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O'Dwyer's Newsletter



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SKDKNICK ACQUIRES SLOANE & CO.

SKDKnickerbocker has acquired Sloane & Co. from MDC Partners in a deal that adds financial capability to its public affairs orientation.



Josh Isay

Both entities are affiliated with Mark Penn's Stagwell Group.

"The acquisition of Sloane and Co. presents a huge opportunity for SKDK and for our current and future clients," SKDK CEO Josh Isay told O'Dwyer's. "SKDK and Sloane are now uniquely positioned in the marketplace to provide corporate and financial PR, transaction support, and special situations and public affairs

work at the highest level."

He added that "few, if any, firms can offer our comprehensive suite of services, from strategy and PR to award-winning digital and broadcast advertising to in-house research and executive media training and speech writing."

Sloane Co-CEOs Darren Brandt and Whit Clay will remain in their posts and run the firm as an independent unit of SKDKnick that offers services in such areas as M&A support, shareholder activism and governance, regulatory issues, investor relations, restructurings and media campaigns.

SKDK's client base includes *Fortune* 500 companies, nonprofits, philanthropic organizations, labor unions, political action committees and candidates.

The firm has offices in New York, Albany, Washington and Los Angeles.

NTIA HEAD TO BEACON GLOBAL STRATEGIES

Diane Rinaldo, who was acting administrator at the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, has joined Beacon Global Strategies as senior VP.



Diane Rinaldo

At the NTIA, she advised the White House and Congress on issues regarding cybersecurity, 5G, privacy and Internet access.

Prior to joining the executive branch, Rinaldo was director of government affairs at SAP and a staffer on the House's permanent select committee on intelligence, where she and played a key role in the development of the Cybersecurity Act of 2015.

Rinaldo also did an eight-year stint at Cassidy & Assocs.

SABIC HIRES EDELMAN FOR B20 SUMMIT PUSH

Saudi Basic Industries has agreed to pay Edelman \$5.6M in professional fees for strategic communications services surrounding the B20 Summit.

SABIC CEO Yousef Abdullah Al-Benyan is president of the B20, a group of business executives and CEOs from the 20 countries that will be represented at the G20 Summit of world leaders slated for Riyadh, Saudi Arabia from November 20-21.

The G20 sessions bring together the heads of countries who represent 80 percent of the globe's economic output and three-quarters of international trade.

Edelman, which has estimated \$1M-plus in expenses for the SABIC program, will provide overall support for B20-related events, media relations, content development, social media and stakeholder engagement.

The agreement went into effect this month and will run through January. A formal contract is not yet available.

The Government of Saudi Arabia owns a 70 percent stake in SABIC, which makes and distributes petrochemicals, plastics, agri-nutrients and metal products.



PR NEEDED FOR RACE RIOT CENTENNIAL

The Greenwood Art Project is looking for a PR firm to promote the 2021 centennial of the Tulsa race riot, which left up to 300 black people dead and the destruction of "The Black Wall Street."

Greenwood in 1921 was a thriving economic enclave of black-owned businesses and entrepreneurs within statutorily segregated Tulsa. Author and educator Booker T. Washington called the area the "Negro Wall Street." A mob of armed white men invaded the Greenwood district, triggering the worst race riot in American history. The attackers looted and set afire more than 1,200 homes in a 40-block area.



The GAP's mission is to hike awareness of the 1921 massacre and the once thriving economic zone.

Funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies, the GAP "strives to create art to activate the community towards healing from our history, rebuilding and re-cultivating in the most beautiful and authentic way, Greenwood Avenue."

The desired PR firm will use earned and social media to promote awareness of GAP's projects.

Proposals are due Feb. 26 and go to Jerica Wortham at j.wortham@greenwoodartproject.org.

Click [here](#) for the RFP.

