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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

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SKDKNICK SCOUTS FOR TIME'S UP PARTNERS

SKDKnickerbocker is working with the Time's Up Legal Defense Fund to represent victims of sexual misconduct, including assault, harassment and abuse.

With 42West and Sunshine Sachs, SKDKnick is coordinating communications for the Time's Up umbrella organization that kicked off Jan 1. via a "Dear Sisters" letter.



Signed by 300 women working in film, TV and theater, the letter expressed solidarity with women farmworkers "who have been preyed upon, harassed and exploited by those who abuse their power and threaten our physical and economic security."

Housed in the National Women's Law Center, the Time's Up Legal Defense Fund serves women in lower-wage jobs who lack the legal resources needed to obtain justice.

SKDKnick, according to a memo, is looking for PR partners to serve as designated agencies to be assigned cases from the Fund. Participating firms would handle projects, "mostly on a reduced fee basis." A procedure will be in place to avoid potential conflicts and firms could decline any case that comes their way.

SKDKnick believes a roster of PR firms in big and small markets is critical to the success of the Legal Fund as the "seismic shift in our culture reverberates as more and more women from all walks of life speak up."

LOCKHART PUNTS NFL PR POST

Joe Lockhart is leaving his executive VP-communications & government affairs post at the National Football League after a two-year stint.

The former White House press secretary under Bill Clinton and Glover Park Group managing director/founder called the NFL post "one of the best communications jobs in the world."

In his memo to staffers, Lockhart said the NFL is "one of the most important and iconic cultural institutions," one that is "subject to almost as much scrutiny as our Government."



Joe Lockhart

Lockhart equated the pressures of the NFL post to his White House job. He plans to leave the league after the Super Bowl, take some time off, do political commentary and look for a teaching job.

Meanwhile, the NFL has posted a senior communications strategist job on its website.

PR NEEDED FOR OPIOID CRISIS PSA

Homeless Health Care Los Angeles is looking for a PR firm to promote a short film-style PSA by actor/director Kathryn Prescott designed to raise awareness about the opioid crisis in the US.

"We are looking to target teens, young adults, parents and 25-35's," Prescott told *O'Dwyer's*. "We are also targeting the science and recovery communities,"



The goal is to encourage teachers, addiction counselors and professors to use the video in discussions with their students/groups.

Prescott has acted in programs, such as British TV show "Skins," MTV's "Finding Carter," and the upcoming Netflix comedy "Dude," that are geared to younger audiences.

She said social media will play a major part of the outreach effort along with media outlets like *Wired*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Teen Vogue*, *Seventeen*, *New Scientist Magazine*, *Buzzfeed*, *NPR*, *Rolling Stone*, *Men's Health*, *Women's Health*, *The Wrap*, *Vice*, *Huffington Post*, *Elle*, *New York Post*, *Slate* and *New York Times*.

"We also want to push for any public figures to tweet about it and push it on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram," said Prescott who can be reached at k.prescott77@googlemail.com.

SARD VERBINNEN CROWNED '17 DEALS KING

Sard Verbinnen & Co. snagged the top spot in four main categories of Mergermarket's global overview of PR advisors on mergers and acquisitions deals for 2017.

With a global deal count of 248, SVC topped second-place FTI Consulting by 48 deals. Brunswick Group came in No. 3 with 190 deals, while and Finsbury Hering Schuppener and Kekst, tied for fourth place with 165.

In terms of value, SVC once again took first place globally (\$386 billion), followed by Brunswick Group (\$346 billion), Finsbury Hering Schuppener (\$308 billion), **Joele Frank Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher** (\$297 billion) and **Kekst** (\$241 billion).

The numbers for the U.S. were in line with the global figures. SVC ranked first in total deals (221) and value (\$353 billion). Joele Frank came in second in both categories, with 151 deals and \$293 billion in value. Other top firms were

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SARD VERBINNEN CROWNED '17 DEALS KING

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Finsbury (#5 in deals, #3 in value), Kekst (#3 in deals, #4 in value), Abernathy MacGregor Group (#4 in deals, #7 in value) and Brunswick Group (#7 in deals, #5 in value).

The data for the PR firm rankings measured deals with a value of over \$5 million, or deals with an undisclosed value where the target's turnover exceeds \$10 million. If the deal is for a stake of less than 30%, the value must be greater than \$100 million.

