



Jack O'Dwyer,  
Editor-in-Chief

# O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications

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## IDAHO REVIEWS GLOBAL TOURISM PACT

Idaho has kicked off a review of its global tourism marketing pact.

The state's Division of Tourism released an RFP for a full-service agency to cover PR, trade shows, local fulfillment of tourism materials, familiarity trips and other outreach for Germany, Switzerland, Austria, the UK, Benelux and Australia and New Zealand.



Proposals are due April 18.  
RFP: <http://odwpr.us/1YOYLkt>.

## MEGABUS PICKS UP CURRENT AS AOR

Current has been named agency of record for North American intercity travel service Megabus.

The account win follows an agency search that resulted in proposals from more than 50 firms.

Megabus offers affordable bus travel between more than 120 cities throughout the U.S. and Canada.



The company, which has served more than 50 million customers since it was founded in 2006, is perhaps best known for the \$1 bus fares it promotes on its website.

Megabus is a subsidiary of transportation holding company Coach USA.

As AOR, Current's communications efforts for Megabus will focus on increasing brand awareness and demand for the travel service through targeted media, as well as influencer and advocacy initiatives.

The Interpublic unit will handle the account through a partnership with sister Interpublic brand agency Jack Morton Worldwide.

The account will be run out of Current's Chicago office, under the guidance of executive vice president Amy Colton.

Chicago-headquartered Current, which holds additional offices in New York, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles and San Francisco, accounted for more than \$10 million in net fees in 2014, according to O'Dwyer's rankings of PR firms.

## JWT PR CHIEF FILES BOMBHELL LAWSUIT

Erin Johnson, chief communications officer of WPP's J. Walter Thompson, has filed a bombshell lawsuit against the agency and CEO Gustavo Martinez, alleging the chief executive made crude jokes about raping employees and used racial and ethnic slurs.

Johnson alleges Martinez made apparent jokes about raping her and other female staff members. He also criticized Jewish and African-American people, according to the suit first reported by the *New York Post*.

Johnson, an 11-year staffer of JWT, alleges the company reduced her pay and job responsibilities after she complained to supervisors.

In a statement, Martinez said he wanted to "assure our clients and my colleagues that there is absolutely no truth to these outlandish allegations and I am confident that this will be proven in court."

## FIRMS SUE TO BLOCK NY PR DISCLOSURE RULE

Five PR and public affairs firms in New York filed a federal suit to block an advisory opinion that render PR pros who contact editorial writers as lobbyists for disclosure purposes.

The firms -- BerlinRosen Public Affairs, Mercury, November Team, Anat Gerstein and Risa Heller Communications -- filed suit to block the state Joint Commission on Public Ethics from implementing the rule, which would require PR firms to disclose contact with opinion media. The advisory opinion, issued in January, requires disclosures including when a firm was hired, their fees and issues covered in its advocacy work.

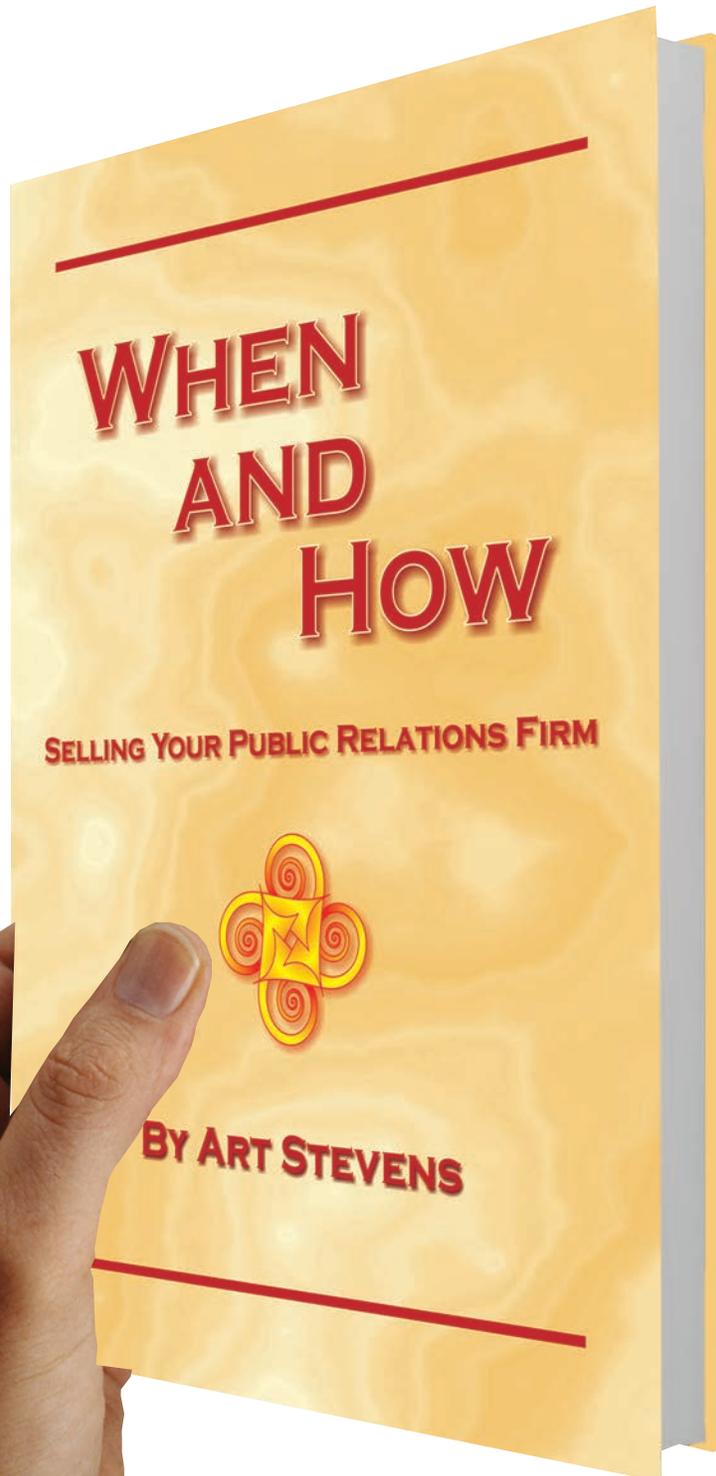
The opinion drew the ire of the PR sector, including trade groups like PRSA and the Council of PR Firms.

