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## **MARYLAND NEEDS PR FOR ANTI-SMOKING PUSH**

Maryland's Dept. of Health plans to hire a communications firm to develop a statewide anti-smoking campaign.

About 7,000 Maryland adults die each year from tobacco-related illnesses.



One-in-five former smokers are diagnosed with cancer each year, which is 56 percent higher than Marylanders who never smoked.

About 725K adults in the Old Line State use tobacco products, including electronic smoking devices.

The selected firm will deliver "evidence-based, culturally and linguistically appropriate, high-impact and sustained messages," according to the RFP.

The goal is to "educate the public, decision-makers, and other stakeholders about the dangers of tobacco use, exposure to secondhand smoke, youth initiation and emerging products, availability of cessation support services and the tobacco industry's advertising and promotion efforts."

The Department has ruled out working with any communications firm that has represented tobacco interests since 1998.

Proposals are due by Dec. 5 and should be sent electronically to the eMaryland Marketplace Advantage (eMMA) procurement system.

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

## **TIKTOK HIRES NBA CMO JHAVERI**

TikTok has named former NBA chief marketing officer Kate Jhaveri as global head of marketing. The position had been vacant since former Hulu VP, brand and culture marketing Nick Tran left the position in January.



**Kate Jhaveri**

Jhaveri has also served as CMO at Twitch (Amazon's videogame live-streaming platform), head of consumer marketing at Twitter, director of brand and mobile marketing at Facebook and director of consumer and online marketing at Microsoft.

In her new post, she will oversee TikTok's consumer and brand marketing, as well as heading up the platform's marketing to content creators. She will work closely with Sofia Hernandez, TikTok's global head of business marketing.

## **SAMSUNG LANDS ON MERCURY**

Samsung Electronics has hired Mercury Public Affairs for government relations and advocacy services.

The Omnicom unit also will advise the South Korea-based giant on how to promote its commercial interests via international events.

The one-year contract, which went into effect on Nov. 1, is worth \$40K a month.

Samsung, which produces a line of semiconductors in the People's Republic of China, got caught up in the Biden administration's sanctions slapped on China's semiconductor industry. It received a one-year waiver on sanctions.



Mercury is representing Samsung on a non-exclusive basis. It may perform similar services for other clients that are competitors to Samsung, according to the contract between the two parties.

The PR firm, though, is precluded from using Samsung's name, logo, trademark or service marks on any advertising or publicity releases without permission from the client.

Mercury has former Connecticut Congressman Toby Moffett handling the Samsung business.

## **WPP CFO ROGERS EXITS**

John Rogers, CFO at WPP, is exiting the company after nearly three years to pursue broader management duties elsewhere.

Joanne Wilson, CFO at Britvic soft drinks company, will take over for Rogers after the closing of the 2022 books.



**Joanne Wilson**

He will be available to WPP through the end of next year to ensure a smooth transition to Wilson when she assumes the CFO post during the first half of 2023.

Rogers helped guide WPP through both CEO Mark Read's creative transformation program in the aftermath of Martin Sorrell and the pandemic.

Read thanked Rogers for his leadership and contributions to WPP, which included an overall revamping of its financial function.

Rogers said he's leaving WPP at a time when it is well-positioned for success and enters its next round of growth.

Wilson began her career at KMPG and held various jobs at Tesco, including CFO at its data science unit.

## **OLD MEDIA TOPS NEW FOR PROF SERVICES**

While social platforms are making some inroads as digital information sources for clients of professional services firms, traditional media and other editorial-filtered options remain the top choices for both C-suite members and in-house counsel at those companies, according to a new study from [Greentarget](#) and Zeughausen Group.

The “[2022 State of Digital and Content Marketing](#)” report finds that eight out of nine (80 percent) of C-suite members think publications and websites covering their profession are either “very valuable” or “somewhat valuable” to them as online information sources. Traditional media (sources such as the *Wall Street Journal*) came in right behind that at 79 percent, and trade publications covering industry news were cited by 69 percent.

Traditional media was tops for in-house counsel (78 percent), with trade publications and other publications or websites covering their profession both coming in at 68 percent.

