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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of
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NASDAQ EXPLORES SALE OF PR/DIGITAL UNITS

Nasdaq is exploring “strategic alternatives” for its \$195M revenues PR and digital units as part of CEO Adena Friedman’s effort to bolster the electronic stock exchange’s expansion of its technology, data and analytics businesses.

The New York-based company this month announced a \$705M deal to acquire eVestment Alliance LLC, which provides cloud-based services to clients such as Morgan Stanley, BlackRock and Google parent Alphabet Inc.

Housed within the corporate solutions operation, Nasdaq’s PR/digital units include GlobeNewswire (press release distribution platform/media contacts database), Nasdaq Media Intelligence (media monitoring, analyst-curated news reporting) and webhosting/webinars/video presentations services. They chalked up \$25M in operating income for the fiscal year ended June and generated eight percent of Nasdaq’s revenue.

“Nasdaq Corporate Solutions is a market-leading
(Continued on pg. 2)



Adena Friedman

MCCALL TAKES OVER FTI’S STRAT COMMS UNIT

Mark McCall, COO and chief of FTI Consulting’s Americas strategic communications unit, is taking over for Ed Reilly, who will focus on client development and transition execution.

CEO Steve Gunby said McCall “has the ideal mix of client management and development skills, operational experience and leadership capabilities.

Prior to the strat comms slot, McCall headed FTI’s special situations group, responsible for M&A activity, restructuring and IPOs. The New York-based McCall also worked in financial/IR in Chicago for Hill+Knowlton Strategies and Burson-Marsteller.

Reilly was president of KRC Research, vice chairman of Bozell Sawyer Miller Group and founder of Westhill Partners before joining Financial Dynamics as managing director in 2005. He assumed the strat comms helm in 2011.

The strat comms unit posted a 7.4 percent decline in Q2 revenues to \$46.2M due to sluggish project-based revenue in North America, especially for financial communications and corporate reputation work.



Mark McCall

NFL KICKS OFF SEARCH FOR CRISIS PRO

The National Football League, which is embroiled in a First Amendment tussle with Donald Trump, has posted a job listing for senior communications strategist.

Duties include “proactively developing plans and strategies aimed at publicly positioning the NFL to key audiences through all communications channels, both traditional and emerging media.”

The successful candidate will create messaging to reflect the NFL’s wide range of priorities, expedite organizational decision-making and provide crisis counseling to executives.

Eight years of communications or journalism experience, expertise in storytelling and issues management is required.

The league wants a person with intense work habits, who speaks his or her mind and is “comfortable working in a diverse environment.”

Corporate, sports or entertainment communications experience is preferred.



HEALTH UNLIMITED SURVEYS CONSUMERS

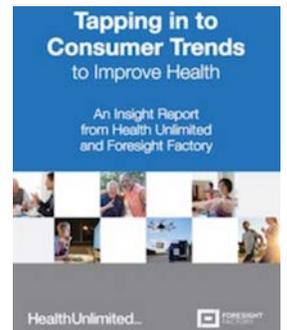
Advances in technology provide consumers better access to healthcare decisions, giving them more control over their well-being and impacting the way marketers communicate with their target audiences.

Health Unlimited and Foresight Factory, consumer analytics company, examined this development, surveying more than 4,000 people in the US, UK, Germany and France to identify key trends to help marketers understand how consumers are dealing with structural change and integration of technology in the healthcare market.

Their report, “**Tapping in to Consumer Trends to Improve Health**,” identified five key developments:

The Naked Consumer—Economic uncertainty and rising costs are reshaping relationships between consumers and governments. People must take ownership of future healthcare needs because governments may no longer provide “safety nets” for seniors.

Society of Sobriety—Consumers are realizing the power of their actions and are embracing more



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NASDAQ EXPLORES SALE OF PR/DIGITAL UNITS

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franchise built over the last decade to help public and private companies around the world successfully navigate the capital markets,” said Friedman in a statement. “As a technology company, our growth path requires a review of our core strengths matched with the evolving needs of our clients. We intend to use our strengths in advanced marketplace technology and information analytics, coupled with our deep understanding of market dynamics, to provide actionable intelligence to corporate executives and boards, through our world-leading Investor Relations and Governance intelligence and collaboration tools.”

The exchange is keeping corporate services units that provide tools to boards of companies and IR teams.

Nearly 4,000 companies with a market value of \$12T list on the Nasdaq.

HEALTH UNLIMITED SURVEYS CONSUMERS

(Continued from pg. 1)

self-discipline and purposeful moderation.

