



Kevin McCauley
Editor-in-Chief

O'Dwyer's Newsletter



The Inside News of
PR and Marketing
Communications

271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016
212/679-2471. Fax: 212/683-2750
www.odwyerpr.com; jobs.odwyerpr.com

September 24, 2018 Vol. 51 No. 38

MDC PARTNERS MULLS STRATEGIC OPTIONS

MDC Partners, parent of Allison + Partners, Sloane & Co, KWT Global and Hunter PR, is exploring its strategic options.

The *Wall Street Journal* reports the decision follows client cutbacks, failure to win new business, pressures from a heavy debt load and the exit of CEO Scott Kauffmann earlier this month.



MDC Partners

MDC reported a 2.8 percent second-quarter revenue decline to \$380M and a plunge in net income to \$1.1M from \$8M. Organic growth dropped 1.7 percent.

Six-month revenue dropped 3.9 percent to \$706.7M. Net loss widened to \$30.1M from \$1.7M.

In releasing the financials, Kauffmann had warned that 2018 “continues to be challenging.”

MDC's stock price tumbled 60 percent over the past year, currently trading at \$4.55 per-share.

The company is using investment firm LionTree to plot its future direction.

PALLADINO TO TOP BCW CORPORATE SLOT

BCW has brought on Amy Palladino as executive vice president, managing director in the agency's U.S. corporate practice.

Palladino joins BCW from FTI Consulting, where she was a managing director in the firm's strategic communication and business transformation segments, focusing on clients in the healthcare and energy industries. Prior to her post at FTI, she was senior director of corporate communications for Heineken USA, leading its corporate reputation, brand PR, distributor relations and internal communications.



Amy Palladino

Her experience also includes leadership positions at Ketchum and the former GCI Group, working on behalf of such clients as Bank of America, IBM, IKEA, Intel, Kodak, Nokia and Philips.

Based in New York, Palladino will focus on senior client counsel and executive positioning for BCW's largest corporate clients.

BCW president, North America Chris Foster said that Palladino's “creativity and judgment will be enormously valuable to our current and prospective clients.”

SEAWORLD'S EX-PR HEAD SETTLES CHARGES

Fred Jacobs, former VP-communications at SeaWorld, has agreed to settle a fraud charge for his role in misleading investors and to pay \$100K disgorgement charges and prejudgment interest, according to the Securities and Exchange Commission.



Fred Jacobs

The SEC announced Jacobs' settlement as part of the \$5M fraud settlement with SeaWorld Entertainment and ex-CEO James Atchinson for their roles in misleading investors about the impact of the 2013 film “Blackfish,” which criticized the company's treatment of its killer whales.

The SEC complaint alleged that SeaWorld and Atchinson from December 2013 through August 2014 “made untrue and misleading statements or omissions in SEC filings, earnings releases and calls, and other statements to the press regarding Blackfish's impact on the company's reputation and business.”

Steven Peikin, co-director of the SEC enforcement division, said the case underscores the need for companies to provide investors with timely and accurate information that has an adverse impact on its business.

Without admitting or denying the allegations, SeaWorld agreed to pay a \$4M penalty and Atchinson will pay a \$1M penalty. Jacobs retired in December 2015, after a 25-year career at SeaWorld.

Steven Peikin, co-director of the SEC enforcement division, said the case underscores the need for companies to provide investors with timely and accurate information that has an adverse impact on its business.

HYNES EXITS AS TEXT100 MERGES WITH BITE

Aedhmar Hynes is leaving the CEO job of Text100 after an 18-year run, as UK-based Next 15 Communications parent company merges the shop with Bite Communications. Her departure follows last year's exit of IBM and Lenovo from Text100's client roster.

In a Sept. 20 blog, Hynes wrote that she leaves “with mixed emotions,” but feels that it's the right time to depart as Bite CEO Helena Maus assumes leadership of the combined entity, which will have a new name. As CEO, Hynes understood that her role was to do her best to advance the Text100 team and vision until it became time for someone else to take over, according to the blog.



Aedhmar Hynes

The 52-year-old executive, who joined Text100 28 years ago as an account executive, plans to focus her time and energy on her role as chair of the Arthur Page Society.

