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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of
PR and Marketing
Communications

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NEVADA REVIEWS TOURISM PR

Nevada is in the final days of accepting proposals for its tourism marketing account, handled by Burson-Marsteller until July.

The Silver State on July 30 released an RFP for the seven-figure account after working with Burson and RedRock Strategies for the past two years. Annual budget is projected to be around \$7.6M, including \$5.8M for media buys.



The account with the Nevada Commission on Tourism is "public relations-driven" and encompasses strategic development, external communications and digital, with some media buying and online development, according to the RFP.

PENSION FUND WANTS PR EDUCATION

The \$10.8B dollar pension fund for Chicago teachers and retirees, locked in years of legal battles with the city and state of Illinois, is calling on PR firms to develop a media relations strategy for local, regional and national outreach.

The Chicago Teachers Pension Fund counts more than 63,000 teacher-members and pays out more than \$1B in benefits annually. It has tussled with the city of Chicago and state of Illinois over unfunded contributions and the parties are in litigation over past underpayments. CTPF's funding ratio is a paltry 49.5%.

The Fund anticipates a two-year contract to support its two-person in-house communications staff.

Proposals are due Sept. 1. RFP: <http://bit.ly/1tLQPjZ>.

MULTINATIONAL ENVIRO PUSH SEEKS PITCHES

A multinational, intergovernmental commission focused on coastal ecosystems and enforcing environmental law is looking for a PR consultant ahead of a key Washington summit.

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation, created by Canada, the United States and Mexico under the framework of the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation, has released an RFP for PR support ahead of a meeting of its joint public advisory committee.

IT wants to generate coverage and drum up participation and webcast viewership for the public consultation event, which follows the Restore America's Estuaries Summit in Washington Nov. 1-6.

Proposals are due Sept. 5. RFP: <http://bit.ly/VKdk8N>.

UBER TAPS FOR PLOUFFE

Uber taxi-hailing app has tapped David Plouffe, campaign mastermind of Barack Obama's two presidential wins, in its continued effort to bolster its image and hurdle regulatory roadblocks.

CEO Travis Kalanick, in an Aug. 20 conference call, likened Uber's growth and development to a political campaign in which the taxi industry is the entrenched incumbent.

Uber faces a transportation "cartel" that presents stiff resistance to the four-year-old company's expansion efforts. Kalanick called Plouffe, who will take the senior VP post when he joins in September, a "strategic thought partner and a brilliant general."



Plouffe

The 47-year-old will be responsible for communications, global policy and branding at the San Francisco-based company that is backed by Google Ventures, Menlo, Benchmark, Lowercase Capital and Goldman Sachs. Political experience is in-line with Uber's previous PR hires.

Robert Werth, president of the Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Assn., rapped Uber's hiring of Plouffe for a new political campaign.

"Uber loves to portray itself as a plucky little tech startup fighting against an imaginary Goliath. But look who just bought themselves one of the best spin doctors in the country," said Werth.

Since leaving the White House following the 2012, Plouffe took a contributor slot at Bloomberg.

BLUEFOCUS PR REVENUES PUSHES \$200M

Growing Chinese ad/PR group BlueFocus Communications reported first half PR revenue jumped 67% to \$198M while overall revenues soared 122% to \$428M.

Net profit was up 119% to \$49.13M.

Much of the first half growth came from its advertising operations, which were up more than 200% to \$229M. Only about 5% (\$20M) of its overall revenues are from markets outside of China, but BF recently tapped Holly Zheng as global president to lead its international expansion from San Francisco.

Beijing-based BlueFocus, which went public in China in 2010, made its first US acquisition in July when it nabbed San Francisco digital and design firm Fuseproject, a foray CEO Oscar Zhao called "just the start" of his US moves. BF last year bought a 20% in UK-based Huntsworth, its first major global deal. Its firms include Dentsu BlueFocus, Insight PR, Eyes Media and BlueDigital, among others. Clients include Honda, Olympus and Dell.

FM CLOSES BOOKS ON ANTI-CHEVRON PUSH

Washington's FitzGibbon Media has terminated its subcontract with Brooklyn's McSquared PR, which organized an anti-Chevron campaign bankrolled by Ecuador as part of its long-running legal squabble over pollution in the Amazon.

FitzGibbon "assisted MC-Squared in PR, digital advertising and creative placement to inform the US public of Chevron's avoidance in taking responsibility for the damage to Ecuadorian Amazon communities," according to an Aug. 7 federal filing.

The firm received nearly \$200K, which included a \$125K *Houston Chronicle* media buy, in January and February from MCSquared.

The ad, which Jan. 19, the day of the city's marathon read: "Chevron Houston Marathoners run for the finish line. Chevron runs from justice" and plugged the www.thedirtyhand.com website.