Cruise Control—People are exercising more control over their health via use of self-tracking and self-diagnosis devices.

Consumer Capital—Consumers are becoming more aware of the value of their health data and selective about whom they share it with. They are making daily risk-benefit analyses about when and how to use their personal information.

Robots Know Best—Robotization, smart systems and people-free delivery are extending into healthcare and driving consumers to believe they will be able to live independently at home as they age.

Tim Bird, CEO of HealthUnlimited said of the report: “As consumers change the way they find and act on healthcare information, we need to evolve with them, and this report gives us a roadmap of what changes to expect in the healthcare space over the next several years.”

BRUNSWICK BAGS BAIN'S BIG CHIPS DEAL

Brunswick Group is working the Bain Capital-led consortium that has inked a \$17.7B agreement to buy the memory chip business of Japan's financially strapped Toshiba Corp.

Apple, Dell Technologies, Seagate and Korean semiconductor company SK Hynix form the group eager to bolster Toshiba as the No. 2 supplier of memory chips behind Samsung Electronics.

Those chips are used in a wide range of electronics, including smartphones and computer services.

David Gross-Loh, managing director of Bain Capital Private Equity, said the deal ensures an independent Toshiba Memory Co. and that the “semiconductor industry remains highly competitive and can respond to fast-changing needs.”

Toshiba will continue as an investor in TMC.

Bain Capital has made more than 65 investments in the tech sector including Symantec, BMC Software, LinkedIn, SurveyMonkey and SunGard Data Systems.

Brunswick's Naomi Dryden and Sunitha Chalam are handling media for the Toshiba semiconductor transaction.

LEADERS KEY TO WINNING EARNED MEDIA

The use of influencers to boost marketing campaigns' visibility has grown wildly popular in recent years, but according to a recent [survey of journalists and in-house brand communicators](#) released by D S Simon Media, the press doesn't appear to be nearly as enthusiastic about the practice.

In fact, despite hundreds of millions being spent annually by agencies on external spokespersons such as actors, artists, athletes and social media

stars, D S Simon Media's Brand Authenticity Survey suggests that leveraging third-party spokespersons may not be nearly as effective when it comes to gaining earned media opportunities or crafting an authentic message as a brand's own in-house leaders.

An overwhelming majority of those polled for the survey — 82 percent — said they believe outside spokespersons are the least authentic representatives for a product or service, rating less effective than either paid or unpaid product users.

The same principle holds for non-profits, with 87 percent of respondents claiming they find third-party spokespersons to be the least authentic representatives for charitable causes.

Instead, the survey suggests that a company's in-house leaders or experts are far more effective at enhancing a brand's reputation and credibility, as well as gaining earned media opportunities with the press.

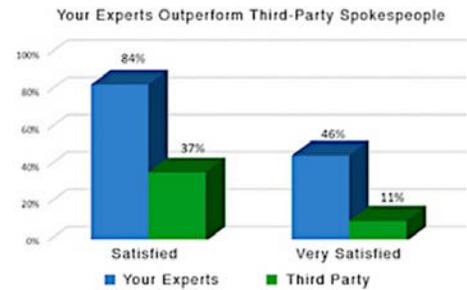
84 percent of journalists polled said they prefer a brand's in-house spokesperson to be available for interview opportunities as opposed to paid third-parties. And in the non-profit realm, that figure was even higher, at 90 percent.

Nearly three quarters — 74 percent — of journalists polled also said making a CEO available for media comment especially makes a brand appear to be more authentic.

Finally, when asked where journalists get their ideas for stories, 82 percent cited social media, potentially underscoring an urgency for companies to provide leadership a platform and presence on social platforms.

Speaking on the study's findings, D S Simon Media CEO and president Doug Simon told *O'Dwyer's* that “If you believe authenticity drives your organization's goals, you need to be focusing on turning your leaders and experts into influencers by featuring them in campaigns that earn media.”

DS Simon Media's Brand Authenticity Survey 2017 was conducted throughout the summer of 2017 by online survey company Survey Monkey. It polled more than 200 journalists, including magazine and newspaper reporters, bloggers and TV and radio station producers, as well as more than 200 brand communicators.



CRC BUYS KELLYANNE CONWAY'S FIRM

CRC Public Relations has acquired The Polling Co., which was founded in 1995 by White House counselor Kellyanne Conway, to buttress its advocacy and digital offerings.

Greg Mueller, CRC president and former communications director for Pat Buchanan, called TPC “an established brand with a strong reputation among conservatives, Republicans, public policy organizations, corporations and associations.”

