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Communications & New Media

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# Anti-Trump journalists eat humble pie

The Committee to Protect Journalists, which called Donald Trump “an unprecedented threat to the rights” of the press, held its \$1,000-a-plate banquet at the Waldorf-Astoria Nov. 22. Humble pie should have been served.

Jeff Zucker, President of CNN and chair of the dinner, had been excoriated on Nov. 21 by Trump at a meeting with reporters. *The New York Post* said “Trump started with Zucker and said, ‘I hate your network, everyone at CNN is a liar and you should be ashamed.’”

“Trump kept saying, ‘We’re in a roomful of liars, the deceitful, dishonest media who got it all wrong,’” reported the *Post*. The meeting was supposedly off-the-record.

Zucker made no mention of the Trump blast at the CPJ dinner, funded by blue chip media and other corporations. He said CNN “will hold the new administration’s feet to the fire and they should respect that even if they don’t welcome it.” Zucker’s demand for fair treatment by Trump, after his network had done its best to delegitimize the Trump candidacy, provoked tweets in the audience that included the words “laughter,” “hypocrisy” and “cognitive dissonance.”

Tweeted James Warren, Chief Media Writer for Poynter: “There was no evident suggestion of hypocrisy expressed around the room but that clearly was the take of some at the august New York gathering.”

Lydia Polgreen, Editorial Director, *New York Times* Global, tweeted: “Some cognitive dissonance hearing David Remnick then Jeff Zucker on press freedom tonight at the CPJ awards dinner.” Remnick is Editor of the *New Yorker*.

Miriam Elder, BuzzFeed’s World Editor, tweeted there were “laughs in part of the crowd” when Zucker said CPJ will “hold the administration’s feet to the fire.”

The Intercept Co-Founder Jeremy Scahill tweeted: “Jeff Zucker just gave blah blah about holding Trump to account. He just went to off record Trump meeting.”

Anna Holmes of Jezebel noted that Zucker had hired Corey Lewandowski, former Trump campaign manager, as a CNN commentator. Lewandowski, who resigned in October, was bound by a non-disclosure agreement with Trump that limited his ability to criticize him. He was also still receiving severance pay from Trump.

Keynoter Christiana Amanpour, CNN’s Chief Correspondent, briefly referred to a Trump post-election tweet that said, “Now professional protesters, incited by the media, are protesting. Very Unfair.”

Trump “walked back the part about the protesters but not the part about the media,” said Amanpour, adding: “We are not there but postcard from the world: this is how it goes with authoritarians like Sisi, Erdogan, Putin, the Ayatollahs, Duterte, et al.”

The CPJ board, headed the past five years by Sandra Mims Rowe, on Oct. 6 said the organization was making an unprecedented foray into U.S. politics because “A Trump presidency represents a threat to press freedom unknown in modern history.” Said the statement:

“Since the beginning of his candidacy, Trump has insulted and vilified the press and has made his opposition to the media a centerpiece of his campaign. Trump has routinely labeled the press as ‘dishonest’ and ‘scum’ and singled out individual news organizations and journalists.”

The Waldorf dinner is a mirror image of Seminar — called “PR Seminar” until 2007 — the annual four-day gathering of 200+ PR heads of blue chips and editors and publishers of leading media. Registration to that event is \$3,500. The 30-member executive committee meets throughout the year in New York. No mainstream media ever write about Seminar. Editors who attend are sworn to secrecy. The 2016 Seminar was June 5-8 in Scottsdale, Ariz., and the 2017 meeting will be June 4-7 at The Breakers, Palm Beach. Among members is New York counselor Mike Paul who joined Publicis in November as head of communications for Publicis Media. He skipped the 2015 Seminar to protest lack of people of color in high PR posts.

The public’s view that the media are in league together against traditional values held by mid-America is what drove the election of Trump. The right and alt-right don’t mind funding banquets of the alt-left because blue chips hold the purse strings and can yank them when needed.

CPJ, despite its condemnation of Trump, has written to VP-elect Michael Pence asking for a meeting to discuss ways to “preserve First Amendment values in the U.S. and press freedoms around the world.” Rowe told *Washington Post* Public Editor Margaret Sullivan Oct. 16 that Trump thinks media exist “only to satisfy his needs and give him publicity.”

*The New York Times*, breaking a tradition of not covering the CPJ annual banquet, assigned editorial board member Carol Giacomo to cover the event. She noted that CPJ “usually focuses on the fight for press freedoms overseas” but this year, “throughout the presidential campaign, Donald Trump relentlessly excoriated and mocked journalists, fostering a hostile environment in which his supporters often joined in taunting and threatening the press corps.”

— Jack O’Dwyer

# O’Dwyer’s

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Jack O’Dwyer  
jack@odwyerpr.com

## ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

John O’Dwyer  
john@odwyerpr.com

## SENIOR EDITOR

Jon Gingerich  
jon@odwyerpr.com

## SENIOR EDITOR

Greg Hazley  
greg@odwyerpr.com

## ART DIRECTOR

David Kniazuk

## CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Fraser Seitel  
Richard Goldstein

## EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS & RESEARCH

Benjamin Abraham  
Caitlin Dullahan-Bates  
Jane Landers

## ADVERTISING SALES

John O’Dwyer  
Advertising Sales Manager  
john@odwyerpr.com

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# Customer loyalty up, impulse buying down

The latest brand study from rbb Communications indicates that for some consumers, no amount of money is enough to bribe them away from their favorite product.

By John O'Dwyer

The fourth annual Breakout Brands survey from rbb Communications proves there's no substitute for loyalty.

The study reports that 93 percent of consumers would be willing to pay more in the future for brands they feel an emotional connection with, up 10 percent from when this was measured in 2012. The survey reported that it would take more than \$220,00 to bribe some customers away from their favorite products.

Quality and price remain the most important factors in a purchase decision for 66 percent of those polled. Only 41 percent cited purchase rewards as a primary incentive.

With such easy access to product reviews on the web, it's also no surprise that more than 90 percent of those responding to the survey revealed they conduct some sort of research before making a purchase decision. The study also shows impulse buying has hit an all-time low (nine percent), emphasizing the high value consumers place on brand loyalty.

alty.

Other findings included:

- More than 65 percent said they will be loyal to a company that provides value as defined by best quality for the best price, whereas poor quality products and bad customer service are the top reasons why Americans leave a brand.

- Gen Z, Gen X and Millennials were more likely to pay 50-100 percent more for a product they felt put them first, over value, customer service and experience (compared to Boomers). They were also more likely to want a customized product.

- 62 percent of respondents said they would allow a significant other to make all their major purchase decisions for the next six months.

"Creating emotional connections between customers and brands is priceless," rbb CEO Christine Barney said. "Companies can achieve that emotional connection and see the impact on the bottom line by adopting the key tenants of Breakout Brands: put the customer first, innovate and communicate with soul."

Apple came in as the number-one U.S. brand, followed by Amazon. Samsung, Google, Nike, WalMart, Kellogg's and Uber and Tesla were also top ranked brands.

Results were compiled for rbb by Wakefield Research, which surveyed 1,162 U.S. adults nationally in October online. ○

## CCOs play diminished advisory roles

By Jon Gingerich

Fewer than a third of senior communicators consider themselves key advisors to their organization's CEO, according to a survey of chief corporate communicators released in November by PR giant APCO Worldwide.

The study, conducted by APCO's global opinion research group APCO Insight, found that while a vast majority — 89 percent — of chief communicators said they have direct access to their CEO, only a little more than half — 52 percent — report directly to the CEO, and only 29 percent said they are key business advisors to that executive. Only 38 percent described themselves as being a leading voice in critical business discussions at their company.

Moreover, fewer than half — 47 percent — said their organization's communications function is "highly integrated" throughout the company and with other teams, and about a third — 33 percent — still view communications budgets as being tighter compared to other departments or more likely to experience budget cuts.

On the other hand, the APCO survey also found that three-fourths of CCOs — 75 percent — believe their CEO understands the value of their company's reputation, and 61 percent of respondents said their company views communications as integral to other functions within the company.

Taken together, the findings suggest a gap may exist between the acknowledged need for communications in corporations and the role those communicators ultimately play.

APCO's survey was conducted in October and included responses from more than 110 senior communications professionals across various B2B and consumer industries in the United States, Japan, Germany, Finland and Canada. ○

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Washington, DC 20045  
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**NEW YORK:**  
262 W 38th Street  
Suite 803  
New York, NY 10018  
(212) 302-1234  
[newyork@straussmedia.com](mailto:newyork@straussmedia.com)

**LOS ANGELES:**  
(626) 794-1350  
[losangeles@straussmedia.com](mailto:losangeles@straussmedia.com)





# Terrorist-sponsor nations big business for lobbyists

K Street lobbying firms have been lining up to provide communications, government relations support and legal services to nations accused of sponsoring international terrorism-related activities.

By Jon Gingerich

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been engaged in a months-long lobbying battle on Capitol Hill ever since the passage of the “Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act,” which famously survived a September veto from President Obama.

That bipartisan bill, also known as S.2040, was introduced in May by Senators Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and John Cornyn (R-TX). It amends the federal judicial code to allow U.S. citizens the ability to sue foreign governments in civil court when their family members are the victims of terrorism.

A majority of the 19 hijackers involved in the 9/11 attacks — 15 of them — were Saudi citizens. A 28-page declassified 9/11 report released in July by the House of Representatives Intelligence Committee (which was originally redacted from the original 9/11 Commission Report released in 2004) suggested possible ties between some of the 9/11 hijackers and Saudi officials.

JASTA passed both chambers of Congress on September 9, but was vetoed later that month by Obama, who, in a three-page letter to Congress regarding his decision, said the bill “undermines core U.S. interests,” and “would neither protect Americans from terrorist attacks nor improve the effectiveness of our response to such attacks.”

In September, President-elect Donald Trump expressed his support of JASTA and called Obama’s veto of the bill “shameful.”

Congress later overwhelmingly voted to override the President’s decision, marking the first veto override of Obama’s presidency.

## Saudi Arabia goes on lobbying spree

Bracing for JASTA’s Congressional showdown, the Saudi Royal Court in September hired Squire Patton Boggs in a \$100,000-per-month pact to advise the country on “legal and strategic policy advice and advocacy on foreign and related issues in the U.S. government,” according to Foreign Agents Registration Act documents filed in September.

The same month, the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia hired WPP lobbying giant Glover Park Group to provide communications and government relations support on matters related to “general foreign policy,” as well as “legislative, public policy and media-related activities of interest.”

JASTA’s veto survival has sent Saudi Arabia into a lobbying frenzy. In October, Saudi

Arabia hired law firm King & Spalding to provide advocacy and legal services related to JASTA’s passage to Saudi Arabia’s Ministry of Commerce and Investment.

Saudi Arabia’s national oil and natural gas company, The Saudi Arabian Oil Company, also hired public affairs powerhouse Podesta Group at \$30,000 for a month-long campaign to serve as a third party-contractor through international law firm White & Case LLP, who had inked an earlier pact with Saudi Arabia.

The country in November similarly hired consulting and lobbying firm The McKeon Group to work as a subcontractor under Glover Park Group and provide communications and government relations counsel, as well as undertake “special advocacy assignments,” which may include communication with U.S. government officials, according to FARA documents filed in October.

Also in November, The Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia hired political consultant Fahad Nazer, a senior political analyst at JTG Inc. and a non-resident fellow at the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington, to give periodic professional advice and recommendations to the Embassy on matters related to PR, media relations and communications.

The Aramco Services Co. in Houston, the U.S. outpost of Saudi Arabia’s national petroleum and natural gas company Aramco was also enlisted in November to aid its parent company with PR support in the form of public and U.S. government outreach that promotes a cultural understanding of Saudi Arabia as well as economic activity and current investment opportunities in that country.

Beltway political tabloid The Hill in November reported that Saudi Arabia has now employed more than a dozen lobbying firms in its bid to battle JASTA, also signing pacts with BGR Group, Hogan Lovells and Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck.

## Sudan signs White & Case

In addition to its work for Saudi Arabia, Washington, D.C.-based White & Case in November also signed a \$250,000 pact to represent the government of Sudan.

According to FARA documents, White & Case will provide legal services to the violence-torn nation “in connection with several litigation matters pending before

federal courts.” Those litigation matters refer to the terrorist bombing the USS Cole in Yemen in October 2000. al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for that attack, which killed 17 US sailors and injured nearly 40 more.

In 2010, injured sailors and victims’ families filed a federal lawsuit against Sudan, claiming that country provided funding, training and support to terrorists in their execution of the bombing.

The US District Court held Sudan liable for the attack, and issued a judgment awarding \$315 million in compensatory and punitive damages. The Sudanese government appealed the decision in 2014, but in September 2015, the 2nd US Circuit Court of Appeals in New York denied the appeal and ordered the Sudanese bank to turn over that country’s assets to cover the judgment.

