

O'Dwyer's

Communications & New Media

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THE Social Media ISSUE



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EDITORIAL

cyberspying becomes a top concern for Americans.

MOBILE AD SPENDING WILL OUTPACE DESKTOP

As soon as next year, mobile ad spending may surpass advertising on desktop computers for the first time.

OUTREACH MARKETING, CONTENT TAKE PR

content and outreach marketing may be different than public relations, though they share the same end goal of telling a brand's story.

WHEN SOCIAL MEDIA HIJACKS YOUR BRAND

Brands are increasingly using social media, but when activists employ those channels to antagonize, few have the training to coordinate an effective response.

PROF. SERVICES SHOULD EMBRACE SOCIAL MEDIA

Professional services firms have typically avoided social media communications. Here's why this should change.

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Apple announced it would develop a streaming music service to compete with the likes of Spotify and Pandora.

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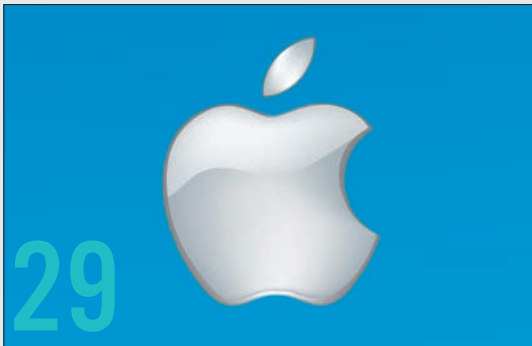
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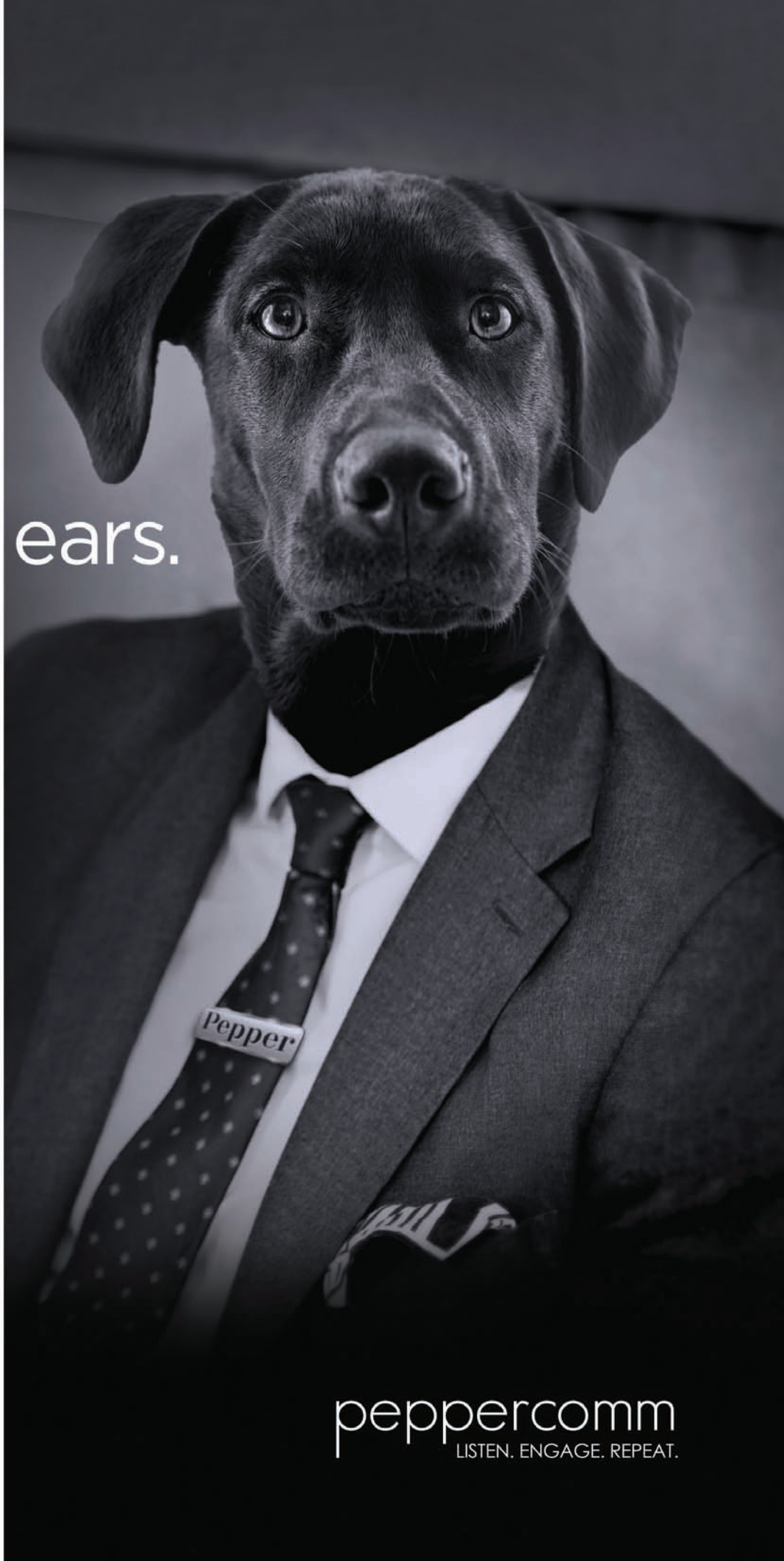
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Personal privacy in a data-driven world

U.S. technology companies in March, along with civil rights leaders and Internet advocacy groups, sent a letter to Congress demanding the federal government end ongoing mass surveillance efforts in the form of its “metadata” collection of telephone records.

The letter specifically referred to Section 215 of the PATRIOT Act, a key provision of that law that gives the National Security Agency authority to collect data from virtually every phone call made in the United States. If not renewed, that provision — which has been called unconstitutional and illegal by some policy experts — is set to expire June 1.

Government monitoring practices have become an issue of reform for several years now, a reaction to the public’s furor over the NSA’s massive surveillance initiatives brought to light by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden. Last year a bipartisan bill, the USA Freedom Act, was introduced in Congress. A Senate version of that bill would have halted the practice of metadata collection altogether; a watered-down version, passed in the House, shifted the onus of metadata collection to U.S. telephone companies. The bill ultimately died in the Senate in November.

Before that, in January 2014, President Obama proposed what *The New York Times* called “modest changes” to the NSA’s collection of metadata, suggesting intelligence agencies employ new search technologies in lieu of bulk collection, and, like the ill-fated House bill, suggested ceding that data gathering to the phone companies. Those new rules were finally unveiled this February. As it turns out, U.S. telephone companies are apparently leery about hoarding that content themselves, so intelligence agencies would still be in charge of collecting it until Congress decides otherwise, though there would be improved safeguards, such as purging irrelevant data after five years, and increased supervision into how it’s used. In other words, the practice of metadata collection is scheduled to continue pretty much just as before.

Americans are growing increasingly wary of government intrusion into their private communications. According to a March Pew Research Center poll, more than half — 52% — of U.S. adults described themselves as “very concerned” regarding government surveillance efforts, and 57% of those polled said they found such practices “unacceptable.” About 30% claimed they’re now taking measures to hide their personal information from federal surveillance programs, and 22% said they had changed their online communications behaviors in the wake of Edward Snowden’s 2013 bombshell NSA disclosure. A separate March study compiled by SKDKnickerbocker and Benenson Strategy Group revealed that 64% of respondents now believe the federal government has gone too far in gathering information from technology companies for surveillance purposes.

Oddly enough, several recent studies suggest all this data compiling might not be doing much good. In 2014, the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board issued a report that stated it was “aware of no instance in which the [metadata collection of telephone records] directly contributed to the discovery of a previously unknown terrorist plot or the disruption of a terrorist attack.” The New America Foundation, in a January 2014 study that analyzed hundreds of individuals recruited by terrorist groups since 9/11, found that “the contribution of NSA’s bulk surveillance programs to these cases was minimal ...” and instead, “traditional investigative methods, such as the use of informants, tips from local communities, and targeted intelligence operations, provided the initial impetus for investigations in the majority of cases.” Finally, even the Obama Administration’s review board, in a December 2013 report titled “Liberty and Security In A Changing World,” admitted that “the information contributed to terrorist investigations by the use of section 215 telephony meta-data was not essential to preventing attacks.”

Perhaps what’s needed to assuage Americans’ personal privacy fears is a bottom-up approach. Last year, the European Court of Justice ruled in favor of its now famous “right to be forgotten” law, which mandates that, in some circumstances, individuals can force companies like Google to remove harmful or unwanted content about them from search results. Since that ruling, Google has allegedly received more than 200,000 such requests. The SKDKnickerbocker poll found that 88% support a U.S. version of this law.

In the meantime, *The New York Times* in January detailed a National Academy of Sciences report that concluded there was currently no suitable technological alternative for the government’s retention of metadata, and that intelligence agencies should instead simply look to control how that amassed content is used. This development, coupled with recent terrorist attacks in Europe and Australia, make it unlikely a Republican-led Congress will let Section 215 of the PATRIOT Act expire anytime soon. Now, some policy experts are claiming that even if Section 215 lapses, the NSA may still be able to continue its surveillance activities through the use of a “pen/trap” statute, among other measures. If you’re still waiting to make that phone call, it might be a while. ○

— Jon Gingerich



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Mobile ad spending will outpace desktop next year

A recent eMarketer report predicted that mobile ad spending had increased 50% from 2014. For the first time, mobile ad spending may surpass advertising on desktop computers as early as next year, and may account for 72% of all digital ad revenues by 2019.

By Jon Gingerich

Ad spending accessed by mobile devices continues to catch up with desktop, and will soon outpace it, according to a recent forecast by market research company eMarketer.

Mobile ad spending in the U.S. will hit \$28.72 billion in 2015, a 50% increase from 2014's totals of \$19.15 billion. This means mobile ad spending will now account for almost half — 49% — of all digital advertising, and 15% of all media advertising.

Desktop ads still account for the lion's share of digital ad budgets, if just barely, and will total nearly \$29.89 billion in 2015. The eMarketer report claimed, however, that “next year will be the tipping point where mobile ad spending surpasses desktop,” positing that ads accessed via mobile devices would account for \$40.50 billion in 2016. Beginning that year, desktop advertising is expected begin a gradual decline — falling

to \$26.59 billion in 2016 and \$24.96 billion in 2017 — as mobile continues its concurrent ascent. The eMarketer report said that by 2019, mobile ad spending could take a 72% share of the total digital ad market, jumping to \$65.87 billion, as desktop spending is expected to dip to about \$25.35 billion that year.

Display trumps search

The surge in mobile ad spending, the report suggested, comes as a response to consumer behavior. According to the report, U.S. adults in 2014 spent nearly three hours on mobile devices each day, up from two hours and twenty minutes in 2013, which, incidentally, is about the current average time consumers now spend daily on desktops.

In regards to a specific format, the eMarketer report claimed that both mobile search ads and mobile display ads — in-

cluding banner ads, sponsored content, and promoted content on Facebook and Twitter — will continue to grow. However, mobile display ads are expected to continue their current reign over mobile search, taking \$14.67 billion in revenues in 2015, while the latter will fetch \$12.85 billion. That gap is expected to widen by 2019, with mobile display accounting for \$33.90 billion in revenues while search accounts for \$28.41 billion.

Mobile app spending will also continue to grow, according to the report, reaching \$20.79 billion in 2015, nearly triple the amount mobile web browsers ads are expected to achieve — \$7.93 billion — during the same period.

Social sites hotbed for display

Advertising's mobile migration is apparently not a reaction only to what devices consumers are using to access digital content, but also seems to be working in tandem with what content users are accessing.

eMarketer in March reported that Twitter is now set to dethrone Yahoo as the third-largest seller of digital display advertising in the U.S., and will reap \$1.34 billion in ad revenues for display ads, a 62% increase from 2014.

Facebook still leads the U.S. digital display market, and is expected to bring in \$6.82 billion in ad revenues in 2015, a 29% uptick from last year (mobile ad revenues alone for the site are expected to reach \$5 billion in 2015). Google still holds second place for the total digital display market.

While Yahoo still maintains solid acreage in the display ad market — it's expected to bring in \$1.24 billion in 2015 — eMarketer predicted “its market share will continue a rapid decline.” ○

PR news brief

Viacom wields ax

Viacom is cutting 264 staffers from its New York city headquarters, according to a notice filed with the state's dept. of labor.

The cutbacks are part of a corporate retrenchment geared to slice 10,000 people from the payroll of the media giant.

Viacom anticipates annual cost savings in the \$250 million range from a consolidation of media units.

The owner of MTV, comedy channel, Nickelodeon, Spike and Paramount Pictures posted a 9% dip in first-quarter net income to \$500 million and a 5% uptick in revenues to \$3.3 billion.

The company's stock trades at \$68.99 and changed hands in the \$89.76 to \$63.11 range during the past 52 weeks.

Executive chairman Sumner Redstone, 91, controls a 79.5% stake in Viacom.

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Content, outreach marketing emerge with PR

Content and outreach marketing are two buzzwords that have cropped up in the communications world. Like public relations, these communications facets create and maintain relationships with an organization's key publics. Although these disciplines are different, they have the same end goal of telling a brand's story.

By Mike Crawford

Content marketing tells a brand's story by getting its owned media or originally created material in front of a targeted audience. The content must be valuable and relevant to the audience. Content marketing can come in many shapes and sizes: microsites, blogs, e-books, infographics, contributed articles, etc.

Additionally, this form of marketing doubles as a search engine optimization strategy. The Internet is a fluid medium that is constantly being updated. Something that was viral last week is almost ancient history this week. Continually updated content that is full of useful details satisfies the Internet and its various search engine algorithms.

The first goal of content marketing is to make the user say, "Wow! I want to share this with my friends." Then their friends want to share it with more friends, and the cycle continues. In the end, you want some of those friends to recommend you, make a purchase from you, etc.

One off-beat example of solid content marketing is from an Australian company, Metro Trains, which ran a campaign on rail safety. Its agency, McCann Melbourne, decided to take a non-boring route to this safety message with the song, "Dumb Ways to Die." The video was viewed more than 83 million times on YouTube and was later released on iTunes.

The brand even took it one step further and created a microsite as well as a game that can be played on both Apple and Android products. The campaign was a success with 1 million young people pledging to be safer around trains.

The effect was a decrease in train accidents and deaths by 21% because the brand provided valuable and relevant content on a medium that the target audience used.

Outreach marketing is similar to the public relations strategy media relations, but instead of targeting traditional media reporters, brands target bloggers and key social media influencers who are already advocates of theirs or their industry.

A brand's contact will reach out to these advocates and find more ways to incorporate the brand into the advocate's everyday life. The important thing to remember is

that these advocates are not just people who can talk about the brand; they are an extension of the brand. Relationships with these advocates last far beyond one marketing campaign and build word of mouth both online and off.