TRUST IN MEDIA REBOUNDS, SAYS G&S STUDY

Trust in the media is up when it comes to information about corporate and social responsibility, while reliance on the accountability of government officials is down, according to a study released Sept. 19 by G&S Business Communications. According to G&S's ninth annual Sense & Sustainability study, 49 percent of Americans turn to news media for information about corporate social and environmental responsibility. That's up six percent from last year's 43 percent, which marked a five-year low.

In addition, more people are likely to pursue information about issues surrounding corporate accountability. Only 25 percent of respondents said they are staying uninformed, down from 32 percent in 2017's survey.

However, faith in the government's ability to address problems of corporate responsibility is weakening, the study says. Almost two-thirds of survey respondents (64 percent) said their confidence that elected officials can be relied on for more than thoughts and prayers following a public emergency was less than it used to be.

"Business communicators who are stewards of corporate reputations and brand value must heed the urgent call from stakeholders for more intelligent, respectful discourse with those who vote with their wallets, ballots and efforts at work," said G&S managing director and sustainability leader Ron Loch.

EX-SOLICITOR GENERAL OLSON REPS SAUDIS

Former US Solicitor General Ted Olson spearheads the Saudi Arabia embassy's effort to defeat passage of the No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act, a measure that would allow the US government to file price-fixing lawsuits against OPEC members for antitrust violations.

Saudi Arabia, which pumps a third of the world's oil, is the largest member of OPEC.

Past NOPEC efforts died under presidents George Bush II and Barack Obama. NOPEC, though, may be viewed more favorably by president Trump, a long-time critic of OPEC.

The Saudis agreed to pay Olson's firm, Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, a flat fee of \$250K for its NOPEC work, according to a Aug. 29 agreement.

The fee covers preparation of a white paper, suitable for public dissemination, opposing OPEC; more in-depth legal analysis and preparation of an op-ed.

The engagement calls for an additional flat monthly fee of \$100K per-month for Olson's preparation time, in the event the Saudis want him to hold meetings with members of Congress.

GD&C stands ready to "expand the engagement to encompass other matters (e.g., congressional testimony)" for a mutually acceptable fee, according to its agreement.



Business Communications.

According to G&S's ninth annual Sense & Sustainability study, 49 percent

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

GE has promoted **Jennifer Erickson** to chief communications officer. Erickson has most recently been executive director, GE Global Communications, with responsibility for developing and executing GE's external communications strategy. Prior to joining GE in



Jennifer Erickson

2013, she spent more than 15 years at Motorola, where she last served as chief communications officer for Motorola Mobility. In her new role, Erickson will lead GE's communications function globally, including internal/external communications, public affairs, executive communications, and public relations.

Hotwire has promoted **Heather Craft** to executive vice president. The agency has also hired **Andrew Corcione** as a senior VP and **Keith Parker** as a VP. Craft was previously senior VP, client services, working accounts including NetApp, Dell Boomi, Zuora and Commvault. In her new role, she is responsible for developing campaigns that support client business goals, client satisfaction for global and national accounts and for developing B2B talent. Corcione joins Hotwire from Finn Partners, where he was a partner and Next Tech Lead. Parker joins Hotwire from the Greater Sacramento Economic Council, where he was the vice president of marketing and communications.

BCW has announced the appointment of nine market leaders in Latin America, all of whom have been drawn from the Burson-Marsteller organization. **Alberto Diaz**, who previously led the Chile market, will now be market leader in Mexico. **Fernando Soriano**, who had been director, brand communications in Chile, will now lead that market. The other seven had already been serving as market leaders in their respective markets: **Guido Gaona** in Argentina, **Patricia Avila** in Brazil, **Hector Cardona** in Colombia, **Jonathan Stern** in Miami, **Carolina Palacios** in Peru, **Lynnette Teissonniere** in Puerto Rico and **Agustina Navarro** in Uruguay. All of them report to Francisco Carvalho, president, Latin America, BCW.

DKC has appointed **Julie Matic** senior vice president, digital lead of HangarFour, the agency's full-service creative, digital content and experiential marketing unit. Matic joins from Cohn & Wolfe, where she was a senior VP, leading digital strategy for the consumer and multicultural practices as part of the agency's global Digital Innovation Group.



