



**Kevin McCauley**  
Editor-in-Chief

# O'Dwyer's Newsletter



**The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications**

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## HUNTSWORTH ACQUIRES GIANT FOR \$72M

Britain's Huntsworth announced the acquisition of a 90.2 percent stake in Giant Creative Holdings healthcare marketing communications from Shamrock Capital Growth Fund for \$72.2M in cash.



San Francisco-based Giant Creative Strategy's 150 staffers serve clients in the bio-

pharmaceutical, medical device and diagnostics sectors. The firm recorded \$32M in 2017 revenues and \$7M in profit (EBITDA).

GCS CEO Steven Gold, president Adam Gelling and senior management own the remaining 9.8 percent stake of the firm. Huntsworth may spend up to \$25M to purchase the management stock based on GCS' earnings performance.

Huntsworth CEO Paul Taaffe said the GCS deal adds scale in healthcare professional marketing especially in the fast growth biotech sector.

## EDELMAN WORKS OSU SEX ABUSE INQUIRY

Edelman is advising Ohio State University on the sex abuse probe linked to Richard Strauss, the deceased doctor of its wrestling team, according to a Politico report.

Strauss died in 2005 from a reported suicide.

Ohio Republican Congressman Jim Jordan, who was assistant wrestling coach from 1987 to 1995, has become the public face of the scandal, though he has denied any knowledge of abuse by Strauss.

The Associated Press reported that Jordan was interviewed by the law firm looking into the Strauss allegations and OSU's response to complaints about the doctor.

Jordan, founder of the conservative Freedom Caucus and possible successor to House Speaker Paul Ryan, has received support from former coaches and wrestlers.

On July 10, the right-leaning firm Shirley & Banister Public Affairs released statements from former OSU athletes backing Jordan.

Fourteen male students from the wrestling squad and other sports teams have alleged abuse by Strauss. Two federal lawsuits have been filed.

Edelman has a long-relationship with OSU, having worked on transition issues and the 2014 scandal connected to its marching band. The firm also represented Penn State following the Joe Paterno sex abuse scandal.



**Jim Jordan**

## PUBLICIS REPORTS 8.2% DIP IN H1 REVENUES

Publicis Groupe reported an 8.2 percent plunge in H1 revenues to \$4.9B due, in part, to a weak performance of its volatile Publicis Health Solutions contract sales organization, which visits doctors to sell products.



**Arthur Sadoun**

CEO Arthur Sadoun referred to "one specific operational bump" with PHS in North America which led to a \$35M drop in revenues during the half.

Organic growth dipped 0.4 percent during the half and 2.1 percent in Q2. Publicis reported a 2.3 percent drop to \$1.4B in Q2 North American organic growth, while Europe slipped 3.6 percent to \$744.

## Publicis' Fallon Slices Papa John's from Roster

Fallon ad agency, which was awarded creative duties for Papa John's a month ago, has dropped the account due to the controversy surrounding the pizza chain's founder John Schnatter's use of the N-word.

"The agency was unaware of the incident with its previous agency," said a statement from Fallon, which also said the agency "has decided not to pursue additional business with Papa John's."

Olson Engage, which did PR for Papa John's, cut ties with the chain this month.

## SITRICK & CO. REPS PAPA JOHN'S FOUNDER

Sitrick And Company is representing Papa John's founder and former chairman John Schnatter, who has blasted the company for acting on "rumor and innuendo" when it asked him to step down as chairman before it launched an investigation into his use of the N-word.

He now regrets his resignation.

Michael Sitrick told *O'Dwyer's* that he and S&C partner Terry Fahn were retained by Los Angeles law firm Glaser Weil to represent Schnatter.

In his letter to Papa John's board, Schnatter, who owns 30 percent of the pizza chain, ripped it for demonstrating "that it does not know how to handle a crisis based on misinformation."

Schnatter says he used the N-word during a diversity training course, not as a racial epithet.

Glaser Weil's Patricia Glaser represented celebrity chef Paula Deen following her use of the N-word.

She also worked for Harvey Weinstein during his negotiations with Weinstein Co. after he was terminated for alleged sexual misconduct.



**John Schnatter**

## **OMC SHOWS 1.8% Q2 GROWTH**

Omnicom CEO John Wren reported July 18 that second-quarter revenues rose 1.8 percent to \$3.9B, while operating profit advanced 1.9 percent, to \$582.3.