The lawsuit holds that the opinion is "unconstitutionally vague," and argues that conversations between PR consultants and editors are private conversations that are vital to share important information and views with media. "Yet under the opinion, those conversations will no longer be private, and therefore will no longer occur," said the suit. The committee said it will oppose the suit.

Renee Wilson, president of the PR Council, filed a third party brief in the case, arguing the scheme under the advisory opinion would deter PR firms from communicating with the press on legislative issues or would force them to outsource work to registered lobbyists.

"Alternatively, public relations firms may stop doing business in New York State," she contended. "As a result, the PR Council's members in New York State do not know whether and to what extent the Commission will apply the Lobbying Act to them, and will be effectively paralyzed."

# NOW AVAILABLE



**“Essential reading for anyone contemplating selling an agency - or buying one.”**

- Andy Hardie-Brown  
Co-Founder/Global  
COO Allison+Partners

**“An excellent primer for all PR agency owners who are considering selling their firms”**

- Steve Cody  
Founding partner  
and CEO Peppercomm

**“Art Stevens provides an invaluable resource for entrepreneurial PR pros and students who want to start their own business and build it for acquisition.”**

- Lynn Appelbaum,  
Department of Media &  
Communications Arts,  
City College of New York

Available @ [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

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Available free of charge to public relations agency CEOs.  
For a free copy E mail: [art@theartstevensgroup.com](mailto:art@theartstevensgroup.com)

## **FLORIDA CITRUS EYES INTERNATIONAL PR**

Florida's citrus promotion juggernaut is looking for PR firms to promote Florida oranges, grapefruit and juices in Canada and Europe.

The state's Department of Citrus issued RFPs for agencies capable of operating throughout France, Europe, the UK, and Belgium and the Netherlands with significant experience in consumer PR and fresh produce accounts.



The DOC plans to award four one-year contracts worth about 175,000 euros per year.

Edelman nabbed the DOC's PR account after a review last year, taking a significant portion of the business controlled for years by Golin.

Citrus is a \$10B industry for the Sunshine State, challenged in recent years by damaged crops and a consumer decline in consumption of orange juice.

Deadline for proposals is April 4.

RFPs: <http://odwpr.us/1MgPomq>.

## **PODESTA RAMPS UP PR**

Hastie Afkhami, senior VP for Social@Ogilvy, has joined Podesta Group PR as senior VP and director of digital as the Washington-based public affairs firm ramps up its digital and PR operations.

Podesta also tapped principal David Marin as managing principal of its PR unit, which the firm said has tripled in revenue over the past five years. Marin, who has pushed Podesta into analytics, has led campaigns for the golf industry (We Are Golf) and Cross-Fit, among others.

Afkhami started out at Booz Allen Hamilton and Emerson Human Capital Consulting before moving to Ogilvy in 2011.



**Afkhami**

## **COYNE PRESCRIBES PR FOR PACIRA**

Coyne PR has picked up Pacira Pharmaceuticals to tout its non-opioid pain control drug, Exparel.

The drug comes amid an epidemic of opioid painkiller abuse and deaths. Parsippany, N.J.-Pacira, which previously worked with Pure Communications, developed the drug, approved in 2011, to administer into a surgical site. It brought in Coyne to target healthcare professionals, patients and caregivers and position Exparel as an alternative or limit to opioid drugs.

Amber Sears, senior director of corporate comms. for Pacira, said the company has an opportunity to address the opioid issue and tapped Coyne to take the "story to the right audiences nationally."

Kelly Dencker heads Coyne's healthcare practice.

Pacira was the target of a warning letter from the FDA's Office of Prescription Drug Promotion in 2014 over Exparel, but the company sued the FDA, which rescinded the letter in a settlement.

## **ASC IN UNITED CONTINENTAL PROXY PUSH**

Two hedge funds have engaged outside PR counsel as they mount a proxy challenge to airline giant United Continental Holdings' board.

