



Kevin McCauley
Editor-in-Chief

O'Dwyer's

The Inside News of PR & Marketing Communications



271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016
212/679-2471. Fax: 212/683-2750
www.odwyerpr.com; jobs.odwyerpr.com

February 22, 2021 Vol. 54 No. 8

OMNICOM POSTS 9.3% DROP IN Q4 REVENUES

Omnicom chief John Wren reported a 9.3 percent tumble in Q4 revenues to \$3.8B as the COVID-19 pandemic took a toll on its business. Organic growth dipped 4.9%, to \$614.7M.



The PR group (Marina Maher Communications, Portland, FleishmanHillard, Cone, Porter Novelli, Mercury and Ketchum) posted a 1.9 percent drop in reported

revenue to \$351M and a 5.6 percent decline for the full year to \$1.3B. It was the only unit to post positive Q4 organic growth, +0.2 percent.

Advertising dropped 9.7 percent, CRM consumer experience plunged 15.8 percent, CRM executive & support fell 13.7 percent and healthcare slipped 2.0 percent.

Omnicom reported organic declines across all regions. The US was down 9.4 percent; UK, 12.4 percent; Europe, 9.2 percent; Asia Pacific, 3.9 percent; and Middle East & Africa, 36.8 percent.

Wren expects Omnicom revenues will decline through the first half of 2021. He warns, "such reductions in revenue could adversely impact our ongoing results of operations and financial position, and the effects could be material."

FTI CONSULTING ADDS CBA'S ZUMWALT

FTI Consulting has added Bryan Zumwalt, who was executive VP-PA at the Consumer Brands Assn., to its strategic communications practice. He is senior managing director and head of government affairs.



Bryan Zumwalt

At the CBA, which was formerly the Grocery Manufacturers Assn., Zumwalt led its government relations, communications, research and ally development efforts. CBA members employ about 20M people and their 1,700 brands kick in \$2T to the US economy.

Earlier Zumwalt was VP-federal affairs and chief lobbyist at the American Chemical Council, where he contributed to the revamp

of the US Toxic Substances Control Act.

He also served on Capitol Hill as chief counsel for the Senate's Committee of Environment and Public Works and counsel to Louisiana Republican Senator David Vitter.

At FTI, DC-based Zumwalt reports to Brian Kennedy, head of the Americas strategic communications group.

O'DWYER'S RANKING BOOSTS NEW BUSINESS

PR firms looking to reach out to prospects who visit O'Dwyer's website every day to research outside PR counsel should consider joining this year's rankings.

O'Dwyer's has been conducting this [benchmark study annually since 1970](#) and our name is well-known in the business world. The third-party recognition gained from appearing in the overall and multiple specialty and city/regional charts is the bedrock principle of PR.



This is the perfect opportunity to promote your expertise in areas such as [healthcare](#), [technology](#), [finance](#), [greentech](#), [professional services](#) and [purpose/CSR](#), to name a few of the 19 specialties we track.

PR firms have distinctive financials—at least half of income is used for staff pay. Therefore, O'Dwyer's requires the top page of the latest corporate income tax return and W-3 to verify legitimate PR firms rather than ad agencies or other types of businesses. The ranking measures counseling and media contact services, not advertising or production expenses.

Participating firms are instructed to consider PPP funds as a loan until they are forgiven and not factor the amount into retainer income.

Please contact John O'Dwyer at john@odwyerpr.com if you have questions about the ranking requirements. You can download the rankings by clicking [here](#) or use the form at the end of this newsletter.

MD ANDERSON LAUNCHES MARCOMM RFP

The MD Anderson Cancer Center, one of the world's premier cancer care and research facilities, is looking for one or more firms to build upon its existing marketing strategies.

US News & World Report ranked MD Anderson the No. 1 care hospital in its 2020-21 survey, and has named Anderson either No. 1 or No. 2 since it began its rankings in 1990.



MD Anderson, which is affiliated with the University of Texas, has issued an RFP with four components. Interested firms may bid on individual programs, a combination of projects or the entire package. Categories are: Brand Management & Strategy, Advertising, Search Engine Optimization and Marketing Analytics & Attribution.

Responses are due March 1 and must be sent electronically to SciQuest procurement site.

