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NY LOOKS FOR PR FOR STATE FAIR

New York State has issued an RFP for PR, marketing and advertising services to promote the annual state fair, which runs for 18 days ending Labor Day, as well as to pitch the fairgrounds and facilities for other events throughout the year.



The fairgrounds, which are located near Syracuse, boast a 15-acre midway and two music venues. The fair typically hosts 600 vendors, of which 200 sell food. More than 1.3M people attended the fair last year.

The fairgrounds hosted about 300 non-fair events last year, including trade shows, equestrian competitions, and

corporate events. Those sessions attracted 1.1M people.

The desired communications partner will pitch the fair as “an exciting and affordable entertainment destination appealing to all demographics.” New York plans to issue a five-year contract with work beginning Jan. 1, 2021,

Carrie Lindemann or Joyce Willi will answer questions about the RFP at procurement.info@agriculture.ny.gov until July 10. Write “RFP0231 – Marketing, Advertising and Public Relations Services NYS Fair” in the subject line.

Responses to the RFP are due July 31. They go to: New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets; Fiscal Management; 10B Airline Drive; Albany, NY 12235; ATTN: Carrie Lindemann or Joyce Willi (RFP#0231)

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

NETFLIX NAMES NEW CMO

Netflix has hired marketing executive Bozoma Saint John for the role of chief marketing officer.



Bozoma Saint John

Saint John succeeds former CMO Jackie Lee-Joe, a BBC Studios and Skype alum who joined the streaming service in July 2019.

Saint John joins Netflix from talent representation and management giant Endeavor, where she served as CMO since 2018. She was previously Uber’s chief brand officer, and prior to that, was head of global consumer marketing at Apple Music.

Earlier in her career, Saint John was a senior marketing manager at Pepsi-Cola North America before being named

Pepsi’s head of music and entertainment marketing.

“Bozoma Saint John is an exceptional marketer who understands how to drive conversations around popular culture better than almost anyone,” Netflix chief content officer Ted Sarandos said in a statement.

BOEING SHOTS DOWN PR CHIEF

Boeing communications chief Niel Golightly has quit because of an employee complaint about an article that he wrote in 1987 as a Navy pilot questioning the ability of women to serve in combat.

CFO Greg Smith will assume the duties of Golightly, who was senior VP-communications, on an interim basis until a successor is found

Golightly joined Boeing Jan. 1 after serving as global chief communications officer at Fiat Chrysler At FCA, he was in charge of PR strategy, media relations and employee/executive communications. Earlier, he held communications jobs at Royal Dutch Shell and Ford Motor after serving as a fighter pilot in the US Navy.



Niel Golightly

In announcing Golightly’s departure, Boeing emphasized that it did not agree with his article written 33 years ago.

Golightly said his statement was one from a 29-year-old speaking about a debate that was live at that time.

“My argument was embarrassingly wrong and offensive. The dialogue that followed its publication 33 years ago quickly opened my eyes,” he said.

UAE, FLEISHMANHILLARD HEAD FOR MARS

FleishmanHillard is pitching the media about the space program of the United Arab Emirates, specifically its mission to Mars slated for this month.

Formed in 2014, the UAE Space Agency is responsible for developing a world-class space sector in the UAE.

The “Hope Probe,” with a 30-day “launch window” starting July 14, is designed to provide the most comprehensive study of the Martian atmosphere.

FH will provide outreach to US journalists and coordinate interviews/briefings with Mars mission spokespeople.

The firm’s objective is to generate positive reputational impact for the UAE by highlighting the country’s scientific advancements and commitments to technology and innovation.

When the Hope Probe enters the Martian atmosphere in 2021, the UAE will join the US, Russia, European Space Agency, China and India as explorers of the Red Planet.

FH staffers in London (Louise McHenry) and New York (Caitlin Teahan and Michael Steavenson) work the Mars mission. The Omnicom unit reports to Alexander McNabb, a relations & partnership consultant in the public diplomacy office at the UAE Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and the Future.



CHAMBERS TABS TOP LITIGATION PR FIRMS

Brunswick Group, Ripp Media, Sard Verbinnen & Co. and Trident DMG all placed in Band 1, the top tier of Chambers' latest rankings of PR firms involved in litigation support.