Altimeter Capital Management and PAR Capital Management, minority shareholders of UCH, are running a six-member slate of directors led by ex-Continental CEO Gordon Bethune.

The firm are working with New York-based financial PR firm ASC Advisors and proxy solicitation firm Okapi Partners in the fight.

ASC is led by Abernathy MacGregor vet Steve Bruce and former head of communications for Elliott Management Scott Tagliarino. Tagliarino and director Taylor Ingraham, formerly of Joele Frank, are advising the funds.

The funds said they tried to work with the United board but claimed the company "hurriedly" added three directors to its board on March 7 in expanding it to 15 directors.

Altimeter CEO Brad Gerstner said as long-term shareholders "we have been greatly disappointed with United's poor performance and bad decisions over the last several years."

United Continental, in a statement, said it is "deeply disappointed" in the proxy contest, claiming it offered a willingness to make "meaningful changes to our board" in talks with the hedge funds.

"PAR and Altimeter have unilaterally taken this hostile action with no concern that a proxy fight could distract the Company from executing on [CEO] Oscar [Munoz]'s strategic plan," the company said.

Munoz returned to work this month as CEO after a heart transplant.

## **VON WALTER PLAYS PR FOR TOYS 'R' US**

Amy von Walter, VP of communications and public affairs for Best Buy, is moving to Toys "R" Us to head communications for the toy and baby products retailer.

She takes over for Kathleen Waugh, who decamped after 10 years to head communications at fashion retail company Hudson's Bay Co., parent of Saks Fifth Avenue and Lord & Taylor.

Von Walter will take the title of executive VP, global communications and PR, starting March 14, reporting to chairman and CEO Dave Brandon.

She led corporate communications and brand PR for Best Buy for the past three years at the \$40B electronics retail giant.

She held in-house PR posts at Medtronic, HealthPartners & Regional Hospital and Target after a public sector career that included public affairs posts with the US Dept. of Homeland Security during its early years in the Bush administration and the Metropolitan Airports Commission.

Toys "R" Us, based in Wayne, N.J., has 865 stores in the US and 750 international locations.

Von Walter's oversight includes media relations, crisis management and brand reputation, as well as special events, team member engagement and philanthropic efforts.

**OZERNOY NAMED NEWS CORP. DEPUTY PR**

News Corporation has appointed Ilana Ozernoy the media giant's newest deputy head of communications.

The appointment was first reported today on *Politico's* New York Playbook.

Ozernoy was chief of staff to New York mayor Bill de Blasio's legal counsel, where she was responsible for managing political and strategic work, as well as supervising that unit's staff of attorneys and analysts. She previously served as communications director for the mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. Prior to joining the de Blasio administration, Ozernoy was a tenure-track professor at The Stony Brook University School of Journalism, and spearheaded the development of a center for international reporting at that school.

Ozernoy served as a journalist for more than a decade, and was a staff writer for *The Atlantic*, a staff foreign correspondent for *U.S. News & World Report* and a radio correspondent for Marketplace. As a war correspondent, she covered the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and also ran *U.S. News & World Report's* Baghdad bureau.

Ozernoy succeeds Daisy Dunlop, who served a three-year stint at the multinational media corporation's New York headquarters, arriving in 2013 before being appointed deputy communications head in Feb. 2015. Dunlop has since returned to her native UK, where she now takes the role of PR chief for News Corp's U.K. operations.



Ozernoy

**DIGITAL AD SPENDS TO OUTPACE TV IN 2017**

Next year, digital ad spends are expected to surpass television for the first time, according to a new quarterly ad spending forecast by digital market research company eMarketer.

eMarketer predicts that total digital ad spending in 2017 will account for more than \$77 billion, or 38.4 percent of total ad spending in the U.S. Ad spending on TV, meanwhile, will total about \$72 billion, or 35.8 percent of total media ad spending.

eMarketer now predicts TV to grow by 2.5 percent this year, a lower forecast than its previous 4.5 projection for the medium during 2015's third quarter.

eMarketer projects that TV ad spending will continue to grow by about only 2 percent a year, and predicts that TV will fall below one-third of total media ad spending by 2020.

In the digital realm, eMarketer now projects that total digital ad spending in the U.S. will increase by more than 15 percent this year.

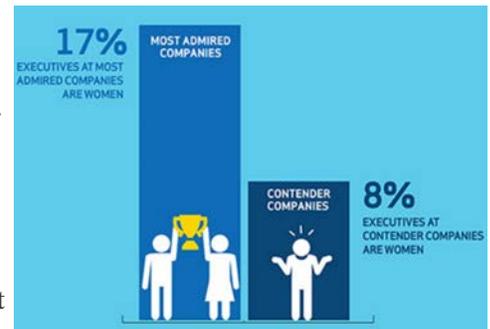
A sizeable portion of this is due to continued growth in mobile, which will surge 38 percent to account for nearly \$44 billion.

The Standard Media Index, the industry standard for ad spend data, recently reported that digital media ad spends in January climbed 16 percent compared to the same period the year prior, and now account for 27 percent of all ad spending.