Mergermarket, an Acuris company, employs correspondents across 67 locations worldwide to assemble a database of information about the M&A market.

B-M HIRES O'BRIEN, EX-KERRY AIDE

Drew O'Brien, who worked for former Secretary of State and Massachusetts Senator John Kerry for more than a decade, has joined [Burson-Marsteller](#) in Boston as managing director and global lead on the Bank of America account.

Most recently at [Weber Shandwick](#) in the executive VP/corporate post, O'Brien led partnerships and the higher education practice and served as strategic counselor for New England-based clients.

Before joining Kerry, O'Brien was special assistant to Boston Mayor Tom Menino, chief of staff to the Massachusetts State Lottery Commission and deputy chancellor at the University of Massachusetts/Boston.

O'Brien reports to Mike Fernandez, B-M US CEO.



Drew O'Brien

QUEEN ELIZABETH LOOKS FOR PR HELPER

The British royal household is looking to hire a communications assistant to serve a one-year term beginning in April. According to the LinkedIn post, the Westminster-based royal communications team strives to promote the "work, role, relevance and value of the Royal Family to a worldwide audience."

The Buckingham Palace job includes coverage of "set-piece palace engagements including investitures and garden parties" and support for off-site engagements.

The communications assistant will produce content for a variety of social media platforms, including feature articles, social media updates, and media briefing notes.

The royal communications team warns that "reaction to our work is always high-profile, and so reputation and impact will be at the forefront of all that you do."

The compensation package includes 33 holiday days per year and 15 percent employer contribution to a pension scheme.

Applicants for the position are invited to "become part of something remarkable." That's because royal household jobs "provide invaluable support to The Queen and Royal Family, enabling them to fulfill their duties and serve the nation. And, working in magnificent and historic surroundings, they're inspired to deliver to a higher standard."

Also, the work environment is "unexpectedly business-minded and refreshingly down-to-earth."

BLOCKCHAIN ADVOCATE GETS LOBBYING HELP

The Chamber of Digital Commerce, a trade association that promotes the industry behind blockchain technologies, has hired public policy and communications firm North South Government Strategies for Capitol Hill advocacy support.

NSGS will help the D.C.-based nonprofit on issues related to the regulation of blockchain-based technologies, the infrastructural component that provides security and governance protections to the emerging cryptocurrency market.



Cryptocurrencies have taken the investor world by storm recently, with the total cryptocurrency market now accounting for a year-over-year increase of about 3,400 percent — or about \$563 billion — according to industry site CoinMarketCap. The value of digital currencies such as Bitcoin continues to rise, spurring massive initial coin offering investment funding into upcoming cryptocurrency ventures, in spite of risks related to account vulnerabilities from hackers and continued worries of a cryptocurrency crash.

NSGS is the firm formerly known as JDM Public Strategies, which was founded by John McMickle, who formerly advised Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA) as counsel to the Senate Judiciary Committee. McMickle also served as legal policy director to the Trump presidential campaign's D.C. Office.

SOCIAL MEDIA SAVVY CEOS OUTPACE PEERS

Engaging with social media may well be one of the keys to success as a CEO, according to a report released Jan. 23 from Ruder Finn.

"The Social CEO" analyzes the social media presence of 100 CEOs from across 13 industries, including such heavyweight tech firms as Facebook, Google and IBM; pharma companies like Merck and Amgen; consumer goods companies and financial firms. It then split that group up into "high-performing" CEOs and "low-performing" CEOs (those whose companies had below-average stock price growth against the S&P 500 Index).

The study found that high performers have a weightier social media presence than their lower-producing peers. 50 percent of the high-performing CEOs surveyed have two or more social media accounts. That number drops to 28 percent for the low performers. The high performers also have significantly more social media followers, averaging 400,566 followers over all their accounts and 244,190 followers per account. Those figures were much lower for the low performers, at 55,355 overall and 37,605 per account.

It also matters how open CEOs are on the social plat-

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Kathy Bloomgarden

SOCIAL MEDIA SAVVY CEOS OUTPACE PEERS

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forms they use, the study says. More high performers (20.72 percent) address personal topics on social media than do the lower performers (14.12 percent). The high performers are also more likely to share industry news. But they are less likely to post on such topics as current events, politics and progressive topics.