In September of this year, the 2nd U.S. Court of Appeals refused requests from the U.S. and Sudanese government to reconsider its 2015 ruling.

## Jordanian Embassy hires Hogan Lovells

International law firm Hogan Lovells has been hired by the Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Washington, D.C., to provide counsel regarding ongoing discussions with U.S. government officials related to the court case of Courtney Linde et al, v. Arab Bank, PLC.

In that landmark case, initially filed in New York federal court, more than 500 U.S. citizens sued the Arab Bank, Jordan’s largest lender and one of the largest financial institutions in the Middle East, under civil liability provisions pursuant to the Anti-Terrorism Act. The suit alleged that Arab Bank facilitated terrorist attacks committed in Israel between 2001 to 2004 by maintaining accounts for individuals and organizations that supported terrorist organizations such as Hamas. In September 2014, Arab Bank was found liable for financing terrorism relating to 24 different terrorist acts, accounting for the first terror-related judgment against a major bank in U.S. history.

Arab Bank in April 2015 struck a settlement deal with plaintiffs — some estimating as high as \$1 billion — but later said it would appeal the ‘14 liability verdict, as the bank claims it did not knowingly offer financial services or assistance to Hamas. That rehearing is currently pending in the Second Circuit. ○

# Adding purpose-driven partnerships to your game plan

**Far too often, brands fail to reap the full benefits of sports-related partnerships. That may be due to a lack of resources, an incomplete activation strategy or simply a bad fit between the brand, the sport and their respective audiences. What's typically missing? Purpose.**

By Steve Mann

**F**or any brand, a good sports-related partnership must clearly support business goals and objectives and, of course, grow the bottom line. But to ensure long-term success and drive enduring value and loyalty, business partnerships should share a higher purpose, and deftly communicate that purpose, to create connections and ultimately, mean something to people.

Sports fans, like most consumers — particularly younger consumers — are consciously choosing brands that support their needs, values and beliefs. Brands need to meet those rising expectations and create partnerships, campaigns and communication strategies that demonstrate they share common ideals and principles.

The business impact can be significant. Recent studies have demonstrated that purpose-driven marketing strategies can have a profound impact on business results. *Harvard Business Review* research showed that companies that aspire to more than just short-term gains and the pursuit of profit have a clear advantage over their competition. According to the *Harvard Business Review's* 2015 “*The Business Case for Purpose*” report, purpose-driven companies make more money, have more engaged employees and more loyal customers, and are even better at innovation and transformational change.

As the rules of sports marketing evolve, with fans expecting — and receiving — more engagement and access to their favorite teams and athletes than ever before, teams and leagues have made looking for new ways to engage with and please their fans a priority. In addition to creating loyalty, selling tickets and merchandise and cultivating new streams of revenue, sports properties must respond to their fans' desire to “participate,” and would most likely welcome with open arms a passionate, proactive corporate partner with fresh ideas.

## Step up to the plate

So, your brand is exploring the idea of entering the wide world of sports? Here are some things to consider to make purpose-driven partnerships part of your game plan:

Identify and clearly articulate your brand's values. What problem does the company seek to solve? What does it stand for? What impact does it strive to make on the world or in its hometown community?

Prioritize company business objectives. This will help you determine the overall marketing strategy: the who, what, where and when you should engage with.

Research and determine the sports entities — and fan bases — that best align with your company's purpose and help the brand achieve its business and marketing goals.

Upon identifying a sports partner, collaborate on a creative, insights-driven, measurable and meaningful sponsorship strategy that ensures your investment is making a difference.

What if you've already signed a sports sponsorship? What if the season has already started? Is it too late to change course? The answer: probably not. Try working with your sports partner to take a step back, to re-examine not just the components of the partnership, but the rationale behind it and ways you may align to maximize its impact. The existing partnership can serve as the catalyst for a new direction and approach that can benefit all involved by being more meaningful, more engaging and more customer (fan)-centric.

With purpose as your brand's driving force, and ample resources for activation providing bench strength (some experts recommend a budget of around \$3 of activation for every \$1 in sponsorship), typical sponsorship elements such as events, fan contests, product giveaways, social media campaigns, CSR programs and the like take on a new energy and significance.

## Cut through the crowd noise

Once the right partnership is in place, properly communicating the magnitude and scope, as well as the specific details and engagement opportunities along the way, to media and fans, is critical. Like the players on the field, the “power of communication” takes the Xs and Os and transforms them into game-changing actions and both small and large victories.

Now more than ever, teams and brands

need to know their fan and customer bases, so they can create partnerships with purpose, develop positive connections and deliver brand experiences that create enduring value. Connections are happening around the clock in a variety of ways — in stadiums, in communities, in stores and online — so it takes knowledge, determination and creativity to break through. Research and insights are key and turning those insights into action in a profound way — delivering the right messages, at the right times, in the right places to the right audiences, is what separates the contenders from the pretenders. So be sure your communication plan supports the strategic priorities of the partnership.



Steve Mann

## Expand your playbook

Every move a brand makes is an opportunity to engage and inspire its people, partners, customers and communities. Reporting that you're the official sports drink, bank or backpack of a basketball team, for example, sounds great. And yes, having a company logo on an outfield wall can generate brand awareness. But transforming those table-stakes efforts into delivering a one-of-a-kind experience for fans — that moves them — makes us all better.

Maybe instead of utilizing that hour you have with one of the players for a photo op or big-check presentation, collaborate on a grassroots community effort like refurbishing a dilapidated playground or feeding the hungry, lead a fundraiser to benefit young athletes with disabilities or encourage reading through a partnership with local sports publications and writers. Empower your employees to give back and do good for some underserved groups. This is important work and it will serve as inspiration that you are able to come together for the greater good.

When companies live their purpose they have the capacity — intellectually, emotionally and financially — to do better for their people and their communities. You don't have to be a Gatorade, Coca-Cola, or Nike to do it right. When purpose, strategy, the power of communication and sports align, businesses create sustainable growth and value for their customers and the net result is win, win, win.

Steve Mann is Vice President of Beehive Strategic Communication. ○





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# A dramatic launch for the VGA National Championship

A case study detailing how a PR agency approached media strategy and built sponsorships and brand support for non-profit veteran organization the Veteran Golfers Association's inaugural VGA National Championship event.

By Jack Glasure

The FWV Sports & Entertainment practice has a proven track record of success working with athletes, sports properties, high-profile events and brand sponsors. Our account teams have led dozens of campaigns on behalf of iconic brands such as Wrangler, Coca-Cola, Jack Daniels, Slim Jim, Justin Boots, Pendleton Whiskey and many others.

We've had very few experiences as rewarding as our work with the Veteran Golfers Association.

When the VGA reached out to us in 2015, the non-profit was celebrating its first anniversary. The fledgling organization needed FWV to help guarantee the success of the inaugural VGA National Championship event at the famed Pinehurst No. 2 golf course in Pinehurst, N.C., just down the road from our agency headquarters in Raleigh.

Wounded warrior and retired Army Captain Joshua Peyton created the VGA in 2014 to help veterans recover from post-traumatic stress disorder. Through the sport of golf, the VGA is committed to building a nationwide veteran community centered around friendly competition, emotional connections and camaraderie. The VGA offers family activities, inter-club play and regional tournaments to help veterans find support, competitive interaction and fellowship as they transition to a life of normalcy following traumatic deployments serving our country.

Peyton tapped FWV for our expertise with sports properties, special events and sponsorships, as well as our ability to deliver high-value media coverage. He challenged us to introduce the story of the VGA to key audiences, build sponsor partnerships to generate the necessary revenue for a meaningful national championship experience, and establish cornerstone relationships within the U.S. military community.

Our team set its own objectives. We sought to generate a minimum of 25 million media impressions, especially within

golf-centric outlets, in order to build affinity for the VGA. To heighten support in the military community, we focused on securing a high-profile elected official to provide credibility. To generate brand support and the desired monetary assistance, our sponsorship team set a minimum goal of securing 10 corporate partners. We also set out to create a popular attraction to drive on-site attendance.

To kick-start the media relations campaign, we worked closely with the marketing department at Pinehurst No. 2 to gain insight into the inner workings and editorial practices of the golf media. We knew that even though the VGA's inaugural national championship was being hosted at the venerable Pinehurst No. 2, it was the first event of its kind, and thus had no history or brand equity. Expectations for immediate interest and coverage were low.

Our experience told us, however, that the human interest component would hold a

of individual veteran golfers, their journey to the championship, and how golf played a role in their recovery from PTSD.

One such story was that of Army Sgt. Andrew Smith, who lost both legs in combat while serving in Afghanistan. Smith, a double amputee who plays golf with the help of two prosthetic limbs, competed for months to qualify. He went on to win the national championship in the Combat Wounded division.

The media strategy also included a focus on Peyton. His personal account of inspiration to create the VGA, and the organization's ambitious mission, made for a moving opening chapter introducing the bigger story. Working with the team at Pinehurst No. 2, we were able to leverage existing media relationships within the golf world, leading to one-on-one interviews and high-profile feature coverage.

In total, FWV secured over 40 media placements in major print, television and broadcast outlets resulting in more than 56 million impressions. Media coverage ranged from exposure in local and regional news outlets to national coverage, including *USA Today*, Golf Channel and *GolfWeek*. The generated ad equivalency was over \$900,000, delivering an overall 150:1 ROI.

Thanks in part to advance media coverage, the effort to recruit corporate sponsors was equally successful. More than 25 reputable brands and

organizations signed on as underwriting partners, including Wilson Golf, New Era, UPS, BMW and Oakley. Corporate sponsorships allowed for perks like free transportation to and from Pinehurst No. 2 and personalized golf bags for tournament participants.

To build support for the VGA and its



Jack Glasure



**Army Sgt. Andrew Smith, a double amputee who lost both legs in combat while serving in Afghanistan, won the national championship in the Combat Wounded division in the VGA Championships at Pinehurst No. 2.**

strong appeal for editors and producers, and would supply an emotional way to magnify the impact of the VGA's unique mission. At the championship tournament, wounded vets made up nearly half the field, and more than a dozen competitors across various flights were Purple Heart recipients. We developed a strategy that focused not only on the event and its historic venue, but primarily on the stories

— Continued on next page



# Corporations look to White House for communicators

What are the qualities companies are looking for when they tap former White House spokespeople?

By Nick Kalm

In November, Hilton Worldwide named Kate Beirne Fallon, former director of legislative affairs and senior advisor to President Barack Obama, as their senior vice president of global affairs. Ms. Fallon is merely the latest example of prominent global companies tapping political figures for their senior-most corporate communications roles.

Among the other notables are Dan Bartlett, WalMart's executive vice president of corporate affairs (former top Aide to President George W. Bush), Robert Gibbs, McDonald's head of global communications (former Press Secretary to Barack Obama), and Jay Carney, Senior Vice President of Corporate Affairs for Amazon (also former Press Secretary to Barack Obama).

Why do so many leading corporations look to the national political world for their top spokespeople, and what implications does this have for corporate communications people who might aspire to the top corporate job themselves? What are the qualities companies are looking for when they tap former White House spokespeople?

## Broadest possible thinking

Top political communicators have to think about and deal with nearly every kind of audience (or constituent), from other politicians to business leaders to heads of state and other influencers. On the other hand, the vast majority of corporate communicators' remit naturally has them spending most of their time thinking about investors, employees, customers,

communities and the media. Corporate communications executives would be well advised to look for developmental and other professional and personal opportunities that get them exposure to dealing with the widest array of publics.

## Politically attuned

Is there any job more "political" than working in the White House? Certainly, these figures know how to read/influence "The Boss," as well as who's up/who's down and how to self-preserve. Corporate communications executives need to develop these traits themselves, and, without trying to succeed at others' expense, work to "read the tea leaves" in the organization so they can help shape the organization's — as well as their own — futures.

## Willing to sacrifice

Working in a senior role in the White House is widely seen as an incredibly grueling job, including seven-day weeks and 12-14 hour days. Obviously, this leaves little-to-no time for a personal or family life.

While that isn't an expectation many companies have for their top communicators, in hiring ex-White House staffers, they know they are getting someone who is used to making incredible sacrifices for their employer.

Corporate communications executives should think well beyond the standard work day and work week, and show both initiative and responsiveness outside of the hours of 9-5.

## Nimble and quick

With all of the issues that could arise at

any time, a senior White House communications person must be decisive, quick on their feet, and able to multitask.

Corporate communications executives should challenge themselves to be as flexible as possible, and look to add responsibilities when they can. This will demonstrate to the CEO and others that they are able to handle nearly anything the job and company might throw their way.

## Mobile

Many presidential communicators earned their stripes on the campaign trail, requiring them to pick up and move at the drop of a hat.