Julie Matic

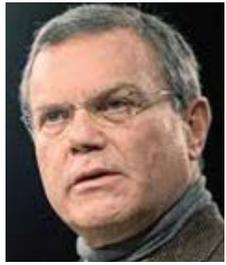
Crosby Marketing Communications has hired **Gary Ellison** as a senior multimedia editor and **Kelly Scruggs** as a social media designer. Ellison comes to Crosby from Discovery Communications, where he spent six years as a producer/editor, creating promotions, digital and social media content for Animal Planet, Investigation Discovery, American Heroes and Destination America. Scruggs joins Crosby from Merkle, where she was an art director, creating campaigns for such clients as USAA and Laser Spine Institute.



Ted Olson

FT APOLOGIZES TO SORRELL

The *Financial Times* on Sept. 17 published an online apology to former WPP chief Martin Sorrell for including him in a Sept. 14 article that was headlined, "Disgraced chief executives reap benefits while investors suffer."



Martin Sorrell

That article, which has been deleted from the FT's site, "inaccurately described the circumstances in which Sir Martin Sorrell resigned from WPP," said the FT.

"Further, we wish to make clear that Sir Martin was not alleged to have engaged in conduct comparable to that of the other former chief executives referred to in the article.

"He has never been accused of the serious wrongdoing with which other individuals in the article have been accused or associated, and has always denied any wrongdoing in relation to his departure from WPP," it said.

The British paper apologized to Sorrell "for any distress caused to him and his family."

MACDONALD JOINS FTI'S HEALTH UNIT

Charlene MacDonald, a Capitol Hill veteran who was senior policy advisor to House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer, has joined FTI Consulting in DC as managing director in its strategic communications unit.

Prior to joining the Maryland Congressman's office, MacDonald served on the Senate Budget Committee—when it was chaired by Washington Democrat Patty Murray—as senior advisor for Medicare & Social Security. She also was deputy chief of staff to Rep. Allyson Schwartz (D-PA), handling policy matters including the launch of the Affordable Care Act.

John Capodanno, Americas head of the stratcomm unit's healthcare & life sciences unit, says clients will benefit from MacDonald's expertise as "drug pricing, regulatory reforms, outcomes-based healthcare systems and the digital revolution, the healthcare industry is going through a convulsive transformation."

POCHEBONNE SAYS "OUI" TO APCO

Arnaud Pochebonne, who headed Weber Shandwick's Paris office and served as executive VP for EMEA, has jumped to APCO Worldwide's outpost in France's capital.

In his more than 20-year PR run, Pochebonne was senior consultant at Burson-Marsteller focused on crisis & PA, and staffer at Tilder Assocs.

He began his career at the business intelligence department of the Secrétariat Général de la Défense Nationale, which is part of the prime minister office.

Brad Staples, APCO CEO, said Pochebonne's "experience at the highest level of c-suite for public and private organizations made him a long sought after partner."

Claire Boussagol chairs APCO Europe.



Arnaud Pochebonne

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

Abelow PR has been selected as agency of record for bespoke Napa and Sonoma wine tour company **Cultured Vine**, effective Oct. 1. Abelow will do news re-



leases, familiarization trips for journalists, promotional tie-ins and general brand awareness. They will also be arranging deskside interviews for the founder

with the luxury press. Cultured Vine gets its clientele into upscale, under-the-radar wineries. Abelow, which just celebrated 25 years in business, also represents such wine, spirits and travel clients as Veuve Cliquot and privately-guided tour company Kensington.

Marketing Maven is supporting business media relations for the **Crypto Invest Summit**, a conference focused on investing in blockchain technologies. The summit will be held from Oct. 22-24 at the Los Angeles Convention Center. Marketing Maven will conduct a public relations campaign, concentrating on top-tier business and general news media, that will run through the Crypto Invest Summit period. Marketing Maven CEO and president Lindsey Carnett will be featured on a panel discussing marketing and PR for security token offerings.

