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Michael Williams, Director of Corporate Marketing, Magellan GPS

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Clinton's auspicious October

It was a great month for Hillary Clinton. After stewing in political turmoil for a big part of the year, after enduring yet another partisan witch-hunt disguised as a Benghazi investigation, or the ongoing scandal regarding her email use while Secretary of State, Clinton has weathered the storm, seen the tables turn.

Normally, I'd beg pardon for that egregious use of mixed metaphor, but the bewildering circumstances by which Clinton was carried into good fortune lend the statement a somewhat apropos distinction.

First, the media collectively crowned Clinton "winner" of the October 13 Democratic Party debates. Reading the headlines the next day, it was difficult remembering a Presidential debate that provoked so much media fawning. Pundits, the mainstream press and the political blogs were so enamored with Clinton's performance you'd think she'd unveiled a cancer cure at the Las Vegas event.

Make no mistake, Clinton put on a good show, which isn't a surprise, given her mastery as a speaker and her decades of debate experience, not to mention the notion that being married to "Slick Willie" for forty years would ingratiate anyone with rhetorical dexterity. She appeared poised, practiced, quintessentially presidential. Contrast this with Senator Bernie Sanders, who — though he eschewed paint-by-numbers rhetoric in favor of clear policy points — came across behaving like someone's basement-dwelling grandfather.

The high universal accolades were a clear reminder that the media falls for style and willfully ignores substance. Next time Sanders goes up against Clinton, he might want to remember the age-old adage that image is everything. A consistent voting record, a compelling message and a refusal to take PAC money apparently doesn't make for good television.

Then there was Clinton's October 22 appearance at the House Select Committee on Benghazi, a circus of an event that she brilliantly managed to turn into a campaign stop. If it was truly the GOP's intention to use the 2012 attacks on the U.S. Diplomatic Mission in Benghazi, Libya, as a means of damaging Clinton's credibility during her bid for the Presidency, it did a terrible job.

The latest Benghazi panel — the eighth now — cost the taxpayers about \$4.7 million. And shortly into her testimony, what we already suspected was quickly confirmed: the Committee is a sham, a poorly-veiled partisan hatchet job that had for 17 months prior been masquerading as an "investigation." The Committee spent most of its time asking Clinton many of the same questions she already answered during her testimony at the last Benghazi panel two years ago: they hammered her for her initial press statements regarding reasons for the attack; they asked why staffers weren't fired; they focused on emails exchanged between her and journalist Sidney Blumenthal; they blasted her on her foreign policy. Hilariously — and without a note of intended irony — they even suggested she'd used the Benghazi incident for political gain.

Most damaging of all, however, was the notion that apparently it never dawned on the Committee that Clinton excels in the hot seat. They gifted her with a golden PR opportunity, a means of establishing her credibility and showcasing her ability to lead at the most crucial time in her campaign.

Much like her October 13 debate performance, Clinton appeared poised, cool under pressure. This time, however, we also got a glimpse of her we seldom see; she exhibited emotion while describing the night of the attack, seemed empathic, human. Whether the sentiment was genuine or not isn't the issue. The House Committee basically handed her the party nomination — and they didn't even see it coming.

So, through a confusing effort of both strategy and sheer luck, Clinton has now emerged as the clear front-runner (no doubt, this development was also aided by the fact that Vice President Biden has now chosen not to run). A spate of polls now shows Clinton widening her lead over Sanders both in key states and nationally: a renewed 10-point surge in North Carolina, a crushing 41-point lead over Sanders in Iowa, and an average 23.5-point lead among the top five polling institutes nationally. Compare this to numbers released in early October — a week before that first debate — when Clinton commanded only a 17-point average lead, and it's hard not to conflate correlation with causation.

Monumental challenges lie ahead. Favorability ratings have shown Clinton has an image problem in crucial swing states. And she's still seen by many as inconsistent (who could forget her flip-flops on same-sex marriage or the Trans-Pacific Partnership). And sadly, she's begun resorting to predictable Silly Season tactics, as evidenced in her carefully worded suggestion that Sanders had exhibited sexism during the October debates. Meanwhile, an October 28 *Wall Street Journal* report detailed the growing number of GOP advocacy groups rallying to take her down.

With an auspicious month behind her and a long year to go before election results are in, Clinton is back in the lead, and it's beginning to look like politics as usual. ○

— Jon Gingerich

O'Dwyer's

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Jack O'Dwyer
jack@odwyerpr.com

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

John O'Dwyer
john@odwyerpr.com

SENIOR EDITOR

Jon Gingerich
jon@odwyerpr.com

SENIOR EDITOR

Greg Hazley
greg@odwyerpr.com

SENIOR EDITOR

Matthew Schwartz
matthew@odwyerpr.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Fraser Seitel
Richard Goldstein

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS & RESEARCH

Chandler Klang Smith
Caitlin Dullahan-Bates

ADVERTISING SALES

Sharlene Spingler
Associate Publisher & Editor
sharlene@odwyerpr.com

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

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Study breaks down Millennials' news habits

Millennials can be an elusive bunch when it comes to how they consume and share information. Now companies have a road map for how to cater more effectively to Millennials, thanks to a recent study saying that Millennials' news and Web habits fall into four distinct types.

By Matthew Schwartz

Let the niching of Millennials begin.

How to communicate with Millennials — the 80-million-strong generation of people born between early 1980s and 2000 — is taking up more and more bandwidth among both brands and organizations.

Media Insight Project — a collaboration between The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and the American Press Institute — took the pulse of 1,045 adults between the ages of 18 and 34 earlier this year. The final response rate was 14%.

The four groups in the study are:

The Unattached: These are younger Millennials, age 18-24, who get their news and information mostly by just bumping into it. They tend to have not yet started families or established careers. Their online

lives are spent largely keeping up with their social circles, schooling or first-time job hunts. Fewer than one in three personally pay for a digital or print news subscription, and the more conventional news subjects like community or world news are not a central interest to their daily lives.

The Explorers: These are younger Millennials, also age 18-24, who actively seek out news and information. These Millennials are relatively similar demographically to the Unattached (i.e., they have not yet developed families or careers), but this group consists of slightly more men than women. They are highly connected (97% have smartphones), and they are interested in news and more active in pursuing it online.

The Distracted: These are older millennials, age 25-34, who have begun to have

families and are part of the middle class. They tend not to use news or information for civic or social purposes. They mostly bump into news and information rather than actively seek it out, and a majority of them do not personally pay for a news subscription.

The Activists: This is another group of mostly older Millennials, age 25-34, but Activists, unlike the Distracted, are more likely to actively seek out news and information.

These Millennials tend to have already established families, careers, and a connection to their community. They are racially and ethnically diverse — the only group that is a majority non-white. They also have acquired enough experience in the world to care about certain issues, and enough stability in life to spend energy on those issues.

The study makes a strong case that millennials are not monolithic with regard to their news habits, and a one-size-fits-all strategy may prove counterproductive.

For example, while a majority of Explorers (85%) regularly go online and keep up with what's going on in the world, just a little more than half of Distracted do so.

What is more, 74% of Explorers said they are more likely to use news to talk with others about what's going on, but less than half of Distracted share news with others.

Explorers also are more likely to use the Web and social media to gather information and connect with people. A majority of them, for instance, said they get news at least several times a day from Facebook (52%).

Explorers also are among the most likely to get news at least several times a day from Reddit (12%), Twitter (14%), Instagram (25%) and YouTube (29%).

Many Explorers also report using Facebook to get more information on something they heard about in the news (39%), the study said.

That is higher than any other group, including Activists, the most news-oriented older Millennials (24% of whom do this kind of deep diving of news on Facebook), the Unattached (28%) or the older Distracted (31%). ●



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PR Council study: real-time marketing overhyped

So-called 'real-time marketing' has ranked as the most overhyped marketing initiative, says a survey conducted by the PR Council.

By Matthew Schwartz

The survey, released October 22 during the PR Council's Critical Issues Forum, took the pulse of 56 senior marketing executives who represent major U.S. corporate members of the Association of National Advertisers. It found a significant gap between rhetoric and reality when it comes to developing and distributing real-time marketing programming.

About half of the respondents (49%) ranked brand newsrooms as either the number-one or number-two most overhyped marketing approach. Native advertising and social media followed suit as overhyped. Only 4% ranked real-time brand newsrooms as a top priority, and none ranked native advertising as top priority.

But respondents did not dismiss content marketing entirely. It came in a distant second in terms of strategic priorities, with 27% naming it a top priority while 13% ranked it second.

Kathy Cripps, President of the PR Council, said in a news release that the problem for both media newsrooms and corporate brand newsrooms is "maintaining a high-volume stream of relevant content over a long time."

Indeed, lack of stick-to-itiveness, as well as budgetary issues and skepticism from the C-suite about the ROI on real-time marketing, are major impediments to developing real-time marketing programming.

Another part of the problem: PR and marketing executives continue to jockey for position regarding who should lead which areas of media and marketing expertise.

Marketers, apparently, continue to take a fairly dim view of PR.

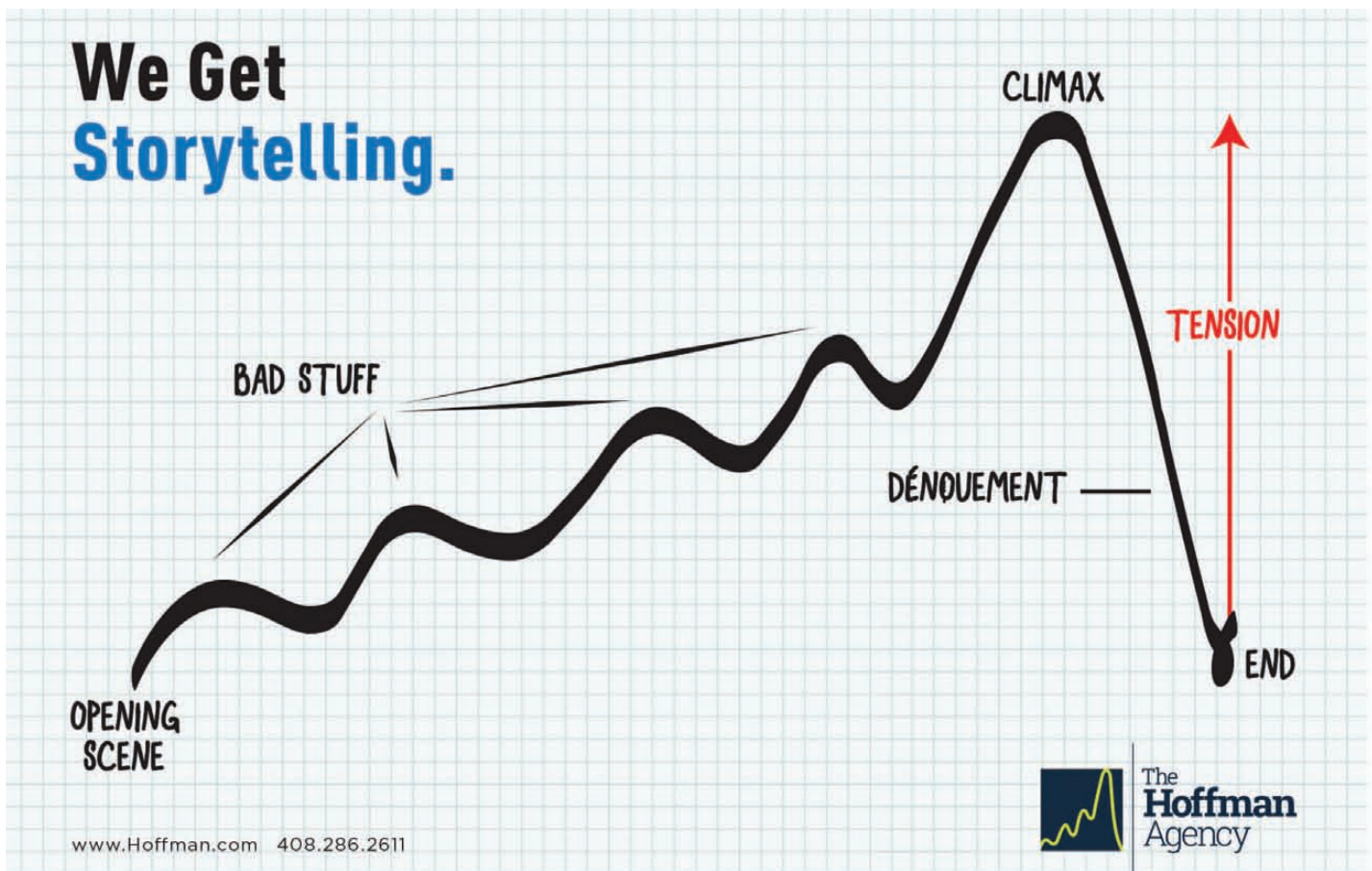
"The marketers answering this survey left no doubt as to their view that they should own most [disciplines] and said public relations should only lead media and blogger

relations, crisis management, and building executives' public profiles," the study said. "They felt advertising and marketing should lead on brand narrative, content, social media strategy and influencer marketing."

Influencer marketing, which is still in just the top of the second inning, is also sparking a schism between PR and marketing and advertising executives.

Brian Solis, Principal Analyst at the Altimeter Group and author of *X: Where Experience Meets Design*, said in the PR Council's release that advertisers and public relations professionals interpret the very notion of influencer marketing differently.

"This is the key difference between advertising and public relations," he said. "Advertising will find a few top celebs, with some of them being Internet famous, to become part of a campaign. PR on the other hand, will find said influencers and nurture longer-term relationships that keep the brand relevant now and in the long term." ○



Believing in unicorns: why the tech IPO isn't a myth

The markets this year have exhibited a drop-off in tech IPO activity. While some companies are choosing to stay private for now it isn't a trend that will continue forever, so it's imperative that companies share their stories with the business and financial media, should they decide to pursue an IPO in the future.

By Bo Park

Remember the market clamor about a possible tech bubble in 2014? It was a different time with dozens of successful IPOs and newly emerging unicorns — those hot private companies claiming valuations of a billion dollars or more. Analysts and experts compared the tech frenzy to that of the late '90s as the sector racked up 167 deals worth \$50.2 billion globally, and capped off 2014 with the largest IPO ever in Alibaba. Private investors were hot on tech too, with software investments amounting to about 41% of venture capital investments in 2014 deals and Internet companies attracting an impressive \$11.9 billion.

The markets painted a different picture this year, with a general slowdown in tech IPO activity, as high profile candidates like Slack, Uber and AirBnB held off on launching public offerings. Yet, private investors who helped companies continue growing at a breakneck pace without launching IPOs won't remain patient forever. Investors will soon be looking for a return on those investments, whether that return is delivered through M&A activity or public stock offerings. As we head into the end of 2015, this realization appears to be growing, and chatter about a shift in sentiment among the VC and PE community is emerging. Some foresee a more conservative environment where private capital won't come as cheaply in 2016.

Why is this important for tech communications people? The number of private tech companies flush with VC funding indicates greater deal activity on the horizon. Telling a compelling business story must become a priority before the IPO — or M&A deal — is truly underway. If you blink, you may miss the window of opportunity to weave a narrative that will position your company for success through the dealmaking process, and beyond.

When an IPO isn't in the works

Counseling a company through an IPO is a challenging endeavor — especially in an industry as competitive as technology. PR pros who haven't been through the IPO process may be operating under the assumption that they can hold off on incorporating it into their planning until a deal

appears more imminent. However, even if the CEO and investors don't see an IPO in the immediate future, starting to think with the mindset of going public months or years in advance will pay handsomely when it's time to tap the public markets.

The time before an IPO is an essential window to develop a compelling business story. Oftentimes, private tech companies do an amazing job of building a consumer following and attract great tech press coverage, but they may neglect the business and financial media — which becomes integral to success when an IPO is on the horizon. Failing to share your story with pure business outlets in advance of an IPO will almost certainly result in some degree of misperception once you file publicly. This is amplified by the SEC enforced pre-IPO quiet period, which severely limits the ability to combat misinterpretations of the business. Working hard to develop a quake-proof foundation before filing is an absolute imperative.

Even in a company with no concrete plans to go public, communicators must understand the necessary steps should the need arise. Here are some things to consider when building that solid foundation to support a successful future as a public company:

Get your messaging together. Crisp messaging that is aligned across audiences is imperative for avoiding confusion about the business. Private companies often have one set of messages for investors and another for their customer base. This can not only lead to brand identity issues, but also skepticism once the company is under scrutiny as an IPO prospect.

Build media relationships. IPO hopefuls tend to be focused on trendy tech websites with pithy headlines and Millennial readers. To be fair, these verticals are important for building credibility in the industry, but when vying for the eyes of investors, companies have to seek the attention of business and financial outlets. The *Wall Street Journal* and Bloomberg are read by thousands of investors on a daily basis, and are incredibly influential with this audience. It isn't always easy to get the attention of these

outlets, but with some effort it is possible to build relationships and even attract coverage as a private company, which can pay dividends (no pun intended) when it comes time to go public.

Get your house in order! This goes far beyond a communications person's role, but everyone with a hand in an IPO-bound organization needs to be aligned in an effort to "professionalize" the company. Making an effort to put more formal processes in place at the same time a company is launching an IPO, is simply too late. Thinking ahead when it comes to formal accounting processes, the makeup of the management team, disclosure policies and a carefully articulated business plan all influence whether investors will buy your story.

Lay the groundwork with the Street. Testing the waters with key Wall Street analysts as a late stage private company can provide valuable insight into the appetite for an offering among investors and provide insight into areas of the business that management may need to consider addressing before taking such a step. Engaging with Wall Street is not something communications pros without significant investor relations expertise should pursue on their own, but with the proper guidance preliminary conversations with Wall Street stakeholders can be incredibly useful, even if an IPO is still a few years off.

Smart tech communicators shouldn't let today's environment lull them into false complacency. Private investors will eventually look for a payday and the tech world is brimming with game-changing companies that will eventually need to tap the capital markets to continue growing. When tech IPOs begin to flow again, companies that haven't thought ahead and honed their stories will risk being drowned out by the ambient noise. Whether it happens in 2016 or beyond, the storytelling techniques best implemented for IPOs have universal application. Those with the foresight to operate as if they are on track toward an eventual IPO, regardless of management's message, will be in a great position no matter what path the company takes.

Bo Park is Managing Director and Head of Tech PR at ICR. ○



Bo Park

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Measure early and often, and don't fear recalibration

Setting measurement objectives for your tech client is something that should occur at the very beginning of a campaign, not as an afterthought. Gathering insights, recognizing trends and adjusting the program accordingly is paramount in any B2B campaign.

By Gene Carozza

To paraphrase the poet Robert Burns: Oftentimes even the best laid plans need course correction. Maybe, while working through a plan, you see results coming that aren't what you intended. But often it's because you've determined you hit the right chord while in the midst of your plans, and something is working well and you need more of it. It's positively impacting the business goals you've set in advance of the campaign. And you've been able to demonstrate its effectiveness through the use of proper goals and measurement methodologies that key stakeholders agreed to from the start.

Here's a quick anecdote. A startup company in the application development space had high aspirations for its product. The company's executives were convinced that once developers had a chance to use their platform, they would love it. The executives set a goal to increase the number of downloads of its product 3X over the previous quarter. They hoped to do this with a marketing campaign driven by PR and targeted to a specific "app dev" audience. The whole campaign focused on the 3X metric to determine impact and effectiveness.

The company's PR team was armed with the usual arsenal of news releases, pitch ideas and assorted tactics, and things looked like they were going swimmingly. The downloads were increasing, and the company was well on its way to achieving the 3X metric.

But then a funny thing happened. The PR team discovered halfway through the effort that a growing number of traffic referrals to the download page were being driven by the company's own employees posting on their LinkedIn profile pages and through Twitter.

Utilizing data that was gleaned simply through Google Analytics, the PR team quickly pivoted to creating more social content in the form of memes and visual elements that could then be shared through these channels. The team kept it light and fun, letting the personality of the company shine through while taking into account the geeky side of the personas they were attempting to engage.

The PR team asked: What would this au-

dience of app developers like even more than visiting the product landing page and sharing with their followers or contacts? A deep dive on the business use of social media. (LinkedIn and Twitter, specifically, were offered for all employees, particularly those in sales and marketing, to add exponentially more shares.) And PR did its part by making sure that when new elements were developed, there was minimal work needed by employees to post and share. (People are busy, so make it easy for them to participate).

The point of this story is that, had the PR team stuck to its original approach, it would have never achieved the 3X objective. The team was willing to recognize a trend and change its approach to promoting the app development accordingly. Realizing there are many different paths to achieve an objective is the lesson learned.

Social media's impact on buying patterns is forcing companies to be more nimble in their campaign execution. IT buyers aren't relying just on tried-and-true tactics, but also on research, testing, and friends' recommendations. Research shows that 97% of IT buyers are influenced by feedback from peer networks like Twitter and LinkedIn, so companies should prepare to course-correct if the data steers them in a new direction.

Setting measurement objectives should come in the beginning of a campaign, not as an afterthought. And the trick is to determine which results will truly define the success of a communications campaign. I am a strong advocate for using the Barcelona Principles, a methodology that encourages companies to quantitatively and qualitatively measure the impact of communications, not the number of "hits," which is essentially recognized now by savvy communications practitioners as a useless metric.

It's disappointing to see companies continuing to rely on a quantitative measure of hits to gauge the success of their programs. How many times have you been told, "We received 25 placements for this effort last year, so this year we set 30 as the goal"? Even better, reading an RFP from a tech company that has an aim of X (pick a

number) placements during the course of the year. But aside from the obvious desire to count clips, the traditional media side of the communications activity is only half — sometimes not even — of what should be measured.

The social and traditional program elements can be measured in a variety of ways that will demonstrate organizational impact and alleviate you from having to count clips. Message pull through, spokesperson inclusion, standalone appearances, traffic activity and tone weighing are some most commonly used, but this will change based on the objectives and desired outcomes.

To summarize, use the Barcelona Principles methodology as the standard way to measure your program. If you are unfamiliar with it, PRSA has some great resources and conferences available that spell out how it works. In short, it requires that you periodically measure progress throughout the course of a communications program to glean what's working and what's not; don't wait until the end to measure effectiveness or impact. Use the many tools available, such as Google Analytics, Trendkite, Netbase, and others to pull the data.

Be sure to include both the social and traditional components as part of the measurement objectives. One cannot exist without the other. And be creative! Make sure it reflects the company image and is welcomed by the audience. Enlist the help of employees to aid in the communications effort when possible, particularly with social efforts. It's been said that we all work for sales, but remember that we're also all brand ambassadors for the company.

Use a balance of quantifiable data — here's the change in activity — and quantifiable insight — what caused the numbers to change? — to measure effectively. And lastly, build a dashboard that can be used and shared at the board level to report your findings.

Keep it simple and understandable: assume that your work will be passed along without you there to explain all the details on the page.

Gene Carozza is Vice President at PAN Communications. ●



Gene Carozza

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Navigating the silicon consolidation boom

M&A activity in the hardware arena is going gangbusters. The advent of mergers and acquisitions in the tech world isn't a new phenomenon, but the transitions involved in M&A pose myriad challenges for communications teams, both internally and externally. Here's what communications pros should keep in mind when navigating the current landscape of consolidation in the tech industry.

By RJ Bardsley

If you look around the technology landscape, you'll see that we're in the middle of another tech boom — only it may not be exactly the boom you're thinking of.