**John Wren**

Organic Q2 growth for the PR group, which includes Fleishman-Hillard, Brodeur Partners, Cone, Ketchum, Mercury, Portland, Kream and Porter Novelli, advanced 2.7 percent from last year's period.

OMC enjoyed robust Q2 organic growth in Europe (+11.2 percent), Asia-Pacific (+8.5 percent) and Latin America (+2.5 percent).

It stumbled in North America (-0.9 percent), UK (-2.2 percent) and the Middle East/Africa (-8.0 percent).

Wren told analysts that weakness in the North American market would subside "partially" for the rest of the year.

He said OMC was hurt by cuts in client spending and the reduction of revenues from accounts lost during earlier quarters.

For the six-month period, OMC's revenues inched ahead 1.5 percent to \$7.5B, and operating profit rose 1.7 percent to \$1B.

## **SCHUMACHER CIARDIELLO EXITS PN NY SPOT**

Julie Schumacher Ciardiello, who rejoined Porter Novelli from Ketchum in 2016 as managing director of its flagship New York office, has exited that post.

She had replaced Erin Osher, who relocated to PN's Seattle office.

At Ketchum since 2007, Schumacher Ciardiello was a leader of its NYC consumer brand practice and then helmed its food & wellness practice. She stepped up to co-director of the North American food group in 2014.

Schumacher Ciardiello did stints at Creamer Dickson Basford, Hill & Knowlton and Golin Harris before joining PN in 1998 as VP working on the Kellogg's account.

She then held senior VP jobs at Vorhaus & Co. and Marina Maher Communications before joining Ketchum.

## **EX-WSJ TECH WRITER TO SUBJECT MATTER**

Subject Matter has hired former *Wall Street Journal* national technology columnist Katie Boehret as a senior director in its strategic content practice.

Boehret joins the firm from Burson-Marsteller, where she developed business strategies, events and executive media plans for clients such as Ford Motor Company's Mobility team and the Smithsonian Institution.

Before coming to B-M, she held senior positions at Recode and The Verge, and spent over a decade at the *Journal*. While there, she helped launch WSJ's AllThingsD.com tech site.

Subject Matter, based in Washington, D.C., bills itself as a "creative advocacy agency," with specialties in both government relations and strategic communications.



**Katie Boehret**

## **TRONC CHOPS NEW YORK DAILY NEWS STAFF**

Chicago-based tronc Inc., which acquired the *New York Daily News* from real estate investor Mort Zuckerman for \$1 in 2017, is axing the tabloid's editorial staff by 50 percent in what it calls a restructuring move.



"We are re-focusing our talent on breaking news, especially in the areas of crime, civil justice and public responsibility," said a statement from tronc.

Jim Rich, editor-in-chief, is among the cuts. Robert York, EIC of tronc's *Morning Call* in Allentown, will replace Rich on July 30.

Tronc says the cutbacks "reflect the realities of our business."

In welcoming the *Daily News* to its roster, tronc pitched it as "another strategic platform for growing our digital business, expanding our reach and broadening our services for advertisers and marketers."

Tronc acquired the *Virginian-Pilot* in May and closed on the sale of the *Los Angeles Times* and *San Diego Times Union-Tribune* in July.

It still owns the *Chicago Tribune*, *Baltimore Sun*, *Hartford Courant*, *Orlando Sentinel*, *Sun-Sentinel* and *Daily Press* (Virginia).

## **MEDIA MANEUVERS**

Comcast has ended its effort to acquire the film and TV assets of Twenty-First Century Fox. Instead, it is focusing on its bid to pick up British telecommunications company Sky. Comcast had placed an all-cash bid of \$65 billion for Fox's movie studio, along with its regional sports networks and such cable channels as National Geographic and FX. Disney topped that with its most recent cash-and-stock offer of \$71 billion. Comcast's bidding war with Fox for Sky is still heating up, however. Fox, which owns 39 percent of Sky, has valued the company at \$32.5 billion. Comcast has raised the stakes with a \$34 billion bid.

Isaac Lee is leaving his post as chief content officer at Univision. Lee says that he plans to start his own television production company. He has been with the Spanish-language broadcaster since 2010. Lee was a driving force behind the development of Fusion Media Group, Univision's joint venture with ABC. Earlier this month, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that Univision was looking into selling the division.