PRO BONO PR TRIO SEEKS WIN FOR WINNER

A trio of PR firms is behind the push to grant clemency for Air Force veteran Reality Winner, the 28-year-old who was sentenced for leaking a classified report on Russian hacking to *The Intercept*.



Reality Winner

Winner's family has enlisted the services of Goodman Media International (New York), The Buzzell Co. (Dallas) and TK/Communications (Los Angeles). The shops are working on a pro bono basis.

GMI chief Tom Goodman is a PR veteran of CBS, ABC and J. Walter Thompson; Barbara Buzzell worked as PR chief/fashion director at I. Magnin, and TK/C's Yusef Robb

served as communications director for Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti.

Winner, a former National Security Agency contractor, served almost three years of the five-year sentence that she received in 2018. The former translator at Pluribus International smuggled a top-secret report about hacking attacks launched by Russian intelligence agencies on the 2016 presidential election.

A US attorney said Winner "caused exceptionally grave damage to US security" because she revealed undercover sources and intelligence-gathering methods.

Winner's family held a press conference in Dallas on Feb. 17 and petitioned the Justice Dept.'s Office of the Pardon Attorney on her behalf.

The *New York Times*, NBC News and Fox on Feb. 17 ran extensive stories about the press conference and Winner's bid for clemency.

BALLARD PARTNERS DIVES INTO VI SQUABBLE

CBI Acquisitions has hired Trump-connected Ballard Partners to intervene in its squabble with the National Park Services over the Caneel Bay Resort eco-lodge located within the Virgin Islands National Park.

Once the biggest employer on St. John, CBR has been closed since 2017 after it was smashed by two Category Five Hurricanes. Its shutdown has rocked VI's tourism-tied economy.



Brian Ballard

CBI took over the CBR in 2004. It owns the structures but not the land. The Norwalk, CT-based entity has refused to rehab the facility until NPS extends its lease on the land, which is to expire in 2023.

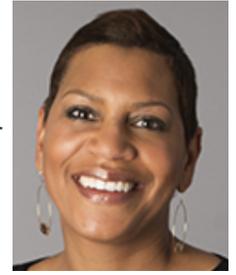
Established by Laurance Spelman Rockefeller, grandson of industrialist John D. Rockefeller, CBR has hosted luminaries such as Mitch McConnell, Meryl Streep and John Steinbeck. The Rockefeller family donated the real estate to the NPS.

Brian Ballard, who chaired the Trump Victory organization in Florida during the 2016 presidential campaign, is working the CBI business.

He's joined by Daniel McFaul, legislative director for ex-GOP Congressman Joe Scarborough and chief of staff to staunch Trump supporter Rep. Matt Gaetz.

ON THE MOVE

Edelman has named **Lisa Osborne Ross** U.S. chief operating officer. Ross retains her current title of president of Edelman's Washington, D.C. office. She joined Edelman in 2017 from APCO Worldwide, where she was the managing director of its Washington, D.C. office. Ross previously served as head of public affairs at Ogilvy. Before that, she served in the Clinton administration as communications director for the U.S. Department of Labor's effort to promote high-performance workplaces, deputy director of the bi-partisan Federal Glass Ceiling Commission and chief of staff of the White House Office of Women's Initiatives and Outreach.



Lisa Osborne Ross

MullenLowe U.S. has named **Erica Samadani** senior vice president, PR director of its Los Angeles office. Samadani joins MullenLowe from TBWA, where she was executive director of public relations, leading internal and external communications for TBWACHiatDay, TBWAMedia Arts Lab, and MAL/FOR GOOD. Prior to joining TBWA, Samadani led Ogilvy PR's Los Angeles office and ran its brand marketing practice for the West Coast. In addition to leading MullenLowe's PR team in Los Angeles, she will work with the agency's external communications team to raise the profile of the office.

Susan Davis International has brought on **Abby Eastman** as director, events & communications. Eastman joins SDI from the National Association of College and University Business Officers, where she was senior meeting planner. She was previously events service manager for the Hilton Hotel in Washington, DC, supporting such events as the White House Correspondents' Association Annual Dinner.