The amount of money pouring into mergers and acquisitions is on par with the late 1990s; indeed, the recent Dell/EMC deal is one of the largest to rock the technology industry in a long time. At the macro-economic level, low interest rates have made borrowing cheap and as a result there is plenty of money to fund mergers and acquisitions. It's possible that companies are rushing to make the most of the interest rates before they go up, and this is why 2015 is turning into such a hot year.

M&A activity within the silicon segment of the tech industry has been especially hot. In the past year we've seen the consolidation of chipmakers — from Altera to Freescale to Broadcom.

A recent article by Ed Sperling at Semiconductor Engineering estimates that 2015 has seen twice the average number of deals and that the value of those deals is about ten times higher than normal. In silicon, the low interest rates are compounded by fairly low valuations across the board, making it easy for buyers to pick up some pretty good deals.

The advent of mergers and acquisitions in silicon isn't a new thing though — we've been living with it since the 1980s. However, marketers should take note of three things that are happening in this latest wave of combinations that are shifting the landscape:

A shifting center of gravity regarding multiple trends.

An ecosystem that is changing.

Innovation spotting.

Silicon and the IoT

We have all heard the term — perhaps we're even a little sick of hearing about it. The IoT — the Internet of Things — has been on every technologist's lips for the past three years or so. You've read about it in magazines and newspapers, heard about it on the news and if you're involved in the Venture Capital community in any way, you've seen it come up in countless conversations.

The interesting thing about the IoT is that semiconductors are at the center of

this trend. If nothing else, IoT as a term has served to create a nexus of several industries — from medical to automotive to construction — right at the doorstep of silicon companies.

So what does semiconductor consolidation mean for the IoT? It means that there are broader implications for industries beyond the semiconductor space. If acquisitions lead to a burst of new innovation, or conversely a slowdown in research and development, it could impact the innovation we see in autos, airplanes and even the garment industry.

Smart marketers in silicon and semiconductor companies should recognize this new web of connections — the benefits of these mergers need to be articulated in much broader terms than simply a combination of two companies that make certain types of chips or sensors.

A changing ecosystem

Sperling is also careful to point out in his article that consolidation runs counter to trends in the silicon industry over the past forty years. The industry traditionally deconsolidates. Recent M&A's threaten to add three percent to market share of the ten biggest companies in the silicon space. Add to that the fact that recent M&A's also put formerly disparate companies together: security and memory, SoC and Flash, EDA and IP. Suddenly the nature of who does what, and more importantly who buys what, has changed dramatically.

This creates an interesting challenge for marketers — the challenge of resetting the playing field and repositioning brands that have consistently done the same thing for the past twenty to forty years. Part and parcel to this is building and reshaping alliances, and in the process crafting the vision for the industry's future. This process becomes much more interesting given the first point — that you're repositioning in a world where the silicon industry isn't just an obscure technical offshoot of the tech industry; rather it's the center of industries from automotive to healthcare.

What does this mean for products and technologies? It means they have life and a voice beyond nodes, GHz, energy efficiency stats and fabrication details. It means semiconductor companies have a huge opportunity

to reimagine themselves at the intersection of technology and humanity. It's time to play a much more sophisticated game of ball — but time is not on the side of these marketers. They must establish their new ecosystem and market position quickly.

Communications professionals often get caught up in the internal energy and friction of a merger or acquisition. That's natural: it seems to be where all the action is. But, as soon as the deal is announced, external influencers are trying to create a new context for the merged company. It's critical that communications pros help them create that context by articulating what your new ecosystem looks like.

Arm your clients with essential ammunition so they can talk about who their customers and partners are, where they fit in to the supply/demand chain, and how the competitive environment has changed. If you don't set this stage, others will.

Innovation spotting

Innovation always comes out of consolidation. This is sometimes hard to see when CEOs are combining R&D programs, engineering teams and real estate. The pressure is to focus on communicating the synergies and economies of scale — the bankers love this part of the story, but it's retrospective in nature, not about innovation.

The most important part of any combination story should be the innovation that will come out of the deal — combined imaginations should lead to visionary new products or technology roadmaps.

Here is the challenge for the silicon industry — there are very few startups in the space. Innovation needs to come from established players and this is something that can sometimes be a hurdle. Marketers must take the opportunity that this wave of consolidation provides to redefine themselves and showcase their best and brightest in innovation.

RJ Bardsley is EVP, Global Tech Strategy Lead at Racepoint Global. ○



RJ Bardsley



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Proactive resilience will characterize tech PR in 2016

One way to envision the future of tech PR is to borrow a definition of resilience from the cybersecurity industry. Right now, proactively protecting corporate perimeters from inevitable challenges or attacks is the single best way for businesses to become guarded against security threats, and it's a strategy that can be utilized proactively to help companies become resilient against attacks in the future.

By Sabrina Horn

This notion of proactive resilience is an interesting way to look at how the field of tech PR can equip itself. Publicizing a brand is not what it was ten years ago, or two years ago. While security vendors cannot wait for hackers to strike, media strategists can't wait for platforms to evolve; we must anticipate the forces that will shift how we do our jobs.

Proactive resilience could also be characterized as being constantly mindful of ongoing changes in the echo chambers of a company's operations.

The past decade has seen a blurring of lines between marketing disciplines. Previously, our preferred method of communication was to control a one-way message to multiple audiences, ultimately finding a home in a print or broadcast outlet. Now that consumers trust opinions from non-objective forms of media — Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and others — we can publish the content ourselves.

At the same time, we have more control and less control of the message, and we have a lot more risk.

The convergence of social and traditional PR has changed our business forever. We can see the train coming, have the headroom to react, do something different, hop on a different train or avoid the rail system altogether.

That said, I can see our resilience being tested and strengthened in the realms of globalization, talent, leadership and field evangelism as follows:

Globalization

When I was a junior in college, I wrote a paper that explored what role, if any, marketing could play in the People's Republic of China. Advertising cigarettes helped grow an industry — albeit an unhealthy one — yet the practice went against Marxist principles of control.

Today the question is not whether capitalism and Alibaba-esque commerce can be kept out of China, but the extent to which the Chinese government will embrace it gracefully enough to avoid civil unrest.

From a technological viewpoint, there are over one billion citizens who bypassed laptops and went straight to mobile. The

story of China is as much about the technological empowerment of the masses as it is about political doctrine and economic evolution.

As publicists, we must be ready to reach people in a way that at once acknowledges the laws of the land and the relentless desire to connect at the core of every human being.

It's not just China that comes to mind. There's Cuba; there's a swelling migrant population in Europe; even Russia and its western-gazing populations will affect our tech clients' businesses and the ways in which we do PR. The time to prepare was yesterday.

Talent

When it comes to talent, agencies have to hire a much wider scope of experts to meet client demands. It's not just about hiring animators and videographers; we need senior marketing generalists who can create communications strategies that deliver everything from product naming to crisis communications under one roof.

Diversified expertise applies as much to professional experience as it does to university training. Content creation is storytelling, and to tell a good story, we also need scholars who can place narratives in their cultural and historical context.

Teams who can connect the saga of technological advancement to the world's great movements in history, literature, economics and politics stand a greater chance of creating programs that resonate with audiences and prevail over competitors.

At the end of the day, it's all about reaching the right audience with the right message at the right time. That's resilience right there.

Leadership

Among many things, leadership is about anticipating what will come, and being able to embrace change: seeing possibilities and outcomes, taking the baton and running with it, and creating new platforms of thought. All of this manifests in how we design, manage and inspire our teams.

Once those groups are in place, we must encourage our colleagues to approach accounts with a spirit of entrepreneurship. In PR, proactive resilience means we tackle

communications challenges holistically and with an eye toward building our clients' overall business.

When an entire team thinks this way, when even our interns feel they have a stake in growing our clients' bottom line, we are better equipped than ever to predict shifts in the market.

Then, we can create strategies that anticipate these shifts and execute programs that win. In a world where everything is changing all the time and at an exponential pace, this mode of operation will be table stakes.

Evangelism

It's critical that our entire industry take responsibility for evangelizing our expanded scope of expertise in the business and technology community. We absolutely need to know more about the paid world of advertising and branding, inasmuch as we must know about the earned and owned sectors of marketing communications. It can't just sound or look good anymore.

The fact is, traditional ad and branding agencies are expanding their acumen as well. Today's PR professionals are resilient and can navigate the changes that our tech clients bring because we can think more broadly.

Looking forward, we ask a simple question: when all is said and done, when the business is won and the contracts are signed, when the campaigns drive sales and win awards and admiration, is our work advancing the field of PR?

If the answer is yes, then we have succeeded at being proactively resilient. If the answer is yes, then the future of tech PR is one filled with stories that will help our clients build their brands and move their businesses forward. It's all about embracing change and being able to navigate it. That is our duty as change agents, and nowhere is that as critical a skill as in the field of technology PR.

Sabrina Horn is Managing Partner, US Technology Practice, at Finn Partners. ○



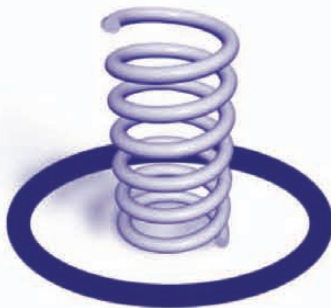
Sabrina Horn

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PUBLIC & INVESTOR RELATIONS

Are your customers getting the mobile message?

Mobile messaging apps are disrupting how brands communicate with consumers today, especially Millennial and Centennial generations. As a result, PR pros should step out of their comfort zones and tune in to conversations happening over these channels if they want to reach these audiences.

By Aljollynn Sperber

According to a recent Forrester report, more than 6 billion text messages are sent each day in the United States. WhatsApp, a mobile messaging app with over 800 million global users, surpassed the daily average of sent SMS messages by 400% with over 30 billion messages sent per day. That's 800 million reasons and 30 billion opportunities to listen and tap into the mobile messaging channel.

PR pros don't need a handwritten invitation to know where the party is happening. There's a laundry list of mobile messaging apps available for communicators to download, including WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Snapchat, Skype, Tango, Kik, Viber, Line and others. You can tune into conversations happening in real-time or provide exclusivity by engaging with your list of groups. Tango has a poll feature which allows publicists to reach their mobile messaging app audience to test for sentiment on new messaging or a logo.

Forget the argument of whether you need to phone pitch, email, or tweet a media contact. Listen in on the conversations that are happening in mobile messaging apps, fine-tune your messaging targeted to millennials, and pitch away. As long as the message is on point, you'll get heard.

Forget B2B and B2C, start thinking B2Me

Public relations pros who have been in the game for over 20 years need to either hand over the controls or download one of the readily available free mobile messaging apps and start paying attention to what Millennials are saying to each other and as a group. The holy grail of Millennial media, BuzzFeed, isn't just distributing content via social and producing shareable videos and click-hole quizzes, they're also in the messaging app space. They host public chats on the popular private messaging app, Viber, where users can follow, share, invite, and engage on the conversation real-time or catch up afterwards. Viber also allows users to follow public chats hosted by celebrities and other media companies such as Perez Hilton and Mashable.

Tango, a mobile messaging app that has over 100 million active users, also has public conversations called Rooms, which users can search and join based on either interests or location. There's also Sysomos

and Brandwatch, a new wave of listening tools that have already hit the mobile scene.

The goal of listening to Millennials and Centennials on messaging apps isn't about identifying the "what you can do for me or what can I do for you" but rather "what can you say to me that will resonate and inspire me to make a move?" We have entered the B2Me movement, where individuals want to be heard and receive messages tailored to them. Are you getting the message yet?

Don't let the message fall on deaf ears

Here's what we know: Millennials are mobile, social, and global. They don't like to be interrupted with traditional advertising; they like to feel as though they're making the choice to engage with a brand. The use of cell phones worldwide is ever-growing and billions of messages are getting sent each day.

It's time for communications professionals to step out of their comfort zone and start tuning into the conversations happening in mobile messaging apps before Millennials start tuning them out. People don't like faceless companies. They like to communicate with other people. Interaction via messaging apps is more personal; messages are unique and tailored to the audience. Communicators or brand managers can start using apps such as Tango or Viber to monitor and understand what millennials are saying to refine their brand messaging. For the most part, these messaging apps are free to download and use so why aren't more PR professionals listening? It's time to listen before you speak.

Here's a cheat sheet of mobile messaging apps Millennials use so you can tune in by participating in conversations prior to perfecting your pitches:

List of mobile messaging apps

WhatsApp (Global). The app is more popular than texting (SMS) handling more than 30 billion messages a day.

Facebook Messenger (Global). More than 33% of Millennials use the app, which provides brands an alternative to reaching the younger generations since they tend not to use the social network as a whole. The app has more than 500 million users.

Snapchat (Global). With a monthly audience of 100 million people, the mobile app supports video chat, allows users to

send cash to each other, and hosts popular branded content in their "Discover" hub.

WeChat (China).

The fifth most popular messaging app reaching 468 million people on a monthly basis. About 60% of youngsters in China turn to this app to get their mobile messaging fix.

Skype (Global). The 12-year-old global video, audio, and chat communications service is used by a quarter of teens and adults between the ages of 17 and 31.

Viber (Global). The app is a global mobile monthly audience of 236 million and recently added the feature "public chats" where individuals can engage with public broadcasts from celebrities, such as Perez Hilton, and media companies, such as Buzzfeed.

LINE (Japan). This mobile messaging app is most popular in Japan, Thailand, and Taiwan and currently has over 181 million users. The company is aggressively advertising in the United States to obtain more users.

Kik (North America). On average, users spend 35 minutes per session in the app, besting Facebook Messenger and Snapchat whose users spend 27 and 21 minutes per session.

Kakao Talk (South Korea). Like other mobile messaging apps, Kakao features stickers and games but also has its own gift shop, a polling tool, mobile payment services, and "Plus Friend", a feature for following brands, media companies, and celebrities.

Tango (United States). The app extends beyond users communicating with friends with a feature for viewing people nearby, member profiles, and a news feed.

Due to the fact that it is even harder to reach out to younger generations with interruption-based ads, instant messaging is an efficient way to reach and engage with them.



Aljollynn Sperber

Continued on next page

Most native ads fail because they're not native (or good)

Native advertising once promised to rescue online media with a legit revenue stream. A quick look at today's poster children for the format, however, reveals most of the content is downright dreadful.

By Lou Hoffman

The defenders are quick to say it's early days, but it's been a good four to five years since the industry starting chiseling away at this format.

To understand what's gone wrong, it's worth circling back to the definition of native advertising, this one from Dan Greenberg at PandoDaily:

"In our view, native advertising should be broadly defined as ad strategies that allow brands to promote and weave their custom content into the endemic experience of a website or app. These native ad experiences differ from traditional digital ad formats such as display and pre-roll because they are choice-based placements (i.e., non-interruptive) that are well integrated into the visual design and content feel of a publisher's site."

The simple version: given a choice between journalism and advertising, people gravitate to journalism. So, if brands can create advertising that looks like journalism, it stands to reason that more people will read the "advertising."

Here's the conundrum. If the "advertising" looks too native and too close to the editorial product, it stands to fool the reader. So publications have established wording and visual cues that tell the reader that this is paid content, not editorial. No media property wants to experience the public flogging that *The Atlantic* took in early 2013 when its native ad on Scientology looked too close to the real thing.

While the salesmanship that went into foisting the term "native advertising" on the industry is impressive, there's nothing natural about the vast majority of native advertising that does interrupt and often jars the senses.

What plagues native advertising

This example from the *San Francisco Chronicle* offers a good microcosm of what retards the growth of this form of advertising.

Bowman stars; OL leaks in 49ers' 19-12 loss to Broncos



Frankfurt defender Timothy Chandler to have knee surgery 7:38 AM

Tadic double helps Southampton to 3-0 win over Norwich 7:54 AM

PRESENTED BY FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Tight Spots and an Uphill Battle Is No...

Bayern signs Kingsley Coman on loan from Juventus 7:59 AM

Liverpool loans out Markovic to Turkish club

You can see in the above image how the "native ad" shows up in my feed. I'm reading the sports page on a Sunday, headline on the 49ers, a feed of local sports stories in the left-hand column and a feed of international sports in the right-hand column. Sticking with the right-hand column, a native ad from Ford appears. Apparently, I missed an IOC vote that cast parking a car as an Olympic sport. Otherwise, how can Ford rationalize this ad as part of the natural sports feed?

Presented By:

Tight Spots and an Uphill Battle Is No Match For the New Ford 2015 Edge [Watch]

By Ford Motor Company on TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2015



What happens when a Ford engineer and a comedian go for a spin? We teamed up brainy engineer Johanna Slanga and funny guy Greg Hess with a New 2015 Ford Edge and set them out on the unpredictable streets of San Francisco.

Watch as they use the available driver-assist technologies of Edge to outsmart a city that's determined to stop them from getting anywhere. Here's what happened as they encountered some daunting scenarios and proved that Edge can make you feel unstoppable.

And someone might want to let the Ford copywriters in on a little secret. Using words that one might find in a sports story like "tight spots" and "uphill battle" doesn't transform copy on parking a car into one that feels like a natural fit on the sports page.

Clicking to the actual native ad delivers this. Again, it's not native or good.

In spite of trying to camouflage intent with five videos starring "brainy engineer Johanna Slanga and funny guy Greg Hess," this is a product ad about a Ford car. *The San Francisco Chronicle* would never assign this story to a reporter, and the content clashes with the natural story flow.

Worse, the ad commits the deadliest sin of all.

It's painfully dull.

Effective NA is the exception not the rule

If you search enough places, you can discover native advertising that works. A Denny's native ad in *The Onion* delivers on the irreverence and parody of *The Onion*. But the Denny's native ad is an outlier.

the ONION

Study: Majority Of Frontal Lobe Occupied By Thoughts Of Sausage Links

Study: Majority Of Frontal Lobe Occupied By Thoughts Of Sausage Links

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NEWS IN BRIEF
December 22, 2014



SEATTLE—Noting the way the polar and lateral regions "light up" when occupied with breakfast-related cognitive processes, a study published Wednesday by the University of Washington revealed that the majority of activity within the human brain's frontal lobe revolves around thoughts of sausage links. "Our research

Once you move away from publications like *The Onion* and BuzzFeed, it's damn hard — and expensive — to develop native advertising that lives up to the definition.

Rather than try to change the trajectory of native advertising, the industry should invent a new category. Anyone for "alien advertising?"

Lou Hoffman is CEO of The Hoffman Agency. ○

GETTING THE MOBILE MESSAGE

Continued from previous page

Brands can deliver tailored offers and announcements to targeted audience segments via mobile messaging apps. Video dominates in private messages so consider a 6-15 second ad with a strong call-to-ac-

tion. Social media is a human-to-human communication channel.

Mobile messaging applications are free to download and use, with the exception of purchasing stickers or WhatsApp membership fee after one year of usage. There's great potential for this channel to be a valuable revenue stream for brands.

Brands need to make their messaging direct, personal, and actionable to entice direct and mobile messaging users. Remember, it is no longer B2B or B2C marketing; you're now living in the Millennial world of B2Me — so make it personal.

Aljollynn Sperber is Director of Social Media at Marketing Maven. ○

What would Marshall McLuhan say?

As we speed into a future characterized by “moments” created by Twitter, or a “news feed” created by Facebook, or the stream of constructed content and re-distributed “copy” created by HuffPo and BuzzFeed, the more I find myself turning to the prescient views of Marshall McLuhan for purpose and meaning. A visionary who predicted much of our present landscape in the 1960s, McLuhan’s views on media and narrative are more critical than ever in today’s streaming communications world.

By Tobin Trevarthen

McLuhan’s work, dating back to the 1964 release of “Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man,” and 1967’s “The Message is the Medium,” offer an eerily accurate portrayal for how we, as a society, are shaping our world-views, one tiny screen at a time.

“We look at the present through a rear-view mirror. We march backwards into the future,” was a famous quote that referred to the need to attach ourselves to a framework of comfort from a recent past.

You can see that play out in the emergence of digital media and the evolution of change from desktop to tablet to smartphone. What once was the provenance of appointment reading, listening and viewing edited for our consumption, is now giving way to a world awash in unedited — yet highly personalized — streams.

In McLuhan’s era, “the railway radically altered the personal outlooks and patterns of social interdependence. It bred and nurtured the American Dream. It created totally urban, social and family worlds. New ways of work. New ways of management. New legislation.”

In our era, the “always-on” flow of overwhelming amounts of manipulated information via the cloud, airwaves and Wi-Fi are breeding new ways of work.

New ways of management. New legislation.

McLuhan referred to this phenomenon as, “the circuited city of the future will not be the huge hunk of real estate created by the railway. It will take on a totally new meaning under conditions of very rapid movement. It will become an information megalopolis.”

As we cope with how to derive meaning from our new information megalopolis, the idea of narrative takes on deeper importance. We have, for generations since the beginning of man, relied on storytelling to build our societies, mores, myth and folklore. Stories have always held a place in our evolution. They provided meaning and context. Albeit, as John Hagel would note, stories are constructed with “beginnings, middles and ends.”

Stories are about me, not you.

When a brand tells you its story, it is based on what it wants you to see and feel and hold dear. An individual or organization desires similar outcomes when it expresses a heartfelt story about its situation or belief.

As we delve into the subtle difference between a narrative and a story, we uncover that a narrative is constructed of multiple stories and conversations that come together to create a call to action between an initiator and responder. A narrative has a sense of drive, meaning and contrast. It is about how you and your personal belief system align with a narrative. Do you want to accept, act upon or refrain from the narrative. Hagel states that “narratives have no end” and is influenced by countering or accepting views over time.

Hence, McLuhan’s narrative of the American Dream above was catalyzed by the emerging technology of the day and our desire to attach that to a framework of yesterday to create a tangible version for the present state.

McLuhan offers a deeper historical perspective on tying narrative to the impact of emerging media, when referring to the Renaissance Legacy.

He stated, “The Vanishing Point = Self Effacement. The Detached Observer. No Involvement. The viewer of Renaissance art is systematically placed outside the frame of experience. A piazza for everything and everything in its piazza. The instantaneous world of electric informational media involves all of us, at once. No detachment or frame is possible.”

In a society where seven, soon to be eight, billion people are all connected in an always-on mode, what would Marshall McLuhan say now? In 1994, Lewis H. Lapman, authored an introduction to the MIT Press Edition re-release of “Understanding Media.” Lapman eloquently decodes McLuhan dialectic into a series of antonyms that again paints a picture foreboding our current state.

Lapman writes, “McLuhan noticed thirty [now 40] years ago, the accelerated tech-

nologies of the electronic future carry us backward into the firelight flickering caves of a Neolithic past. Among people who worship the objects of their own invention (whether in the shape of the fax machine or the high-speed computer) and accept the blessing of an icon as proof of divinity (whether expressed as the Coca Cola trademark or as the label on a dress by Donna Karan), ritual becomes a form of applied knowledge. The individual voice and singular point of view disappears into the chorus of a corporate and collective consciousness, which in McLuhan’s phrase — doesn’t postulate consciousness of anything in particular.”

Lapman further states “... Again as McLuhan understood, the habits of the mind derived from our use of the mass media — ‘we become what we behold’ ... we shape our tools and afterwards our tools shape us ...”

The self-evidence of this view in 2015 is reflected in the six second Vine, the multitude of selfies, the disappearing SnapChat, the river of photos posted to Instagram and the ever-streaming ticker on the bottom of our broadcast news. Our searches and our news feeds are either filtered by “their algorithms” or our “personalization filters”. What was mass media, is now becoming a filter bubble created by what we behold. Our tools are shaping us.

I believe what Marshall McLuhan would say today is that finding meaning and purpose today will be solved by recognizing that we are all attached and we are like a narrative that has no end.