PAN Communications has added **CommerceCX**, a brand that provides enterprise digital solutions, and customer analytics platform **Custora** to its expanding martech roster. PAN will leverage its martech experience to drive awareness and market visibility for both brands. The announcement follows Custora's recent round of Series B funding, news that PAN helped promote during a critical growth period for the brand.

Manifest has been tabbed by Norwegian lifestyle brand **SWIMS** to build a global brand for the company and execute delivery of creative communications campaigns. Manifest's remit includes strategy, PR, influencer relations and brand activation. The agency will support the release of the company's Fall/Winter '18 and Spring/Summer '19 collections in addition to producing a creative influencer event for the new year.



Diffusion has been named public agency of record for logistics technology company **uShip**. Diffusion will be tasked with raising the company's profile and communicating its transparent marketplace approach. The agency will execute a media relations program targeting mainstream, consumer, technology and industry press, with the goal of positioning uShip as an industry leader and go-to shipping option for large goods.

SW Public Relations has been selected as agency of record for **Lesso Home New York Market**. Opening next year in Westbury, NY, Lesso Home New York Market will feature an extensive range of home furnishings and building materials, with showrooms for international manufacturers of home furnishings, interior décor products and building materials.

DIGITAL POLITICAL ADS SEEK TRANSPARENCY

The efforts of the Digital Advertising Alliance to increase transparency and accountability of digital political ads took a step forward.

The organization released guidelines that outline the creative specifications necessary for U.S. federal and state political advertisers to create and display the “Political Ad” icon, which would give readers a way to access information about the sources and funding of political ads.



The DAA’s guidelines say the Political Ad icon and/or wording should provide “clear, meaningful, and prominent notice” for ads that advocate the election or defeat of a candidate for federal office as well as in certain state-wide elections.

The icon should link to disclosures that include such things as the name of the political advertiser, along with reliable contact information; a link to a government database of contributions and expenditures for the advertiser, if applicable; and the names of the advertiser’s CEO, executive committee, board of directors or treasurer.

Compliance with the DAA’s political advertising guidance will be independently enforced by the Advertising Self-Regulatory Council of the Council of Better Business Bureaus and the Data & Marketing Association, a division of the Association of National Advertisers.

To see the guidelines, go to AboutPoliticalAds.org, which also includes an interactive map offering voters access to each U.S. state or territory’s election campaign database or election authority website.

BRUNSWICK REPS JLT IN MMC DEAL

Brunswick Group handles PR for UK’s Jardine Lloyd Thompson Group, which has agreed to be acquired by Marsh & McLellan Cos. New York-based insurance broker/risk management giant, in a deal valued at \$5.6B in cash considerations.

MMC is paying \$25.50 per-share for JLT, an outlay that represents a 33 percent jump over the Sept. 17 closing of its stock price, as part of its strategy to “be the pre-eminent global firm in the areas of risk strategy and people.”

Dan Glaser, MMC’s CEO, called the transaction a “complementary fit between our companies that creates a platform to deliver exceptional service to clients and opportunities for our colleagues.”

JLT CEO Dominic Burke will become vice chairman of MMC following the completion of the transaction, which is expected to close in the spring of 2019.

MMC, which bills itself as world’s leading professional services firm, has about 65K staffers and generates \$14B in revenues.

JLT is using Brunswick Group’s Tim Burns and Dania Saidam as PR advisors in the MMC transaction,

Tim Wise of Simon Robertson Assocs, is JLT’s financial counselor.



Dan Glaser

SINATRA SINGS PRAISES OF THE INFATUATION

The Infatuation, restaurant discovery platform, has hired Michael Sinatra as its first VP-communications.

He will handle media relations, internal/external PR and reputation management at the 10-year-old company launched by music business executives Chris Stang and Andrew Steinthal that offers reviews, guides and special events.



Michael Sinatra

Most recently, Sinatra was global external communications director at consumer/commercial products marketer Newell Brands and communications, PR, PA and social market leader at Whole Foods, where he developed partnerships for the organic grocer with The Infatuation. Sinatra began his PR career at FleishmanHillard in New York.

A key focus of Sinatra will be to re-introduce and expand the Zagat brand, which The Infatuation acquired from Google earlier this year.