Once in the White House, they are much more likely to spend the night in a hotel traveling with the President than in their own beds. For a corporate communications executive to be considered for some top roles, they need to accept those developmental opportunities, including overseas, and be willing to spend time on the road seeing the company's impact on communities and others.

In the ever-changing world of corporate communications, up-and-coming executives can take prudent steps to demonstrate and reinforce their relevance as their employers adapt to a marketplace where more is expected of companies than ever before.

Nick Kalm is Founder and President of Reputation Partners, LLC. ●



Nick Kalm

## VGA's National Championship launch

Continued from page 12

inaugural championship within the military community, FWV reached out to high-profile elected officials with positive reputations among that niche audience, securing participation from three U.S. Senators. Senator Richard Burr (R-NC), Senator Thom Tillis (R-NC) and Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) agreed to attend the event, helping to generate added media attention and establish credibility for the VGA.

To create an attraction that would engage public attention and boost attendance, particularly in the local region near Fayette-

ville and Fort Bragg where many active and former Army personnel reside, FWV enlisted the participation of senior Army officers including Lieutenant General Mike Ferriter, Major Larry Moores, and Sergeant Major Rodney Gorman (Delta Force Operator in Mogadishu), to lead a special screening and panel discussion of the 2001 film, "Black Hawk Down."

Adding to the excitement at Pinehurst, FWV helped produce a live concert by country music star and well-known veteran supporter, Colt Ford. The combination of music and movie entertainment drove attendance well over expectations, and resulted in tens of thousands of dollars

raised for veterans and PTSD research.

The inaugural VGA National Championship captivated attention and stirred hearts throughout the golf world and beyond. As each flight winner donned the iconic red championship blazer with the VGA shield, fighter jets soared in formation overhead, a new golf tradition was born, putting the service, sacrifice and patriotism of its participants in the national spotlight. All of us at FWV are proud to have played a part in the success of an endeavor that serves those so deserving of our respect and gratitude.

Jack Glasure is Senior Vice President of French/West/Vaughan. ●

# Anatomy of an acquisition

**There's no magic formula when it comes to a successful merger of PR companies. All deals arrive with their own risks and financial implications.**

By Scott Widmeyer

Three years ago my firm, Widmeyer Communications, was acquired by Finn Partners, and questions whether the match would work out have finally subsided. For those with ringside seats, primarily employees and clients, they see how we've combined and integrated to form a bigger, better company.

To the outside world, one clear proof of our successful union is that we've retained key clients while adding significant new accounts. Another, no less important, is that we've retained key staff who made Widmeyer a successful, happy company.

In the larger picture, Finn Partners continues to flourish and is one of the country's top independent firms, with revenue over \$80 million. It has doubled in size since acquiring Widmeyer.

After 30-plus years in PR, including 25 as agency owner, I know most deals don't work out this well and that some end up doing more harm than good.

It should surprise no one that the questions I get now are from other buyers and sellers asking, "What advice can you offer ... what do you know now that you wish you'd known earlier?"

Let's be clear: there is no magic formula for a successful union, in life or in business. That said, here's what was done right in combining our companies and some of what I learned.

I can't overemphasize the importance of good advice and good advisors. Before I gave thought to any kind of deal, I met Art Stevens at a conference in 2009. Art, erstwhile president of Lobsenz-Stevens and the U.S. arm of Publicis, heads The Stevens Group, a PR M&A firm.

Art engaged me in a dialogue about my company's future. I didn't need Art to tell me that continuity planning was a requirement of good leadership, but it didn't hurt to have him remind me, then approaching 60, to be thinking about my firm's long term future.

The financial implications alone were significant — we were an \$11 million firm — but there was more at stake than dollars. I wanted the best future for my staff. I still do.

Art and I had a dialogue that continued over more than two years, during which time he helped me define what I wanted for the firm's future and what kind of company might make a good suitor. I also discreetly

sought advice from many friends gained over my career.

What came out of my conversations was the realization that combining with the right company was something I should consider. However, I wasn't going to pressure myself to make a deal, and Art knew we didn't want Widmeyer shopped around.

Another lesson I learned was not to start taking meetings if I wasn't serious about selling. It's not the buyer's role to convince a seller to sell.

From the time of my first discussions with Art until my sale closed was nearly four years, which brings up an important element of making a good match: time.

There's rarely a reason to rush a deal. "We don't try and move too quickly in these situations," Peter Finn, CEO of Finn Partners, said recently. "These are big decisions requiring major commitments. Let's date a while before marriage."

Realize that getting to a deal will take six months or more. Use the time for due diligence and to ensure you are making a happy union ... which brings us to the next major consideration: culture and chemistry.

Widmeyer worked hard to build a diverse, inclusive culture and in 2012 won the PR Council and *PR Week* "Diversity Distinction in PR Award." It meant a lot to us, and if my firm were to be acquired, I needed a suitor with similar values and vision.

Art attended that award ceremony, where I also ran into Peter Finn: Finn Partners was also vying for an award. Shortly afterward, unknown to me at the time, Art contacted Peter and without divulging names, probed him on Finn Partners' interest in acquiring a D.C. firm. There were synergies Art knew would appeal to Finn, and Art also foresaw a cultural fit.

It was clear from our first meeting that Widmeyer and Finn could be a good match. The chemistry clicked for Peter and me, as did our vision for our firms' future. We saw the value that each other's business brought to a combined company.

Our first date was a good one, and thus began a period of shuttle diplomacy for Art in bringing us to terms. Again, I can't overstate the importance of patience and good advice. Just because we decided to move ahead doesn't mean it was smooth

sailing the whole way.

"One rule I've learned in acquisitions is to keep the principals from direct negotiation," Art said afterward. "Having emissaries handle talks avoids erosion of the mutual respect that initially brought parties together. I've seen deals implode when principals decided to work out terms themselves," he said.

It took about six months from when Peter and I first sat down until we closed our deal.

Afterward, we had the normal hiccups, mostly over billing systems and technology. Both our firms made changes or adapted in some way. Our employees saw that Peter and I were transparent in dealing with problems, respectful of each other's opinions and readily open to change. That attitude filters down.

What's the one most surprising revelation? Probably that when one becomes successful, as many firm owners do, it's easy to forget there's also a great future for yourself and your company when teamed with the right enterprise. There's much to be gained from giving up complete control.

*Scott Widmeyer founded Widmeyer Communications, where he served as Chairman and CEO, prior to becoming Founding Managing Partner at Finn Partners in 2013. ○*



Scott Widmeyer

## PR news brief

### Marino Reps New Rochelle

The town of New Rochelle, a short ride north of New York City on Metro-North's New Haven rail line, has selected Marino to promote the city as a good place for economic development, reports Westfair Online.

Marino was selected in a competitive bidding process that began in June.

The NYC-based firm was founded in 1993 by Frank Marino who served in New York City Mayor Ed Koch's administration as senior VP for public affairs, media relations and marketing.

Marino has provided counsel to The Real Estate Board of New York, Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City and New York University.

New Rochelle has been trying to revive its glory days as one of Westchester's premier economic engines.



# One launch isn't enough

Steady, regular coverage in media outlets is what achieves lead generation, drives traffic to a company's website and, ultimately, results in sales.

By Curtis Sparrer

There are many circumstances — orange shag carpet, bright eye shadow, tequila shots — in which less is definitely more. In PR, however, more is always just more.

Back in September, our agency polled 1,010 American adults to determine how likely people were to visit a tech company's website based on media coverage. Then, in October, we fielded a B2B PR Effectiveness Study, which surveyed more than 500 marketers — CMOs, vice presidents of marketing, marketing directors and marketing managers — to see how PR influences them.

What we discovered is that some people are moved to visit a company's website the first time they encounter it in the media. But, in most cases — and this was especially true in the case of consumers — people have to see several media placements before they are moved to check out a company further.

These results confirm what PR people know from experience: a single launch event is not enough.

What truly drives traffic to a company's website and achieves lead generation — and, ultimately, sales — is a steady cadence of regular coverage in a variety of media outlets. Anything short of that and your company is but a blip on the radar of the noisy news machine.

"Decision makers are influenced by compelling content that brings insight — be it a video, infographic, survey or industry backgrounder," said Carla Schlemminger, marketing strategist and startup advisor. "By encountering broader content pieces which speak to a larger industry, the reader forms a positive association with the company in question. That company is now gaining brand recognition in the mix of larger industry conversations, trust over lesser-known brands, higher-level partnerships and shorter sales cycles."

Hetal Pandya, Co-Founder of EasilyDo, agreed that seeing products and services in the media is essential to making purchasing decisions. "Learning about a B2B company, their product and their success from the press definitely helps give the brand credibility."

Marketing professionals, on the whole,

are far more responsive to media placements than consumers, likely because it is their job to keep their fingers on the pulse of their industry.

In our survey, over half (52 percent) of the CMOs and vice presidents of marketing responding said they would visit a company's web or mobile site the first time they see a company in the news. That was also true for 43 percent of the marketing directors and one in five marketing managers.

Seeing a story several (two to five) times in the media will garner visits from another third of CMOs and VPs (35 percent), another third of marketing managers and another 14 percent of marketing directors.

"As a CMO, if I'm engaged in a branding campaign, then I'll be automatically drawn to content related to branding and will likely visit websites that can educate me on trends, tools or techniques," said GlobalLogic CMO Arya Barirani. "Good marketers are always putting themselves in the audience context — some call this the customer journey — to figure out how to serve up content to create greater engagement. So, yes, if I encounter a really compelling piece of content, I will certainly investigate the company further."

"As a rule of thumb, consumers must hear about a product or service two to five times from three different sources for a company to establish awareness and earn purchase consideration," agreed Mark Undercoffler, a 20-year marketing industry professional. "In contrast, many in the industry are tasked with innovating and keeping a competitive advantage, so the B2B audience is more likely to check out a new company sooner."

Indeed, consumers are a harder win: only one in five American men and 13 percent of women will check out a site the very first time they see a media placement. Sixteen percent of American men will visit a company site after seeing several (between two to five) media placements, and nearly one in four will visit a site after seeing a company in the news more than five times.

Only an additional 11 percent of women say they will visit a company's site after seeing several placements, but 49 percent say they will eventually check out a company's web or mobile site if they see enough place-

ments.

"The studies' results are clear," added David Hurwitz, Vice President of Marketing at MosaixSoft. "Seeing a company mentioned by legitimate third parties drives interest. The magic of PR is to make that happen."

While a launch event is — in the right hands — definitely news, one foray into the media will not be enough to propel a company to success. Sustained, creative PR outreach efforts to a variety of outlets are the best — maybe only — way to achieve long-term success.

"PR is likely the most effective sales lead tool available to companies today," added Undercoffler. "The days of taking potential clients out to time-consuming entertainment events to woo them are all but over."

Curtis Sparrer is Co-Founder and Principal at Bospar. ○



Curtis Sparrer

## PR news brief

### W2O Group acquires Marketeching Solutions

Communications network W2O Group has acquired digital marketing firm Marketeching Solutions.

Financial terms of the deal were not publicly disclosed.

Marketeching is a healthcare-focused consultancy that partners with brand marketers and market researchers to offer insights and analytics that enhance strategy. The New Hope, PA-based company, which employs about 20, maintains a second office in Philadelphia. The company was founded in 2008 by Kevin Johnson, who serves as President.

"We acquired Marketeching to accelerate growth and further deepen and broaden our expertise in analytics focused on healthcare and life sciences," W2O Group Chairman and CEO Jim Weiss told *O'Dwyer's*. "These core areas continue to increase in importance as the landscape changes rapidly with the advent of new technologies, consumer choice, regulations and cost/access headwinds that are likely to get even stronger after this election."

Marketeching will now become an independent subsidiary of W2O Group. It will continue to be run by Johnson, who maintains the president title. He'll report to Paul Dyer, President of W2O's Analytics and Insights practice.

W2O, which focuses on tech and global brands and owns agencies Brewlife, Twist Mktg and WCG, in September acquired Wilmington, NC-based life sciences PR agency Pure Communications.

# Returning sports apparel to the USA

Universities, as well as professional sports organizations, can lead the charge in rebuilding America's sports apparel market.

By Rene Henry

The American apparel industry is a \$250 billion annual market, and 98 percent of clothing in the U.S. is now being manufactured in foreign countries. Colleges and universities, professional sports teams, private clubs and other organizations have an opportunity to change that and create jobs in this country.

Unlike a typical retailer who competes with other retailers where price is the only consideration, alumni and fans are a captive market for sports apparel. There are many companies in the U.S. that offer competitive pricing for sports apparel. Thanks to ABC News I found the All American Clothing Co. in Arcanum, Ohio.

According to president B. J. Nickol, who started the company with his parents in 2002, All American works with suppliers and partners in some 20 states and its products are 100 percent made in America. The cotton in some apparel can even be traced back to the farmer. "Our prices are competitive because we have lower marketing costs, eliminated a 100 or 200 percent markup by a middleman and have productive workers," Nickol said. "With orders we could double our production."