The top social media platform was LinkedIn, which was called a valuable source by 64 percent of C-suite members and 57 percent of in-house counsel. Twitter was named by 44 percent of those from the C-suite and 33 percent of in-house counsel, with Facebook coming in last with 41 percent of C-suite members and 23 percent of in-house counsel.

When it comes to the top pick for CMOs looking to market their firms, LinkedIn beat out all competitors, with 81 percent deeming it “very valuable” and the other 19 percent labeling it as “somewhat valuable.”

Traditional media snagged a “very valuable” ranking from 62 percent of the CMOs surveyed, but other social media platforms lagged far behind LinkedIn. Twitter was called “very valuable” by just 13 percent, with Instagram getting only seven percent and Facebook racking up no “very valuable” scores at all.

The highest number of CMOs (81 percent) also indicated that they gave LinkedIn a “high” priority when allocating resources for content distribution, topping traditional media (67 percent). Once again, Twitter, Instagram (both 13 percent) and Facebook (three percent) were far down the list.

Regarding what kind of content they want to see, respondents placed articles first, with conferences/webinars and research reports also scoring well. They also noted the increasing importance of thought leadership and credentialing activity.

## **PORT OF LONG BEACH WANTS PR PARTNER**

The Port of Long Beach is looking to book a firm for strategic communications and crisis PR duties.

The second busiest container seaport in the US, Long Beach serves as the gateway to trans-Pacific trade.

It handles more than \$200B in trade annually and supports 2.6M jobs across the US, including 575K jobs in southern California, of which 50K are in Long Beach.

The RFP calls for promoting the Port’s brand, providing media training to officials, handling communications projects and coordinating and implementing the emergency public information plan on an as-needed basis.

Proposals are due Nov. 21 at the PlanetBids portal.

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



Port of  
**LONG BEACH**

## **NEWS OF FIRMS**

[The Bliss Group](#) and [Ringer Sciences](#) launch the Executive Signals Platform, an audience intelligence platform that analyzes the behavior of executives in key media channels dedicated to business. The platform is designed to reveal the trends and topics that are top of mind for a brand’s key buyers, identify the publications that receive the most engagement and uncover the most relevant influencers. It also provides competitor intelligence that can be used to benchmark executive social thought leadership programs against industry peers. “The executive signals platform delivers unique actionable intelligence on an audience of senior business leaders to inform how we build campaigns, perform outreach and react to emerging industry trends,” said Ringer Sciences founder and CEO Yash Gad.



[CMI Media Group](#), a WPP agency that works with health, wellness, and pharmaceutical clients, starts up a healthcare-focused ecommerce practice. The ecommerce capability, which will be led by Jacob Harrison as director of ecommerce investment strategy, will work to transform the marketing landscape in a way that will allow clients to get Rx and OTC products in the hands of patients and consumers.

[BizCom Associates](#) is launching an employee-based philanthropic program, BizComCARES. The program is designed to empower the agency and individual teammates to select the causes they wish to support. This could range from seasonal opportunities such as holiday programs to providing relief following a natural disaster to supporting local mentoring programs. BizCom has also set up a website, [BizComCARES.com](#), where employees can showcase their philanthropic efforts. Organizations or individuals can also use the website to contact the agency requesting support.



**BizComCARES**

[Imaginity](#) of Dallas acquires [Beacon Advertising](#), which serves clients across the restaurant, retail and B2B space. The combined operation will do business under the Imaginity brand. It will employ nearly 120 team members and report 2022 capitalized billings of approximately \$200 million. Beacon co-founder Evan Meeke will become executive director of client partnerships at Imaginity. Imaginity provides integrated marketing services complemented by its proprietary AdScience customer data platform.

[Propel](#) releases a tool that enables users to schedule follow-up pitches for a campaign in one batch, while maintaining one-to-one pitch customization and personalization. Follow-Up Assist is the newest feature within the Propel Gmail and Outlook plugins. Propel founder and CEO Zach Cutler says that new feature “will save people in the industry time, freeing them up to focus on the core aspects of PR.”