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

TENEO HANDLES UAE'S 50TH BIRTHDAY BASH

Teneo is handling communications surrounding the United Arab Emirates' "Golden Jubilee" to celebrate its accomplishments over the last 50 years, which includes the launch of the Hope Probe that is currently orbiting Mars.

The UAE is the first Arab and Muslim-majority nation to explore space via a partnership with the US and France.

The country's "National Day" is Dec. 2.

Teneo began providing anniversary services on Jan. 1 and will continue handling communications strategy, advisory, planning and narrative development services through Feb. 28.

That effort is worth \$150M a month.

The work is in addition to its existing base retainer of \$250K per month that Teneo receives from the Salama Bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation under a pact that went into effect on April 12, 2020.

Teneo also signed on for a two-month "transformation services" project with the UAE worth \$500K for the Jan. 31 to March 30 period.

SKDKNICK TAPS SEN. KELLY'S STRATEGIST

SKDKnickerbocker has hired Pia Carusone as managing director and co-head of its political department at the Stagwell Group unit.

She was lead strategist and ad maker for former astronaut Mark Kelly's successful 2020 run for Arizona Senator against



Pia Carusone

Republican Martha McSally, who was appointed to the seat following the 2018 death of John McCain.

Prior to the Kelly campaign, Carusone served in the Obama administration as assistant secretary for PA at the Dept. of Homeland Security.

She also was the youngest female chief of staff in Congress when she worked for Arizona Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, Kelly's wife.

At SKDK, she will work with fellow political department co-heads Doug Thornell and Oren Shur, counseling candidates and producing content to shape their campaigns.

LLYC REPORTS 8.3% DIP IN 2020 REVENUES

LLYC reported an 8.3 percent dip in 2020 revenues to \$53.3M largely due to the devaluation of currencies in Brazil, Mexico and Argentina triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2020 results compare to LLYC's record-setting year-earlier financial performance.

LLYC wrapped up the pandemic-dominated year without cutting staff or increasing debt.

The Americas region generated 52 percent of 2020 revenues for the Madrid-based firm. Argentina, Portugal and Colombia were top performers.

The COVID-19 crisis accelerated the digital transformation of the firm, according to Alejandro Romero, CEO of the Americas.

His goal is to "get ahead of the game and adapt to the new challenges our clients face by offering innovative global solutions that will help their business and profits."

LLYC, which has offices in Miami, DC and New York, has 600 professionals, of which 66 percent are women, who account for 44 percent of management positions.

NYC DEPT OF ED'S BARBOT TO BERLINROSEN

Miranda Barbot, press secretary at the New York City Dept. of Education, will join [BerlinRosen](#) March 22 as VP-strategic campaigns.

She did a more than three-year stint at the nation's largest public school system with 1.1M students and 150K staff members.

Barbot handled the Dept.'s PR and policy rollouts during the COVID-19 pandemic, including school shutdowns in March, transition to remote learning and the reopening of facilities last fall.

Prior to the DOE, Barbot was director of communications at the Hispanic Federation and staffer at [Goodman Media International](#).



Miranda Barbot

BerlinRosen's strategic communications clients are Service Employees International Union, Color of Change, HBO Max, International Brotherhood of Teamsters and 15 Percent Pledge.

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

Zapwater Communications has been engaged by the **Montserrat Tourism Division** for media relations activations in North America. The agency will lead Montserrat's Remote Workers Stamp initiative, which offers year-long visas to remote workers, and will execute other promotional campaigns for the island. The account will be managed out of Zapwater's Miami office and the scope of work includes virtual events and partnerships.

French/West/Vaughan is selected by private equity firm **Sherpa Collaborative** to handle public relations efforts for the organization and multiple associated brands. FWV has already begun work on behalf of the firm, with an initial focus on increasing awareness and driving sales for its consumer-facing brands Lawson Hammock and Andador, a woven belt collection, through a national media relations campaign.

Ogilvy fires up **Zippo's** PR as WPP unit handles creative, media relations, influencer marketing, social strategy and performance media. The account will be led out of Ogilvy's New York office. Zippo's products are sold in more than 180 countries and regions around the world. "In Ogilvy, we found a partner that valued the heritage of our brand," said Zippo senior brand manager, global marketing Lucas Johnson.