He added that rebuilding the apparel industry in this country will take time. "Because of NAFTA we lost 85 percent of the jobs in our industry. Today we have a skills gap with the best sewers 50 years or older. We will need time to train a new labor force and it is all possible if the buyer commitment is there," Nickol said. His firm also can provide apparel with the union made label.

Most colleges and universities, private clubs and even the U.S. Olympic Committee turn their license rights over to an agent for a fee and/or royalty who then approves licensees. A good friend who had one of the world's most successful sports licensing, merchandising and branding companies told me the licensees have no concern where the product is manufactured. According to him they will take the easiest and fastest road to get the cheapest possible price and greatest markup without concern for working conditions or health, safety and environmental issues. I wonder if any college president has any idea where the school's branded products are made.

All organizations that outsource their brand should monitor their licensees

because any adverse customer service will impact the image and reputation of the licensor. Colleges and universities seem to be more prevalent than other institutions in allowing third parties to use their name for money.

I recently bought two T-shirts and a cap from West Virginia University Mountaineers online assuming everything was in Morgantown and handled by WVU staff. I considered the website misleading because I later learned that the seller/licensee was a German-owned company in Jacksonville, Florida. I sought more information from the company and my email, phone and letter requests were ignored. The T-shirts were made in Honduras and the cap in Vietnam.

According to Marsha Malone, who heads WVU's trademark and licensing unit, there are 175 licensees and 665 retailers across the country selling WVU-branded apparel through its agent, IMG's Collegiate Licensing Company. I believe the university has done well financially selling its apparel through licensees but I question whether it would not be equally as profitable if the apparel was made in America.

Doing research for this article I quickly found that most people did not want to discuss the made in America subject. When I asked "Why not have the apparel made in the U.S.?" politicians couldn't have responded with more gobbledygook rhetoric. Mark Jones, a publicist at the U.S. Olympic Committee went so far as to write, "I'm sorry, but we're not interested in participating in your story."

However, Scott Blackmun, CEO of the USOC, asked Lisa Beard, his chief marketing officer, to respond and she was most helpful. She noted that several of the organization's official suppliers and licensees had products made in the U.S. "Ralph Lauren personally decided that the uniforms worn by our athletes and delegation during the opening and closing ceremonies in both Sochi and Rio would be made in America," said Beard. "And this was at a significant expense to his company."

One USOC licensee that makes all its products in this country is WinCraft, Inc. in Winona, Minn. According to CEO and Chairman Dick Pope, the company manufactures 35 major product families that include flags, banners, pennants and

other promotional products for businesses, more than 600 colleges, all professional sports teams and leagues, and most recently the world champion Chicago Cubs.

"We buy all of our raw materials from suppliers in the U.S. and finish the work in one of our six plants," said Pope. WinCraft has four plants in Minnesota and one each in Woodinville, Wash. and Apopka, Fla. "We make 85 percent of our products in the U.S. and decorate the balance here."

The company also is proud of its green initiatives and annually recycles some 36 tons of scrap plastics as well as other materials. Its machinery and operations are all energy efficient. There is no reason at all anyone should buy an American flag not made in the U.S.

I first became involved with the USOC more than 60 years ago and as a volunteer have given the organization several thousand hours of time. For three years I served as assistant to the president and on a number of important committees. During the 1980s I was in Colorado Springs almost monthly. I believe that the USOC is one organization that should have all of its products and apparel made in the U.S., and especially T-shirts, jackets and sweatshirts emblazoned with USA and the American flag.

*Rene A. Henry has authored 10 books and his career includes more than 50 years internationally in public relations and sports marketing and five decades in sports at the Olympic, international, collegiate, professional and recreational level. ●*



Rene Henry

## PR news brief

### LegalShield Lists Pollack as AOR

Los Angeles-based Pollack PR Marketing Group has been named agency of record for legal service provider LegalShield.

LegalShield develops and markets affordable legal protection plans for individuals, families and small businesses through a network of about 7,000 independent provider attorneys across the U.S. and Canada.

PPMG has been retained by LegalShield to build marketplace awareness of the company's technology and service offerings.

PPMG, which was founded in 1985, maintains a second office in New York.





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# Wearing blinders: the sports sponsors playbook

**Big sports and its enablers — sponsors, the media, the advertising industry and the PR sector — share the shame in turning a blind eye to the many instances of bad behavior that occur in professional sports today.**

By Arthur Solomon

**T**he 21st century has been a good for sports business so far, if you disregard Russia's recent crackdown on human rights, or the fact that it used the Sochi Olympics as a propaganda vehicle and that it invaded the Ukraine immediately after the conclusion of its not-so-fun games.

Or, if you see nothing wrong with holding the Olympics in a country that subjects athletes and visitors to substandard health conditions, like Rio.

Or, if you're so enamored with football that life-altering concussions and spousal abuse in the National Football League are accepted as merely the cost of doing business.

Or, if you think the NFL was correct in making a cause célèbre about a slightly deflated football, while routinely making excuses and using the "everyone deserves a second chance" rationalization for permitting players known to have committed domestic violence because teams need those players to win.

Or, if you don't see anything wrong with Major League Baseball using thug-like tactics to get A-Rod for using performance-enhancing drugs, while giving "stand in the corner" punishments to other users.

Or, if you don't see anything wrong when it was revealed that USA Gymnastics failed to notify law officials about complaints of sexual misconduct by young gymnasts against coaches.

History has shown that if you're a sponsor of sports, you wear blinders and don't see anything wrong. And if you do, you keep it to yourself.

Big business is famous for its propaganda-like statements regarding sports sponsorships that have no bearing on reality, especially when those statements are tied to the Olympics, whose "we're supporting our athletes" declarations camouflages the real reason these companies are spending millions of dollars on athletic events: massive product sales.

The NFL and Olympics sponsors share a commonality in spending billions on the big business of sports: They're helping to perpetuate the worst aspects of sports by not demanding that the ruling bodies of the sports cabals clean up their acts.

I'm not referring to the ludicrous public relations stunts of MLB to rid its game of

steroid users or the NFL quest to seek counsel from female experts regarding its player's abuse incidents. Did the NFL have to hire women to make NFL commissioner Roger Goodell and team owners know that slugging a woman was wrong? No, all they had to do was ask their wives and daughters. Or maybe they used the same disingenuous reasoning that for decades had them ignoring concussions in the hopes that no one would notice that they occur.

Need recent evidence about the hypocrisy of the NFL and its team owners? Earlier this season, the New York Giants signed kicker Josh Brown despite knowing his spousal abuse history. The Giants released him only after additional information about the abuse became public. The team's apology for originally signing him is as worthless as a missed field goal attempt.

Of course, sports have always been a magnet for brands that are now considered detrimental or unhealthy. Both tobacco and alcoholic products were once frequent sponsors of sporting events, and even today alcoholic beverages and sports are still tied together at the umbilical cord. And now fantasy sports gambling has joined the list.

It was only since the audience reach of television that brands spent billions supporting the IOC and the NFL, regardless of the Machiavellian and less-than-sportsmanlike conduct of those organizations. This situation will not change unless sponsors do more than just make meaningless PR statements and put their advertising dollars into other activities. Until that happens — and it did happen to prize fighting — don't expect to see sportsmanship in these sports.

For years, the leagues were prime vehicles for beer companies, non-alcoholic beverages and snack foods to position their brands as nutritional and fun products, in spite of medical research to the contrary. Only government regulations prevent the leagues from approving tobacco products for sponsorships, as they did for years prior to the ban.

During my sports reporting days as a journalist and during my PR sports marketing career, sports have been promoted as if it's all milk and honey. That would be nice, if true. But the many actions of athletes, team owners, leagues, coaches and

governments disprove that depiction of sports.

The hypocrisy of the image sports tries to portray was unveiled by the *New York Times*, whose reporting revealed that MLB, the NFL and NBA and its team owners have official relationships with the unregulated gambling of online fantasy sites. The *Wall Street Journal* has delegated its coverage of the fantasy site industry to its business section, which makes sense, because betting isn't a sport.

Even though the leagues vociferously proclaim they're against betting, they've always encouraged it: in baseball by announcing starting pitchers ahead of games, and in football by making public injuries to players, which, of course, enables odds makers to set the line.

Reality shows that sports isn't and never was what athletic cabals, marketers, PR and ad agencies portray it as: an integral element of society that brings out the best in people. In addition to excusing domestic violence, denying the facts about concussions and anti-social acts by players, sports sponsors also kept quiet when it was revealed that the NFL's patriotic image was just another paid for marketing ploy, enhanced by more than \$700,000 payments from the military. Better that instead of wrapping itself around the American flag, the NFL should show their appreciation to the military by hiring veterans.

As the year neared a close, early season NFL TV ratings showed a decline in viewers. Maybe at last, the decades-long hypocrisy of the NFL regarding domestic violence, concussions, the anti-social acts of its players and the lame responses of team owners and the commissioner has contributed to the decline.

The beer industry has no choice but to stand with the league. Other sponsors do too. If TV viewers' decline was more than just a blip caused by the election, stay tuned. There are venues other than the grid iron available for sponsors.

Big sports couldn't disseminate its propaganda without its enablers: The advertising industry, the media, and sponsors and, of course, our public relations business. There is more than enough shame to be shared by all.

Arthur Solomon was a Senior VP at Burson-Marsteller. ◉



Arthur Solomon



## Media training pioneer Glazer dies at 86

**G**eorge Glazer, who spent 27 years as chief broadcasting executive at New York's Hill and Knowlton counseling CBS news personalities such as legendary anchor Walter Cronkite and "60 Minutes" founder and Executive Producer Don Hewitt, died of a heart attack Nov. 22 at his home in Palm Beach County, Florida. He was 86.



George Glazer

Acknowledged by colleagues as a pioneer of contemporary media training and the use of satellite media tours and video news releases, Glazer advised luminaries such as Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, hotel mogul Bill Marriott, JetBlue Founder David Neeleman, Michael Jackson and Paul McCartney.

In 1986 Glazer created and managed the international press center at the historic summit between President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev in Reykjavik, Iceland.

Glazer is credited with conceiving and launching NYSE's pilot project to provide news channels with live interviews of traders on the floor of the exchange.

Since 1998 Glazer and his son, Bryan, have run World Satellite Television News. Clients have included Muhammad Ali, Sir Richard Branson, AOL Founder and Florida Governor Rick Scott.

Glazer was born in Philadelphia on Nov. 5, 1930, to Albert and Tillie Glazer. His father was President of the Philadelphia Glazing Co., one of the city's largest glass window cutters and installers. After graduating from Penn State University in 1952, where he was editor of the *Daily Collegiate* newspaper, Glazer started out as a reporter at WCAU, the CBS TV station in Philadelphia.

Glazer is survived by his wife, Mina; his son Bryan; his daughter Marjorie Edelstein, and his son-in-law, Steven Edelstein.

## ICR takes Tangney

**C**orporate communications and investor relations giant ICR has appointed financial veteran Scott Tangney to a Managing Director slot in the agency's corporate communications group.

Tangney joins ICR from Makovsky, where he was Executive VP and led that agency's financial and professional services practice for more than a decade. Prior to that,

he was Executive VP and Group Managing Director at Publicis Dialog and an Executive VP at agency Lobsenz-Stevens.

At ICR, Tangney will counsel and service clients with a focus on corporate, financial and professional services sectors while supporting the agency's growth in new areas. ○



Scott Tangney

## B-M names Engleka U.S. healthcare chair

**B**urson-Marsteller has named Henry Engleka Chair of that agency's U.S. healthcare practice.

Engleka succeeds U.S. healthcare Practice Chair David Zitlow, a former CBR Systems and GolinHarris executive who exited the WPP unit earlier this year to head the new Chicago outpost belonging to Washington, D.C. healthcare and life sciences agency Spectrum. Engleka was previously at Porter Novelli, where he served as Executive VP and led the Omnicom giant's New York Health and Wellness practice. Engleka was most recently stationed at the John Theurer Cancer Center at Hackensack University Medical Center, where he served as Senior Consultant and Marketing Steering Committee Member. He was also previously COO for the Mount Carmel Guild Behavioral Health System and an Assistant Executive Director and Staff Director for the American Psychological Association. ○



Henry Engleka

## Hynes becomes Blanc & Otus CEO

**H**ill+Knowlton Strategies sister tech agency Blanc & Otus has named Tony Hynes Chief Executive Officer.

Hynes succeeds former CEO Joshua Reynolds, who left the San Francisco-based consumer and B2B technology agency last year to join social media data analytics company Quantifind as head of marketing.



Tony Hynes

Hynes joins WPP unit Blanc & Otus from Burson-Marsteller tech start-up North of Nine Communications, where he served as Partner. Prior to that, he was General Manager and Executive VP at Interpublic powerhouse Weber Shandwick, where he led that agency's San Francisco outpost. He was also previously General Manager at Next Fifteen's Bite Communications and held Director roles at Hitachi Data Systems and Burson-Marsteller.