Sinatra reports to CEO Stang.

SALESFORCE CEO MAKES TIME FOR TIME

Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff and his wife, Lynne, are buying *Time* magazine for \$190M cash from Meredith Corp, which acquired the Time Inc. magazine properties in January. The new owners promise to stay away from the day-to-day operations and editorial direction of the magazine.

Meredith president Tom Harty said Meredith is “pleased to have found such passionate buyers in Marc and Lynne Benioff for the Time brand,” which reaches 100M print and online readers monthly.

“Time has always been a trusted reflection of the state of the world, and reminds us that business is one of the greatest platforms for change,” the Benioffs said in a statement.

Meredith continues to look for buyers for *Sports Illustrated*, *Fortune* and *Money* to focus on its roster of women’s magazines.



Marc Benioff

HERNANDEZ HEADS FOR NCTA

The NCTA—Internet & Television Assn., has added Saul Hernandez as VP-government relations.

Most recently, the 15-year Capitol Hill veteran served as deputy chief of staff for North Carolina Democratic Congressman G.K. Butterfield.

Hernandez joins Amy Bender on NCTA’s government relations team. She joined the association earlier this month as VP-government relations & legislative counsel from FCC commissioner Michael O’Rielly’s staff.

NCTA represents broadband and pay TV businesses that account for 90 percent of the US cable market.

Michael Powell, former FCC chair, heads the group. Brian Dietz, former executive director of communications for AT&T Broadband in Sacramento, is senior VP-strategic communications.

BLUESHIRT PRACTICE TO ADVISE ON ACTIVISM

Investor relations firm The Blueshirt Group has launched a new corporate governance advisory and activism defense practice.

The Next Fifteen unit said this new practice would further the agency's ability to counsel its publicly-traded clients on corporate governance issues and help them identify vulnerabilities and proactively prepare for potential activist engagement.



Waheed Hassan

“Activism risk is significant for companies of all sizes,” Blueshirt managing partner Lisa Laukkanen told O'Dwyer's. “With over \$150 billion of assets under management, activist investors continue to exert pressure on companies as reflected in the increasing number of campaigns.”

The new practice will be led by Waheed Hassan, who has been appointed managing director. Hassan joins Blueshirt from governance consulting and proxy solicitation firm Alliance Advisors, where he served as managing director.

He was previously M&A and proxy contest research manager at Institutional Shareholder Services. Prior to that, he was a financial analyst at Capital One and also served as a senior research analyst with Indosuez W.I. Carr Securities, UBS Warburg and Merrill Lynch affiliate Khadim Ali Shah Bukhari.

Blueshirt Group, which caters primarily to technology clients, now represents approximately a third of U.S.-based tech-related IPOs. The San Francisco-based agency, which was founded in 1999 by Morgen-Walke Associates alumni, maintains additional operations in New York, Beijing and Stockholm.

Next Fifteen Communications acquired Blueshirt in 2010.

GPG MAKES MYLER MANAGING DIRECTOR

Katie Myler, a Burson-Marsteller alum who was previously senior media advisor to former U.K. Labour Party head Ed Miliband, has joined Glover Park Group, where she's been named a managing director in the government affairs firm's strategic communications practice.

Myler joins GPG from fellow WPP unit Burson-Marsteller, where she served as global practice managing director and was based in the PR giant's London and New York offices.

Previously, she served in the British Government as special advisor to both the Home Secretary and the UK Department of Health.

At GPG, Myler will provide crisis, strategic and media counsel. She'll be stationed in the agency's New York office.



Katie Myler

5W PR STANDS UP FOR HEROES

5W Public Relations will handle the Stand Up for Heroes event, which will include headliners Bruce Springsteen, Jon Stewart, Seth Meyers and others, slated for Madison Square Garden Nov. 5. Presented by the New York Comedy Festival and the Bob Woodruff Foundation, the Stand up for Heroes program will honor wounded veterans and their families.

The PR firm's consumer lifestyle and entertainment brands unit also represents the NYCF and Caroline Hirsch, founder of both events.

Celebrating its 15th anniversary, the NYCF runs from Nov. 5-11 and various venues throughout the city. It will include acts such as Conan O'Brien, Marc Maron and Jim Jeffries.

