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# O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications

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## HAVAS ACQUIRES FORMULA PR

French marketing conglomerate Havas has acquired New York-based PR agency Formula with an eye on boosting its North American reach alongside Havas PR.

Formula, with more than 100 staffers and outposts in Los Angeles and San Diego, posted revenues topping \$13M last year. It also handles Latino (Formulatin) and experiential marketing (Formula Street), alongside its communications and PR core.

Formula president and founder Michael Olguin called the decision to sell the “natural evolution of our growth strategy” and a “game changer” as he looks to grow the mid-sized firm to the next tier. He set up Formula in 1992 after serving as GM for Los Angeles firm Cooper Communications and a stint as PR director for gym chain Sporting Clubs of America in the late 1980s.

Yannick Bollere, chairman and CEO of Havas, praised Formula’s client roster, singling out its consumer and lifestyle work as a “perfect fit” for the Paris-based group. Formula clients include Wyndham Hotel Group, Shure headphones, JDate and Tecate, among others.

The firm will reside in Havas’ Creative Group with agencies like Havas PR, Havas Luxe and Havas Edge. Havas also owns Abernathy MacGregor Group.

## AGENCIES FLOCK TO ARMY INDUSTRY DAY

Nearly three dozen agencies attended the U.S. Army’s “industry day” for marketing and advertising firms on Dec. 3 in San Antonio as the Army mulls a review of its nine-figure recruitment advertising and PR account.

On the PR side, firms attending included Fleishman-Hillard, Bell Pottinger, Ogilvy PR and Bradford PR, according to a roster of attendees, while ad heavyweights like JWT, Hill Holiday, McCann and Arnold were represented. McCann and an Interpublic slate that includes Weber Shandwick are the incumbents after winning the business in 2005 and defending it in 2011.

The Army last month asked firms to submit credentials and interest ahead of a likely RFP for the work, which bills around \$200M per year.

The industry day event, optional for firms, took place at the Fort Sam Houston Golf Club and was meant for firms to display subcontracting services and meet with contracting personnel about the review process.

The Army wants to pitch itself as the “first choice for those considering a military career.”



## TAAFFE TAKES HUNTSWORTH HELM

Paul Taaffe, who served eight years at the helm of Hill & Knowlton, is taking over for Peter Chadlington, 72, as CEO of Huntsworth.

Since 2012, the 20-year veteran of the WPP unit was director of comms. at \$7B e-commerce company Groupon.

Derek Mapp, Huntsworth chairman, said Taaffe has the extensive knowledge of PR, digital communications and e-commerce needed to make an immediate contribution to the British PR conglomerate.



Taaffe

Taaffe began his communications career in 1983 as corporate relations manager at Unilever. He moved to Reginald Watts Assocs. and Weber Shandwick before joining H&K. He formally takes command in April and will use the intervening months to meet executives and review its Grayling, Huntsworth Health, Red and Citigate properties. Chadlington becomes senior advisor when Taaffe arrives and will cultivate contacts in Africa, Middle East and Asia Pacific.

Huntsworth’s No. 2 executive Sally Withey has stepped down from her COO and finance director slots. She has been seriously ill and on leave since June.

## FERNANDEZ TAKES APCO/NA REINS

Nelson Fernandez, managing director of APCO Worldwide’s New York office, has been upped to North America chair at the Washington-based shop. His Paris counterpart Nicolas Bouvier has stepped up to chair European operations.

The moves come as CEO Margery Kraus hands the managing reins to Brad Staples on Jan. 5. Staples said Fernandez and Bouvier are part of the “new generation of leaders” with fresh perspectives on the firm.

Fernandez joined APCO in 2005 after a dozen years at Burson-Marsteller. He was an associate at the Fund for the City of New York.

**AARP has put its search for a PR firm to buttress its media relations team “on hold,”** according to an email sent by Julie Futrovsky, a procurement staffer at the non-profit organization.

An RFP was issued Dec. 19 with responses due by Jan. 15. That hunt is now suspended until further notice. The DC-based advocacy group says PR firms will be contacted in the event it decides to proceed.

JoAnn Jenkins leads AARP, which has 37M members. FleishmanHillard alum Martha Boudreau is executive VP and chief communications & marketing officer.

## **DETROIT BANKRUPTCY PR TAB TOTALS \$850K**

The city of Detroit spent \$700K at two PR firms through its historic 17-month bankruptcy that ended Dec. 10. The city paid Abernathy MacGregor Group \$480K for PR counsel, while Duffey Petrosky earned \$220K.

Nowling & Company, the firm of city emergency manager Kevin Orr's spokesman Bill Nowling, formerly of Duffey Petrosky, took home another \$150K, according to a Dec. 30 court filing listing fees and expenses of the city and ordered by the US Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Michigan.



Detroit emerged from Chapter 9 bankruptcy on Dec. 10, nearly 17 months after its July 2013 filing.