VirgoPR lands private jet travel company **VeriJet**. The campaign will focus on such news as expansions to the company's fleet, app updates, further regional services, thought leadership for the aviation industry and the future of travel. VirgoPR will also be refining messaging and positioning around how VeriJet fits into the travel industry.

Magrino handles Pepper, a platform that sells home décor, lingerie, pajamas and adult toys that it says "encourage closeness through playfulness and exploration." The agency will work on creative programming and brand awareness development in the US market through integrated public relations strategies and marketing campaigns. In addition to selling its products online, the company is scheduled to open brick-and-mortar stores in Las Vegas.

CUOMO'S LESSONS IN CRISIS FAILURE

Governor Andrew Cuomo's book, "American Crisis: Leadership Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic," debuted at number seven on the *New York Times* best seller list in



Fraser Seitel

October and remained on top through the year's end.

Three months later, his sequel, "Gubernatorial Crisis: Failed Leadership Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic," ought to be mandatory reading for every public relations counselor.

Gov. Cuomo's unbridled hubris has landed the erstwhile Democrat darling in an untenable, unwinnable and, for Andrew Cuomo himself, "unimaginable," public relations disaster.

Here is the CliffsNotes version of the public relations rules Cuomo violated on his way to political purgatory.

Violation one: Cuomo took full credit

Early on as the virus spread, Cuomo took to the airwaves to assure the nation that he, like Al Haig—look it up—was "in charge." He dutifully dodged a daily dose of mainly softball questions from distanced—but still mostly awed—reporters, while taking full credit for New York's—i.e. his!—handling of the COVID crisis.

This stood in stark contrast to his New Jersey counterpart, Gov. Phil Murphy, who understood the importance of crediting others, and at his COVID press conferences called on subordinates to report and commended them effusively.

Violation two: Cuomo believed his own publicity

As the crisis wore on and the more the media fawned over Cuomo's virtuoso daily performances, the more his acclaim ascended. And the Governor reveled in his grandiosity.

His daily press conference that began as a serious news briefing morphed into a variety show, with Andrew as the MC. The Academy of Television Arts & Sciences awarded the Governor an Emmy for his TV service to humanity.

And then, eight months into the crisis in the blunder of all blunders, Andrew decided to write a 320-page book to share with a grateful COVID-ravaged nation his "hard-won lessons in leadership and his vision for the path forward." That move would backfire ferociously three months later.

Violation three: Cuomo feigned empathy

In early February, after DeRosa let slip that Cuomo purposely withheld New York's skyrocketing COVID-19 nursing home death count, the Governor sprang into full damage control mode to try to tamp down the mounting furor.

Typical were his comments at his first post-DeRosa bombshell press conference, when he tried to relate to loved ones of nursing home victims by citing the loss of his own father.

Cuomo's father, of course, died six years ago from heart problems at the age of 82, with his family by his side. Mario Cuomo's demise stood in stark contrast to most of the 15,000 New York nursing home COVID victims who were prohibited from seeing their loved ones when they died.

Compare that to Gov. Murphy's inclusion at every press conference of stories and photos of at least three randomly-selected and mostly unknown New Jersey COVID victims. The latter is empathetic; the former is manipulative.

Violation four: Cuomo accepted no blame

Finally, Prince Andrew, like King Donald before him, was quick to point fingers at others, rather than accepting blame himself, when things went horribly wrong.

Cuomo reluctantly acknowledged that his administration should have provided more information faster.

But ...

"The truth is, everyone did everything they could do. The truth is you had the best medical professionals and advice on the globe. The truth is it was in the middle of a pandemic," the Governor explained.

He then went on to blame social media, 24-hour news stations, Republicans with agendas and even—in an admirably-inventive deflection—pointed to his own state public health director, Howard Zucker, as a possible culprit.

Going forward, Gov. Cuomo might consider the advice proffered in another book, admittedly far less noteworthy than "Leadership Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic." That book was the Bible. And the advice: "Pride Goeth Before a Fall."

