



FOUNDATION SERIES EBOOK

Digital IR: 2016 best practices

Learn the latest global trends and fine-tune your IR tech

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Contents

- How do IROs use social media?
- 3-step mobile strategy
- 5 IR website success factors
- Webcasting best practices
- Shooting corporate video
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How do IROs use social media?

IN THIS SECTION:

- Why you can't ignore social media
- How common is social media use?
- How productive do IROs find social media?
- Social media: pros & cons
- Where should you start?
- Strategy checklist



Why you can't ignore social media

Social media has become a key communications channel for all corporate stakeholders – even investors. More than three quarters of investors have investigated an issue they first saw on social or digital media, according to recent research*.

IR professionals, however, have been slower than most to embrace social media as a way to share information, though a minority have set up dedicated accounts.

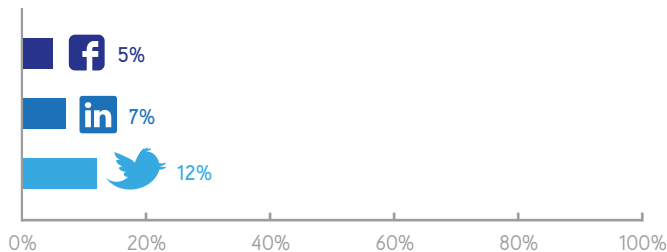
Whether IR teams have direct control or receive support from colleagues, social media demands a role in all financial communications programs.

**2015 investor digital and social media survey from Brunswick Group*



How common is social media use?

Social media use by channel



Source: IR Magazine

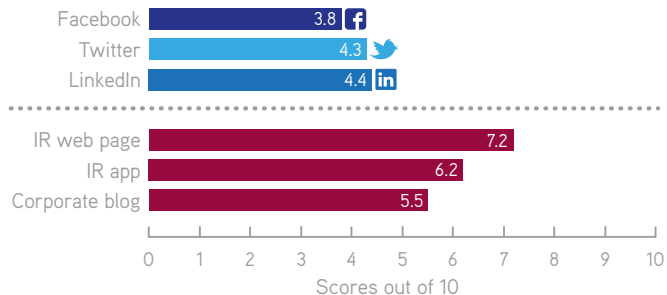
IR Magazine conducted an extensive, global survey into how the IR community uses social media to communicate with investors¹. Only a small proportion of the respondents use social media in their investor relations programs. The findings show that just 16 percent of IR professionals use social media to communicate with investors, and that Twitter is the most popular medium with 12 percent participation, followed by LinkedIn at 7 percent and Facebook at 5 percent.

Small caps use Facebook and LinkedIn more often than large businesses. This may be because smaller businesses need more exposure and are keener to try innovative options to get it.

¹*IR Magazine Special Report 2: Corporate Reporting 2014*

How productive do IROs find social media?

Productivity scores



Source: IR Magazine

The survey asked IROs how they score social media channels for productivity on a scale of 1 to 10. Crucially, only IROs who say they use social media could then comment on its productivity. The statistics indicate most companies do not view social media as a wise use of resources: respondents score LinkedIn at 4.4 out of 10, Twitter at 4.3 and Facebook at 3.8.

Even though Twitter ranks highest as the social media platform of choice for IROs, 72 percent of respondents give Twitter a score of 5 or less. This suggests that almost three quarters of those who use Twitter still aren't convinced of its value for investor relations.

Respondents rank the IR web page, IR apps and corporate blogs as more productive than any social media channel.

Social media: pros & cons

IR departments can use social media channels to enhance the distribution of their financial communications. Goldman Sachs has gone further, using Twitter as the principal distribution method for its third quarter earnings in October 2015.

Some foresee the expansion of social media and the likelihood it will be used more extensively by the investment community, making time spent on it now an investment for the future.

IR teams that set up dedicated accounts are often found in sectors where social media use is encouraged across the whole organization, such as the technology and consumer sectors.

Furthermore, some IR departments view social media as a useful way to engage with retail investors and the media.



Goldman Sachs
relied on Twitter
to distribute its
results in Q3
2015

The most commonly cited reason IROs choose not to use social media is that no demand exists from institutional investors or sell-side analysts.

Other common reasons given by IR teams include regulatory constraints, a lack of resources, senior management reluctance and the fact that social media access is barred at many financial institutions.