[Marketing Maven](#) director of media relations Frank Tortorici is named to Qwoted.com’s Top 100 List for the third quarter of 2022. Qwoted’s algorithm ranks PR users based on such factors as hit rate of pitches to responses from media, speed of reporter replies, reporter ranking and number of positive interactions with media. “This initiative is a live quarterly ranking of public relations professionals who have proven they have the best stories to tell and the most compelling way of telling them,” said Qwoted editor-in-Chief Lou Carlozo.

## GETTING MEDIA FOR A 'BORING' CLIENT

When you buy a car, you probably think of the make. The leaders of the auto companies may not even cross your mind.

But when you think of Tesla, only one name comes to mind: Elon Musk.



**Dustin Siggins, Robert Kuykendall**

Musk spent years communicating his vision in the press. [He's a legend](#) because he put better, more creative content in front of the right target audiences the right way.

Elon Musk, not cars, is the kind of client most PR practitioners envision when they get into the industry. But without cars, Musk is just a rich has-been who left PayPal years ago. For Musk, cars are the launching pad for space, social change and even changing the course of a war.

For the most boring of clients or accounts, the solution to making them exciting is simple: create messaging and content that stand out and put them in the media homes that capture target markets' attention over and over again.

### Why does your company exist?

"We know we're not the most exciting company," Parabilis VP of Operations Ryan Huss once said. Parabilis provides loans to small business government contractors who need money fast, but don't qualify for a bank loan.

Not exactly sexy, but when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Parabilis' small business financing expertise was exactly what the press was looking for.

What hooked the editors and soon put Parabilis on a top industry podcast wasn't finance or loans. It was their real mission: helping small business contractors.

### Provide unique solutions

At the end of the day, nothing is boring. Content can be mundane; stories can be ordinary. But with the right solution and the right promotion strategy, you can be the coolest kid in the sandbox.

[That's what Money.com does with its list of best colleges and universities.](#) Millions of Americans gripe about the cost of college. But what Money provides is a well-researched solution: analyzing the quality of America's top institutions, based in part on the price of attendance and post-graduation job placements. And releasing the list in May—when students and parents begin college tours—helped put their list go viral in the press, on social media and on colleges' websites.

### Do something totally off the wall

"Like watching paint dry" isn't a compliment in American culture, but paint mixer Tony Piloseno saw something different. While the entire paint world was watching paint dry, Tony was mixing it on camera, creating a new story in one of the world's oldest commodities. His creativity first got him fired, then earned him viral press, then became a [social media empire](#) that drew 100 million eyeballs in 2021.

### Get others to brag for you

Last year, a law firm won a disability accommodation lawsuit against a school district. It won because the firm has good lawyers, but that's just a day at the office. Most of us don't want to read about people in dark suits talking legalese.

This story isn't about a lawyer winning a case; it's about changing how schools treat disabled students. That's a story

of interest to disability rights activists, parents of disabled students, lawyers, teachers and even the general public.

It's a story that can't be told by the lawyer. That's bragging and everyone would tune him out. It [must be told](#) by his happy client and the student's parents. It needs to be seen and heard in the press and on social media and turned from a stodgy courtroom case into a story of helping David beat Goliath.

### What stands out to your audiences?

You're not alone in feeling that your clients are too ordinary to stand out. But somewhere is your unique opportunity to help them rise above the norm, to become the Elon Musk of your industry or community. Maybe it's their mission, or perhaps it's just doing something totally different or simply narrowing their target market focus.

The opportunity to make your client the most exciting thing since Elon Musk is there. Go find it.

*Dustin Siggins is Founder of the publicity firm [Proven Media Solutions](#) and a writer with bylines at Forbes, Insider, and elsewhere. Robert Kuykendall is a campaign veteran and former non-profit executive who is now a private-sector entrepreneur.*

## TRUMP AND THE MCRIB: THE FINAL TOUR

With a predicted announcement date of November 14, the second presidential campaign of Donald J. Trump will get underway like a determined engine chugging up the funicular, spewing invective and appealing to the worst instincts of the American voter.

No telling who Trump will be running against, so he needs an early angle on which to pitch his campaign. In that respect, he might take a page from McDonald's playbook for its elusive McRib sandwich and tell voters this is their last chance to vote for him and to Make America Great Again—as he defines "great."