CompTIA, a trade association for the tech industry, has hired **Steve Kidera** as senior director of communications and public affairs. Kidera was previously director of corporate communications at TEGNA, the broadcast, digital media and marketing services company that was formed when the Gannett Company split into two publicly traded companies in 2015. Before that, he was manager, media relations at Gannett. In his new post, Kidera will lead strategic communications and outreach for the association's federal, state and international advocacy efforts.

LaVoieHealthScience has promoted **Paul Sagan** and **Lisa DeScenza** to vice president.

Sagan joined LaVoie in 2018 as assistant vice president, investor relations & corporate communications. DeScenza has been with the firm since 2012, most recently as assistant vice president, integrated communications.

Brian Pinkston, formerly communications director at NewYorkBIO, has joined LaVoie as account director, investor relations & corporate communications, and **Douglas Russell** assumes the newly created role of senior vice president, client services & PR/media.



Paul Sagan

RETHINKING CORPORATE APOLOGIES

The slightest misstep in today's social-media-driven culture can push companies into crisis mode – issuing knee-jerk apologies that can cheapen genuine expressions of contrition and result in long-term reputational harm.

I'm shaking my head about the latest corporation begging for forgiveness – Buffalo Wild Wings. The restaurant chain caught some flack online for implying that the Houston Astros baseball team deserved a more severe punishment for cheating in the 2017 and 2018 seasons. Last month, the Astros dodged player suspensions and received only a \$5 million fine, the loss of some draft picks, and one-year suspensions for its manager and general manager over the sign-stealing scandal.



Matthew Beaton

"THAT'S how you punish a team that cheats," Buffalo Wild Wings tweeted, taking a shot at the Astros while sharing a story about the Manchester City soccer club that faces a \$32.5 million fine and a two-season ban from the Champions League for rules violations.

Outrage ensued (a very online, Houston-specific, blink-and-you-miss-it type of outrage). Apparently, a few fans sent angry tweets, a few local news outlets wrote articles, and Buffalo Wild Wings went into apology mode.

"So last night was the roast of Buffalo Wild Wings, courtesy of the city of Houston. And honestly, we deserved it. Well done H-Town for coming to your team's defense, and we're sorry about what we posted," the company tweeted from its account on Saturday.

The apology, if anything, drew more criticism than the initial tweet. (Original tweet: 3,900 comments; 26,500 retweets; 159,300 likes. Apology tweet: 4,000 comments; 667 retweets; 5,400 likes).

So, what was Buffalo Wild Wings' reasoning? What was the value of the apology?

If a company plans to apologize for every innocent social media flap, it can expect to remain in constant crisis mode. And if an apology is necessary, it should follow a thoughtful, well-reasoned review of the situation – not because enough tweets said you should.

Perhaps the biggest upside from the apology was the additional media attention Buffalo Wild Wings received.

Most Americans only think about Buffalo Wild Wings during its commercials, so maybe the company leaned into the publicity opportunity and, at the same time, felt it was taking the high road.

Companies, though, shouldn't be so quick to grovel in public, relying on quick-fix apologies to satisfy social media and press criticism. And not all do this.

For example, Peloton declined an apology tour last December after its infamous holiday commercial drew accusations of sexism and comparisons to the dystopian world of Black Mirror.

"While we're disappointed in how some have misinterpreted this commercial, we are encouraged by — and grateful for — the outpouring of support we've received from those who understand what we were trying to communicate," the company's statement said.

Now, two months after the outrage over the commercial, few remember whether the company self-flagellated for a week or just said its ad was "misinterpreted."

And from a PR perspective, that matters a lot. First, an apology tour is full of potential landmines. The last thing you want is to be forced to do a second apology tour because your first one was inadequate or tone-deaf.