“Ours is a brand new world of allatonce-ness. Time has ceased. Space has vanished. We now live in a global village ... a simultaneous happening ... Our most impressive words and thoughts betray us — they refer us only to the past, not to the present.”

Tobin Trevarthen is Chief Narrative Officer at Sparkpr in San Francisco. ○



Tobin Trevarthen

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Technology's role in the future of influencer outreach

Influencer outreach has evolved from just competing to earn an article — or even a quote — in a story. The perimeters of influence have widened, and the influencer's role has evolved. Now and henceforth, influencers are all around us.

By Brandon Andersen

A Twitter user with a triple-digit following can now impact the biggest brands, as 92% of consumers prefer referrals above all other sources. A world where anyone has a hand in your brand's fate may seem scary, but it's no different than when customers shared experiences around the water cooler — except now those conversations can spread across the globe in minutes.

Technology has moved influencer outreach beyond the Rolodex wheel of business cards. Modern solutions have evolved to meet PR professionals' influencer marketing needs, which extend beyond outreach to include listening, targeted engagement and amplification.

Here are two influencer marketing challenges communicators currently face and how an integrated technology solution can help overcome these issues.

A volume problem

The competition for attention among millions of creators and a near-insatiable thirst for information from audiences have led to higher quality content than ever.

In 2013, for example, the Internet added 5 exabytes of content each day, equal to the amount of information created from the first cave drawing to 2003. Even with a dedicated team, it would be impossible to comb through millions of posts and articles to identify your brand's top influencers.

The ability to stand out among all this content has placed greater emphasis on influencer outreach. Collaborating with those who have built trusted relationships with your audience will help disseminate your message, but that's hardly a secret.

A 2015 study showed that 59% of communicators planned to increase their influencer marketing budget over the next 12 months, an unsurprising statistic considering the study reported a return of \$6.50 for every dollar invested in influencer marketing.

That ROI could grow even higher as communicators adopt better technologies and fine-tune their influencer outreach to provide the right messages to the right people at the right times. Brands, hoping to grab a piece of the pie, reach out, but too many do so with a spray-and-pray approach that produces more irritation than coverage.

Successful influencer collaborations start as relationships forged over common interests, often on social media. Generally, that common interest is providing a specific audience with value in the form of entertainment or information.

Modern-day media databases scour social media to provide real-time insights into the topics particular influencers are covering at any given moment. But remember it's a social channel, not a business one.

It's imperative to build relationships and an integrated platform facilitates that. Promote influencers' work, add to the conversations they spark and give them data and story lines that will help them better serve their audience — even if they don't involve your brand.

Once you have joined their circle of trust, pitch a story related to your brand, but make sure it jives with the influencer's current interests. When a pitch turns into publicity, amplify the coverage using social media and other distribution channels.

The rise of the non-journalist influencer

As a whole, reporters didn't show enthusiasm for social media in its early years, though many now rely on it. According to Cision's most recent Social Journalism Study, a slim majority — 51% — of journalists surveyed in 2014 said they couldn't do their job without social media, up from 28% two years prior.

What inspired this change? Though the saturation of social media has played a role, the success of everyday bloggers and social media personalities in reaching, engaging with and inspiring audiences certainly helped drive their migration.

It was the "peer journalists" who first transformed news from a broadcast medium to a two-way conversation. These interactions have created followings who ache for content from those they trust.

According to BusinessWired, Millennials spend 18 hours a day with media. Of that, they spend nearly an equal amount with user-generated content — 30% — and traditional media — 33%. PR professionals can no longer just train their focus on traditional media or even the biggest digital outlets, like Mashable, BuzzFeed and The Huffington Post.

Mom bloggers, for example, hold significant influence, and brands have taken

notice. Using free content management systems, some mom bloggers have secured six-figure incomes, agents and sponsorship deals, according to Mark Schaefer in "LiSTEN: 5 Audiences Brands Can't Afford to Ignore," a collaboration with four other top marketing minds.

As traditional media outlets shrink, the power of bloggers and social media personalities grows, requiring PR professionals to pivot even more. The industry's latest technology can help.

Cision Social Edition, for example, provides social media listening technology that helps brands pinpoint who is publishing content that impacts your brand, positively or negatively.

Jay Baer, one of the collaborators on the LiSTEN e-book, says you have to "hug your haters" because haters are influencers who provide insights about your brand that are worth their weight in gold. Social listening that uncovers haters can help you identify flaws in your offerings, services or overall outreach. Fixing these can turn them into advocates, or at least prevent others from falling out of love with your brand.

Social media listening truly is PR's "Moneyball" tactic. Though nearly nine in 10 communicators relying on social media listening have found it effective, less than four in 10 have adopted the tactic.

With so few practicing social media listening, you have an opportunity to get ahead of competitors by adopting this technology and ensuring the wellbeing of your brand.

The new reality is that no matter your tenacity or team size, an integrated technology solution has become an essential part to influencer outreach, and just about every other aspect of public relations.

Just as the notion of using a Rolodex to contact a newspaper journalist has faded into the past, so too must manual searches and disparate tools. As influencer outreach grows in importance and scope, so must the technology we rely on.

Brandon Andersen is Director of Marketing at Cision. ○



Brandon Andersen



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Developing effective content in a mobile-first society

From the moment we get up in the morning until we fall asleep, a majority of the world is connected to others via a mobile device. In much the same way that it's important to develop products with a mobile-first strategy, it's equally essential to focus our PR efforts on where consumers are engaging with products and services.

By Julie Karbo

The growth of mobile phone and tablet use continues to skyrocket. By the end of 2015 there will be 4.88 billion worldwide mobile users and 5.09 billion by the end of 2016, according to Internet statistics company Statista.

Every smart company — whether a *Fortune* 50 company or a neighborhood small business — is evaluating better ways to move applications, tasks and sales to mobile devices. As PR professionals, we must also adopt this “mobile-first” mentality if we are to keep pace with those we are trying to influence. It's not just using mobile as a way to respond to email when we aren't at our desk or make a call from any location. It's crucial to design communications according to the mobility of the audience and the boundaries of the device.

Not only can we get better results when dealing with reporters and other influencers, but we can also use the mobile channel as a direct, real-time connection to the consumer.

How can we implement a mobile-first PR strategy? As is true in any planning exercise, we must ask ourselves: What's our objective? What motivates our audience? What media do they consume? When do they do it, how and why?

Let's start at the beginning of the day. How does our target consumer or reporter get their information and news? Many have their mobile devices — either phone or tablet — by the bed. If you're like me, the minute my feet hit the floor — or sometimes before — I'm reading critical email and looking for breaking news. Consumption of the information we need to do our jobs or simply to follow what interests us — continues throughout the day. Once we are in the work environment, we may switch to a laptop or desktop. The minute we leave this real or informal “desk” we're back to mobile. Most people use their mobile device between 4.7-5.6 hours a day, and usage has been growing at a rate of approximately 10% annually, according to Telecompetitor.

I've identified six areas that should be factored into the development of a mobile-first communications strategy:

Pick channels based on target's lifestyle

Most technology, business and consum-

er press are sophisticated when it comes to using mobile and popular social apps. Depending on individual preferences, Karbo Com will pitch reporters via email, text messages, video, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. When attempting to reach current or prospective clients, we use email, video, text, instant messaging, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Instagram. When developing a direct-to-consumer strategy, the task is more complex. Device and app use varies greatly by age group and content. For example, if you're trying to reach someone between the ages of 18-34, social channels such as Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube, Vine and Periscope are popular. But not all social is equal. According to comScore's June Mobile Metrics study, the most popular mobile based apps for this age group (with the exception of music apps) are Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook Messenger, and Snapchat.

My agency was one of the first to target social media for B2B enterprises. For B2B today we tend to focus on email, LinkedIn, YouTube and Twitter.

Design content for a mobile-first channel

More and more frequently, pitches, posts and content will be read on a smartphone and less so on a tablet. It's critical that correspondence, website and any other content be designed to properly display on the most popular mobile platforms — iOS and Android.

Of course, laptops afford the luxury of a larger screen and more consumption time, allowing added levels of detail and nuance for the more focused mind. On the other hand, mobile phones are designed for short attention spans, so a pitch, ad, video or post must have immediate impact and fit within the constraints of the platform (e.g., a two-line text, a 15-second video, or Twitter's current 140 character limit).

Up the creativity game

There are also different expectations in terms of creativity according to the device and the applications on that device. Many tech reporters get hundreds of pitches a day, so using a medium such as Snapchat gives the freedom to do something different. When trying to reach consumers, bear

in mind the high volume of social media feed posts to compete against. Again, take advantage of the opportunity for creativity the mobile platform gives.

Consider where it will be consumed

Develop content for the time of day during which it will be consumed as well as the location. Think in terms of the attention span that tends to accompany the device. While mobile devices have eliminated the boundaries of the work environment, there are still factors to consider depending on where and when content will be consumed. Will it be viewed in a relatively quiet environment — at a desk at the office — on the couch at home, or on public transportation or in a crowded cafe? Where it is consumed will affect how distracted readers will be and how they react to its delivery. This can be a tougher call because some reporters, for example, don't mind if you DM them while they're on a bus, whereas your content may miss the mark completely if a consumer has to concentrate on a subtle post or Instagram video in a crowded restaurant.

Take advantage of viral factors

Evaluate whether or not content should reach one person or influence an entire community. If content is customized for the individual, use one-on-one methods such as Twitter's DM, Facebook Messaging, email, text or a phone call. Will readers want to share it? Should they be sharing? If there's an opportunity to inform a larger community, do so. Keep the messages appropriate, and never make the initial recipient feel like they're a personal pipeline without benefit to themselves. Better yet, design content that influencers will want to share.

Adjust strategy based on efficacy

Like any other PR program or tactic, mobile-first PR's worth must be evaluated and when necessary, adjusted. This is even more critical given the speed and innovation inherent in mobile communications.

Mobile-first PR presents a wealth of opportunities for the experienced PR pro. It can deliver tremendous results when implemented with an understanding of the unique characteristics of the medium.

Julie Karbo is Founder and CEO at Karbo Communications. ○



Julie Karbo



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Strategies to survive the digital health shakeout

The consumer digital health market is booming. Here are several communications strategies that marketers with clients in digital health spaces can employ to ensure continued success.

By Denise Vitola

The consumer digital health market is hot. Private and public funding for U.S. companies in digital health reached \$3.3 billion at the close of 2015's third quarter — on pace to exceed 2014's record \$4.3 billion growth, according to Rock Health, a venture fund that tracks U.S. deals of more than \$2 million.

While many think of the digital health category as mainly wearables and biosensors — which collect data — the market actually has many facets, including:

Consumer engagement. These are tools for purchasing healthcare products and services or health insurance. Consumer engagement is actually a new direction for the health IT business, which historically has been devoted to the “back office,” submitting claims, generating bills, and documenting clinical care. This new set of consumer-facing technologies range from online information resources, to tech-based monitoring for consumers with chronic conditions, and even patient portals.

Personal health tools and tracking. These are apps — separate from fitness trackers — that capture data on physical activity, nutrition, genetics, as well as health records.

Analytics and Big Data tools. These tools cull intelligence and insights from the data collected on patients.

Telemedicine. These are healthcare services delivered via telephone and digital communications.

High expectations by Silicon Valley and Wall Street investors in digital health companies appear to be matched by consumers' growing enthusiasm for new health and lifestyle management tools.

For example, about two-thirds — 66% — of Americans say they would use a mobile app to manage health-related issues, according to the Fifth Annual Makovsky/Kelton “Pulse of Online Health” Survey, which was fielded in January to 1,015 nationally representative Americans ages 18 and older. Millennials, not surprisingly, are leading the charge, more than twice as likely to express interest in using a mobile app to manage their health as compared to Americans 66 and older.

However, bullish investors plus eager consumers do not alone add up to success for established or new players in digital health. Of 258 digital health companies garnering more than \$2 million each in investment last year, more than half are deemed to fail, according to an Accenture forecast.

A venture capitalist with Health 2.0 (who requested anonymity) told MedCityNews that even with a so-called B2B2C business model — defined as when a digital health vendor earns validation from clinical providers before they go to the consumer market — success will be elusive unless the company gets the “C” part right.

What do they mean by the “C” part? It's the combination of providing consumers a high-quality experience and the ability to both engage and inspire consumers to make changes in their behaviors that become habits.

What do digital health companies need to do to assure their futures? Aside from an effective business plan and execution, it comes down to three critical, overarching communications strategies:

Articulate your mission

Expressing your company's mission and what makes you different is critical for all companies, but is especially vital for companies in a crowded, emerging field like digital health.

Start with creating a concise narrative that communicates your story in human terms, and whose threads run through all your communications channels to help you stand out among audiences — whether investors or regulators, or consumers, providers or suppliers. This is hard to do sometimes inside a company due to lack of objectivity. Often companies benefit from turning to specialists who have the experience and objectivity to listen to the executives, customer audiences, influencers and competitors in order to develop a compelling, compact and effective brand message that can be carried consistently by everyone in the organization over different communications channels.

Build trust

Building trust, of course, is paramount to any industry but none so much as in the

health industry. While the exact tactics will be tailored to your company's sector and dependent on the current regard of your customers and influencers, the principles are the same.

Keep your promises to consumers and suppliers and energetically serve your community. Go beyond to help them navigate a complex community, consistently monitor and respond to their queries (positive or negative) — whether it's B2B, B2C or B2B2C, over social media and other appropriate channels.

Be ultra-conscious of information security and always preserve and protect the privacy of customer information. Know and communicate frequently to influencers, and be “present” on the channels where they get information.

A great example is MyRozi, a membership site that helps individuals navigate their health plans, network with caregivers, learn more about their diagnosis, connect with others with similar issues, find products that address their medical needs, and get tips for saving money, as reported in CIO magazine.

Engage your audience

Ultimately, digital health companies will navigate from the largely one-off solutions of today, to being part of an integrated system of healthcare tomorrow.

Why do more than half of people with fitness trackers stop using them after a while — with one third ditching the device within six months of receiving it, according to an Endeavour Partners survey? The fact that only 8% of people who make New Year's resolutions are able to realize their goals may be a failure of good intentions — or perhaps it signals deficiencies in product design and functionality, inadequate marketing communications, or all of the above.

How you engage with customers consistently, with honesty and integrity, is the X factor in success.

Denise Vitola is Managing Director at Makovsky. ○



Denise Vitola



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Top traits to look for in an IoT PR agency

Any successful marketing executive — either at an IoT vendor, or a technology company looking to enter the IoT market — needs to know how to pick the right marketing communications agency partner. Here's a list of top traits to look for when choosing an IoT PR agency.

By Tom Rice

Failure to pick the right marketing communications agency partner from the start could result in wasted time, money or even hurt relationships with the IoT (Internet of Things) influencers you want to reach. From what we hear from clients across our Practice Groups, finding the right agency fit comes down to a few key ingredients: strategic thinking, agility, relationships, ability to execute and cultural fit, to name a few.

As you're entering the crowded and evolving IoT market, you need an agency that has all those traits, but also one that knows the IoT market, has a proven track record, and can keep up with the rapid pace of change inherent with that industry. Here is what you should be looking for when searching for an IoT marketing communications agency.

Make sure the agency knows IoT

Perhaps the most important trait to look for in a marketing communications agency is finding one that understands your in-

dustry and knows how to implement and execute on a marketing strategy in your industry with those nuances in mind. You don't want to have to spend extensive time acclimating the agency on your business and the basics of your market or the players you need to influence.

Given the ever-growing size of the IoT market, the agency should be able to understand the overall IoT landscape to develop a plan that will break into the IoT market and beat out competitors in an increasingly noisy space. Make sure you see case studies on work they've done for other relevant companies and that they can demonstrate how they have developed a strategy and executed said strategy to obtain great results.

Choose the right-sized agency

Nobody wants to be on the bottom rung of a national brand-chasing ladder. If an agency spends most of their time pursuing large brands outside your industry to meet lofty revenue goals, they likely aren't a good fit. This type of agency will likely give you the B or C team, when you want their A team to help you accomplish your goals. The right agency will be adaptable to change, especially within the tech space, and will be able to adjust on the fly when it comes to milestones, strategies and developments.

Get a team that communicates your way

It's crucial that you choose an agency that can implement the proper communication framework. They should be willing to communicate often, and over-communicate when needed. They should offer strategic counsel, and not be afraid to tell you when a plan needs adjustment. The IoT market continues to grow and expand, constantly gaining influencers, meaning that the agency you work with needs to be able to keep up with the changes and insights and communicate them correctly and aggressively.

Select the right team within the agency

At the pitch meeting, you should meet the team members who will be servicing your account, not just the executive leadership. It's also important to make sure the agency is a good cultural fit. You're going to work with them day-in and day-out. Your agency is an extension of your brand,

so make sure you share similar values and principles.

You can tell a lot about potential fit by meeting the people you'll be working with. Make sure this team fits all the criteria above — that they are the A team, that they communicate fully and fearlessly, they know the IoT market and that they share the goal of promoting your business.

Find an agency that knows the landscape

According to some recent studies, 30% of the U.S. population gets their news on Facebook and 44% of U.S. smartphone users consume news on their mobile device. Moreover, the top 10 most visited websites in the world aren't destination content sites — they're platforms like Google, Facebook, Twitter and Baidu. Destination news and content sites with massive editorial teams and budgets — like CNN.com, MSNBC.com, *New York Times*, BBC and *USA Today* — aren't even found on the list of most visited sites.

The IoT agency you choose needs to understand the shifting power structure that's happening between publishers, marketers and content consumers to ensure that your message is going to reach the maximum number of qualified eyeballs.

This shift seems to be happening from content destinations to content platforms. The audiences are definitely on social and mobile platforms, and they are growing fast. Selecting an agency that's in sync with the future of media, content distribution and monetization will guarantee that your programs will remain relevant as the landscape evolves.

There's little argument that IoT is one of the hottest segments in technology today. Therefore, it's critical that companies competing in this market have the blueprint to find the right agency partner that can provide the right mix of strategy and execution to deliver high-impact success on an ongoing basis.

Tom Rice Executive Vice President and Partner at Merritt Group. ●



Tom Rice

PR news brief

Sard mounts PR defense for HeartWare

HeartWare International, which tangled with an activist investor opposed to its \$860 million acquisition of Valtech Cardio, is relying on Sard Verbinen & Co. for PR support.

HeartWare, a Framingham, MA.-based maker of heart pumps for patients with advanced heart failure, announced in September its deal for Valtech, an Israel-based developer of valve repair and replacement devices for heart valve diseases.

Engaged Capital, a top 20 shareholder of HeartWare, went public this week against the Valtech deal with the help of PR shop Bayfield Strategy. EC released a letter to HeartWare's board which laments "years of disappointing returns" and urges the board to "walk away from this highly-dilutive, highly-risky acquisition and return to the company's focus to the core left ventricular assist device business."

The hedge fund wants Heartware to pursue its own sale, rather than the acquisition.

HeartWare "respectfully disagree[d]" with the EC position, noting the fund only recently bought HeartWare shares and affirming its commitment to the deal. "We are confident this acquisition will deliver significantly greater value to shareholders and patients alike than could be achieved through Engaged Capital's recommended alternatives," the company said.

Sard Managing Directors Andrew Cole and Mark Harnett lead the Heartware account for the firm.

Cyber (in)secure?

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How digital influencers build brand credibility

Building brand credibility is paramount, and working with digital influencers offers an unmatched ally for getting your brand to stand out in a crowded advertising landscape.

By Susan van Barneveld

One of the most important goals of marketing is building brand credibility. Why? Building credibility increases the chances that consumers will have a positive perception of your brand. Consumers will almost always choose a brand they think highly of over those that they don't when deciding where to spend their hard earned cash.

Let's take cars for example. If you or a relative has had problems with a specific vehicle from a certain car manufacturer, chances are you will never buy a car from them again no matter how great any of their other cars may be. This brings me to my next point. What do we all know about perceptions? Once formed, they are very difficult to change, so it is important to work hard to acquire and retain a good one. This is where digital influencers and influencer marketing can help.

What is a digital influencer?

Digital influencers can take a few different forms:

Social. Social influencers are individuals with a large social following, whether it's on Pinterest, Instagram, Facebook or Twitter, or a combination of channels. In the technology space, Robert Anthony aka NewYorkBob, is the number-one influencer on Pinterest with 1.2 million followers. Robert is a traditional journalist as well, writing for the *New York Daily News*, but his large social following classifies him as a social influencer.

Video. Video bloggers, or vloggers, are a large group of digital influencers that are a great resource for promoting your products and brand. Some "unboxing" and review channels in the technology space have close to 3 million subscribers, such as tech vlogger Marquess Brownlee.

Lifestyle Blog. Influential bloggers typically have a large amount of traffic to their blog site, as well as followers on a variety of social channels. It's hard to imagine today's blogosphere without the presence of mom bloggers. As of January 2015, there are 4.7 million mom bloggers living in the United States, and 33% of them have 5,000 or more followers online.

No matter which form a digital influencer takes, there are a few attributes they typically share: These are people that have large followers on their particular channel(s), are

looked up to and trusted by others, are involved in their particular community and tend to be trendsetters. Working with digital influencers through content marketing allows you to tap into these existing communities and leverage the reach they have with your potential customers.

Why work with digital influencers?

Today's consumers are engaging with brands online more than they ever did before. Take moms for example: According to a study by SurveyMonkey, 60% of moms access Facebook multiple times a day, and 59% of them follow at least one brand. Today's moms are more web-savvy, and 58% of them research products online before making a purchase most or all of the time.

While traditional paid media ads used to be viewed as the most trusted form of advertising, that is no longer the case. According to Nielsen, 90% of consumers trust peer recommendations, in contrast to only 33% who trust ads. People trust the opinions of other real people, whether that is friends, family or digital influencers, and trust is key in order to build brand credibility. Needless to say, it's highly recommended — if not necessary — for your brand to cultivate relationships with digital influencers.

So, how can digital influencers actually add credibility to your brand? They provide the most trusted form of advertising, word-of-mouth, at a much larger scale than previously possible. If they like you and your brand, they can endorse you. In doing so, the trust that their followers have in them will pass onto you as well, adding instant credibility to your brand. Digital influencers are able to help your brand stand out in a crowded space where people are bombarded with ads.

Digital influencers also have the power to write "real" unbiased reviews for your products. These types of brand mentions hold a lot more weight coming from trustworthy end consumers, rather than salespeople on commission. If that is not possible, they can always mention your brand in a social post, video or blog post, which again comes across as more of a natural endorsement.

How do I work with digital influencers?

So how do you find digital influencers and get them to promote your brand or review your product? The basic steps to influencer marketing are:

Research. The first step to working with digital influencers of any kind is to identify the correct personalities for your brand/product. There are a number of companies you can subscribe to that track social, video and blog influencers such as GroupHigh. However you can always start with web searching on your own. Be sure to have a spreadsheet to keep track of the results. Once you have a list of influencers, rank them in priority order by looking at data metrics such as number of followers/subscribers, website traffic, comments, etc. Also, double check that the content of their social channels or blog match what your target audience is interested in.



Susan van Barneveld

Secure Influencers.

Once you have your list of targeted influencers, draft up a personalized email to each. Keep it short and sweet and be up front about what you are looking for and the requirements. Be aware that some influencers will charge for a mention, review or unboxing of products. This could range from \$250 to thousands of dollars. Know your budget beforehand and pitch appropriately — if you have no budget, try targeting smaller influencers who will most likely work with you in exchange for product only.