Since its launch in 1981, the McRib has disappeared more than Harry Houdini, but always makes a comeback, usually when the price of beef and chicken is high relative to pork, as [an article in "The Street"](#) points out.

The ersatz barbecue sandwich's fans always show up to buy, even keeping track of appearances on a website, [McRib Locator](#). In that respect, they are much the same as Trump's voter base, who can't wait to see his appearances so they can excoriate and rant along with him.

It's a perfect analog: the McRib is a lump of pork formed into the shape of ribs, while Trump is a lump of rich white jerk formed into a presidential candidate.

Besides being a junk-food junkie, Trump is no stranger to marketing. A "last chance" appeal is almost certain to work with those who still haven't gotten over the anger Trump ginned up after the 2020 election.

McDonald's is hedging its position about the finality of the farewell tour of the McRib, saying of this iteration, "You never know when—or if—the McRib is coming back."

Likewise, even if Trump is unsuccessful, this 2024 campaign run extends his brand and his legacy. We don't know when—or if—he is coming back. Whether that matters even as much as The McRib has mattered to American life is something for the historians to puzzle out.

*Bill Huey is president of Strategic Communications and the author of Carbon Man (Kindle, 2010).*



## **PITTSBURGH UTILITY SEEKS REBRAND**

The Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority is seeking a communications partner to handle a 2023 rebranding initiative designed to reintroduce the utility to its customers.



PWSA serves more than 300K people in the city and surrounding areas. It is the largest combined water and sewer authority in the Keystone State.

Its drinking system, which draws from the Allegheny River, contains 930 miles of water lines, five reservoirs and 11 tanks.

The company's sewer system is composed of 1,200 miles of lines, approximately 25,000 catch basins and four pump stations.

Proposals are due Nov. 23 at the Bonfire portal.

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

## **CASTAGNETTI SHIFTS TO DENTONS**

David Castagnetti, co-founder of the high-powered Washington-based Mehlman Castagnetti Rosen & Thomas government relations shop, has joined Dentons Global Advisors as a partner.



**David Castagnetti**

He is to use his public policy and political experience to counsel DGA's leadership team, boost the firm's offerings and support clients on their public affairs priorities.

Prior to launching MCR&T, Castagnetti was chief of staff to Democrats Sen. Max Baucus (MT) and Rep. Norman Minetta (CA).

He began his career in the office of then-Congressman and now Sen. Ed Markey (MA) and went on to serve Sen. John Kerry in his presidential campaign.

DGA CEO Ed Reilly, who had helmed [FTI Consulting's strategic communications unit](#), said Castagnetti will be a vital mentoring resource.

"He is truly committed to sharing his wealth of knowledge and supporting the next generation of leaders," said Reilly.

## **ABERNATHY MCGREGOR WORKS NEST DEAL**

Eurazeo, investment firm, relies on Abernathy MacGregor as it sells its majority stake in NEST New York, marketer of fragrance lifestyle brands, to North Castle Partners in a deal worth about \$200M.



Laura Slatkin, who founded NEST in 2008, said the partnership with Eurazeo enabled the business to flourish and deliver impressive growth over the past five years.

She looks forward to working with North Castle as NEST embarks on its next chapter of growth.

Hemanshu Patel, partner at NCP, said NEST fits nicely into NCP's family of health and wellness brands that are leaders in their respective categories.

He also noted that Rich Gersten, NCP's beauty industry advisor, has worked with Slatkin and her team in the past.

Will Braun and Emma Prenn-Vasilakis are working the account at AbMac, which is part of Havas' H/Advisors network of financial firms.

## **ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT**

**Mower** is selected by the [Arthritis Foundation](#) to lead the organization's 2023 awareness campaign, "We Journey Together." The effort will include in-depth market research, brand strategy, creative development, media planning and buying, and public relations, all directed toward increasing recognition and visibility for those who have arthritis as well as those indirectly affected by the disease and its related conditions. The Foundation provides connection and empowerment for the nearly 60 million adults and 300,000 children diagnosed with arthritis—the number one cause of disability in the United States.