Hynes will also serve in the dual role of Hill+Knowlton Executive VP. ○

## Finn Partners hires Heinley

**F**inn Partners has appointed Michael Heinley as Partner and Deputy of the global independent agency's New York health practice.

Heinley joins the agency from online health publisher WebMD, where he was VP of Corporate Communications. Prior to that he was a Corporate Comms. VP at Johnson & Johnson, where he was responsible for that multinational pharmaceutical company's employee engagement and CEO communications. He was also formerly a Senior Director of Corporate Comms. at Merck & Co, and held an Account Supervisor role at Hill & Knowlton. ○



Michael Heinley

## B-M brings on Boehret

**V**eteran tech journalist Katherine Boehret, who was formerly a Re/code Deputy Reviews Editor and a reporter at *The Wall Street Journal*, has joined Burson-Marsteller in the role of Senior Director.

Boehret was Technology Reviews Editor at Vox tech property The Verge, where she wrote tech-related news items, reviews and opinion columns. Prior to that she was deputy reviews editor and senior reviewer for tech news site Re/code. Digital publisher Vox Media acquired Re/code last year. She was previously a reporter at *The Wall Street Journal*, which she joined in 2002 as a reporting assistant before later being named National Technology Columnist. She was also an editor for online tech publication AllThingsD.com. ○



Katherine Boehret

# O'Dwyer's guide to ENTERTAINMENT & SPORTS PR

## 5W PUBLIC RELATIONS

1166 Avenue of the Americas  
4th Floor  
New York, NY 10036  
212/999-5585  
info@5wpr.com

5W Public Relations is a top 20 independent PR firm with offices in New York and Denver whose client list spans across lifestyle, sports and entertainment. 5WPR has been a trusted PR partner to celebrities, business leaders, and professional sports leagues. Client experience includes Bowlmor AMF, Pat Smith, Ball Up, D'Angelo Guitars™, Davenport Theatrical Enterprises, and the Wiggles. 5WPR's services include celebrity branding, event management, fashion shows, Red Carpet events, record label promotion, launch events, movie premiers, and influencer management. 5WPR has secured product placement, brand ambassador partnerships or event appearances for our clients with the following celebrities and influencers: Jessica Alba, Anna Kendrick, Kim Kardashian, Fergie, Chrissy Teigen, Thomas Keller, Daymond John, Jeremy Piven, Kevin Durant, reality show stars, movies and a slew of others.

## BLAZE

1427 Third Street Promenade  
Suite 201  
Santa Monica, CA 90401  
310/395-5050  
Fax: 310/395-5001  
mkovacs@blazepr.com  
www.blazepr.com

**Matt Kovacs**, President

BLAZE is the trusted partner of choice for lifestyle contender brands hungry for a real piece of the marketshare. BLAZE has been retained by a growing number of savvy clients who want integrated PR, influencer and social media strategies — and flawless execution. BLAZE senior level professionals play a hands-on, day-to-day role with clients. With more than two decades of relationships and a solid team founded in strategic approaches, BLAZE is adroit in advancing client objectives and nimble to the quick-changing pace

of media technologies.

Clients include: Anime Expo, CVG Cinemas, ESPN, The Fit Expo, Gold's Gym, Great Mall, Performance Bike, Ontario Mills, Outlets at Orange, Spectrum Sports, WinView Games and Yuneec E-GO Electronic Skateboard.

## BUFFALO AGENCY

12700 Sunrise Valley Drive  
Suite 300  
Reston, VA 20191  
703/761-1444  
Fax: 703/893-3504  
kingraham@buffalo.agency

**Rich Katz**, Founder & Managing Director

**Kyle Ragsdale**, Managing Director & CMO, Billy Casper Golf

**Kristen Ingraham**, Senior Vice President of Operations

**Bill Replogle**, Chief Creative Officer

Intelligent. Fresh. Holistic. Founded in 2001 as Buffalo Communications, this agency has evolved into something much bigger. The new Buffalo Agency — formed in early 2016 — blends public relations and communications powerhouse Buffalo Brand Invigoration Group with the highly acclaimed marketing and analytics of its parent company, Billy Casper Golf, and the acquisition of award-winning creative shop Sparky's Garage. The combined result is a premier full-service, integrated marketing company dedicated to golf, destinations, sports and lifestyle brands. Learn more at buffalo.agency.

## BZA PR

6901 Canby Avenue, #105  
Reseda, CA 91335  
818/462-5600  
www.bzapr.com

1633 Broadway, 16th Floor  
New York, NY 10019  
212/708-1703

**Steve Brener**, President

BZA is a PR and marketing firm with more than 60 years of combined experience in the sports journalism and PR fields. BZA has the experience and contacts to maximize client exposure via PR,

promotions, event planning, event production and marketing plans.

The firm's network of media contacts at the local, national and international levels facilitates media placements. Its service-oriented philosophy includes strategic plan development, interaction with client contacts, cultivation of media promotions to enhance advertising buys, adherence to timelines, timely progress reports, on-site execution and event results and evaluation.

Sports clients include: NFL (National Football League), NHL (National Hockey League), SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING, OMEGA, MGM Resorts, CareerBuilder Challenge, Santa Anita Race Track, USTA, JDP Communications, Bellator MMA, College Football Awards, Tiger Woods Foundation and AUA (American Urological Association).

## FINN PARTNERS

301 East 57th St.  
New York, NY 10022  
212/715-1600  
www.finnpartners.com  
philippa@finnpartners.com  
david.hahn@finnpartners.com  
howard@finnpartners.com

**Philippa Polskin**, Managing Partner, Polskin Arts & Communications Counselors 212/593-6488  
**David Hahn**, Senior Partner, MEDIA CONNECT, 212/593-5847  
**Howard Solomon**, Managing Director, Finn Partners West, 415/348-2733

At Finn Partners, entertainment is elevated to the highest of art forms. From experiential activations for leading consumer brands to advance and opening communications strategies for some of the world's finest museums, dance companies and orchestras, Finn Partners brings a unique perspective and years of combined experience to the field of entertainment and cultural marketing and communications. As the 2015 *Holmes Report* Midsize Firm of the Year, Finn Partners is one of the fastest-growing independent communications agencies in the world with headquarters in New York City and offices in Chicago, Detroit, Fort Lauderdale, Jerusalem, London, Los Angeles, Munich, Nashville, Portland, Paris, San Francisco, and

Washington, D.C., with additional international capabilities through its own global network and PROI Worldwide. The firm's work in the entertainment and cultural sectors lies within two major groups at the Agency: Polskin Arts & Communications Counselors and Media Connect, both based in New York.

A division of Finn Partners, Polskin Arts & Communications Counselors is the oldest and largest firm specializing in cultural public relations. Polskin Arts plans strategy for comprehensive campaigns focused on major institutional initiatives, represents corporations and other funders engaged in cultural initiatives and provides ongoing counsel and crisis communications. Clients include: The Museum of Modern Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation, Whitney Museum of American Art, American Museum of Natural History, The Studio Museum in Harlem, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Columbia University, the J. Paul Getty Trust, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Menil Collection, Fondation Louis Vuitton, the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative and UBS.

MEDIA CONNECT is a specialty division of Finn Partners that focuses on the promotion of authors, entertainers, and artists. MEDIA CONNECT regularly promotes bestselling authors for major book publishers including Mitch Albom, Daniel Silva, and Dean Koontz. MEDIA CONNECT helps media companies such as Condé Nast, HBO, PBS, *National Geographic* and The Discovery Channel by providing Satellite TV and Radio Tours and online social media campaigns.

## FRENCH/WEST/VAUGHAN

112 East Hargett St.  
Raleigh, NC 27601  
919/832-6300  
www.fvw-us.com

**Rick French**, Chairman & CEO  
**David Gwyn**, President / Principal  
**Natalie Best**, Executive Vice President / Director of Client Services / Principal

French/West/Vaughan (FWV) is the Southeast's leading public



relations, public affairs and brand communications agency, independent or otherwise. Founded in April 1997 by Agency Chairman & CEO Rick French, FWV now employs 87 public relations, public affairs, social media, advertising and digital marketing experts among its Raleigh, N.C. headquarters and New York City, Los Angeles and Tampa offices.

Ranked as the #2 firm for sports PR and #13 for entertainment PR by *O'Dwyer's*, FWV specializes in creating maximum brand exposure for its clients through strategic partnerships, paid endorsements, sponsor relations, event management, social media, mobile and experiential marketing and traditional earned media outreach programs.

FWV's sports and entertainment clients include former Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Michael Vick, Philadelphia Eagles cornerback Nolan Carroll, Race car driver Bobby Mesmer, L.A. Laker forward Luol Deng, National Pro Fastpitch, Daytona Tortugas Baseball, the Veteran Golfers Association, O2 Fitness, Fleet Feet, Sure Sports Lending, Yell-Fy, Kyazoonga (The Big Ticket), Steinberg Sports & Entertainment, NATHAN, Privi, Exclusive Sports Group, and best-selling author Nick Schuyler. Additionally, FWV has a pro bono partnership with Teen Cancer America (TCA), the national non-profit founded by rock 'n' roll icons Roger Daltrey and Pete Townshend of The Who.

The agency has also done work on behalf of the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association

(CIAA), United States Polo Association, Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association, United States Speedskating, leading international swimwear brand Arena, Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson, All-Pro NFL running back Arian Foster, Detroit Lions safety Glover Quin, New York Giants running back Rashad Jennings, Cincinnati Bengals defensive tackle Geno Atkins, former Chicago Bears safety and free agent Ryan Mundy, former NFL safety Terrence Holt, former NFL wide receiver Torrey Holt, NFL legend-turned filmmaker Simeon Rice, singer-songwriter Jacob Whitesides, singer-songwriter Lucie Silvas, platinum-selling musician T.I., actor Brandon Mychal Smith, AstroTurf, Speedo, MoGo Mouthguards, TVG (America's Horseracing Network), the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC), and Urban Sports and Entertainment Group.

## HUNTER ENTERTAINMENT + SPORTS

A division of Hunter Public Relations  
41 Madison Avenue, 5th floor  
New York, NY 10010-2202  
212/679-6600  
smormar@hunterpr.com  
sturtle@hunterpr.com  
www.hunterpr.com

Partners: **Grace Leong, Jonathan Lyon, Jason Winocour, Mark Newman, Donetta Allen, Gigi Russo, Erin Hanson**



Chris Gethard with a KSA client, comedian Stephen Colbert.

With the right celebrity association, event sponsorship or integrated content opportunity, the entertainment world offers added star power and sizzle, providing one of the fastest ways to drive mainstream brand awareness and build brand identity.

Hunter Entertainment & Sports is a full-service entertainment marketing practice of Hunter Public Relations that is tapped-into the worlds of pop culture, lifestyle, fashion, sports and entertainment. Drawing from a strategic public relations point-of-view, Hunter Entertainment & Sports helps to authentically position brands to attain the right amount of "cool factor," generate impactful earned media impressions, earn consumers' attention and keep brands top of mind.

Formalized in 2008, Hunter Entertainment & Sports consists of dedicated entertainment marketers who work across all Hunter clients to manage strategic alignments that solidify a brand's role in popular culture through the practice's core competencies: talent engagement; sponsorship negotiation and activations; integrated content and entertainment media relations & strategy.

Recent highlights include a four-year-long relationship between allergy-sufferer, Debra Messing, and ZYRTEC®; toasting to Hollywood's biggest stars with Tequila Don Julio at the Sundance Film Festival; Hilary Duff hosting a marathon viewing of the TV series "Younger" to help consumers

#ScreenOn with VISINE®; and celebrating New York Fashion Week with custom Alexander Wang BIC® Lighters.

## KEITH SHERMAN AND ASSOCS.

234 West 44th Street  
New York, NY 10036  
212/764-7900  
Fax: 212/764-0344  
www.ksa-pr.com

**Keith Sherman**, President  
**Brett Oberman**, VP  
**Scott Klein**, VP

KEITH SHERMAN & ASSOCIATES (KSA) provides strategic public relations counseling and marketing communications services to a diverse clientele in entertainment, arts, lifestyles and international brands.

KSA is proud of several long-term client relationships including 10 years working for *The New York Times*, 18 years for the Tony Awards, 25 years representing Olympic Gold medalist Brian Boitano and a decade working for insurance giant Marsh & McLennan.

Clients include: Universal Pictures, Focus Features, Sony, Oscilloscope, Adrian Grenier, Colin Quinn, Lang Lang, Chris Gethard, Montreal Jazz Festival, Broadway League, Bolshoi Ballet, Abu Dhabi Arts Festival, Feinstein's/54 Below, Drama Desk Awards and 300 Broadway, Off-Broadway and na-

Continued on page 22



To focus on the positive benefits of marathon viewing and how VISINE® is the must-have screen watching accessory, Hunter Entertainment & Sports worked with VISINE® to partner with actress Hilary Duff to launch the #ScreenOn campaign, where she shared her personal dry eye and binge-watching stories with media.