The study doesn't only pit high performers against low performers. When the numbers are broken down by company sector, it becomes evident that some industries are far more social-savvy than others. Not surprisingly, tech companies lead the way, with 91 percent of tech CEOs in the survey reporting that they had a social media presence. For the FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods) sector that figure falls to 60 percent, with pharma coming in at 56 percent and financial services at 33 percent.

The main point reached by "The Social CEO," however, is that tapping the power of social media has a strong relationship to a company's success. "CEOs must find ways to leverage the power of social media as a means to bring their story to life and connect with customers, investors and other audiences," said Ruder Finn CEO Kathy Bloomgarden. "To be competitive, CEOs need to find their 'voice' on social media."



RASKY RUNS RAYTHEON'S DC PUSH

Rasky Partners is working Washington for defense giant Raytheon, a leading contractor for missile defense systems.

The Waltham, MA-based company produces the Patriot Air and Missile Defense system, which is used by 14 countries.

Raytheon on Jan. 9 picked up a \$1.5B pact to provide additional capabilities for the Patriot system.

The State Dept. this month approved the \$133M sale of anti-ballistic missiles to Japan as part of that country's effort to defend against an attack from North Korea.

Reuters reported the Japanese deal would include anti-ballistic missiles from Raytheon and BAE Systems to follow through on President Trump's commitment to provide defense capabilities to allies threatened by North Korea's provocative behavior.

Rasky's Jessica Tocco (BGR alum and one-time director of the US Chamber of Commerce in Vietnam); Bethany Bassett, former legislative aide to Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA); and Alexandria Wich, aide to Sen. Mark Kirk (R-IL) are on Rasky's Raytheon team.



WEBER SHANDWICK'S GIUDA JOINS TEAM TRUMP

Michelle Giuda, **Weber Shandwick's** senior VP-global corporate communications, is exiting her post for a State Dept. job.

She'll work as assistant secretary of state for PR, reporting to Steve Goldstein, Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and PA and former senior VP at BP Global Solutions.

Giuda joined the Interpublic unit in 2013 as a corporate communications specialist after a one-year stint at GOPAC, the 527 organization which bills itself as "the premier training organization for Republican candidates in elected office on the state and local levels".

Earlier, she worked for five years for former House Speaker Newt Gingrich. Giuda was national deputy press secretary for his 2012 presidential run, and communications coordinator for Gingrich Communications, where she promoted the politico's books.

Kim Dixon, Weber Shandwick's director of global communications, will handle Giuda's duties. She joined WS in 2015 from digital company, PureWow.

Earlier, she held PR posts at JP Morgan, Horn Group and Bender/Helper Impact.



Michelle Giuda

HOW BANNON GOT PLAYED

By Fraser P. Seitel, author of the Prentice-Hall text *The Practice of PR*



Steve Bannon's fall from grace was so rapid, so precipitous and so conclusive — not to mention so unexpected — that recalling his name now requires some thought. Never before in the annals of power politics has such a close personal advisor to the President been offed so definitively. Talk about "Gone in 60 Seconds."

How Bannon, the self-acknowledged smartest man in Washington and primary creator of the Trump strategy, got "played" by a notoriously untrustworthy and conniving journalist, should serve as a cautionary tale for any public relations person who deals with the media.

The story by now is well known. Michael Wolff, a strange and prodigiously disliked Wall Street/media columnist for such publications as *Vanity Fair* and *New York Magazine* and frequent TV contributor, approached Bannon — then Donald Trump's strategic advisor — about access to the White House for a book Wolff was writing on the new administration.

Bannon, a former Goldman Sachs manager, movie producer and Breitbart executive, was outspoken in his contempt for the mainstream media and particularly what he saw as its contempt for his candidate. Trump and Bannon led the campaign to demonize the "fake news" delivered by the usual suspects, from CNN to the *New York Times*. And it was Lt. Bannon, in particular, who served as Gen. Trump's point man on his anti-media flank, occasionally explaining to hand-selected journalists how unfair the coverage of the new President really was.

The Trump-Bannon combination continued to thrive until the publication of Wolff's book, "Fire and Fury,"

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HOW BANNON GOT PLAYED

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which tells the inside story of a hopelessly dysfunctional White House, where most of the senior troops lament the ignorance, naiveté, insecurity and childishness of the man they serve. While it's impossible to know how much of Wolff's best seller is true and how much is baloney, it remains a mystery how someone with a reputation as sleazy as Wolff managed to finagle his way into the inner sanctum of the Trump White House, and why his new friend Bannon awarded him carte blanche access to the West Wing staff for nine solid months, which ultimately resulted in Bannon's self-immolation.