Be a Resource. After securing the number of targeted influencers for your campaign, make yourself a resource to them. Provide them with the necessary web links they may need or are required to post; offer hi-res product or lifestyle photos; check in a week later to see if they have any questions. The easier you make the process for them, the more likely they are to work with you again in the future.

Interact & Share Socially. After an influencer posts on their social channel, YouTube, or blog, be sure to interact with the post and share it! This is an important step in creating and maintaining a positive relationship with each influencer. Easy ways to do this include commenting on the post with a thank you, as well as sharing it on your brand's social media pages. Tag the influencer's pages (where applicable) and encourage your followers to check them out.

Susan van Barneveld is CEO of Copernio in Garden Grove, CA. ●

Creating a narrative that stands out

Today there are more channels available to send out marketing and PR messages than ever. However, the age-old challenge of saying something meaningful remains.

By Guy Murrel

From automated marketing platforms and influencer marketing to social media — Twitter and LinkedIn, mostly — and more traditional bylined articles and news releases, creating messaging that stands out — and that people care about — is crucial. But, as we all know, most companies find themselves in a marketplace where “everyone is saying the same thing.” As we like to say — everyone is trying to stand out using the same 16 words.

Having been in the messaging trenches for more than 30 years, I realized that saying something compelling usually meant not talking about ourselves (in my case, clients). This can be counterintuitive for many executives and founders of companies. Until recently, most tech companies were founded by technologists and engineers. They built cool stuff and expected the world to be excited about their creation — and rightfully so. However, working in a crowded market, frustration would often appear because the market didn’t get it.

In this article I want to share a few approaches that we use frequently to help tech firms create new “messaging spaces.” I say space in terms of having a Greenfield so to speak. While a Greenfield is undeveloped, it represents a clearing within the crowded and noisy markets we work. We’ll look at positioning and messaging from a higher, industry level perspective, and outline the basics of building a strategic narrative and how it can not only help with marketing, but often align companies toward a common, purposeful goal.

Messaging challenges

Crafting messaging that is truly compelling and stands out is difficult. Traditional positioning and messaging approaches often are too inward and self-centered, and many companies labor away explaining how they do things — not what they do. More importantly, they usually leave it to others to define the market space. The result can be satisfactory for the status quo, but this approach lacks the central “cause” that all facets of the business can rally behind.

To stand out and say something meaningful, most organizations have the opportunity to define existing or new categories

as a means of creating a market-leading position. The “category story” can serve as the basis of a corporate narrative that engages influencers, employees, investors, partners and customers, and impacts perceptions and drives positive change. The narrative becomes more than a marketing message; it’s a corporate strategy that reaches all areas of the business. It can be leveraged through PR and marketing campaigns and the impact can be profound — helping align companies and providing a roadmap to execute against.

Something to consider to help shift messaging to a higher, more meaningful level is the strategic narrative, and the role it plays in guiding organizations and connecting with communities of people. Strategic narratives are central to the practice of international relations. Governments use narratives strategically to achieve desired objectives: defining their countries’ identities, explaining their role in the world, identifying allies and enemies, establishing the nature of the relationships among them; contextualizing historical events, as well as policy decisions.

High-tech companies can adopt a strategic narrative approach to messaging as well, defining the landscape and trends of the industry that are aimed at a category-focused level. Take time to develop a vision for the future that focuses on the market segment’s growth and promise. This can become the organization’s cause and purpose, as the company works to advance the progress and success of its industry. This approach can bring a company’s vision to life, and can extend beyond marketing as every single person in the organization can support it. This also facilitates a single, unified message that is often elusive for companies of all sizes.

Messaging fundamentals

When developing a strategic narrative, make sure to incorporate the following elements:

Add context to mega-trends. Most industries are being disrupted and offer the opportunity to define the mash-up that defines new industry dynamics. Aim to provide insight and context into industry trends, and provide a viewpoint and opin-

ion on what’s happening outside of your own company.

Define and honor the category.

Step outside of your company to define the category as you see it. How can your company advance the adoption and the evolution of the category? Is there a process or framework you can develop and “give” to the industry? Always make it a priority to champion the overall good of your category or market space.

Shape a better world. Outline a vision statement for the industry — where would you like to see your industry in three to five years? What contributions can your market segment make to industry/customers/mankind?

Define your role. State your company’s goals and course of action. What overall role will your company play in the world you’ve defined? What is the company vision for innovation? How will it benefit customers and align with the mega-trends you’ve defined?

Be inclusive. Don’t define a strategic narrative that “only applies to us.” Re-shape a category/industry and welcome visitors, including competitors! Think how it touches each and every employee, partner, customer and influencer. Talk less about yourself, and more about the world you live in.

One you have developed a strategic narrative you can use it for core PR-related communications and much more. It should be pervasive across the Website and leveraged across digital marketing, analyst relations, media relations, content marketing, speaking and other thought leadership initiatives.

The benefits of creating a new and open space to say something compelling are profound. Think of any “market leader” and they likely are the ones defining the market and pushing the industry narrative. Any organization can do it — it just takes a very deliberate approach to thinking big, acting like a teacher and walking the walk as an industry leader.

Guy Murrel is Co-founder and Principal at Catapult PR-IR. ○



Guy Murrel

Understanding the new B2B buyer journey

A new study shows that the B2B buyer journey is only growing in complexity, underscoring why it's critical for communicators to understand how B2B prospects make purchase decisions, and to stay in front of buyers over the course of the sales cycle.

By Dave Paro

According to Google research, a typical B2B buyer now conducts an average of 12 web searches before engaging with a specific brand's website. And then after that initial digital interaction, Walker Sands Communications client data shows that a prospect has seven to 15 additional touchpoints with a brand before turning into a qualified lead. As the traditional linear sales funnel turns into a complicated pretzel of interconnected channels, it becomes critical for marketers to understand this new buyer journey and stay in front of buyers over the course of a lengthy sales cycle.

A new study from Walker Sands that surveyed more than 300 marketing technology decision-makers finds that the B2B buyer journey is only increasing in complexity. For example, technology buyers have distinct needs during each phase of the buyer journey, which means B2B marketers must interact with them in different ways as they discover, research and purchase solutions. And it's no longer just the C-suite making decisions about new technology, so marketers must understand how buyers and influencers throughout the organization make decisions, which differs depending on variables like title and company size.

The study shows why B2B marketers can no longer rely on a handful of dominant and isolated marketing channels to reach prospects. To connect with buyers today, brands instead need a marketing strategy that gets earned, owned and paid media working together in harmony to ensure multiple points of interaction and conversion. Here's a look at some of the findings from the Walker Sands study that marketers can use to map out the new B2B customer buying journey.

Discovery process

According to the study, 44% of businesses begin a search for new marketing technology when they recognize a need, and only 6% do so when they hear about a new piece of technology. In other words, B2B buyers aren't going to consider making a new purchase unless they actually have a problem that can only be fixed with new technology. Simply becoming aware of a new technology brand will not motivate them to change

the status quo, which means marketers need to focus on creating a need that speaks to buyer pain points.

Additionally, most marketers first learn about new marketing technology from peers, news publications or search engine results. Only 5% learn about new tools from sales representatives. So even if an organization has a need for new technology, decision-makers are going to be conducting their own research to learn about their options before contacting a vendor. This makes it critical for brands to be visible as buyers independently search for possible solutions, relying on tactics like media relations, search engine optimization and word-of-mouth marketing to get in front of prospects during the discovery phase.



The Martech Decision-Making Hierarchy.

Source: Walker Sands State of Marketing Technology 2016.

Path to purchase

Once decision-makers discover new technology, most will conduct their own research to determine if the solution is right for their organization before they ever contact a sales representative. In fact, the Walker Sands study finds that 65% of marketing technology buyers are at least halfway to a decision before they contact the vendor. Most are reaching this decision by consuming either branded or third-party content across various channels. Specifically, the report shows that product demos, case studies and online reviews are the top three most influential types of content for marketing technology buyers.

To really stand out to business buyers at

this research stage, quality content is key. Make sure relevant pieces of content are easy for buyers to find and consume, and that they clearly differentiate your solution (or your client) from competitors. Additionally, the messaging across all channels — whether it's earned PR placements or owned branded content — must be consistent and tell a clear story. Most business buyers will not move to make a purchase if they're not convinced with what they find during the research process.

Beyond the C-suite

To make this process even more complicated, most business organizations involve multiple individuals within decision-making processes, and all of these individuals have competing priorities. The Walker Sands study finds that almost two-thirds of marketers have led the decision-making process for at least one marketing technology purchase in the past three years, including more than half of entry-level marketers. And more than two-thirds of marketers say they are given the opportunity to provide input into the tech buying decisions that they use in their jobs.

Ultimately, B2B technology marketers need to appeal to as many individuals within an organization as they can. Learn about the prospect and how each level of the organization may find your tool useful. Maybe the C-suite has a vested interest in integration with other current platforms, while lower-level employees are more concerned about ease of use. Regardless of the selling points that your technology offers, make sure that your marketing and PR content focuses on how it appeals to everyone within an organization — not just the top executives.

By understanding how B2B prospects make purchase decisions throughout the new buyer journey, brands and agencies can develop coordinated PR and marketing strategies that ensure their brands are visible during every step of the decision-making process. To find out more, download the Walker Sands State of Marketing Technology 2016 report at walkersands.com/new-martech-buyer-journey.

Dave Parro is Partner at Walker Sands Communications. ●



Dave Parro

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PR needs to get specific in 2016 or go home

An annual report that analyzes communications trends reveals that PR is shaping up to get personal in 2016.

By **Brendon Craigie**

During the 2008 and 2012 elections, President Obama's campaign found success leveraging social media to communicate to specific target audiences.

Next year will see the U.S. Presidential election take targeted campaigning to a new level. New technology and in-depth knowledge of target voters will combine to deliver voters with what feels like personalized campaign messages.

This was just one of the insights gathered from our 2016 Trends Report, which offers a global perspective on the trends that will shape the marketing and communications landscape in the year ahead.

Talking to our audience one-to-one is the Holy Grail, but it's impractical in practice. Relying on generalized content that can be tailored to a specific audience is the most effective route for marketers. One of the best ways to do this is by looking at where people live and work.

Great communications campaigns tap into emotional triggers, and our sense of home is one of the most powerful of those. Media organizations are ploughing time and money into creating content which works at a hyperlocal level — chasing the success BuzzFeed enjoys with their “22 things you'll only know if you come from X” format.

Once we're creating localized content, it's only logical to start thinking about how to target people on a local level as well. What does this mean? In 2016 it won't be enough

to A/B test six or seven copy variants and then settle on the message that performs best. We'll need to create and serve dozens or even hundreds of messages, each of which targets a specific sub-section of our audience. It may not be practical on a mass scale, but the more nuanced and granular our content and distribution techniques become, the more our audiences will feel like we're talking to them personally.

The focus on hyperlocalized, personalized content is precisely why websites aren't as important as they used to be. Since the World Wide Web was created, the goal of marketers — whether through advertising, social, SEO or PR — has been to drive our digital audience to our websites and then convert them into a lead or customer.

The Internet of 2016 will be different. We're already seeing digital native publishers work away from the confines of their website and go to their audience with a very local target segment approach. BuzzFeed now generates 52% of all its views away from its website — through Snapchat, YouTube and Facebook video. Where BuzzFeed leads, the rest of the media industry tend to find themselves reluctantly following.

By sponsoring great content wherever it lives, brands are no longer reliant on display ads and takeovers to generate awareness. Instead they can be associated with genuinely engaging video, imagery and interactives which work on the platforms that our audiences are using.

Giving up a degree of control and relying on outside platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Medium, Amazon or YouTube is an adjustment we'll come to terms with in 2016. Though embracing completely off-channel campaigns is currently a rarity, we'll see more marketers working on networks which combine content creation and distribution in one single package.

We'll also see less reliance on the website as an endpoint — it will become one channel we can use rather than the focal point of every campaign.

In 2016 we'll see a willingness to hand over distribution of our content to third parties, along with an acceptance that our customers may never visit our websites. Instead, we'll create campaigns which live and breathe on the channels they're natural for — without shoehorning in clumsy calls

to action or expecting our audience to disrupt their own routine to visit our content.

Of course, we still need to capture leads. That's where technology comes in. Platforms like Hubspot and Marketo create automated lead generation forms which exist independently to our websites. Embed these forms on your distribution channel of choice and away you go. By automating our lead capture and CRM systems we can focus on what really matters — creating and sharing stories which appeal to our audience.

It also streamlines information flows to give savvy marketers time to address strategy, allowing resources which would otherwise be spent on data management to be focused on making insightful decisions and interpreting nuanced metadata.

While these tools eliminate “Marketing Silos” and optimize budget value, they also disrupt many layers of the traditional marketing mix — design, analytics, SMM, HTML programming — by transforming the range of competences required at different levels. Given the consistent availability of new digital tools, we must work to hone our skills and maintain awareness of new and emerging applications.

As a result, automation in marketing is both a blessing and a threat — we must justify our “human” skill set in the era of robotics, data, and AI technologies. Those who reject the opportunity to use automated tools and prefer to rely exclusively on traditional approaches will be forced to adapt or sacrifice efficiency.

The availability of feature-packed, intelligent, and easy-to-use marketing solutions (many of which do not require considerable investment) will pave the way for numerous disruptors in the delivery of PR services. These new players, many of them microenterprises or individuals, will use the technologies to reduce their largest overhead — talent.

Part of honing your talent and staying sharp is keeping abreast of the hottest trends. To sign up for Hotwire's seventh annual Trends Report, go to: hotw.re/Odwyers.

Brendon Craigie is Group CEO of Hotwire. ○



Brendon Craigie

PR news brief

5W scans Zebra account

Zebra Technologies, the publicly traded maker of barcode and identification printers and technology, has connected with Burson-Marsteller, following an RFP.

B-M will guide PR across North America, Latin America and the EMEA region, spanning 11 countries. Ogilvy PR previously had the work.

Zebra, based in Lincolnshire, Ill., and named after the black-and-white palette of a bar code, wants to get on the radar of senior *Fortune* 1000 execs and leverage its partnership with the National Football League.

Zebra made a splash last year when it snapped up Motorola's tracking technology unit for \$3.5B. Its technology is used for everything from inventory control and package tracking to driver's license data.

Therese Van Ryne, who joined from Motorola, heads global PR and analyst relations for Zebra.

Focusing on people-centric social media

Patients are at the forefront of everything we do in the healthcare industry, making the notion of patient-centricity a worthwhile and noble concept. When it comes to social media, however, pharma needs to learn how to put the person before the patient.

By Chris Iafolla

Five years ago, the tendency for healthcare companies was to take a “hey, look at me — I’m on social media” approach. This is no longer sufficient.

As healthcare marketers, we understand the distinct differences between our industry and less-regulated industries like consumer packaged goods, but consumers don’t make the delineation. They expect the same level of service, response and engagement out of pharmaceutical companies that they do out of their favorite beauty brand.

The expectation is that pharmaceutical companies act like customer service organizations, disease education experts, science companies and patient-support groups all at once. This is becoming increasingly more important as election season kicks up and the cost of prescription medicine takes center stage and consumers begin examining these companies closer.

When all of this converges, the drive to be patient-centric has accelerated and the focus on engagement through social media has intensified, but the question is: how do companies evolve their current approach to better fit this move to more patient-centric engagement?

It’s the person, not the patient

One key component to changing the way healthcare companies engage is to not think about the patient, and instead, think about the person. It’s a subtle difference that has major implications on how we produce content and engage with people across social media channels.

Pharmaceutical companies tend to spend disproportionate amounts of budget on motivating people to seek a prescription. It makes sense. Without patients on therapy, pharmaceutical companies would cease to exist. However, when this thought process is pulled through to social media engagement, it begins to cause problems. A patient is a person first.

A drive to patient-centricity should acknowledge this fact and be open to engaging with people outside of simply what defines a patient. This type of approach would inform content creation efforts that stretch outside of simple disease awareness activities and would include more material that fits into the daily life of the person. To truly engage with people on their level, we

have to first understand that their lives exist outside of their condition.

Human behavior is shaped by core values, emotional stimuli, aesthetic responses and other inputs, which are dynamic and volatile. That means even in a changing digital and social landscape, consumers will respond to well-crafted messages, trustworthy information and relationships that are cultivated to yield mutual benefits.

The content premium

For years, the words paid, earned, social and owned have been useful differentiators — and they still are. But in the healthcare setting, PESO feels like a blunt instrument. When the conversation is about illness or mortality, the biggest mistake is to treat social media as a push channel.

Social media is undoubtedly an instrument that can deliver heightened engagement, but in healthcare, it is also a world inhabited by people with urgent and sensitive connections to the products companies provide. Often, as in other industries, an aspect of paid promotion will be required to elevate the story. But “paid” is wasted in this drive to put the patient at the center if the content isn’t valuable, the message isn’t unique and the human element isn’t immediately clear.

Don’t avoid the important issues

Because consumers now have an understanding that healthcare companies will engage with them, their level of expectation has increased. These people are accustomed to getting their questions answered by airlines, their appointment requests responded to by cable companies and their product complaints addressed directly by the manufacturer. The result is that people expect to be engaged on their terms, not those of the company. This is a tough one for healthcare companies operating in a highly-regulated environment where engagement on real issues is difficult.

This means finding a way to communicate on pricing concerns, addressing patient questions regarding treatment and providing broad support to those living with certain conditions. It’s not an easy challenge to solve for a pharmaceutical company, and there are certain issues that lend themselves to other forms of communication, but a willingness to at least consider these topics is important.

Healthcare companies operate in an environment where every communication carries weight — where people’s health is the primary topic. Because of this, social media is a unique tool to change the way we engage with our audience, but it requires a renewed focus on putting the person first.

The companies that can find that balance of empathy, responsiveness and credibility will find the most long-term value on social media.

Chris Iafolla is Head of Digital and Social Strategy at inVentiv Health Public Relations Group, which consists of Allidura Consumer, Biosector 2, Chamberlain Healthcare PR and Chandler Chicco Agency. ●



Chris Iafolla

PR news brief

Cision debuts PR platform upgrade

Cision on October 26 rolled out an upgrade to its PR platform encompassing the software company’s influencer marketing, media insights and mobile marketing tools.

The upgrade is designed to improve the ability among PR professionals to find both media reps and influencers who are most likely interested in their story pitches.

“What we’re trying to do with [the upgrade] is to build the right experience for PR and communications pros,” said Natalia Dykij, VP of product management at Cision. “The upgrade is all about how do we expand our core capabilities and start to offer best of breed products.”

Major upgrades to Cision’s PR platform include adding premium profiles from Gorkana, the media database company that Cision acquired last year for an undisclosed sum; enhanced influencer profile pages; influencer “streams” and influencer search.

The upgrade also includes new social performance dashboards, email distribution improvements and Google Analytics integration.

On the mobile front, as part of the upgrade Cision will now offer a new iOS mobile and curation.

Users will be able to download the app to access a stream of their brand’s (or client’s) most important news coverage, with tools to curate and share news with internal stakeholders as well as social media followers.

The product is available to Cision’s new and existing customers in the U.S., Canada, France and the United Kingdom.

Old-school vs. new-school tech marketing approaches

The biggest driver of change in marketing and communications today is buyers' access to information. B2B technology marketers need to renew their approach for connecting with customers in strategic, meaningful ways.

By Michael Nelson

We've seen astonishing changes in marketing and communications over the past decade. With social media, word-of-mouth can overshadow million dollar marketing campaigns. And now, through digital ad targeting and analytics, we can finally tell which half of our marketing budget is working (you're in trouble unless it's both!). The single biggest driver of change in marketing and communications is buyers' access to information. Information empowers buyers to expand their consideration set quickly, makes it easy to compare and narrow alternatives, and lowers switching costs.

Changing times have been rough on marketers. Buyers adjust their social settings, unsubscribe from email lists, fast-forward past commercials and receive so many flashes and buzzes that most marketing becomes ambient noise. B2B technology marketers need a new-school approach for connecting with customers in a purposeful way. If they don't evolve, they'll be overtaken by competitors who put customers in control.

What change is needed? A key insight comes from Forrester Research, which found buyers "might be anywhere from

two-thirds to 90% of the way through their journey before they reach out to the vendor." In other words, if you're not reaching customers online in a strategic way early on, you've missed the boat.

Consider old-school vs. new-school approaches in B2B technology marketing. The old-school approach was a one-way communication. When the sellers were the only organization with a budget, they owned the communication channels. An old-school marketer's job was to provide basic information about the features and benefits of products or services. The new-school approach fits the marketing function into today's social, search engine and online ratings context. New-school is about thinking of your customers as an audience, and serving information that helps them either overcome a challenge or increase revenue. That could mean talking about your products; equally it could mean providing insights, sharing tips and spotting trends. This shift in mindset is helping new-school marketers create content people love, act on and share. It also is building long-term customer trust.

Flipping the power structure of the buyer-seller relationship may seem counterintuitive and complicated, but it doesn't have to be. What it takes is knowing who you are, your customers' needs and the right technology. The combination will elevate your brand by empowering your customers. Here are seven steps that will help get you started:

Identify your target customers, their needs and how you can satisfy them. Who are your target customers? What are their challenges, needs and motivations? Answers to these questions will drive how you position your company from a messaging and a channel perspective.

Nail your messaging. Draft messages that connect your target customers' needs and wants with how your business can help. Nail your organizational messaging down, then expand and refine for brands, products and target persona messages.

Have a great website. Your website is the hub of integrated digital marketing campaigns. It's where you funnel online traffic and capture leads. It's where potential customers will find information about your brand, products, services and benefits.

And it's where you can nurture prospects from leads to customers, and passive customers to engaged promoters. Make sure your site looks and works great — both in the eyes of your customers and in the eyes of search engines.

Develop killer content. Great content takes many forms — videos, eBooks, webinars, blog posts, byline articles, white papers and infographics. No matter the form, killer content is digestible, relevant and compelling. Written to serve as a resource rather than to promote your business, the primary goal should be to delight or enlighten, not sell.



Michael Nelson

Extend content throughout your brand's online ecosystem. Killer content is meaningless if it doesn't reach the right people. When developing content, consider its ability to be used across multiple channels — paid, earned, shared and owned (PESO). PESO uses content to get your company in front of the right people at the right time. When done right, PESO will use targeted online ads, media placements, social shares or direct marketing to funnel traffic to content, which lives on your website.

Capture and track website visitors' interests; nurture leads along. With traffic flowing into your website, connect the data from your landing pages, downloads and webinars to your CRM system to support your sales team. Align lead nurturing and personalize sales strategies around what customers are doing on your website. If a customer reviews a white paper, think about sending them a case study on the subject. If they look at your price sheet, maybe it's time to pick up the phone?

Measure and continuously improve campaigns. With your integrated digital marketing machine purring, you will be collecting lots of data. Much of it can and should help advance your business. Use data to identify where your traffic is coming from, what content is most effective and how marketing contributes to your company's revenue.

Michael Nelson is Senior Account Executive at PadillaCRT and a member of its B2B tech practice. ○

Media brief

Newspaper reporter ranked among "most endangered" jobs

Newspaper reporters now occupy one of the scarcest jobs in America, a designation listed alongside professions such as meter reader, mail carrier, farmer, and logging worker, according to a recent ranking of "endangered jobs" by CareerCast.com.

The latest CareerCast report claims newspaper reporters currently yield an annual median salary of \$37,090, and the profession has a projected growth outlook of -13%.

The job search site claimed the profession has yet to recover from a severe decline in hiring that hit the media industry nearly a decade ago, an industry still "undergoing a profound transformation as outlets work to keep up with evolving technology."