**Caitlyn Jenner drove off the women's tee at the Celebrity ProAm at Sherwood Country Club, where Marketing Maven executed the media relations for the PGA TOUR Champions' inaugural PowerShares QQQ Championship.**

KSA \_Continued from page 21

tional touring productions.

Other projects include: Kimpton Hotels, Portuguese Gourmet Food Festival, The Art Students League of New York, Forum Gallery, Visiting Nurse Service of New York, Hertz, The Onion, *Architectural Digest*, Columbia University, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Samuel French, New York Marriott Marquis and Bristol-Myers Squibb, among others. Results. Excellence. Proactive effort. Strategic thinking. Integrity. Creativity. Passion. These are some of the elements that distinguish KSA's work.

## MARKETING MAVEN

135 East 57th Street, 4th Floor  
New York, NY 10022  
212/967-5510  
www.MarketingMavenPR.com  
Los Angeles Headquarters  
310/994-7380

**Lindsey Carnett**, CEO & President  
lindsey@marketingmavenpr.com  
**Natalie Rucker**, VP of Business Development  
natalie@marketingmavenpr.com

Award-winning agency, Marketing Maven, led by former NCAA women's soccer captain, Lindsey Carnett, combines traditional media relations and cutting-edge digital strategies for sports and entertainment clients. This fusion of online and offline marketing helps

our team develop campaigns that are results-driven and measurable.

With offices in LA and NY, this bicoastal team is tapped into media at the two largest entertainment capitals. From movie premieres, gifting suites, red carpet events, product launches to national media tours, Marketing Maven executes worldwide PR stunts, influencer marketing and viral social media competitions to generate buzz for clients. In addition to content marketing, our digital team also executes social media advertising campaigns with analytics and insights geared toward driving consumer awareness, increasing event attendance and growing valuable sponsorships.

## PEPPERCOMM, INC.

470 Park Ave. South  
4th Floor North  
New York, NY 10016  
212/931-6100  
hello@peppercomm.com  
www.peppercomm.com

**Steve Cody**, Co-CEO and Co-Founder  
**Ed Moed**, Co-CEO and Co-Founder  
**Ted Birkhahn**, Partner & President  
**Ann Barlow**, Partner & President, West Coast  
**Deborah Brown**, Partner & Managing Director  
**Jacqueline Kolek**, Partner & Managing Director  
**Maggie O'Neill**, Partner & Managing Director

Services include Branding, Content Strategy & Development, Creative Services, Crisis Management,

Digital Solutions, Experiential, Insights & Strategy, Licensing, Public Relations & Social Media, and Research & Measurement.

Peppercomm is an independently owned 20-year-old integrated communications and marketing agency headquartered in New York with offices in San Francisco, Boulder and London.

Everyone loves a good listener — and at Peppercomm, we're always paying attention. We're a strategic partner that listens to uncover your business objectives. Then we listen to your audiences to learn what they need and how they think. We look around corners to see what's coming next, and help our clients creatively push boundaries while avoiding minefields and mitigating risk.

Founded in 1995 by Steve Cody and Ed Moed, Peppercomm began as a traditional PR agency and has evolved into a fully integrated firm with a focus on financial and professional services, B2B industrial and consumer lifestyle and the technology that serves them all.

Our combined years of deep category experience and love of what we do shapes our work. We engage your audiences on every level and set your brand apart. And we do all this to help your bottom-line and build your business. So get in touch. We're all ears.

## PMK•BNC

1840 Century Park East, Suite 1400  
Los Angeles, CA 90067  
310/854-4800  
www.pmkbnc.com  
Twitter: @pmk\_bnc  
Facebook: pmk\*bnc  
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622 Third Ave., 20th Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
212/373-6100

Bankside Studios  
76-80 Southwark Street  
London E1 SE1 0PN  
+44 (0) 207 961 2377

**Michael Nyman**, Chairman & CEO  
**Cindi Berger**, Chairman & CEO  
**Chris Robichaud**, CEO

PMK•BNC is the leading authority in Popular Culture and Entertainment. We specialize in creating ideas that move the consumer, applying our unique insights to help clients build audiences, engage consumers and become culturally relevant.

We are experts who speak a global language of popular culture driven by consumer passion points: film, television, sports,

music, art, fashion and technology. We represent clients ranging from preeminent celebrities, producers, directors, cable and network TV properties, production companies, award-winning films, musicians, authors, sports figures, leading consumer brands and premier special events.

With a staff of more than 300 professionals in New York, Los Angeles and London, PMK•BNC delivers inspired communications and marketing strategies including public relations, event production, experiential marketing, celebrity and influencer outreach, sponsorship, promotions, product placement and integration, digital content creation and brand consultation.

## ROGERS & COWAN

1840 Century Park E, 18th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90067  
Fax: 310/854-8106  
www.rogersandcowan.com  
Twitter: @rogersandcowan  
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Facebook: Rogersandcowan

### Mark Owens, CEO

As the leader in entertainment marketing and PR, Rogers & Cowan helps clients become relevant in the cultural conversation and connects them to their audience for greater levels of engagement. We provide our clients with insightful research and strategic communications structured around solid storytelling and a creative commitment to big ideas.

The agency works with a diverse roster of entertainment and brand clients in the talent, music, content, retail & consumer, luxury lifestyle, fashion & beauty and technology industries. Agency service offerings include media relations, strategy, research & insights, product launches, influencer engagement, executive visibility, celebrity seeding, crisis management, sponsorships and digital/social media. Our specialty is maximizing the moment and getting coverage for our clients in the owned, earned, and shared media space. We deliver brand activations with measurable impact resulting in billions of impressions year round.

A creative, collaborative, and diverse workplace with offices on both coasts, Rogers & Cowan is a performance-driven culture comprised of passionate individuals dedicated to client service and results.





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## TAYLOR

The Empire State Building  
350 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3800  
New York, NY 10118  
212/714-1280  
www.taylorstrategy.com

**Tony Signore**, CEO & Managing Partner  
**Bryan Harris**, COO & Managing Partner

Named "Consumer Agency of the Decade" by the *Holmes Group*, Taylor has forged a reputation of excellence in public relations and brand marketing for more than 30 years by partnering with the world's leading corporate marketers utilizing their sports, lifestyle, and entertainment assets to engage consumers and foster brand relationships that drive business growth. The agency's roots are firmly planted in the world of sports and its legacy of developing and activating hundreds of award-winning campaigns for leading brands in support of sports sponsorships is unparalleled. From global properties like the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup, to the crown jewels of U.S. sports — the World Series, Super Bowl, NBA Finals, and Daytona 500, among others — Taylor has long been a trusted counselor for many of the world's most influential sports marketers.

The agency has also successfully aligned its client partners' business goals with the most recognizable properties in the entertainment industry, including the Academy Awards, Grammy Awards, Latin Grammy Awards, Sundance Film Festival, and MTV Music Video Awards.

Taylor's client partners include Activision, Allstate, AMB Group, Capital One, Comcast, Diageo, Mercedes-Benz, NASCAR, Nestle, Nike, Panini America, PVH, P&G, and Tempur-Sealy.

## WEBER SHANDWICK

909 Third Avenue  
New York, NY 10022  
212/445-8000  
www.webershandwick.com

**Jerry Gleason**, Executive Vice President; Director, Sports Marketing North America

Weber Shandwick's Sports Marketing practice combines the agency's industry-leading consumer marketing practice with an expan-

sive global network of sports marketing experts focused on creating award-winning programs for many of the world's best known brands in cooperation with the major sports franchises, leagues and athletes.

We bring together athletes, products and campaigns to tell engaging stories across multiple platforms that help connect with consumers and fans alike to give our clients competitive advantages enabling them to elevate their brands, enhance consumer loyalty and increase sales.

We build visibility and preference for our clients and their products and services through consumer outreach, media relations, event marketing, fan engagement, sponsorship activation and social media.

In addition, we work closely with our Interpublic Group sports marketing partner Octagon to offer our clients a full range of counsel and support surrounding sponsorships, athlete representation, on-site physical activation and hospitality, negotiation and benchmarking.

Our sports marketing professionals have created and leveraged sports sponsorships for some of the most recognized and respected brands in the world in cooperation with the major sports franchises, leagues and athletes. Our programs give our clients competitive advantages enabling them to elevate their brands, enhance consumer loyalty and increase sales.

## WEBSTER PUBLIC RELATIONS

253 Jackson Meadows Drive  
Hermitage, TN 37076  
615/777-6995  
Fax: 615/369-2515  
www.websterpr.com

**Kirt Webster**, President  
kirt@websterpr.com  
**Jeremy Westby**, Sr. VP  
jeremy@websterpr.com  
**Scott Adkins**, VP of Publicity  
scott@websterpr.com

Webster Public Relations promotes and protects the brands and careers for icons like Dolly Parton, Hank Williams Jr. and Kenny Rogers, as well as artists as diverse as Cyndi Lauper, Kiefer Sutherland, Kid Rock and Kenny G. Our firm is at the forefront of creating innovative campaigns, not only on behalf of established heritage artists, but actualized effective strategies to launch new careers.

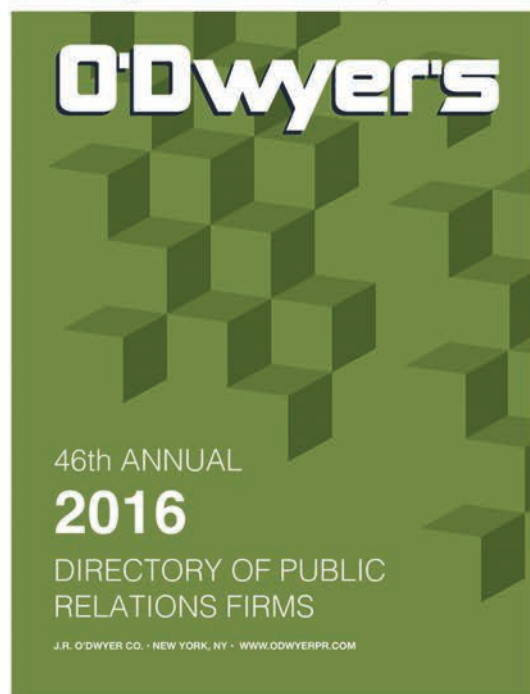
Based in Nashville, Webster Public Relations uses our far reaching influence to achieve local, region-

al, and national media exposure. Known for being risk takers, our success stems from a desire to see all of our clients forge new paths and create new partnerships. Above all, we strive to exceed the expectations of those we serve. Through our solid relationships with talent bookers, tastemakers, music supervisors and other industry professionals we create a customized campaign with a multidimensional approach that significantly builds

our clients' profiles and also raises industry awareness. The increased media presence also helps build bridges to new ventures from corporate opportunities to new compelling projects. We have a proven track record of these results. This broad spectrum includes Satellite Media Tours and Special Events, for which we can act as sole producer or serve as consultants. Webster Public Relations is savvy, creative, and above all, effective. ○

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# O'DWYER'S RANKINGS

## TOP ENTERTAINMENT PR FIRMS

Firm	Net Fees (2015)	Firm	Net Fees (2015)
1. Finn Partners, New York, NY	\$7,474,000	17. SPM Communications, Dallas, TX	224,924
2. Taylor, New York, NY	3,540,000	18. Landis Communications, San Francisco, CA	200,000
3. W2O Group, San Francisco, CA	1,900,000	19. Status Labs, Austin, TX	196,211
4. Zeno Group, New York, NY	1,540,860	20. CooperKatz & Co., New York, NY	147,726
5. 360 Public Relations, Boston, MA	1,500,974	21. WE, Bellevue, WA	143,000
6. Regan Communications Group, Boston, MA	1,325,400	22. Rock Orange, Miami, FL	102,021
7. Hunter PR, New York, NY	1,000,000	23. TransMedia Group, Boca Raton, FL	100,723
8. Peppercomm, New York, NY	872,675	24. Didit Communications, LLC, New York, NY	87,947
9. Jackson Spalding, Atlanta, GA	847,649	25. Sachs Media Group, Tallahassee, FL	60,000
10. Coyne PR, Parsippany, NJ	739,612	26. Maccabee, Minneapolis, MN	36,047
11. Rasky Baerlein Strat. Comms., Boston, MA	734,007	27. Marketing Maven PR, Camarillo, CA	35,324
12. French   West   Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	702,000	28. Schneider Associates, Boston, MA	33,300
13. Public Communications Inc., Chicago, IL	692,489	29. AMP3 Public Relations, New York, NY	33,163
14. PadillaCRT, Minneapolis, MN	566,084	30. Standing Partnership, St. Louis, MO	25,993
15. rbb Communications, Miami, FL	324,650	31. Notability Partners LLC, Austin, TX	13,184
16. McNeely Pigott & Fox PR, Nashville, TN	280,036	32. LEVICK, Washington, DC	11,163