Within weeks of the book's first leaks, Trump, no surprise, fired "Sloppy Steve" and presumably severed all ties with his

former top aide. Bannon's financiers quickly followed suit, as did his employer, Breitbart. Today, Steve Bannon has become an historical afterthought. Finished. Over. Kaput.

Here are the three simple public relations reminders he leaves in his wake.

1) Don't trust reporters

Or at least the ones you don't know.

The simple rule that every public relations professional must know is that reporters and sources have different objectives: the latter want good stories about their employers; the former want stories that sizzle. That's why one must always be wary of reporters.

Bannon, no doubt, was impressed with Wolff's pedigree. After all, the man was an outstanding writer, winning the National Magazine Award twice, and had worked for the highest-rated publications in the country. He was a published author, sought-after TV media critic and a friend to media movers and shakers, some of whom he partnered with in an attempt to buy media giant Primedia Inc. Perhaps most important to Bannon, Wolff was disdainful of the working press, preferring to rub elbows with the power players rather than the ink-stained wretches.

What Bannon apparently didn't realize was that Wolff was also a snake. Sure, he was a "good reporter," just not "good" in terms of fairness, honesty or ethics. Michael Wolff was well known for his provocative prose and producing stories that people wanted to read. But he was equally well known — as described in a most public 2004 cover story in the *New Republic* — as someone who couldn't be trusted. That's why other reporters had no particular use for him, but since Bannon had no particular use for them and because the Trump strategist obviously didn't do much homework, he opened the White House tent for the snake to slither in. The dope.

2) Don't believe your own press

Good public relations people know that any publicity

— good or bad — should be believed by half, always playing down expectations.

But Steve Bannon — the President's architect, his top man, the chief arbiter of policies that affected millions — was flying high for the first time in his life and loving it.

So, when the conniving Wolff approached him with a proposition to write the book that would memorialize Bannon's place in history, the gullible Bannon ate it up. He believed that in Wolff, a writer who regularly hob-nobbed with the moguls to whom Bannon compared to himself, he had found a writer who could properly discern the superior thoughtfulness that he possessed and the Svengali-like impact he had on an eager believer like President Trump.

This book, the self-inflated advisor thought, would provide the true context of his own policy-making authority and the outsized role that the President's key advisor would play in the reshaping of America and the world. Michael Wolff, in other words, would be Steve Bannon's Arthur Schlesinger.

So Steve Bannon dropped his guard and spilled his guts.

Among other pearls, Bannon, according to Wolff, declared Don, Jr.'s infamous meeting with Russians in Trump Tower, "treasonous." He admitted his antipathy to Trump daughter Ivanka and her husband Jared Kushner and dismissed the two amateurs as "Jarvanka." Ivanka, Trump's favorite, was evidently a particular Bannon target. Wolff quoted him as calling her a "@#*@% liar" and gleefully extolling after the United States pulled out of the Paris climate agreement that Ivanka championed, "Score. The bitch is dead."

Now the only feasible reason anyone would open up so graphically — about his employer's family, no less! — was that Bannon trusted Wolff to keep some comments off-the-record and protect him as a source. Surprise!

3) The organization supersedes the individual

Public relations professionals understand that your first loyalty is always to he or she who pays the check. In this case, it's the President who gets the credit, made the decision or wrote the speech (as White House speechwriter Peggy Noonan famously found out when she bragged that she was the one, not President George HW Bush, who invented the term, "thousand points of light." Neither Poppy nor Mommy Bush were pleased.)

Stated another way, the organization's welfare always comes before your own. Steve Bannon, so consumed with his own presumed place in history, either forgot or didn't realize that simple truth.

So he hungrily swallowed the Wolff Kool-Aid, let the Trojan Horse through the gates and proceeded to backstab his employer. By enabling Wolff to paint the White House as a dysfunctional organization and Trump as an unprepared, dim-witted, way-in-over-his-head buffoon, Bannon sealed his fate.

So intent was Bannon to ensure that he, himself, was memorialized, he never realized that in assisting the devious Wolff, he was committing the cardinal Trump World sin, disloyalty and sealing his own demise.