Where should you start?

Most IR teams choose not to engage with the investment community directly over social media. But social media remains a key distribution channel and intelligence-gathering tool, so IR teams should make sure some basic principles are being followed.

It is best practice to ensure the company's social media accounts – whether run by the IR team or another department, such as corporate communications – are linked to on the IR website. IR teams can also enhance the distribution potential of their financial releases by adding social elements such as share and like buttons.

Broader corporate accounts on social media tend to have significantly more followers than dedicated IR ones so it is advisable to post financial news to the corporate account, whether or not a dedicated IR account exists.

A dedicated Twitter account?

'We're seeing some variation today in terms of dedicated versus combined social presence,' explains Nikkole Couture, commercial head of communications at Nasdaq Corporate Solutions. 'If it's users you're after, consider one consolidated presence across marketing, PR and IR. If it's targeted information you want to provide, you'll likely prefer dedicated IR social profiles.'

Social media: strategy checklist

- ☒ Check your websites include links to social channels
- ☒ Include share buttons on press releases
- ☒ Ask corporate communications to help distribute IR content

[illegible]

- Why you need a mobile IR strategy
- Step 1: Gather the data
- Step 2: Optimize your website
- Step 3: Should you have a native app?
- Strategy checklist

Why you need a mobile IR strategy

Evidence that mobile technology is quickly taking hold can be seen everywhere. Most people have an Android device, an iPhone or an iPad to keep them in touch with friends and family.

Traffic from wireless and mobile devices exceeded traffic from wired devices in 2014, two years ahead of predictions. Cisco expects global mobile data traffic to grow three times faster than fixed IP traffic.

Within the business world, mobile is an accepted part of day-to-day work and the number of users will increase: more than half of US and European companies already provide their employees with tablets, according to a study by Frost & Sullivan.

Turning to IR communications, evidence shows the increasing importance of mobile technology to stakeholders. Data from Nasdaq Corporate Solutions indicates that 11 percent of corporate website viewers are now on mobile devices, a 44 percent increase on the previous year.

Using mobile has also moved from an option to a necessity. In April 2015 Google initiated a mobile-friendly update dubbed 'mobilegeddon', and the search engine giant's algorithms now favor mobile-friendly sites.

IROs need to develop strategies to succeed in this growing mobile environment. Mobile development is a priority, but where do you start?

Step 1:

Gather the data

Start by speaking to your provider to discover what mobile trends it sees across its websites. Your corporate website provider should be able to give you a snapshot of what is happening in terms of device use, popular content and other areas.

You can also find information on your website's mobile usage in website analytics reports. If you do not have access to these, contact your webmaster.

Webcasts already optimized for mobile have their own reports. The data in these reports will give you vital clues about what you are doing correctly or incorrectly.

Filter the data

'As your provider's stats will be an aggregate of many client sites across multiple industries, it's important to know how common mobile usage is in your space,' advises Couture. 'Consult your IR site reporting or ask your webmaster for a recent view of mobile uptake.'

Step 2: Optimize your website

An optimized IR website provides mobile users with an improved experience when they visit your site. This encourages them to spend more time and discover more of what you have to offer. Optimization also improves your chances of discovery in user searches.

Properly designed mobile websites are easily accessed by smartphones and tablets, as well as laptops and desktops. The mind-set for mobile design differs from that of desktops because of the smaller screens. Simplicity is important: larger fonts, simple menus, use of graphics and icons instead of text, and clear information all provide an effective mobile experience for the user.

Everything on your website should work on mobile. It's equally important that webcasts and any upcoming events read well on devices, and videos should play, too.

Don't forget about other elements on your website such as registration pages. They might be perfect on the desktop, but when they load onto a mobile device they may be nothing but a confusing jumble of text and lines. Certainly, mobile users won't register if this is the case.

When developing a new mobile-ready website, ask your team to view the pages on various mobile devices and browsers. This helps to pick up problems quickly.

Step 3:

Should you have a native app?

A native app is a program written for a specific operating system, like iOS or Android, that users download to their device. A person uses the app instead of using the website in a browser. Responsive web design should be your priority before you consider a native app.

The advantages of a native app include access to the app regardless of whether the user is online or not. It can also provide users with convenient notifications when new content becomes available.