**Isaac Lee**

Sinclair Broadcast Group Inc., which has hit a snag in its plans to acquire Tribune Media for \$3.9 billion, says it will address the concerns that FCC Chairman Ajit Pai has raised over the deal. Sinclair is withdrawing plans to sell two of its stations, KDAF in Dallas and KIAH in Houston, to Cunningham Broadcasting Corp. That sale had been intended to help Sinclair meet the limit on how many stations a single company can own.

## **CONSUMERS APPREHENSIVE ABOUT AI**

People view Artificial Intelligence as an exciting frontier that could solve many problems, but are wary of a potentially job-eliminating technology they admit they don't know much about, according to a report released by FleishmanHillard on the public's sentiment toward AI.

AI has become a hot topic in recent years, but the Omnicom unit's report suggests that many still lack a full understanding of what AI is and are looking to experts to educate them on the technology and the role it plays in society.



On one hand, the report found that nearly half of the global respondents polled (49 percent) believe AI is an exhilarating topic that will change our lives and jobs for the better, and nearly the same number (45 percent) said they believe the positive potential aspects of AI outweigh the negatives.

On the other hand, more than a quarter of respondents (26 percent) admit they have a poor understanding of what AI is or have no understanding of it at all, and only a third (31 percent) said they'd personally witnessed the benefits of automation.

This lack of education appears to have tempered the public's expectations about what AI means and how it will affect businesses and industries in the future. More than half of respondents (56 percent) believe AI requires more regulation and restrictions than what are in place now.

Not surprisingly, positive sentiment of AI seems to correlate with those who use the technology the most, and those users tend to skew young. More than 80 percent of respondents ages 18 to 44 said they use AI on a daily basis. By contrast, less than a third of respondents aged 45 and over reported using AI on even a weekly basis. Those between the ages of 25 and 34 responded most positively about the potential benefits of AI, while those between the ages of 55 and 64 were the most pessimistic.

More than half (53 percent) of respondents said they believe that educating the public regarding the role AI plays in society must improve. And nearly two-thirds (61 percent) said they believe the responsibility for doing so should be shared between key stakeholders in business, government and academia.

When asked to name which sectors they think would be most disrupted by AI most over the next five years, respondents cited communications (81 percent), healthcare (74 percent), consumer technology (72 percent) and social media and networking (61 percent).

Slightly more than half of respondents (51 percent) reported using AI technologies on at least a monthly basis.

FleishmanHillard's report, "Artificial Intelligence & Communications, The Fads. The Fears. The Future" was developed by the agency's intelligence unit, TRUE Global Intelligence, and was conducted by Finer Weston Data Analysis. They surveyed 2,000 consumers online within the United States and UK. Responses were collected in May.

## **ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT**

**French/West/Vaughan** has added Las Vegas-based **BlitzPredict**, a startup that has launched a global sports information platform that is focused on sports and esports betting markets. BlitzPredict says it is the first company to record sports predictions to the blockchain, time-stamped against true market odds, to provide a permanent, verifiable record of an expert's success. The BlitzPredict web app was released in June, launching analytics models for Major League Baseball and the FIFA World Cup. The platform also currently offers odds on Major League Soccer and MMA. BlitzPredict NFL content is scheduled to launch in August. FWV will lead the integrated marketing strategy designed to introduce the platform to industry observers and established bettors, as well as to those new to online wagering.



**BlitzPredict**

**Sage Communications** has picked up **HyTrust**, **Nuxeo**, **Population Association of America**, **ScienceLogic** and **ThirdEye Gen Inc.** to its client roster. HyTrust is an automated cloud infrastructure security solution for the public and private sector. Global software company Nuxeo provides a content management platform for business applications. Population Association of America is a nonprofit, scientific, professional organization that supports the scientific study of the human population. ScienceLogic, a leader in AIOps, provides modern IT operations with actionable insights. ThirdEye Gen Inc. develops augmented reality smart glasses for commercial and consumer verticals.

**Magrino** has bolstered its roster of travel clients with the addition of **Joali Maldives**, JW Marriott Turnberry Miami and **Lotte New York Palace**. Joali Maldives, an all-suite luxury resort slated to open in fall 2018, is set on its own private island in the Raa Atoll. Magrino will work with JW Marriott Turnberry Miami, which is set to reopen this fall, to help the property introduce a series of additions that include a newly expanded 25,000-square-foot spa. Lotte New York Palace, which is located in the heart of Midtown Manhattan completed a \$140 million renovation in 2013.