**DATA LINKS GENDER DIVERSITY AND REP**

Companies admired by the public are more likely to boast greater gender diversity at the executive level, according to key insights revealed from March data released by Weber Shandwick.

Weber Shandwick's analysis, titled the Gender Forward Pioneer index, measured the percentage of women in senior management positions at Fortune global 500 companies.



Though women still comprise a small percentage of senior level leaders, the index found that companies recognized for having strong reputations are more likely to hold a higher proportion of female executives.

Using Fortune's "World's Most Admired Companies" rankings as a guide, the index found that companies with strong reputations boast more than twice as many women in their senior management ranks (17 percent) than companies with weaker reputations (8 percent), suggesting a correlation between a company's reputation and the number of women it staffs on the senior level.

Currently, however, the GFP index found that gender parity is virtually nonexistent among global corporations' senior executive ranks.

None of the world's 500 largest companies ranked by revenue have senior management teams boasting an equal representation of men and women, and nearly 40 percent (37.6 percent) hold exclusively male senior leadership teams. On average, only 10.9 percent of the senior executives behind the world's 500 most successful companies are women.

According to the GFP index, the number-one industry for women in senior management roles is general merchandisers, which holds an index of 33 percent. Some industries — diversified wholesalers, food and grocery wholesalers and shipping, temporary help and textiles companies — hold virtually no women on their senior management teams.

Overall, North America has the highest proportion of women in senior management roles, where nearly two out of 10 (19 percent) executives are women.

In total, only 13 of the Fortune global 500 companies have a female CEO. In creating the index, Weber Shandwick analyzed the senior management rosters at companies on both the Fortune global 500 and the "World's Most Admired Companies" lists, identifying more than 8,600 current executives at companies in 36 countries. Research was conducted between November and December.

Weber Shandwick is now launching an initiative titled Women Leaders Engagement, which will utilize experts across the agency's network of specialty practices for the purpose of raising the profiles of female executives.

**ANONYMOUS HIT ON CLIENT MAY BRING A SUIT**

By Mark Sableman

A PR firm whose client is being disparaged by anonymous emails may find that a lawsuit is the only way to stop the disparagement. Anonymous disparagers have been found out, stopped, and sanctioned through the civil justice system.

Consider this nightmare PR scenario: your client's customers, associates, and neighbors keep receiving messages that disparage the client in the worst way – accusing the client of fraud, deceit, and crimes, even child molestation. The messages are anonymous, or are signed simply, “A friend” or “A neighbor.” The messages keep coming, and people keep reading them. They may even be picked up in the media. Your client's reputation sinks and his blood pressure rises.

This isn't just a hypothetical. Hate message campaigns like this have happened repeatedly, and are likely to continue happening, given the easy anonymity of the Internet and the nastiness that a shield of anonymity often brings out in people.

There are solutions, which usually require cooperative work by lawyers and PR professionals. In one case I handled, two wrecking companies fiercely competed against one another. Suddenly, one company began seeing its business orders slow down, as it also began receiving critical inquiries from several local governments. The company knew its work was good, and its conduct ethical and legal. Luckily, several friends and officials came forward and showed the company letters they had been getting, disparaging the company and accusing it of dishonest or unlawful practices. None bore a signature or address of the sender—just something like “A Neighbor” or “A Concerned Citizen.”

**PR and Legal Problem**

It was a dual PR and legal problem, which both professions had to work together to solve. Our first step was finding out who did it, and getting sufficient evidence to support a lawsuit. You can't bring suit against “A Concerned Citizen,” or “A Neighbor,” or the other false names used by the sender, and you can't sue someone on mere speculation. We suspected the competitor, but had to tie him to the messages with evidence.

There are different ways to identify the origin of messages. Physical evidence can provide clues. In the pending case in which Marvel Entertainment CEO Isaac Perlmutter is accused of sending out disparaging messages about a neighbor in his gated Palm Beach community, the neighbor claims to have identified DNA of Perlmutter's wife on one of the envelopes. In some cases, document examination experts can make connections through similarities in handwriting or other physical elements of the document.

In our case, we made the connection from the content and style of the messages. We retained two academics, both skilled in forensic linguistics, but with strikingly different styles and techniques, to compare the writing and typing styles of the disparaging messages to that of known writings of the suspected competitor. Both experts opined that the competitor wrote the messages, and we filed suit based on that evidence. After some initial

protests, denials, and threats, the competitor eventually admitted authorship.

Once the sender was identified, he was in deep trouble. Our client's PR firm let local media know about the case. On the legal front, the sender couldn't effectively defend the messages, since they were clearly false in one key respect—their signature. Any jury would know that someone who lies about his identity is probably lying about everything else as well.

That case settled, and working with our PR colleagues we made sure the settlement wasn't confidential. A few weeks later, an account of the case, including the losing party's payment of \$760,000 for what a local judge had called the “hate mail case,” made the front page of the *Wall Street Journal*.

Few PR professionals want to take their work to court. But when your clients are being battered in the dark by an elusive attacker who disingenuously calls himself “A friend,” a legal team and a judge may be your client's real best friends.