Companies with a large amount of mobile traffic may want to add a native app to offer additional communications options for their audience. Firms with many retail shareholders may also want an app to reach these shareholders easily.

Apps can be simple or elaborate, off-the-shelf or custom. Basic apps may suffice if you just want to make your documents library, share price information and other standard resources available to users.

If you want users to be able to register for an event or watch live, streaming video, for example, you may need a custom app. They can be expensive, but they also offer advanced functionality.

Mobile IR: strategy checklist

- ☒ Gather intelligence on mobile traffic
- ☒ Optimize your website for mobile devices
- ☒ Consider the pros and cons of a native app

- Why IR websites matter
- Stage 1: Exceptional design
- Stage 2: Honing your message
- Stage 3: Video engages
- Stage 4: Mobile now a necessity
- Stage 5: Security check
- Strategy checklist

Why IR websites matter

Your IR website is a crucial resource for investors and analysts. Data collected by Nasdaq Corporate Solutions reveals investors rely on it for more than you might think:

- **More than 84 percent of investors visit a company's IR website to conduct research before they decide to invest**
- **More than a quarter of investors visit investor relations websites at least once a day and 71 percent visit at least weekly**
- **Earnings announcements prompt 70 percent of investors to visit the IR website immediately**

Companies are beginning to realize they need to dedicate more time and effort to their IR website. By using the same branding and features seen in other areas of



Schlumberger's IR website

their business, they hope to attract new users and retain the interest of investors and analysts.

IR website security merits special attention, especially after several recent IR data breaches. With cyber-crime increasing, many companies have not addressed vulnerabilities, leaving them open to infiltration.

The following five pages offer advice to improve your website for maximum benefit and protection.

Stage 1: Exceptional design

Visiting your IR website is often the first experience a potential investor has with your company, and first impressions count. New investors and existing ones are tech-savvy and expect more from websites than in the past. They are pressed for time and want information quickly and easily. Poor design, navigation or functionality will repel and frustrate visitors.

IR websites must embrace the principles used by successful businesses in other parts of the web. They need to create trust and instill investors with the confidence they need to act. Visitors want an emotional connection with your brand, and website design is an important part of brand image.

Design elements such as icons and hero images are not just aesthetically pleasing: designers use them as visual cues so visitors understand what your business offers. Photographs, videos and graphics help investors 'see' your business model so they can decide whether it is a fit for them.

As your IR website is at the center of marketing efforts, it also needs to stay fresh. Designers constantly experiment with new layouts that reflect current trends. Tiled layouts, similar to those seen on Pinterest, are popular in website design today. A tired, dated website can quickly bounce away potential investors.

Stage 2: Honing your message



Nike uses bold 'hero' images on its IR website to reinforce its financial profile

Your homepage is your opportunity to grab a visitor's attention. If you don't do it quickly, they won't know what you offer. Statistics indicate the average page visit is under a minute. This means your homepage needs punch, not reams of text.

Successful homepages summarize a company's story using fewer words and more images. It should be possible to create your IR homepage copy in fewer than four paragraphs.

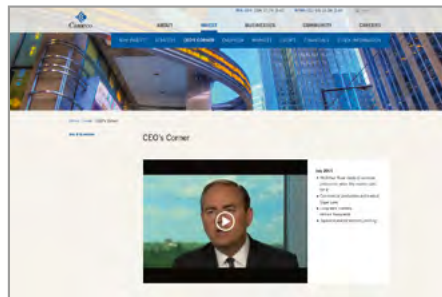
Instead of words, consider a large 'hero image' that conveys your brand. These large background images dominate the screen to wow the user. A properly chosen hero image is worth a thousand words.

Stage 3: Video engages

If a picture is worth a thousand words, video is probably worth more. Our culture favors the moving image. The exponential growth in YouTube, Dailymotion, Vimeo and other video sites confirms that visitors prefer video: it entertains and informs.

Video on your homepage is an excellent way to deliver your corporate message. Mist Media suggests the average internet user spends 88 percent more time on a website that has video. Other media experts note that video can boost website rankings.

When presenting IR data, use visuals and audio to add interest. Visitors need to understand your company's big picture and video can show them – instead of telling them – what you have to offer.