Fraser P. Seitel has been a communications consultant, author and teacher for 40 years. He is author of the Pearson text "The Practice of Public Relations," now in its 14th edition, and co-author of "Rethinking Reputation" and "Idea Wise." He may be reached directly at yusake@aol.com.

STAYING ON TOP OF DISINFORMATION

As more consumers turn to social media and online forums for their news, online listening tools can give brands an opportunity to enhance their marketing efforts and overall presence on these platforms. Taking a deeper look at online conversations by monitoring what consumers are saying is an effective way to oversee your brand.

Go a step further than traditional keyword monitoring by looking out for unusual behaviors around your usual keywords and those who typically fall into your target audience. You should also monitor and assess competitor and category chatter.

Once an online conversation is taking place, the ability to identify where the information is coming from (and who it reaches) is crucial to understanding how to best proceed.

Although many brands can spot consumers acting with bad intent after the fact, artificial intelligence tech can enable brands to detect these conversations well in advance, in addition

to identifying fake profiles that contribute to the spread of disinformation. AI software can help brands identify accounts spreading misinformation and quickly categorize campaigns or disinformation into Real, Fake, or Bad (nefarious intent).

When it comes to disinformation, it's easy to identify the subject of online chatter. But brands need to better position themselves to take swift action by investing in tools that pinpoint the origins of these conversations, examining real and fake accounts to determine how and where the disinformation spreads. Brands who can identify communities and networks of online "users," are in the best position to handle disinformation campaigns in a timely and appropriate fashion.

With a deeper analysis of online conversations and the sources sharing the information, brands can not only curb the negative effects of disinformation, but also craft a proactive media relations strategy to mitigate it going forward.

Dan Brahmey is the co-founder and CEO of Cyabra, an SaaS platform that uses AI to detect disinformation online, and filter the real from the fake.



Dan Brahmey

GEORGIA DOT DRIVES OUT PR RFP

Georgia's Department of Transportation is looking for a firm to assist its communications and PR team in raising awareness of its programs and to educate the public about available services.



Committed to moving people and goods through the Peach State in a timely and efficient manner, the GDOT works to maintain safety on roadways and relieve congestion on the interstates, according to its website.

The primary objective of the selected PR firm is to enhance the use of the web, social media and non-traditional media to promote the GDOT's programs.

It will "educate the public of the Department's core functions and the transportation services available to the citizens of Georgia," states the RFP.

GDOT will issue a three-year contract. It will have two one-year renewal options.

Interested firms are required to register at the "Team Georgia Marketplace" at <https://saofn.state.ga.us/psp/sao/SUPPLIER/ERP/?cmd=login>.

Responses are due March 2.

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

FGH WORKS TO BOLSTER US/UKRAINE TIES

Finsbury Glover Hering has signed a \$50K monthly retainer pact with Ukraine's Transatlantic Dialogue and Engagement Center to bolster that country's relations with the US, European Union and other Democratic nations.

TDEC works in close cooperation with Ukraine's "Servant of the People" political party, one of the major players in the Ukrainian parliament.

FGH provides government relations, strategic counsel to TDEC in its effort to facilitate interactions with members of the US government and multilateral organizations.

That effort began Feb. 2 and runs through the year.

The WPP-owned shop has Brett O'Brien, Tod Preston and Lindsay Plack handling the account.

H+K GRABS TOP AIDE TO REP. NADLER

Daniel Schwarz, who was strategic communications director for the House Judiciary Committee during the inquiry into the impeachment of Donald Trump, has joined Hill+Knowlton Strategies as senior VP for its US public affairs practice.



Daniel Schwarz

He handled communications planning, messaging and strategy for the Committee under the leadership of chairman Congressman Jerry Nadler (D-Manhattan/Brooklyn).

Since 2015, Schwarz has been communications director for Nadler, who also sits on the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee.

He also did a stint as advance lead

for Hillary for America.

Richard Millar, H+K global president/CEO for the Americas, expects clients to benefit from Schwarz's "unique analysis and insights covering legislative, regulatory, and political issues of significance."

WPP owns H+K.

VIDEO, AUDIO TO SEE B2B GAINS

Online video and display is where marketers working in the B2B landscape anticipate the most investment this year, according to [a new report released by marketing research firm WARC](#).