London-based Chambers evaluates the firms in its listings by such criteria as technical legal ability, client service, diligence, commercial vision, business understanding and value for money. It also ranks individual practitioners by the same criteria.



Ripp was singled out for the active role taken by senior staff in client relationships. "The person on the other end of the line will be the one to take the next step themselves," one commenter said. "They're a really strong team in

that regard, they all have that seniority."

Along with Ripp, Brunswick and Sard Verbinnen appeared in Band 1 last year as well.

Washington, DC-based Trident DMG moved up from Band 2, the second-highest category. The firm, which prepared Michael Cohen for his testimony before the US House Committee and managed the publicity around that testimony, was cited for being "innovative, insightful and relentless."

Finsbury, FTI Consulting, PRCG Haggerty and Sitrick and Company are this year's Band 2 firms. Band 3 consists of Edelman, Infinite Global and Kekst CNC; Band 4 includes KARV Communications, Levick, Reevemark and The Levinson Group; and the firms in Band 5 are Abernathy MacGregor Group, Hellerman Communications, Joele Frank Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher, Poston Communications and Rubinstein.

The Chambers website stresses that "being ranked in any band is a significant achievement."

The individual advisors who received Band 1 rankings were Ripp Media's Allan Ripp, Brunswick Group's Ellen Moskowitz and Trident DMG's Lanny Davis.

To see the complete list of ranked firms and individuals, click here.

ENDER TO LEAD COMMS AT CBS

CBS Entertainment Group has appointed Chris Ender, who has been with the company for 24 years, as its new head of communications.



Chris Ender

Ender has served as executive vice president, communications at CBS since 2013. His previous positions included SVP communications and VP media relations.

He succeeds Dana McClintock, who announced that he was leaving CBS in March. McClintock's departure followed the exit of CBS interim boss Joe Iannello, who was replaced by former vice chairman of NBCUniversal Con-

tent Studio George Cheeks. Iannello had assumed the job after the ouster of Les Moonves.

In a memo to CBS staff, Cheeks said that Ender "will be responsible for all public relations, media relations and corporate communications functions across our CBS divisions."

Ender will continue to be based in CBS' Studio City offices, while vice president, corporate communications Rick McCabe, will lead its New York team.

BLJ WORLDWIDE TAPS RUBENSTEIN'S ROSEN

BLJ Worldwide, a boutique strategic consultancy specializing in public diplomacy, communications, and global affairs, has named Amy Rosen president.

Rosen joins BLJ Worldwide from Rubenstein Public Relations, where she was a vice president, overseeing clients in both the corporate and consumer practice, as well as leading media relations and communications programs.

She was previously an executive vice president at Indra Public Relations, and has held senior roles at Hill + Knowlton Strategies, Edelman, Burson-Marsteller and Sard Verbinnen & Co. At BLJ

Worldwide, Rosen will be responsible for overseeing the New York, Washington, D.C. and Doha offices while also providing clients with strategic communications counsel, and developing and leading media relations programs.



Amy Rosen

HAGER SHARP HIRES HOWARD U'S BROWN

Hager Sharp has brought on Crystal Brown to lead its education, labor, and economy practice.

Brown joins Hager Sharp from Howard University, where she was VP and chief communications officer. As a member of the president's executive cabinet, she oversaw the university's strategic communications, marketing and branding, PR, executive communications, web and digital strategies, crisis communications, publications and internal communications.

Before Howard, she was chief communications officer at the University of Maryland. She was previously a senior VP at Widmeyer Communications and senior VP, marketing communications at e-Luminate Group.

"To have a leader of Crystal's caliber joining our team of top-notch communicators and advocates is a win for our clients and a win for us," said Hager Sharp president and CEO Jennifer Wayman.



Crystal Brown

PHILIPS LIGHTING'S KANTER MOVES TO ING

Melissa Kanter, who headed integrated communications for Philips Lighting in North America, has moved to ING Americas, financial services marketer.

Based in New York, she will head communications and brand experience for the unit of the Amsterdam-based giant that has 53K people operating in more than 40 countries.