Word of mouth is the number-one reason behind purchase decisions. This is particularly true within the sought-after mom audience. In fact, 55% of moms who use social media daily made a purchase decision based on the recommendation of a blog. From sending advocates product samples to review in a blog post to sending personalized direct messages on Instagram to strengthen relationships, outreach marketing can occur in many forms.

Recently, M/C/C reached out to mom

bloggers on behalf of its client, Animalz by ReTrak. The agency was trying to gain as much recognition for the brand during the busiest buying season of the year — the holidays. The bloggers were all advocates of kids' technology or stocking stuffers.

After providing these bloggers with information about the volume-limiting headphones, photos, a BuzzFeed quiz and a product video, nearly 80 posts were written and engaged customers through almost 7,000 tracked social actions. In just three months, the agency helped drive more than 50% of Animalz sales in 2014, with a year-over-year increase of 1,755%.

Instead of just telling targeted audiences what they need to know about a brand, these tactics allow brands to participate in two-way dialogue and empower as well as encourage audiences to form their own message for the brand.

Mike Crawford is President of M/C/C. ◉



Mike Crawford

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What to do when social media hijacks your brand

Companies and brands are increasingly using digital and social media channels to engage customers. But when activists employ those same channels to confront or antagonize, few have the training to coordinate an effective response. As a communications medium, social media is invaluable, but it also exposes brands to attack. Here's why every company should proactively prepare to protect itself.

By Meg Alexander

You're denying my child a life-saving medicine!" "Ingredients in your foods are toxic." Imagine these words landing one after another on your brand's Facebook page or Twitter feed. In minutes, the online "voice" of your brand that you've worked hard to establish is smothered in negative commentary. You may find yourself asking: is my brand ready for this?

Even as social media opens valuable communications channels between companies and their customers, it simultaneously exposes brands to critics seeking change. Ready access to computers and smartphones enables anyone to become an activist. While traditional non-governmental groups strategically initiate sophisticated campaigns, an effective activist effort may rise from the grass roots — such as mothers protesting the safety of children's products or patients desperate to obtain a new drug.

Whatever their agenda, one activist's call to action can quickly propagate into a rallying cry, due to the ease for others to comment, to "like" and retweet the message. Social media platforms can become the oxygen under a lowly-lit flame, creating a blaze that spreads the opinions of detractors who challenge a firm's mission, management or operations. All companies should proactively hone their ability to respond to such events with the appropriate speed, scale and tenor. Yet, as countless hashtags and news headlines attest, companies continue to be caught ill prepared.

Brand-jacking

Public shaming is a common tactic of online activist campaigns. But this is just the tip of the iceberg. Savvy activists are exploring strategies that impact companies' bottom lines: namely, forums where products are sold. Last fall, PepsiCo was the focus of a coordinated campaign by the Rainforest Action Network. According to the environmental group, Pepsi products relied on palm oil that was harvested unsustainably in rainforests. RAN hijacked on Amazon.com that allows customers to post questions about products. Provocative strings of queries ensued, such as "Is Pepsi still destroying forests for palm oil?" In a second effort, RAN flooded Pepsi's Amazon page with thousands of demeaning one-star reviews.

A more vivid example comes from the en-

vironmental group Greenpeace. The group protested Shell Oil's drilling plans in the Arctic by putting pressure on the plastic toy company Lego, a downstream Shell customer. Greenpeace "brand-jacked" Lego's figurines in a video designed for YouTube. In it, an entire Arctic village made of Lego blocks is drowned in oil. Not even the town's Lego puppy was spared. An e-petition at the end of the video called on the toymaker to end its partnership with Shell. The Greenpeace video went viral, garnering more than five million YouTube hits. Within weeks, Lego announced that it would end its partnership with Shell.

#SaveJosh

Consumer products have been fertile ground for activist campaigns because of their early engagement in social media. In the coming years, we believe biopharmaceutical companies will also become targets. Why? With frustrations over the growing price of medicines and increasing interest in gaining access to exploratory therapies, it's likely patients-turned-activists will turn to avenues such as social media to muster support.

A quintessential example is the case of #SaveJosh, a program initiated by the parents of Josh Hardy, a young boy suffering from cancer, who developed a life-threatening infection after receiving a bone marrow transplant. His family sought access to an anti-viral drug that was not yet approved by the Food & Drug Administration.

The investigational drug's manufacturer, Chimerix, initially declined their appeal citing, among several reasons, that the drug's early access program had closed and that they had declined nearly 200 similar compassionate use requests. Josh's family and friends created a Facebook page and the signature hashtag #SaveJosh demanding access to the medicine. It quickly swelled to thousands of likes, tweets, and an e-petition that spilled into the national news cycle. In days, under withering public pressure, Chimerix announced that it would work with the FDA to open clinical testing. Josh was among the first to receive treatment. The change of heart came in time to help the patient — but not in time to spare the company from painful media scrutiny and the later departure of its CEO.

Six steps to protect your brand

There is no one foolproof formula to prevent all potential detractors from vocalizing grievances online. But, what is clear is that planning your response in real-time will not suffice. At Inventiv Health Public Relations, my colleagues and I have identified six steps to help stimulate a company's reputational immune system and defuse some of the most harmful impacts of a targeted social media campaign.



Meg Alexander

Cultivate relationships. Examine your brand through the eyes of those who feel most aggrieved by your business policies and practices. Understanding their concerns and behaviors will offer an insight into their future actions. On a parallel path, shore up your relationships with credible organizations and individuals who share your position, and who will speak up if you come under fire.

Predict and monitor. Many issues can be anticipated when companies tune their listening to the right signals. Executives should couple social listening with cross-functional information sharing to spot emerging issues. Overlaying offline and online intelligence, such as advocacy group comments or hotline calls, may help identify an issue that could metastasize from one channel to another.

Plan and establish protocols. Empower a team of first responders before the warning signals appear, complete with a response protocol that specifies who responds when negative commentary surfaces, and what statements are cleared for immediate use in each channel.

Practice response. Simulation exercises are an effective way to stress-test your plans. They allow teams to rehearse and build 'muscle memory' so they know how to act, when a crisis hits. Companies should simulate multi-platform issues because modern crises are rarely contained to traditional media alone.

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Professional services should embrace social media

Professional services firms have typically avoided social media communications. For many reasons, however, communicators working in these spaces today must now act like publishers and familiarize themselves with the content needs of their audiences.

By Ted Birkhahn

Demanding regulators. Difficult clients. Elusive prospects. Vocal antagonists. Skeptical employees. Depending on the category in which you operate, these are just some of the reasons why professional services firms have largely avoided the realm of B2B social media communications.

You may have heard the following:

“We’re a conservative brand with conservative clients, so social media isn’t right for us.”

“Our clients aren’t using social media, so why should we?”

“Social media is for consumer brands, not professional services firms.”

“Social media poses too much risk and too little reward.”

Sound familiar? As a strategic communications company that caters to professional services firms, we’ve heard it all. The objections are plentiful and the excuses are easy. However, when it comes to social media communications, it’s not an issue of why or when — it’s how and where. The rewards for agencies that embrace social media successfully can be handsome, and should no longer be ignored.

If your firm — be it law, consulting, finance or accounting — has stumbled out of the gate trying to create a meaningful social media presence, or are considering stepping up its efforts, you may have questions. Here are three common ones your senior leadership team is likely asking.

How can my company and employees publish and circulate content over social media and not run afoul of regulators?

Regulators are often cited as one of the top reasons why professional services firms — especially ones that operate in highly-regulated industries — don’t embrace a proactive social media effort. However, technologies and platform companies such as Hearsay Social and CommandPost make it easier for firms to track and report social media activity and adhere to strict compliance demands. What’s more, proper social media training and focusing content on thought leadership rather than ‘conducting business’ will also help manage compliance issues and avoid the wrath of regulators.

How do I convince naysayers in my firm that social media is a worthwhile investment when our clients — who are mostly senior level business executives — don’t use it?

If one of your communications goals is to enhance and increase the quality of media coverage of your firm and its leaders, social media is a vital tool. It’s the conduit for the brand and its lead spokespeople to engage with media on topics and issues that are driving much of their coverage. If you’re not present on social media, you’re missing a golden opportunity to build relationships with media, analysts, academics and other influential figures.

Yes, it’s accurate to say that most se-

nior-level business executives are not visibly active on social media, but more and more are passively using platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter to discover smart news and commentary.

And almost all executives (or their assistants) consistently use it to find information about pressing business issues and individuals with whom they may do business. This is precisely why digital profiles of professional services firms and their leaders are so important — particularly considering how search engines are increasingly giving weight to content from social media.

How do I develop, on a regular basis, content that my audiences will actually care about and provide a healthy ROI on social media communications?

Professional services firms must act like publishers and get to know the content needs of their audiences. Success in social media requires an altruistic approach to providing content that will add tangible value to the reader and focus on the needs of the audience, not the marketer. In other words, you have to be able to address the content needs of your audience ... which, most often, isn’t information about your products and services.

What topics and issues will resonate most with the audience? What complex business problems are they eager to learn more about? What type of content do they prefer, and what devices do they most often use to consume it? Answers to these questions can help marketers develop a targeted content strategy that results in the best content formats, the most effective content channels and the most relevant topics on which to focus.

As marketers, our job is to educate, influence and prompt action among prospective clients or those who influence them. An insufficient amount of social media in the marketing diet can limit a company’s ability to achieve success in raising awareness, differentiating itself and driving interest working with the brand.

Ted Birkhahn is a Partner and President of Peppercomm. ○



Ted Birkhahn

ATTACkED oN SociAl MedIA

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Assess and engage. All online chatter is not equal. Learn to recognize when a critical campaign is trending upwards, and have tiers of response pegged to quantitative and qualitative metrics that gauge the intensity of the assault. With a history-based understanding of how social media threats have played out in the past, you can calibrate the level of response. An appropriate intervention could range from personal outreach to a disgruntled stakeholder, to the launch of a dedicated splash page, or even could escalate to a modification in business practices.

Measure and refine. Issues, like conversations are fluid. Ensure internal teams are measuring the impact of your response actions in real-time, and be prepared to change approach if they are not working.

The take away? As the web continues to democratize the ability for people to voice their frustrations, social media activism aimed at corporations will only intensify. On behalf of its stakeholders, companies must proactively plan their responses now or be left cleaning up the aftermath.

Meg Alexander leads in Ventiv Health Public Relations Issues Management practice. ○

Brand experts say content remains king

The Content Council discussed all things content during its annual spring meeting in New York, which featured panel discussions from industry experts on the future of the content marketing industry.

By Kevin McCauley

Content creation, development, navigation, ownership, shareability and capacity to influence targeted audiences at a cost-efficient price were some of the topics discussed during sessions held from March 22 through 24 at the trendy Gansevoort Park Hotel in New York.

The event hosted experts from Google, IBM, Citi, GE, The Weather Company, Condé Nast, and Weber Shandwick, as well as keynote speakers Huffington Post President and Editor-in-Chief Arianna Huffington, and VICE Media Digital head Sterling Proffer.

Chris Barth, Strategist at Contagious, said his goal is to develop material that gives clients an “unfair advantage” in the marketplace.

He talked about how the dramatic decline of TV viewing among Millennials has made that medium irrelevant to youth brands such as Taco Bell and Chipotle.

For instance, young viewers watched an average 168 minutes of TV in 2012 and viewed 109 minutes of mobile fare. That flipped to 177 minutes for mobile and 118 minutes of TV in 2014.

Barth said marketers need to “re-conceptualize TV as video” to attract the eyeballs of Millennials.

AT&T is among marketers that “get” content, according to Barth. Ma Bell, traditionally a huge TV advertiser, broke ground and attracted younger viewers with its “Summer Break” video series.

Since AT&T understood the importance of finding audiences where they are, the series about California teens avoided TV screens.

SummerBreak formats drew robust audiences on YouTube, Twitter, Vine, Instagram and Snapchat, enabling the company to reach targeted audiences without paid media.

By letting people choose viewing platforms they are most comfortable with, AT&T generated 200 million viewers during SummerBreak’s first season.

Showcase values

Companies use content to showcase values, continued Barth. High-end camera maker Leica developed the “world’s most boring video” to showcase its commitment to craftsmanship, he said.



The Content Council’s March “Content Chaos” conference in New York. From left to right: David Brown, Executive Vice President, MXM; Michael Sebastian, Reporter, *Advertising Age*; Linda Descano, Managing Director and Head of Content and Social, Citi; Alexa Christon, Head of Media Innovation, GE.

Photo: Johnny wolf Photography.

The 45-minute spot features nothing but a Leica staffer polishing a camera to emphasize the message that it spends a lot of time to make products good.

Virgin Atlantic created a horror video of passengers trapped in a crowded plane to encourage business travelers to switch to it for more comfortable and restful rides.

Print far from dead

Barth said not every piece of content can be reduced to “snackable” bits. Uber and Airbnb maintain glossy magazines aimed at their internal audiences of drivers and homeowners. Contagious maintains its own magazine to keep readers updated on trends and ideas.

Keith Kawasaki, VP-Client Services at iostudio, talked about the creation of *GX* magazine for the Army National Guard.

GX publishes 100 pages of “real stories, not created content” every other month to communicate the National Guard experience. The functional editorial empowers Guardsmen and supports the value of the

work they do in disaster relief or on the front lines of combat according to Kawasaki.

GX puts to end the perception of the National Guard as “weekend warriors.”

Brand voice on Twitter

Aly Baer, Brand Strategy head at Twitter, discussed the growing importance of video on the micro-blogging site and its ability to provide a platform to marketers to provide voice for their brands.

VISA and HP tapped Twitter’s Vine (six-second videos) capability to showcase their participation in the Sochi Olympics and launch of a bendable computer, respectively.

Vine’s staff created 33 videos to promote Visa’s Olympic activity, while HP strung together its five-best Vines into a 30-second commercial.

Baer noted that Twitter has been called the “world’s biggest focus group.” She viewed the site as a “bridge not island” that brings viewers and brands closer to what they care about.

Twitter’s purpose is to allow users to “discover content in the moment that matters,” according to Baer.

Content budgets to rise

Customer/member acquisition, brand engagement and improved brand perception are the top goals of content marketing, according to a study released by The Content Council during the conference.

The survey, conducted by *Ad Age*, found that nearly four-in-ten (39.7%) of the 448 respondents view their commitment to content marketing as either “strong” or “extremely strong.” That compares to the 17.7% of respondents who were bullish on the medium two years ago. More than three-in-four (75.9%) expect commitment to content marketing to grow by 2017.

Content marketing accounts for 23.3% of overall budgets and is projected to grab a third of budgets within two years. The study found 30% of content marketing is “extremely well” aligned with strategy and another 12.7% rate in “very well” aligned.

Corporate websites, Facebook e-mail/newsletters, Twitter and YouTube are the top five channels of choice for content. Live/virtual events, partnerships with established media, LinkedIn, Pinterest and Instagram rank next.