The report, which analyzed trends within the technology and telecom sectors, and where B2B marketers working in these spaces anticipate growth in 2021, found that nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of B2B marketers expect spending in online video and display to go up this year at their companies.

Two-thirds (66 percent) said they also plan to increase investment in digital audio in 2021, and 59 percent are investing more in TV. Podcasts followed, where a 56 percent lift is anticipated. Nearly half (49 percent) said they'll be funneling money into out-of-home marketing.

Half (50 percent) of tech and telecom marketers said they expect the companies they work for to increase virtual events budgets in 2021, suggesting communicators expect the decline of live events and in-person meetings the industry experienced in light of the COVID-19 pandemic will continue this year.

Nearly the same number of respondents (49 percent) said they also expect their company to increase investment in partner marketing and sponsorship in 2021, while 48 percent said influencers would see more investment.

Altogether, 83 percent of respondents said the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on their operations, and about 90 percent said the lack of in-person interactions has had an impact on their marketing plans. Nearly three-quarters of North American respondents (72 percent) said working in a virtual environment has made their business development efforts more difficult.

WARC's "Changing channels in B2B" report surveyed more than 330 B2B marketers working in the tech and telecom industries in 10 markets around the globe. It was published in partnership with music streaming service Spotify.



LIMBAUGH DIES AT 70

Rush Limbaugh, conservative talk radio host who skewered feminists, minorities, environmentalists and liberals, died from lung cancer. He was 70.

The cigar-chomping former opioid addict told his audience last February that he suffered from advanced lung cancer.

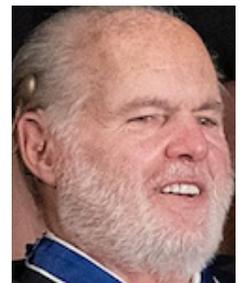
Nationally syndicated in 1988, "The Rush Limbaugh Show" became the country's most popular radio program.

Limbaugh was a leader in the "birtherism" movement that spread the lie that Barack Obama was not born in the US. Donald Trump rode that bandwagon to the White House.

During the 2020 State of the Union address, Trump stirred up controversy in awarding Limbaugh the presidential medal of freedom "in recognition for all that you have done for our nation."

Joe Biden condemned Trump for giving the nation's highest civilian award to Limbaugh, "who has done as much as Trump himself to divide our nation."

Limbaugh's wife, Kathryn, announced her husband's death at the start of the Feb. 17 radio program.



Rush Limbaugh

SCHROEDER NAMED CCO AT INOVA HEALTH

Tracey Schroeder has joined Inova Health Systems, the leading nonprofit healthcare provider in northern Virginia, as chief communications officer.



Tracey Schroeder

Most recently, she was global head of consumer PR at Marriott International, responsible for its 30 brands during a five-year stint.

Schroeder joined Marriott from Burson-Marsteller, where she was COO of its Proof Integrated Communications offering.

Inova's 18K staffers operate five hospitals that serve more than two million people a year through the hospital network, primary and specialty care

practices, emergency and urgent care centers.

U.S. News & World Report ranked Inova Fairfax Hospital the No. 1 facility in the DC area in 2019 and 2020.

BRUNSWICK GROUP HANDLES DOLE DEAL

Brunswick Group is handling Dublin-based Total Produce plc's merger with Dole Food Co. to create the world's largest fresh fruit and vegetables company.

Total, Europe's No. 1 fresh produce company, owns a 45 percent stake in Dole, with Castle & Cooke holding the rest.

The combined entity will take on the Dole name, launch an IPO and trade on the New York Stock Exchange with sales in the \$10B range.

Carl McCann, chairman of Total, said the partners have more than 170 years of fresh produce marketing experience, a highly diversified portfolio, resilient earnings and a strong balance sheet.

Dublin will be the global headquarters of Dole plc and Charlotte will serve as headquarters for the Americas.

Brunswick Group has Blake Sonnenshein and Elizabeth Volpe representing Total Produce.

They are supported in Ireland by Brian Bell of Wilson Hartnell PR, which is part of Ogilvy.

ETHIOPIA TURNS TO VENABLE

Venable is providing US government outreach to Ethiopia under a \$35K per-month contract that went into effect Feb. 1.