*Mark Sableman is a media, Internet and intellectual property law partner with Thompson Coburn LLP.*

**LITIGATION PUBLIC RELATIONS**

By Fraser Seitel

In court cases, plaintiffs and defendants are often scrupulously warned by judges not to influence the ultimate verdict outside the courtroom, especially by seeking positive publicity.

Fat chance.

In the 21st century, with social media, cable news, talk radio and traditional media incessantly jabbering about possible trials, upcoming trials and current trials, there is little guarantee that any jury — or a judge, for that matter — can be objective about any high-profile legal case.

That's why litigation public relations has become so important.

Litigation public relations can best be defined as managing the media process during the course of any legal dispute to affect the outcome or its impact on the client's overall reputation.

Here's how it works.

Say you've been retained by a character as despicable as one can imagine, like Justin Ross Harris, the “father” accused two years ago of intentionally leaving his 22-month-old son Cooper for seven hours to die in a hot Atlanta S.U.V.

Last week, with his murder trial to begin in April, Harris was also charged with sexual exploitation of underage girls.

And that's when Harris' attorney, Maddox Kilgore, initiated his litigation public relations strategy to plead his client's case in public and influence the court's ultimate decision.

Said attorney Kilgore, “It is clear that these allegations are wholly unrelated to the accidental death of Cooper Harris,” adding that the curious timing of the new charges “signals the state's desperation to convict Ross of the worst mistake any of us as parents could make.”

(Continued on page 5)

## NEWS OF PR FIRMS

### R&C EXPANDS NYC LIFESTYLE DIVISION

Rogers & Cowan has expanded its New York lifestyle entertainment division with a recent acquisition of talent from the New York office of fashion, beauty and hospitality events and marketing company Entertainment Fusion Group.

Danielle Thur, formerly head of EFG's New York operations, has been appointed R&C VP. Prior to joining EFG, she was founder and principal of Whisper PR Inc., which focused on fashion, accessories, beauty and lifestyle.

Joining Thur are her former EFG staff members Jasmine Desai, who has been named account director; Melissa Howard and Lauren Weissman, who have been appointed senior account executives; and Elizabeth Emery, who will serve as assistant account executive. The entire staff will relocate to R&C's New York office.

EFG's east coast roster of clients will also be folded into Rogers & Cowan's lifestyle entertainment portfolio.

R&C CEO Mark Owens said the move will solidify his firm "as true leaders in the PR, social and marketing space for luxury brands needing assistance making them relevant and connecting them to their audiences/fans."

### LITIGATION PR (Cont'd from page 4)

The lawyer's statements, of course, were designed to begin to plant a seed of doubt that his reprehensible client may simply have been victimized by an accidental case of forgetfulness.

Smart 21st century lawyers, like Kilgore, understand that with social media, the Internet and cable TV being so pervasive, they have little choice but to engage in litigation public relations to provide their clients with every advantage.

Perhaps the most notable proponent of litigation public relations is none other than Los Angeles celebrity attorney Robert Shapiro, who hasn't suffered nearly as much from representing O.J. Simpson as he has from John Travolta's creepy impersonation of him representing O.J. Simpson.

Shapiro, part of the "dream team" that sprung Simpson from an almost-certain guilty verdict in his 1995 front-page murder trial, has said the following about the importance of public relations to the outcome of a trial.

"The importance and power of the media cannot be overemphasized. The first impression the public gets is usually the one that is most important."

"No comment" is the least appropriate and least productive response. Coming at the end of a lengthy story, it adds absolutely nothing and leaves the public with a negative impression."

"The lawyer's role as spokesperson may be equally as important to the outcome of a case as the skills of an advocate in the courtroom."

Counselor Shapiro added that few lawyers possess the "education, experience, or training" required of a competent spokesperson. And that's why every high profile legal case needs a public relations professional to help orchestrate effective litigation public relations.

*Fraser P. Seitel has been a communications consultant, author and teacher for 40 years.*

## NEW ACCOUNTS

### New York Area

**5W PR**, New York/Borghese, Italian skin care and color cosmetics brand, for launch of new masking products under the Gango Essenziali collection banner. 5W will target consumers via media relations in print, broadcast, digital and business outlets, as well as celebrity spokesperson activation.



**Red PR**, New York/Good Dye Young, DIY hair dye line, for PR. GDY is a new brand founded by Hayley Williams, singer of Nashville-based rock band Paramore, and available in five colors. It will be available for pre-order on April 15, and officially launches in May. Red PR will pitch targeted media, setting up interviews and media exclusives with Williams surrounding the brand's launch. The firm will also handle social media duties for the brand.

**Steinreich Communications**, Fort Lee, N.J./Kore Tulum Retreat and Spa Resort, Yacatan Peninsula resort, for PR.

### East

**Sanitas International**, Washington, D.C./Minou Tavarez Mirabal, independent presidential candidate in the Dominican Republic for 2016. Tavárez Mirabal, who previously served as DR deputy foreign minister, was elected to parliament, for which she has served since, and is also the committee president of non-profit international network Parliamentarians for Global Action. She is the daughter of revolutionaries Manolo Tavarez Justo and Minerva Mirabal. She is currently the leading candidate to succeed the Dominican Republic's current president, Danilo Medina. Sanitas will provide political strategy for Tavárez Mirabal and her campaign and will also work to secure principal media interviews in international media outlets.