Survey respondents hailed from ad agencies (48.2%), marketers (35%) and media companies (16.7%). ●



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Tailoring content for today's custom-fit audiences

An unfathomable amount of content is published each day: 2 million blog posts, 500 million tweets and 432,000 hours of YouTube video claim just a portion of it. Much of this comes from brands, which have almost universally adopted content marketing, and are churning out more of it than ever. But many brands have chosen strategies that emphasize quantity over quality, preventing them from enjoying the brand awareness, customer nurturing and revenue increases associated with content marketing.

By Mark Thabit

For success in this content-cluttered world, brands need to invest more in targeting specific segments of their audience. That means creating better content over simply more content, quality over quantity.

Here are some content marketing ideas to consider:

Gain control of each platform

A brand that reaches a member of its target audience but doesn't provide a way for them to continue engaging is like adding coins to a piggy bank without its plug inserted.

The first step in retaining the value the content earns entails understanding what control each platform provides.

On email, brands control to whom they distribute content. Email lists allow them to reach a group of followers who have likely engaged with their content before. They contain links back to owned platforms, which nurture the recipient further down the engagement path. The downside of email is brands don't expand their audience.

A social message reaches only a set audience, but that audience controls how far the brand message goes. When social audiences share, they amplify the message to new audiences. This lack of distribution control means brands must provide a way for their expanded audience to get to platforms in which they have designed a nurturing system. The easiest way to do so is providing a link back to a website or blog that offers more content and introduces them to products and services.

With a blog, brands don't control who sees the content since many blog readers come from search and social recommendations. Providing a clear path within posts and on the site architecture will help nurture blog visitors down the engagement funnel and towards a sale, donation, enrollment or whatever your ultimate goal may be.

Determine value of the content

Whenever a brand distributes content, it's making a request of its audience. The request could be as minor as an investment of time or as significant as an email address or social account. Understanding

the worth of each piece of content is key.

An unknown brand or one only offering short-form tips and tricks will likely fall short of goals if they gate it behind a request for an email address. However, when offering valuable, compelling content, audiences will see giving up their email address as a great value.

Recently, Cision partnered with best-selling author Brian Solis and renowned cartoonist Gaping Void to create an e-book titled *What If PR Stood for People and Relationships?* The content earned nearly 300,000 views, 2,000 social shares, influencer shares totaling a more than 2 million person reach and hundreds of new prospects.

That's not to say a brand partnering with an industry influencer is content marketing's silver bullet. Brands need to consider what they hope to achieve with each campaign, understand which content formats and platforms their audiences prefer, and determine how to create compelling content that works in those spaces.

Test before you invest

What's the most effective piece of content? It depends.

A recent survey showed an almost completely even split among content marketers when asked if long-form, short-form, video and social media was the most effective in terms of ROI. Even "I don't know" racked up about a similar number of votes as the other four categories.

The reason for the uncertainty is that no one format fits every audience. Smart brands test content before investing fully. Testing helps determine if their message, platform, medium and tone will make a significant impact or fall flat. A win inspires confidence for moving forward. A loss can easily be shaken off.

This is especially good news for small businesses or those content marketers with few resources. Test the waters with a piece of raw footage or small part of a campaign and use feedback like views, comments, shares and conversions to gauge whether to invest more.

Benchmark the results from the test content with a more polished piece to determine if the extra investment is worth it. A

gif, for example, costs less to produce and distribute. If it performs nearly as well as a long-form edited video, brands will want to focus on that, saving them time and money.

This is not just a strategy for small or resource strapped-businesses. Amazon tested original content publicly, releasing 13 TV pilots at the start of the year and choosing five to turn into series.

"Amazon Studios seeks feedback about projects and ideas, even in their earliest stages," Amazon writes on its own site. "We will test premises, storyboards, posters, videos, test movies, pilots, promos, and other formats to see what people think."

After its testing period, Amazon chose the five shows that performed best for different parts of its audience, selecting two children's shows, two dramas and a docu-series.

To dip toes into testing, consider using email marketing, PPC and SEO. These are cost-effective ways to identify the pain points, formats and messaging that resonate best.

Overcome challenges, find success

Though content marketing has become a central part of many brands' marketing plans, they still have challenges to overcome — mainly, resources.

After all, 34% of content marketers cite "lack of budget" as their biggest content challenge. Another 11.5% see "lack of time" as their biggest hurdle. That's 45% of content marketers who lack resources.

By taking a methodical approach to content creation that identifies what target audiences want, where they want it and testing along the way, it will take longer to get a campaign out the door.

However, brands that follow this outline will find that they saved resources, produced better results and provided a springboard for moving forward with better content marketing.

Mark Thabit is CMO of Cision. ○



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The do's and don'ts of using social media for a cause

Social media is undoubtedly an effective channel for inspiring change, spreading awareness and raising money for a cause. But there's a big difference between activism and slacktivism.

By Valerie Pritchard

Social media can help shed light on issues that might have otherwise remained in the dark and bring grassroots issues to awareness on a national level. It can turn a group of friends into an army of social justice warriors and inspire average people and celebrities alike to pour big buckets of ice over their heads to raise millions for ALS.

We can certainly aspire to the level of success that was achieved by the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge, but there's a lot we can learn from it as well. Here are a few "do's" and "don'ts" that might be helpful for your next cause marketing campaign.

Do define your objectives and priorities

Every social media campaign needs a clearly-defined objective and cause campaigns are no exception. Before you draft your first tweet, you should know exactly what you're hoping to accomplish, whether it's raising funds or awareness. This is the first step toward establishing whether or not your campaign will be a success.

When you're working for a cause or a nonprofit, chances are there's more than one thing you'd like to accomplish. Perhaps you'd like to generate awareness of a candidate AND mobilize people to vote, or maybe you'd like to raise money for your cause AND sign up as volunteers. In this case, prioritization is essential.

When in doubt, keep it simple. This is a good rule of thumb no matter what you're doing on social media, but it's particularly crucial for cause marketing. Social media is a powerful platform, but it's also an incredibly noisy space. In order to break through the clutter, you need to ensure that your objective is as clear and streamlined as possible.

Do create the right call to action

The difference between activism and "slacktivism" lies in the call to action. Critics of using social media channels for a cause marketing campaign argue that consumers are only interested in changing their profile picture or using a hashtag for the attention it brings to their personal pages. But just because the consumer gets a piece of content out of the deal doesn't mean your campaign is doomed to fail. In fact, it can serve as a great incentive to act. And if your goal is to raise awareness and half a million Facebook users change their

profile pictures to support your cause, that's absolutely progress toward your goal.

But if awareness is not your goal and what you'd really like is for people to vote, donate or sign a petition, a simple avatar change might not be the best way to get there. This was the pitfall of the Kony 2012 campaign. Users were on board with the message, but weren't sure how to proceed after they changed their profile pictures. Having a clear call to action will help ensure that building momentum won't result in your audience asking, "now what?"

Do offer a content "souvenir"

If the Obama campaign and the Ice Bucket Challenge have taught us anything, it's that user-generated content plays an incredibly powerful role in a cause campaign on social media. It almost serves as a badge for the person to be able to say, "I care and I participated." But as previously stated, it's very important to note that although a wave of profile picture changes can be a powerful tool for raising awareness, it might not be the most effective method of driving other actions. If your goal is more along the lines of fundraising or drawing votes, consider positioning content as the product of the action rather than the action itself.

We've already seen many examples of how effective this approach can be. During the 2014 election, Facebook offered the option for users to add an event to their timeline if they participated in the election. The classic "I Voted!" stickers were enormously popular in the virtual space and provided users with a platform to speak about their views. And they certainly would've had to vote first, lest they miss out on the banter around whom to vote for. And of course, anyone who participated in the Ice Bucket Challenge would have gotten a video out of it.

Don't wait to evaluate results.

This is crucial for two reasons. First, monitoring your campaign on a rolling basis will help ensure better final results. Publishing content on social media isn't like purchasing a TV or print ad. Of course you have the added advantage of two-way communication about your campaign, but you also have the unique ability to optimize in real time. Looking at your results on a regular basis can provide insights on how to pivot if your content isn't resonating with

your audience or how to tweak your spending if your ad units aren't getting results.

Second, reporting your results can help you drum up more enthusiasm for your cause. ALS didn't wait until the ice bucket challenge fizzled out to report how much money the participants raised. Instead, they were transparent through the whole process. This worked in their favor and every subsequent report spurred more donations and participation.



Valerie Pritchard

In truth, creating a social media campaign for a cause is not terribly different from creating a social media campaign for a brand, product or organization. In fact, most of the process is essentially the same. However, the fact remains that social media users interact with cause marketing campaigns in a very different way than most other content on the web. It's our responsibility as strategists to know the difference between a campaign that will create waves and one that will create a superficial ripple.

Valerie Pritchard is a Digital/Social Strategist at Makovsky. ◉

PR news brief

Top advertisers cut back in 2014

The nation's Top Ten advertisers sliced overall ad outlays 4.2% to \$15.336B in 2014, according to Kantar Media.

Number-one advertiser Procter & Gamble chopped spending 14.4% to \$2.636 billion with the bulk of the retrenchment in magazines and digital display.

No. 3 AT&T registered a 12.7% cut in spending to \$1.632 billion, while No. 6, and General Motors, No. 2, posted drops at 8.3% to \$1.425 billion and 8.2% to \$1.648 billion, respectively.

Other declines were at Comcast (5.9% to \$1.550 billion), Toyota Motor (5.7% to \$1.196 billion) and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (3.1% to \$1.133 billion).

Pfizer posted a solid 23.0% jump in outlays to \$1.400 billion. Berkshire Hathaway (13.6% to \$1.430 billion) and Verizon Communications (4.8% to \$1.283 billion) followed.

Kantar reported that total TV spending received a boost from the winter Olympics, World Cup and elections. That sector was up 5.5%.

Network TV showed a 2.5% advance with about 80% of that increase due to the Olympics. Cable enjoyed a 6.8% spurt as drug, telecom and movie companies hiked budgets.

Online display ads inched ahead 0.9%, despite a second-half slowdown. The WPP unit does not measure video or mobile formats.

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Embracing Millennial's social roots for success

Success in PR comes from embracing Millennial roots, employing data-driven, "silo-free" strategies and focusing on mission-driven clients.

By Lindsay Mullen and Alyssa Conrardy

As Millennial marketers, we share a unique vantage point on a dynamically changing media and marketing environment.

For our team, talking with reporters and creating compelling stories is just as instinctual as building communities and activating supporters online. Two years of running our own business has shown us that as marketing and PR firms look to the future, it's no longer about operating in silos. Those social or digital media departments that were created to keep big firms on the cutting-edge are what are actually setting our industry behind the curve.

The ability to draw someone in through a news article or social media post and nurture them through the sales funnel is only effective with the right mix of marketing activities. Top of the funnel activities like media relations and social media engagement need to tie directly to engagement of

followers, stakeholders and advocates on your website and through your e-newsletter.

Measurement in demand

While these activities bring more overall value to clients, they also allow us to demonstrate measurable results. These are results that create impact and drive the bottom line. And these results are what our clients today are demanding. We believe as more Millennials move into decision-making roles, this will become the new norm. PR and marketing professionals will have to prove return on investment.

The good news is it's no longer guesswork. Digital analytics tools and their corresponding data provide insight into consumer behavior and preference, allowing us to speak more directly to target stakeholders where and when they are paying attention. We can build out goals beyond the nebulous "raise awareness, build credibility and position you as a thought-leader" to include

key performance indicators. These include things like media placements garnered, relationships built, messages received, messages amplified, supporter growth and stakeholder engagement. Then, with the help of digital tools, we can tie these KPIs directly back to impact, sales and profitability. In other words, we can measure what actually matters.

So how are we positioning our firm for success in the future? We're embracing our Millennial roots, employing data-driven, silo-free strategies and focusing our work on a new type of client: mission-driven organizations.

Cause marketing's rise

If you've been paying attention, you've noticed consumer preference has shifted toward brands that are giving back. According to research from Cone Communications, U.S. consumer purchasing of products associated with a cause is up 170% since 1993, and 91% of global consumers now say they're likely to switch brands to one associated with a good cause given comparable price and quality.

By many measures, Millennials are more altruistic and cause-minded than previous generations, and as more of our cohorts move into decision-making and head of household roles, we anticipate consumer preferences will continue to lean toward organizations that associate with positive impact. We've built our firm to serve this growing but underserved slice of the market, which includes nonprofit organizations with business-like mindsets and for-profit companies that put equal emphasis on purpose and profits.

We're embracing change and taking a tactic-agnostic approach to helping mission-driven organizations get ahead. We're blending creative storytelling with digital acuity to build strategies for tomorrow's leaders in the impact space so that they can focus on their causes while we get the word out. That's a future to get excited about.

Lindsay Mullen and Alyssa Conrardy are co-Founders of Prosper Strategies. ○



Lindsay Mullen



Alyssa Conrardy



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Latour tabbed as GE Communications Chief amid Sheffer exit

Gary Sheffer, Chief Communications Officer for GE, is retiring after a 16-year career at the Fairfield, Conn.-based conglomerate.



Sheffer

Deirdre Latour, Senior Director of External Comms., will take over Sheffer's CCO role on April 1. She joined the company from its outside agency, Edelman, in 2004.

Sheffer played a key role in GE's Ecomagination and GE Works campaigns, as well as its PR strategy through the financial crisis and the transition from high-profile CEO Jack Welch to Jeff Immelt. He led its communications and PA operations for the past 12 years.

GE Business Innovations CEO and former GE CMO Beth Comstock said Sheffer developed one of the best communications teams in the world.

Sheffer is Chairman of the board of the Arthur W. Page Society. ○

Campbell joins Ferraro Group

Barbara Smith Campbell has merged her Consensus LLC shop into Nevada's Ferraro Group PR/PA shop.

She's a tax policy pro who has represented clients before the state's insurance division, public utilities commission and taxation department.

Campbell in February resigned as Chairman of the Silver State Insurance Exchange after a four-year stint.

Greg Ferraro, who spent a dozen years at Las Vegas PR/PA powerhouse R&R Partners before setting up his shop, called Campbell "one of the foremost tax policy authorities in Nevada."

She also served as Finance Director at Mandalay Development, which was merged into MGM Mirage, and chaired the Nevada Taxpayers Assn.

Ferraro Group has worked for clients such as JPMorgan Chase, Dunkin' Donuts, Apple, 3M and Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development. ○

Ex-MSLO PR exec Goehring named partner at Vianovo

Katherine Nash Goehring, an agency and corporate PR pro who worked corporate comms. and IR for Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, has landed at Austin-based Vianovo as a Partner.

Goehring spent five years at Martha Stewart's business, departing as VP of Corporate Comms. and IR for a consulting role in 2013. She was previously with Public Strategies and Rubenstein Associates.

Vianovo is a politically rooted PR shop with outposts in Washington, Dallas and Mexico City, as well.