FitzGibbon, which also promoted a visit to the affected Rainforest region by actress/activist Mia Farrow, officially cut ties with MCSquared on Jan. 19.

A federal court ruled March 4 that the \$9.5B judgment against Chevron in Ecuador was unenforceable because of fraud.

In May, Chevron reached a deal with Patton Boggs over its role in the suit, resulting in PB withdrawing from Ecuador litigation, issuing a letter of regret and paying \$15M to the San Ramon-based energy giant.

ARMY CHAPLAINS PRAY FOR PR SUPPORT

The Department of Army Chaplains has cast a net for PR support of a new communications plan across the military and major stakeholders.

Known as DACH, the department's mission is to ensure the "free exercise of religion for soldiers and families" through its 3,000 active chaplains that represent more than 140 different religions.

DACH wants an agency to handle internal and external communications, from monthly working groups and promotional videos to external-facing social media, talking points and public affairs guidance, according to an RFP released Aug. 18.

A one-year contract with two options years is expected to result from the search.

Responses are due Sept. 2. RFP: <http://bit.ly/YURyGc>.

AD GUY TAKES CREATIVITY TO GOLIN

Timothy Bruns, most recently creative director at JWT in New York, now has the same post in Interpublic's Golin's western region in Los Angeles.

In a creator career of more than 25 years, Bruns organized branding campaigns for Microsoft, Citibank, MetLife, AOL, Samsung, Comsat and Absolut.

He led creative at advertising agencies Draftfcb, TBWA/Chiat Day and BBDO.

Caroline Dettman, Golin's chief creator and community officer, praised Bruns' "combination of conceptual creative development with insightful storytelling."



The US actress Mia Farrow takes part in the 'Dirty Hand' campaign.

TX, UT SEEK OVERSEAS TRAVEL PR FIRMS

Texas and Utah have released multiple RFPs to handle tourism PR in overseas markets from Europe to Asia.

The Lone Star State is calling for pitches for Japan and South Korea to handle consumer, media, travel trade and other outreach in the region.

Weber Shandwick, which also handles China, is the incumbent.

A one-year contract will carry two option years.

As previously reported, Texas is also currently reviewing its Americas tourism PR. Edelman is defending that business.

Pitches are due Sept. 10 for the Asia business.

Utah, meanwhile, has released separate RFPs for travel PR covering Germany, Canada, Australia and China. Get It Across Marketing & PR currently handles the Germany market.

Turner PR won Utah's US PR account last year.

Deadlines for the Utah pitches are all Aug. 26, except the China RFP, which is due Sept. 3.

The RFPs can be accessed via <http://bit.ly/1spB1CB>.

CONSERVATION INT'L NAMES GOLDTHWAITE

Meg Goldthwaite, who led communications and marketing for the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund, has been named chief marketing officer for Arlington-based global environmental group Conservation International.

CI, which has about \$200M in net assets, focuses on issues like climate change, food security and clean water through a lens of sustainability.

Goldthwaite exits a senior director of strategy and innovation post at Women for Women International, a DC non-profit that aids women survivors of war.

At CI, she leads all marketing and communications, including partnerships, brand positioning and message development for the group.

Prior to Women for Women Int'l, Goldthwaite was VP/mktg. and comms. for the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund and previously served at the World Wildlife Fund and in corporate posts at MCI.

CI, with its substantial fundraising and spending, has taken some criticism in the past for partnering with companies like BP, ExxonMobil, Nestle and McDonald's on environmental projects.

HIGH SPEED TRADERS ORG TAKES SHAPE

The Modern Markets Initiative, the Washington-based trade group for the high-frequency trading sector set up by PR veterans of the Obama and Romney campaigns, has named a CEO and brought in lobbying support.

JDA Frontline and Blue Engine Message & Media are working the PR front for the organization, founded in January by JDA's Kevin Madden, former press secretary and senior advisor to Romney, and Blue Engine's Erik Smith, a senior advisor and media guru for President Obama's two national campaigns.

MMI said last week it has engaged DLA Piper to handle regulatory and public policy matters while trading industry vet Bill Harts (Bank of America, Citigroup, Nasdaq) takes the reins as CEO.

WWD RUNS AWAY FROM CONDE NAST

Conde Nast is unloading its Fairchild Fashion Media trade magazine group, which is spearheaded by *Women's Wear Daily*, to Penske Media Corp. in \$100M deal.

The New York-based publisher bought FFM from Walt Disney Co. for \$650M in 1999.

CEO Chuck Townsend said the sale reflects his strategy of investing in its core consumer magazine brands.

"Condé Nast has enjoyed unprecedented growth in our core consumer print, digital, mobile, events, video, television and film development businesses; this sale underscores our commitment to accelerating growth in these areas," he said in a statement.