Ethiopia prime minister Abiy Ahmed launched an invasion of the separatist Tigray region of the country in November.



Abiy Ahmed

That attack has triggered a humanitarian crisis.

Abiy took the helm of Africa's second-most populous nation in 2018 with a promise to unite Ethiopia, but has struggled to contain growing ethnic violence, reported the *New York Times*.

US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken spoke with Abiy on Feb. 4 and "expressed grave concern about the humanitarian crisis in the Tigray region," according to the State Dept.

Venable's contract runs through April 30 but may be extended upon mutually agreed to terms.

The engagement letter notes that Venable has agreed "not to perform governmental affairs work for any client that may be in opposition to the Embassy of Ethiopia

NEWS OF FIRMS

FleishmanHillard handles the launch of the Health Action Alliance, a partnership between business, communications and public health organizations to strengthen and accelerate the business community's response to COVID-19. HAA was launched by The Ad Council, Business Roundtable, the CDC Foundation, the de Beaumont Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. On its website, healthaction.org, the organization provides free best-in-class tools, resources, training and events for the business community to help companies deliver trusted, fact-based health communications to employees and encourage consumers to make informed decisions about COVID-19 vaccines.



MMGY Global launches MMGY Travel Intelligence Europe, a UK-based research operation, with the opening of its new London office. The office will be led by Cees Bosselaar, who joins the firm as managing director, MMGY Travel Intelligence Europe. Bosselaar, who was previously vice president, business development at market research firm Phocuswright, will oversee services including visitor and guest analyses, resident sentiment, brand lift, competitive analyses, creative testing and other custom research studies. He will also lead the upcoming launch of MMGY Travel Intelligence's Portrait of European Travellers syndicated study.

The Story Mob, a female-owned agency, has launched a rebrand that goes past its focus on esports to address the needs of organizations and brand partners looking to tap into gaming culture—which in addition to sports, encompasses entertainment, music and fashion. Timed with the third anniversary of the agency's founding by Anna Rozwandowicz and Nicola Piggott, the rebrand includes a new website and updated agency services.



GCI Health expands to Brussels, a move designed to further the agency's European presence and expand its global public affairs offering. GCI Health Brussels will offer clients government and public affairs, integrated communications and advocacy capabilities. The expansion will be overseen by Neha Dave, who joins GCI Health Brussels as senior director, and Kath Kerry, UK managing director. Dave will join GCI Health's global public affairs and policy team, which is led by Ryan Kuresman, group senior vice president of public affairs and health policy.

PRSA partners with **Puerto Rico Public Relations Association** to provide professional development, educational and career opportunities for members of each respective organization. Benefits available to PRPRA members through the agreement include a discounted annual membership to PRSA as well as access to all PRSA programming. PRPRA will also provide access to its professional development and other program offerings to PRSA members.

Thompson & Co. Public Relations sponsors Public Relations Student Society of America memberships for eligible students at the University of Alaska Anchorage. UAA recently reinstated its charter as the organization's host campus for Alaska students. "This generous investment in the futures of young communicators is one that will help promote equity, diversity and entrepreneurship in the communications industry," said department chair of Journalism and Public Communications at UAA Joy Chavez Mapaye.

COMMENTARY



Dr. Anthony Fauci

Congratulations to Dr. Anthony Fauci for winning the prestigious Dan David Prize in public health for “defending science” against disinformation about the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Dan David Foundation, based at Tel Aviv University, honored America’s top infectious disease doctor and president Biden’s chief medical advisor for “courageously defending science in the face of uninformed opposition during the COVID crisis.”

Fauci “leveraged his considerable communication skills to address people gripped by fear and anxiety and worked relentlessly to inform individuals in the United States and elsewhere about the public health measures essential for containing the pandemic’s spread,” according to a statement from the Foundation’s awards committee.

The Foundation credited 80-year-old Fauci for “speaking truth to power in a highly charged political environment.”

Fauci has served as director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases since 1984.

The Dan David Prize was established in 2000 by the late global businessman Dan David.

Donald Trump’s path to reputational recovery took a detour on Feb. 16 with the filing of a lawsuit by the NAACP claiming the former president and his lawyer Rudy Giuliani, claiming they violated the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871.