At Philips, which is now called Signify, Kanter ran internal/external communications, as well as social responsibility and sustainability initiatives in the US, Canada and Latin America.

Earlier, she headed global communications for Liquidnet, institutional investment network.

Gerald Walker, CEO of ING in the Americas, said clients are looking for information about how ING's products help achieve their financial goals while supporting sustainability strategies.



Melissa Kanter

A SAFE WORKPLACE FOR LGBT EMPLOYEES

While the recent Supreme Court ruling that the LGBT community is legally protected from job discrimination is a huge win and a step in the right direction for our country, workplace discrimination still exists outside of the confines



Terry Preston

of the right to employment. In fact, despite these protections, there are a variety of ways in which the LGBT community faces discrimination at work, and they aren't always as cut and dried as hurtful language or insults.

At a previous employer, I was challenged with overcoming this discrimination directly. On a smaller, project-based account that only required the ongoing work of one individual, I was

assigned a senior director to oversee my work—but unlike my other accounts, would never be introduced to the client. Rather, I was informed that I was “not enough of a man’s man” to be featured on the account—and while the client had never expressed the slightest discomfort with the LGBT community, and my orientation had no impact on the work I produced, my superiors believed it was in the client’s best interest to keep my presence hidden. “When you work with men, you have to act like men,” my director said. “We just don’t think you have what it takes.”

This ideology soon seeped into other aspects of my job. Shortly after, I was routinely asked how I enjoyed living in the gay district (where I did not live), and upon receiving new office furniture, was told by the same individual that my department was lucky to have me because I was gay—“and all gay people are great with decor and interior design.”

These comments, paired with my behind-closed-doors client work, hurt. Despite my right to equal employment, when organizations do not actively speak up to ensure the equal and fair treatment of all employees, these comments are left unchecked and can have a lasting impact on the emotional well-being of staff.

In my case, I was left to continue my work on the account only to turn it in and have someone else take the credit. I was not allowed in meetings or on calls, and was never mentioned or introduced when the client visited our office. Before long, it became abundantly clear: My company was proud to deliver the work I produced, but was not proud of who produced it—only because of my orientation.

It wasn't until I left that organization that I learned that these experiences weren't par for the industry. When I joined Affect, I soon understood that it is the individual responsibility of an employer to create an environment in which all employees feel they are treated fairly and supported. It's vital that organizations show their support not only during Pride, but year-round. Guaranteeing an individual that they won't be fired isn't enough. Below are a few tips for continually celebrating Pride in the workplace.

Keep an Open Dialogue Around Social Issues: The impact of current events and political issues can have vastly different effects on individuals. As a result, it's vital that organizations keep an open dialogue around pertinent social issues to assure employees that they have support from their employers and coworkers, and to know that these individuals are listening to their needs and concerns. This idea of ongoing support can play a significant role in employee retention.

Celebrate Pride Month as an Office: To ensure a wel-

coming environment, offices need to celebrate Pride month as a group. Whether this is done through participation in a parade, a personal office celebration, or taking the opportunity to host an open dialogue about important social issues pertaining to the community, organizations should regularly encourage employees, regardless of their orientation, to celebrate and support the LGBT community.

Use Your Platform to Spread Support: Organizations must go beyond showing support just within the confines of their own office space. Rather, it's important that organizations use their platform—blogs, newsletters, social media platforms and more—to take a stand and openly share their support for the LGBT community.

Speak Your Pride Year-Round: The LGBT experience isn't confined to one month of the year – so your organization's open support shouldn't be, either. It's clear when an organization hops on the Pride bandwagon, and fair weather support does not equal a supportive work environment. Companies must make an effort to continually support the LGBT community, through daily actions.

Foster a Culture of Trust: Above all, take the time to listen to your employees and implement a corporate environment where individuals feel safe to speak up about their experiences. By expressing an interest and understanding of individual experiences, leadership is more likely to learn about potential issues between staff members. Eliminating these issues before they become larger problems will leave organizations in a better position to retain talent, encourage diversity and protect their corporate reputation.