**LaVoieHealthScience** has been named agency of record for strategic communications by **XenoTherapeutics**. LHS will work with the company to build a messaging framework to educate stakeholders on its technology to advance xenotransplantation, the science of transplanting organs and tissues of different species.



Its initial product candidate, Xeno-Skin, is intended to serve as a replacement or a complement to human graft material. "LHS stood out with its deep understanding of the business and regulatory aspects of science and medicine, its team of high-touch senior leaders, and proprietary approach to creating targeted messaging mapped to stakeholders," said XenoTherapeutics co-founder and CEO Paul Holzer.

## **MILLENNIALS HAVE MORE TO TEACH US**

Millennials have changed the course of business, to a greater extent than any of us could have imagined. Coming of age in the new millennium, 22-to-37 year old Millennials are a different cohort than GenXers, Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation.



**Andy Polansky**

While there's no shortage of research and information on what Millennials want, think, do and say, there are indicators that might be overlooked.

Here's what we know already about this most influential group:

- Millennials want to work for and buy from companies that they believe deliver on their promises, care about social justice and defend their values.
- If Millennials do not agree with how a company treats its employees, takes a position on hot-button issues or engages in sustainable practices, they will think twice of it as a place to work and a brand to buy.
- Millennials aren't afraid to take action. If they disagree with a company's political view, they will boycott it and often go one step further by intentionally buying the products of companies that align with them on controversial issues of the day.

Millennials grew up on the cusp of the digital revolution. They led other generations in their adoption and use of technology and watched how technology disrupted markets, sometimes even making their own parents' jobs obsolete or outdated.

What can we learn from our youngest practitioners about what the next 50 years will bring?

A lot, I think. Here are a few considerations for the years to come:

### **Corporate values will matter even more**

With the retirement of Baby Boomers now upon us, more than one in three Americans in the workforce are Millennials, making them the largest generation in the U.S. labor force, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data.

However, Millennials have a reputation for being nomadic, hopping from one job to another. Weber Shandwick's research on employee engagement, The Employer Brand Credibility Gap, found that nearly 60 percent of global Millennials are very likely to keep working for their current employers for the next year, a rate significantly lower than that of older generations. Employers must promote things that matter to Millennials, and communicating values may help attract and retain them.

Values also matter while on the job. One-third of Millennials who say they're aware of their employers' values strongly agree that they consider these values when faced with decisions at work.

Values and purpose increasingly play a role in Millennials' purchasing decisions. According to Weber Shandwick's study, The Company Behind the Brand II: In Goodness We Trust, four in 10 Millennials are buying from companies or brands that share their values more than they used to, and are significantly more likely to be doing so than older generations.

In research that investigates the rising trend of BUY-

cotting — where consumers show support for companies by intentionally buying from them — we found that BUYcotters are more likely to be Millennials or Gen Z. U.S. and UK consumers who BUYcott primarily do so because of product or service quality, but their support was also driven by values displayed by a company or brand.

As Millennials gain influence as employees and customers, companies devoid of clearly defined and articulated corporate values will be at a disadvantage.

### **Business leaders need to be more vocal**

The past few years have shown an increasing intersection between business, brands and policy. Millennials especially have heightened expectations for how leaders and companies respond to current controversial issues.

Millennials want CEOs to speak up on societal issues. In Weber Shandwick's latest CEO Activism study, we found that Millennials are more favorable toward CEOs who speak out on societal issues and more likely to buy from a brand whose CEO speaks out on hot-button issues.

Millennial support of CEO activism comes naturally and we can expect to see more in the decades ahead. A 2014 Pew Social Trends report found that the Millennial generation may be detached from organized politics but are politically active. They're more supportive of gay marriage, climate change solutions and social justice. They are also America's most racially diverse generation. Coupling these differences with their immersion in social media, they have more confidence in the power of networks and connectedness to make change. We can expect them to be more vocal as well as they turn to social networks to make their opinions known.

### **Ending gaps in diversity, equity, inclusion**

Fifty years from now, I hope we'll be able to look back on 2018 as an inflection point year in the pursuit of equality for people of all backgrounds. With movements like #MeToo and #TimesUp cementing in our cultural zeitgeist, the next half century in the workplace will (and should) look a lot different than the last.

We know that Millennials seek diversity and inclusivity at work more than their older counterparts — in a Weber Shandwick study, nearly half of Millennials said diversity and inclusion would be an important factor in job searches, compared to about one-third of Gen Xers and Boomers.