**Three Cheers PR**, a wholly owned subsidiary of [360PR+](#) that focuses on the adult-beverage market, is named agency of record for Loverboy, which produces a line of ready-to-drink sparkling hard teas, spritzes and cocktails that are sold both online and at retail outlets. Three Cheers' work for the client spans earned media, event marketing, digital analytics and fully integrated campaign development and rollout. "Three Cheers gets Loverboy. They understand the industry, our category, our consumer and the media they follow," said Loverboy CEO Kyle Cooke.

**Carve Communications** signs on as agency of record for **Upper Deck**, a global entertainment company creating trading cards, memorabilia, collectibles, games and online platforms. The agency is tasked with generating awareness, establishing authority, driving engagement, and fostering activation in partnership with the company's marketing teams. Other recent additions to Carve's roster of AOR relationships include OTT cloud platform Quickplay, Canadian SaaS platform Voilà, Droyd children's rideables and Zetwerk Manufacturing, a global source of manufacturing across industrial and consumer products. "The depth of their highly experienced IR professionals will help us improve all facets of our investor relations efforts," said Kaleyra vice president of investor relations Colin Gillis.



**MZ Group** is selected to lead a comprehensive strategic investor relations and financial communications program for **Kaleyra**, an enterprise Communication Platform as a Service business. The agency will work with Kaleyra management to develop and implement a comprehensive capital markets strategy designed to increase the company's visibility throughout the investment community.

**Proof Strategies** is named the first public relations agency of record for the **Liquor Control Board of Ontario**. Proof will oversee integrated marketing campaigns for the LCBO brand family (LCBO, Vintages and Food & Drink) and its social impact platform "Spirit of Sustainability" as well as support to the LCBO corporate communications office. The scope of work will include strategy, measurement, social media, corporate communications, influencer relations, earned media, social impact and public affairs.

**CommCreative** is named North American agency of record for **Raymarine**, a marine electronics company. CommCreative is developing and executing brand messaging and a go-to-market strategy, including creative, digital, social media and mobile advertising. The agency's efforts are targeted at boat owners and the fishing community in the Americas.

## ALABAMA LABOR DEPT. NEEDS MARKETING

The Alabama Department of Labor has issued a request for proposals for firms specializing in marketing services.

The Montgomery-based government department is looking for a communications firm that can work with the ADOL to raise awareness of a new unemployment compensation “ombudsmen” program to be located in various Career Centers across the state. Scope of the work includes developing creative assets (in English and Spanish), educating Alabamians of the new unemployment compensation program; increasing awareness of Career Center services for job seekers and employers; driving traffic to [www.labor.alabama.gov](http://www.labor.alabama.gov) and increasing participation in the UC Ombudsman service; conducting market research; and providing media planning and buying services.

Proposals are due by Nov. 25 and should be emailed to [tina.moore@labor.alabama.gov](mailto:tina.moore@labor.alabama.gov) with the subject line “Marketing Services /Outreach Campaign for ADOL.”

Questions should be directed to Tina Moore at [tina.moore@labor.alabama.gov](mailto:tina.moore@labor.alabama.gov).

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

## GOOGLE’S KENNEDY DRIVES TO VOLKSWAGEN

Volkswagen Passenger Cars hires Google senior global brand marketing director Nelly Kennedy as CMO effective mid-February 2023.



**Nelly Kennedy**

She succeeds Jochen Sengpiehl, who has moved to Volkswagen Group China as CMO. Before joining Google, she was executive director digital at Condé Nast International and held several senior posts in global marketing at Adidas.

“Nelly Kennedy and the expertise she brings with her will make a decisive contribution to giving Volkswagen a clear brand profile in all regions,” said Volkswagen Passenger Cars board member for sales, marketing and after sales Imelda Labbé.

## GASTHALTER & CO. TARGETS CHIMERIX

Gasthalter & Co. represents Rubric Capital Management as it sends a Nov. 10 letter to the board of Chimerix Inc., expressing a lack of confidence in the strategic direction of the biopharmaceutical company.