Second, by unreservedly apologizing and taking full responsibility for a tweet or commercial, a company essentially accepts all the worst interpretations of that tweet or commercial.

That's not to say apologies are unnecessary, but automatic apologies shouldn't be issued as soon as a few angry tweets roll in and some negative news coverage hits the web.

Consider this: Three months after the outrage ensues, few will remember your misunderstood tweet or commercial, but, if handled correctly, a company will have safeguarded its brand by refusing to accept or sanction any odious labels that were meant to do it permanent harm.

Matthew Beaton is a PR consultant and founder of Beaton PR, which works with law, finance and tech firms. He is based in New York City.

COMCAST NAMES KHOURY COMMS. CHIEF

Cable and telecommunications giant Comcast Corporation has promoted Jennifer Khoury to the role of chief communications officer.

Khoury succeeds D'Arcy Rudnay, Comcast's first chief communications officer, who's retiring after 16 years with the Philadelphia-based cable TV company. Rudnay will remain onboard until the end of the year, where she'll serve as senior advisor to Comcast's executive leadership team.

Khoury joined Comcast in 1999. She was previously senior VP of corporate and digital communications, leading all strategic comms. for the company's consumer products, as well as media relations, social media and digital comms. for its brand.

Khoury will now oversee all of the Comcast's external and internal corporate communications functions. She'll report to Comcast chairman and chief executive officer Brian Roberts and senior executive vice president Adam Miller.



Jennifer Khoury

ASA INVESTS IN MCMORROW

The American Securities Assn. has hired Kelli McMorrow as head of government affairs and director of fixed income policy.

She joins the ASA from Bond Dealers of America, where she exited as senior VP after a three-year run.

Earlier, McMorrow was chief of staff for former Texas Republican Congressman Randy Neugebauer, who served on the House Financial Services Committee.

The ASA bills itself as "America's voice for Main Street investors" and the only trade group to advocate on behalf of regional financial services firms.

VIDEO, AUDIO CONTENT ATTRACTS GEN Z

Gen Z's media consumption habits include a wider variety of content experiences than their older peers, according to a report by publisher video platform Connatix.

The report found that, on average, Gen Zers spend more time watching publisher videos online than older consumers, with 46 percent reporting they watch more than one hour of video per day (compared to 40 percent of Millennials, 31 percent of Gen Xers and 21 percent of Baby Boomers).



Gen Zers appear more receptive to video ad content as well, as 60 percent said they're willing to watch an ad before a video. Gen Z respondents reported a greater preference toward both shorter video ads (10 seconds or less) and longer ads (20 seconds or more) than older respondents.

Gen Zers also gravitate toward audio. More than a quarter (26 percent) of Gen Z consumers polled said they'd spend more time with articles if audio versions were available, compared to 17 percent of Millennials, 14 percent of Gen Xers and nine percent of Boomers.

And more than half of readers under 35 (55 percent) said they'd spend more time with publishers if they provided more videos to watch.

The survey also discovered that about a quarter (25 percent) of Gen Z respondents said they were willing to pay \$10 a year for subscription-based podcasts tailored to their tastes, compared to 24 percent of Millennials, 19 percent of Gen Xers and 11 percent of Baby Boomers.

Connatix's report, "Gen Z: The New Voice in the Editor's Room," polled more than 1,000 U.S. consumers belonging to the Baby Boomer, Gen X, Millennial, and Gen Z generations through online market research platform AYTm.

CA COLLEGE SEEKS MARKETING AGENCY

Mt. San Jacinto College, a public community college in Riverside County, California, is looking for a marketing/creative services agency to devise an annual marketing campaign to target prospective students and raise awareness of the college's programs and services.

MSJC needs a full-service agency that can create three student-recruitment campaigns per fiscal/academic year in an effort to promote the college's fall, spring and summer semesters. Scope of work includes content creation; media buying; photography and videography services for commercial TV/radio spots; design and print services; and research and development.