Goehring has counseled Gov. Ann Richards, the New York Stock Exchange and KPMG. ○



Goehring

FTI's Knott moves to MWW

Bob Knott, who led the Americas Corporate Practice at giant FTI Consulting, moved to MWW in January as Executive VP in the corporate offering. He's based in the Washington outpost of the Jersey-headquartered firm.

At MWW, Knott focuses on issues management, corporate social responsibility and sustainability work.

While at FTI, he handled client engagement for Bain Capital, Allstate, Ace Hardware and Dow Chemical.

Knott's a veteran of Edelman, where he did a 13-year stint during which he advised Morgan Stanley, DuPont, American Red

Cross, General Electric, Chevron, JPMorgan Chase and Walmart. He exited as Global Practice Chairman and Client Relationship Manager.

MWW chalked up 2014 fees of \$51.4 million and employed 248 staffers at yearend to rank as a Top Ten firm on *O'Dwyer's* list of independents. ○



Knott

Stillings forges top marketing role for IronPlanet

Susan Stillings, an agency vet of Teneo, Brunswick Group and Edelman, among others, has been named Chief Marketing Officer for online heavy equipment marketplace IronPlanet.

The Bay Area-based portal, backed by some of the top names in venture capital, annually brokers hundreds of millions of dollars in sales of used construction vehicles, government surplus vehicles and other heavy equipment.

Stillings has been an advisor to Prosek Partners for the past year after stints at Teneo and Brunswick (partner). She was an EVP in Edelman's Global Financial practice, Managing Director for Ogilvy PR's Asia Pacific financial unit, and MD for Joe Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher.

IronPlanet acquired oilfield equipment auctioneers Kruse Energy in November

and launched units focused on government surplus auctions (GovPlanet) and used equipment (allEquip) in the past year.

Backers of IP include Accell Partners, Klein Perkins Caufield & Byers, Volvo, Komatsu and Caterpillar. ○

H+K's Lawrence finds Finn post

Chris Lawrence, who was Senior VP in Hill+Knowlton Strategies' research unit, has moved to Finn Partners as Director of Research in its Washington office.

He'll team with Matt Price, Deputy Research Director, and work on projects with Barry Reicherter, Senior VP and Partner of FP's Digital Insights unit.

Lawrence has experience in branding/reputation management, plan/proposal development, program evaluation/tracking and client satisfaction surveys.

Prior to H+K, he was Senior VP at Weber Shandwick's KRC Research and field director at Fabrizio, McLaughlin & Assocs.

Richard Funess, Senior Managing Partner at FP, praised Lawrence's "sell and do" experience that will enhance the firm's ability to offer "research-based strategic insight." ○



Stillings

O'Dwyer's guide to SOCIAL MEDIA PR

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Danielle Dunne, *Managing Director*

Whether it's cars or cameras or diapers or detergent, health has never been more ubiquitous than it is today. For some brands, health may be a new focus. Fortunately, it's always been at the center of ours. And, we've taken this knowledge and enthusiasm to some of the world's largest brands to help them connect with today's socially charged, health-minded consumers.

Allidura Consumer, as part of the InVentiv Health Public Relations Group, takes an integrated approach to communications, and has expertise in traditional media relations as well as digital and social media and issues management. Combining our deep understanding of what motivates a health-minded consumer with our social expertise, Allidura offers Social @dvocacy, a tailored approach for helping health-driven and health-challenged brands create powerful advocate relationships. In addition, through our Issues 2.0 initiative, we've worked with companies that have had their fair share of bumps and bruises — from recalls to regulatory threats to Facebook “bombing” and social activism — to help their brands emerge with more passionate and supportive fan bases.

Our client counsel allows brands to communicate across the wellness spectrum regardless of whether a brand's equity is in health or faced with a health challenge. Our meaningful insights and creative know-how have been tapped by a full range of consumer products and nutritional supplement brands, over the counter and beauty prod-

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Biosector 2 (B2) is a global healthcare communications agen-

cy that partners with visionary clients to deliver groundbreaking programs and improve the health of people's lives. For more than a decade, B2's experience as an agency spans virtually every category in the industry and drives strategic solutions for their clients.

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Christie Anbar, *Managing Director*

Chamberlain is a healthcare public relations company serving the healthcare sector exclusively. For more than 20 years, Chamberlain has worked to redefine and shape the standards by which health information is communicated. As counselors in this complex and evolving environment, we are passionate about translating science into meaningful messages that empower and inspire our audiences to take action and make informed decisions about their health. Chamberlain's diverse client roster represents several sectors in healthcare — from leading *Fortune* 100 & 500 pharmaceutical companies, to nonprofit organizations, to biotechnology and medical organizations.

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to reach target audiences through appropriate channels — fully matched to today's technological and geographic realities.

Chamberlain has deep relationships in healthcare and business media, and its media experts do more than pitch and place; they provide expert counsel that ensures results. Every account team is trained in social media and understands when and how to use it appropriately and successfully in the healthcare environment.

Outside of traditional and social media, Chamberlain's credentials include Brand Communications, Corporate Communications, Market Access, Advocacy Relations, Data Strategy and Management, Public Affairs, Message and Content Development, National and Grassroots Programming and Issues and Crisis Management.

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Tracy Naden, *US Managing Director*
Julie Adrian, *Managing Director, LA*
Heather Gartman, *Managing Director, DC*
Cori Hollenbach, *Managing Director, UK*

Chandler Chicco Agency (CCA), as part of the InVentiv Health Public Relations Group, is a global team of healthcare communications specialists dedicated to helping clients solve their most complex challenges. Integrating an unmatched breadth of resources that enables a comprehensive, 360-degree approach, CCA serves clients that span the spectrum of healthcare from blockbusters to niche products; large pharma to emerging specialty companies; biotech to devices and diagnostics; healthcare technology, hospitals, non-profits and academic centers.

CCA sets the standard in delivering best-in-class communications in a collaborative, flexible envi-

ronment where creativity reigns and clients come first. Highly valued as a natural extension of clients and winner of *PRWeek's* 2014 Healthcare Campaign of the Year, the CCA team is passionate about their work and proud to be making a real difference in people's lives.

Taking an integrated approach to communications, CCA prides itself on its competency for both media relations and digital and social media. Our media specialists and digital strategists are second to none. They don't just know media, they also know the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual clients, as well as the client's business goals. For more than 15 years, CCA has helped clients around the globe plan strategic campaigns, develop creative and effective tactics, conduct proactive outreach, handle incoming media queries, respond to looming or full-blown crises, and manage all aspects of media in the global arena. Our deep experience in traditional healthcare communications and commitment to excellence informs our understanding of digital and social media trends and how they can be appropriately leveraged and executed for pharmaceutical companies. Our approach ensures that our recommendations, in both the traditional and digital cases, are strategic, balanced, informed and achievable.

CCA is fully integrated globally with operations in New York, Washington, Los Angeles, London, and Paris, and is supported by inVentiv Health, Inc., a pure-play global network spanning 45 markets. The network is truly best-in-class and, through ongoing collaboration and knowledge sharing, stays one step ahead of the local and regional social, economic and policy trends to ensure the delivery of integrated communications solutions for clients who seek global reach while demanding local relevance.

CISION

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Peter Granat, CEO

Cision, which recently merged with Vocus and Visible Technologies, is a leading media intelligence software company that integrates social media monitoring, enriched data analytics and

customer engagement into a single platform. Its social media monitoring capabilities allow brands to see what people say about their products, industry and competitors across more than 150 million blogs, social networks, forums, opinion sites and top video- and image-sharing sites in real-time. Brands can manage all their social profiles from one place, proactively respond to customers, interact with their industry's top influencers and identify and nurture quality leads with Cision's social engagement tools. Cision also offers unmatched media analytics — such as geo-segmentation capabilities, sentiment support in 11 languages, and the ability to measure and evaluate social activities directly impacting business — and customizable reporting for stakeholders. Its Social Analytics API access simplifies the process of combining social data with other marketing and business intelligence — whether it's for tracking daily engagement or monitoring a campaign's results.

COOPERKATZ & COMPANY, INC.

205 Lexington Avenue, 5th Floor
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www.cooperkatz.com

Ralph Katz, Principal
Anne Green, President / CEO

CooperKatz & Company, Inc. is highly-regarded for its strong strategic and creative credentials. It offers full-service public relations, digital and creative services capabilities to a national client base across industry sectors.

The firm was an industry-leader in establishing a practice devoted to helping clients develop and execute social media and digital strategies. CooperKatz takes an integrated approach to digital work as part of every client engagement.

Capabilities include: conversation monitoring; influencer engagement; social channel development; community management; content marketing; campaign execution; video production; SEO; social monitoring and analytics; online issues management; and more. The agency has executed award-winning digital work for such clients as Coldwell Banker Real Estate, National Fire Protection Association, Otis Elevator Company, Petfinder.com, Polar and more.

CooperKatz has won numerous industry awards, including "Best

Agency of the Year" in its size category from *The Holmes Report* and "Best Places to Work in New York City" from *Crain's New York Business*.

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Thomas F. Coyne, CEO
Rich Lukis, President
Kevin Lamb, Senior Vice President, Digital
Marie Baker, Vice President, Social Media

The end goal for any brand in today's dynamic digital communications marketplace is conversion — whether in perception or purchase. The accelerating convergence of social media with digital platforms, new and emerging technologies and the insights they reveal, enables brands to create that conversion in ways never before imagined.

As expert communications strategists and master social storytellers, we partner every day with high profile enterprises, including Disney, Novartis, Shell, VTech and GE to enable brand-oriented social and digital narratives — with consumers, among consumers and between consumers — that translate to greater awareness, reputational impact and consumer activation.

Where past attention was focused on chasing the social platform of the day, tomorrow's social landscape is far more fluid and dynamic, blending online and offline engagement, consumer technologies that enable a greater depth of engagement and activation, and empowered consumers that live at the center of it all, crafting their own personalized social experience with brands based on content, context and relevance. We work closely with brands to define the social customer journey, understand the needs of the customer, and counsel brands on creating the optimum social ecosystem and experience that fills those needs and provides value to their consumers.

We partner with brands to ad-

vance and advocate for social and digital strategy within their corporate organization, developing enterprise-level Centers of Excellence in social and digital to establish foundational structure and social media strategy on which to build brand success. We work closely with brands to create custom influencer networks that enable long-term relationships of value with key social conversation leaders. We manage daily engagement, content strategy and social communities for numerous high profile brands, applying our expertise on the latest digital technologies, social platforms and digital behaviors, ensuring consumers experience engagement with brands that is authentic and valuable. And we work with brands to gather, interpret and apply analytics to not only evolve the social storytelling, but also to translate the value of social strategy to senior leadership.

At the end of the day, our partnerships with clients are rooted in the signature style of breakthrough creative thinking and high touch client service that has made Coyne one of the leading independent agencies, and that category leading brands insert with confidence into their strategic marketing ecosystem.

D S SIMON PRODUCTIONS

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D S Simon offers a proprietary platform for digital media and blogger placement. The firm boasts an award-winning video creative team and has an industry leading approach to earning media results. *Fortune* 500 companies, leading brands and non-profits partner with D S Simon for help communicating in the digital space and on television.

Founded in 1986, the firm was a pioneer in video production and distribution to the media as well as satellite and Internet media tours.

The company's headquarters and HD Broadcast studio are in New York with offices in Los Angeles, Chicago, and Washington, DC. Its award-winning video blog www.vlogviews.com receives more than 150,000 hits per month. For more information visit the D S Simon website at www.dssimon.com.

FEINTUCH COMMUNICATIONS

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Emily Simmons, *Social Media Director*

Chatter about your company is happening across the web; why not join the conversation?

Feintuch Communications offers a comprehensive solution for companies looking to enter the social media realm or to enhance their existing presence. Each program is designed to support the company's business objectives and PR goals. Programs include an analysis of the current industry landscape and competitors; a calendar of planned updates; content creation; community building/management; and measurement.

We work with companies to develop public relations and social media policies to fit the company's unique culture and business objectives. We offer customized social media training to educate employees about the policy and how to maximize business opportunities through social media channels.

We are believers in success through intelligence. Whether your company is just getting started with social media or is ready to bring its current program to the next level, we can help you more effectively communicate to your critical audiences.

FINN PARTNERS

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Noah Finn, *Managing Partner*

At Finn Partners, our 45 person, full-service digital team is made up of designers, developers, videographers, researchers, and social strategists who are dedicated to building the best digital and social programs, greatly influenced by research and analytics to map out brand goals.

We take an integrated approach to social media, using it to build a brand through community development across platforms, while also extending to public relations,

marketing, and sales objectives in a manner that is socially digestible. We also integrate paid media, both online and off, to augment earned media and organic engagement.

Our experience ranges across industries, with clients such as the Verizon Foundation, Hyundai Hope On Wheels, IEEE, Hotels.com, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, the Jamaica Tourist Board, and Jamba Juice.

The hallmark of our team is its ability to effectively blend innovative, strategic thinking and creative communications practices to enhance our clients' success. This is exemplified through our long client relationships and our wealth of industry awards. No matter what your digital need may be — you can count on our team to deliver.

FRENCH/WEST/VAUGHAN

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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.

FWV is home to one of the nation's top digital services practices. A leader in launching award-winning, results-driven marketing campaigns, FWV executes multifaceted digital and social media initiatives to drive valuable, relevant lead generation and fan growth, as well as stimulate product trials, influencer and targeted audience awareness and conversions on behalf of some of the world's foremost companies and brands, including: Wrangler Jeans, Riders by Lee, NATHAN, Calligaris Home Furnishing, Moe's Southwest Grill, Pendleton Whisky, Tweetsie Railroad, Wilmington and Beaches CVB (N.C.),

NC State University, the International Gemological Institute (IGI) and *MOVES Magazine*.

Comprised of a team of specialists in audience insight, user experience, interactive marketing and online media planning, our digital marketing experts help clients better understand, navigate and utilize existing, new and ever-changing communications platforms. Capabilities include: integrated research and strategy; online communications planning; creative web development including website design, online video and interactive advertising; social media content creation; word-of-mouth, social and viral marketing campaigns; SEO; and paid online, social and search advertising. FWV has established and continues to maintain authoritative brand presences on both mainstay and emerging social platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google+, Vine, YouTube, Tumblr and more.

FWV has achieved significant results on behalf of its clients, including establishing companies and brands as online and social authorities in their respective industries and lifestyles; providing fans and brand loyalists online communities for engagement with each other on meaningful topics; maintaining a consistent increase in engagement levels month-over-month; increasing brand affinity, reach and purchase intent for specific products; and creating emotional connections with consumers, all while delivering targeted reach in scalable and measurable ways.

GREENOUGH

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Phil Greenough, *President, Founder*

At its core, your business thrives because it makes your customers' lives better — and at Greenough, we put this simple fact at the center of all our social content. We start with research: our tightly integrated content and social teams delve deep into your target audiences, parsing their interests, usage habits and even sense of humor. We then align our audience data with your business objectives, using our content-first methodology to produce strategic

campaigns that provide real value to your audience — and, by extension, your business. Finally, we integrate all of our social content, including paid social strategy, into an overall brand story supported by outcome-based metrics that clearly demonstrate ROI.