The Fairchild group includes *Footwear News*, *Beauty Inc.*, M and events. Conde Nast keeps Style.com and NowManifest.

FFM CEO Gina Sanders will remain at Conde Nast and its parent Advance Publications in a not-yet-determined position.

Jay Penske hailed the acquisition as unique and remarkable opportunity to add a collection of esteemed global brands to our growing portfolio.

Conde Nast publishes *Vanity Fair*, *GQ*, *The New Yorker*, *Glamour*, *Vogue*, *Self*, *Wired*, *Bon Appetit*, *Architectural Digest* and *Lucky*.

Penske owns *Variety*, *Hollywood Life*, Deadline.com, various digital properties and a joint venture in India with Zee TV.

VF PUB SHIFTS TO CONDE NAST MKTG POST

Conde Nast has moved Ed Menicheschi, *Vanity Fair* publisher, to president/chief marketing officer of its media group. He replaces long-time staffer Lou Cona.

President Robert Sauerberg said Menicheschi spearheaded VF's "cross-platform initiatives" and has the "shrewd business skills" need to bolster the group's advertising and marketing clout.

Prior to *Vanity Fair*, Menicheschi was president of WWD Media Worldwide.

A search is on for a publisher of VF, where Graydon Carter is editor-in-chief.

ISIS SPOKESMAN KILLED IN SYRIA

Abu Mosa, press officer for the terrorist army ISIS, was killed by Syrian military forces last week, the State Department confirmed Aug. 21

Mosa had a prominent role in a recent Vice News documentary on the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, taunting the US and claiming that, "We will humiliate them everywhere, God willing, and we will raise the flag of Allah in the White House."

The death of Mosa follows ISIS' release of the video execution of American journalist James Foley this week, a propaganda play that reverberated globally.

An ISIS Twitter account said Mosa was killed during "missile clashes" with the Syrian Army at Taqba air-base in the northern part of that country.

**AL JAZEERA TO GORE: 'TAKE A HIKE'**

Al Jazeera America rejected allegations lodged by former Current TV owners Al Gore and Joel Hyatt (NL 8/18) that they were gored in the \$500M sale of their station to the Arab satellite TV network.

Gore/Hyatt charged fraud and breach of contract, claiming they were stiffed \$65M.

AJA says "not so," claiming it complied with the sale contract and charging Gore-Hyatt with filing a "pre-emptive lawsuit and lawyer-driven public relations maneuvers."

The unit of the Qatar-based network said under the deal the sellers had set aside money in an escrow fund. Al Jazeera America would use that fund to pay damages or settle a third-party suit.

David Boies, Gore and Hyatt's high-profile attorney, has asked the court to order AJA to "stop wrongfully withholding escrow funds" that belong to Current TV's former owners.

ISRAEL, GAZA CONSUME 'FANTASY NEWS'

Israel and Gaza media are dishing out "fantasy news" coverage of the current conflict, according to a report in the UK's *Economist* headlined "propaganda war."

The coverage of the war is "unusually partisan," according to the magazine. Israel's sole liberal daily, *Haaretz* backs the military campaign, though with questions about how it is carried out. Some readers cancelled subs after *Haaretz* "insisted that Palestinian casualties be covered alongside Israeli ones."

The Economist World politics Business & finance Economics Science & technology

Israel, Gaza and the media
Propaganda war

Both sides consume fantasy news
Aug 16th 2014 | JERUSALEM | From the print edition

BY ITS nature, war is polarising. Six out of seven Israelis oppose a ceasefire in Gaza if would include easing the blockade of the enclave, for example. Nor are Palestinians very interested in making necessary concessions.

In Israel, coverage of the current war is unusually partisan. The sole liberal daily, *Haaretz* has favoured the military campaign, albeit with questions about its conduct. (Some *Haaretz* readers cancelled their subscriptions, nonetheless, because the newspaper insisted its Palestinian casualties be covered alongside Israeli ones.) Most Israelis get their news from rolling bulletins issued by correspondents quoting army spokesmen. Since the campaign began, Israeli broadcasts have been solidly upbeat. Specialists in Arab affairs report that the offensive is bringing Hamas to its knees. Former generals provide constant

Most Israelis get news from rolling bulletins by correspondents quoting military spokespeople.

Broadcasts are decidedly upbeat. "Specialists in Arab affairs report that the offensive is bringing Hamas to its knees. Former generals provide constant commentary, often describing Hamas in blood-curdling terms."

Few TV anchors have talked about the high death toll of Palestinian civilians, continued the Economist. One Hebrew-speaking Palestinian was cut off after he spoke of the toll on Gaza's children.

The Hamas propaganda machine "has kept up a flow of heroic exhortations and fanciful tales of its triumphant fighters."

Emails have been sent to Israelis to warn their country will "continue to explode" until Israel has met all of the Palestinian conditions.