Abernathy MacGregor, leading up to and through the bankruptcy filing, focused on financial communications efforts as the city wooed Wall Street and government officials.

Duffey Petrosky, based in Farmington Hills, Mich., provided PR counsel to Orr.

Nowling in November joined Finn Partners' Detroit office after wrapping up his duties with the city.

Legal and financial counsel was the city's top billing category, including \$57.9M to law firm Jones Day, \$22.8M to investment bank Miller Buckfire, \$20M to Ernst & Young, \$17.3M to turnaround advisors Conway Mackenzie and \$15.4M to law firm Dentons.

## **ICR COOKS UP SHAKE SHACK IPO COMMS**

Sizzling burger chain Shake Shack is cooking with ICR for financial communications support as it slates an initial public offering on the New York Stock Exchange.

The 10-year-old company is expanding across the US and abroad from its initial hot dog cart and burger hut in Manhattan's Madison Square Park opened in 2004. Shake Shack, which calls itself the "modern day 'roadside' burger stand," filed Dec. 29 to sell shares to further tap the estimated \$72B dine-out burger market.



ICR senior VP Jessica Liddell heads the account advising New York-based Shake Shack's internal PR team led by director of marketing and communications Edwin Bragg.

The company, which has not yet specified how many shares it plans to offer and listed \$100M as its IPO ceiling, counts 63 "shacks," including 31 company-operated stands. Revenues topped \$78M last year -- net income was \$5.4M -- and sales surpassed that mark by the end of the third quarter of 2014.

Union Square Hospitality Group is majority owner of the chain.

## **UN WATER SANITATION PUSH SEEKS AGENCY**

A UN-backed global organization supporting sanitation, hygiene and water supply programs in poor countries is reviewing its strategic communications to burnish the member-backed group.

The 25-year-old Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, based in Geneva, Switzerland, was run by the World Health Organization until 2010, when the United Nations Office for Project Services took it over. Its initial focus on clean drinking water programs expanded to advocacy and communications in 2000 and later honed in on sanitation and hygiene, particularly in impoverished nations in Asia and Africa.

In one example of its PR efforts, a campaign launched in May with the ad agency Mother focuses on ending open defecation.

The WSSCC released an RFP on Dec. 19 open through mid-January to update and improve its strategic communications, media relations and digital efforts. That includes development of a communications plan for 2015-16, strategic counsel, and various forms of outreach, including global conferences.

Amanda Marlin, an Australian, is program manager for advocacy and communications at WSSCC, while Nebraska native David Trouba is senior program officer for communications and outreach.

Firms do not have to be based in Switzerland to pitch. WSSCC said agencies should plan for at least one visit to its Geneva headquarters at the start of the work.

Proposals are due Jan. 19.

RFP documents: <http://bit.ly/1A1qDbR>.

## **PERU WARMS UP TO OGILVY**

Peru's Ministry of Environment turned to Ogilvy PR Worldwide for media help regarding the country's hosting of this month's climate change conference in Lima.

The United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP20) ran from Dec. 1-12.

More than 200 countries agreed to the first pact committing individual cuts in emissions that contribute to global warming.

Ogilvy pitched international media, especially outlets in New York, Washington and California, about the importance of the session and Peru's position as a leader in the fight against global warming.

A Greenpeace stunt took some of the luster from both COP20 and Peru's role as protector of its cultural heritage.

A group of about 20 activists on Dec. 8 entered a protected area near Nazca Lines ancient etchings in Peruvian desert and placed a huge sign clearly visible from the air to promote renewable energy.

The sign damaged the landscape.

Greenpeace apologized for the desecration, but told Peru it didn't know the names of those who planted the sign.

"The answer was that they don't know the names," said Luis Jaime Castillo, Peru's vice minister for cultural heritage,

The Nazca Lines are a Unesco World Heritage Site.

**PRINT MAGAZINE LAUNCHES UP 21% IN 2014**

Print magazine launches rose 21% in 2014 to 234 in a "great year" for new titles, according to analyst Samir "Mr. Magazine" Husni of the Univ. of Mississippi.

An additional 49 titles launched last year over 2013, while special editions and magazine books fell by 32 titles to 621.

"With all the troubles on the newsstands, 2014 proved to be a great year for new magazines," he said.

Husni, who only counts print magazines he can obtain in physical form, said the top 10 categories were special interest (19; *Raw Bike, Vapor Lives*); metro and regional (19; *Old Port, Sugar & Rice Magazine*); pop culture (19; *Reserved Magazine, Churn*); crafts and hobbies (15; *Knit Purl, Hoop-la*); children's (10; *Peppa Pig, Bible Fun for Children*); sports (9; *All Things Sports, Chicago Football*); arts and antiques (9; *Acrylic Artist, Artists & Makers*); fashion (7; *Porter, Eyelash*); gay and lesbian (7; *Winq., Men Addicted*), and health and wellness (7; *Mantra, Naturally*).