Cameco posts a regular video Q&A, called CEO's Corner, on its site

Video content of your C-suite and corporate speeches are excellent resources to promote and share. They show key leaders in action and help connect viewers to your company message.

Many IR sites already have video content they can move to the homepage for greater impact.

Stage 4:

Mobile now a necessity



Laura Mason of Legal & General Capital speaks in a mobile-ready video on the insurer's corporate website

With Google's algorithm changes this year, mobile capability for a website is a necessity. The search engine now favors websites built to accommodate users on smaller screens and, if you do not provide this, it lowers your ranking.

The reason for this shift is clear: most people use mobile today and want information when and where they want to view it.

The most important thing for IR teams to consider for their website is responsive design, which adjusts content to fit any device, no matter the shape or size, so investors and analysts can always view your information.

Stage 5:

Security check

Eye-catching design and a powerful message are important elements of an IR website, but they cannot stand in isolation. You also need top-notch security.

Minds have been concentrated by leaks of financial results from both IR websites and wire services, as well as the steady stream of broader hacking stories affecting companies.

As hackers grow more sophisticated, security measures must match their efforts. Financial data leaks seriously damage credibility.

IROs need to know that web hosts provide the protection they need to guard sensitive documents. For companies that manage their own disclosure, it's imperative to regularly review your people, processes and technology.

Questions to ask

'Look for a provider with a sophisticated information security organization. You should also inquire about training and certification for the staff who handle content to ensure your sensitive information is treated with due diligence and consistency,' says Couture.

IR websites: strategy checklist

- ☒ Compare your website with best practice in design, messaging and video
- ☒ Ensure your site is optimized for mobile devices
- ☒ Discuss with provider or internal teams how to establish/maintain security

Webcasting best practices

IN THIS SECTION:

- Why you should consider webcasts
- The value of PowerPoint and video
- Use registration and track data
- Beyond earnings and AGMs
- Be shareable and available
- Strategy checklist

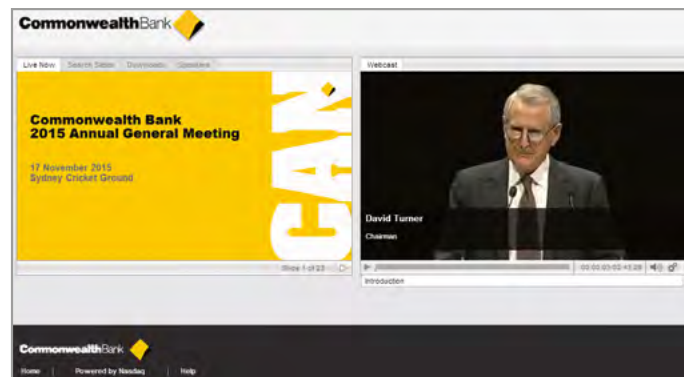


Why you should consider webcasts

Webcasting is an effective way to engage with stakeholders because it's a simple, flexible and cost-effective method to connect with others.

Webcasts can meet many needs: announcing results, opening up your AGM and sharing an investor/analyst day with a wider audience. US firms can also use webcasting to meet the requirements of Reg FD.

IROs can tailor presentations to the audience and the level of importance of the event. Many webcasts are simple audio streams, while high-end video events often include interactive elements and slick slide presentations. Whichever format you choose, the best practices on the following pages will help you get the most out of your webcasts.



Commonwealth Bank's video webcast

The value of PowerPoint and video



Adding visuals is an excellent way to bring key points home. Slides are easy to follow along with and videos can provide a sneak peek at the management team.

Videos also allow stakeholders to connect with the company's CEO, CFO and managers so they aren't just names on documents. This creates credibility and trust.

Johnson & Johnson used a video webcast with a presentation to broaden the reach of its business review event in May 2015

Use registration and track data

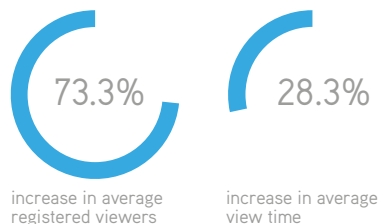
Pre-registering attendees for events is an excellent way to collect data on shareholders. Webcast tools can track how each person interacts with the webcast so you discover what is important to your audience. This information can be used to improve presentations and fulfill stakeholder needs.