**Covington & Burling**, Washington, D.C./H&R Block, Kansas City, MO-based tax preparation giant, for Capitol Hill lobbying help related to taxation and internal revenue code issues, including support for the establishment of minimum federal standards for paid tax preparers.

**Brandware**, Atlanta/EVOX Images, virtual reality products and solutions, as AOR for PR.

### Southwest

**Crosswind Media & PR**, Austin/Massachusetts Institute of Technology student group Hacking Medicine, to promote the organization's "HackMed Health House," a three-day workshop focused on the intersection of chronic illness and technology solutions to take place during the 23rd Annual SXSW Interactive Festival in Austin. Crosswind collaborated with HCB Health, AbelsonTaylor, JUICE Pharma Worldwide and Otsuka Pharmaceutical in co-sponsoring the event and promoting Hacking Medicine's efforts to bring digital healthcare startups, patients and venture capital groups together.

**NEWS OF SERVICES****FORMER CNN ANCHOR TO HOST MEDIA TOURS**

Journalist Bobbie Battista, former CNN anchor and moderator of that channel's long-running talk show "Talkback Live," has entered into an exclusive contract with broadcast and digital media services company KEF Media, where she will now host co-op media tours.

Titled "Bobbie Battista's Consumer Corner," each of the new KEF-produced segments will feature two brands and will reach a minimum audience of 12 million. Atlanta-based KEF will produce the co-op spots at locations that reflect the agency partners as well as the features' intended theme.

**Battista**

KEF president and CEO Kevin Foley told O'Dwyer's that his company, which has not produced any co-op tours in two years, returned to the format due to renewed client demand, after studying competitors' current offerings, in which they noticed flaws. "We produced co-ops for a few years, but I felt the way they were being done did not always serve our agency clients' best interests. We developed alternative service offerings, which we still feature," Foley said. "But many clients continued to ask for co-ops so we created 'Bobbie Battista's Consumer Corner' to answer that need. We think it's a lot smarter, credible and more professional."

Foley said the company will produce one or two co-op media tours a month, depending on agency demand.

KEF Media Solutions Director Alex Hinojosa, who will serve as Bobbie Battista's Consumer Corner executive producer, called Battista "an experienced news pro who can deliver client messages professionally and with enormous credibility."

**PR COUNCIL PICKS GHAZAI AS VP**

Industry trade association the PR Council has named Sara Ghazai vice president and communications director.

Ghazai arrives at the Council from academic and medical industry consortium the New York Genome Center, which she joined in 2014 and most recently served as communications and events director, leading the center's marketing, branding, communications and digital media efforts. She previously worked at MSLGroup North America, where she was senior account executive and was charged with developing PR and marketing plans, as well as managing events and sponsorships. Prior to that she was an account executive at Lou Hammond & Associates, and also fielded corporate communications for global healthcare company Novartis.

At the Council, she will oversee editorial and media output, including the Council's blog and website. Additionally, she'll lead the direction of the Council's advocacy outreach and will handle event management and research. Council President Renee Wilson said Ghazai's experience with "advanced communications and marketing campaigns" in-house and on the agency side, will serve membership well.

**PEOPLE****Joined**

**Shirley Powell**, chief communications officer for The Weather Company, to Cox Automotive, the tech-savvy auto industry company behind Autotrader and Kelley Blue Book, as VP of comms. and community relations. TWC, the parent to Weather.com, was acquired by IBM in October. Powell led comms. and social media for TWC's consumer and B2B brands. She earlier held corporate PR posts at Turner Broadcasting, NBC Entertainment, Disney/ABC and Nickelodeon. Cox Auto, part of the \$18B media giant Cox Enterprises, counts other properties like Manheim, Dealertrack, Xtime, and vAuto, among others. Powell leads day-to-day communications for the company, including PR, executive comms. and crisis management.

**Sutton**

**Cynthia McFarlane**, former Saatchi & Saatchi Latin America president, to Newlink Group, Miami, as chief strategy officer and managing partner. She joined S&S in 1993 as an A/D in Puerto Rico and, since 2008, led she operations for Latin America there and for Hispanic advertising agency Conill, where she was responsible for 16 agencies in 15 markets. She left Saatchi & Saatchi in October.

**Jessica Kleiman**, former EVP of communications for Sandow, to Instagram, as consumer communications director, starting March 28 and based in New York. Kleiman was VP of PR for Hearst Magazines and earlier directed PR for The Knot Inc.

**Mike Moschella**, VP of organizing, NationBuilder, to DKC, New York, as VP of innovation. At DKC, he is charged with bringing the tech, data and organizing capabilities he built at TOC into DKC's digital unit, DKC Connect. He was previously in politics and served as assistant to the senior VP for comms. at think tank NDN.

**Promoted**

**Jeff Raymond** and **Lindsay Galin** to co-manage Rogers & Cowan's talent division, newly created positions at the Los Angeles-based firm. Galin, senior VP, entertainment, joined R&C in 2011 after running her own talent publicity firm, Lantern PR, which she launched in 2010. Prior, she was an associate PR manager in the publicity department at Hearst Magazines, which she joined in 2006. Raymond, senior VP, entertainment, joined the firm in 2007, also after running his own PR shop, PYR PR, since 2002.