A tally released by Mediafinder.com said magazine closures soared 77% in 2014 with 99 titles shuttering. The Oxbridge unit found 190 magazines launched in 2014, up from 185 a year earlier.

Husni told the *New York Post*'s Keith Kelly that Hearst's Dr. Oz The Good Life was the year's most successful launch as the publication ran a second printing of its debut issue and plans to increase its rate base from 450K to 800K in 2015. He also noted that big publishers like Time Inc. and Conde Nast are doing fewer big launches and more special, one-off issues.

**MWW'S KEMPNER TAKES BBG BOARD SEAT**

The Senate confirmed MWW founder/CEO Michael Kempner nomination to the nine-member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors on Dec. 12.

BBG is the federal agency responsible for US-financed international civilian media.

Its \$733M 2014 budget employs 3,600 people who produce programming in more than 60 languages.

Voice of America/Radio Liberty, Marti (Cuba programming), Middle East Broadcasting Networks and Radio Free Asia are key outlets.

The Senate also confirmed the board nomination of Leon Aron, director of Russian studies at the American Enterprise Institute.

**'HANNITY' PRODUCER, EX-WH PR HAND TO CMP**

Chris Byrne, senior producer for Fox News Channel's "Hannity" and a former White House press aide, has moved to Capitol Media Partners to staff a New York outpost of the PR firm.

Byrne takes a partner slot for Los Angeles-based CMP, founded by former Bush administration UN spokesman Richard Grenell. Byrne was deputy director of presidential personnel and special assistant to White House press secretary Dana Perino during the recent Bush administration. He moved to Fox News in 2009.

Agency and corporate PR alum Brad Chase is a third partner at CMP based in San Francisco. He joined in 2011 and worked with Grenell in healthcare giant

DaVita's corporate communications unit.

CMP has worked with the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation and Integrated Environmental Technologies.

**COLUMBIA TO VET ROLLING STONE PIECE**

Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism agreed to review the editorial process behind *Rolling Stone's* now discredited report about gang rape on the campus of the University of Virginia.

An editor's note from *Rolling Stone's* Jann Wenner says J-School dean Steve Coll and academic affairs chief Sheila Coronel will handle the probe.

The full and non-edited report will be posted on *Rolling Stone's* website, while excerpts will run in the magazine.

The 9,000-word article appeared in November and told how seven males raped a student called Jackie at a fraternity party. That bombshell led to the suspension of the frat's activities on campus and a national review about the need to deal with sexual attacks at colleges.

Author Sabrina Erdely relied on Jackie as the sole source for the article.

A media firestorm erupted and details of the *Rolling Stone* piece were debunked. *Rolling Stone* has since cast doubt on the veracity of Erdely's article.

A deadline has not been set for the J-School's report.

**MM ACQUIRES BULLDOG, RAGAN EYES ASSETS**

Canadian media monitoring supplier MediaMiser has acquired key assets of *Bulldog Reporter* for \$135K with plans to re-start the bankrupt PR trade publication after a federal judge approved the deal despite objections from the case's bankruptcy trustee.

PR trade publication Ragan Communications, meanwhile, has offered \$25K for *Bulldog's* PR University and webinar business.

MM, a unit of the publicly traded digital and media services group Innodata, bought the *Daily Dog*, the *Bulldog Awards*, *Inside Health Media*, *Media Pro* and various books and publications of *Bulldog*.

*Bulldog* shut down in September and filed for bankruptcy protection in November saddled with \$900K in debt and declining revenues.

MM, led by president Chris Morrison, said it re-opened *Bulldog's* Oakland, Calif., offices and hired some staff. Morrison said the *Daily Dog* will resume publication shortly, while the *Bulldog Awards* will be re-launched in 2015. *Media Pro* and *Inside Health Media* are back up for subscriber use. Bankruptcy Judge Roger Efremky approved the sale on Dec. 19, ordering *Bulldog* parent Sirius Information to then pay a secured \$14,500 claim to Wells Fargo Bank.

Ragan Communications has offered \$25K for the webinar business and PR University, which also includes downloads and CDs. The deal, subject to court approval, includes the PRU trade name, as well as current subscribers of the PR University Passport service and lists of past subscribers.

Ragan said it will fulfill a \$105K liability from PR University by offering six-month subscriptions to webinars and its own training site, but will not offer refunds.

**NO COMPANY IS IMMUNE TO A DATA BREACH**

By Denise DesChenes

Data breaches can take a multitude of forms. Like any crisis, there's no one-size-fits-all approach, and companies must rely on experienced, trusted advisers to help them weigh a variety of factors and formulate a tailored communications strategy that's right for them.

Unfortunately, attacks can also originate within an organization and may or may not be intentional.