Audience tracking can also tell you how long participants remain online and when attendance starts to wane. If interest drops off severely at a certain point, the presentation may be too long. If attendance slowly dwindles, IROs can use tactics such as polls and surveys to engage audiences and keep them online until the presentation ends.

In addition, pre-registration can identify journalists or media influencers in the audience and help track news coverage following the event.

A question-and-answer period is especially helpful to uncover shareholder concerns. Future presentations can then address these concerns and further build shareholder confidence.

Webcast with video and slides vs audio-only webcasts



Source: Nasdaq Corporate Solutions, 2013

Beyond earnings and AGMs

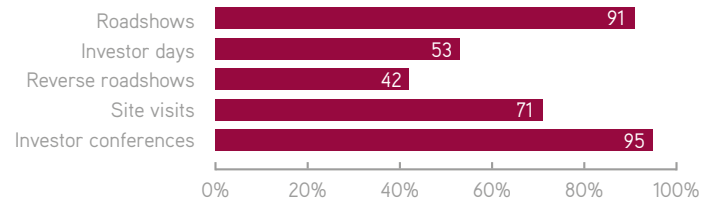
Webcasts aren't just for earnings announcements and annual meetings: they are very versatile and a good way to open other events to a wider audience.

Many companies use investor/analyst days as the cornerstone of their annual investor relations activities. Why not share them?

An archived version of the webcast on the IR website also allows repeat viewings for interested parties.

Other types of events to consider for webcasts include investor education seminars, business reviews, site visits and product updates.

What type of interaction do companies use?



Source: IR Magazine Global Roadshow Report 2014

Be shareable and available

Your webcasts should be archived on your website. You should also share them through social media. These external links will direct traffic back to your website to create further interest.

All webcasts should be mobile-friendly. Around 1.2 bn people already access the internet through their mobile devices and this will only increase. If your videos aren't easily viewable on mobile you will miss an opportunity to connect with existing and potential investors.

Boosting views in Latin America

One group that likes to make use of additional webcast distribution is mid to large-cap Latin American companies, which often have a large shareholder base in the US market, says Brian Ross, commercial head of digital media at Nasdaq Corporate Solutions: 'We normally provide distribution to StreetEvents but you can also reach investors through financial portals such as Yahoo Finance.'

Webcasts offer opportunities for growth, too. Smaller companies can gain exposure while others can reach

beyond their borders toward foreign investors. A well-crafted webcast distributed through financial portals is a powerful tool to assist you in either venture.

Around 1.2 bn people already access the internet through their mobile devices

Webcasting: strategy checklist

- ✓ Incorporate videos and slides to maintain interest
- ✓ Use registration forms and polls to gather intelligence
- ✓ Archive webcasts online and share via social media

Shooting corporate video

IN THIS SECTION:

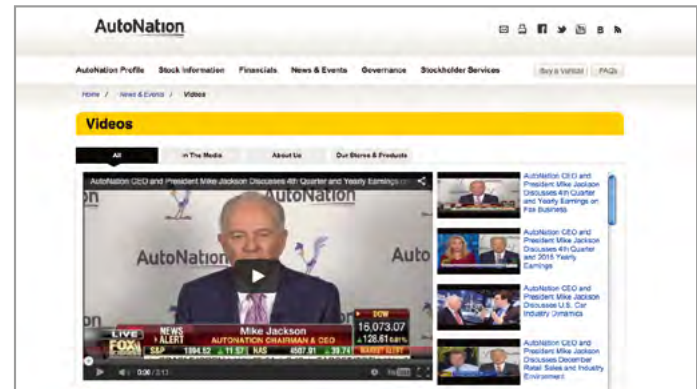
- Screen attraction
- Five best practice tips for corporate video
- Making the most of executives
- Strategy checklist



Screen attraction

Corporate video has seen an unprecedented level of growth in recent years, and with good reason. We live in a visual environment and more viewers want to 'see' the inner workings of businesses they deal with.

While text is often the chosen medium for delivering fine details about business, video delivers emotional content and builds credibility and trust. Furthermore, statistics show more than half of retail investors view corporate videos for a sneak peek into the workings of a business.



AutoNation's IR-website video playlist

Five best practice tips for corporate video

1 Keep it short and give it impact

Viewers don't have a long attention span, so businesses need to keep videos short and powerful. Less than two minutes is preferable. If you have lengthy content, try to break it up into smaller videos so viewers can absorb what you are saying without losing interest.

