



Someone You Should Know

George Stenitzer

What I do: I'm vice president of communications for Tellabs [NASDAQ: TLAB, which in October 2013 announced a definitive merger agreement with entities affiliated with Marlin Equity Partners]. I support our IR manager on communications with financial analysts and investors, and oversee communications with industry analysts, news media, customers and employees.

Why IR: I focused on marketing and public relations in the 1980s and expanded my role to annual reports and other financial communications in the early '90s. I had a passion to do a great annual report, which led to earnings announcements, annual meetings and investor relations. I joined NIRI while at Ameritech and learned the basics at the NIRI-University of Michigan IR program.



Early success: Every year for six years, I told various bosses that I wanted to do the annual report – and was told every year that I had the wrong background and experience. I finally got the go-ahead in the seventh year. My first annual report for SBC [now AT&T] was named 45th in the world by [Sid Cato](#). I'd never heard of Sid at the time and was disappointed that we were only #45. I studied and bought into Sid's approach to annual reports, so Ameritech's annual report was subsequently #1 six years in a row, including one perfect score.

Advice to IROs: Make your company's investment story as simple, straightforward and investible as possible. Don't forget to emphasize the hidden value of your company's intangible assets – such as the value of the brand, leadership team, intellectual property and strong customer relations.

A major challenge: The merger of SBC and Ameritech required 17 regulatory approvals in the United States and Europe. It was a major challenge to keep the 35 people on my team focused, proactive and positive, especially since many of them expected to be out of a job after the merger. On the other hand, their merger-related experience made them more marketable in their next jobs. I'm so proud of them and the many extremely talented people I've worked with over the years.

What people don't know about me: I've been playing guitar since high school and played classic rock with [the Decades](#) while I lived in St. Louis. Now I play guitar just for fun. I grew up in St. Louis, where I learned to kayak. My dream has always been to live along a river. It's fun to kayak even when a river is in flood – you go 5-6 miles an hour dodging trees, rather than the usual 1-3 miles an hour. Seven years ago, I moved my primary residence to a log cabin in Oswego. I can launch my kayak into the Fox River from my backyard.

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