Creating a space that is welcoming to all individuals takes consistent work, understanding and compassion from senior leadership. However, by implementing the best practices outlined above, companies can cultivate a work environment where all feel equally supported, respected and valued by their organization.

Terry Preston is a senior account executive at Affect.

REEVEMARK REPS CHESAPEAKE CHAPTER 11

Reevemark is handling the much-anticipated Chapter 11 filing of shale pioneer Chesapeake Energy, which collapsed due to a heavy debt load, weak oil prices and financial pressures from the COVID-19 pandemic.



As communications advisor, Reevemark worked with Chesapeake's PR team headed by Gordon Pennoyer to develop an internal communications cascade, provide external messaging and organize CEO town hall sessions. The goal is to pitch the reorganization as a means to achieve a more sustainable capital structure and capitalize on the company's diversified operating platform.

Under now-deceased founder Aubrey McClendon, Chesapeake ran up billions in debt and orchestrated sideshows, such as poaching the NBA Seattle SuperSonics and moving the squad to the company's hometown of Oklahoma City, where they play home games at Chesapeake Energy Arena.

Chesapeake CEO Doug Lawler has eliminated \$20B of leverage & financial commitments, but ultimately concluded that a financial restructuring was “necessary for the long-term success and value creation of the business.”

Reevemark's Chesapeake team includes Paul Caminiti, Hugh Burns, Delia Cannan, Molly Curry, Jacqueline Zuhse and Michael Anderson.

FTI FEEDS CHUCK E. CHEESE COMEBACK TIPS

FTI Consulting is handling the bankruptcy of the Chuck E. Cheese chain of pizza-based children's entertainment centers, which blames the COVID-19 pandemic for its financial woes.

CEC Entertainment, the parent company, said Chapter 11 protection would let it continue discussions with financial stakeholders and landlords about concessions needed to restructure its balance sheet to support re-opening of its restaurants.



As of June 24, 266 Chuck E. Cheese and Peter Piper Pizza arcades and restaurants have re-opened. At the end of Q1, there were 612 Chuck E. Cheese and 122 Peter Piper Pizza outlets that were company-owned and franchisees.

"The Chapter 11 process will allow us to strengthen our financial structure as we recover from what has undoubtedly been the most challenging event in our Company's history," David McKillips, CEC's CEO, said in a statement.

FTI Consulting's Angelo Thalassinou and Sarah Rosset handle the CEC business.

LA POLICE UNION STARTS LOBBYING SALVO

The Los Angeles Police Protective League, the union that represents Los Angeles Police Department officers, has retained public relations and public affairs consulting firm Vectis D.C. to handle police reform legislation, according to lobbying registration documents filed with Congress in June.

Los Angeles mayor Eric Garcetti in June announced a proposal to slash the LAPD's annual \$1.2 billion budget by up to \$150 million.

According to a June 25 *New York Times* analysis of police groups' influence in Congress, a half-dozen police organizations in the country have spent a combined \$2.9 million lobbying the federal government since 2017.

Vectis is the firm founded by former California Democratic congressman and House majority whip Tony Coelho, along with Ron Packard, a Republican who was chairman of the Appropriations Committee on Energy and Water.

The LAPPL account will be managed by senior partner and managing partner Don Polese, who was formerly Packard's district chief of staff.

BRUNSWICK, ICR WORK OUT MIRROR DEAL

Brunswick Group and ICR handle Lululemon Athletica's \$500M deal to buy home fitness company MIRROR.

Calvin McDonald, CEO of Lululemon, maker of athletic apparel, said the acquisition is part of the plan to position the company as the "experiential brand that ignites a community of people living the sweatlife."



Lululemon invested in MIRROR in 2019 and formed a content partnership, which had Lululemon "ambassadors" offering sweat and meditation classes to MIRROR customers.

MIRROR will operate as a standalone company within Lululemon and continue to be led by its founder/CEO Brynn Putnam, a one-time Lululemon ambassador.

Brunswick Group (Eleanor French) handles media for Lululemon, while ICR (Joseph Teklits and Caitlin Churchill) works the investment community.