TPC’s WomanTrend unit tracks social, cultural, financial, professional and health trends affecting women.

Brett Lloyd, CEO of TPC, said teaming with CRC will “allow our clients to leverage our polling and research even more effectively as part of a broader PR and communications strategy. TPC will maintain its office in DC.

Conway, who stepped down from TPC upon joining the Trump White House, filed an ethics form in March that estimated her 100 percent ownership stake in TPC/Woman Trend from \$1M to \$5M.

Alexandria-based CRC, which used to be called Creative Response Concepts, has worked for clients such as Swift Boat Veterans for Truth, Koch Brothers’ political advocacy group Americans for Prosperity, General Motors, Federalist Society, Brent Bozell’s Media Research Center, Chevron, Americans for Tax Reform, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, PhRMA, Parents Television Council and Regnery Publishing.



Kellyanne Conway

WEBB ACQUIRES DALLAS-BASED SHOP

Crayton Webb, a Dallas TV journalist turned PR pro who led corporate social responsibility and corporate communications efforts for beauty products direct marketing giant Mary Kay, has acquired Dallas-based PR and public affairs firm Sunwest Communications.

Terms of the acquisition were not publicly disclosed.

Webb joined Mary Kay in 2005, initially managing government relations before being named director of CSR and corporate communications and later leading the company’s global media relations, reputation management, PR and crisis communications efforts as vice president.

He was previously chief of staff to Dallas Mayor Laura Miller (2002-05) and communications director for the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas after 10 years in TV news, including investigative reporter for KTVT (CBS) 11 in Dallas.

Webb, who now assumes the role of Sunwest CEO, said there will be no changes to the company’s name, address or account teams as a result of the transition. Outgoing CEO Andy Stern will remain involved with the firm in a new senior counsel role.

Sunwest, which was founded in 1982, provides marketing communications, community relations, corporation communications, corporate philanthropy/CSR,



Crayton Webb

creative services, crisis communications, financial PR, media relations, public affairs, social media strategy, special event planning and spokesperson training to clients in the real estate, finance, tech, education and consumer sectors.

“Sunwest has a 35-year legacy of helping clients build trust, increase visibility and tell meaningful stories,” Webb told *O’Dwyer’s*. “Its reputation, team and client base are extraordinary, thanks to Andy Stern’s leadership and vision over the past three decades. When I considered what the next phase of my career might look like, the opportunity to build upon the foundation set by Andy at Sunwest is one that I couldn’t pass up. I’m excited and honored to continue Sunwest’s legacy and help write its next chapter.”

PADILLA PICKS UP HIMLE

John Himle, founder and former CEO of Minneapolis-based public affairs, corporate communications and crisis shop Himle Rapp & Company, has moved to Midwest PR powerhouse **Padilla**, where he’s been named executive vice president and senior counsel.

Himle founded Himle & Associates in 1982, which was rebranded as Himle Horner Inc. in 1989 with the arrival of veteran Republican consultant and public affairs pro Tom Horner, who later left the firm to run for Minnesota governor. The agency was renamed again after the arrival of president Todd Rapp, who was previously executive director to former Minnesota House Speaker and Majority Leader Phil Carruthers.

Rapp bought Himle’s ownership stake in the firm last month, making him sole owner and CEO of the firm. It is now titled Rapp Strategies, Inc.

Before joining the PR world, Himle was executive director of the Minnesota Agri-Growth Council. He also served five terms as a member of the Minnesota House of Representatives, and was later appointed by former MN Governor Carlson as a member of the Metropolitan Airports Commission, where he served for eight years.



John Himle

CONTE CALLED TO LEAD HOTWIRE NY OFFICE

US and UK tech specialist **Hotwire** has named Christa Conte senior vice president and head of the agency’s New York office.

Conte joined the tech PR shop in 2012 as a program director and VP of client services before she was promoted to the role of senior program director the following year.

She was previously an account director at New York-based financial and tech firm Feintuch Communications and a senior account executive at KCSA Strategic Communications.

Conte now oversees all of Hotwire’s business in New York, including awareness, growth and culture. She’ll also lead the Hotwire digital commerce team.



Christa Conte

The proposal to sub “communications” for “PR” in most places in the PRSA bylaws at the Oct. 8 Assembly

is a blow not only to PR but to PR and communications courses offered by colleges.