Send proposals by 10:00 a.m. (PST) on March 3 to: Mt. San Jacinto Community College District; Attn: Tammy Cunningham – Director of Procurement and General Services; 1499 N. State Street; Bldg. AA; San Jacinto, CA 92583

Agencies should seal proposals in an envelope labeled with the bid name, number and submittal deadline ("Marketing Services," "RFP No. 2020-012," "3/3/2020").

Questions go to Tammy Cunningham, tcunningham@msjc.edu, and Carole Ward (cced), cward@msjc.edu, by February 25.

[Download the RFP \(PDF\).](#)

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

Current Global has been named PR agency of record for **Bota Box** product of Delicato Family Wines. The agency is charged with developing and executing public relations programming to support the brand and its "This is How We Bota" campaign throughout North America. The account will be supported by Current Global's San Francisco office under the leadership of senior vice president Jennifer Strasburg.



Global Results Communications has added **AMERGINT Technologies**, a provider of mission-critical ground, test and networking systems for the space and defense industries, to its client roster. GRC will produce and launch campaigns to amplify media and analyst relations and generate coverage of the company in news and trade publications. Over 2,500 AMERGINT product deliveries are hosted on cloud architectures and dedicated servers, testing, launching and operating space systems.

William Mills Agency has been chosen to provide public relations services for **Teslar Software**. WMA is also providing marketing assistance for the company and has developed an app icon for its website and social media channels. Headquartered in Springdale, AR, Teslar offers automated workflow and portfolio management tools for community financial institutions.

Trevelino/Keller has been engaged by global café-bakery chain **Paris Baguette** to promote the brand in its franchise sales expansion plan into the U.S. The agency's services will include placing earned media with the restaurant and franchise trade as well as in local markets. Trevelino/Keller will also support key franchise/restaurant shows from an earned media and executive visibility standpoint, work on presentation and sales materials, and participate in revamping Paris Baguette's franchise sales website.



Weber Shandwick has been named PR partner of **Singapore's National Library Board**. The agency will provide day-to-day PR consultancy and communications services support for the NLB. Vanessa Ho Nikolovski, managing director, Singapore and chair, client services, of Weber Shandwick Asia Pacific, said the agency's remit is to support the NLB's evolution "from a knowledge hub to a dynamic center at the heart of a digitalised community."

Diffusion has been selected as public relations agency of record for **Gate Labs**, a smart lock maker that produces what the company says is the world's first all-in-one video smart lock. Diffusion will coordinate with the brand to build its profile as a leader in the smart home industry. The PR program will support Gate Labs as it releases the Generation 2 smart lock and rolls out more features across its product lineup, leveraging a product seeding program that will let reporters, influencers and reviewers test the smart lock's design for themselves.

DIGITAL POLITICAL AD SPEND TO TOP \$1B

Digital political advertising spending in the U.S. will cross the \$1 billion threshold for the first time this year, according to a recent forecast by digital market research company eMarketer.

eMarketer's latest election spending figures shows digital advertising—which includes federal, state and local races—topping \$1.34 billion during the 2019-2020 election cycle, an increase of about \$900 million since the 2015/2016 presidential race.



eMarketer attributes the spending surge on the unusually large number of Democratic presidential primary candidates competing for the party's nomination in this election cycle, which includes noted contributions from billionaire candidates Michael Bloomberg and Tom Steyer, who have both spent historic sums in campaigns that have prioritized digital media outreach.

Altogether, eMarketer predicts that total political media advertising revenues during the 2019/2020 political campaign period will approach a record-breaking \$7 billion (\$6.89 billion), accounting for an increase of about \$2.67 billion from the 2015-2016 cycle.

Digital makes up a little less than 20 percent of this (19.4 percent), yet nearly double the 10.5 percent digital accounted for during 2015/2016 campaign cycle.