Report research was compiled based on hiring outlook and contributing economic factors. Other jobs that rank high on CareerCast's list of endangered jobs include flight attendant, jeweler, insurance underwriter, drill press operator, and seamstress/tailor.

It's the second time this year a report by the job search site has heralded bad news for the industry. In April CareerCast deemed newspaper reporter among the "worst jobs in America," behind professions such as lumberjack, cook, and military personnel.

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Understanding marketing automation for healthcare

Marketing automation is a great way for communicators to drive brand awareness, and should be strategically integrated into all marketing and PR efforts, connecting everything you do in digital spaces for healthcare clients. A successful marketing automation strategy, however, involves more than simply sending email blasts.

By Nicole Wojno

Marketing automation is all the talk these days, and for good reason. A March *Forbes* study found that automated marketing increased the conversion of prospects into qualified leads by 53%, and a Pardot survey of marketing automation users shows that their companies' sales revenue climbed by 34% on average after implementation.

But while marketing automation can eliminate a lot of manual work, it isn't like a programmable thermostat you can set once and forget about. Your marketing automation strategy needs to be continually updated with new content and tactics to deliver fresh leads and insights to your sales and marketing teams. These adjustments are particularly crucial as your company grows, the healthcare market continues to change and your customers' needs evolve.

Here are three common pain points — or “nots” — that we see among companies in the healthcare industry whose marketing automation strategy is struggling to keep pace with change, along with some advice for how to “untie” them.

Not offering sales enablement tools

When companies are focused on prospects and devising new strategies to reach them using marketing automation, it's often easy to forget about the most important “customer” of your content — your sales team.

Sales enablement is about empowering sales representatives and equipping them with the best informational tools to support your marketing strategy. Although a less talked about concept, it is quickly becoming one of the most crucial elements of B2B marketing. Businesses that don't make it a priority are bound to fall behind.

Avoid creating content for content's sake. Instead, you need to understand exactly what sales representatives need from you and focus on developing that content. Start by asking sales team members about the types of conversations they are having with potential customers and learning about collateral and materials they need to help engage their prospects throughout the buying cycle.

Along with that support, creating a sales enablement program requires training,

such as conducting quick in-person education sessions that deliver several actionable takeaways for your sales force. Training could also include practical exercises that lead to real assets (and a lot of kudos), such as establishing a sales library of all marketing-created content, creating an internal lead nurturing drip campaign with training resources, and empowering sales to be their own marketers by providing templates that can easily be customized and sent to prospects.

Lastly, marketing leaders should continually check in with your sales team to determine how your marketing automation platform can deliver better insights and adjust accordingly.

Not integrating automation into all efforts

A key aspect of sales enablement is supporting the sales team's efforts with marketing automation. However, after integrating the marketing automation system with their website during implementation, too often companies quickly default to leveraging the platform as an email blast tool instead of strategically aligning it with all marketing efforts in the organization.

The main point of marketing automation is that it connects with all of your PR, marketing and digital tactics, so they all must be synchronously developed in order for the unified marketing strategy to be successful. That means creating relevant, up-to-date content assets to keep leads engaged and using some experimentation, such as with email campaigns, to determine the subject lines and copy that maximizes conversions.

We recommend developing a quarterly campaign plan to establish the overarching campaign theme, its associated events and how you'll tie that into nurturing campaigns, social media, paid advertising, webinars and promotion on your website to increase conversions.

In addition, as you're developing new content, whether it's a bylined article for a healthcare IT publication, a guest blog on a partner's site, a new data sheet or even an updated website, think about where you can use that information in your current campaigns or whether there's an opportunity to offer it on your website as a download.

Not seeing the big picture on reporting

With a marketing automation tool and CRM in place, there's so much that you can report on that you could almost spend all your time reporting and revising your current efforts, and lose sight of your big-picture goals.

Although the latest click-through rate or deliverability on your emails is important to the marketing team, your C-suite probably doesn't care about those stats. Find out the metrics they care about and succinctly report on those data. Say your CEO wants to know the percentage of new customers sourced by new marketing initiatives. To deliver that metric, you would take the number of the new customers acquired in a set time period and determine what percentage started as a marketing-sourced lead. This provides a great indicator of how marketing is impacting customer acquisition and directly contributing to the bottom line.

What if the CFO wants to know how much it costs the company to acquire a customer? Simply add up all the campaign spending, advertising costs, sales and marketing salaries and anything else that contributes to your overall sales and marketing costs and then divide that by the number of new customers in that time period — that is one number that you don't want increasing over time!

Do some digging on the types of metrics that will give your C-level executives an accurate (and meaningful) picture of marketing performance, and create reports that tell that story instead of just exporting email performance reports.

Those are only the most common marketing automation “nots” among healthcare companies that should be untied, but there are several others. By far, the most important “not” to avoid is not integrating marketing automation into your overall marketing strategy. While a crucial element, marketing automation must be supported with informative, engaging content. With a solid, comprehensive strategy, companies will drive brand awareness, establish thought leadership and increase quality lead generation, which makes sales, marketing and the C-suite happy.

Nicole Wojno is Director of Marketing at Dodge Communications. ●



Nicole Wojno

Winning headlines with a material or component story

With the right story, you can create an effective media relations strategy that reaches your target audience.

By Matt McLoughlin

I just read about spider silk for the thousandth time, and the elements used to tell the story piqued my interest like it's the first. For decades, and punctuated every time a new Spider-Man movie debuts, we've heard about spider silk's potential to introduce new materials and inspire others. It's not only the basis for research, it's also a familiar, understandable, and cool angle for telling a science and technology story.

For every spider silk advance, hundreds of other interesting technologies and materials have stories to tell. But so many materials science and component manufacturing companies miss the chance to elevate their story and insert themselves into larger conversations that could increase their reach and exposure.

Of course that's tough to do in a crowded tech media landscape where the majority of coverage is tied to a handful of brands. In 2010, Pew Research reported that 15% of tech media coverage was focused solely on Apple. I'm willing to bet that number hasn't fallen off.

But with the right story, you can mix an effective media relations strategy and content marketing to reach your target audience despite the obstacles. Storytelling could be the difference in securing financing, increasing your customer base, and catching the eye of a customer. You can build your own platforms to share content, but the media remains the most effective way for most companies to reach and inform a large audience.

So, how do you stand out to the media and position your technology or company for a breakout story? Having worked with materials companies and the gadgets and devices they're part of, we've identified five ways to develop a materials and components story that sticks:

Tell your best story consistently. Think big. You're not just creating a new technology. You're changing the way people interact, creating a new experience, or solving a problem. Innovation is a central theme for most technology companies, but so few truly develop a narrative that speaks to that. Incremental advances in tech are important news for some company stakeholders, but creatively building buzz around a bigger picture topic is more effective.

SCHOTT, the international glass and technology company and a client of mine, is great at this. It has reimaged the way it

shares information through a blog that consistently tells a story of innovation, new applications for glass, and advances in a centuries-old technology.

Figure out where your best story fits. Getting your story told is not just about product details and key messaging. Find a way to tie your story to topics, trends, and news outside your own world. Also, know where to place your story so higher profile media may take it to the next level. Some stories may fit a *Wall Street Journal* or ABC News. But big media have a barrier to entry that you might not meet right away. It may be easier to connect with an outlet like LiveScience that can tell your story in an interesting way, and whose partnerships with big media outlets could land you in *The Huffington Post* or *Yahoo News*.

Battery startup Sakti3 landed a story in the *Wall Street Journal* by targeting reporter Christopher Mims's battery coverage and tying its story to that of a bigger company, Dyson. It didn't hurt that Sakti3 was announcing funding from Dyson, but it saw an opportunity to tell a much more complete story that drove coverage.

Take your story into the future. Presenting your new technology to the media is the starting point. Media want to know how current tech will shape the future. You don't have to give away proprietary information or promise anything unrealistic to paint for a reporter how your material or component will evolve, address future challenges, or disrupt a market. Creative storytelling will demonstrate innovation and thought leadership by pointing media to those next steps in technology.

Intel, for example, continues to build a vision of the future, but the company takes a different approach when communicating its technologies. It has mastered the art of articulating — at conferences, and to the media — how its technologies will impact everyday experiences, all without referencing particular products. You don't have to be Intel to do this.

Present a clear picture — or video — of your story. Compelling images and video are a must for every company and story. Period. Images and video triple views of press releases, and articles with images get 94% more views than those without, according to one expert. And, no surprise, multimedia dominates social media.

Indiegogo posted a handful of videos that combine humor and quality production, a model worth following. Be assured, the video is considered the most important element of crowdfunding campaigns.

Don't just grab a camera and shoot. Look at how media cover products, materials, and tech like yours, and hire someone who can reproduce that. Photographers for local newspapers will often freelance, giving you a skilled and cost-effective eye to get the most out of your images.



Matt McLoughlin

Find and build storytelling talent. Your team may be the best part of telling your story. If you're creating content or coordinating an interview with media, you know the stress of capturing the right voice and energy with the project. A CEO may not have the technical expertise to address engineering issues. A product manager may not be able to address big-picture issues. Users, brand evangelists, or customers may be your best source.

Who are the innovators, personalities, and faces within your company? Who can tell the best story about your technology? Find these people who can lift your storytelling through personality and enthusiasm. Capture them on video, introduce them to media, and have them contribute content.

Google is one example of how to do this well. It has a lot of smart, media-savvy experts who can execute on stage, in front of the media, and on video. Recent discussions about artificial intelligence, Q&As with Google Webmasters, and updates on self-driving cars show its bank of go-to sources is enviable from any company's perspective. These speakers succeed because they convey a vision for how incremental tech advances are reshaping the future. Google makes time to train these executives, including new faces from companies it acquires, in presentation and storytelling skills. You should too.

Take stock of your resources and fold some or all of these tips into your communications strategy. With a big-picture story told through the media and your own content, your material or component could be the spider silk still captivating us decades from now.

Matt McLoughlin is Vice President at Gregory FCA. ○

Getting the message on messaging

In order for a tech PR program to be effective, communications and messaging must be inextricably intertwined. The process requires nimble thinking and more than a small amount of patience.

By Dan Garza

Messaging comprises a position statement and several declarative sentence messages. Typically the details convey a key solution or differentiator no competitor has, and resolves issues and/or problematic areas associated with customers' product or service offerings.

Most often, creating these messages isn't a walk in the park, as the PR pro can expect corporate obstacles, roadblocks, and detours along the route to completion.

Some high-tech companies in Silicon Valley wrack their brains coming up with the right messages. Marketing messages and associated positioning or value proposition are indeed the very foundation of a solid technology PR program, but putting them together doesn't have to take forever. Three to four declarative, active-voice sentences stating a product or service's strengths as solutions can serve as those marketing messages.

Messaging experts — those who've writ-

ten books and are regarded as the gurus on this subject — say you can expect to take about three weeks to develop an effective set of messages.

However, at startups and smaller B2B companies with only a sales director, company president, and a marketing professional wearing many hats, that message development has the highest probability of being nailed down within a few days.

Messaging can be flexible; it doesn't have to be rigid. The elasticity comes in when technology changes or when customers require certain technical solutions. Messages embedded in your proactively developed stories and articles going to the trade, vertical, and business press can be adjusted when new customer and sales developments arise.

The inherent beauty of technology from a PR perspective is that it's dynamic. In B2B communications, customers using hardware and software products from various

suppliers face ever-changing issues so that answers to those issues constantly change.

In most instances, that means messaging should be expeditiously developed, minted, and sufficiently flexible to be effective in communicating with a market audience at a given time. Unfortunately, messaging can be worried and argued over so much that a particular set of messages become invalid due to a changing market.

In other words, targeted customers have already satisfactorily resolved their challenges and moved on. Earlier developed messaging thus becomes outdated and moot. It's a case of being all dressed up and no place to go.

At times, getting messages ironed out can be extremely challenging, particularly in large corporations. There's where bureaucracy, ineptness, and individual politics thrive. A company environment like this perpetuates the idea of sub-dividing messaging and PR efforts.

In this arrangement, one group is solely tasked with message development. Once those messages are completed, they are thrown over the wall to a second group, typically market communications or PR, who are trusted with conveying them via their selected vehicles. Generally, this isn't a very effective practice, since news releases are company-centric and not customer-centric. By their nature, news releases do what they're supposed to do — make announcements and extol new product features — yet they lack the level of credibility messaging requires.

Keep it simple

Tech PR pros have two options: get wrapped up in bureaucratic bickering over what's right and wrong, causing delays that stymie content development and communications; or take the "Keep it simple, stupid," approach, preserve basic development and execution with an urgency at the forefront, and hope the marketing group responsible for messaging reaches an expeditious consensus.

Keep in mind the adage that nothing is perfect. A good rule of thumb is to go with the best messaging possible that support marketing and sales for a certain period, then fall back and re-group to refresh those messages with new customer and sales input. Engaging with a company's sales force



Dan Garza

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LOS ANGELES:
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— Continued on next page

is perhaps the best route to take for messaging. Sales personnel are on the front line with customers and have first hand knowledge of their challenges, issues, and problems, today and in the future; sales personnel provide fertile ground to begin an audit leading to well-developed messaging.

It's also an excellent way to simultaneously gather critical data for messaging and a contributed article program. That data can be curated into a content database and parlayed into an on-going contributed article program to build awareness, visibility, product preference, business value, and pave the way toward a more favorable sales environment.

It's worth noting messaging and contributed article content is very similar. Messaging deals with customer issues and solutions. Likewise, the types of contributed articles trade press editors seek are problem/solution or tutorial. What could be better?

Embed messages in PR tools

Once an acceptable set of messages is formulated, it's time to structure a PR communications program with those messages embedded in some form in all communications tools — press releases, customer case studies, white papers, contributed articles, web content, technical conference papers, you name it, those messages must be there.

In most instances — with contributed articles, white papers, or other customer-centric PR tools — messaging needs to be obliquely phrased or worded so that it is editorially acceptable. Embedding company messaging as originally worded and head-on is not suggested in cases like this. However, message wording can be more forgiving, more promotional in company-centric communications, such as online or print advertising and web product or service-related content.

In the last year or so, research studies show that such PR tools as contributed articles, e-newsletters, case studies, visual aids or information graphics are the so-called “goldilocks” of content marketing, according to Ascend2's April “Content Marketing Trends Survey.”

Kevin Bailey's article in the April 2014 edition of *O'Dwyer's*, “Why PR Is Now SEO's Best Friend,” best explains the why and how industry media links provide “strong calls to action.” Bailey contends those links drive an audience from a media outlet to relevant content assets on a client's site. Trade publications usually include the company's website with the bio of a contributed article author.

This and other research and editorial reports put teeth in the belief there's considerable value associated with a strategically structured contributed articles program, as

the focal point of a strong PR and content marketing program. Contributed articles become the key communications driver to help usher in high-value sales leads and move prospects up the sales cycle. They create and foster credibility, reputation, customer trust, and business value as the key sales incentives in dealing with those B2B high-tech companies.

Once articles are published, they can be posted on your company's website. Plus, thanks to search engines like Google, Bing, and others, your contributed pieces go viral and are easily located when prospects or existing customers do an online search to find ways of resolving their current challenges.

Further, the content drawn from Subject Matter Expert sourcing sessions can be re-purposed into a variety of other PR tools to include web content, white papers, and other marketing collateral.

Along this line, another research report, KoMarketing's “2015 B2B Usability Report,” says that traditional marketing collateral like research reports, case studies, and white papers are “must haves” for website posting. It asserts that website content like this helps to establish customer credibility and trust and encourages prospects into a buying frame of mind.

Dan Garza is a marketing PR professional and veteran observer of Silicon Valley PR. ○



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The 10Fold team striking a pose!

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10Fold provides public relations, analyst relations and content services for B2B infrastructure companies, or what we call “deep technology” companies. By giving a voice to entrepreneurs and innovators, we create demand for solutions that change the way we work and live. Our domain specialties include Big Data, storage, information security, mobile, telecommunications, enterprise software, and networking.

10Fold customers rely on us for the market recognition and visibility required to meet business objectives, and we are proud to be the only agency that guarantees quantifiable results with its award-winning Metrics Matter™ methodology. Established in 1995, more than 300 companies have relied on 10Fold (formerly Trainer

Communications). Based in San Francisco, CA, we have received several dozen national awards such as PRSA Anvils, Bulldog Awards, MarCom Awards, Iron Sabre Awards, The Holmes Best Places to Work award (twice!) and dozens of video and animation production awards. For more information, visit www.10fold.com.

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336 North Main Street
Royal Oak, MI 48067
248/304-1400
info@airfoilgroup.com
www.airfoilgroup.com

55 South Market Street
Suite 1410
San Jose, CA 95113
650/691-7300

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Airfoil is an independent integrated marketing communications and public relations firm serving global technology businesses. With offices in Detroit, Silicon Valley, and New York City, as well as global partnerships in Asia, Eu-

rope and South America, Airfoil drives campaigns for a growing client roster across automotive, consumer, enterprise, healthcare and other business sectors. The agency provides services to measure, inform and accelerate marketing communications, digital, social media and brand strategy programs for clients.

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Employees: 14

Danielle Dunne, Managing Director

Whether cars or cameras, 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, part of the inVentiv Health Public Relations Group, takes an integrated approach to communications with capabilities spanning public relations, digital and social media, marketing and branding, graphic design and multimedia, and research and measurement.

In addition, we believe crisis prevention is essential in today's 24/7, hyper-connected world, where a brand could be 140 characters, a post, or a video away from a crisis. Often, a brand's longevity relies on the effectiveness with which it responds to online activism, which is why we developed an Issues 2.0 service. As there is no such thing as a typical crisis, nor a cookie cutter response, especially when patient lives are at stake, we believe that investing in an ounce of prevention is worth the inordinate costs and resource strains that comes when a corporation must triage a full-blown crisis. As a global healthcare agency, the world's most iconic brands trust us to diffuse their most challenging health issues before they escalate

into crises.

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 product and nutritional supplement brands, over-the-counter and beauty products, and food and beverage companies.

BATEMAN GROUP

1550 Bryant St., Suite 450
San Francisco, CA 94103
415/503-1818
Fax: 415/503-1880
sfnewbiz@bateman-group.com
www.bateman-group.com

45 Main St, Suite 617
Brooklyn, NY 11201
347/410-7983
nycnewbiz@bateman-group.com

Fred Bateman, CEO and Founder
Bill Bourdon, General Manager, SF and Partner
Tyler L. Perry, General Manager, NY and Partner
Syreeta Mussante, Paula Cavagnaro, and Steph Johnson, SVPs
Shannon Hutto, VP
Elinor Mills, VP of Content

Headquartered in San Francisco with offices in New York City, Bateman Group was founded in 2004 with a goal of creating the technology-focused PR agency of choice for startups and established market leaders alike — a different breed of agency where content development is a core competency instead of a liability. Bateman Group is distinguished by its people-first company culture and progressive workplace policies. By assembling and retaining a stellar team of the top communications strategists in the industry, Bateman Group maintains one of the highest employee retention averages in the industry — turnover is typically no more than 8%.

Clients include: Addepar, AdRoll, Animoto, Bromium, Campaign Monitor, Castlight Health, Google For Work, Google Cloud Platform, Gusto, HackerOne, Intuit, InVision, Invoca, Lightspeed, LinkedIn, Lookout, Netskope, Numerify, Percolate, Ping Identity, Prosper Marketplace, Scale Ven-

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450 West 15th Street, 6th Floor
New York, NY 10011
212/845-5600
www.inventivhealth.com/B2
Twitter: @biosector2
b2view.biosector2.com
jokane@biosector2.com

Jeanine O'Kane, US Managing Director
Jo Wunder, EU Managing Director

Biosector 2 (B2) is a global healthcare communications agency 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.

With a dynamic and collaborative team in New York, Washington, Los Angeles, and London, B2 provides clients with global reach and fully integrated services. Biosector 2, as part of the InVentiv Health Public Relations Group, delivers unmatched perspective, creative know-how, and a truly integrated approach to communications.

At Biosector 2 our main goal is to create measurable behavior change for our clients' most important stakeholders. Digital and social channels have become impossible to ignore for patients, doctors, providers and anyone accessing the vast landscape of health and wellness today. Biosector 2 has deep experience in traditional healthcare communications and commitment to excellence that informs our understanding of digital and social media trends and how they can be appropriately leveraged and executed for pharmaceutical companies. Our teams work closely with our in-house digital experts to monitor new technologies and trends, relevant regulatory developments (like FDA letters, or notices of violation relating to digital initiatives, etc.). Equally important, we have developed extensive experience in working with internal medical, legal and regulatory review teams to develop executable, high-impact digital and social media initiatives.

Comprehensively, our track record reflects the systematic approach we take for all of our clients' business needs. Our dynamic, insightful approach allows us to solve today's problems while uncovering tomorrow's opportunities.

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Don Baer, Worldwide Chair & CEO
Rowan Benecke, Chair, Global Technology Practice

Every business is becoming a technology company.

Technology is no longer a function to deliver more effectively, rather a redefinition of how businesses operate. While companies have risen with a smart technology strategy, others have swiftly been brought down by technology failures. Successful businesses must have a strong technology strategy, infrastructure and communications narrative talent. Burson-Marsteller has hundreds of technology-focused communications professionals around the world who focus on the right audience—the influencers who drive decisions impact success. Our technology clients range from some of the world's largest and most well-known technology companies to niche and innovative players.

We work with technology clients across a spectrum of communications challenges and issues, including everything from enterprise to consumer tech, from product launches to brand positioning, we work with each of our clients uncover and develop great stories and share them with your key influencers. Our work is rooted in data, drawing on a proprietary database of two million individuals, to pinpoint the clearest path to influence your audience.

Burson-Marsteller leads in understanding how to develop the right narrative, and also knowing the right audience in which it should communicate. A technology company's narrative is critical to communicate a compelling vision of how their products and services will change and improve the world. Burson-Marsteller's sphere of influence extends beyond strong media relationships to include customers, investors, partners, and employees, NGO's, topical experts and regulators around the world. Coupling the story that makes the most impact, with the audiences who matter, therefore requiring a deeper understanding of the company, is true success. Being able to deploy this story across all relevant communications channels, including paid, owned, earned and social,



Bateman Group Partners, (L to R): **Bill Bourdon**, General Manager, SF; **Fred Bateman**, CEO and Founder; and **Tyler L. Perry**, General Manager, NY.

allows our clients to reach the appropriate audiences to inform and persuade behavior.

While we excel in technology PR, we also translate the power and depth of Burson-Marsteller's traditional capabilities in corporate positioning, executive communications, issues, crisis and stakeholder outreach to deliver customized programs for technology clients.

With the industry's strongest global footprint and a deep expertise in complex technologies, we scale to consistently deliver outcomes for our technology clients that grow their businesses and their reputations.

IT has evolved from back office to front office to every office.

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6560 Gunpark Dr., Suite C
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Terri Douglas, Co-Founder & Principal

Ranked the leading technology PR agency in Colorado, Catapult PR helps B-2-B technology companies establish market-leading positions through strategic positioning and messaging, aggressive media and industry analyst relations, and social media and community building.

Hence the name, "Catapult." The firm is expert at coordinating and executing high-impact company/product launches. Its work around strategic narrative development, starting with a full-day workshop, helps tech firms define and own market categories.

From startups to large enterprises, Catapult has deep expertise in all major vertical markets, along

with years' long experience in application development, cloud, big data, commercial wireless and enterprise platforms that disrupt market norms.