### **CHIMERIX**

RCM, which owns an 8.5 percent stake in Chimerix, says the company’s shares trade at a substantial discount to its liquidation value. It calls for the board “to begin a winddown process and conserve cash to maximize liquidation value available to shareholders, while simultaneously exploring strategic alternatives for ONC201,” treatment for glioma patients.

RCM considers further investment in ONC201, which is likely to need an expensive phase 3 trial, “is not an appropriate course of action.”

Chimerix, which uses [Joele Frank](#), [Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher](#), does not believe liquidation is in the best interests of shareholders as it would deprive them of the significant upside potential of ONC201 and other assets.

## ON THE MOVE

**360PR+** promotes **Alexandra (Ali) Kavulich** to managing director in New York. Kavulich was previously a SVP at the agency. Prior to 360PR+, she was at Octagon, where she led campaigns and events for luxury brands including Rolls-Royce Motor Cars North America. Kavulich also served as assistant VP public relations and marketing for Sotheby’s auction house. As managing director at 360, she will play a broader leadership role for the agency, overseeing clients, employee engagement and operations for the New York office. “Ali has consistently shown herself to be a strategic, trusted partner to 360 clients, an engaged business-builder for the agency and compassionate mentor to our staff,” said 360PR+ partner and EVP Victoria Renwick.



**Alexandra Kavulich**

**Visit Orlando**, the city’s official tourism association, ups senior director of public relations **Denise Spiegel** to VP of communications. Before joining Visit Orlando in 2006, Spiegel worked in the Los Angeles office of FleishmanHillard. In her new role, she will lead the communication strategy and development of organizational messaging that supports the company’s mission, vision, business objectives and values and delivers them to internal and external audiences.

**Haberman** names **Doug Moore** chief commercial officer, a newly created role at the firm. Moore joins the agency from Bain & Company, where he served as expert partner since Bain acquired digital marketing agency FRWD in 2018. He was president and partner at FRWD for four years before that and has also served as vp, advertising and media at General Mills. Haberman has created the CCO role to reflect its momentum and ambition to further accelerate its clients’ societal impact and growth. “He understands as well as anyone how to unlock bigger returns on marketing investments,” said Haberman president and partner Brian Wachtler.

**The Managed Funds Association**, the trade association for the hedge fund and global alternative asset management industry, hires Edelman Smithfield vice president **Raffi Williams** as vp of communications. Before coming to Edelman Smithfield, Williams was acting communications director at the Federal Housing Finance Agency and deputy assistant secretary at the Dept. of Housing and Urban Development. At MFA, Williams will work to advance the organization’s agenda on key policy issues and educate the public about the value of the hedge fund and alternative asset management industry.

**Tier One Partners** names VP **Celena Fine** to lead its Agile Insights and Analytics practice. Fine, who works with clients in the financial services, technology and healthcare industries, was previously a TV news journalist at Boston’s NBC and FOX affiliates. “With Celena at the helm of this practice area, one she helped to build and shape over the past year with her passion for culture and news, Tier One will continue to expand the Agile Insights and Analytics practice and develop future products,” said Tier One co-founder and managing partner Kathy Wilson.



**Celena Fine**

## COMMENTARY

**ADL Moves into ESG...** The Anti-Defamation League is acquiring JLens, the Jewish values-based investor network, to expand its participation and advocacy in the environmental, social and governance movement and to combat anti-Israel and antisemitic policies in the impact investing arena.

Since its launch in 2012, more than 30 North American Jewish institutions have invested about \$200M in JLens' campaign to back companies that promote Jewish values.

It has been a leader in the effort to fight the boycott, divestment and sanctions push that harms Israel's economy and even questions its legitimacy.

Jonathan Greenblatt, CEO of the ADL, called ESG the last frontier in the fight against antisemitism.

"As underscored by the many companies that recently cut ties with Kanye West after his antisemitic tirades, corporate advocacy is an important tool for improving society," he said.

*eJewishPhilanthropy* notes that the ADL has historically campaigned against antisemitism in the marketplace via coalitions, advocacy and media.

The JLens addition means the JDL will participate in shareholder meetings and speak directly with corporate social responsibility executives to drive change.

ADL is becoming more of a corporate insider.