# O'DWYER'S RANKINGS

## TOP SPORTS PR FIRMS

Firm	Net Fees (2015)	Firm	Net Fees (2015)
1. Taylor, New York, NY	\$10,600,000	16. McNeely Pigott & Fox PR, Nashville, TN	145,384
2. French   West   Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	6,176,664	17. WE, Bellevue, WA	141,000
3. Coyne PR, Parsippany, NJ	1,978,945	18. Rasky Baerlein Strategic Comms., Boston, MA	97,905
4. APCO Worldwide, Washington, DC	1,588,600	19. Trevelino/Keller, Atlanta, GA	75,000
5. Ruder Finn, New York, NY	1,500,000	20. Power Group, The, Dallas, TX	72,152
6. Regan Communications Group, Boston, MA	1,274,000	21. Sachs Media Group, Tallahassee, FL	69,356
7. Racepoint Global, Boston, MA	573,886	22. Public Communications Inc., Chicago, IL	64,152
8. Jackson Spalding, Atlanta, GA	522,414	23. Hodges Partnership, The, Richmond, VA	61,000
9. Konnect Public Relations, Los Angeles, CA	482,209	24. Didit Communications, LLC, New York, NY	49,368
10. LEVICK, Washington, DC	427,591	25. Zeno Group, New York, NY	38,347
11. Crosswind Media & PR, Austin, TX	380,000	26. PadillaCRT, Minneapolis, MN	32,401
12. Status Labs, Austin, TX	277,965	27. Marketing Maven PR, Camarillo, CA	30,500
13. BLAZE, Santa Monica, CA	176,859	28. Butin Integrated Comms., St. Simons Island, GA	26,250
14. CooperKatz & Co., New York, NY	173,922	29. Finn Partners, New York, NY	22,000
15. rbb Communications, Miami, FL	150,000	30. Perry Communications Group, Sacramento, CA	9,000

# PR lessons from the Trump travesty

By Fraser Seitel

In rejecting a 24 carat-conniver and electing instead a vulgarian nitwit, American voters proved conclusively that ...



**Fraser P. Seitel** has been a communications consultant, author and teacher for more than 30 years. He is the author of the Prentice-Hall text, *The Practice of Public Relations*.

Well, I have no idea what they "proved."

But I would suggest that public relations counselors can glean several 21st century "lessons" from the most odious presidential election since Andrew Jackson's campaign of 1828, when his press secretary, Amos Kendall, famously didn't bathe.

Here's what we learned:

## Lesson #1: don't kabuki dance

When Donald Trump was hit with the Billy Bush 2005 "Access Hollywood" tape

that revealed how maniacally misogynistic he was in real life, the candidate didn't try to dance away from the potential knockout blow. He admitted he said things he wasn't proud of, dismissed it as "locker room banter" and moved on. As a result, Bush got canned, and Trump was elected President.

By contrast, Hillary Clinton tried to waltz away from every accusation from favorable treatment by the Democratic National Committee to "pay for play" Clinton Foundation grants to national secrets on her e-mail. She lost.

## Lesson #2: don't cheat

One late-breaking development that cast a pall on the Hillary campaign was the flap surrounding political public relations veteran and CNN contributor Donna Brazile.

After Brazile secretly planted questions with the campaign that would be asked during an upcoming CNN debate, the interim head of the DNC was caught with her pants down when Wikileaks disclosed her cheating. Brazile and the Clinton campaign became last-minute symbols of "dirty tricks."

## Lesson #3: the media are biased

The right wing, of course, has always screamed about the "biased media," but in the Trump election, even the media acknowledged their bias.

In August, *New York Times* Media Business Columnist Jim Rutenberg, a young man trying to replace the late iconic media reporter David Carr, encouraged his fellow journalists to shed its semblance of balance in the case of the decidedly-unbalanced Trump. He wrote:

"It may not always seem fair to Mr. Trump or his supporters. But journalism shouldn't measure itself against any one campaign's definition of fairness. It is journalism's job to be true to the readers and viewers, and true to the facts, in a way that will stand up to history's judgment. To do anything less would be untenable."

And from that moment on, the former bastions of journalistic objectivity — from the *New York Times* to the *Washington Post*, from CNN to NBC — made no bones about their antipathy to Donald Trump.

## Lesson #4: the "experts" are phonies

Not only are the media biased, they are flooded with phonies who likely know less than you do.

All of them were dead wrong: from David Brooks and Tom Friedman to Chuck Todd and George Stephanopoulos to Nate Silver and all the other previously-respected "analytical" pollsters.

The fact is that television is essentially for entertainment and social media is essentially for gossip. And the moderators and bloggers and pundits and talking heads who populate these media are articulate and attractive first and knowledgeable, last. They're rarely both and often neither.

What this reality leads to is ...

## Lesson #5: trust your gut — but verify

Most of the time, it makes more sense to go with your gut instincts, even if that flies in the face of consensus "wisdom."

That's precisely what Donald Trump, warts and all, did throughout his march to the mountain top. He disdained the advice of others to change his approach and instead, followed his own counsel. This often resulted in embarrassing tweets and buffoonish comments, but ... in the end, Trump's instincts that most people were neither MSNBC/moveon.org Democrats nor Fox News/Breitbart Republicans proved correct.

The people rejected the status quo and voted for change.

And public relations people, once they stop crying, can learn from Trump's stupefying success. ○



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# Tax reform and Trump, plus identity theft

By Richard Goldstein

**T**his month I'm writing on what I view to be two important topics: tax reform and identity theft. This time of year clients and friends are asking me my view on tax changes. Should they defer income to 2017 (not a bad idea)? Should they close a merger now or wait to 2017? Why was my 2015 tax return rejected because the IRS said I already filed it?



**Richard Goldstein** is a partner at Buchbind-er Tunick & Company LLP, New York, Certified Public Accountants.

## President-elect Donald Trump

This time of year clients and friends are asking me my view on tax changes. Should they defer income to 2017 (not a bad idea)? Should they close a merger now or wait to 2017? Why was my 2015 tax return rejected because the IRS said I already filed it?

I have no inside track on tax reform. However, with a Republican Congress and President, I believe there will be some form of reform. First, I don't believe that Donald Trump is a Republican. I know he ran on the Republican line, much the same as Mayor Michael Bloomberg ran on the Republican line for Mayor, but this does not mean Bloomberg or Trump are Republicans. In fact, I believe that Trump is more liberal than conservative and is an independent. I believe he's squarely in the middle with no real loyalty to the Republican Party. Time will tell, including who he picks for the Supreme Court.

Recently, Stephen Moore, a Heritage Foundation fellow and advisor to the Trump Campaign, said he would recommend that Trump pursue tax reform along two tracks, by focusing on business taxes in his first 150 days and leaving the politically more challenging task of reforming individual taxes for later.

In my view, if you think there will be a flat tax, you are wrong! The Internal Revenue Code is both a political and economic law. Yes, it has special interest provisions, but it also supports our economy and is intertwined with business, corporate, partnership, international tax and trust and estate provisions to name a few. It's just too complex to start over. Yes, there

are things on my wish list: eliminate the alternative minimum tax, increase the standard deduction and allow a 100 percent deduction for non-reimbursed medical expenses.

Trump's proposal would reduce the official corporate tax rate to 15 percent from 35 percent (I do not see this happening; I would reduce the corporate rate to 25 percent over a phase in period), allow corporations to repatriate overseas profits at a 10 percent rate and reduce the top tax rate for individuals from 39.6 percent to 33 percent (I believe this is doable). I'm in favor of a one-time benefit to repatriate profits to the U.S. at a reduced rate. I believe 10 percent is just too low considering that repatriated foreign earnings in most cases enjoy the benefit of certain foreign tax credit provisions that reduce the cost of repatriation.

Moore estimated that the cost of the cuts would lead to a revenue loss of about \$3 trillion over 10 years for which Trump would compensate with spending cuts (it will have to be BIG spending cuts, in my view). The theory is the cuts will broaden the tax base by adding 1 percent of growth to the US economy. So, Trump wants to pass a tax cut bill and then make up the difference by cutting government spending.

Some analysts have warned of a bigger problem. The nonpartisan Tax Policy Center forecasts that the Trump plan would cause the Federal debt to soar by \$7 trillion over the first decade, including interest costs and macroeconomic effects.

According to Moore, Trump and Congress would be able to get this passed as a job creation bill by linking corporate tax reform to infrastructure spending. The combination would also increase the chances of gaining support from Democrats, who have favored such a link.

Moore estimated that taxing repatriated overseas profits could raise \$100 billion to \$150 billion for infrastructure spending. U.S. corporations are estimated to have \$2.6 trillion in profits overseas. A prediction: U.S. corporations will not repatriate back unless Congress address the issues of why these companies keep funds overseas and make it more attractive to repatriate in the long term. I do not feel we can sustain at a 10 percent rate over time.

## Identity theft

I'd also like to discuss what I view to be another very important topic: identity theft.

The last two years I've seen more personal income tax returns rejected as "already filed" than in my entire career. So what's the cause? In my view, the cause is the ease of stealing information over the internet and the ability to hack into computers.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, as many as 10 million Americans have identities stolen each year. According to the FTC, 50 percent of the complaints were tax related.

One of the best ways for individuals to proactively recognize that they have a potential identity theft situation is to request and review copies of their (1) tax account transcripts from the IRS, (2) wage and income transcripts from the IRS, and (3) credit reports from the three major credit reporting agencies.

Here are some other ways I call the "Goldstein" identity audit program. Daily or at least once a week review all your bank statements; daily or at least once a week review all your credit card statements; at least once a year review your credit report from all the major credit reporting agencies.

## IRS transcripts

IRS transcripts can show signs of identity theft and should be reviewed. They are available for free on the "Get Transcript" web page at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov), by calling 800/908-9946 to receive the transcript by mail, or by submitting Form 4506-T.

For identity theft purposes, some important codes are TC 150, which indicates that a tax return was filed and posted to your account, and TC 976, which indicates that a duplicate return was filed and posted to your account.

## Credit reports

You have a right to obtain a free copy of your credit report every 12 months for each of the primary reporting companies. Do this now! Some issues to watch out for:

- Do any inactive accounts show new activity?
- Is there a line of credit that you did not open or that looks unfamiliar?
- Is there an account unfamiliar, or an account you recognize but did not think was overdue, delinquent or in collections?
- Are there inquiries from creditors ("hard inquiries") that you do not recognize?

There is much more to identity theft than outlined here. You can get the credit reports at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or by calling 877/322-8228. ○

## H+K hires GOP strategist Reed

**S**cott Reed, a veteran GOP political strategist and a former Executive Director of the Republican National Committee, has joined Hill+Knowlton Strategies in Washington, where he's been named a Senior Advisor.

Reed's appointment to the WPP PR powerhouse becomes effective December 1.

Reed is Founder and Chairman of Washington-based government relations consulting firm Chesapeake Enterprises. He was previously Bob Dole's campaign manager during that retired Senator's 1996 presidential run, and was executive director of the Republican National Committee during the GOP's historic 1994 Congressional takeover. He was also Chief of Staff to HUD Secretary (and former Dole running mate) Jack Kemp during the Bush administration, and previously helped run Kemp's presidential campaign in 1988.

Reed is currently Senior Political Strategist at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which he joined in 2011. He will maintain this role while serving in the Senior Advisor role at H+K.

H+K's D.C. outpost is led by Executive VP Ellen Moran, who previously served as Chief of Staff at the U.S. Commerce Department and was President Obama's Communications Director. ○



Scott Reed

## Glover Park picks Poteet

**G**OP tax veteran Paul Poteet has been hired by Democratic lobbying giant Glover Park Group to serve as a Managing Director in the firm's government relations practice.

Poteet joins the Washington, D.C.-based firm from the office of Senator John Thune (R-SD), where he most recently served as Senior Policy Advisor and Tax and Trade Counsel. Prior to that he was Managing Director of Federal Government Relations for biotechnology trade group the Biotechnology Industry Association. He began his career as a Senior Policy Advisor to Rep. Wally Herger (R-CA).

Poteet will provide Glover Park political and legislative counsel regarding tax, trade and finance policy within the Republican leadership. ○



Paul Poteet

## Rasky Baerlein bolsters gov't relations practice

**B**rittany Beaulieu brings her experience serving on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for Ranking member Ben Cardin (D-MD) over to Rasky Baerlein's Washington, D.C., office.

As VP, Beaulieu will provide strategic counsel to the firm's multinational clients on the increasingly complex geopolitical environment.