JSH&A COMMUNICATIONS

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Jonni Hegenderfer, Jim Kokoris, Cheryl Georgas, *Partners*

With 25 years of experience, JSH&A is a Chicago-based marketing communications agency that helps leading CPG brands drive consumer awareness, engagement and advocacy by creating integrated PR and social media programs that deliver high-impact results.

Named a top Consumer Marketing Agency of The Year, JSH&A has won multiple awards for creative campaigns and strategic influencer engagement programs executed on behalf of clients like ConAgra Foods, Beam Inc., Master Lock, Safest Choice Eggs, Bosch Tools and Dremel.

Our social media capabilities include: blogger and influencer engagement, social media strategy, channel management, content strategy and creation, and social listening and reporting.

Whether it's developing a social strategy for the launch of Reddi-wip's Facebook presence, rallying social influencers to talk about how they took back Monday dinnertime with the help of Manwich or helping Master Lock launch a year-long cause-related social media campaign benefitting the American Red Cross, we deliver strategic, results-driven programs.

KAPLOW

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Liz Kaplow, *Founder and CEO*

For more than two decades, Kaplow has been changing con-

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NCOA
Personalization / Variable Data

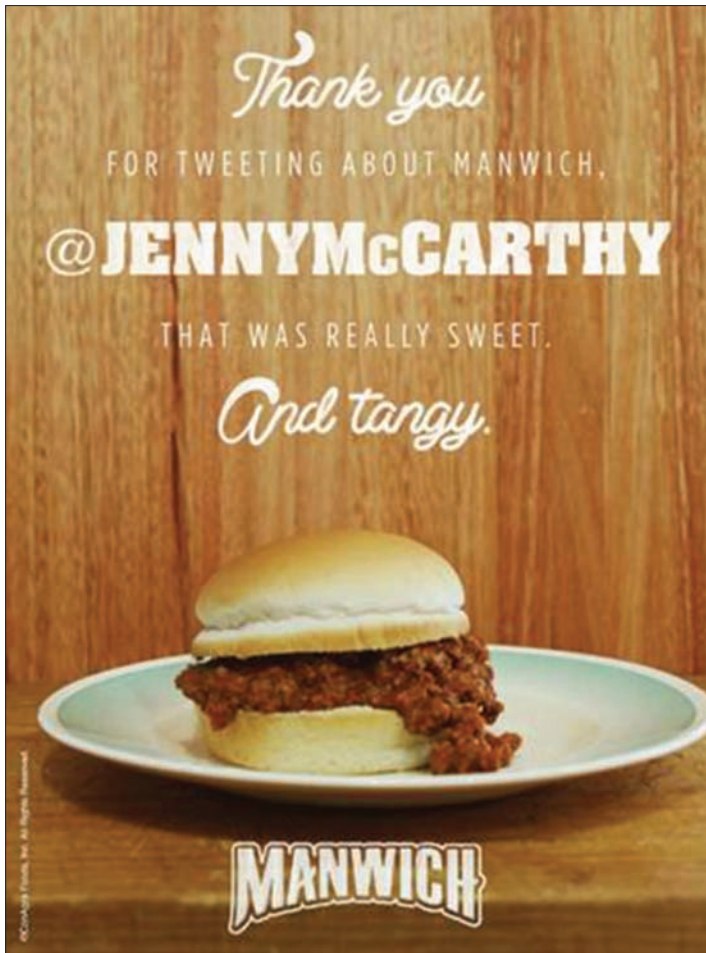


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JSH&A's social strategy for Manwich increased purchase intent through leveraging bloggers, celebrities and Twitter to remind moms that Manwich is a winning mealtime solution.

KAPLOW

Continued from page 22

versations and helping consumers fall in love with our clients' brands. Our integrated programs for world-leading companies fuel consumer conversations, wherever they occur.

Kaplow was built on authentic storytelling, and that has never been more relevant than today when brands are speaking directly to consumers. Our creative ideas disrupt, amuse and educate consumers at every touch point.

Our approach to social media is driven by insight, imagination and initiative. We start by carefully listening to what consumers are saying about our clients' brand and competitors across social platforms. Then, we use boundless creativity to develop digital strategies that meet business objectives with measurable ROI. Finally, we apply with flexibility and initiative.

We take an integrated approach to digital planning — working hand-in-hand with PR, communications planning and paid efforts — to ensure we reach consumer and influencers at every touch point. Our best-in-class digital and social media campaigns win awards and deliver results.

KELLEN

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The single greatest threat in social media is the perception that

you don't listen to your audience. At Kellen, we help you address this and other critical issues that will determine success or failure in social media: what are the relevant business objectives; how can you add value to the online conversation; what platforms will be the most productive; how do you establish appropriate KPIs and track, measure and report your results.

From digital gap research to strategic execution, our digital offerings are based on advocating for and communicating on behalf of not only individual brands and companies, but entire industries ranging from food & beverage, construction, healthcare and science to media, professional services and non-profits.

Our capabilities as a single source for digital and brand asset development, public relations, issues management and event promotion, enable us to provide creativity and consistency while delivering results. Our client programs flow from ideation, strategy and positioning through to online media, social communities and traditional media.

L.C. WILLIAMS & ASSOCIATES

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Kim Blazeck Dahlborn, President and CEO
Shannon Quinn, Executive VP

Social media is no longer a tactic, rather an integrated part of almost every public relations and communications plan. It's essential to consider the wide array of social channels as vehicles to reach a desired audience.

L.C. Williams & Associates (LCWA) offers expertise in social architecture designed to make an impact on business goals and objectives. We build customized, well-rounded campaigns that make the most of social channels and spur audiences into action. From building buzz via online activations to leveraging available channels to inspire, reinforce messages and establish brand leadership, we approach the social landscape with a critical eye toward business impact.

Of course, in social media,

listening is just as important as talking. Our reputation management capabilities rely on monitoring, measuring and minimizing negative chatter to keep conversations focused on the positive.

Our staff is immersed in social media and considered leaders in the industry, participating in educational sessions, contributing "how to" articles to our agency blog and managing daily interactions on behalf of clients American Academy of Sleep Medicine, First Alert, Lehigh, Oster Professional, Snow Joe, Trex and more.

MAKOVSKY

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Ken Makovsky, President & CEO

Headquartered in New York, with an owned office in Washington, D.C., Makovsky is a leading global independent integrated communications consultancy, building businesses and reputations with ideas that cross the boundaries of traditional, digital, social and experiential media.

Makovsky has specialties in Health, Financial & Professional Services, Technology and Energy & Sustainability. Our services include public relations, digital branding, social media, crisis communications, change management and investor relations.

In 2014, Makovsky won 39 company and campaign awards including the Bulldog Stars of PR Awards for "Agency Professional of the Year," and the American Business Award for "Marketing Campaign of the Year" for health services and insurance. The firm has also been recognized for its "Overall Web Design" by the American Business Awards, "PR Firm of the Year" by PR News Elite Awards, "Healthcare Agency of the Year" by *The Holmes Report*, and was ranked as one of the "Top Places to Work in PR" by *PR News*. The firm also won a PRSA Bronze Anvil, three PRSA Big Apple Awards, the Financial Communications Society Portfolio Award for client campaigns and multiple Gold, Silver and Bronze Stevies.

Makovsky is also the founder of IPREX, the second largest worldwide corporation of independent agencies in more than 30 countries and 40 U.S. cities.

MEDIAMAX ONLINE

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John Libby, *President*
Greg Martin, *VP, Sales*
Anthony Ruggiero, *VP, Sales*

MediaMax Online (MMO) provides everything the PR Professional needs for a successful online press room, with unique distribution services for electronic press kits, promos and PSA's, as well as unsurpassed traditional and social media monitoring for the Entertainment, Sports, Automotive and Retail industries.

With more than one million broadcast-quality downloads annually, EPK.TV is the preferred distribution service of entertainment studios, networks, agencies and media outlets. EPK.TV hosts and distributes electronic press kits to over 30,000 media outlets and press — making EPK.TV the most effective method of EPK distribution in the industry.

Daily Buzz leads the industry in media monitoring for TV and motion picture studios, PR agencies, and professional sports organizations. Daily Buzz has built a reputation of exceeding the high standards required to measure, organize and share content with publicists, management, talent and filmmakers. Daily Buzz employs professional media coordinators and incorporates layers of technology to deliver accurate, edited and analyzed breaks that meet the quality and timely needs of our clients.

MMD.TV Managed Media Distribution provides end-to-end post production services, along with Dedicated Workflow Specialists to manage clients' digital media assets. With MMD.TV, clients can host short and long form videos, images and documents in customized, branded portals.

MWW

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Mitzi Emrich, *Chief Social Media Strategist*

Customers are becoming more informed, connected and active —

and they have the tools and motivation to take control of their interactions with brands. As a result, they no longer want to passively receive news — they want to be part of the story and share their own views in unique and personal ways.

Enter MWW — we know how to navigate the biggest social networks or the smallest niche communities for our clients. MWW is a leading independent mid-sized communication and public relations firm with nine offices in the US, one in London, and affiliate partners in key markets across Europe and the Americas. Successful social marketing and engagement strategies are rooted in brand immersion, detailed information gathering, consensus building, and brand value definition. MWW helps clients plan and implement strategic roadmaps that detail the most effective efforts to pursue in the months and years to come. We deliver social media experiences and engagement opportunities that shape perceptions, mitigate risks and inspire customers and stakeholders to act.

In a time when organizations are defined by communities of enthusiasts, voices of detractors and influential voices both on-and offline, we harness the power of digital and social strategy, compelling content creation and distribution, great design and continuous measurement to build movements. The MWW social media practice brings together storytellers, brand specialists, community managers, paid media innovators and analysts who work in synergy with creative designers, marketers, and public relations experts. Our collaborative spirit means we deliver compelling programs that engage stakeholders in expected ways, bolstering reputations and boosting bottom lines.

Let us help you navigate the digital and social world in ways that are most effective for your brand. Let us help you Matter More™.

PEPPERCOMM, INC.

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West Coast



To increase gift-card sales for Guerlain Spa New York, Quinn conducted a Facebook advertising campaign that doubled the fan base and spiked sales by a dramatic 68% increase.

Jackie Kolek, *Partner & Managing Director*
Maggie O'Neill, *Partner & Managing Director*

Peppercomm is an award-winning strategic marketing and communications firm headquartered in New York City with offices in San Francisco, Boulder and London that listens first, last and always. We pride ourselves on listening to our clients' needs as well as the wants and needs of their various audiences. That focus on listening before engaging (or creating) inspired not only our tagline: "Listen. Engage. Repeat." but our strategic approach.

Our integrated team of specialists work together to create cohesive campaigns that leverage the right communications and marketing vehicles across all touch points. Our clients range from major household names and elite luxury brands to some of the world's largest and highly regulated professional and financial services and industrial organizations. We have helped clients reposition and rebrand; launch entirely new brands and position global brands in the U.S. market; build websites and social strategies; launch content strategies; create brand experiences; drive executive visibility; prepare for and mitigate crises; engage key audiences and ultimately deliver results for our clients.

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www.highimpactdigital.com

Maria Pierson, *CEO*
Jane Grant, *President*

High Impact Digital, a division of Pierson Grant Public Relations, is composed of early adopters with over ten years of skilled Internet marketing experience. The division specializes in social media marketing, search engine optimization, brand monitoring and Web development designed to integrate online and offline PR.

High Impact Digital crafts winning social media strategies for national and regional companies such as Show Management and the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show, as well as law firms, real estate developers, restaurants, luxury products and other businesses seeking to connect with customers and enhance their Web-based marketing. Working together with Pierson Grant publicists, High Impact Digital delivers creative thinking, thoughtful execution and measurable results, employing the best practices in digital marketing.

QUINN

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We have a contrarian approach to social media. We put quality over quantity. Social media should elevate the brand and never be pedestrian.

Currently social media serves four purposes — driving sales, customer service, customer reviews

— Continued on page 26



Rogers & Cowan / Black Sheep Social Media created shareable assets for Bertolli that leverage trending, hashtag #makeamoviehealthy

QUINN

Continued from page 25

and brand communication.

Regarding the latter, great social media amplifies and underscores the brand. Everything flows from the brand DNA to the blog, the voice of the brand, before it is communicated across the social-media platforms. It takes a certain level of sophistication to get it right.

In the world of customer reviews, more brands should allow them. Absence this in the travel industry, TripAdvisor is the go-to site for reading and posting reviews. We advise clients on how to work with its all-important rankings, and we send staff to TripAdvisor master trainings.

We work with celebrities, trendsetters and influencers to connect brands to consumers at an emotional level as well as to extend the client's reach. When we invited Boo, the World's Cutest Dog, for a sleepover at an Affinia hotel in exchange for Facebook posts, we reached Boo's 6-million Facebook fans with Affinia's dog-friendly message. One fan wrote, "I want to take my poodle to that nice hotel."

Social-media partnerships with influential brands amplify the client's standing and its reach. Our Pinterest contest for JW Marriott Resorts with Nordstrom promoted the resort brand's wedding and honeymoon message to the retail-

er's expansive social-media audience, produced \$24,000 in revenue and increased Pinterest followers by 500. It was named a Best Digital Marketing Campaign by Luxury Daily.

Sometimes we use online advertising to achieve a goal. To increase gift-card sales for Guerlain Spa New York, we conducted a Facebook advertising campaign aimed at users within a close radius who follow like-minded, luxury brands. Within a month we doubled the spa's fan base and spiked gift-card sales by a dramatic 68% increase.

An untapped area of social media — the "fifth dimension" — is to create elevated guest engagement. Elevated means giving meaningful voice to consumers. We are helping the Arzezen, a very unique hotel rising in downtown Manhattan, create a first-ever, interactive guest program that will play out in social media and onsite.

Social media is not for every brand. In the world of ultra-luxury residential real estate, a magazine-quality blog is often all you want. Owned blogs and magazines turn a brand into a media platform, a key strategy for telling the brand story and generating opportunities for all kinds of partnerships.

Our social media campaigns have won major awards, including the coveted PLATINUM AWARD (Best of the Golds) at the annual, black-tie HSMIA Awards (the Oscars of travel marketing).

RFIBINDER

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Amy Binder, CEO
Chris Gee, Chief Digital Officer

At RF|Binder, we believe that widespread adoption of social media has permanently changed the world of communications, transformed audiences into publishers and expanded the influence a peer can have on the decisions of those they are connected to. Now that mobile has finally eclipsed the desktop as the primary way audiences access digital content, our clients are increasingly searching for newer, more efficient ways to connect with key audiences.

We advise our clients to think of social media as they would a dinner party — the same rules apply. You would never show up an hour late to a dinner party and then proceed to talk about yourself the entire time. Unfortunately this is how many brands behave with their social media efforts!