Talk about poor optics.

The KKK Act protects Congress against violence that may interfere with it carrying out its Constitutional duties. For instance, the Jan. 6 storming of the US Capitol to prevent the certification of the presidential election.

Trump’s fellow defendants the Proud Boys, right-wing nationalist group, and Oath Keepers militia, are not exactly the company desired by a former president who believes “our historic, patriotic and beautiful movement to Make America Great Again has only just begun.”

The NAACP lodged the suit on behalf of Congressman Bennie Thompson (D-MS), who claims the shelter-in-place order put into effect at the Capitol posted a threat to his health.

The 78-year-old sheltered in close quarters with two members of Congress who tested positive for COVID-19 after the uprising.

In his statement following his second impeachment trial, Trump promised to “emerge with a vision for a bright, radiant and limitless American future.”

It looks like he’ll have to focus on the Ku Klux Klan Act suit instead.

More than half of Americans (54 percent) hold Trump responsible for the storming of the Capitol, according to a Quinnipiac University Poll released Feb. 15. Forty-five percent want him to face criminal charges.

Forty-nine percent of respondents say the attack on the Capitol would not have happened without Trump’s rally at the Ellipse. Forty-three percent believe it would have happened.

The Capitol Hill riot has dealt a major blow to America’s effort to promote human rights and democracy overseas, according to Secretary of State Anthony Blinken.

“There is no doubt that our ability to wave the banner of democracy and human rights to some extent has been tarnished by recent events, especially the egregious attack on the Capitol on Jan. 6,” he told NPR.

Blinken believes it is important for the US to pursue all legal remedies against those who ransacked the Capitol and put the lives of members of Congress in jeopardy.

“We’re not trying to sweep it under the rug,” he said. “We’re confronting it. And sometimes it’s ugly, sometimes it’s painful, but it’s incredibly powerful.”

Good luck to staffers at the *Baltimore Sun*, as it looks like they may escape the ruthless clutches of New York hedge fund Alden Global Capital, which has inked a \$630M deal to acquire the paper’s parent company, Tribune Co.

Known for its voracious cost-cutting, media investor Alden slashes staff at its acquired newspapers to the bare bones.

A NewsGuild study found that Alden cut 71 percent of jobs at the papers that it acquired from 2012 to 2019.

The Sun attracted a last-minute white knight in the form of The Sunlight for All Institute, a nonprofit formed by businessman and philanthropist Stewart Bainum, Jr.

The Institute has agreed to buy the Sun, *Capital Gazette* in Annapolis, *Carroll County Times* and several Baltimore area weeklies.

Baltimore mayor Brandon Scott hailed the deal as a win for Sun employees and a “more transparent, accountable Baltimore,” while a spokesperson for Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan wished the Sun “great success as it returns to being locally-owned, and continues to carry out the work of the free press.”

A tip of the hat goes to the “Save Our Sun” campaign organized by the Washington-Baltimore News Guild and NewsGuild-CWA last year to attract a local owner for the 183-year-old paper.

Blame it on programmatic advertising. Pfizer, developer of the COVID-19 vaccine, and the Centers for Disease Control place ads on websites spouting misinformation about the pandemic, according to a report from NewsGuard.

Kroger and Walmart, which are major distributors of the vaccine, also support bogus COVID-19 sites.

Media companies dedicated to outing fake news sites also joined the fun as CBS News, NBC and MSNBC placed ads on COVID-19 misinformation sites.

The NewsGuard study found that from Feb. 2020 to the present, 4,315 brands ran more than 42K unique ads on websites flagged for COVID-19 misinformation.

The NewsGuard study reports that in most cases, ads on misinformation sites were “likely inadvertent, placed by algorithms on programmatic ad-buying platforms.”