If the world’s largest PR organization has lost faith in the value of PR as a function, why should teenagers be enticed into studying PR **or its distant cousin, “communications?”**

PR courses have long been under attack by some PR profs themselves, working PR people, and consultants who feel such courses don’t belong in college. Employers are looking for grads who spent four years in legitimate academic subjects.

Boston University PR Prof. Donald Wright told the Arthur W. Page Society in 2007 that grads of PR degree programs only account for 10-15% of recent hires.

He conducted research with the help of Patrick Ford of Burson-Marsteller, Rob Flaherty, Ketchum, and Michelle Hinson, Institute for PR.

They found that, most of the time, agencies and major corporations favor grads who took liberal arts, business and other academic disciplines.

Princeton Review Urged Liberal Arts

The Princeton Review in 2007 said college students interested in PR should take liberal arts and writing courses rather than PR courses.

PR, it said, needs people who can “communicate well in print, in person and on the phone.” The Review claims that half of those bound for college consult one or more of its products. These include preparation for the SAT and other tests, an annual listing of the “best” colleges, and an annual ranking of the “best” party colleges.

Tom Harris, co-founder of Golin Harris, author of *The Marketer’s Guide to PR*, who taught 14 years in the master’s program in Integrated Marketing Communications at Northwestern University, “agreed 100%” with the Review.

Don’t Take “Vocational” Subjects

Said Harris: “I wouldn’t waste my precious time in undergraduate school on vocational subjects like advertising or PR. This is the greatest time in life for young people to learn about the world in which we live and work. I was an English major at the University of Michigan and always looked kindly on English majors when I was hiring college grads.”

He said, “College should be about learning to think, solve problems and communicate” but life should not be “all work.” He urged undergrads to take some courses in art and music. Subjects like psychology, sociology, history, political science and economics are “invaluable to an educated person,” he added. PR and communication profs should convert to teaching such subjects.

PRSA Mistake Was Pullback from Ethics

The advice of *The Princeton Review* and Harris is even more relevant today when there is such confusion over the role of PR.

There is no confusion over what happened to PRSA

in the past 17 years that stymied its growth. Membership of 21,000 is only slightly above the 19,600 it had in 2000.

The Society in 1999 cancelled its enforceable Ethics Code that had been a bulwark since the 1950s. In many years, tens of thousands of dollars were spent trying cases and giving members ethical guidance. Spending on “ethics” fell to almost zero—\$945 in 2016 on total expenses of \$11.5 million.

Only one of the 55 or so staff members is a member of PRSA—PR director Laurent Lawrence. The 1980 regime of Patrick Jackson decreed that administrators would staff h.q. with minimal PR people. About ten staffers with PR or journalism backgrounds were let go.

Mark of a Profession Abandoned

Staff thought it could easily dispense with “ethics.” But lack of an enforceable code demolished any claims of PR being a profession. Doctors, lawyers and CPAs have elaborate Code enforcement mechanisms.

As a result of the ethics pullback, major companies and PR firms deserted PRSA in droves to The Arthur W. Page Society, PR Council and (PR) Seminar, among others. New York Women in Communications exploded to 2,200 members, leaving the PRSA/New York chapter in the dust with about 600 members.

Instead of execs from blue chips such as Texaco, American Can, Pacific Gas & Electric and Reynolds Metals Co. holding the top elected PRSA spot, it went mostly to solo practitioners. Members gave up the CEO title to the staff—something unthinkable in medical, legal and CPA assns. Staff and “educators” now dominate PRSA.

Changing Label Doesn’t Change Contents

PRSA leaders and staff think they can sprinkle “communications” throughout the bylaws and thus broaden the Society’s appeal.

This is like changing the label on a can of soup that had sprung a leak. The contents are poison and no amount of label-changing will cure that.

The Society must restore its Board of Ethics and start spending and speaking out on ethical issues. It must go after misbehaving members who are exposed in the public prints.

It must show its good will and dedication to communications by webcasting live the Oct. 8 Assembly when the “communications” bylaw will be debated. The Canadian PR Society webcasts its legislative meeting live for all to see so there is no reason PRSA could not do this.

A number of unethical practices and policies of the Society itself must be changed including its dominance by APR members who hold 16 of the 17 board seats when it should be 3-4 based on the percentage of APR members. The membership of the Assembly should be public record. Proxy voting should not be allowed. One national conference in NYC in 25 years is an insufferable snub of the city. No doubt 20-30 staffers enjoy about two weeks every year with all expenses paid in a distant city.

Reporters should be allowed to join. They were welcome as Silver Anvil judges in the 1970s.

– Jack O’Dwyer