NEWS OF FIRMS

The Core Strategic Group (formerly FSB Core Strategies) has added office locations and staff in Austin, TX and Washington, D.C. Senior vice president Ash Wright will head up operations in Austin, while vice president Chasen Bullock will lead CSG's Washington, D.C. office. Both join the new offices from existing independent practices. The Austin and D.C. operations will primarily support CSG companies providing public affairs and election campaign services, while also marketing the full range of CSG company offerings to clients in their regions.

The Initiative Group has been formed by a group of publicists who formerly worked for BWR Public Relations. Partners in the firm include Cindy Guagenti, Paulette Kam, Gary Mantoosh, Christina Papadopoulos, Lisa Perkins, Jamie Skinner and Alex Spieller. A statement from the new firm said that it would "honor the legacy of BWR while returning back to its roots as an innovative independent public relations company." The Initiative Group will also offer such digital services as social media risk assessment diagnostics and reputation management. BWR was merged into parent company Burson Cohn & Wolf in May, with the company citing the impact of COVID-19 as a factor in the decision. BWR co-founder Nanci Ryder passed away from ALS on June 11.

Waters Agency, a virtual technology public relations firm for B2B and B2C technology companies, has unveiled its new branding, global expansion and executive appointments. The rebranding from Waters Communications to Waters Agency includes a new logo and website, and is intended to highlight the firm's ability to deliver strategic communications campaigns that combine public relations with analyst relations, content creation, social media, IPOs, executive communications and influencer marketing. To support its expansion, the agency has also added new leaders including Lauren Curley, based out of the Boston HQ, to the newly created position of chief operating officer and Ryan Waters as senior vice president for EMEA, based out of London.



Woodruff, a Kansas City, MO-based marketing and communications firm, has expanded its digital capabilities to offer progressive web application (PWA). A PWA is essentially an application that works in any web browser but offers the functionality normally associated with native applications, such as a home screen icon, fast load times, access to content when offline, push notifications, GPS locations and other device hardware access. Woodruff digital director Jenny Jones says PWAs help companies "to ensure their digital properties are easy to access and as user-friendly as possible."

Global tech PR specialist network **the With Global Alliance** has brought on five new members: FirstCom Comunicação in Brazil, VinciPR in Russia, Frau Wenk in DACH (Germany, Austria and Switzerland), GinjaNinjaPR in South Africa and DOK30 in Benelux. With these new members on board, the With Global Alliance now represents clients in 26 countries. The alliance says that the new members give it deeper experience in tech verticals including medtech, telco and retail tech. The new members come on board as the alliance launches an initiative, The Global Gathering, for colleagues of every level in each market to connect with their peers.

WILTON MANORS, FL FLOATS RFP

The City of Wilton Manors, Florida, is seeking proposals from marketing and public relations firms that can provide consulting services in an effort to market the city's Wilton Drive as a tourism destination.



The Broward County city, which is part of the Fort Lauderdale area, wants an agency that can conceive and execute a PR campaign designed to bring more visitors to its main street corridor, Wilton Drive, the city's arts and entertainment district and home of many nightclubs, restaurants, bars and shops as well as a national destination for LGBT+ tourism.

Scope of work includes: creation of a marketing plan that positions Wilton Drive as a tourism destination; maintenance of the wiltondrive.org website and social media sites as well as creation of new content and increasing the digital reach and number of opt-ins and followers of those sites; and the creation of graphics and other products.

Terms of the contract call for one year, with the option to extend for three additional one-year terms.

Proposals are due by 2:30 p.m. (EST) on July 9 and should be sent to: Office of the City Clerk; 2020 Wilton Drive; Wilton Manors, FL 33305

Bidding agencies should write the following on all submitted envelopes:

Proposal For: Marketing and Public Relations Consulting Services for Wilton Drive Improvement District
RFP Number: RFP # 2020-04

To Be Opened: July 09, 2020 at 2:30 p.m

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

SOUTH CAROLINA AIRPORT FLIES WEB RFP

The Greenville-Spartanburg Airport District has issued an RFP for a complete design and ongoing maintenance services of its website. It wants a "turn-key website utilizing a non-proprietary content management system."

The purpose of the site is to "clearly communicate our values and unique air travel experience to prospective clients in an effective and economical manner," according to the RFP. Increased usability and a better customer experience are the key objectives.