Marketers should take a hard look at where their dollars are winding up. That’s the least they can do to support the global effort to beat back the pandemic. —Kevin McCauley



Instructions for 2021 Rankings Based on '20 Net Fee Income

Deadline to submit: Fri., Mar. 12, 2021



Letter from the CPA of the PR firm as follows:

(This form may be photocopied and used by CPA; Send top page of latest income tax return and W-3 for 2020)

To the Board of Directors of _____ (city, state) _____:

We have performed the procedures enumerated below, which were agreed to by you solely for the purpose of ranking the PR firm named above with O'Dwyer's based on 2020 results. This engagement to apply agreed-upon procedures was performed in accordance with the standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. The sufficiency of the procedures is solely the responsibility of the PR firm. We make no representation regarding the sufficiency of the procedures described below either for the purpose for which this report has been requested or any other purpose. Our procedures were as follows:

A. Net fee income is defined as basically charges for PR counseling and time spent preparing and placing stories in media. Mark-ups for out-of-pocket expenses and mark-ups and/or profits from collateral activities such as graphics, video production, printing, public opinion research, etc., are included as actual amounts. We compared fee income, as defined above, to the appropriate fee billing records and found that for the 12 months ended Dec. 31, 2020:

Net fee income for 2020 was: \$ _____ Percentage gain (loss) was: _____

Net fee income for 2019 was: \$ _____

***Note: PPP funds should be considered a loan until they are forgiven and not factored into retainer income.**

B. Gross billings for calendar 2020 aggregated _____ (total income plus reimbursables).

C. We determined from the payroll records that _____ employees were employed full-time as of Dec. 31, 2020 (employees who worked at least 35 hours a week and had F.I.C.A. taxes withheld).

D. Wages paid as reported on enclosed form W-3 for 2020 totaled: \$ _____.

E. Enclosed is the first page of the latest Federal income tax return of the PR firm signed and dated by both us (the CPA) and (CEO of PR firm).

F. The PR firm named above is (is not) owned, affiliated or in any way related to an advertising agency or individual owners of an advertising agency or any other company. Name of parent or affiliated company plus industry in which it operates: _____

G. Net fees of the PR firm named above in one or more of 19 PR specialties are given below to rank the firm in that specialty category. We are providing names of accounts to show the firm's expertise in these areas (fees of specialties cannot exceed total fees of firm):

- | | |
|--|--|
| Agriculture \$ _____ | Home Furnishings \$ _____ |
| Automotive/Transportation \$ _____ | Industrial \$ _____ |
| Beauty/Fashion/Lifestyle \$ _____ | Non-Profits \$ _____ |
| Education \$ _____ | Professional Services \$ _____ |
| Energy \$ _____ | Purpose/CSR \$ _____ |
| Entertainment \$ _____ | Real Estate Finance & Development \$ _____ |
| Environmental/Sustainability/Greentech/PA \$ _____ | Sports \$ _____ |
| Financial & Investor Relations \$ _____ | Technology \$ _____ |
| Food & Beverage \$ _____ | Travel & Economic Development \$ _____ |
| Healthcare \$ _____ | |

H. List branch office fees and number of staff on a separate sheet for: Atlanta, Chicago, Connecticut, Boston, Florida, Los Angeles area, Miami, Midwest cities, New York & New Jersey, Pennsylvania, San Francisco area, Southeast, Texas, Washington, D.C. area, Western cities. We were not engaged to, and did not, perform an audit, the objective of which would be the expression of an opinion on any of the accounts or items referred to above. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. Had we performed additional procedures, other matters might have come to our attention that would have been reported to you. This report is intended solely for the use of the specified user listed above and should not be used by those who have not agreed to the procedures and taken responsibility for the sufficiency of the procedures for their purposes.

Signed by outside CPA _____ Signed by CEO of PR firm: _____

Agency contact for this form: _____ phone: _____ e-mail: _____

GENERAL RULES UNDER WHICH ENTRIES ARE EDITED:

Only long-term (six months or more) clients should be listed and they should be active in 2020-21. PR operations which are units of advertising agencies or partly owned by ad agency employees must indicate this. Affiliates or joint ventures of PR firms should not be listed. **A PR professional's name may appear only once. At least one full-time person must be listed at each branch.** Staff listed at h.q. cannot also be listed in branches. Firms billing more than \$1 million should list at least six PR executives or staff. Only firms that list accounts will be considered for the rankings. Firms that participate in the specialties must show at least three accounts to back up figures.

E-mail to John O'Dwyer, john@odwyerpr.com, or fax to 212/683-2750

J.R. O'Dwyer Co., 271 Madison Ave., #1500, New York, NY 10016