At RF|Binder we help our clients to enter online communities by first listening to the conversation taking place, then engaging, and ultimately adding value. Our team's unique blend of art and science allows us to marry creative intuition with cutting edge analytics. We begin every assignment by gaining a deep understanding of the client's true digital footprint, starting with two WHOs, a WHAT and a WHERE. WHO are the influencers? WHO are the audiences? WHAT are they saying? WHERE are their conversations happening?

These powerful insights fuel every aspect of how we help clients, from overarching strategy to our recommendations for content. We help to strengthen the target audience's emotional connection with our clients' brands while also ensuring that all communications and messaging are on-point and on-brand. In short, we iterate, learn, and optimize results on a continuous basis.

Our team, powered by the Knowledge & Insights Group, actively listens to key online communities, and knows how to leverage our traditional, digital and social channels to deploy an early response to any emerging developments that can impact the brand (either positively or negatively). From there our digi-

tal strategy group develops and delivers fun, engaging content strategies that tell our clients' stories and build brand advocates.

The group's services include bespoke digital and social media strategies, multi-channel content marketing strategies, online rapid response, digital brand advocacy, advanced data analytics, quantifiable social media ROI, program measurement and analysis. Our clients run the gamut from venture-backed start up to global multinational corporations including edX, Talenti, Abine, Wines of Germany, Johnson & Johnson, McGraw-Hill, Loews, and Dunkin' Donuts.

ROGERS & COWAN

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Tom Tardio, CEO

Rogers & Cowan is the leading entertainment marketing communications agency with offices in Los Angeles, New York, Atlanta, Nashville and South Florida. It is also the first entertainment firm to build an in-house social media practice to meet the evolving needs of our corporate brand clients. Our highly experienced team of professionals is at the forefront of the social media spectrum creating overarching digital strategies for brands implementing multi-platform communications, designing and executing comprehensive, integrated social media campaigns and creating influencer and content marketing programs for a diverse roster of clients.

As innovators in navigating the world of social media, we offer clients knowledge, insight, relationships and a deep understanding of the constantly evolving social media sector to assist in developing and executing integrated communications strategies. Our team creates and implements customized campaigns for start-up companies seeking to build awareness in the digital, social and mobile worlds as well as established brands seeking to utilize social media solutions to engage with consumers on a deeper level. Whether we are targeting influencers, engaging fans directly, or driving home a brand's message, Rogers & Cowan helps influence

the way our audiences think about a brand while nurturing and building ongoing dialogue. When it comes to digital communities, we identify the influencers who matter to our clients and build relationships that benefit both the consumer and the client.

Our clients and projects have included Rdio, Target, 505 Games, GRAMMY Awards, Swarovski, Kabam / Wil Wheaton partnership, Kabam / Marvel Contest of Champions social media influencer campaign, Bertolli content amplification, Viggie app launch, Haunting Melissa app launch, Avon Voices online global talent search, Lancôme Latin influencer event, Sony Pictures Home Entertainment Ultraviolet platform and app, Coca-Cola Th(RE)D social game and Scion Reinvent the Wheels web series, among others.

RUDER FINN

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Kathy Bloomgarden, CEO
Michael Schubert, Chief Innovation Officer
Scott Schneider, Chief Digital Officer
Maryann Watson, President, RFI Studios

In today's hyper-connected world, all communications are social. As one of the first agencies to establish an in-house digital practice — RFI Studios — in 1999, Ruder Finn has a longstanding heritage and extensive experience in leveraging digital and social platforms to engage key stakeholders. With RFI's global team of strategists, storytellers, designers and technologists in New York, China and San Francisco, we use a multichannel approach to tailor and optimize stories across earned, social, owned and paid channels to meaningfully engage with the end-user.

At RFI Studios, digital strategy isn't just social. We create integrated platforms for mobile, social and .com as a means to enhance strategic digital storytelling, build engaged communities, activate audiences and provide meaningful metrics to measure success and return on engagement. We marry data-driven insights, to make sure our stories connect, with influencer mapping, to ensure we're reaching the right people through the right channel. We are anchored in rigorous user experience research and

execute (and re-calibrate) based on real-time metrics.

With a consistent focus on digital content and strategy, Ruder Finn and RFI Studios provide clients with a range of differentiated offerings from our ability to create digital builds in-house to social and real-world activations across all existing channels, including paid. Our breadth of expertise includes managing social communities, developing mobile apps, creating progressive digital tools, implementing geolocation and gamification, developing meaningful and engaging content, identifying and building relationships with key digital influencers, and utilizing both big and little data. Additionally, we have extensive experience working with clients on internal engagement programs which includes development of enterprise-wide collaboration platforms. Our capabilities also include a dedicated health and wellness digital offering to help clients navigate the regulatory complexities of engaging with patients via digital channels. Blending traditional PR and digital expertise, Ruder Finn takes a holistic approach to helping clients create meaningful content, bring their story to life digitally and optimize the potential to go viral.

SACHS MEDIA GROUP

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Ron Sachs, President & CEO

Sachs Media Group is a leader in building effective outreach, awareness and marketing campaigns, and is routinely ranked as one of the top 100 public relations firms in the nation and among the top PR firms in Florida. As an integrated communications firm, we have broad capabilities, including award-winning public relations, public affairs, web and graphic design, social/digital media and video production.

Sachs Media's digital division matches expert knowledge of the social arena with top-quality implementation. As the social web gets more congested every day, we provide results that break through and reach optimal audiences. Our team has worked with hundreds of brands across the country to create premium social media experiences, earning top industry accolades along the way. Whether creating new social communities from

scratch or utilizing existing outlets, the Sachs Media team understands the best means for creating an engaging digital experience.

At Sachs Media Group, the difference is results.

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Joan Schneider, Chief Executive Officer & Founder
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Since 2004, SA has been a leader in social media, digital influence and engagement. We are constantly evolving our social advocacy and digital influence practice to help clients navigate the shifting landscape and harness the organic impact of powerful social networks that complement paid and owned media.

At SA, our fully integrated approach starts with building listening programs, refining messaging, curating content, identifying and engaging influencers, developing creative and compelling program concepts, and cultivating conversations that build relationships and foster advocacy. We help brands stand out in social media and use digital technologies to grow businesses from start-ups to *Fortune* 500 companies.

Schneider Associates is a full-service public relations and integrated marketing communications agency specializing in Launch Public Relations®, a proprietary method of launching new and revitalizing iconic products, services, companies, institutions and communities to build awareness, excitement, and sales. Visit www.schneiderpr.com

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Carlen Lea Lesser, SVP, Digital Strategy

Justin Kohut, Director, Digital Insights and Strategy

Spectrum is at the intersection of science and storytelling, creating powerful and game-changing conversations for our clients and audiences. Our experienced teams carefully dissect conversations to generate social intelligence aimed at finding meaning and context. We use our understanding of these interactions to develop communication strategies that advance the client's mission — from the web to the wire. By asking the right questions that lead to meaningful results, we build compelling initiatives for clients, powered by the community at large. From blockbuster drugs to breakthrough vaccines and everything in between, Spectrum is privileged to share science stories with the world every day. Learn more at spectrumscience.com.

WEBER SHANDWICK

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Chris Perry, President, Digital

Weber Shandwick is a global leader in digital communications and content marketing. The firm incorporates the fundamentals of social media throughout the organization — connecting, conversing and collaborating to address new opportunities and issues. At the heart of the firm's work is the "incite idea," a creative trigger so powerful that it drives ongoing advocacy and engagement for clients across all practice areas/industries.

Weber Shandwick is trusted to handle a range of digital responsibilities, including social business consulting programs, digitally-led campaigns, brand media programs and community management for 200+ major household names. The firm helps clients address new opportunities and threats online, using data throughout to plan and assess program impact. The firm has a wide array of digital products and service offers, including a social crisis simulator, firebell, an award-winning, proprietary application that allows clients to participate in real-time online crisis simulation drills in a secure, off-the-Internet environment. In 2013 the firm launched Mediaco, a leading-edge consulting and production capability that helps all companies become media companies. ○

Don't let your online video land you in court

Think you can use that TV news clip in your video, or just a few seconds of that web footage? Think you can use that stock image? Better think again.

By Sue Stolov

It's gotten pretty challenging for PR to avoid legal issues with online video," according to Laura Possessky, media and entertainment law attorney, because "PR use is, by definition, not necessarily a commercial use to advertise for a product, and it is not necessarily a news event, so what makes it challenging in the PR field is that the legal rules on this are more gray than black and white. That means PR professionals are always having to make that critical judgment — what is the piece going to represent and what is the context here."

If the videos you make are put online, be aware that distributors like YouTube will pull them off quickly if there's a hint of an issue pertaining to copyright. Anyone who is a copyright owner can file a takedown notice.

"It's happening more and more," said Possessky, "because the major content owners in the music and film industry have leaned heavily on Internet distributors to do a better job of removing unauthorized copyrighted material." And getting the video back up is a difficult process.

No one wants to produce a video that gets pulled, and no one wants to produce a video that winds up in court. So, what can you do to protect your product and avoid wasting your client's money? There's always some risk involved in producing video, especially if you want to approach your client's subject matter in an innovative manner — that's why some PR professionals shy away from video. But it doesn't need to be that way. There are some pretty solid steps PR pros can take to minimize the chance you'll need to call a lawyer.

Plan ahead, check for clearance issues

Possessky said the most cost-effective way to avoid legal issues is to get your ducks in a row before you start. Paying up-front for certain things is a lot less costly than having to come back around and pay for it a year or two later. First, she said, if you're not producing it in-house, find a producer who will stand behind their product and has indicated to you knowledge of the rights and permissions that might be required. Then think carefully about how you'll use the material: will it be shown at a conference, how many people will see it and will it go on the web? If it's going on the web,

how long? Also think about where you'll be videotaping and what is identifiable in the background. Will you be using footage or materials provided by a third party? And if so, in what context will you use those materials?

Media, entertainment and Internet attorney Joy Butler said creating a checklist of clearance issues is a good idea at the start of a project. In her book, *The Permission Seeker's Guide Through The Legal Jungle: Clearing Copyrights, Trademarks and Other Rights for Entertainment and Media Productions*, she includes a checklist of clearance issues as they might relate to: people, subject matter, location, music, company names, products and third-party footage.

Tips specific to PR video

It's common for PR-produced videos to have a few stock images, and most assume, said Butler, that paying the stock image company for the rights has them covered. However, "that is not necessarily the case," according to Butler.

"Stock houses may get releases from models that allow their use in promotional videos, but do not cover a use dealing with sensitive material," Butler said.

Take, for example, the Getty Image-HIV Ad lawsuit, in which the person photographed was used in an advertisement that implied she was HIV positive. She is not, and she sued. Butler said "the license granted by the stock house frequently includes only rights related to the copyright of the image, and leaves the PR firm on its own to clear any additional rights triggered by the use of the image like privacy, publicity and defamation."

Release forms. This is an area where planning ahead is extremely important. With most release forms, the more encompassing you are with your intended uses, the better. There are samples of release forms in the back of *The Permission Seeker's Guide Through the Legal Jungle*; the key to these releases is thinking about the future, as many companies will often use footage in many different ways, over a period of many years.

For example, one of Butler's sample releases: "The rights I grant to Producer are irrevocable, perpetual, worldwide, and include the right to use the interview in any

form, media, language or technology, now known or later developed," would likely keep you covered for many years. But, as in the Getty case above, the producers would have needed a very specific release form signed by the model, allowing use in an ad that would depict her as HIV positive.

Airchecks and third party footage. Using airchecks and other footage is probably where PR people need to make the most judgment calls, because it often calls into play the concept of "fair use."

It's such an important part of making videos that American University's Center for Social Media, together with AU's Washington College of Law, put together the Code of Best Practices in Fair Use for Online Video. At risk of simplifying something complex, it's okay to use copyrighted material without obtaining permission under some circumstances. This article can only begin to touch on the factors that qualify something as fair use. If you regularly produce videos, it's a good idea to familiarize yourself with the examples listed in AU's Code as this is probably one of the copyright issues that come up most often in PR. The Copyright Act lists favored uses for fair use, and Butler said those are "criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship and research."

As with most copyright issues, how you use the material is key. Using a snippet of a TV news clip to show how something was covered in the news media at the time would likely be considered fair use, as long as your entire video was not just news clips, and you were not indicating that the news station endorsed your subject or product. Third party footage may in some circumstances also be considered fair use, but Possessky said it is always important to look at the different layers involved, who shot the video, who is in the video, is the location identifiable and are there products involved. There may be a layer that's not been covered under fair use.



Sue Stolov

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Apple to debut music streaming service

Apple in March announced it would develop a streaming music service to compete with the likes of Spotify and Pandora. How the tech giant plans to differentiate its offering in a market saturated with subscription music services, however, remains to be seen.

By Jon Gingerich

Call it a sign of the times. Digital download services like iTunes struck a deadly blow to CD sales several years ago, and now today's enormously popular music streaming industry signals that downloads too may be on their way out. Music lovers' steady migration to subscription services reiterates what people have been saying for years: that music has increasingly evolved from a product to a service, that consumers no longer want to own music — they simply want to access it.

While details are still vague, Apple in March announced that it too will move into the world of subscription music, giving itself a chance to play in a league currently dominated by popular services such as Spotify, Pandora, and Google Play Music. Apple's forays into the world of streaming comes as a result of the tech giant's \$3 billion purchase of Beats Electronics in 2014, the largest acquisition in Apple's 39-year history. The Beats brand, co-founded by hip hop legend Dr. Dre and music industry mogul Jimmy Iovine, is best known for its popular line of consumer headphones, but Beats also operates Beats Music, a \$10-a-month online subscription service that was launched in January 2014. Musician Trent Reznor is Chief Creative Officer of that service.

The Beats Music platform was included in the Apple acquisition, and all news suggests the forthcoming Apple streaming property will be a re-haul of that service, and will probably appear as an integrated feature inside a new, redesigned version

of Apple's signature iTunes media library. Reznor is said to retain his role in the project, and will reportedly play an integral role in its re-launch. According to a March 25 *New York Times* report, the new service would debut sometime this year.

Streaming grows in popularity

The streaming music industry surged by 54% in 2014, and accounted for \$1.7 billion in revenues, and those numbers are only expected to grow. Unlike downloads, streaming music services allow listeners to access online content without forcing them to buy it. Some services, like Pandora, work like an interactive radio station, allowing users to discover artists by devising customizable playlists based on their musical preferences. Others, like Spotify, allow access of entire albums, essentially giving users a virtually inexhaustible library of music at their disposal. Like download services, streaming companies pay the labels, publishers, and artists who own the content; unlike download services, streaming companies offer this access via paid subscriptions, though many also offer free versions supported by a roster of advertisers.