The magazine reports that West Bank cafes have dropped the TV station that supports moderate President Mahmoud Abbas in favor of stations carrying martial footage from Hamas and the radical Islamic Jihad group.

Palestinian commandos are depicted as fearless warriors "supposedly storming enemy lines, as cowardly Israeli soldiers collapse in tears," according to the Aug. 16-22 Economist.

MEDIA NEWS

TIME INC. REPORTER RATINGS 'NOT A BIG DEAL'

A spreadsheet obtained by Gawker.com that showed Time Inc. rating *Sports Illustrated* writers on whether their content is "beneficial to advertiser relationship[s]" is "not a big deal," according to Time chief content officer Norman Pearlstein.

Gawker reported on the rating system after the Newspaper Guild leaked the document.

Pearlstein told *New York Magazine's* "Daily Intelligencer" that the document was leaked by the union to make hay.

"It think it's not a big deal," he said. "I don't think it has anything to do with editorial independence and editorial integrity. But if I'm the Guild and I think I can leak a document to get reporters' attention, this was a nice one to leak."

Time Inc., spun off from Time Warner this year and saddle with significant debt, raised eyebrows earlier this year when it started making magazine editors report to the business side of the company.

The Guild derided Pearlstein's comments as "spin" and suggested his "subordinates haven't given him the whole story, especially since he says he only found [out] about the ranking system in the press."

Other criteria in the document used to rate writer-editors were quality of writing, productivity/tenacity, audience/traffic and enthusiasm/approach to work, among others.

FERGUSON RELIES ON COMMON GROUND

The City of Ferguson, Mo., placed under control of the Missouri National Guard after days of protests and unrest following a police shooting of an unarmed black teenager this month, brought in an outside PR firm to keep up with the crush of media inquiries and coverage.

Chesterfield-based Common Ground PR, co-founded and led by Standing Partnership alums Lynese Hoffman and Denise Bentele (pictured), is advising the city.

"We are providing short-term assistance to the City of Ferguson's media relations department in fielding media inquiries during this tragic time," the firm said in a statement.

[See Common Ground CEO Denise Bentele's op-ed on page 7.]

The clashes between police, protesters and others in the streets of Ferguson have drawn global media attention. Swelling journalist interest, the city's PR response has been criticized over arrests and harassment of journalists trying to cover the turmoil, as well.

Some outlets like Daily Kos and Talking Points Memo have picked up social media criticism that Common Ground's staff appears to be predominately white.

Ferguson police on Aug. 15 identified 28-year-old Darren Wilson as the police officer that shot the teenager, Michael Brown, on Aug. 9 in the St. Louis suburb. After moving control of the city from local to state police, Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon deployed the National Guard last week.

The US Dept. of Justice is investigating the shooting.

TO CENSOR OR PUBLISH BEHEADING PHOTOS

By Arthur Solomon

Most people would agree that heavy-handed censorship by a governing entity is anti-democratic. But what about self-censorship, which is now in the news because of the horrific beheading by ISIS of journalist James Wright Foley?

Should gruesome photos of people being slaughtered be banned from news outlets? Will publishing or televising macabre events serve a public good by providing a history lesson of hideous examples that might be prevented in the future if evil is stamped out before it grows too powerful?

Those are the questions that arise each day and must be answered by those empowered to decide what news should be made available and what news isn't newsworthy. As anyone who has worked as a journalist in a newsroom knows, there are many newsworthy stories that are spiked, some for lack of space and others because editors didn't like the way they were reported.

The choosing of what is important news and what is unimportant news (as is the decision of what Op-Eds editors of this NL accept) is a form of editorial self-censorship.

The debate over protecting the public from unsavory happenings seems to be in our protectors DNA. Decades ago, a harmless type of show business – burlesque – was abolished because it was considered to offend moralistic sensibilities. Hollywood enacted its own censorship rules that put blinders on scenes that offended its puritanical gatekeepers.

For years self-appointed censors have been targeting comic books, TV shows and movies for being overly violent. More recently the political correctness police have been agast at the language used by rappers.

Perhaps the most famous governmental censorship case not involving so-called classified information during our life-time occurred in the 1960s, when Lenny Bruce, a well-known stand-up comic, was arrested and convicted for obscenity in his routine, which ended his career and some people feel led to his death. (Bruce was pardoned in 2003 by New York Governor George Pataki, too late to help the comedian.)

Which brings us back to the ISIS beheading images. Some people feel that they are too ghastly and should not have been made public.

But also horrific are the pictures of Holocaust victims, which are used as a teaching lesson about evil if it is not stopped at its beginning.

The ISIS beheading photos are evidence of today's evil and should not be censored. Censoring them does a disservice to every American soldier who perished while trying to erase an evil from again reaching our shores.