With so many variables to consider, it's imperative that companies retain a tight circle of trusted, impartial advisers with experience handling the most complex cyber-crime situations. This circle may include data breach attorneys, data security consultants and crisis communications professionals. This team should have a framework in place that will enable an informed working group to move swiftly to assess the situation, contain the breach, limit the damage, and determine the best way to communicate.

A comprehensive communications strategy is of the utmost importance. If communications are mishandled, those blunders can potentially be even more disastrous than the breach itself and can have a lasting impact.

While timeliness of a response is considered a hallmark of a sound crisis communications strategy, in a data breach situation the magnitude and nature of the cyber-attack may not immediately be evident, and a proper investigation may take some time. Accuracy of the information available and timeliness of the communications response can be an extremely delicate balancing act.

Upon learning of a breach, companies should immediately alert the appropriate authorities, while simultaneously investigating the breach and commencing the scenario planning process with their circle of advisers. Anticipating key questions from all constituencies, including the media and general public, investors, regulators, and employees, will help drive the drafting of potential disclosures and communications that can later be finalized.

A breach could trigger a public filing requirement and may warrant a press release, depending on the magnitude of the breach and the level of impact. A company's corporate website enables organizations to provide updates to its stakeholders regarding the breach and the investigation in real-time without issuing multiple press releases. A social media strategy regarding the incident should be considered.

Work closely with law enforcement officials and apprise them of any communication plans; legal disclosure requirements vary by state and an ongoing, active investigation may limit how much the company can share about the nature of the breach.

A notification letter from the company's management team can assure stakeholders that the incident is being taken seriously and the upper echelons of the company are directly involved in the management of the breach.

Consider setting up a call center via a third party to handle customer inquiries and ensure that call center staff are trained to manage appropriate responses.

When financial information or other critical pieces of personal information are involved, companies should consider offering impacted customers credit monitoring services.

*Denise DesChenes is a Managing Director at Sard Verbinen & Co.*

**2014: A BANNER YEAR FOR PR BLOOPERS**

By Arthur Solomon

Many PR crises occur because of surprise happenings - like an industrial malfunction, unexpected criticism of a new corporate policy, a whistle blower's revelations or poor use of social media.

Some reputational ordeals are self-inflicted. Others are caused by government leaders who see things as they wish them to be instead of as they really are.

The PR bottom line: despite the best efforts of specialists only the media can decide when a crisis is no longer newsworthy.

Here are the top 10 bloopers of 2014.

**Roger Goodell**, the NFL commissioner, hit the PR crisis trifecta causing a crisis for himself and the NFL by his lenient punishment of players and a team owner, highlighted by revelations of spousal and child abuse by players, and holding a press conference without any new news to report.

**Satya Nadella**, CEO of Microsoft, said employers would eventually reward women who do not ask for a salary increase. The venue for the statement could not have been worse: a meeting to celebrate women in the tech sector.

**Dr. Mehmet Oz**, the cardiothoracic surgeon and host of TV's "The Dr. Oz Show," was questioned by a Congressional committee for promoting products on his program that he says can result in weight loss, even though they are not scientifically proven.

**John Grisham**, the best-selling author, said in an interview with England's Telegraph that some people jailed for child pornography viewing receive too harsh jail sentences because they would never touch a child.

**Dr. Nancy Snyderman**, the NBC-TV medical reporter, said she would put herself under voluntary quarantine after returning from covering the Ebola outbreak. But she went back on her on-air statement and was seen in a car double parked near a restaurant.

**Sony Pictures Entertainment** received negative major media coverage when hacked emails, which included unflattering comments about President Obama and Angelina Jolie, were made public. Sony then threatened legal action against media outlets reporting on the emails.

**SeaWorld**, which bills itself as a marine-life zoological park, has failed to deal with the fall-out connected to the late 2013 "Blackfish" documentary on CNN. The saga has crimped park attendance and triggered the ouster of SeaWorld's CEO in December.

**Graco Children's Products** said it would recall faulty buckles on 3.8 million car seats because in an emergency it might be hard to open the buckles. This did not satisfy the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that said unless an additional 1.8M seat buckles were fixed it would take legal action against the company.

**General Motors** waited until 2014 to deal with a faulty switch problem that the automaker knew about since 2001. The delay resulted in deaths and waves of negative publicity.

**Walmart's** Halloween promotion was anything but a treat for the retailer when it labeled some plus-size offerings "Fat Girl Costumes."

Good luck to this year's honorees. Here's to a quiet 2015!

*Arthur Solomon is a writer, PR consultant and former senior VP at Burson-Marsteller.*

## NEWS OF PR FIRMS

### DEVRIES ALIGNS WITH SPANISH FIRM

DeVries Global has formed an affiliate relationship with Spain's Lina Ortas Comunicación to collaborate for global clients on PR, digital and creative services.

Ivette Sanz Osso, EVP of global practices at DeVries, said LOC's strategic capabilities and culture, as well as the firm's experience with social media and content creation attracted the Interpublic-owned DeVries to the deal.