**Raymond, Galin**

**Matt Sutton** to The Rosen Group, New York, as a senior A/E. Sutton, who joined the agency in January 2015 as an A/E, on Capitol Hill, where he served as comms. director to Rep. Beto O'Rourke (D-TX) and later led business development initiatives at APCO Worldwide. At Rosen Group, she has repped the Brewers Association, the American Hotel & Lodging Association, Kiplinger's Personal Finance, and Focus Products Group.

## **NAT'L WATERSHED COALITION GETS DC REP**

Washington D.C.-based environment and sustainability consultancy 9b Group, Inc. has been retained by the National Watershed Coalition for Capitol Hill representation on lobbying issues pertaining to agriculture.

Pawnee, OK-based National Watershed Coalition is a nonprofit comprised of national, state and regional entities that advocates the use of watersheds as a planning and implementation measure for managing natural resources issues. The coalition was formed in 1989.

The NWC has retained 9b to advocate and educate members of Congress on the PL-566 Watershed Program, which was created under the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act and offers financial and technical assistance for flood control, water conservation and watershed protection initiatives. The program currently involves more than 500 active projects.

The account will be managed by 9b Group co-founder and partner Pelham Straughn, who was formerly policy director for the House Committee on Agriculture under Chairman Frank Lucas (R-OK).

9b Group, which is incorporated as a benefit corporation, is currently the only such Washington, D.C. lobbying and consulting entity focused on conservation issues. The consultancy has also represented The American Farmland Trust.

## **METS TO HONOR PR STAFFER FORDE**

Shannon Forde, senior director of media relations for the New York Mets and a respected PR executive around Major League Baseball, died March 4 after a battle with breast cancer. She was 44.

Mets COO Jeff Wilpon called her a "very unique person" and a kind wife and mother of two. "Citi Field won't be the same without her contagious smile and genuine personality," he said.

Added Mets star David Wright: "It's not often that you see somebody that's behind the scenes like that make an impact on players, fans, the community. She certainly did that."

Forde spent nearly 22 years on the Mets' PR staff, joining out of St. John's University in 1994.

Forde was diagnosed with stage IV breast cancer in 2012. Prompted by Forde's diagnosis and cancer battles by Melody Yount of the Cardinals and Monica Barlow of the Orioles, PR staffers from around MLB organized a Stand Up to Cancer auction in 2013.

The Mets are planning a memorial service at Citi Field March 9.

## **AZ WANTS TOURISM FIRM TO SPEAK GERMAN**

Arizona's Office of Tourism is collecting agency proposals to guide PR in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

The state wants to boost visitation from the German-speaking European countries via media relations. It has had an agency in the region since the mid-1990s. Kaus Media Services is the incumbent.

The RFP, released March 4, carries a March 18 deadline.

View the RFP at [procure.az.gov](http://procure.az.gov).

## **A+P ACQUIRES TOKYO'S FOCUSED COMMS.**

On the heels of launching its integrated content division All Told in Asia, global communications firm Allison+Partners continues to widen its foothold in that region, officially establishing its Japan entry with the acquisition of Tokyo-based Focused Communications.

Financial terms of the acquisition were not made public.

Focused Communications specializes in technology, government, healthcare, public affairs, consumer marketing and corporate communications, and primarily serves B2B and B2C clients in technology, healthcare, consumer goods and government sectors.

The Tokyo-based agency, which staffs 15 and was founded in 2000 by president and CEO Akemi Ichise and chairman Takashi Miura, had previously collaborated with Allison+Partners on a variety of client assignments.

Focused's roster of clients and employees will be integrated under the Allison+Partners banner. Ichise and Miura will remain at the agency and will continue to lead the office.

Ichise was previously director of the communications services group at PRAP Japan Inc., which she joined in 1997 and led that company's IT, healthcare and food practice groups.

Prior to that she was a VP at Weber Shandwick Japan (then Shandwick Japan), which she joined in 1983 and led the agency's IT team.

She presently serves as board director at The Public Relations Society of Japan.

Miura previously led the communications services department at PRAP Japan, where he served as executive director.

He was also executive VP of Weber Shandwick Worldwide imprint IPR-Shandwick, where he provided counsel for brands in the automobile, chemical, financial and healthcare industries.



**Ichise**



**Miura**

### **Asia Focus for Allison**

Allison+Partners has displayed a marked interest in the Asia market in recent years.

The agency in 2014 acquired China partner Century PR, establishing offices in Beijing and Shanghai, and set Singapore and Hong Kong outposts in the two years following.

The agency claims its revenue in that region more than doubled in 2015 and now represents 10 percent of Allison+Partners' overall revenue.

"Japan is the world's third largest economy and a core market for many of our clients," Allison+Partners co-founder and global COO Andy Hardie-Brown told O'Dwyer's.

"The chemistry and culture of Focused dovetail with our own business philosophy and cultural touch points. With the transition process now complete, Japanese, regional and global clients will benefit from the increased resources available across Allison+Partners' worldwide network of offices," added Hardie-Brown.