Journalists should not self-censor gruesome news. Their job is to report and not let their personal sensibilities affect reporting.



NEWS OF PR FIRMS

DENTSU NABS IPG EXEC FOR AMERICAS PR

Belle Lenz, VP of global communications for IPG Mediabrands, has moved to rival Dentsu Aegis Network as regional director of communications for the Americas, a new role based in New York.

Dentsu, the fifth largest ad/PR conglomerate, is among rumored suitors of Interpublic, the No. 4 conglom behind WPP, Omnicom and Publicis.

Belle led corporate comms., partnerships and events for the media holding company of IPG, encompassing UM, Initiative, ORION Holdings and other units.

At Dentsu, she is charged with developing DAN's communications strategy in the region, where the growing, Japan-based marketing conglomerate plans to expand. Lenz reports to Americas & EMEA CEO Nigel Morris.

Dentsu Aegis has around 6,000 staffers in the Americas.



Lenz

SENIOR GROUP LOOKS FOR PR

The Council of Senior Centers and Services, which supports community groups in New York, is looking for a PR firm.

CSCS has more than 200 senior service agencies that serve more than 300K older adults.

It wants to expand its footprint beyond NYC and broaden membership to include individuals.

The Midtown-based group says the economic recession plus the growing increase in adults over the age of 65 challenges the ability of seniors to remain in their homes and communities, especially those surviving on fixed incomes.

More than a third of NYC elders are living in poverty and 90 percent of them have annual incomes of less than \$30K.

Older frail and immobile homebound people face additional challenges.

CSCS sponsors the NYC Family Caregiving Coalition, HIV/AIDS training programs for the 30 percent of people over 50 living with the condition, SNAP outreach program, bill payer and financial management courses.

Bobbie Sackman, CSCS director of public policy, told the July 25 *Wall Street Journal* there is "an aging tsunami" in NYC as demand for funds struggles to meet the needs of the boom in older adults, the segment's population is expected to grow by more than 35 percent in 2030 to 1.8M. Mayor Bill de Blasio increased the Dept. for the Aging's budget eight percent to \$230M, which was the biggest increase of any city agency.

A Council spokesman told O'Dwyer's the search is in the "preliminary stage" and doesn't want to hear from firms at this time.

BRIEF: Virginia-based consulting and tech services conglomerate ICF International has joined agency network PROI Worldwide following ICF's acquisition of PROI member Mostra, now **ICF Mostra**. Philippines-based **M2.O Communications** has also joined PROI.

NEW ACCOUNTS

New York Area

Makovsky, New York/Corporate Resource Services, publicly traded technology, staffing, recruiting and consulting services firm, as AOR for public and investor relations, including external comms. and media relations, and expanding its shareholder base.

Kwittken, New York/FreshDirect, online grocery delivery service, as AOR for PR, including media relations and support of other initiatives and launches. FD serves regions of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and greater Philadelphia.

MWW, New York/Scruff, LGBT social networking and dating app, as AOR for PR, including media relations and strategic philanthropy. Scruff counts more than 500K active daily members.

NKPR, New York/YourTea.com, Australia-based online provider of detox and wellness teas, for PR and media relations in the US.

Lou Hammond & Associates, New York/GROHE America, maker of premium kitchen, bath and shower fixtures; UNITERS North America, arm of global manufacturing concern in the furniture protection products category, and the Haunted Attraction Association, trade group, for a third year of PR representation.

Blackbird PR, New York/The Ritz-Carlton, Kyoto, for travel and hospitality PR for the 134-room resort.

Southeast

Uproar PR, Orlando, Fla./Romacorp, parent company of the Tony Roma's restaurant chain, for a national PR campaign. The company also tapped Parquet Public Affairs for issues management and crisis communications support and Spry Group for interactive design. Tony Roma's is in 30 countries.

RockOrange, Miami/Cotton Incorporated, for PR for the 2014 Cotton 24 Hour Runway Show in South Beach in November. The third show of its kind features a new outfit every minute for 24 hours – 1,440 cotton outfits in all.

West

Andrew Freeman & Co., San Francisco/plank, Oakland restaurant, beer garden and entertainment destination, for Bay Area PR and marketing support of its grand opening.

Olmstead Williams Communications, Los Angeles/Ice Energy, maker of the Ice Bear energy storage solution that uses ice to replace large industrial air condition units during peak usage times, and Geneva Healthcare, maker of tech platform for digital health data used to cut patient wait times and aid physicians.

Kahn Media, Ventura, Calif./Midway Industries, Arizona-based maker of high-performance clutches and flywheels under the Centerforce brand, as AOR, including PR, media outreach, strategic comms. and social media marketing.

International

MSLGroup, India/The Raymond Group, fabrics and garment retailer, for strategic advisory, creative comms. and engagement in India. The work includes influencer outreach, crisis and issues management, brand building and reputation management.