"This alliance will not only allow our agencies to evolve together, but it will also offer our current clients the opportunity to simplify communications offerings from one side of the Atlantic to the other," said Lina Ortas, CEO of LOC, which works with clients like Schweppes, Kellogg's, Sunny Delight, Damel and La Casera.

DeVries roster includes Procter & Gamble, Zippo, Celebrity Cruises, KOLON Sport, and Boston Beer Company, among others.

### SCHWARTZ DEFENDS MIAMI

Schwartz Media Strategies has picked up agency of record duties for the Miami Downtown Development Authority, following a competitive bid process.

The Miami firm beat out more than a dozen competitors in the review to retain the account it has managed since 2009.

Schwartz helped Miami's downtown emerge from the shadow of South Beach and reset its image after the housing crash, noting "the city's urban core was widely regarded as ground-zero for the global real estate crash."

"Our media relations campaign has changed the way journalists and consumers think about Miami's urban core, marking a striking change in perception dating back to the recession," said president Tadd Schwartz. "Downtown is no longer viewed as Miami Beach's sidekick."

### PCC OPENS TRUMPET AWARDS FOR ENTRIES

The Publicity Club of Chicago has opened the entry period for its 56th annual Golden Trumpet Awards through Feb. 27.

The competition is open to all PR and communications practitioners, self-employed or retained by organizations doing business within 500 miles of Chicago, as well as professionals outside the geographic area who handle communications for entities within Chicagoland. Campaigns in PR, marketing or media relations must have occurred (or had results) within the 2014 calendar year.

The Trumpet Awards ceremony is scheduled for June 4 at the Palmer House Hilton Hotel in Chicago.

PCC President Jon Kaplan called the event the "premiere awards competition for PR and communications professionals in the Midwest.

Former President Jimmy Carter keynoted last year's awards.

PCC will present 2015 Lifetime Achievement Awards to Jill Allread and Dorothy Pirovano, CEO and president and retired CEO, respectively, of Public Communications, Inc.

Info: publicity.org.

## NEW ACCOUNTS

### New York Area

**Prosek Partners**, New York/Hennion & Walsh, investment and wealth management services, as AOR for PR, including ongoing media relations and social media. Prosek said it is focused on building brand awareness and demonstrating how H&W's services provide individual investors with return potential and services normally only available to large institutional investors.

**Red PR**, New York/GROH, skin, hair and scalp care products by Entia Biosciences; IBX, salon-only, pre-manicure nail strengthening and repairing treatment, for PR.

**Gillian Small PR**, Hoboken, N.J./Monif C., plus-size women's clothing brand, as AOR for PR. The brand is designed exclusively for women sizes 14-24. The work includes US media relations.

### Southeast

**THAT Agency**, West Palm Beach, Fla./Braman Motorcars, as digital AOR for Braman Audi, Bentley, BMW, Porsche, Mini and Rolls Royce.

### Mountain West

**Riester, Park City**, Utah/Park City Chamber of Commerce/Convention & Visitors Bureau, for new ad campaigns to promote the city for tourism, following a competitive pitch.

**Primavera Group**, Denver/Colorado BioScience Association, for media relations and strategic PR, starting Jan. 5. The firm takes over for Absolutely PR, which handled the pact for the past 10 years and hands over the work as owner/principal Maggie Holben retires. Primavera has worked with CBSA member Sharklet Technologies for the past seven years.

**GroundFloor Media**, Denver/Denver Post Community, for messaging support, social media planning and SEO counsel. Efforts include development of content, including a messaging platform, social media and website navigation recommendations, as well as building a robust social media engagement content calendar. The newspaper's community programs include the Denver Post Community Foundation and Denver Post Charities. Arts and culture, education and literacy, children/youth, and human services are key.

### Southwest

**M/C/C**, Dallas/Property Damage Appraisers, as AOR for brand development, including integrated marketing comms.

### West

**Edelman**, San Francisco/Energous Corp., publicly traded developer of wire-free charging technology known as WattUp, for external communications, including earned and owned media, analyst relations and content creation. The company went public in March. Its patent-and trademark-pending technology delivers power via the same radio bands as a Wi-Fi router.

**PMBC Group**, Los Angeles/Färbe Technik, global manufacturer and supplier of mobile accessories for Apple, Blackberry and Samsung devices, as AOR for PR, including new product announcements at CES 2015. FT is a unit of iShopNation Corp.

## NEWS OF SERVICES

### UK PROBES CISION/GORKANA LINK

The British antitrust watchdog Dec. 24 announced it is reviewing Cision's \$300M-plus acquisition of Gorkana Group to gauge its impact on competition in the United Kingdom.

The Competition and Markets Authority already ordered the potential merger partners to remain separate until its investigation is completed.