Under Cardin, Beaulieu worked on the Ukraine Freedom Support Act and legislation to address international parental child abduction and global health. She also served



Brittany Beaulieu



on the foreign policy staff of Senate Finance Committee Chairman Senator Max Baucus, current U.S. Ambassador to China.

Rasky Baerlein is a nationally recognized PR and bipartisan government relations firm with more than two decades of experience. It comes in at #27 in *O'Dwyer's* ranking of PR firms with \$14.1 million in 2015 net fees.

The firm is headquartered in Boston. ○

## Denton eyes PR, PA network

**D**entons, the largest law firm in the world, said it will form a global network of public affairs firms in 2017 reaching into PR, lobbying, advertising and related fields.

Global Chairman Joe Andrew, a former head of the Democratic National Committee, said the Nextlaw Global Public Affairs Network acknowledges that the firm "serves our clients in the court of public opinion as well as the court of law."

Dentons will not charge firms fees to join the network and will allow for multiple members within a single market.

The firm said it will begin inviting firms to join the network this week and will unveil the network in the first half of 2017.

Added Andrew: "No matter how large a law firm or a public affairs firm is, no single firm can provide the best expertise everywhere in the world." Dentons was formed by a series of mergers, including London and Washington powerhouse SNR Denton, to build up to more than 7,300 attorneys around the world and revenues estimated to be north of \$2 billion. ○

## Podesta lifts lobbying support for CrossFit

**P**opular branded strength and conditioning regimen CrossFit has tapped Washington, D.C.-based political affairs powerhouse Podesta Group for help with government issues on Capitol Hill.

CrossFit, which was developed in 2000 by Greg Glassman and Lauren Jenai in Santa Cruz, CA, is primarily a mix of aerobic exercise, calisthenics and Olympic weightlifting. Owned by company CrossFit Inc., the fitness program, which is promoted as both a physical exercise philosophy and a competitive fitness sport, currently licenses its name to approximately 13,000 CrossFit affiliated gyms, and is now practiced by enthusiasts, professional athletes, martial artists and military special operations units worldwide.

CrossFit has hired Podesta for help with federal oversight regarding "conflict of interest rules and regulations related to academic research funded by government agencies," according to lobbying registration documents filed in November.

The account signals CrossFit's first use of a lobbying firm. ○



## Feintuch named PRWA CFO

International communications consultancy network PR World Alliance has named Henry Feintuch, President of New York-based financial and tech agency Feintuch Communications, to the role of Chief Financial Officer.

Feintuch's appointment was announced during the network's annual general meeting in Venice, Italy, where the network's new board was elected.

Feintuch, who's been a member of PRWA since the early 2000s and has served on its board for more than a decade, had held the board title of Vice Chairman since 2013.

"Organizations like the PR World Alliance help to level the playing field between the giant-sized, better resourced firms and the smaller independent shops, focused on providing senior talent to client business and in need of localized support in key world markets," Feintuch told *O'Dwyer's*. "Now, as our organization restructures to provide more services to our members and admit more partners from around the world, it's my privilege to give back in my new role as CFO."

PRWA also appointed board member Catherine Kablé, a managing partner at Paris-based agency Kablé Communication, to the role of incoming Chairwoman. Kablé succeeds outgoing Chairwoman Perran Ersu Ozcaldiran, President of Istanbul's Persona PR, who will now hold the title of Vice Chairwoman. Board member Lars-Ola Nordqvist, President of Stockholm-based agency Comvi-



Henry Feintuch

sion, has been named Secretary, and Christian Josephi, President of Stuttgart, Germany's Panama PR, has been appointed Director: PRWA, which is headquartered in Canada, currently counts 15 agency members throughout Europe and North America. ○

## Joele Frank, Sard work chip maker's play for Pericom

Washington-based government and corporate PR shop the Harbour Group, which has maintained a long-running pact with the United Arab Emirates, has been hired to develop communications plans for that country's specialized government agency the Executive Affairs Authority.

THG will provide communications counsel and consultancy services for the government authority's ongoing work in the United Kingdom, according to Foreign Agents Registration Act documents filed in November. Those services are slated to include communication message and plan development; identifying and engaging key stakeholders; media relations strategy; spokesperson training; participation in meetings; and media and online monitoring.

Abu Dhabi-based EAA advises policy to the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and provides that country's executive council policy and advice on matters pertaining to economics, government affairs, legal and risk management and communications.

THG's contract with the AEE runs until June 2019. ○

### FARA News



## NEW FOREIGN AGENTS REGISTRATION ACT FILINGS

Below is a list of select companies that have registered with the U.S. Department of Justice, FARA Registration Unit, Washington, D.C., in order to comply with the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, regarding their consulting and communications work on behalf of foreign principals, including governments, political parties, organizations, and individuals. For a complete list of filings, visit [www.fara.gov](http://www.fara.gov).

**Podesta Group, Inc.**, Washington, D.C., **registered Nov. 8, 2016 for Ocean Advisory & Consulting W.L.L. (through Andrae & Associates), Doha, Qatar**, to assist Ocean Advisory's partners Donald A. Jordan and Muhammad Al Misned in strengthening the principal's ties to the U.S. government and institutions. Ocean Advisory is a private equity investment firm based in London with affiliate companies and a network that extends across Qatar, the U.S., England and China.

**Envision Strategy, LLC**, Washington, D.C., **registered Nov. 17, 2016 for Embassy of the Republic of Senegal**, Washington, D.C., to conduct PR efforts, including arranging interview for officials from the Republic of Senegal with U.S. and world media.

### Lobbying News



## NEW LOBBYING DISCLOSURE ACT FILINGS

Below is a list of select companies that have registered with the Secretary of the Senate, Office of Public Records, and the Clerk of the House of Representatives, Legislative Resource Center, Washington, D.C., in order to comply with the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995. For a complete list of filings, visit [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov).

**Dutko Worldwide**, Washington, D.C., **registered Nov. 21, 2016 for VidAngel, Inc.**, Provo, UT, regarding antitrust issues related to the Family Entertainment and Copyright Act. VidAngel's entertainment platform allows users to filter language, nudity, violence and other content from movies and TV shows. Disney, Warner Bros, 20th Century Fox and Lucasfilm have all taken legal action to prevent the company from offering this service as authorized under the 2005 Family Entertainment and Copyright Act.

**Squire Patton Boggs**, Washington, D.C., **registered Nov. 18, 2016 for Endeavor Robotics**, Bedford, MA, regarding autonomous systems acquisition policies. Endeavor Robotics builds unmanned ground vehicles (UGVs) for use in defense, public safety and energy and industrial markets.

**Cassidy & Associates, Inc., LLC**, Washington, D.C., **registered Nov. 14, 2016 for Accenture Federal Services**, Arlington, VA, regarding meetings with officials on defense health programs, National Defense Authorization Act and defense appropriations.

**Holland & Knight LLP** Washington, D.C., **registered Nov. 21, 2016 for Lumina Analytics, LLC**, Tampa, FL, regarding data analytics issues and outreach to federal agencies. Lumina Analytics provides risk management intelligence to regulated industries, law firms and governments worldwide.

**The Kutler Group**, Columbia, MD, **registered Nov. 22, 2016 for HARMAN International**, Stamford, CT, regarding automotive issues related to autonomous vehicles. HARMAN designs connected car systems, audio and visual products and enterprise automation solutions.



## SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION



**Monument Optimization**, Washington, DC. 202/904-5763. [john@monumentoptimization.com](mailto:john@monumentoptimization.com); [www.monumentoptimization.com](http://www.monumentoptimization.com). John Stewart, President.

While we specialize in search engine marketing, we are more than just an SEO firm. We blend a variety of marketing tactics to maximize the effectiveness and return on investment of search engine campaigns.

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**At Point, Inc.**, P.O. Box 361, Roseland, NJ 07068. 973/324-0866; fax: 973/324-0778. [services@atpoint.com](mailto:services@atpoint.com); [www.atpoint.com](http://www.atpoint.com). Mick Gyure.

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**F-H SHUFFLES MANAGEMENT DECK**  
Fleishman-Hillard named Jack Modelzewski to the newly created position of the American post to coordinate activity of the unit chief of regions in the U.S., Canada and Latin America.

The founding general manager of F-H Chicago also served as COO for Europe and South Africa. Modelzewski was president of client relations since 2004 with responsibility for F-H's practice groups and strategic planning.

F-H CEO Dave Senay also appointed J.J. Carter, GM/Sat Francisco, to the U.S. western president slot. Nancy Selig, executive VP and former senior president assumes global client relations duties. Bob Winslow, managing director for global technology, is now in charge of F-H's more than 30 practice groups and new product development.

**CHIME RINGS UP HEALTHCARE DEAL**  
Chime Communications has acquired healthcare specialist Reynolds-MacKenzie for an initial payment \$4M, a package of \$2.5M cash and stock. R-M's FY11 generated \$2.4M in revenues last year and earned an operating profit of \$1.2M.

It's the firm of Alison MacKenzie and Eva Reynolds. The duo counsels clients such as Pfizer, Amgen, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Roche and Medtronic. R-M will be part of Chime's OPEN Health group that was formed in January.

The acquisition could cost Chime up to \$11M based on R-M's performance. Lord Bell's operation retains the right to pay up to a quarter of that contingent comp in newly issued shares.

Chime is parent of Bell Pottinger.

**DISCOVERY BAY DISCOVERS MWW**  
Discovery Bay Games, the Seattle-based company that produces game, apps and accessories for Apple's iPad, has selected MWW Group as agency of record. DBG is developer of Doo, the first integrated device for iPad. Doo makes it possible for multi-person games such as "Smithsonian Antiquity or Fiction." MWW is to position the client as the top brand of gaming "appliance" for the Apple tablet.

Craig Olson, CEO of DBG, said it hired MWW for its "proven record of creating communications programs that directly influence the bottom line."

DBG becomes part of MWW's consumer tech practice with Samsung, Nikon and Canon, among others.

**NEWS CORP. CALLS IN EDELMAN**  
Embarked News Corp. has called in Edelman to handle fallout from its phone hacking scandal that has engulfed its British operation.

The No. 1 independent PR firm is providing communications and PA counsel to News International's management and standards committee handling the internal inquiry into the hacking of a murdered 15-year-old girl's voicemail, allegations of snooping into the calls of family members of soldiers killed in Afghanistan and victims of the London terror attacks.

Alex Rigg, Edelman's managing director for corporate affairs, and James Lunde, managing director for PA, handle the account.

They report to Will Lewis, general manager of News International, which is responsible for Rupert Murdoch's British papers.

(More on the News Corp. crisis on page 3)

**THEME PARK OPERATORS SEEK PROPOSALS**  
The Virginia-based, global trade group for amusement park operators is on the hunt for a PR firm with an RFP open through Aug. 7.

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions represents the interests of 4,000 individual members from entities like zoos, theme and amusement parks, museums and aquariums.

The Alexandria-based group, led by new CEO Chip Clary, is looking for media relations support with experience in crisis communications and the travel/tourism PR sector as it proactively engages consumers through the media and reacts to situations ranging from financial, legislative and operational issues. The IAAAP wants two on-site staffers to assist its press team and one team member versed in crisis support.

Colleen Mangone, manager of media relations, is making pitches with in-person meetings slated for mid-August in Virginia for potential key account personnel. Work is expected to begin in early December.

Download the RFP at [odwyerpr.com/rfp](http://odwyerpr.com/rfp).

**APCO Worldwide has recruited Collin Mackay**, former communications and partnerships director at the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations, as director of its healthcare practice in Brussels. Mackay is a 25-year veteran of the healthcare scene, holding posts at Weber Shandwick, Avenis and Ogeant Laboratories.

You'll get the news first in the eight-page weekly O'Dwyer letter, the "bible" of PR according to the *New York Times*--tips and stories that can lead to jobs, new accounts, media placements--sent as a PDF to your inbox every Monday afternoon.

Plus, you'll have access to all the news and commentary posted daily on PR's #1 website, [odwyerpr.com](http://odwyerpr.com), which has over 10 years of searchable content and O'Dwyer's exclusive database of RFPs for PR services.

O'Dwyer's magazine, now in its 29th year, examines a different area of PR each month. Issues include practice-area specific feature stories as well as profiles of PR firms with strengths in the focus area. The agency profiles constitute the ideal starting point for companies beginning their search for PR counsel.

### 2015 Editorial Calendar:

January, *PR Buyer's Guide/Crisis Comms.*  
February, *Environ. PR & Public Affairs*  
March, *Food & Beverage*  
April, *Broadcast Media Services*  
May, *PR Firm Rankings*  
June, *Multicultural/Diversity*  
July, *Travel & Tourism*  
August, *Prof. Svcs. & Financial/*  
September, *Beauty/Fashion & Lifestyle*  
October, *Healthcare & Medical*  
November, *Technology*  
December, *Sports & Entertainment*



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