NEWS OF SERVICES

SIMON ADDS HIGGINS FOR HEALTHCARE PR

Susan Higgins, a veteran broadcast PR pro, has joined D S Simon as senior media relations manager to lead healthcare campaigns.

Higgins, who ran her own shop as a freelance for the past 25 years, is a former broadcast journalist for WABC-TV and CNN's NY Bureau.

Simon president/CEO Doug Simon said her years in the news media and PR worlds brings a "unique combination of experience" to the firm's clients. "She understands the media's needs as 'co-producer' which enables her to give voice to the client's message in a competitive media landscape," he said.

Higgins said healthcare PR is unique because a PR pro has to demonstrate to medical producers both an in-depth understanding of the issues involved and a deeper knowledge of how the story fits into their program or website.

UN TARGETS TERROR VICTIMS

The United Nations is circulating an "expression of interest" for a firm to conduct a media training program for ten victims of terrorism.

The vendor would design and deliver a training course in communications including "how to communicate with the media, general public, youth and other stakeholders" over a period of 18 months.

The trained people will then be equipped "with the necessary communications skills in preparing and launching campaigns including digital, and strategy and targeted messaging," according to the EOI of Aug. 4.

Among objectives of the project are defining what "can be achieved via communications and to "establish personalized media campaign and messaging strategy" and identifying key audiences like vulnerable communities and journalists."

Muhammed Islam at islam21@un.org is contact. He has not yet been reached for comment about the program.

AFRICA ECONOMIC PUSH SEEKS US PR

Trademark East Africa, an economic development engine funded by several countries including the US, is looking for PR agency support to reach North American and European media.

The Kenya-based not-for-profit representing a fast-growing, yet conflict-torn region of 140M people includes countries like Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Somalia and South Sudan.

It works to foster trade partners, support development efforts through funding, and provide technical assistance.

Among its goals for 2016 are a 10% increase in exports and a 30% decrease in the time it takes a truck to cross selected borders.

"As TMEA is funded by a range of European and North American donors, it is important to get visibility of our projects and communicate the successes and impacts to this important external audience," reads the RFP.

Proposals are due Sept. 8.

RFP: <http://bit.ly/1vfGeBC>.

PEOPLE

Joined

Alan Wallace, global senior PR manager, Trend Micro, to publicly traded cloud-based solutions provider Endurance International Group, Burlington, Mass., as director of PR. Endurance brands include Bluehost, HostGator, Domain.com and FatCow, among others. Wallace was previously in PR in Microsoft's Trustworthy Computing division and senior VP of corporate comms. for CyberDefender. He was also VP of corporate comms. for Panda Software and Mezi Media.



Wallace

Alex Deane, head of public affairs for Weber Shandwick and a former aide to now-Prime Minister David Cameron, to FTI Consulting's strategic communications operation as managing director in London. Deane, a prominent City of London figure and pundit who exits Weber after three years, is charged with growing FTI's PA operation. He was chief of staff to Cameron when the Conservative Party PM was Secretary of State for Education and Skills in the mid-2000s and later moved to Bell Pottinger as a director.



Deane

Matthew Jennings to Abu Dhabi-based global airline Etihad Airways in the new role of senior manager of public affairs in Washington as it expands in the US. Jennings led legislative affairs for the International Air Transport Association, the airlines' main trade group. Etihad, which carried 11.5M passengers last year as the flagship airline for the United Arab Emirates, in June added service from Abu Dhabi to Los Angeles International Airport and slates San Francisco and Dallas-Fort Worth routes for opening in November and December. It serves existing routes in Washington, Chicago and New York. Etihad launched in 2003 under decree of UAE's Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan. Jennings is a former staffer to Rep. Henry Brown (R-SC).

Chris Quint, exec. dir., Maine State Employees Assn., to the Univ. of Southern Maine as exec. dir. of PA.

Suzanne Hatcher, dir. of corporate comms. and PR, Life Technologies, to Cubic Corporation, San Diego, as director of corporate comms., including oversight of its PR function and reporting to EVP/CFO Jay Thomas. LT was recently acquired by Thermo Fisher Scientific.

Promoted

Crayton Webb, a Dallas TV journalist turned PR pro, to head CSR for beauty products direct marketing giant Mary Kay. Webb takes the VP post after nine years with the company, initially managing government relations. Randall Oxford, now a senior counselor at Dallas-based The Harrell Group, last held the VP/comms. post. Webb was chief of staff to Dallas Mayor Laura Miller (2002-05) and director of comms. for the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas after 10 years in TV news, including investigative reporter for KTVT (CBS) 11 in Dallas.

FED ANTITRUST COMPLAINT FILED VS PRSA

O'Dwyer's, in a further move aimed at busting the PRSA boycott against it, has lodged a complaint with the U.S. Dept. of Justice Antitrust division.