We also know from our most recent Civility in America annual tracking study that a diverse and inclusive workplace is more civil. If it's not clear by now that we should proactively advocate for a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace, I expect the Millennial voice will make a difference.

### **Takeaways for our industry**

Millennials are making their mark on the communications industry. Their expectations should be taken seriously because they have a great deal to contribute and as the next generation of PR leaders, they will drive progress forward. They have pushed our sector to be more connected, more diverse, more accessible and yes, more accountable. Here's to the next 50 years of seeing what this group will help our community achieve.

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*Andy Polansky is CEO of Weber Shandwick.*

## **TAINTED TURKISH BANK TAPS BALLARD**

Ballard Partners, which has close ties to the Trump administration, has signed on as DC representative for Turkiye Halk Bankasi AS, the Turkish state-owned bank, on financial services matters.



**Brian Ballard**

A US judge in May sentenced Mehmet Hakan Atilla, who headed Halkbank's international banking unit, to 32 months in prison for his role in an Iranian plot to avoid US sanctions and launder \$1B in oil revenues through the US financial system.

Turkey's foreign ministry claimed Atilla didn't get a fair trial and was convicted on the basis of "forged evidence and false statements" by followers of Pennsylvania-based cleric Fethullah Gulen, whom Turkey says was the mastermind of the failed 2016 coup to oust president Tayyip Erdogan.

Brian Ballard, who was Trump's chief fundraiser in Florida, is working the Turkish business with former Congressman Robert Wexler (D-FL) and Washington managing partner Sylvester Lukis

## **ACCESS INTELLIGENCE ACQUIRES VMA MEDIA**

Rockville, MD-based B2B media and marketing company Access Intelligence has acquired event-organizing agency VMA Media.

Terms of the deal were not publicly disclosed.

San Francisco-based VMA organizes events for the video marketing industry, including its flagship Video-nomics Summit, as well as roundtables.

VMA now becomes part of AI's marketing communications unit, joining the company's portfolio of marketing events.

VMA senior staff Nicole Healy, Chelsea Walker and Jeremy Walker join AI in light of the merger, according to a report by magazine-media news site Folio.

AI is the privately-held B2B media company that owns Folio, *PR News* and media and events company AdExchanger.

## **EX-BIDEN AIDE FOCUSES ON APERTURE**

Scott Mulhauser, a top aide to former vice president Joe Biden, has opened Aperture Strategies in DC to offer PA support to companies, coalitions, non-profits and trade associations.

As deputy chief of staff, Mulhauser traveled the country with Biden and handled messaging and communications during his campaign.

Most recently, Mulhauser was chief of staff at the US embassy in Beijing, leading US trade missions and working closely with American companies, media outlets, universities and public officials to explore opportunities and respond to crises in China and across Asia.

Mulhauser worked on Capitol Hill for Senators Frank Lautenberg (NJ) and John Breaux (LA). He also did a stint at the Export-Import Bank.



**Scott Mulhauser**

## **TROIKA MERGES WITH MISSION MEDIA**

Brand consultancy and creative shop Troika Media Group is merging with brand/experience marketing company Mission Media.

The new company will be called Troika/Mission Group. The aim of the partnership is to combine Troika's expertise in branding and digital work with Mission's credentials in experience, culture marketing and public relations. Based in New York, TMG will also have fully staffed offices in Los Angeles and London, with a total headcount of approximately 200 employees.

Mission founder Nicola Stephenson is joining the board of TMG and will become the group's president. Troika Media Group CEO Robert Machinist will now serve as TMG's CEO. Jon Forsyth, co-founder of UK agency Adam & Eve DDB, will work with Stephenson as a strategic partner, concentrating on growing TMG's business.



**Jon Forsyth**

Also coming on board as senior executives will be Mission CEO Kevin Dundas; Mary Connelly, former senior executive team member of US editions of *Vanity Fair*, *Vogue* and *Glamour*; and Jason Lundy, former head of global consumer marketing for Citibank.

A statement from the company said that TMG will focus on branding, digital marketing and performance media services.

## **NEWS OF PR FIRMS**

**Ketchum** has unveiled its Vital Health suite of services, designed to help companies in the health sector find the causes of challenges and develop communications solutions to them. The suite represents a collaboration between Ketchum Health specialists and the agency's communications specialty services, which include Ketchum Influencer Marketing, Ketchum 50+ and StoryWorks.health. Launching as part of the Vital Health suite is the Vital Diagnostic tool, which determines a brand's Vital Health Score: transparency, innovation, compliance, integration, social responsibility, patient-centricity, employer of choice, quality and industry leadership. Based on the Vital Health Score, Ketchum's health experts provide a roadmap to optimize a company's or brand's marketing and communications strategies.