The upstate South Carolina facility has positioned itself as offering easier parking, shorter lines and more competitive fares vis-à-vis airports in Charlotte, Charleston and Atlanta.

The Greenville-Spartanburg Airport offers 100 daily flights to 17 destinations on United, American

Airlines, Delta, Allegiant and Southwest planes. It enjoyed a record year in 2019 as passenger activity jumped 12.7 percent to 2.7M.

Responses to the RFP are due July 31. Send five copies and an electronic version of the proposal to: Jonathan Stone; Contracts Manager Greenville-Spartanburg Airport District; 2000 GSP Drive, Suite 1; Greer, SC 29651-9202; Attn: Request for Proposal for Website Design Services

Stone will field questions about the RPP at jstone@gspairport.com until July 10.

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



ON THE MOVE

Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions has hired **Ross Gillfillan** as VP of communications. Gillfillan comes to CRES from the Office of Management and Budget's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, where he served as a senior adviser. He was previously senior adviser at the White House Domestic Policy Council and director of strategic communications at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Gillfillan was also a founding partner at Torch Communications and VP at Feinstein Kean Healthcare.



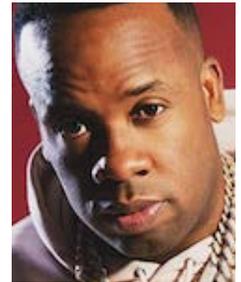
Ross Gillfillan

Investis Digital, a global digital communications company, has appointed **Jessica Dalziel** as vice president of strategic accounts in New York. Dalziel has been with the company since 2017, most recently serving as group account director. She was previously marketing and operations manager at Eirim, an Irish company that provides educational assessments. In her new post, she will continue to partner with clients at every stage of the process to refine their digital presence.

Veritone, a provider of artificial intelligence technology and solutions, has appointed **Locke Truong** as vice president of marketing for media & entertainment and monetization and **Ryan Bazler** as vice president of marketing for aiWARE. Truong comes to Veritone from cloud marketplace Ingram Micro, where he was head of global product marketing. Bazler was most recently director of product marketing at AI-based enterprise document capture provider Kofax.

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

Berk Communications has signed musician, entrepreneur and activist **Yo Gotti** to its roster of athletes and personalities. As Gotti's PR agency of record, Berk will work on his personal publicity, promoting his story to the public. In addition to releasing his own music, Gotti has collaborated with such artists as Kanye West, Nicki Minaj, Megan thee Stallion, J. Cole, Meek Mill and DJ Khaled. He is also the CEO of music label imprint CMG, the owner of Privé Restaurant in Memphis, an investor in esports organization FaZe Clan and a criminal justice reform advocate.



Yo Gotti

William Mills Agency has added Charlotte, N.C.-based digital banking platform **Finzly** to its client roster. The agency is tasked with promoting Finzly's innovation and digital transformation in the areas of payments, online account opening, digital banking and international treasury management.

Merlot Marketing has been named agency of record for real estate investment firm **GPR Ventures**. The agency will lead public relations efforts and provide marketing consultation in support of the firm's ventures and projects in the Greater Sacramento Region. Merlot Marketing will also publicize the company's projects through social media news releases, wire distributions and trend articles targeted to key Sacramento trade and business media. GPR Ventures' portfolio includes 59 industrial and office buildings, totaling over 1.8 million square feet, and an additional 26 acres of land.

COMMENTARY

Russia supplies talking points to its man in DC. Donald Trump on July 1 lashed out at reports that Russia's GRU intelligence service paid bounties to the Taliban for every American soldier they killed in Afghanistan.



He tweeted:

The Russia Bounty story is just another made up by Fake News tale that is told only to damage me and the Republican Party. The secret source probably does not even exist, just like the story itself. If the discredited @nytimes has a source, reveal it. Just another HOAX!

The president must be an avid follower of the twitter feed of Russia's DC embassy. On June 27, it posted the following statement from Russia's foreign ministry:

"We have paid attention to another piece of fake news, launched in the media space by the American intelligence community, about alleged involvement of Russia's military intelligence unit in contract killings of US troops in Afghanistan. That unpretentious fake clearly demonstrates low intellectual abilities of US intelligence propagandists who have to invent such nonsense instead of devising something more credible."