A complaint had been filed Aug. 20 with New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman asking his department to consider antitrust charges against the Society because of its refusal to allow an O'Dwyer exhibit at its annual conference in Washington, D.C., Oct. 11-14.

The Society has shown in the past that it takes government action to correct its behavior.

The Federal Trade Commission in 1976, having been sent a copy of the Society's Code of Ethics by O'Dwyer's, visited the Society in the fall of that year and told it that two of the articles in the Code were in violation of antitrust laws—the bar against members competing for each other's accounts and the bar against contingency fees.

Society leaders and staff put the issue before the 1976 Assembly, which spent two hours arguing over whether the Code, created in 1954, should be revised. Delegates said they feared that "open warfare" over accounts would result and tabled the motion.

O.K. to Pitch Non-Members' Accounts

O'Dwyer's felt the non-compete article was particularly unethical because the bar was only against pitching other members' accounts. It was O.K. to pitch non-members' accounts.

As for contingency fees, that was standard in the legal field and seemed logical for the PR counseling industry where media placements could be planned but there was no guarantee any of them would be obtained.

Society members wanted to be paid for their efforts irrespective of the number of placements made.

FTC said the Society for many years was engaged in "a combination, conspiracy and common course of action to restrain interstate commerce." It said prices of members' services "have been or have a dangerous tendency to be tampered, stabilized, fixed or otherwise interfered with."

The Society was ordered to ditch the two articles and publicize it. It was ordered in the future not to interfere with members and their business relationships with clients.

Volunteers Lack Power

Appeals to co-chairs of past conferences for access by O'Dwyer staffers have fallen on deaf ears. The co-chairs appear to be mainly ceremonial titles with little if any say over what takes place at the conference.

O'Dwyer staffers were banned from the 2013 conference in Philadelphia in spite of pleas made to co-chairs Oscar Suris, head of corporate communications for Wells Fargo, and Patrice Tanaka, chief counselor, PadillaCRT. Suris did not respond while Tanaka responded and was sympathetic to our requests, she was unable to change policy set by the Society's staff.

Conference co-chairs this year are James Olson, VP, global corporate communications and Americas public affairs, Starbucks Coffee Co., and Elise Mitchell, CEO of Mitchell Communications Group, Fayetteville, Ark., and CEO, Dentsu PR Network. They have not responded thus far.

FIRM AIDING FERGUSON RESPONDS TO CRITICS

By Denise Bentele, Pres./CEO, Common Ground PR

Just as an EMT would respond to a 911 call, Common Ground PR was asked to provide immediate, emergency help in the form of fielding the overwhelming number of media inquiries the city was receiving until it assembled a long-term team to handle this crisis.

Our short-term agreement to assist had nothing to do with the preceding tragic events. Rather, as we watched the news of ongoing turmoil, it was apparent that the negative images could forever impact our region's economic development efforts and the lives of our neighbors.

And so we went to field calls from media around the world, trying to connect them to the appropriate sources while city leadership tended to an incredibly challenging, unfolding situation. The pace of queries was profound – like catching raindrops in a hurricane.

It's not every day that a city of 21,000 residents gets more than 500 media calls in a day. It's not every day that the alphabet soup of news networks and stations all converge in one of the more than 90 municipalities in St. Louis County. But when all of the cameras are gone, we as St. Louisans will be left to rebuild. We will deal with companies who leave town and others who decide not to invest in St. Louis.

I was dismayed at the negative reaction online and on social media, especially among fellow communications professionals, who pointed at the lack of diversity on our staff as a sign of the "greater problem." Increasing the diversity of communications professionals is an industry-wide challenge that we all need to tackle. But as a local St. Louisan who watched this tragedy unfold, I offered our assistance because it was clear that this community was overwhelmed and needed immediate help fielding media inquiries. The color of our skin reflected nothing of our concern to help our broader community.

In my first conversation with Ferguson city officials, I advised that any solution to strife and development of long-term reconciliation would have to come with the assistance of a member of the black community skilled at community engagement with these key constituents.

To that end, The Devin James Group, a nationally certified minority-owned firm, has been working with St. Louis County and the City of Ferguson as an independent liaison to handle the public relations and long-term needs, work with community leaders and seek regional support in a grassroots effort to build true engagement. With the long-term coalition and communications help of CEO Devin James, local residents and businesses can focus on determining what's best for this community.

Devin is currently identifying and recruiting communities and leaders to participate and assessing potential for collaborative capacity which could result in the forming of or partnering of community coalitions, creating an outreach plan for improving awareness as well as developing a platform that gives the local community an outlet to address the issues and media perceptions.

We thank the many people who have shared their support and advice and we hope this helps answer questions our peers have, and hope more importantly that you send your prayers to the long-term healing of St. Louis.