The CMA released the following announcement on the site of the London Stock Exchange:

"The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has made an Initial Enforcement Order under section 72 of the Enterprise Act 2002 to Canyon Holdings Sàrl and GTCR Canyon UK Investments Limited. This Order is without prejudice to the CMA's ongoing investigation into the completed acquisition by GTCR of Gorkana."

CMA promises the full text of the order will be released online "as soon as it is reasonably practicable."

Cision provided [odwyerpr.com](http://odwyerpr.com) a statement from CEO Peter Granat. It reads: "The U.K. Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has requested additional information regarding our acquisition of Gorkana Group. This is standard practice for a transaction of this size, and Cision is providing all necessary information to the CMA as part of the acquisition process."

"We look forward to working with the CMA to ensure any questions they may have are satisfied and demonstrate that competition remains healthy post-acquisition. We have temporarily suspended any integration activities until the CMA review is completed."

Chicago private equity firm GTCR owns Cision. London investment firm Exponent Private Equity controls Gorkana.

Granat said in October the Gorkana deal is the "next step forward" in making the combo a global leader in PR software.

### SERVICES VENDORS DISSECTED ON LINKEDIN

Cision, Vocus, Gorkana, Meltwater, BurrellesLuce, PR Newswire, Media Miser and TV Eyes get puffs and pans in a 3,671-word confab on LinkedIn. PR people struggling to find the right media distribution and measurement service can find answers here.

Jon-Michael Basile, communications staffer at Data Quality Campaign, Washington, D.C., has touched off an unprecedented, no-holds-barred analysis of eight firms that provide access to hundreds of thousands of editors and social media points.

The discussion by 41 participants will be useful to PR practitioners who are more likely to use such services because one-on-one relationships with editors, including face-to-face meetings and phone conversations, are becoming a rarity.

Although the pluses and minuses of the services are discussed in detail, and many statements made that could be challenged, there was only one posting from one of the services mentioned—PR Newswire.

Nearly 50 comments were posted on the thread as of Jan. 2.

The discussion can be read at <http://linkd.in/177Zurw>.

## PEOPLE

### Joined

**Jill Bader**, communications director for the Republican State Leadership Committee, to Strategic Perception Inc., Hollywood, Calif., as dir. of strategic partnerships. She was comms. director for Gov. Scott Walker of Wisconsin and the Florida RNC Victory Fund during the Romney campaign.



Bader

**Victoria Mechlin**, handled communications for Resort Homes Group in Washington and London. to Griffin & Co., Washington, D.C., as director of client services for the residential and commercial building sectors PR firm. She was communications director for *Business First* magazine; staffer at Cerrell Assocs. (Los Angeles) and GGC PR (Miami), and media relations manager at News USA (DC).

**James Wood**, associate director, AxiCom Cohn & Wolfe, to The Internet Society, Reston, Va., as senior director of strategic communications & media relations, a new post. He will handle internal and external communications with the goal to amplify the global voice of the organization that works to keep the 'Net open and more transparent.



Wood

Wood handled London-based AxiCom's broadcast, content creators, video and delivery chain clients such as NDS (now part of Cisco), Nokia mobile phones (acquired by Microsoft), Panasonic, Pace and TDK.

**Trana Pittam**, senior manager of publicity, Universal Studios Hollywood, to Bon Secours St. Francis, Greenville, S.C., to oversee media and community rels. She was previously manager of corporate comms., Parkland Health & Hospital System, Dallas, Tex.

**Katherine Schneider**, associate, Sitrick and Company, to Fiona Hutton & Associates, Los Angeles, as an A/E. The firm also promoted Kendall Klinger to senior A/E.

**Rafi Fischer**, a 10-year PR pro most recently the No. 2 at Lone Star Communications, to Finn Partners in Israel responsible for its technology clients. Lone Star was the firm of Texas-born Charley Levine, who passed away last month at the age of 62. Fischer spent a half dozen years at Lone Star, handling English and Hebrew language campaigns for tech, biotech and cleantech clients. The George Washington University graduate worked at Ogilvy PR Worldwide before moving to Israel in 2007. At Finn Partners, Fischer reports to Goel Jasper, whom Levine hired when he co-chaired Ruder Finn Israel.

### Promoted

**Jessica Darden** and **Dan Schlacter** to senior A/Es, McNeely Pigott & Fox PR, Nashville, Tenn.

### Named

**Michael Law**, US CEO of Burson-Marsteller, to the board of trustees of the American Forest Foundation. The Ogilvy alum and Scotland native is an Eagle Scout and avid outdoorsman.

## **PRUDENTIAL PUTS COMMS UNDER AD CHIEF**

Prudential Financial will move communications and PR under advertising chief Colin McConnell on the 2015 retirement of chief communications officer Bob DeFillippo.

DeFillippo plans to step down in the first quarter of 2015 after 20 years with the Newark-based insurance and financial services giant.