**ICR** has established an executive advisory & corporate transformation practice through an exclusive partnership with Elm Street Advisors. The practice will be led by James Scully, head of Elm Street Advisors and former J.Crew and Avon CFO and COO. Services include: business strategy execution; CEO and CFO mentoring/support; transformational, operational, and organizational change; financial value creating initiatives; and finance effectiveness.

## COMMENTARY

### PAPA JOHN'S FOUNDER EXITS BOARD

John Schnatter isn't accustomed to the kind of press he's been getting over the last year or so. For more than a decade, most people knew Schnatter as "Papa John," the smiling everyman who was committed entirely to bringing you "better ingredients and better pizza." He appeared in several commercials with superstar athletes like Peyton Manning and others, helping make Papa John's, the pizza shop he started in a closet more than thirty years ago, a household name.



**Ronn Torossian** Over the past year, though, Schnatter has become a household name for an entirely different set of reasons.

Last year, Schnatter made headlines when he blamed his company's slumping sales on the NFL's anthem controversy. Competitors like Pizza Hut leapt on those comments, taking the opportunity to point out they were doing just fine. Schnatter was accused of making excuses and blame-shifting, and the chatter got so loud and consistent that he ended up stepping down as CEO.

Now, Schnatter has resigned as chairman of the pizza company he founded after admitting to using a racial slur during a conference call. According to multiple media reports, Schnatter was on a conference call discussing media training, when he mentioned that brand

representatives like Colonel Sanders never got in trouble for using the "n-word." Except, he used the epithet, not the socially acceptable replacement term.

Almost immediately, the marketing firm representing Papa John's severed ties with the company. Schnatter's ouster came soon after. In a statement to the media, Schnatter took responsibility for his comments, saying "regardless of the context, I apologize ..." for using "inappropriate and hurtful" language.

As the public began learning of the incident, it was subsequently announced that Schnatter would also resign from the board of trustees at the University of Louisville.

That's a lot of negative press in a relatively short amount of time, which leads us to the PR consequences of this kind of scenario. When your face is the brand of your company, there are a lot of direct consequences to personal statements and behavior. In an interesting point, Papa John's board admitted this was the case for Schnatter when it said company business "could be harmed if Schnatter's reputation were negatively impacted ..."

And that's the second edge of the double-edged sword of having a person very closely connected with a brand. What they do, say, and think is seen as what the brand stands for. At this point, it appears no further action is being taken to alter the Papa John's brand, but the company is obviously waiting to see how quickly this latest PR incident blows over.

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*Ronn Torossian is CEO of 5WPR*

### JACK O'DWYER'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO PR M&A

I met Jack O'Dwyer in 1987 when he launched his monthly magazine, O'Dwyer's PR Services Report. Jack approached me to write a monthly PR agency management column.

At the time, I owned a general NYC-based CPA firm. I had one client, Creative Systems Group, a new PR firm formed by three executives from Burson-Marsteller. Jack even offered to pay me for the column, but I turned him down because I saw PR value for my business in having a monthly full-page column, photo and byline. I did the column for nine years and passed the baton to Richard Goldstein, CPA, who has written the column ever since.

Jack was also the person who suggested that, as a financial person and columnist, I was in a perfect position to do financial benchmarking for the PR field. So, working together, we created the annual Gould+Partners' "Best Practices Benchmarking" survey, first published in 1988.

I'm proud to be known as the pioneer of agency

benchmarking in the PR industry. Few today know it was Jack's idea. Since then, I've also published an annual "Billing and Utilization Report" and annual "Net Revenue Growth Report." All three studies have always been free on request.

I also assisted Jack in refining his PR firm directory ranking application so that all agencies defined net revenues and profitability the same way and had their CPA firm sign off on the financial representations.

I thank Jack O'Dwyer for being instrumental in launching both my CPA firm and M&A advisory firm as a niche specialty in public relations. His coverage of the PR industry, directories and other products have helped to strengthen the reputation and acceptance of the PR profession. Happy 50th Anniversary.

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*Rick Gould is managing partner at Gould + Partners.*



**Rick Gould**