2 Think outside the box

Corporate videos can be more than just the CEO talking about the company. Many corporate videos now include interviews with employees, slides, animation and reviews of products and services.

3 Focus on visuals

Video delivers a single, strong message instead of the minute details of print. Company videos need to use the power of images to communicate their brand, corporate culture and business strategy. Take advantage of ways to 'show' clients the firm, instead of reading about it.

4 B-roll gives business a face

B-roll is the footage shot behind the scenes and added in the background of the main interview. It could be employees working or demonstrations of products or operations. Use this footage to

showcase your business. When done well, it gives the viewer a sneak peek into operations and attitudes.

5 Mobile is here to stay

The increase in mobile devices and the business done on them continue to increase in leaps and bounds. Responsive video is a necessity today so viewers must be able to choose how and where they view the video. Text and layout must resize automatically and video must work on a phone. Text must be large enough to read and interview subjects large enough so the viewer can see their faces.

Making the most of executives

The most popular type of corporate video today is the executive talking head. CEOs are often the people to consider first, but they may not always be the best choice. Personality and presence are vital to the success of any corporate video.

Of course, if the CEO is flamboyant and engaging, certainly use him or her in a video. Otherwise, there may be more charismatic characters in the ranks of the company better suited to the spotlight. Many businesses feature a variety of senior managers because they each have insights into their particular area of the company.

Even executives who feel more comfortable in a board meeting than before a camera can make excellent subjects if interviews are handled correctly. Video shoots can be small and intimate so executives offer insights

naturally. This not only reveals the core concepts of the business, but also the personality of the executive. This makes video compelling and engaging.

Avoid scripted interviews, which can feel staged and wooden. Opt for executives active around a conference table or speaking before a group if a one-on-one interview isn't possible.

Corporate video: strategy checklist

- ✓ Use video to showcase management and operations
- ✓ Follow our five best practice tips
- ✓ Identify best executives for airtime

Further reading

IR Magazine articles and reports to further boost your knowledge of IR and technology

Social media

Are IROs unfollowing social media?
Few IR teams used social media as an investor communication tool, and now early adopters are backing out.

The IRO view: social media

Tim Human unpacks our latest survey into the uses and value of social media in investor relations

Mobile IR

Using mobile devices and apps to run tech-savvy IR operations
New technology is allowing IROs to ditch the print-outs, improve investor targeting and keep in touch with the buy side

How to use mobile streaming for IR
Want to live-broadcast your CEO's AGM remarks? There's an app for that

IR websites

The thinking behind Twitter's IR blog
Blogs are powerful investor education tools, but largely underused. So why did Twitter's IR team start one?

Best-in-class IR websites

We asked digital experts to review their favorite IR sites. The only rule? They couldn't pick one of their own clients

Webcasting

Video webcasts trump audio-only
Using live video to illustrate earnings

is increasingly preferred by audiences, finds study

Five tips for efficient investor presentations

How to present more engagingly and with greater impact

Corporate video

12 tips for making videos

Along with 33 examples, four points on messaging and three style rules

Online video disclosure with RWE: short and sweet

An 'elevator pitch' video could offer a distinctly powerful way of getting facts to investors, says RWE

Sponsor's statement

About Nasdaq Corporate Solutions

Nasdaq Corporate Solutions helps organizations manage and master the two-way flow of information with their audiences. Around the globe, market leaders use our technology, analytics and consultative services and solutions to help maximize the value of their work – from investor relations and corporate governance to public relations and communications.



To meet the information needs of investor relations professionals, Nasdaq Corporate Solutions offers a suite of IR content, analytics, advisory services and communications tools to:

- Gain insight into market developments and institutional investor activities
- Understand investor opportunities and risks
- Define and prioritize outreach
- Communicate with key stakeholders through webcasts and IR websites
- Measure the impact of your IR program

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- Corporate reporting essentials
- Small-cap IR basics
- IR careers & education guide

Part of



Europe

IR Media Group Ltd
64 Great Eastern Street
London EC2A 3QR, UK
+44 20 7749 9175

Americas

IR Media Group (USA) Inc
25 Broadway, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10004, US
+1 212 425 9649

info@IRmagazine.com

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