**Parents of an unnamed 12-year-old student** at the Fay School, Southborough, Mass., have claimed in a Federal lawsuit filed Jan. 19 that the school's strong Wi-Fi signals caused their son physical harm. They seek \$250,000 in damages.

The school has ignored measurements, other data, and medical and other reports supporting the need to make an accommodation, according to the complaint which was filed anonymously to protect the minor child, called "G."

The suit was filed with the Worcester division of the U.S. District Court for Mass. by John J.E. Markham II of Markham & Read, Boston. Counsel for the school is Schwartz Hannum, Andover.

Fay said it complies with federal and state guidelines for exposure to ambient radio frequency energy (RFE) and that measurements by Isotope, LLC, completed in January 2015, confirm that.

#### **Study Found Legal Emissions**

Isotope found that RFE emissions on the site were substantially below the applicable federal limits "by a wide margin," said a statement Aug. 25, 2015 by school head Rob Gustavson.

They were "substantially less than one ten-thousandth of the applicable safety limits federal and state," he said.

The suit says that under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Fay should be working towards a "reasonable accommodation" to the EHS of "G."

It says G's parents have offered to work with the school, even at their own expense, to examine the classroom Wi-Fi system and to attempt installation of a reasonable alternative to their "industrial capacity Wi-Fi" when G is in the classroom.

The parents say Fay has refused to do anything meaningful and has retaliated by barring G from the campus for any reason even for activities that do not expose him to Wi-Fi.

This includes sports which G "loves, and which allowed social time he missed with his peers." Fay has also blocked any contact between parents and teachers on lessons being taught and is not allowing recording of class lessons or Skyping of classes at parents' expense, the complaint says.

G was experiencing and describing symptoms of EHS before he knew that Wi-Fi could be the cause, the action says.

"Data collected and analyzed showed 'startling connection' that his symptoms coincided with Wi-Fi exposure peaks.

The mother of G provided research papers and news stories on EHS for those interested in the subject.

Tuition at the co-ed school starts at \$13,500 for pre-kindergarten (half-day) and ranges up to \$38,290 for grade nine. Tuition/board in grades 7-8 is \$61,660 yearly.

#### **Westhampton Library Cites Fed Rules**

The Westhampton, N.Y., library, which is also under pressure from residents to limit exposure of patrons to

RFE from Wi-Fi and computers, has noted that it complies with federal guidelines. It has refused to make any changes in its current Wi-Fi setup.

Residents in Fullerton and Berkeley Calif., Montgomery County, Md., and Ashland, Mass., are pressuring schools and libraries to limit or eliminate use of Wi-Fi.

Wi-Fi health advocates list 28 medical groups, schools, libraries and government bodies that are fighting the spread of microwave radiation which they consider dangerous, particularly to children.

The Interdisciplinary Society for Environmental Medicine, 3,000 physicians in Germany, urges banning cellphone use by children and banning cellphones and cordless phones in preschools, schools, hospitals, nursing homes, event halls, public buildings and vehicles.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health says the Federal Communications Commission's standard is inadequate because it "is based on only one dominant mechanism—adverse health effects caused by body heating." FCC also "does not address the issue of long-term, chronic exposure to RF fields."

#### **WHB Is Last Holdout vs. Eruv**

The March 7 decision of Quogue, N.Y., to allow markers on 48 utility poles that denote an Orthodox Jewish community leaves Westhampton Beach as the only Hampton town still resisting such a designation.

Rob Rubio and Brian Tymann were elected to the WHB board last June on a platform that rejected signing any agreement that would allow such a boundary.

Yehuda Buchweitz, partner at Weil, Gotshal & Manges, the pro bono legal counsel of the East End Eruv Assn., which is pursuing lawsuits seeking to establish eruvim, told the March 10 *Southampton Press* that the litigation with WHV is continuing and that there have been no advancements since last year. He said Quogue was making the "right move" in agreeing to the eruv because to do otherwise could cost the town millions of dollars.

#### **Debt-Laden CSC Paid Execs of Debt-free MSG**

Executives of Cablevision Systems Corp., which may be sold to Altice for \$17.7 billion, also worked for Madison Square Garden Co. which was spun off from CSC in 2010. MSG has no debt while CSC's net debt is \$7.43 billion, giving CSC \$5.04B negative net equity. CSC revenues are \$6.51B while MSG's are \$1.56B.

Altice says that if it is allowed to buy CSC it will cut what appears to be executive costs. It told a security analyst meeting that more than 300 executives of CSC earn more than \$300K each. Initial target is to cut \$900M in costs. Key executive pay of CSC execs in 2014 included \$23,702,403 for James Dolan, CEO; \$15,347,097 for his father, Charles Dolan, chairman; \$14,032,940 for Gregg Selbert, vice chairman; \$7,009,589 for Brian Sweeney, president and CFO, and \$7,391,705 for Kristin Dolan, COO, daughter of Charles Dolan.

James Dolan, executive chairman of MSG Co., was paid \$3.09M in 2014. Five other Dolan children and three other relatives were on the payroll.

— Jack O'Dwyer