Prudential said McConnell will take a newly created role of chief brand officer, overseeing global brand identity, PR, brand marketing and advertising, internal comms. and executive event planning.

DeFillippo was director of public affairs for AARP before joining Prudential in 1994. He started out in journalism with the *Poughkeepsie Journal* before serving as press secretary to Rep. Hamilton Fish (R-N.Y.).

Prudential vice chair Mark Grier said DeFillippo was instrumental in shaping the company's reputation, noting his guidance through key events like its demutualization and IPO in 2001, the financial crisis, and its global expansion. "As he retires, Prudential is one of the most admired companies in the world," said Grier.

McConnell is another longtime Prudential hand. He joined in 1991 and took over advertising in 2009. He was also an executive speechwriter for the company. Grier said McConnell is "ideally suited" to join the resources of its global communications and advertising operations.

Agency vet Scot Hoffman is VP of global comms. and head of corporate and international business communications for Prudential.

## **UNIV. OREGON KICKS OFF BRANDING PUSH**

The University of Oregon used its Jan. 1 Rose Bowl (Pasadena) appearance to kick off a four-year branding initiative handled by the Newport Beach, Calif., office of Philadelphia headquartered 160over90 shop.

The push is to promote the idea its academic program is equivalent to the excellence of its athletics.

The campaign will highlight UO's history of experimentation, innovation and collaboration designed to make new discoveries and bring fresh thinking to the Beaver State, nation and world.

The branding program relies on a mixture of traditional, social and guerilla tactics.

UO's Duck mascot made pop-up appearances throughout Los Angeles, while UO messages ran on 20 digital billboards in the city.

A TV ad debuted during the Rose Bowl football match-up between the No. 2 ranked Ducks and No. 3 Seminoles of Florida State. A Twitter campaign launched Jan. 2 to get more mileage from the TV spot.

The university of 24K students expects the branding drive will position it as a top-tier university to attract students and donations to the \$2B fund-raising drive that launches in 2015.



**DeFillippo**



**McConnell**

## **BROWNBACK AIDE TAKES DRIVER'S SEAT**

Landon Fulmer, chief of staff for Kansas Governor Sam Brownback, is leaving Topeka for DC on Jan. 5 for the VP/state affairs post at the Alliance of Auto Manufacturers.

He quarterbacked the Sunflower State's controversial \$3B school funding scheme that lifted limits on local school boards to levy property taxes. A new income distribution plan is in the works.

Mitch Bainwol, CEO of the AAM, said Fulmer "comes from a state where ideas are fervently debated and rough-and-tumble politics is a way of telling your constituents that you care."

The Alliance represents a dozen auto companies including General Motors, Ford, Mercedes-Benz, Porsche, Volvo, Toyota, BMW and Mazda.

## **STAFFER QUILTS REGAN, BLAMES GLOBE**

The 27-year-old domestic partner of a powerful Massachusetts politician quit well-connected Regan Communications and blamed a string of stories about their relationship in the *Boston Globe* for his departure.

Bryon Heffner, 27, has been in a six-year relationship with Stan Rosenberg, the incoming president of the Bay State's Senate.

The *Globe* ran items about Hefner's social media rants against outgoing Senate president Therese Murray, tense dinner exchanges with another Democratic pol and a trip to a legislative conference in St. Thomas.

Regan had reassigned Hefner to its Florida office, but he turned down the offer, according to a statement emailed to the *Globe*.

Natasha Perez, chief of staff for 65-year-old Rosenberg, said the exec wouldn't comment. George Regan said he has nothing to add to the Hefner situation.

## **HL PROPS UP FALTERING VENEZUELA**

Hogan Lovells is representing Venezuela, which is on the brink of economic collapse due to plunging oil prices, on its relations with the US.

President Obama on Dec. 18 signed legislation that imposed sanctions on Venezuela for its crackdown on demonstrators protesting the rule of strongman Nicolas Maduro. The sanctions freeze assets and deny visas to Venezuelan officials responsible for the violence that has led to 43 deaths over the past three months.

Energy revenues, which account for 95 percent of Venezuela's exports, bankroll the extensive social services programs that buy goodwill for Maduro's government.

Hogan Lovells has neither a formal written contract nor exchange of letters to cover its legal analysis, counsel, strategy development and policy advocacy before US officials and public policy activities.

The firm may contact members of the media on behalf of Venezuela. It also may select and engage professional strategic communicators and PR firms to assist the Venezuelan effort. Senior international advisor HP Goldfield, who also advises Saudi Arabia, and Charles Simpson, ex-US Energy Dept. Associate Deputy Secretary and American Gas Assn. government affairs staffer, are part of the four-member Venezuela team.

## **PR OPINION**

**Millions in legal fees both paid and pro bono are being expended** on Long Island in a fight over whether religious symbols can be put on utility poles. Involved are Verizon, Long Island Power, major law firms and three L.I. towns.