Streaming revenues accounted for about \$1.87 billion in 2014, and overtook CD sales for the first time last year (CD sales still brought in \$1.85 billion last year). Financially, Spotify leads this market. The company posted \$1 billion in revenues for 2013, and about 91% of that money came from the 22% of its users who pay for the non-ad supported subscription version of the service. As of January, Spotify has about

60 million total users, with 15 million of them paying for the service. Internet radio service Pandora still boasts more listeners than Spotify — about 81.5 million active listeners as of 2014 — but claimed smaller revenues last year, about \$920.8 million. Fewer than 5% of its active listeners are now paying subscribers.

Music download revenues fall

Digital downloads, once feared the death knell of the music industry, still account for more annual revenues than streaming, and comprise about 37% of the music industry's total earnings, but that gap is closing fast. *The Wall Street Journal* in October reported that music downloads at Apple's iTunes Store fell 13% since the beginning of 2014.

iTunes has remained financially robust as a service and, in fact, achieved all-time revenue highs at the end of 2014, with total iTunes revenues at \$18 billion for the year, a \$2 billion uptick from 2013. Much of this increase is due no longer to music, but the popularity of app downloads from its App Store, which grew 36% from the year prior.

It had been doubtful that Apple would ever try its hand in music streaming, and in the months following the Beats Music acquisition, rumors abounded that Apple would shutter the service (former Apple CEO Steve Jobs allegedly never liked the streaming concept). Details remain sparse, but according to the March 25 *New York Times* report on the forthcoming platform, the Apple service, unlike Spotify or Pandora, would probably not offer a free option. Now that Apple has changed its tune on streaming, few clues exist regarding what perks it will offer consumers with this new service, or how it will differentiate itself from popular models currently running the market. ●

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Music. Show me a video producer who has not heard the following and I'll show you a video producer who is not a video producer: "I heard something on the radio last week and I really would like to use that in the video. Can we do that?"

The answer might be "yes," if you have a big wallet and about a month to obtain clearance. In other words, the answer is likely "no!" Any music that is used to move along a piece or create mood, must be licensed.

I recommend you get a copy of the license to the music from the producer. This way, you'll know exactly how long you're allowed to use the music, and you'll have it should you or your client need proof. Once the term is over, the video must be pulled completely off the site. Even if you keep the video on a back page that no one can find without a specific URL, content trollers can find it. Music licensing companies have software that can locate their music anywhere on the web, and they'll come knocking at your door and bill you \$1,000 or more if they find your rights were never purchased or expired — that's what you could be charged

even if your original cost would have been \$75. And no one wants to have to come up with that kind of money five years after the project has been completed.

So, it's important that you've clearly thought through clearances, releases and rights before you upload. That will likely be your best shot in any video you make, and will keep you and your client's beautifully produced video out of court.

Susan Stolov is a Director, Producer and Writer with Washington Independent Productions in Washington, D.C.. She also currently authors the video tip series, Beyond Point and Shoot. ●

O'Dwyer's guide to VIDEO & BROADCAST FIRMS

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Artisan Production House is a full service production company specializing in food and lifestyle publicity. We are known for our integrated brand strategy through satellite TV junkets, live / launch events, videos and celebrity talent partnerships. We work with you to tell your story and give it relevance, producing brand content that provides consumers something worth talking about. Our personal relationships with TV producers and media influencers throughout the country and high-end production capabilities (film-style shooters, editors and graphic designers) produce meaningful business results.

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Joan Auritt, *President*

ACG is a high-quality, results-oriented multimedia production company specializing in electronic and digital PR and marketing services. Staffed by innovative and relationship-focused experts, we customize your project needs with the most cost-effective solutions to increase your brand awareness and to maximize your audience reach. ACG's "one-stop-shop" approach provides you with the attentive services of a boutique, from creative consultation and media coaching through production and results reporting, every project receives the full focus of our attention.

ACG's outstanding range of services include: Video Production and Distribution; Media Training; TV Satellite, Radio and Online Media Tours; Integrated Media Tours; Social Media Campaigns, Blogger Connect and Twitter Parties; Web Videos, Webcasts, Live Video Stream and Event Coverage; Video, Audio and Multimedia News Releases; B-roll Packages; PSAs; Corporate Videos (sales, investor relations, product launches, branding, training and highlight reels).

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Peter Granat, *CEO*

Cision, which recently merged with Vocus and Visible Technologies, is recognized as the leading provider of premium broadcast management applications. It offers easy-to-use products that allow customers to monitor their brand, watch media coverage, analyze the results and present insights to select audiences. Cision provides the largest broadcast library in the industry with continuous, comprehensive monitoring of national, cable and all 210 local markets, online viewing of video, broadcast-specific analytics, unprecedented sharing capabilities and convenient preview video functionality. Companies can optimize their monitoring through its award-winning Cision PR Edition, which allows users to monitor their television, radio, newspaper, Internet and social media coverage in a single application. With Cision PR Edition, users can watch a video preview of their broadcast hits, run press reports, share video, analyze results and present findings to stakeholders. Cision also offers DVDs and professionally edited digital clips, transcription services, compilation reels and project-based monitoring to accommodate any range of special requests. If you're a new customer, mention that you saw us in *O'Dwyer's* and get your first digital clip for free.

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Double R Productions (Double R), founded in 1987, is a full-service, woman-owned communications firm, specializing in television and video production. For more than 27 years, company President Rosemary Reed and Double R have provided film, video and television services, original broadcast programming, presentation training and coaching along with state-of-the-art post-production and graphics services. Our projects range from national public service campaigns and image pieces for non-profits to association, corporate and government presentations of all shapes and sizes. The common thread in all Double R projects is the focus on message and the creative, professional look and feel enhancing each piece. Double R Productions works with you from start to finish on your project. Double R provides production crews and equipment for events nationwide, from one-person crews to multiple camera shoots with lights, sound technicians and directors. "Bring us your vision, we consult, shoot and edit. We get it right!"

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Larry Saperstein, *President*
Karen Manfredi, *Vice President of Sales*
Allison Lehman, *Director of Operations*

KickedUp Media Group specializes in satellite and radio media tours, in-market media tours, video production of PSAs, corporate and social videos, media training

and Hispanic media outreach. The company was founded by Larry Saperstein, the former head of broadcast and production services at West Glen Communications. Saperstein is joined at KickedUp by public relations veteran Karen Manfredi as vice president of sales, and Allison Lehman as director of operations.

Manfredi is a seasoned media relations counselor with over 30 years of experience at major public relations agencies. She is reuniting with Saperstein, as the pair previously worked together at WestGlen Communications where Manfredi was a vice president and oversaw hundreds of SMTs, RMTs, RNRs, B-Roll packages and in-market projects annually.

Lehman's experience within the media industry ranges from public relations, advertorials, and project management to journalism, new media and video production. Allison began her career at News 12 Long Island and went on to produce in the Washington, D.C. market.

KickedUp Media Group's versatility is evidenced by their scope of work, which ranges from major medical institutions and big pharma to national trade associations and non-profits as well as national retail chains and consumer goods.

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MediaMax Online (MMO) provides everything the PR Professional needs for a successful online press room, with unique distribution services for electronic press kits, promos and PSAs, as well as unsurpassed traditional and social media monitoring for the Entertainment, Sports, Automotive and Retail industries.

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nally, EPK.TV is the preferred distribution service of entertainment studios, networks, agencies and media outlets. EPK.TV hosts and distributes electronic press kits to over 30,000 media outlets and press — making EPK.TV the most effective method of EPK distribution in the industry.

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Each week, radio reaches 243 million listeners. That's 91 percent of the total U.S. 12+ population. We want them to hear your story. For more than 25 years, MediaTracks Communications has worked with PR and marketing professionals to craft clear, engaging messages that get heard on air and online to support your brand. As producer and syndicator of the award-winning national radio programs, Radio Health Journal and Viewpoints, we deliver guaranteed placement ANRs with tangible, measurable results. Our experienced, accessible Chicago-based team connects with major market stations and national networks every day to communicate your message via RMTs, ANRs, custom news feeds, and PSAs. Our expertise also extends to targeted placement in both the Hispanic and

African American markets. Solid, long-term relationships with repeat clients demonstrate our proven record in healthcare, consumer, corporate, public affairs, high tech and not-for-profit fields.

Radio media tours with consumer product messages have included Best Western's "Summer Travel," Got Milk's "Reach for the Stars," and "College Financial Aid" for Discover. Our client roster includes AbbVie, Genentech, LifeScan, Medtronic, UPS Store, Forest Labs, ACH Foods, Sanofi Pasteur, Novartis, MetLife, Purdue Pharma, Dole, Pedigree, Mars M&Ms, Kraft, Coca-Cola and Campbell's. We share long-term agency relationships with Burson-Marsteller, Edelman, FleishmanHillard, GCI, Golin, Hunter, Ketchum, Ogilvy, Porter Novelli, Ruder Finn, Taylor, W2O Group, Weber Shandwick and Zeno Group. MediaTracks has also produced and syndicated the 40-segment Merck "Milestones in Medicine" national radio series and "A Healthier World," a weekly national radio feature for Pfizer, Inc.

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The News Generation team hosts a media workshop in Washington, D.C.

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Susan Matthews Appood, President

Are you looking for a media relations firm to earn you coverage, not pay for "guaranteed placements"? Are you looking for guidance on tailoring your message to broadcast? We understand and can help.

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News Generation is an issue-driven media relations agency, specializing in using broadcast media to earn coverage for associations, non-profits, government agencies and clients of PR firms.

Services include: radio media tours, audio news releases, public service announcements, satellite media tours and b-roll packages. All services are available in English and Spanish. To check out the high-quality content we pitch, visit broadcastnewsresource.com.

PLUS MEDIA, INC.

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We are a team of passionate, creative and client-focused broadcast marketing professionals. Through creativity, flexibility and journalistic savvy, we consistently deliver top markets and ensure that our clients' ROI is not only met but surpassed. With over 25 years of experience in broadcast and video content production, PLUS Media has the passion, know-how and commitment to deliver on its promises.

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Shayne Fraeke, CEO

For more than 25 years, PremiereTV has delivered exceptional broadcast publicity and video production services throughout the U.S. and across the globe. We pride ourselves on providing peer-

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When Nike's Jordan Brand launched their new AJXX9 shoe, Taylor Productions was on the court capturing the wear test experience for social influencers to share. This full-service production studio specializes in digital content creation with an experienced team of creatives, producers and editors.

PREMIERETV

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less quality, unyielding professionalism and superior customer service. Our clients agree — PremiereTV maintains an astonishing client return rate and our business has grown exponentially through word-of-mouth and referrals alone.

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if you need a "highlight reel" for your next meeting, we have the knowledge and resources to manage the production and orchestrate the PR.

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Richard Strauss, President

Celebrating our twentieth year, Strauss Media Strategies, Inc., is the nation's premier public relations, communications, and strategy firm specializing in radio and television. Not just another "crank it out booking service," Strauss Media Strategies works closely with its clients to develop campaign-specific strategies and tactics that get results. Collectively, our staff brings more than 175 years of broadcast experience and judgment to our clients.

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Bryan Harris, COO & Managing Partner
Matt Adam, SVP, Productions

Taylor Productions is a full service digital production company specializing in the sports, lifestyle, and entertainment space. From branded online content and live streaming to animated videos and mini-documentaries, Taylor Productions helps brands engage with consumers in creative and unexpected ways. Conveniently

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Susan Stolov, Director/ Producer/Writer

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The May issue of *O'Dwyer's* will profile PR firms ranked in our 2015 rankings of independent PR firms. If your firm is ranked with us and would like to be profiled, contact Editor Jon Gingerich at 646/843-2080 or jon@odwyerpr.com

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Howie Schultz goes over the cliff

By Fraser Seitel

Despite Starbucks' promise "to keep the program going," in time, the company's disastrous Race Together campaign to tackle the issue of race in America will be forgotten.



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*.

And Starbucks' quixotic Founder and CEO Howard Schultz, the driving force behind the erstwhile, ill-fated PR campaign to "initiate the discussion about race," will move on to tilt at other windmills.

Now that the company has shut down the campaign, a week after it was announced with great fanfare, what are the lessons that others may learn from Starbucks'

high-profile "fall from race?"

- **Think "worst case" before striking.**

No one questions that Howard Schultz is the kind of billionaire that truly cares for his fellow man and means well. But idealism is no excuse for rushing into a bad idea — even for a billionaire.

Race Together was a classic "Ready Fire Aim" campaign, rushed out with as cockamamie a premise as any ill-suited PR campaign in modern history.

The idea that 50,000 busy baristas at 12,000 Starbucks locations would be willing, able and competent enough to engage customers in conversation about race was almost as moronic as the idea that Starbucks' customers would stand for such an intrusion into their simple daily act of buying coffee.

The premise was ridiculous on its face. If anyone around Schultz had even raised the worst-case issue of "what if," perhaps the headstrong coffee king would have seen the light in time to stop the rollout.

- **Don't succumb to the misplaced whims of the CEO.**

This is a tough one, since all of us need

the job but ...

Recent history is littered with the bad PR ideas that autocratic CEOs have foisted on their companies, to the detriment of employees, customers and bottom line.

In 2012, when Chik-fil-A Founder Dan Cathy went public with his opposition to same sex marriage, the company was clobbered.

In 2013, when Whole Foods Founder John Mackey compared Obamacare to "fascism," he infuriated the company's liberal customer base.

Bleeding hearts, of course, have defended CEO Schultz for reinforcing the "social conscience" of his brand. And that he did. But the question is, "At what price to customers, employees and shareholders?"

Just as one patronizes Chik-fil-A for its chicken, not management's views on homosexuality, so, too, does one patronize Starbucks for its coffee, not management's desire to discuss America's race problems.

CEOs, even those who started the company, must be persuaded to consider the impact of their public views on their business.

- **Don't compound failure by shooting yourself in the head.**

By far the most embarrassing aspect of Starbucks' calamitous campaign was the decision of its communications director, a few days prior to closing down the program, to delete his Twitter account.

"Last night I felt personally attacked in a cascade of negativity," Global Communications Senior Vice President Corey duBrowa grimly recounted.

When the person in charge of the communications campaign stops communicating, you've got trouble in River City. Which leads to the last and most important lesson ...

- **The job of the PR counselor is to tell it like it is.**

In the days of *The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit*, PR advisors were primarily "yes men," nodding in agreement at every foolhardy idea the CEO championed.

Today, by contrast, a truly "valued" PR advisor is one willing not only to stand up to a CEO's well-meaning but wrong-headed ideas but also brave enough to talk the boss down from the ledge.

Evidently no one at Starbucks was willing to step up to this counseling responsibility.

And that's why Howie Schultz was allowed to jump. ○

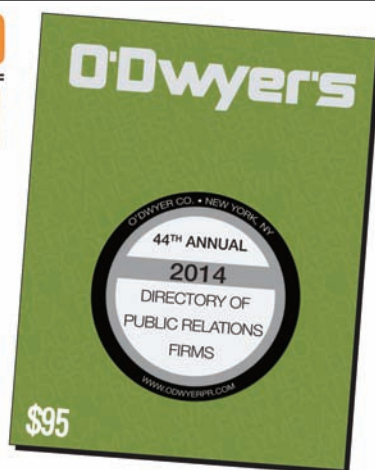
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What is your PR firm worth? (part two)

By Richard Goldstein

Welcome back. This month is a follow-up to the March *O'Dwyer's* column. As always, if you need a copy contact me or *O'Dwyer's* Editor Kevin McCauley.