Television continues to serve as the preferred political ad spending channel, with eMarketer estimating that TV ad spends will make up two-thirds (66 percent) of the total \$6.89 billion spent on political ads during the 2019-2020 election cycle.

MEDICAL TEAMS INT'L ISSUES PR RFP

Medical Teams International is looking for a strategic communications/digital marketing partner to further its goals and build the brand of the Christian relief service that has provided humanitarian services to people in more than 35 countries since its founding in 1970.



The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation donated \$350K in January to Portland, OR-based MTI to fund life-saving primary healthcare services in Columbia to 120K Venezuelan migrants who fled their country due to its economic collapse and political unrest.

MTI wants a firm with experience in growing a non-profit organization's profile internationally. The shop will share TMI's values and have some background in humanitarian work.

The group's goal is to triple its capacity to respond to human and natural disasters. It aims to serve 2.4M refugees and globally displaced people and 30K Americans per-year by 2024.

Proposals for PR and digital work are not to exceed \$100K for the six-month engagement.

They are due Feb 28 at info@medicalteams.org.

[Download RFP \(PDF\)](#).

MEDIA MANEUVERS

The entire editorial staff of *Men's Journal* is getting the ax, according to a report in the *New York Post*. American Media, which has owned the publication since 2017, will be merging its editorial operations with those of the Carlsbad, CA-based Adventure Sports Network, which it acquired last year. The magazine will cut its frequency from 10 issues a year to six, and will drop its circulation from 1.25 million to 1 million. The *Men's Journal* ad staff will remain in New York. American Media has also unloaded *Muscle & Fitness*, *Flex* and *Muscle & Fitness Hers*—all of which will transition to digital-only publications.



Michael Bloomberg's campaign says that if Bloomberg is elected president, he plans to sell Bloomberg LP as well as releasing his tax returns. Campaign adviser Tim O'Brien said "there will be no confusion about any of his financial holdings blurring the line between public service and personal profiteering." Bloomberg has come under fire from several of his competitors in the campaign over his finances, with much of the controversy stemming from the estimated \$400 million Bloomberg has spent on advertising. According to the *Financial Times*, Bloomberg owns 88 percent of the financial data company he founded in 1981.

Andrew Yang has signed on as a political commentator for CNN following his exit from the race for the Democratic presidential nomination after his poor showing in the New Hampshire primary. Yang's first appearance on the network was during the Feb. 19 debate.

Fox Corp. is looking into acquiring advertiser-supported streaming service **Tubi**, according to the *Wall Street Journal*. The *Journal* report says that Tubi, which claimed to have 25 million monthly active users in December, could fetch a price of more than \$500 million. Fox would be the latest media company to get into the ad-supported streaming game. Before merging with CBS, Viacom picked up Pluto TV, while Comcast is said to be negotiations to buy Xumo. NBC's Peacock streaming service also includes an ad-supported option. The ad-supported services are seen as a way for these media companies to both broaden their reach and hopefully provide an additional ad revenue stream.

The California Times, the company that owns both the *Los Angeles Times* and *San Diego Union-Tribune*, announced on Feb. 19 that it is offering voluntary buyout packages to employees who have worked at the company for at least two years. Staffers were told that the company is not planning for any layoffs, according to a report on CNN Business. Biotech billionaire Dr. Patrick Soon-Shiong assumed control of the papers in June 2018 from Tribune Publishing (then known as tronc). Times employees voted to form a union in January 2018 and ratified their first contract in October.



COMMENTARY

Is the sustainability “bubble” ready to pop on Wall Street? Should PR share the blame for the growing price gap between social responsibility stocks and other equities?



Savita Subramanian

Morningstar found that investors poured \$21B into environmental, social and governance funds in 2019, just about quadrupling the 2018 amount.

Savita Subramanian, Bank of America's head of US equity strategy, said the “monstrous” inflow of money into ESG funds is driving the valuation gap, according to the *Financial Times*.