PR people need to watch how lawyers and the courts work because in many instances legal trumps PR considerations.

The lesson here is that if you lose the battle for public opinion, go the legal route. Burden the opposing side with crushing legal costs. Ruder Finn's Michael Schubert told the PR Society Ethics panel Sept. 8, 2014 that PR must accept that lawyers have the "final say."

This case, involving at least \$1 million in legal expenses by Southampton, Westhampton Beach and Quogue and at least that amount in time donated to the East End Eruv Assn. (EEEE) by Weil, Gotshal & Manges, world's 13th biggest law firm with revenues of \$1.2 billion and 1,200 lawyers, should never have been accepted by any court to begin with.

Telephone poles, as any schoolchild will say, are no place for religious symbols. They may be owned by utilities but they are on public property.

The U.S., only too aware of how many died in religious wars in Europe, was founded on the basis of separation of church and state.

### **Verizon, PSEG/LIPA Jump Into Fray**

What's surprising in this issue is that two giant companies, Verizon and PSEG/Long Island Power Authority, have jumped into this fray on the side of the EEEA which wants to erect an eruv religious boundary, marked by plastic strips called lechis on utility poles, in SH, WHB and Quogue.

Public Service Enterprise Group, operator of Public Service Electric & Gas of New Jersey, the state's largest utility, took over operation of LIPA on Jan. 1, 2014.

The Hampton Synagogue, WHB, some of whose members are Orthodox Jews, on March 7, 2008 asked WHB for permission to erect an eruv covering about one square mile of the three miles of the village. One rule of the Orthodox for an eruv is that permission must be obtained from local authorities.

Village trustees refused. Mayor Conrad Teller estimated that 90-95% of residents were opposed to the eruv, rules for which are in the thousands of words.

The basic premise is that no "work" may be done on the Sabbath. However, some rules are suspended in an eruv which converts, for the believers, public property into a "private domain."

Pushing baby carriages and carrying keys would be allowed. However, should it be raining, umbrellas could not be used since opening one is building a tent.

### **Non-Orthodox Rap Eruv**

"We do not wish to live in a village whose territory has been demarcated by the erection of an eruv on government property," said Arnold Sheiffer, president of Jewish People Opposed to the Eruv, representing about 300 non-Orthodox Jews in the area. The JPOE website

provides a timeline of the legal battle from 2008 to the present. JPOE says the battle against the eruv, which was erected in WHB on Aug. 8, 2014 while issues in the dispute were still unsettled by the courts, "has just begun." Jonathan Sinnreich, JPOE attorney, called the lechi "a deeply religious and sectarian symbol of a particular religious belief that they (JPOE members) do not share, and in some cases find offensive."

JPOE says it had written assurance from Verizon and Verizon was quoted "in print" as saying that village approval would be needed before any installation was made. Verizon says it did not "categorically" agree to that.

### **Verizon, LIPA Sue Three Towns**

Verizon New York and LIPA on Jan. 18, 2011 sued WHB, SH and Quogue seeking an affirmation of their right to permit EEEA to install lechis on their poles in these communities.

The suit asked the court to enjoin the three from interfering with the erection of the eruv. Verizon and LIPA in 2010 had signed agreements with EEEA allowing it to erect pole attachments in Nassau, Suffolk and Queens.

Upwards of 200 legal filings have been made in this battle to date, providing a glimpse of what happens in a lawsuit. Value of the legal time, both paid and pro-bono, is probably well over \$2 million. Lead attorney for Weil is retired partner Robert Sugarman who probably bills at \$1,000 or more hourly, said legal sources. Other Weil lawyers are in the \$500 to \$600 range.

Weil takes special pride in its pro bono work, requiring all lawyers, from partners to new attorneys, to spend 50 hours a year on such activities.

It describes an eruv as "a largely invisible unbroken demarcation of an area through which certain activities may be conducted outside the home on the Jewish Sabbath and Yom Kippur."

It says Weil won an important victory in June 2014 when the district court ruled that EEEA and the utilities can under state law contract for the attachment of plastic strips to the poles and that nothing blocked them from a contract with one of the municipalities [WHB] where "an eruv has now been created."

It notes that litigation continues on First Amendment and other important issues before Magistrate Judge Kathleen Tomlinson.

The docket for the case involving Southampton lists 78 filings as of Oct. 30, 2014 including one in which Judge Tomlinson urges the two sides to "narrow the scope of the search terms to be applied." She noted that "70 gigabytes of non-email data" had been presented to the court. A gigabyte is one billion bytes.

Southampton, as of Oct. 14, 2014, had appropriated \$695,000 to law firm Jaspan Schlesinger to fight the eruv. WHB had spent \$75,656 with outside lawyer Anthony Tohill as of June 25, 2014.

The village website lists more than 70 legal filings by WHB and the other parties in the dispute.

— Jack O'Dwyer