Catapult's success stems from its personal and professional service, along with partner-level account involvement and strategy. It is the preferred agency for technology companies looking to establish and build market-leading positions.

CHAMBERLAIN HEALTHCARE PR

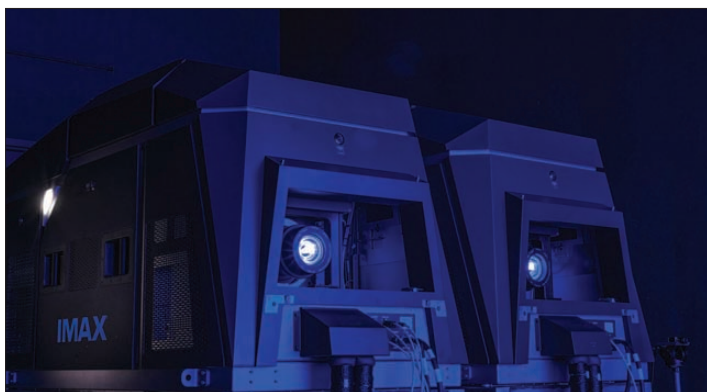
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New York, NY 10011
212/884-0650
Inventivhealth.com/chamberlain
Christie.Anbar@inventivhealth.com

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.

At Chamberlain, we offer a complete suite of communications services to reach target audiences through appropriate channels — fully matched to today's technological and geographic realities.

Continued on page 44



As part of its commitment to pushing boundaries and doing things never before done in cinema, IMAX developed its next-generation projection and sound system featuring groundbreaking proprietary laser technology designed for IMAX's largest screens. The Coyne team leveraged the launch of IMAX with laser to solidify the company's position as a technology powerhouse while also reinforcing its ability to deliver a unique and completely re-imagined movie-going experience.

Photo: IMAX Corporation

CHAMBERLAIN

Continued from page 43

Digital and social channels have become impossible to ignore for patients, doctors, providers and anyone accessing the vast landscape of health and wellness today. We have deep experience in traditional healthcare communications and commitment to excellence that informs our understanding of digital and social media trends and how they can be appropriately leveraged and executed for pharmaceutical companies. Our teams work closely with our in-house digital experts to monitor new technologies and trends, relevant regulatory developments (like FDA letters, or notices of violation relating to digital initiatives, etc.). Equally important, we have developed extensive experience in working with internal medical, legal and regulatory review teams to develop executable, high-impact digital and social media initiatives.

In addition to our Digital & Social Media services, we offer Brand Communications, Corporate Communications, Market Access, Traditional Media Relations, Advocacy Relations, Data Strategy and Management, Public Affairs, Message and Content Development, National and Grassroots Programming, Issues and Crisis Management. Chamberlain, as part of the inVentiv Health Public Relations Group and inVentiv Health, Inc., is part of a global communications network with 13,000 employees in 40 countries.

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450 West 15th Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10011
212/229-8400
www.inventivhealth.com/ccapr
info@ccapr.com

Julie Adrian, *Managing Dir., US*
Heather Gartman, *Managing Dir., DC*
Cori Hollenbach, *Managing Dir., 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.

Our communications programs are driven by the need to motivate behavioral change among stakeholders. Digital and social channels have become impossible to ignore for patients, doctors, providers and anyone accessing the vast landscape of health and wellness today. CCA has deep experience in traditional healthcare communications and commitment to excellence that informs our understanding of digital and social media trends and how they can be appropriately leveraged and executed for pharmaceutical

companies. Our teams work closely with our in-house digital experts to monitor new technologies and trends, and relevant regulatory developments (like FDA letters, or notices of violation relating to digital initiatives, etc.). Equally important, we have developed extensive experience in working with internal medical, legal and regulatory review teams to develop executable, high-impact digital and social media initiatives.

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.

COPERNIO

11602 Knott St., Suite D-13
Garden Grove, CA 92841
714/891-3660
svanbarneveld@copernio.com

Susan van Barneveld, *CEO*

Copernio's clients describe our team as nimble, creative, and effective. With more than 55 years of experience building technology brands, and an affiliate network that spans the globe, Copernio is a rare breed of boutique agency specializing in public relations, influencer marketing and social media.

Copernio prides itself on the long-term relationships established with both the media and our clients. Our personalized, creative approach enables us to effectively integrate digital, broadcast and print media with innovative influencer campaigns and social media initiatives for start-ups through Fortune 100 clients. We work with our clients to deliver results with a high ROI that relate directly to their goals — whether it is brand building, consumer sales, or other strategic business goals.

With a strong client base in the consumer electronics, aerospace and defense, high technology, manufacturing, healthcare and green initiatives arenas, Copernio's clients are recognized as category leaders in their respective niches. Copernio's team is comprised of specialists with expertise in areas specific to our clients' needs, products and services.

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www.coynepr.com

5 Bryant Park,
28th Floor
New York, NY 10018
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12400 Wilshire Boulevard
Room 535
Los Angeles, CA 90025
310/395-6110

Brian Murphy, *Vice President, Consumer Technology*
Katie Seifert, *Assistant VP*

Coyne has established itself as one of the leading independent full-service firms in the country representing an impressive collection of international corporations, top national brands and first-class organizations. No agency possesses a better combination of strategic perspective, business and technology experience, unbridled creativity, and client-centered service than our nationally recognized firm.

Consumer technology PR is not just about being able to communicate a product's features and benefits to the "tech" community. While this audience is still important, technology has become a bigger part of pop culture. An agency's ability to effectively communicate its client's technology to a broader audience is paramount to any successful communications program.

At Coyne, the consumer technology team is adept at taking what can be complicated technologies and communicating them to key industry constituents, while at the same time communicating the innovation to a much broader consumer audience. This one-two punch is one of the reasons why many leading consumer technology organizations look to partner with Coyne.

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212/367-9750
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Dorothy Crenshaw, *Founder*

Crenshaw Communications is expert at identifying, shaping, and communicating what differentiates a technology product or brand, and

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Desirée Webster, marketing comms. manager, Legrand N.A., reviews its new On-Q Intuity home automation system with Richard Roher, managing partner, Feintuch Communications at the annual CEDIA Expo.

CRENSHAW COMMS.

Continued from page 44

how to translate that difference into real customer benefits.

We offer in-depth experience in consumer and business technology products and services; marketing and ad tech; retail and eetail technology; renewable energy; enterprise software; digital and mobile services; digital content/publishing; and wearable tech/therapeutics.

In addition we have a particular expertise in early-stage businesses at the intersection of the arts, design, and technology. Successful client programs include those for both established and emerging brands and companies, including appFigures, AOL Platforms, WeTransfer, Blick Art Materials, Five Elements Robotics, Silverpop/IBM, skobbler/Telenav, ToutApp, Purch, Magzter, Retail.com, data company XPlenty, and wearable technology startup ZetrOz.

EASTWICK

211 Sutter Street, Floor 3
San Francisco, CA 94108
408/470-4850
info@eastwick.com
www.eastwick.com
@eastwickcom
Facebook.com/eastwickcom
Linkedin.com/company/eastwick

Barbara Bates, CEO & Founder
Heather Kernahan, President
Douglas A. Liddle, Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer

Hi, we're Eastwick. We're a technology-focused communications agency, and we're here to help.

With deep Silicon Valley roots, we are geeky and breathe tech

every day. We're eager to tell the world your stories — from enterprise, security, and data and analytics, to adtech, cleantech, healthtech, edtech, and consumer. We bring together analytics and insights, public relations, content and digital marketing, and creative services to help some of the world's biggest brands — and emerging leaders — create high impact communications strategies.

We are tech communications. We get you. We get you noticed. We get you results.

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4030 Easton Station, Suite 300
Columbus, Ohio 43219
dennis.brown@fahlgren.com
Info@fahlgren.com
www.fahlgrenmortine.com
Twitter: @fahlgrenmortine

Neil Mortine, President and CEO
Dennis Brown, SVP, Technology
Julie Exner, SVP, Technology

Fahlgren Mortine “thinks wider” to bring the right mix of emerging and traditional communications to technology decision-makers at every stage of their journey. Building on a deep understanding of products and markets acquired through years of experience and primary and secondary research, our “What If?” strategic framework infuses creativity and discipline into the planning process to deliver solutions-oriented programs that create awareness, drive preference, generate leads and nurture prospects.

Fahlgren Mortine integrates a range of services required for success in today's multi-channel world, including branding, media and analyst relations, media connections planning and buying, content marketing, social media strategy and management, advertising and digital development.



The Eastwick team at their 2015 summer offsite meeting.

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245 Park Ave., 39th Fl.
New York, NY 10167
212/808-4901
Fax: 212/808-4915
info@feintuchpr.com
www.feintuchcommunications.com
www.PRWorldAlliance.com

Henry Feintuch, President
Richard Roher, Managing Partner

Tech PR has been part of our DNA for decades. Our team helps start-ups, rapidly growing firms and established enterprises to influence markets about their products, services and corporate values. We do that with journalistic sensibilities and solid business experience.

Today, few companies engage in vanity PR; they engage in programs to educate their stakeholders, to engage with their customers and to drive business results.

Preparing to launch an exciting social media platform or beta test a breakthrough ad technology? Planning the introduction of advanced technologies for audio capture or video display? Looking to get industry analyst feedback on an enterprise mobile app? Or explain to shareholders why a security technology, biotech development or fintech algorithm may change the world? Is your new wind/solar technology gearing up to challenge conventional wisdom about alternative energy? Are you aiming to expand your marketing to a global stage?

The senior-led Feintuch Communications team, now including the Roher PR Group, thrives on helping organizations to address their business communications challenges and position themselves to succeed in the marketplace. Our programs are designed to deliver business ROI, not just press clippings and status reports. We welcome the opportunity to partner with you to grow your business.

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301 East 57th St.
New York, NY 10022
212/715-1600
www.finnpartners.com

Sabrina Horn, Managing Partner, US Technology Practice
646/202-9777 or 415/999-8777
Sabrina.horn@finnpartners.com
Alicia Young, NY/East Coast
212/593-6343
alicia.young@finnpartners.com
Howard Solomon, LA & SF/West Coast
415/348-2733
howard.solomon@finnpartners.com
Chantal Bowman-Boyles, London/Europe
44 203 008 8622
chantalb@finnpartners.com

Finn Partners experienced its highest growth rate ever in 2015, underscoring our position as one of the fastest growing independent communications agencies in the world. Our Technology Practice is now our largest, due in part to our acquisition of Horn Group, a highly respected and iconic New York and San Francisco-based tech PR firm. As part of this acquisition, Founder Sabrina Horn, joins as Managing Partner, US Technology Practice, along with her team. With a 20+ year track record, Horn Group has worked with the industry's foremost entrepreneurs and visionaries to help build their companies and create entirely new categories in the tech sector.

With our U.S. and global reach, Finn Partners Technology practice is now 100 people and \$20 million. As such, we have one of the PR industry's largest tech practices, with strength across B2C and B2B sectors including enterprise cloud, security, storage, consumer tech/IoT, big data, supply chain, services, mobile, adtech, digital publishing, information services, and telecommunications.

Technology brings change to the

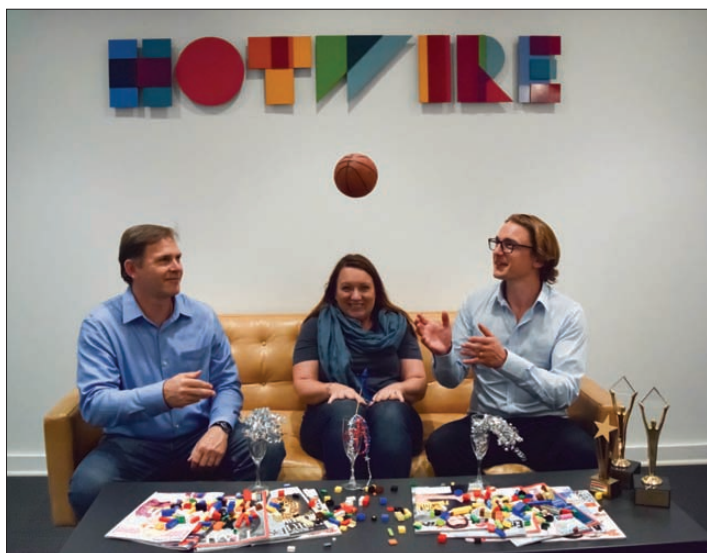
Continued on page 48

Finn Partners and Horn Group. Together.
Igniting big ideas. Broader services.
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A Great Match Delivering Amazing Results.

Chicago DC Detroit Jerusalem London Los Angeles Munich Nashville New York Paris San Francisco



Hotwire General Managers David Bailey and Rebecca Honeyman, as well as Group CEO Brendon Craigie, take a short break between client meetings.

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Continued from page 46

way we live and work. At Finn Partners, we bring those stories to life, help people embrace that change, and move businesses forward.

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One Brook Street
Watertown, MA 02472
617/275-6500
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Phil Greenough, CEO & Founder
Jamie Parker, President

Brand storytelling drives Greenough. By aligning market and media interests with our clients' agendas, we drive awareness, affinity and action with all the key constituents. The difference starts with our service model: each client is assigned a seasoned, tech-savvy account leader who creates a data-driven plan that taps our dedicated resources in media, content and digital marketing. For earned coverage, our media group, comprised of former journalists, stays singularly focused on engagement with their former colleagues. The digital marketing team first actively listens and then maximizes the reach across paid, shared and owned media. Our content team creates material ranging from long and short form text to graphical and moving media. This integrated brand storytelling method is the backbone

of our clients' communications. Our 16 years of client experience includes public and private technology companies in segments like analytics, security, mobile and enterprise IT.

GREGORY FCA

27 West Athens Ave.
Ardmore, PA 19003
610/642-8253
www.GregoryFCA.com
www.TheNewsHackers.com

Greg Matusky, President
Mike Lizun, SVP, Technology PR
Jacob Tulskey, Business Development Manager

You have a product or service that's unlike anything else available. You're doing what seemed impossible even a few years ago, shifting the ground of your industry. But your story has yet to be told on a larger stage.

You want to tell the world about the work you're doing, want to earn new business through media coverage and content marketing, want to be the buzz of every conference you attend, but haven't seen success on that level just yet.

Gregory FCA's technology PR specialists are here to help. A nationally ranked, full-service public relations firm with 50 professionals, Gregory FCA has spent the last 25 years helping companies tell their stories and drive new business through media relations, content marketing, social media, and event strategy.

We work with startups crowdfunding their first device and global

enterprises making the world run smoothly and efficiently. Whether you're advancing consumer tech in smart homes, wearables, or connected devices; pushing the limits of materials science; disrupting the status quo in fintech; or scaling to meet the needs of the enterprise, you're changing the world. Gregory FCA will make sure the world knows it.

GROSHELLE COMMUNICATIONS

709 Panorama Drive
San Francisco, CA 94131
415/307-1380
heidi@groshelle.com
www.groshelle.com

Heidi Groshelle, Founder & Principal

Groshelle Communications specializes in launching innovative, disruptive consumer electronics and enterprise technologies into the U.S. marketplace for companies based in the Silicon Valley, across the U.S., in Asia, and in Europe.

Since 1995, we have helped executives at over 200 startups and established technology businesses shape their company's public reputation, build relationships and get published.

Based in San Francisco, we deliver strategic and effective public relations, content creation, and social media services.

21st Century communications are about sharing knowledge, building community, and engaging with customers and influencers. Our senior team ignites industry buzz and fans those flames to keep startups and mid-size companies top of mind.

Awards: Bronze Bulldog Award Winner for Best Consumer Product Launch; Bronze PRSA Commendation for Best Consumer Product Launch; Stevie Award Winner for Best Marketing Organization; Top 50 Communications Campaign; Silver Communicator Awards, Best PR Program.

THE HOFFMAN AGENCY

325 S. First St.
San Jose, CA 95113
408/286-2611
SBurkhart@Hoffman.com
LHoffman@Hoffman.com
www.Hoffman.com
Twitter: @DailyBrew

Defining communications broadly to include digital, content mar-

keting, thought leadership as well as traditional PR, The Hoffman Agency knows how to differentiate brands and deliver air cover for sales. With a heritage in the tech sector, the firm's work today cuts across a range of industries.

For clients with global needs, the company operates in Asia Pacific, Europe and the United States. Unlike traditional agencies handicapped by their silo structure, we apply a collaborative approach to implementing multi-country campaigns. This leverage of content and thinking across geographies ultimately generates better results.

While campaigns vary by client and industry, all share one theme: the creation of content that reflects the tenets of storytelling. This means developing narratives that prompt journalists to write and target audiences to read — a far cry from the "corporate speak" that satisfies internal stakeholders. Toward this end, the firm also conducts storytelling workshops.

Even on the operations side, The Hoffman Agency walks to a different drummer. Eschewing the traditional focus on the financial side — measuring account people based on their "billability" — the firm adheres to the belief that if you deliver great work to the client, financial performance will follow.

HOTWIRE

16 W. 22nd Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10010
646/738-8960
www.HotwirePR.us
LetsTalk@HotwirePR.com

535 Mission St., Suite 1756
San Francisco, CA 94105
415/840-2790

Brendon Craigie, Group CEO
David Bailey, EVP, GM San Francisco
Rebecca Honeyman, SVP, GM New York
Laura Macdonald, VP, San Francisco
Matt Krebsbach, VP San Francisco
Christa Conte, VP, New York

Hotwire is a global PR and communications agency dedicated to helping ambitious companies change their game, build their reputation, and stand out from the crowd. Our communications experts work in sector practice teams to provide our clients with in-depth knowledge and experience in a number of market categories. Our technology client line-up ranges from start-ups to *Fortune* 500 companies, spanning industries such as fintech, consumer technology,



The Karbo Com Nexenta team with Pepper the robot at OpenSDx.

e-commerce and software.

From Sydney to San Francisco, we're a team, with a "one office" mentality. Our international team works across our 22 locations, including the US, UK, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Australia and New Zealand, together with affiliate partners. We bring the best of our knowledge, skills and experience to all of our clients wherever they are in the world. Hotwire's clients around the globe include GoPro, Redbull, Indeed, MapR, Workday, WorldRemit, Cisco, Mozilla, Pensco, Inrix, Thales, Nikon, Logitech, Telefonica, Qualcomm and Shazam.

ICR

685 Third Avenue, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10017
Fax: 646/277-1201
www.icrinc.com

Thomas M. Ryan, CEO, Co-Founder
Don Duffy, President

Established in 1998 and privately-held, ICR partners with companies to develop strategic communications programs that achieve business goals, manage risk, and enhance the value of the enterprise. The firm's pairing of capital markets veterans and senior communications professionals provides a highly-differentiated offering, one that continues to serve as the foundation for significant growth.

Today, ICR has approximately 500 clients across 20 industries and is one of the largest independent agencies in North America. The

firm maintains offices in Boston, Connecticut, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco and Beijing.

In 2014, ICR once again saw double digit revenue growth driven by new client wins including Weibo, La Quinta Holdings, Freshpet, Rubicon Project, Extended Stay, AltheaDx and Paramount Group, among others. In January of 2015, ICR hosted the 17th Annual ICR XChange, the firm's annual investor conference, which drew more than 150 private and public company management teams and over 2,000 attendees.

KAPLOW

19 West 44th Street, 6th Floor
New York, NY 10036
212/221-1713
lkaplow@kaplow.com
www.kaplow.com

Liz Kaplow, President and CEO

For more than two decades, KAPLOW has been changing conversations through innovative storytelling that helps consumers fall in love with our clients' brands.

We are experts at life-styling technology brands to make them relevant to a broad consumer audience. Our work with Skype over the past nine years helped transform it from a tech tool into a way for people everywhere to connect every day. Our Knext division works with innovative disrupter brands to help tell their stories so they, too, can become household names.

We have long-standing relationships with best-in-class clients



LPP Boston team celebrates a great year on the Boston harbor.

including Target, CVS/Pharmacy, Avon Foundation, Shiseido and CEW. In the past year, we have brought on a number of blue chip brands including Vitamin Shoppe and The Children's Place in retail, Alouette cheese and the Franciscorta wine region in food and beverage, two major financial institutions as well as online disrupters Nextdoor and James Allen. The fully integrated programs we deliver for our clients — including media relations, events, social media, digital marketing, branded content, listening studies and brand voice development — fuel consumer conversations wherever they occur.

Mid-sized and independent, KAPLOW is nimble and flexible in today's ever-changing communications landscape.

KARBO COMMUNICATIONS

601 Fourth Street, Suite 204
San Francisco, CA 94107
415/255-6510
info@karbocom.com
www.karbocom.com
@KarboCo

Julie Karbo, Founder & CEO

With Karbo Communications, you don't get bench players, you get the industry's top digital PR veterans and rising stars working with you every day to deliver on business objectives, whether it's developing positioning that speaks to your competitive strengths, placing your company in top media, engaging an active social media base, creating viral videos, or writing influential content. We've ushered in technologies such as the cloud, the IoT, social media and communities, big data, mobile apps, security, networking, video, and wearable technology.

The Karbo Comms. team creates award-winning programs for companies at all stages of maturity, from stealth startups that seek a market-changing launch, to established companies that want to move to the next level of leadership and growth. When it's make or break, you want the best. We've worked with companies such as Apple, Digg, Nexenta, Sean Comb's Revolt TV, Chomp, Peribit Networks, Equinix, RTI, Cisco, Defense.Net, Crackle, Oracle and Intel. Karbo Communications delivers communications programs that help increase revenues, industry-leading stature, partners and funding.

LOIS PAUL AND PARTNERS

One Beacon Street, 2nd Floor
Boston, MA 02108
617/986-5700

828 W. 6th Street, Suite 103
Austin, TX 78703
512/638-5300
www.lpp.com

Twitter ID: @LPP_PR
LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/9273
Facebook.com/LoisPaulandPartners

Lois Paul, Founder and CEO
Philip Moore, CFO
Christine Simeone, Exec. VP
Melissa Zipin, Sr. Vice President, Healthcare
Don Jennings, Sr. VP, Technology
Anastasia Efstratios and Emilie Salvagio, VPs, Technology

Lois Paul and Partners is a strategic communications agency for the technology and healthcare industries. We are hands-on consultants, creating content and building relationships to shape conversations

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Marketing Maven integrated Green River Ordinance at SXSW for launch of Kingston Technology's 5-in-1 MobileLite Wireless.

LOIS PAUL & PARTNERS

Continued from page 49

with influencers through traditional and digital channels.

With a strong background in technology focused journalism, CEO Lois Paul founded LPP in 1986 because she understood that translating complex technology into easy to understand terms was a unique skill, and one that was required to serve the needs of clients and the media. Over the last 28+ years, we have maintained this fundamental focus as we have expanded our practice beyond technology to include healthcare and health technology, and have grown as an agency, now with staff in Boston, MA and Austin, TX.

Throughout our history, LPP has worked with the latest, most advanced technologies, services and corporations that span cloud, databases, embedded, online payments, health tech, industrial, networking, security, semiconductors and many more. LPP professionals are practiced in shaping complex subject matter into high interest stories and in developing innovators into the next opinion and thought leaders. With LPP, you can expect to find energy, intelligence and dedication you won't find anywhere else.

LOTUS823

2-12 Corbett Way
Suite 203
Eatontown, NJ 07724
732/212-0823
Fax: 732/810-0445
biz@lotus823.com
www.lotus823.com

David Hernandez and **Allison Hernandez**, Managing Partners & Co-Founders

lotus823 is an award-winning integrated marketing communications agency dedicated to helping brands increase their visibility and engage their audiences through content marketing, experiential events, multicultural marketing, public relations, and social media services.