Richard Goldstein is a partner at Buchbind - er Tunick & company II P, New York, certified Public Accountants.

Art Stevens

Art's premise is simple: Is a formal valuation really necessary? Art's advice is to skip the valuation and use the rule of thumb of how agency acquisitions are usually done and save the \$7,000 to \$12,000 valuation cost.

In Art's view, if your agency has a net fee income

of \$3.0 million and a 15% to 20% profit after the owner pulls out the perks, then the agency is worth one times that net fee income or \$3.0 million. Or it is worth five times EBITDA; the prevailing totals are usually the same.

According to Art, the only valuation you need is common sense. If your agency does around \$3.0 million, then the base value will be around \$3.0 million. If the agency has demonstrated rapid growth, and you are certain that the agency will double its size in three years, then the earn-out will take into account this rapid growth, and you will do considerably better than \$3.0 million.

If your agency is stumbling at around \$3.0 million, having made in excess of \$4.0 million a year in net fee income the previous two years, then it may be valued at less than \$3.0 million. But if the anticipated synergies take place between the seller and the buyer during the next few years and the result is the seller experiencing a massive turnaround in net fee income and profits, then the seller could pocket more than \$3.0 million after all.

According to Art, in all the years he has been doing mergers and acquisitions he has never had a buyer ask to see a valuation. The buyer will always use its own criteria to make a judgment. Art states "And if the a seller shakes hands with a buyer to move a deal forward, then the marketplace will have done the valuation for you."

AL Croft and Rick Gould

According to Al Croft (and Rick Gould),

the standard formula for the value of a PR firm usually is net worth plus four to six times a weighted average of the firm's imputed (adding back to reported profits any compensation or perquisites taken by the owner(s) that would not have been paid to an ordinary employee doing the owners job) net profit before taxes over the preceding three years.

The price tends to be low if the firm is in poor condition or specializes in an unfashionable area of practice, higher if the firm is unusually strong or will take the other party into a desirable market in which it previously could not compete. Since salary is a subtraction from net profit, there may need to be an adjustment. By this I mean an owner whose agency earns a profit of \$3.0 million earns a salary of \$600,000. From a valuation stand point this may be excessive.

Therefore, for pro forma purposes only, the profit should be increased on salary in excess of \$250,000. Another approach is to use the salary that a buyer is willing to pay the seller for salary during the earn-out period. It is also important to remember that the deal price may change if the seller is a "C" or regular corporation versus a Subchapter S corporation or LLC or if the deal is an "asset" or "stock" transaction.

In my view one valuation issue needs greater emphasis — especially if the transaction is structured as a stock deal. The fair value of your company — its net worth is yours! If the buyer will not pay for your working capital consider another buyer. As an example, consider a stock transaction with an agreed upon price of \$3.0 million and the balance sheet indicates working capital is \$1.0 million. If you sell the company for \$3.0 million it will only cost the buyer \$2.0 million. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for buyers to require a hold-back of working capital — 60 days worth is not uncommon.

Who should manage negotiations?

Some deals are negotiated by PR firm principals without the help of an outside advisor or valuation. All too often, however, such discussions degenerate into an endless series of friendly lunches, or terminate unnecessarily because one party says in all innocence something which offends the other. The involvement of a third party often makes agreement more likely by lowering the emotional temperature of negotiations and keeping things moving.

Lawyers and CPAs will inevitably be involved in their special capacities when merger discussions become serious. Some

also believe they are qualified to initiate and manage negotiations. However, they often think of a merger as a strictly financial matter, which among PR firms is never the case. An independent M&A advisor specializing in the PR field often can find and develop good merger prospects and help parties negotiate a mutually advantageous deal.

There is one other issue that I have run into, especially among younger sellers — "you are not offering enough!" Take a 45 year old seller with a \$3.0 million agency and a \$3.0 million valuation. Once taxes are considered, a \$3.0 million deal is just not attractive. In this case traditional valuations just do not work. It takes an advisor with a good deal of transaction experience to structure a deal that can meet the needs of both the buyer and seller.

My personal view

In multimillion dollar transactions my advice is to get a valuation and engage a M&A advisor. The cost is not significant considering the size of the deal. In most cases the advisor will include the valuation in the retainer. At least you will be armed with a benchmark price. It is not necessary to get a glossy bound appraisal issued by a CPA, law firm or appraisal firm unless you really want this. In most cases you can spend \$3,500 to \$5,000 as Rick points out. On the other hand, it can cost \$7,000 to \$12,000 as Art points out. It is important to get a fee range and make a decision on how you want to proceed.

Both Art and Rick have blogs that discuss this subject. Please check out their respective blogs on this issue and more.

Good luck! ○

PR news brief

Cision acquires social platform

PR software provider cision has acquired social media management and analytics platform V iralheat to boost its social offering.

The six-year-old, venture-funded company turned to the large enterprise market in 2013 under cEo Jeff Revoy, helping companies manage social media accounts, interactions and content, as well as measuring impact. it has also ventured into predictive analytics.

cision said Viralheat's technology will be available to US customers immediately and Revoy, along with co-founder Raj Kadam and V ishal Sankhla, will join cision's senior executive ranks under cEo Pater Granat.

Revoy is a former cMo of icontact, which was acquired by Vocus in 2012. Vocus and cision merged in 2014.

Weber Shandwick takes UN

Weber Shandwick has picked up a six-figure assignment from the United Nations to mount a campaign for the second State of the World's Volunteerism Report, a global follow-up to the world body's landmark 2011 report.

The UN unveiled the first such report in December 2011 in New York and across 80 countries to foster better understanding of civic volunteerism and outline ways it can be advanced into the future to stem a decline in trust in governing institutions.

Germany-based United Nations Volunteers, the UN agency focused on using volunteerism to tackle development issues, released an RFP in November for the global assignment to promote the new report, slated for release in April 2015. PR work in New York, Germany, as well as Asia, Africa and Central/South America is expected.

Weber Shandwick's London office will lead the \$146,000 PR contract to launch the report. ○

Montana slates prescription drug abuse campaign

Montana's attorney general is searching for an agency to develop a public awareness campaign to curb an endemic problem of prescription drug abuse in the state.

Montana saw 484 prescription overdoses from 2010-13 and 7,200 hospital admissions over that time, in addition to rises in drug-related DUI offenses and high school students who say they've tried prescription drugs without a prescription. The Treasure State released an RFP on March 18 for the assignment to reach susceptible population segments like adults 34-60, Native Americans, active and former military personnel, and students ages 12-22.

The work includes demographic research, creative, monitoring and earned media, among other tactics.

Proposals are due April 27. ○

P&G's Ex-PR chief advises APCO

Chris Hassall, who once led Procter & Gamble's 1,200-member worldwide communications team, has joined APCO's international advisory board.

As the consumer product giant's global external relations officer, Hassall was responsible for reputation, corporate communications, issues/crisis management, media relations and philanthropy.

Before assuming the top post, he led Greater China and Asia PR from a perch in Guangzhou and Europe, Middle East and Africa communications during a stint in Geneva.

Hassall stepped down from P&G in 2012. He has been teaching brand building and business development at Sun Yat-Sen University in China. ○



Hassall

Former Senator joins Venable

Mark Pryor, the Democrat who lost his seat to Tom Cotton in the 2014 election, has joined the government affairs practice of Venable.

He'll focus on communications, privacy, cybersecurity, automotive and consumer protections areas.



Pryor, a two-term Senate veteran, also was attorney general of The Natural State.

During his Senate stint, Pryor sat on the appropriations; commerce, science, and transportation; homeland security and governmental affairs; rules and administration, and ethics committees.

Stuart Ingis, head of the lobbying firm's DC office, called Pryor a "thoughtful consensus builder, a characteristic that will translate well to working with clients at Venable." ○

Ex-Obama aide goes to H+KDC

Ellen Moran, former Executive VP of Emily's List (fund-raising organization for female Democratic candidates) and communications director in the Obama White House, is moving to head Hill+Knowlton's Washington office.

Howard Opinsky held the post until late last year when he took on eastern region responsibilities in addition to his corporate/crisis practice lead.

Moran also did a stint as Chief of Staff to former Commerce Secretary Gary Locke.

She joins H+K from WPP sister firm, Dewey Square Group. ○



Moran

FEMA expands Ogilvy's work

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has awarded a five-year \$130 million contract to a joint venture of Michael Baker International, technology and engineering consultant, and Ogilvy Public Relations.

MBI manages the Resilience Action Partners venture that's tasked with providing flood risk communication and mitigation planning services in communities across the US.

The community and risk engagement contract is part of FEMA's risk mapping, assessment and planning program.

MBI and OPR will help FEMA collaborate with state, local and tribal government efforts to raise awareness of flood dangers and help fortify against natural disasters.

Jeff Sparrow, MBI's FEMA market national director, said the partnership combines his firm's technical expertise with Ogilvy's communications and engagement strengths.

MBI has 5,000 employees in 90 offices spanning the globe. Owed by DC Capital Partners of Alexandria (VA), MBI has worked on the Alaska Pipeline, World Trade Center, Pulaski Skyway (NJ) and Pittsburgh International Airport. ○

Levick sides with Turkey in Armenia genocide squabble

Levick represents the Turkish Institute for Progress on Congressional matters related to Turkey's relationship with Armenia. Its top priority is to head off support for the Armenian Genocide Truth and Justice Resolution introduced today by Democrats Adam Schiff (CA), Frank Pallone (NJ) and Republican David Valadao (CA).

The measure calls for President Obama to work for a constructive relationship between Turkey and Armenia, plus Turkey's acknowledgement of the Armenia Genocide.

Armenia contends the Ottoman government beginning in 1915 launched a systemic decimation of the two million civilian Armenians living under their rule.

Subsequent Turkish governments have expressed grief for the deaths, but have denied that a policy of genocide existed.

Turkey has support on Capitol Hill from Republicans such as Congressman Bill Shuster of Pennsylvania.

Last month, he wrote a "Dear Colleague" letter urging Congress not to get involved in a hundred year old dispute that happened on the other side of the world.

Shuster believes support for Armenia's position on genocide would be "cataclysmic and undermined US security interests" in the region.



He depicted Turkey as a staunch ally in the fight against ISIS and provider for refugees of the Syrian Civil War.

Shuster also noted NATO member Turkey bases Raytheon missiles despite strong objections from Russia and Iran.

Levick has Connie Mack, former Republican Congressman from Florida, handling the Turkish Institute campaign. ○

Akin Gump bolsters Japan

Akin Gump Strauss & Feld has called on four key executives from Republican powerhouse PA firm DCI Group for Japan to push for a deal for the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement that is opposed by some Democrats and their labor/environmental allies.

The deal would cover the US and 11 Pacific Rim nations that account for about 40% of the world's economy.

President Obama needs GOP support for the treaty, which is under fire from high-profile Dems such as Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts.

He believes the trade pact would bolster America's economy and provide leverage against China.

Akin has hired DCI Group AZ to a \$30,000 monthly contract to round up political support for the TPP.

DCI CEO Doug Goodyear, chairman Thomas Synhorst and managing partners Justin Peterson and Brian McCabe own the limited liability company tapped by Akin Gump.

The contact went into effect Feb. 23 and runs through March 31.

The Japanese paid Akin Gump \$388,000 during the six-month period ended Jan. 30. ○

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.

Targeted Victory, LLC, Alexandria, VA, **registered Mar. 17, 2015 for Royal Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia** though Qorvis MSLGROUP Americas, Inc., Washington, D.C., to provide strategic advice and digital consulting services.

Daschle Group, LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered Mar. 16, 2015 for Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office**, Washington, D.C., to provide strategic consulting services in connection with the negotiation of the Trans-Pacific Partnership and other issues before the U.S. government impacting TECRO's interests.

Glover Park Group, LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered Mar. 9, 2015 for Masdar, Abu Dhabi**, UAE, to provide public relations counsel regarding communications strategy in a range of countries, including the United States, as well as advice and support to corporate leadership interacting with the U.S. government and Wash., D.C. thought leaders and policymakers.

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.

Cohen & Grigsby, P.C., Pittsburgh, PA, **registered Mar. 19, 2015 for Cybergenetics, Inc.**, Pittsburgh, PA, regarding Department of Justice sole source contract and Department of Commerce rule development.

Iseman & Szeliga LLC, Arlington, VA, **registered Mar. 19, 2015 for Los Angeles Airport Peace Officers Association**, Los Angeles, CA, regarding airport safety and security funding as well as TSA issues.

Forbes-Tate, New York, NY, **registered Mar. 18, 2015 for Bank of America**, Charlotte, NC, regarding banking and finance issues.

Keller McIntyre & Associates, Arlington, VA, **registered Mar. 18, 2015 for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington**, Arlington, VA, for identifying and pursuing federal programs to provide assistance to the 21 counties in the Diocese.

Harbinger Strategies, LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered Mar. 17, 2015 for The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.**, Washington, D.C., regarding representation on financial services, tax, and international trade, including implementation of Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION



Monument Optimization, Washington, DC. 202/904-5763. john@monumentoptimization.com; www.monumentoptimization.com. John Stewart, President.

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NEWS CORP CALLS IN EDELMAN
Enthusiast 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 married 13-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 Bigg, Edelman's managing director for corporate affairs, and James Leland, 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. 3.
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 Chery, 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 IAAP 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 taking 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.

APCO Worldwide has recruited Celia Mackay, former communication and partnerships director at the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Assn., as director of its healthcare practice in Brussels. Mackay is a 20-year veteran of the healthcare scene, holding posts at Weber Shandwick, Arentis and Ogilvy & Mather.

CHINESE RINGS UP HEALTHCARE DEAL
China Communications has acquired healthcare specialist Reynolds-MacKenzie for an initial payment \$4M, a package of \$2.5M cash and stock.
R-M says it 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 China's OPEN Health group that was formed in January.
The acquisition could cost China 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.
China is parent of Bell Pottinger.

DISCOVERY BAY DISCOVERS MWV
Discovery Bay Games, the Seattle-based company that produces games, apps and accessories for Apple's iPad, has selected MWV Group as agency of record.
DMG is developer of Duo, the first integrated device for iPad. Duo makes it possible for multi-person games such as "Smithsonian Artifacts or Fiction," "MWV is in position the client as the top brand of games "appreciates" for the Apple tablet.
"Craig Olson, CEO of DMG, said it hired MWV for its "proven record of crafting communications programs that directly influence the bottom line."
DMG becomes part of MWV's consumer tech practice with Sansung, Nikon and Celestion, among others.

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, 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 28th 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.

- 2014 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*
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August, *Prof. Svcs. & Financial/*
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