Some Wall Streeters believe ESG stocks are on fire because corporate CEOs heed PR messaging about meeting the needs of all stakeholders including employees, customers, communities and society as a whole.

The FT noted that money flowing into energy renewable stocks comes at the expense of oil & gas companies.

“There appears to be a growing disconnect between operational performance and share price returns,” said Eugene Klerk, head of global ESG research at Credit Suisse. “There is a growing awareness or nervousness around this particular topic.”

Morgan Stanley reports the outperformance of ESG stocks began six to nine months ago and that it typically takes at least five years before overheated sectors cool down. That means there’s still plenty of time for corporate CEOs to buy into PR’s ESG pitch.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg penned a Feb. 16 op-ed in the *Financial Times* that called for more regulation of Big Tech because he doesn’t think “private companies should make so many decisions alone when they touch on fundamental democratic values.”

The article was a smokescreen, a PR ploy to get Facebook off the hook. Since the US government moves at a glacial speed, there’s no way regulatory safeguards could be erected in time for the 2020 election.

Zuckerberg could snap his fingers and kill political advertising tomorrow, if he wished.

Philanthropist George Soros noted in a Feb. 18 letter-to-the-editor piece published in the FT that if FB has any “doubt whether an ad is political, it should err on the side of caution and refuse to publish.”

Soros doubts that going to happen because he believes Zuckerberg is “engaged in some kind of mutual assistance arrangement with Donald Trump that will help him to get re-elected.”

The Trump campaign has hired Matt Oczkowski, who was head of product at Cambridge Analytica, the data firm that improperly obtained the personal information of tens of millions of FB users.

Oczkowski played a key role in Project Alamo, the

online campaign orchestrated through FB advertising that helped put Trump in the White House.

What do you say, Mark? There’s still time to pull the plug on political advertising.

Twitter feels heat on global warming. While Facebook is taking hits for its policies on political advertising, Twitter deserves scrutiny for running tweets denying global warming that are produced by bots.

A quarter of all climate crisis tweets stem from bots, according to a not-yet-published study from Brown University. The *Guardian* of the UK obtained a draft of the report. The Brown researchers found the bots had a “substantial impact” in amplifying global denial messaging and building support for president Trump’s decision to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement.

Stephan Lewandowsky, co-author of the study that analyzed 6.5M tweets, isn’t surprised at the global denial messages. “More often than not, they turn out to have all the fingerprints of bots,” he told The Guardian. “The more denial trolls are out there the more likely people will think that there is a diversity of opinion and hence will weaken their support for climate science.”

What do you say, Twitter?

You’ve got to tip your hat to president Trump.

He’s a master at stagecraft. His Feb. 16 appearance at the Daytona 500 was pure magic. It was the opposite of a helmeted Mike Dukakis awkwardly sitting in a tank.

Flying from Mar-a-Lago, Air Force One did a lap above the Daytona International Speedway track before landing across the street at Daytona International Airport.

Air Force Thunderbirds, which did two fly-overs of the track, were parked next to the presidential plane.

Trump’s motorcade then led a parade of racing cars around the 2.5-mile track. With First Lady Melania Trump at his side, the president gave a short pep talk before closing with, “Rubber will burn, fans will scream, and the great American race will begin.” As grand marshal, he declared, “Gentlemen, start your engines.”

The crowd loved every minute of it and took up chants of “USA,” “four more years,” and “we love you.”

White House media organ Fox News broadcast the spectacle and the Trump campaign filed an ad of the event. The *Daytona Beach News-Journal* reported that Trump’s visit would be long remembered by Trump’s fans.

The only glitch: Campaign manager Brad Parscale tweeted that Trump won the Daytona 500 even before the race started. Unfortunately, he accompanied the tweet with a 2004 image of Air Force One carrying George W. Bush, taking off from Daytona after he attended the race.

Parscale deleted that image, which featured more fans in the stands than there were at this year’s opening of the NASCAR season.

—Kevin McCauley