Headquartered in New Jersey, and serving B2B and B2C companies nationwide in industries spanning consumer electronics, food and beverage, health and wellness, technology, and more, lotus823 develops and executes customized marketing strategies utilizing an integrated, results-oriented approach.

Whether you're developing a crowdfunding campaign, launching a new product, expanding your service offerings, or looking to increase brand awareness, our strategic combination of services allows us to develop balanced communications plans that tell unified brand stories. By removing the traditional silos and allowing the different tactics to work in harmony, our approach amplifies the reach of efforts, helping establish credibility and increase brand equity.

MAKOVSKY

16 East 34th Street
New York, NY 10016
212/508-9600
www.makovsky.com

Ken Makovsky, President/CEO
Denise Vitola, Managing Director

Makovsky's Technology practice has helped startup to *Fortune* 500 companies identify their brand, streamline their story, and gain competitive advantage over their peers, achieving thought leadership status and visibility

among the most influential media and industry stakeholders through content development, media relations, strategy, digital innovation, integrated communications and research.

The team's deep experience spans both business and consumer technology, with vertical expertise in Enterprise, Advertising, Consumer, Medical/Healthcare and Financial Technology. Our client roster represents some of the biggest brands in the industry. Our people have experience working on legacy companies such as Cisco and IBM; health tech innovators like WebMD; professional services industry leaders KPMG, Booz & Company and A.T. Kearney; ad tech disruptors like Taboola; big brand consumer tech companies such as Adidas and Netflix, and ecommerce companies including PayPal, eBay and Amazon. We've also made a huge impact in the middle market helping companies break into the U.S. with products, platforms and brand narratives that put their companies on the map and help them grow their bottom lines.

A full-service agency headquartered in New York, with offices in Washington, D.C., and Boston; we also offer our clients international support through IPREX, a global network of communications agencies we founded that spans across 40 U.S. cities, and in 30 countries.

MARKETING MAVEN

135 East 57th Street, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10022
212/967-5510
www.MarketingMavenPR.com

Los Angeles Headquarters
310/994-7380

Lindsey Carnett, CEO & President
lindsey@marketingmavenpr.com
Natalie Rucker, VP of Business Development
natalie@marketingmavenpr.com
John Krisiukenas, Managing Director, NY
johnk@marketingmavenpr.com

Marketing Maven combines traditional media relations and cutting-edge digital strategies for consumer technology clients. This fusion of online and offline marketing helps our team develop product launch campaigns that are results-driven and measurable. By aligning with our clients' goals, identifying and engaging with their key influencers and adapting to emerging trends, we produce

award-winning campaigns.

From national app launches to children's software or mobile charging devices, Marketing Maven executes worldwide PR stunts, national media tours, Viner engagement and viral social media competitions to generate buzz for our clients. In addition to content marketing, our digital team also executes social media advertising campaigns with analytics and insights geared toward driving consumer awareness, engagement and sales conversions.

MERRITT GROUP

8251 Greensboro Drive
Suite 600
McLean, VA 22102
703/390-1500
Fax: 703/860-2080
info@merrittgrp.com
www.merrittgrp.com

Alisa Valudes Whyte, Senior Partner & CEO

Merritt Group delivers strategic communications that take full advantage of the intersection of PR, media, digital, social and creative grounded in research. Our goal is to help the world's most inspiring companies share viewpoints that get people talking and keep their audiences engaged.

Merritt Group is a nationally recognized firm specializing in modern communications in the areas of public relations, marketing (digital & interactive, social, content) and research & measurement.

While we are known for our technology expertise, our domain knowledge spans other sectors from healthcare and energy to government. Our client roster includes organizations ranging from large, industry-leading enterprises to emerging innovators.

Merritt Group has offices at the respective centers of power and technology, in Washington D.C. and in San Francisco. Some of our clients include Teradata, Monster Government Solutions, Workfront, Databricks, Riverbed, Innovation Health, Venafi, Heritage Provider Network, MAXIMUS and Booz Allen Hamilton.

The December issue of *O'Dwyer's* will profile Entertainment & Sports PR firms. If you would like to be profiled, contact Editor Jon Gingerich at 646/843-2080 or jon@odwyerpr.com

MWWPR

8 California Street, 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94111
415/464-6422
www.mww.com
mmulloy@mww.com

Molly Mulloy, *Executive Vice President, General Manager*

At MWWPR, tech savvy doesn't even begin to describe us. From the hardware and software that drive our digital lifestyles, to the content and services that we engage with and consume daily, technology brands turn to MWWPR to help shape and tell their story. Anchored in San Francisco, MWWPR's global technology practice is comprised of diverse subject matter experts spanning the U.S. and Europe. Our team brings deep expertise in consumer electronics and connected home, mobile/telecom, digital marketing, entertainment tech, enterprise software, health tech, and database and analytics.

With capabilities that span corporate communications, consumer lifestyle marketing and public affairs for many of the world's leading technology brands, our campaigns are developed and informed with proprietary research and well-crafted insights, then launched by leveraging influencer relationships in tandem with customized paid, owned and earned media strategies.

With an approach to communications that goes beyond the boundaries of expected thinking, we remain at the forefront of the fast-paced technology world and deliver even faster results for our clients.

PADILLACRT

1101 West River Pkwy., #400
Minneapolis, MN 55112
612/455-1700
PadillaCRT.com

Scott Davila, *Senior Vice President*

PadillaCRT is a top 15 independent public relations and communications company. We use insightful strategies to help our clients develop deep connections with their audiences. Our 360-degree approach includes research, branding, marketing, advertising, design, digital, social, mobile, media relations, corporate and investor relations and crisis management.

PadillaCRT's Technology Practice is wired into B2B technology and related market trends, including enterprise software and hard-

ware, IT services and solutions, engineering, materials science and cloud computing services. Our technology teams work with clients around the globe to turn their complex stories into compelling IT communications that achieve real business results.

Clients in the technology sectors include Cisco, Rockwell Automation, SAP and Tyco Retail Solutions. PadillaCRT is a founding member of the Worldcom Public Relations Group, a partnership of 111 independently owned partner offices in 140 cities on six continents.

PAN COMMUNICATIONS

255 State St.
Boston, MA 02109
617/502-4300
Fax: 617/502-4343
www.prspeak.com
www.pancommunications.com
Twitter: @PANComm
LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/pan-communications
info@pancomm.com
mnardone@pancomm.com

Philip A. Nardone, Jr., *Pres. & Founder*

Mark Nardone, *Executive VP*
Elizabeth Famiglietti, *Senior Vice President, Human Resources*
Gene Carozza, **Lisa Astor**, **Dan Martin**, **Darlene Doyle**, **Lauren Arnold**, and **Tim Monroe**, *VPs*
David Saggio, *VP, PANdigital*

PAN Communications is a data focused public relations, content marketing, and digital agency providing technology, healthcare and consumer tech brands with award-winning, integrated marketing communications programs. For two decades, PAN has delivered insight-driven, measurable public relations programs for leading and emerging brands nationally and globally. The firm provides marketers with impactful communications, influencer relations, social media and PANdigital services that expand our client's brand equity, positively impacting their customers' path to purchase through consistent engagement. For more information visit our website at www.pancommunications.com, follow us on Twitter (@PANcomm) or call 617/502-4300.

PEPPERCOMM, INC.

470 Park Ave. South,
4th Floor North
New York, NY 10016

212/931-6100
hello@peppercomm.com
www.peppercomm.com

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

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

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

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

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

RACEPOINT GLOBAL

53 State Street
Boston, MA 02109
617/624-3200
agencymarketing@racepointglobal.com
www.racepointglobal.com
Twitter: @racepointglobal
Facebook.com/racepointglobal
Instagram.com/racepointglobal

Additional offices in San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Detroit, London, Hong Kong, Beijing and Shanghai

Larry Weber, *Chairman & CEO*
Peter Prodromou, *President*
Dan Carter, *EVP, Managing Director, North America*
Andrew Laxton, *EVP, Managing Director, Europe & Asia*

If you've been paying attention for the past decade, you know that every marketing agency has prom-

ised a new kind of integrated solution. The only problem is, nobody has delivered ... until now.

Racepoint Global is defining what it means to be an intelligence-driven marketing agency. We deliver a new kind of accountability based on our ability to better understand your customers, their psychology and how they consume information. The key is our proprietary software, FieldFacts. It's the industry's best tool for identifying influencers and targeting them where they engage verbally, visually and emotionally.

Armed with this intelligence, we give our clients PR, advertising and precision-marketing campaigns that speak to the right people at the right time. Then we dare to measure performance and report how many times high-level influencers have acted on your behalf.

That's accountability. That's Racepoint Global. And that's how we make you successful.

RUDER FINN

301 East 57th Street
New York, NY 10022
www.ruderfinn.com

Kathy Bloomgarden, *CEO, Ruder Finn*

Robin Kim, *EVP, MD, Global Technology & Innovation, Ruder Finn*

Transformation is our business, and nowhere is this competency in communications more relevant than in the technology sector. As the technology continues to advance the way we communicate, shop, work, learn and entertain, every sector is leveraging the power of a technology to advance and drive business success. Ruder Finn's Technology practice is one of our largest global groups, with numerous signature projects with leading-edge startups and some of the largest multinational technology innovators. Whether you're powering the cloud, digitizing entire countries, transforming how people communicate, or pioneering innovations in virtual reality, our team of passionate storytellers is committed to helping innovative technology companies stretch their influence outside of their industry. Further, we have a deep knowledge of the technology verticals that are making an impact, from consumer technologies and devices to healthcare, and manufacturing to telecommunications — to enhance their positioning in competitive

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RUDER FINN

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markets.

Together with our full-service digital unit RFI Studios, Ruder Finn works with some of the world's leading technology companies to create meaningful content, including engaging visuals and videos, and dynamic stories for digital and traditional mediums that resonate with important stakeholders. This breadth of knowledge and capabilities has resulted in numerous close partnerships with C-suite and marketing executives at top technology companies to develop signature platforms to elevate their thought leadership externally.

Ruder Finn also works to create technology mindsets and build new innovation capabilities in companies in industries outside tech who increasingly realize that technology is core to their competitiveness. From consumer packaged goods to healthcare and insurance companies, we've developed a multi-faceted offering around organizational transformation through technology. As part of this, we offer a formalized suite of services, known as RF TechTalent, that provides clients with the platforms and tools to identify, recruit, develop, and retain technology talent — no matter what industry the company is in. We also focus on driving cultural change within specific organizational functions via startup partnerships and accelerated collaborative timeframes. In addition, we provide clients with innovative technologies developed in-house, including real-time multi-market crisis training and sensory-driven interactive digital installations.

SAGE COMMUNICATIONS

1651 Old Meadow Road
Suite 500
McLean, VA 22102
703/748-0300
info@aboutsage.com
www.aboutsage.com

Larry Rosenfeld, Co-Founder & CEO

David Gorodetski, Co-Founder, COO, and Exec. Creative Director

At Sage Communications we employ our ability for crafting stories to inform, educate, entice and shape perceptions across a wide variety of industries. We aim to

cultivate relationships and motivate action, with a focus on implementing two-way communication between our clients and their consumers.

We approach business by seamlessly integrating public relations, advertising, marketing, event and interactive services to *Fortune* 500 companies, start-ups, non-profits, government agencies, associations and coalitions. Through the extensive knowledge of our team, we're able to design the most authentic and unique strategies to successfully achieve our clients' business goals. Our proactive efforts and determination allow us to provide our services in the most cost-effective manner while maintaining accountability to our clients.

Within technology communications, the opportunities are infinite — and we don't stop after our initial success. Instead, we continue to challenge ourselves and push the boundaries to enable our clients to develop groundbreaking programs that reap significant results. At Sage, we understand how to create and deliver powerful stories that have an impact at all levels of the technology ecosystem. We generate exposure and communicate expert insights that qualify our clients to lead and influence the conversation.

From startups who are working from the ground up to international technology titans, our clients count on us to build momentum and deliver results that prompt industry leaders to pause and take notice.

SPARK

2 Bryant St., Suite #100
San Francisco, CA 94105
415/962-8200

30 West 26th Street, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10010

6550 Vallejo Street, Suite 201
Emeryville, CA 94608

info@sparkpr.com
www.sparkpr.com

Alan Soucy, CEO
Donna Burke, Co-Founder
Tony Telloni, NY General Manager
Aaron Mann, GM, Emeryville
Toby Trevarthen, Chief Narrative Officer

Spark is an award-winning 21st century communications and integrated marketing services agency that delivers high impact results for world-leading brands. Our approach has been influenced through partnering with over 1,000

of the world's leading technology companies, market disrupters and brilliant entrepreneurs over the last 15 years.

Today, Spark represents global technology and consumer leaders as well as startups. We are proud to have helped a long list of companies achieve their business objectives through a wide range of marketing services, including Univision, Dropcam, Chobani, Kuaidi Dache, Verizon, Monster, Electronic Arts, Visa, Walmart, *The Economist*, Trulia, Flickr, Bloomberg, Nielsen, Nokia, NVIDIA, Skype and Yahoo!

We are large enough to deliver a full range of communications and digital marketing services, yet small enough to assure that every client receives senior level attention. Our deep industry knowledge is cultivated through collaborative teams with expertise in venture capital, financial tech, enterprise tech, ad and marketing tech, consumer tech, consumer lifestyle, mobile and wireless, digital entertainment, sports technology and health & wellness market segments.

Our vision is to help clients increase their market relevance through shaping narratives and transforming their brands, one conversation at a time.

TREVELINO/KELLER

949 W. Marietta St.
Suite X-106
Atlanta, GA 30318
404/214-0722
Fax: 404/214-0729
dtrevelino@trevelinokeller.com
www.trevelinokeller.com
www.start-opia.com

In response to increased market demand to establish reputation, create demand and drive acceleration, Trevelino/Keller, positioned today as a "Digital PR and Marketing Firm," has expanded its service capabilities around four core strengths: Brand-Content, PR-Social, Creative-Web and Inbound-Outbound Marketing. Having successfully solidified its position as one of the preeminent technology firms in the Southeast with clients ranging from the region's leading angel group, ATA, the new breed of incubator/co-working brands, ATV, and a diverse mix of early stage and established hardware, software, SaaS, wireless, networking, health IT, security, ecommerce, mobile applications and vertically rich

technology companies, the firm is beginning to compete outside the region to take advantage of its San Francisco footprint established in late 2014. Enhancing the firm's PR-Social capabilities is its Groovy Studios brand, made up of in-house specialists that deliver its content, creative, web and digital marketing capabilities. Groovy Studios serves clients in an integrated fashion as well as for specific creative executions.

Furthering its commitment to technology and startups, the firm is relaunching its Start-Opia startup portal in Q4 as a startup exchange designed to connect startups with service providers across eight core disciplines: PR, Social, Web, Brand, Legal, Coding, Accounting and Content. With one of the industry's highest retention rates, Trevelino/Keller successfully leverages its technology practice across each of its supporting practices — technology, corporate, lifestyle, health, greenworks and food & beverage, from offices in Atlanta, Charleston, SC and Orlando, FL and the Bay Area.

VOLUME PUBLIC RELATIONS

1745 Shea Center Drive, #400
Highlands Ranch, Co 80129
www.volumepr.com
Edwards@volumepr.com

Elizabeth Edwards, Founder, President & CEO

Volume Public Relations is the nation's first and only technology PR firm to offer the guarantees of scientific precision in the practice of marketing, communication, PR and sales strategy.

Volume PR's award-winning strategic communications firm boasts 20+ years of experience in consumer technology, B2B technology and telecommunications, and is fluent in even the most complicated of infrastructure-level technologies. The agency is known for creating more awareness, more customers, and more results for technology brands of all sizes by designing messages, strategies, and promotions perfected with the principles of cognitive and behavioral science.

Volume's technology clients consistently enjoy rapid growth to positions on the prestigious *Inc* and *Software* 500 lists, and widespread coverage in leading technology media. When you're ready

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BUSINESS TRAVEL



MEETINGS & EVENTS



VACATIONS CRUISES & MORE



**Customer Focused
Technology Driven**



Gloria Bohan
President, Founder & CEO



Nick Lananna
Client Services Manager

"Call me"



Omega World Travel brings 42 years of travel industry knowledge and expertise to you, combining personalized service and advanced travel technology solutions.

- Vendor and Sourcing Support
- Executive Travel Programs
- Travel Policy Consulting
- Risk Mitigation
- Mobile Technology
- Corporate Travel Solutions
- Duty of Care Technologies
- Global Capabilities
- Data Consolidation and Analytics
- 24/7 Support
- MICE Support & Management
- Leisure Travel - Cruise.com



1271 Avenue of the Americas
Suite 4300 - New York, NY 10020
646-693-7404 - nlananna@owt.net



(L to R): Wise PR's Boudine, Wise and McCartney.

VOLUME PR

Continued from page 52

to increase awareness, reach more customers and achieve public relations results you can measure, it's time to add Volume Public Relations to your team.

WALKER SANDS COMMUNICATIONS

55 W. Monroe St., Suite 3925
Chicago, IL 60603
312/267-0066
www.walkersands.com
Mike.Santoro@walkersands.com
Blog: www.walkersands.com/blog
Twitter: @WalkerSands

Ken Gaebler, CEO and Principal
Mike Santoro, President and Principal

In an overcrowded marketplace, you need a partner who is known as an innovator; a proactive firm with a foundation in technology, a fresh perspective on the industry and the resources to develop your brand.

Walker Sands Communications is a full-service, integrated Public Relations and Digital Marketing agency. Nearly tripling in size over the last three years has earned us three consecutive honors on the *Inc.* 5000. We're built on a reputation of helping growth-conscious technology companies develop powerful and thought-provoking

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Jessica Tiller, Executive Vice President and Co-Founder
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Weiss PR, Inc. helps businesses and non-profit organizations reach, engage, and influence the right audiences in order to achieve their communications and business objectives. Staffing accounts exclusively with senior-level executives who have a minimum of 10 years of public relations experience, Weiss PR has developed a strong reputation for getting positive results for its clients by using an integrated approach to communications that typically includes media and influencer relations, social media and marketing services, and issues management — all anchored by strategic communications planning.

While Weiss PR's two dozen clients are spread across five industries in the U.S. and abroad, much of its work is concentrated in the technology space. The firm has extensive experience working with data centers; encryption and information security firms; serious

gaming/simulation companies; software and applications developers; and wireless providers. It has also handled public relations for two award-winning technology incubators.

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O'DWYER'S RANKINGS

TOP TECHNOLOGY PR FIRMS

Firm	Net Fees (2014)	Firm	Net Fees (2014)
1. Edelman , New York, NY	\$265,147,553	38. Makovsky , New York, NY	\$1,100,000
2. WE , Bellevue, WA	65,341,000	39. 360 Public Relations , Boston, MA	1,025,679
3. APCO Worldwide , Washington, DC	22,432,599	40. Hunter PR , New York, NY	1,000,000
4. Racepoint Global , Boston, MA	20,314,597	41. M/C/C, Inc. , Dallas, TX	1,000,000
5. MWWPR , New York, NY	18,683,000	42. Standing Partnership , St. Louis, MO	966,878
6. Ruder Finn , New York, NY	17,180,890	43. Moore Communications Group , Tallahassee, FL	913,118
7. Sparkpr , San Francisco, CA	16,424,750	44. Wise Public Relations , New York, NY	880,000
8. W2O Group , San Francisco, CA	16,175,000	45. Lambert, Edwards + Assocs. , Grand Rapids, MI	752,000
9. Finn Partners , New York, NY	12,720,766	46. North 6th Agency (N6A) , New York, NY	737,260
10. Zeno Group , New York, NY	11,951,973	47. Seigenthaler PR , part of Finn Partners, Nashville, TN	711,130
11. Max Borges Agency , Miami, FL	10,693,735	48. Feintuch Communications , New York, NY	507,916
12. LaunchSquad , San Francisco, CA	10,401,803	49. Rasky Baerlein Strategic Comms. , Boston, MA	505,751
13. Hoffman Agency, The , San Jose, CA	10,270,000	50. rbb Public Relations , Miami, FL	483,392
14. Merritt Group , McLean, VA	9,751,230	51. RF Binder Partners , New York, NY	391,257
15. SS PR , Northfield, IL	9,085,050	52. Karbo Communications , San Francisco, CA	379,679
16. Fahlgren Mortine , Columbus, OH	7,739,983	53. Crosswind Media & Public Relations , Austin, TX	350,000
17. PadillaCRT , Minneapolis, MN	7,715,617	54. French West Vaughan , Raleigh, NC	300,000
18. HORN , San Francisco, CA	7,700,000	55. LANE , Portland, OR	281,121
19. Highwire PR , San Francisco, CA	7,563,904	56. Singer Associates, Inc. , San Francisco, CA	276,877
20. Inkhouse Media + Marketing , Waltham, MA	7,394,447	57. Beehive PR , St. Paul, MN	270,325
21. Airfoil , Southfield, MI	7,170,140	58. Red Sky PR , Boise, ID	254,614
22. Bateman Group , San Francisco, CA	6,700,000	59. CooperKatz & Co. , New York, NY	217,075
23. PAN Communications , Boston, MA	5,772,000	60. Public Communications Inc. , Chicago, IL	210,595
24. Walker Sands Communications , Chicago, IL	4,563,028	61. Hodges Partnership, The , Richmond, VA	204,000
25. 5W Public Relations , New York, NY	4,000,000	62. Schneider Associates , Boston, MA	200,650
26. G&S Business Communications , New York, NY	3,337,304	63. Didit Communications, LLC , New York, NY	177,785
27. Hotwire , New York, NY	3,121,032	64. Weiss PR , Baltimore, MD	175,000
28. LEVICK , Washington, DC	2,859,114	65. BLAZE , Santa Monica, CA	168,438
29. Vantage PR , San Francisco, CA	2,807,707	66. O'Malley Hansen Communications , Chicago, IL	160,100
30. Jackson Spalding , Atlanta, GA	2,429,641	67. McNeely Pigott & Fox PR , Nashville, TN	157,705
31. Coyne PR , Parsippany, NJ	2,133,037	68. WordWrite Communications LLC , Pittsburgh, PA	137,000
32. Peppercomm , New York, NY	2,109,779	69. Maccabee , Minneapolis, MN	113,450
33. DVL, part of Finn Partners , Nashville, TN	1,931,689	70. Champion Management Group , Dallas, TX	106,800
34. Prosek Partners , New York, NY	1,900,000	71. Landis Communications , San Francisco, CA	100,000
35. Trevelino/Keller , Atlanta, GA	1,870,000	72. Konnect Public Relations , Los Angeles, CA	95,645
36. Idea Grove , Dallas, TX	1,866,941	73. Power Group, The , Dallas, TX	81,205
37. Gregory FCA , Ardmore, PA	1,370,000	74. Rosica Communications , Paramus, NJ	55,234

The art of the apology

By Fraser Seitel

It's been a big month for apologies.

President Obama apologized to Doctors Without Borders for the American botched bombing of a field hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan, that resulted in the deaths of 12 staff members and seven patients.



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*.

Twitter's once-again-CEO Jack Dorsey apologized for the company's laggard ability to attract new users and make money.

United's new CEO Oscar Munoz took to YouTube to apologize to employees and customers for the reputation-bashing United/Continental merger, that has raised fares, tempers

and criticism of the world's largest airline.

Apologies, of course, have always been tricky PR propositions. For example, Republicans chastise Obama for his quick-trigger propensity to publicly apologize for all manner of American mistakes, from burning Qurans in Afghanistan to harsh treatment of prisoners in Iraqi to producing a moronic film that made fun of the Prophet Mohammed.