The statement went on to accuse the US intelligence community of involvement in Afghanistan drug trafficking, "making cash payments to militants for letting transport convoys pass through, kickbacks from contracts implementing various projects paid by American taxpayers."

Trump, who claims the US intelligence community is part of the Deep State cabal out to get him, hasn't gotten around to the drug trafficking attack. He hasn't sunk that low—yet.

Mad as hell... More than seven in ten (71 percent) of Americans are "angry" about the state of the country, while two-thirds are "fearful," according to Pew Research. That anger and fear are widespread among Democrats and Republicans.

Forty six percent of respondents are "hopeful" about the country, and only 17 percent are proud to be American.

The poll found that Joe Biden has a 10-point bulge (54 percent to 44 percent) over Trump in the election contest.

The respondents give Biden big advantages over Trump in several personality traits and characteristics. The former VP trumps Trump in the "even-tempered," a "better role model," "cares about ordinary people" and "honest" categories.

They are basically tied in the "courageous" department.

Trump scores his only win over Biden (56 percent to 40 percent) in the "energetic" department. That "Sleepy Joe" nickname must be sticking in the minds of voters.

Mark Zuckerberg is in a hard place as more than 150 major advertisers including Unilever, HP and Adidas are "pausing" their spending on Facebook to protest the platform's failure to combat false information and hate speech.

That's just the tip of the iceberg. The World Federation of Advertisers, which covers 90 percent of the world's advertising spending, says a third of the globe's biggest brands will

either suspend or are likely to suspend their spending on all social media sites. A WFA survey of its membership found another 41 percent undecided about joining the fun.

Stephan Loerke, CEO the WFA, said advertisers and their agencies are extremely concerned about the proliferation of illegal and harmful content on social media platforms.

The WFA believes the best way to drive change is for advertisers to work with platforms to change practices and create a safer and fairer online media environment for everyone. The ball is in your court, Mark.

Hong Kong, which is cracking down on freedom of the press and the right of its people to express themselves, has finally found a firm to handle its \$6.2M "relaunch" business.

It's the old gang from Bell Pottinger, the firm that imploded after running a racist 2017 PR campaign in South Africa.

Consulum, which also does work for Saudi Arabia, is to develop a communications strategy to "highlight Hong Kong's recovery and help rebuild confidence in Hong Kong as a place to invest, do business, work and live."

Good luck with that.

Hong Kong on June 30 published its new national security law, which puts it under the thumb of the Communist rulers in Beijing. The law was released on the 23rd anniversary of the British "handover" of the city to China.

Hong Kong must now beef up security and oversight of "schools, civic organizations, media, Internet and the use of these platforms to educate local residents on matters related to national security," according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

Consulum's contract also calls for crisis communications duties. It will have its hands full.

Happy days are here again: We're bankrupt. The COVID-19 pandemic has spurred a wave of corporate bankruptcies, which are running at their fastest pace since 2013.

Corporate PR people, though, are putting the best spin on things. After reading headlines of Chapter 11 press releases, one would think things are going well in the business world.

CEC Entertainment, the home of Chuck E. Cheese, patted itself on the back for going bust. Here's the headline: "CEC Entertainment Takes Decisive Action to Strengthen Balance Sheet, Best Position Company for Long-Term Success Through Voluntary Chapter 11 Process."

Management blamed "the financial strain resulting from prolonged, COVID-19 related venue closures" for CEC's downfall. But Team Chuck E. wasn't doing so hot before the virus. The company suffered a \$26.1M fourth-quarter 2019 loss on \$209.8M revenues. For the entire year, it lost \$28.9M on \$912.9M revenues.

Montreal-based Cirque Du Soleil opted for the sunny "Cirque Du Soleil Entertainment Group Announces Comprehensive Plan to Restart Business."

Unfortunately, that restart won't include the 3,480 employees who were furloughed in March.

Graciously, Cirque Du Soleil has now given the boot to those former workers so they can receive unemployment compensation.

—Kevin McCauley