance on theoretical grounds. This brought up the tension over time frames. It is hard for an academic to have a scholarly paper come out in a time frame that will fit with the time scales of the news media. On the question of maximizing impact of scholarly work, one of the business school communications managers suggested that the business press may be becoming less important than in the past. With the emergence of web based media and the ability of schools to create their own web based content, the business media outlets may be becoming less relevant. Indeed, the newspaper journalists described a challenging situation in which news rooms are being cut radically, making it very hard to cover the news. But they stressed that they are very open to ideas or stories from academics. In fact, several of them said that it is often hard to find an academic who will talk to them, particularly when they are on deadline. So, there seems to be room for opportunity for those academics who may wish to engage the practitioner press more directly.