**"I alone can fix it,"** said Donald Trump during the 2016 Republican convention after he sketched a vision of America that was racked by violence, terrorism and destruction.

Look for The Donald to revive the "I alone" line as he attempts to spin the midterm "defeat" by Republicans who had anticipated a red wave washing across America.

He had expected to use the GOP midterm landslide as a springboard to his "big announcement" slated for next week.

But the only wave on Nov. 8 was the one that swept away Trump's chosen candidates like Blake Masters, Mehmet Oz, Kari Lake, Don Bolduc and Doug Mastriano.

When asked on Election Night what influence he had on the results, 76-year-old Trump said: "I think if they win, I should get all the credit, and if they lose, I should not be blamed at all."

He will claim that Republicans desperately need him to top the 2024 ticket to energize his base and power a red tsunami.

With Trump, it's always a case of me, myself and I.

But he is looking more and more like yesterday's news.

**Nervous about the collapse of Twitter's security and privacy** under the ownership of Elon Musk? You got a lot of company.

Many privacy and compliance executives were either fired by Musk or saw the writing on the wall and quit before Twitter's collapse. Musk, who just wrapped up the \$44B acquisition, is talking about Chapter 11.

Twitter's troubles create an opportunity for Mastodon, an open-source network that now has more than 1M active users, up from 381K just two weeks ago.

Edelman CEO [Richard Edelman devoted his Nov. 10 "6 A.M." blog](#) to Mastodon.

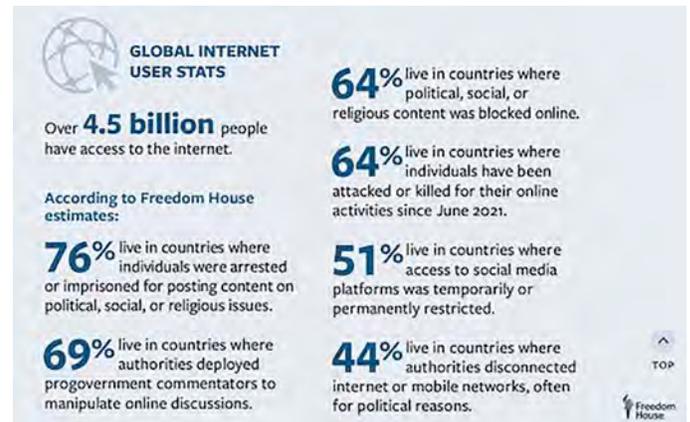
**We are so over COVID-19...** Less than three in ten (28 percent) of Americans are "very" or "somewhat" worried about catching COVID-19, according to a Gallup poll released Nov. 10.

That's the lowest percentage since the summer of 2021 when many Americans emerged from isolation.

Forty-four percent declare COVID-19 is over.

A whopping 78 percent of Americans say the best advice for people who are healthy is to lead their normal lives as much as possible.

Winter is coming, though. New variants of COVID-19 are bound to emerge and test America's willingness to self-isolate for the greater good.



**Freedom on the Internet improved** a little bit in the US during 2022 for the first time in six years, according to the "[Freedom on the Net](#)" report compiled by Freedom House.

The non-profit group praised president Joe Biden for making the promotion of internet freedom a top priority of his foreign policy, but that contrasts with only marginal improvements on the home front.

Freedom House notes that the White House brought together 60 governments to sign the Declaration for the Future of the Internet to advance a positive vision of the net.

At home, the results were sparse. Proposed laws to strengthen tech-related transparency made little progress.

The lack of a comprehensive federal privacy law and incomplete reforms to surveillance rules allow US agencies to purchase data of citizens from shadowy brokers with little oversight or safeguards.

Freedom House noted the Supreme Court's decision to junk *Roe v. Wade* "prompted renewed concerns about law enforcement access to location information, browsing histories, and other forms of data."

GOP leaders use disinformation and intimidation to make false justifications for new anti-fraud measures that could restrict access to voting or distort the counting and certification processes and set the stage for future unrest by eroding public trust in any unfavorable results.

There are tough times ahead for internet freedom in the US. The 2023 Freedom House report promises to be an interesting read.

—Kevin McCauley