Observers criticize Dorsey for bashing unnecessarily the company he has been brought back to run.

Aviation consultants take Munoz to task for overdoing the poor-service confessions, thus amplifying a misperception about United's performance.

And then there was the book a few years ago in which two public relations consultants argued that apologies showed weakness and should be avoided.

The real point, of course, is that apologizing is one thing, but taking action to fix problems is another. Stated another way, apologies are meaningless without prompt corrective action. And it's the job of the PR professional to ensure that such action is integral to the apology.

Take President Obama's apology for the tragic U.S. bombing of the Afghan hospital. Here's what's got to happen next.

Allow an independent investigation. In "receiving" the Obama apology, Doctors Without Borders called for an independent investigation by the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission to find out what happened in Kunduz. Obama initially rejected that idea, arguing that investigations by the U.S. Defense Department, NATO and others would reveal all facts.

The President should rethink this. The International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission was created by the Geneva Conventions to investigate violations of international humanitarian law. Its current members are from 15 different nations but not America.

Nonetheless, to demonstrate that the U.S. is serious about finding the truth in this awful incident, President Obama should consent to Doctors Without Borders' call for this particular body to investigate.

Quickly investigate and announce the findings. Regardless of the pace of other investigations, the Defense Department investigation should be concluded quickly and the findings should be announced in detail, answering the perplexing questions that already have been aired: Did the Afghans, as U.S. Gen. John Campbell suggested, ask the Americans to bomb the area? Were Afghan and American commanders notified during the bombardment, as Doctors Without Borders contended? How high up in the chain of command were the decisions made to bomb the hospital?

These pressing questions need to be answered quickly.

Deal with those responsible. Finally, since this tragedy appears to be such a blatant violation of international law, not to mention a stain on the integrity of the U.S. military and a stain on the humanitarian record of the U.S. itself, heads should roll.

Gen. Campbell adamantly refused to name names in his testimony, allowing that one purpose of the investigations would be to identify those responsible. Once those individuals are singled out, they should be dealt with appropriately.

There is no way to sugarcoat America's bombing of the Kunduz hospital. It was a fatal mistake. America's apology for this tragedy was the proper response. Now we need to get to the bottom of what happened and take action against those responsible.

The point, again, is that apologies are fine as far as they go; but eminently more important is that the mea culpa is quickly followed by action that corrects the problem. ○



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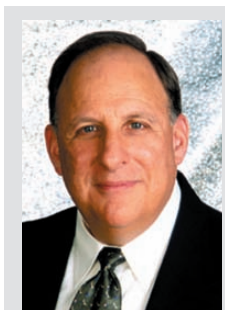
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The most critical benchmark in PR — an update

By Richard Goldstein

There are many benchmarks in the PR industry. However the one benchmark that is critical to the success of the PR firm is Revenue Per Professional.



Richard Goldstein is a partner at Buchbinder Tunick & Company LLP, New York, Certified Public Accountants.

Right now, before you do anything else, take a minute and look at your RPP versus other PR firms in your fee range. RPP is the average income generated per professional; the people on your staff whose time you bill to clients and whom you depend on for the financial health of your firm. Generally, if your overhead and other

costs are controlled, the higher income your firm generates per professional, the higher your operating profits.

Agency Statistics

Rick Gould wrote in the second edition of his book *The Ultimate PR Agency Management Handbook*, “One long-standing industry benchmark should be generating \$165,000-\$175,000 in fee billing each year, for each employee (note: all employees). This is an average figure that takes into account your agency’s billable as well as non-billable staff. Very profitable PR firms are often able to drive the average up to the \$200,000 range. In reality, there is no reason not to shoot for a higher average, as the target provides both considerable motivation, and highly tangible markers of exactly how much revenue a healthy agency should enjoy.”

Rick goes on to say — and I agree — that an even more important benchmark is revenue per full time equivalent employee. This range could be between \$185,000 and \$235,000, depending on size, location and specialty of the agency.

So where are we today? According to Rick’s “PR Industry 2015 Best Practices Benchmarking” report (based on 2014 results), Revenue Per Staff for 2014 was \$182,206. This is revenue per total number of staff regardless of whether they are account or administrative. RPP was \$214,111. Firms with net revenues in excess of \$25 million averaged \$213,801. Firms in D.C. averaged \$246,390. In the Midwest, \$248,875.

This benchmark is a key indicator of productivity for professional staff. If pro-

fessional salaries and agency overhead are effectively managed, the resulting benchmark (professional salaries/revenue and overhead/revenue) should be an indicator of overall agency profitability.

If the RPP amount is high — in excess of \$200,000 — but professional account salaries are also high — in excess of 44% — it is possible to have high revenue per professional with only moderate profitability.

So what does this all mean? Why is RPP so important? RPP asks two important questions: how productive/billable are/were your account staff? In other words, how efficiently were your professionals utilized? Are your billing rates as high as they should or could be? Do you even know how to properly determine your agency billing rates?

An example

If your revenue last year was about \$3.0 million, and you had 15 billable professionals (you should consider freelance as professionals for this purpose), your average RPP is \$200,000. This is less than the industry average of approximately \$208,000 for an agency this size. In effect, \$120,000 of revenue was left on the table based on the Gould report RPP statistic. However, in my view, a good deal more was lost. According to Rick, the average billable hours for a staff person involved in client matters should be 1,700 hours, less for the key officers and professionals who pitch new work. On average, I use 1,500 hours per professional to take the other factors into consideration. (1,500 hours assumes an 89% utilization rate, the average for the industry according to the Gould report). Therefore, the agency in my example generates 22,500 billable hours. If I divide this by the \$3.0 million revenue generated, I arrive at an average billing rate of \$133 per hour.

Take your profitability temperature

One of the first things I look at when I first meet an agency is their rate per hour. Going back to the previous example, assume the agency above generates 23,150 hours (14 professional employees working approximately 1,600 hours and the CEO/COO working 750 hours on client matters). Dividing this by the revenue of \$3.0 million, the average billing rate per hour is \$130, not great by any standard. Something here just does not make sense! This is even more critical when I am told the agency has an average billing rate per hour of \$185. Believe me I have seen this to be \$75 for many agencies.

Some management considerations from the past:

It is critical that your professional staff understands the meaning of account management. Account management is bringing the firm’s management, professional and creative services to bear against a client’s problems and opportunities so that you serve the client with maximum effectiveness, while also generating income and profits.

Your staff needs to understand that managing these dual responsibilities will not only lead to professional success but can be personally gratifying as well.

Management sometimes complain that frequently account professionals seem to forget who they are working for. They do a great job of serving the client but neglect the agency’s need to make a profit. Your younger employees, and yes, even your veterans, need to recognize early on that they cannot invest more hours on behalf of a client than the client is willing to pay for. Most want to do the best job for their client, and that often creates a tendency to over service that often leads to over-budget or write-off situations. A lesson in account management can go a long way to increase RPP! ○

PR news brief

Karbo Communications program targets tech start-ups

With technology startups, PR is generally not high on the priority list. Funding may eventually materialize — if the company has a successful debut, that is — but is far from a sure thing. Now tech startups have the opportunity to enter a market with a bigger PR impact and better visibility, thanks to a new program that Karbo Communications has introduced.

The PowerStart PR Launch Program, created for pre-Series A technology companies, is offered via a tiered pricing structure.

The offering includes the Karbo Communications’ Essential Differentiation and Messaging (EDM) process, spokesperson coaching, story pitching to top-tier press, media kit/press material development, interview management and social media content.

In addition, companies have the option to purchase à la carte items such as video creation, contributed article placements, customer case studies, speaking opportunities, award submissions, promotions, advertising and review programs.

There are more than 20,000 startups in the Silicon Valley alone, Karbo Communications said. According to CB Insights via Fortune, startup funding for the U.S. is projected to reach a whopping \$70 billion by the end of this year.

“The reality is that a lot of startups have phenomenal products, but they lack the financial resources to execute top-flight launches,” said Julie Karbo, founder-CEO of Karbo Communications, in a statement. “At Karbo Com, our philosophy is that you only have one chance to launch your company, and it should be with your strongest foot forward. If a startup waits until acquiring a Series A round to make an impact, they risk the market simply passing them by.”

Hazelbaker steers to Uber PR

Jill Hazelbaker, who led Snapchat's communications operation, is moving to Uber as VP of Communications and Public Policy.

Re/code first reported the move.

Hazelbaker was Google's top PR and government relations exec and also led European Union policy based out of London for the search giant. She is a former communications hand for Sen. John McCain's presidential run and advised former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg's re-election.

She was VP of Communications and Public Policy for Snapchat as the company worked to drop its image as a sexting app to pivot toward a consumer friendly social messaging service. ○



Hazelbaker

Finn Partners hires Kuhl

Kristie Kuhl, who formerly filled executive Vice President slots at Cohn & Wolfe and Makovsky & Company, has moved to Finn Partners, where she assumes the role of Senior Partner of that agency's health shop.

Kuhl will now be responsible for Finn Partners' range of pharmaceutical efforts, which includes biotechnology, pharmaceutical, and specialty pharma. ○



Kuhl

NBC dials up Cerwin for entertainment work

Lesley Cerwin, who handles PR for NBC's reality shows like "The Voice" and "The Biggest Loser," has been upped to Senior VP of Entertainment Publicity for NBC Entertainment.

Cerwin joined NBC Universal from Buena Vista TV in 2005 and started out publicizing "Law & Order" at Universal Network TV.

Under NBC's "alternative programming," her PR purview has



Cerwin

included the Golden Globes and network specials, along with custom-content marketing. ○

Kundred appointed west coast MD at MSL

MSLGROUP on Thursday named PR and marketing veteran Curt Kundred as Managing Director for the Western Region, as well as Global Head of Strategic Partnerships and Acquisitions.

Kundred, who is based in the agency's San Francisco office, will lead MSLGROUP's West Coast operations that include PR offices in the Bay Area, Seattle and Los Angeles.

Prior to joining MSLGROUP, Kundred served as President for the West Coast, East Coast and Canada for FleishmanHillard and President of the Western Region for Edelman.

In his strategic partnerships and acquisitions role, Kundred will help to develop MSLGROUP's growth plans, and report to Global CEO, Guillaume Herbette. ○

Foster returns to B-M

Chris Foster, SVP for Booz Allen Hamilton in Washington, has returned to Burson-Marsteller as worldwide EVP under CEO Donald Baer.

Foster is a former Managing Director and US Healthcare Practice Chair for the firm, where he worked for two stints in the late 1990s and late 2000s.

At BAH, he worked global civil health, strategic comms. and civil commercial business for the consulting firm.

Earlier roles included FleishmanHillard, CarryOn Communications and the American Association of Health Plans. ○



Foster

Huntsworth's new CFO

UK-based Huntsworth has appointed Neil Jones as the PR group's next Chief Financial Officer.

Jones assumes that role in February. He replaces Brian Porritt, Huntsworth's interim Finance Director, who will stay with Huntsworth until the first quarter of 2016.

Jones is currently CFO of international exhibition and conference organizer ITE Group, a role he has held since 2008. Prior

to his work at ITE, he was Group Finance Director of Ireland-based business-to-business media group Tarsus Group.

Huntsworth, which owns PR units Grayling and Citigate and operates out of 30 countries, hired Hill & Knowlton veteran Taaffe as CEO in December. Huntsworth posted a \$70 million loss in the first half of this year. ○



Jones

Rubenstein gets Rowan

Dawn Rowan has been named Vice President, Director of Media Relations at Rubenstein Public Relations.

In the new role, Rowan will head Rubenstein's media relations division and facilitate the agency's communications campaigns.

Rowan comes to Rubenstein from NBC 4 New York, where she served as Communications Director for five years. In that role she was responsible for overseeing the development and execution of communications, PR and media relations efforts for the TV station, as well as for digital properties COZI TV and LX.TV.

Prior to her work at NBC 4 New York, Rowan held a Senior VP slot at DKC Public Relations, and was Senior VP/Group Head at M. Silver Associates. She also ran her own company, Rowan Communications, for two years. ○



Rowan

Batliner promoted to Spong President

Carmichael Lynch Inc. in October named Julie Batliner President of the company's public relations division, as President and Founder Doug Spong transitions to the role of President Emeritus.

Batliner, who has been with Spong since 2005, has landed a long list of new clients, including Arla Foods, Formica Corp., Jennie-O Turkey Store, The Schwan Food Co. and U.S. Bank.

She also launched a Client Relationship Management program while simultaneously building the agency's social media capabilities.

In 2010, the agency promoted Batliner, from Chief Client Relations Officer, to her most recent role as Managing Director. ○

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Cantor Integrated Marketing Search

"Single most important source of information on PR firms."

- Thomas L. Harris, Author
Choosing and Working with your PR firm

Senate probes Obama ad, PR spending

The Senate Budget Committee has launched a probe of federal government PR and advertising spending, noting the estimated \$1 billion in spending on outside pacts.

Sen. Mike Enzi, the Wyoming Republican who Chairs the committee, has asked the Office of Management and Budget for an accounting of executive branch spending for fiscal 2015, following a *Washington Post* report about Edelman's work for the Dept. of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

"Agency spending on advertising, public relations and media relations is largely a black box ... it's hard to tell how much is spent and where the money is going," he wrote in a letter to OMB Chair Shaun Donovan.

Enzi noted that federal law prohibits appropriated federal funds being used for publicity or propaganda purposes, or for lobbying Congress.

"Legal issues aside, unnecessary media relations spending is a cost that the nation simply cannot afford," wrote Enzi.

Fiscal 2013 PR and ad spending approached \$1 billion with \$900 million on ad services and \$87 million for PR, according to the Senate committee. ○

Gallup to drop out of 2016 Primary polls

Gallup, the company synonymous with political surveys, said it would not participate in gathering Americans' political opinions regarding the 2016 presidential primaries.

The news came during an October feature posted at Politico, where Gallup Editor-in-Chief Frank Newport told the news site that the opinion poll giant has shifted its focus away from horse-race polls and is now more interested in research regarding voters' issues. The only primary-related data it presently plans to gather involve asking how Americans feel about individual candidates.

"We believe to put our time and money and brainpower into understanding the issues and priorities is where we can most have an impact," Newport told Politico.

Newport also informed Politico that he can't confirm whether Gallup will participate in gathering polling data during next year's general election.

Gallup was lampooned in 2012 after research it gathered during that year's Presidential election infamously gave a one-point win to Mitt Romney over President Obama. Competing polling organizations, meanwhile, arrived at wildly different — and, as it turned out, far more accurate — results. Obama ended up winning that election with a 3.9-point lead.

The miscalculation resulted in an internal probe into the organization to discover what went wrong and how the company could improve its findings. ○

H+K Strategies bolsters its D.C. team

H+K Strategies has recruited from the political and cable TV precincts to bolster its Washington, D.C. office. The PR agency on Wednesday named Matthew Felling, who previously worked for the U.S. Senate, as a VP, and Patrick Ryan, formerly with Fox Business Network and CNBC, as a Senior Account Su-



pervisor.

Prior to joining H+K, Felling was Strategic Communications Director for Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska). He ran her day-to-day and long-term messaging on policy areas including health care and military issues. Prior to that, he was anchor and Chief Political Reporter for KTVA-CBS (Anchorage, Alaska).

Ryan most recently worked at Braithwaite Communications, where he was responsible for managing media relations and crisis communications. Before that Ryan worked at the Fox Business Network as Producer, as well as CNBC Thomson Reuters. ○

Ex-White House, TPG PR exec to Mercury

Adam Levine, the former communications exec for private equity giant TPG locked in a legal battle with the firm, has joined Mercury to set up a San Francisco outpost.

TPG sued Levine in January, accusing the former Goldman Sachs and Bush White House PR staffer of leaking information to the press to harm the firm. Levine countered with a whistleblower suit, claiming TPG violated securities laws and made misrepresentations to investors.

Levine takes a Managing Director role with Omnicom-owned Mercury. Partner Fabian Nunez said Levine brings "incredible talent and leadership" to the firm.

In addition to the TPG post, he was VP and Spokesman for Goldman Sachs and Assistant White House Press Secretary and Director of TV news for President George W. Bush.

He started out on Capitol Hill and moved into TV journalism with NBC News and ABC TV. ○

Ex-Cantor Aide advises Burson, Direct Impact

John Murray, an advisor to former House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va.) who ran his own communications shop, has signed on as senior advisor to Burson-Marsteller and its Direct Impact grassroots operation.

Murray, founder of JAM Strategies, is a former Deputy Chief of Staff and Communications Director to Cantor during his stints as Majority Leader and GOP Whip. He also led strategy and fundraising for the YG Network super PAC. He worked at B-M earlier in his career.

Direct Impact also added Luke Albee, Chief of Staff to Sen. Mark Warner (D-Va.), as a Senior Advisor. ○



Lepow

Saudi investment authority tabbed Edelman

The Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority engaged Edelman for PR support as it made a pitch that the Saudi economy is attractive for investment and diversifying in September.

SAGIA manages the kingdom's investment landscape and works to promote economic investment in the country. Abdullatif bin Ahmed Al Othman, a former senior VP for Saudi Aramco, heads the authority.

Edelman's work supported Al Othman's early September trip to Washington.

Edelman, which has worked in PR capacities for the Saudi government in recent years, was charged with engaging opinion influencers, establishing media opportunities, and assisting with editorial placement on behalf of the authority, according to its federal filing.

The firm describes its client's role to furnish "Saudi Arabia as an attractive destination for [foreign direct investment] and highlight Saudi Arabia's economy as transforming into one that is diversified." ○

Ogilvy to work Indonesia travel

Ogilvy PR's Jakarta shop has been appointed the official agency of record for Indonesia's Ministry of Tourism.

The agency will enact a five-year strategic communications plan for that country's ongoing "Wonderful Indonesia" campaign, for the purpose of boosting Indonesia's visibility as an international tourism destination.

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.

Podesta Group, Inc., Washington, D.C., **registered Oct. 23, 2015 for Republic of South Sudan**, Juba, South Sudan, for communicating priority issues in the U.S.-South Sudan bilateral relationship to relevant U.S. audiences, including Congress, executive branch, media, and policy community.

Amsterdam & Partners, LLP, Washington, D.C., **registered Oct. 26, 2015 for Republic of Turkey**, Washington, D.C., to provide advice and representation relating to potential claims under treaty, U.S. law and/or international law held by the Republic of Turkey against individuals and/or entities in the United States.

Berliner Corcoran & Rowe, LLP, Washington, D.C. **registered Oct. 14, 2015 for Embassy of the Principality of Monaco**, Washington, D.C., to advise on behalf of Departement des Relations Exterieurs et de la Cooperation, an official branch of the Monaco Government, in connection with the proposed District of Columbia tax haven law.

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.

Franklin Square Group, LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered Oct. 22, 2015 for Dropbox, Inc.**, San Francisco, CA, regarding issues related to international data and privacy standards, intellectual property, and trade.

Bracewell and Giuliani, LLP, Washington, D.C., **registered Oct. 22, 2015 for Organic Voices Action Fund**, Washington, D.C., regarding GMO labeling.

MWW Group, Washington, D.C., **registered Oct. 22, 2015 for Atkins Nutritionals, Inc.**, Denver, CO, regarding issues related to the development of US dietary guidelines.

38 North Solutions, LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered Oct. 22, 2015 for Tesla Motors, Inc.**, Washington, D.C., regarding energy policy for energy storage and automotive industries.

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, LLP, Washington, D.C., **registered Oct. 20, 2015 for DraftKings, Inc.**, Boston, MA, regarding issues related to fantasy sports.

The plan, referred to by Indonesia Minister of Tourism Arief Yahya as "an aggressive awareness campaign for Indonesia's branding," includes the goal of increasing Indonesian tourist numbers to 20 million "within the next few years."

According to Indonesia Minister of Tourism Arief Yahya, Ogilvy's account win followed a highly competitive pitching process that included the review of nearly two-dozen agency requests for proposal. ○

Grayling to power World Energy Congress PR

The World Energy Congress, the triennial global energy sustainability confab, has plugged in Grayling to guide communications for the 2016 event slated for Istanbul.

Grayling's Turkey and UK outposts will lead the assignment, which the firm won after a competitive review. The work includes global media relations and social media engagement.

The conference is run by the London-based World Energy Council with accreditation from the United Nations and attracts a premier lineup of energy ministers from across the globe. The Istanbul conference is set for Oct. 10-13, 2016 with the theme "Embracing New Frontiers."

The last WEC was in Daegu in 2013. It was last held in the US in Detroit in 1974.

Grayling Turkey Managing Director Ana Dodea called the WEC "an incredibly influential global event, widely attended by government ministers and key players from the international energy industry." ○

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NEWS CORP. CALLS IN EDELMAN
Embarked News Corp. has called in Edelman to handle fallout from its phone hacking scandal that has engulfed its British operation.
The No. 1 independent PR firm is providing communications and PR counsel to News International's management and standards committee handling the internal inquiry into the hacking of a murdered 15-year-old girl's voicemail, allegations of snooping into the calls of family members of soldiers killed in Afghanistan and victims of the London terror attacks.
Alex Bigg, Edelman's managing director for corporate affairs, and James Landie, managing director for PR, 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 individuals from entities like zoos, theme and amusement parks, museums and aquariums.
The Alexandria-based group, led by new CEO Chip Clancy, 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 Collin Mackay, former communications and partnerships director at the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations, as director of its healthcare practice in Brussels. Mackay is a 20-year veteran of the healthcare scene, holding posts at Weber Shandwick, Avenalis and Organ Laboratories.

F-H SHUFFLES MANAGEMENT DECK
Fishburn-Hillard named Jack Modzelewski to the newly created position of the Americas post to coordinate activity of the unit chief of regions in the U.S., Canada and Latin America.
The founding general manager of F-H Chicago also served as COO for Europe and South Africa.
Modzelewski was president of client relations since 2004 with responsibility for F-H's practice groups and strategic planning.
F-H CEO Dave Sney also tapped J.J. Carter, GM/San Francisco, to the U.S. western president slot. Nancy Seliger, executive VP and former eastern president assumes global client relations duties. Bob Winslow, managing director for global technology, is now in charge of F-H's more than 30 practice groups and new product development.

CHIME RINGS UP HEALTHCARE DEAL
Chime Communications has acquired healthcare specialist Reynolds-MacKenzie for an initial payment \$4M, a package of \$2.5M cash and stock.
R-M 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 Chime's OPEN Health group that was formed in January.
The acquisition could cost Chime up to \$11M based on R-M's performance. Lord Bell's operation retains the right to pay up to a quarter of that contingent comp in newly issued shares.
Chime is parent of Bell Pottinger.

DISCOVERY BAY DISCOVERS MWW
Discovery Bay Games, the Seattle-based company that produces games, apps and accessories for Apple's iPad, has selected MWW Group as agency of record.
DBG is developer of Duo, the first integrated device for iPad. Duo makes it possible for multi-person games such as "Smithsonian Artifact or Fiction." MWW is to position the client as the top brand of gaming "appreciators" for the Apple tablet.
Craig Olson, CEO of DBG, said it hired MWW for its "proven record of creating communications programs that directly influence the bottom line."
DBG became part of MWW's consumer tech practice with Samsung, 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 29th year, examines a different area of PR each month. Issues include practice-area specific feature stories as well as profiles of PR firms with strengths in the focus area. The agency profiles constitute the ideal starting point for companies beginning their search for PR counsel.

2015 Editorial Calendar:

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



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