PR OPINION

The beheading of journalist James Foley by ISIS forces and other instances of hostility to journalists in the U.S. and abroad prompted a *New York Times* examination of the phenomenon.

“From Missouri to Syria, Journalists in Troubled Areas Are Becoming Targets,” said the banner head Aug. 21.

Noted were not only murders, jailings and expulsion of journalists from troubled foreign lands, but interference with working press in the U.S.

Reporters covering protests over the shooting of a youth in Ferguson, Mo., have been “hit with tear gas and held by the police with little explanation,” it reported.

“People who are in authority have a preference for journalists not being witness to wrongdoing,” NYT was told by Martin Baron, executive editor of the Washington Post.

That is right! People don’t like their “dirty linen hanging out in public,” as the saying goes.

“Harsh Environment” for Reporters

NYT, warming to the subject, interviewed a number of reporters and editors and found “a harsh environment for reporters both at home and abroad, complicated by changes in the way journalists work and a change in the way they are viewed by both governments and the public.”

NYT could have spent more time talking about how journalists are confronted by PR people at businesses and organizations. PR specialists now outnumber press by a better than four-to one ratio says the U.S. Dept. of Labor—202,530 PR’s as of 2013 vs. 43,630 journalists. The PR’s grew from 166,630 in 2004 while the journos dipped from 52,550. Furthermore, as noted by Douglas Hebbard in Talking New Media, the median pay of PR’s was \$54,940 in 2013 while journalists were making only \$35,600.

We wouldn’t advise anyone to take up journalism as a career. There’s far more money and security in PR, which is thriving on the agency side where counselors can do lots of promotion for businesses large and small at a much lower cost than paid ads.

Traditional Media Sidestepped by PR

Current fashion in PR is to avoid traditional media as much as possible, especially critical media, reaching customers and other target audiences via company websites, e-mails and social media. There’s a sense in parts of the PR industry that victory has been achieved over the pesky independent press.

PR specialists are now called “social media influencers” at an ad/PR firm employing the son of Richard Batyko of the Akron chapter of PRSA, who noted this fact in his pitch to join the 2015 national board. All the pitches stressed the importance of social media. Decades of employing PR people who never worked in the media has created a PR culture that tends to regard reporters as aliens.

Additional pressure on reporters is coming from the economic side—the need to please advertisers. A

“firestorm of controversy” has erupted over new “advertiser-friendly” criteria Time Inc. is using on some of its editorial employees.

Time looks at how “beneficial to advertiser relationship” a writer’s work is deemed to be.

Press Persecution Is Documented

Worldwide press persecution is a phenomenon that has been documented by UNESCO, Committee to Protect Journalists and many others. UNESCO issued a 51-page report on the subject in 2012 and continues to examine it.

UNESCO’s Navi Pillay is particularly distressed by the fact that such persecution is mostly ignored by governments and institutions and that those who impede and harass the press can do so with “impunity.” Almost no murders of journalists are ever solved.

Among those silent on this subject is the U.S. PR community. The New York chapter of the PR Society is hosting a program Sept. 8 that will address the topic “PR professionals practice deception.”

This sounds like the chapter is interested in what is ethical in PR. Two speakers with backgrounds in “ethics” are featured—Randy Cohen, former “Ethicist” columnist of NYT who wrote a column for Ally Bank but was dropped after six weeks, and Jacqueline Brevard, former chief ethics officer, Merck & Co.

The problem is that reporters are banned from the event set for 6:30 p.m. at SUNY, 116 E. 55th St. Chapter president Henry Feintuch says they can watch it via a webcast and if they try to “crash” the event they will be turned away by security. Guards blocked reporters from attending a “PR career day” sponsored by the chapter at NYU April 2, 2014.

The national Society has banned reporters from its Assembly for the past three years and O’Dwyer staffers from all events at its national conference for the same period. It has already told the O’Dwyer Co. it is banned from the 2014 conference in Washington, D.C., Oct. 11-14 including the exhibit hall where a booth was sought for O’Dwyer products. National spent an all time low of \$1,057 on “ethics” in 2013.

Complaints charging violation of antitrust laws have been filed with the U.S. Justice Dept. and New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman (pg. 7).

Feintuch, thus far anyway, will not allow O’Dwyer reporters at the event probably because we would raise the topic of press avoidance by PR people and the organizations they work for and ask whether this is ethical.

The chosen topic, whether PR people practice deception, sidesteps the issue. A hallmark of current PR is setting an agenda and sticking to it.

We could find no way to reach either Cohen or Brevard no matter how much we searched the web. We couldn’t even find their mailing addresses which is how we have to reach out to some people these days. Another hallmark of PR is unavailability of PR people when numerous avenues of communication are present. This is the “Ostrich School of PR.”

— Jack O’Dwyer