Festival organizer Hirsch is the founder of New York comedy club Carolines on Broadway.



MEDIA MANEUVERS

ESPN+, the sports network's streaming service, says it has over a million paid subscribers after five months in. While it features Major League Baseball, college sports, boxing, soccer and the UFC, ESPN+ does not carry live NFL or NBA games. Regardless, ESPN president Jimmy Pitaro says that “a wide range of sports fans have seen the value of ESPN+.” The service is part of the effort by Disney, ESPN's parent company, to steer its business away from traditional distribution models. Disney has a family-friendly streaming system in development, which it plans to bundle with ESPN+ and Hulu, after Disney's acquisition of 21st Century Fox assets gives it majority control of that streaming service.

Condé Nast has formed a Women's Video Network, which will be centered around *Glamour*. *Glamour*'s editor-in-chief, Samantha Barry, came to the magazine in January after serving as head of social media at CNN. *Allure*, *Self* and *Iris*, a social-led editorial and video platform for millennial women, are also included in the new network. In addition to original series, the network plans extensive coverage of *Glamour*'s Women of the Year Awards and Summit in November. Last year's video coverage of the event drew 75.6 million global total views.

BuzzFeed News has pulled the plug on its in-house podcast production team, according to a report in the *Wall Street Journal*. The company says it will still produce podcasts without the dedicated team, though most will be eliminated. The closure will result in just a few layoffs. The cutback comes as BuzzFeed is shifting its resources toward video. BuzzFeed is not the only company to scale back its podcast aspirations lately. Panoply, a podcast network started by The Slate Group, announced earlier this month that it was shutting down, and Amazon's Audible Originals podcasting unit laid off several employees earlier this year.



Samantha Barry

COMMENTARY

THE TRUMPISM OF COLIN, SERENA AND NIKE

President Trump is an unparalleled master of self-aggrandizement and victimization, claiming to make America great again while fighting the evils of a “corrupt” media and Robert Mueller’s “witch hunt.”

Colin Kaepernick, Serena Williams and Nike understand the pervasive forces of public ignorance and gullibility that led to Trump’s election and have effectively harnessed them for their own profit and gain.



Eric Starkman

Let’s begin with Kaepernick, possibly the only athlete to land a lucrative Nike endorsement deal for a performance on the sidelines. The Kaepernick narrative endorsed and promoted by Nike is that he’s a victim of discrimination because no team drafted him after he was benched by San Francisco and opted out of his contract. Quarterbacks with poorer records than Kaepernick’s have been

signed, so de facto the NFL must be discriminating against him because of his national anthem protests.

Here’s what people who get paid to focus on football have said about Kaepernick. ESPN’s Kevin Seifert wrote a column in March 2017 entitled “Colin Kaepernick’s biggest problem? Performance, not politics.” Seifert noted that Kaepernick was one of the league’s “least accurate quarterbacks” for two years. “When given a choice between players with relatively equal projections in terms of production, teams are likely to choose the one who brings what they perceive to be less controversy. What happens on the field is always the most important factor.”

Jay Mariotti of the *San Francisco Examiner* was highly critical of Kaepernick before his anthem protests and called on the 49ers to “dump” him because he let it be known he would prefer playing in New York where he was dating the celebrity girlfriend he lured away from teammate Aldon Smith. Quarterbacks are supposed to be leaders and instill unity, but Kaepernick was a divisive force. He was involved in a highly publicized on-field fight with Smith in training camp.

It’s noteworthy Kaepernick didn’t begin his anthem protests until he already was benched. Rather than risk everything, he found a creative way to keep himself relevant. Even if one chooses to believe that Kaepernick is genuinely concerned about the mistreatment of minorities, his endorsement of Nike is highly questionable. Racial discrimination is quite pervasive in the footwear industry and Nike is regarded as one of the biggest offenders.

Tellingly, Kaepernick hasn’t protested the widespread violence of football players off the field or expressed concerns about playing for a team ranked first in number of arrested players.

Serena Williams, who got trounced by Naomi Osaka at the recent U.S. Open, claimed she was a victim of “sexism” when the most respected umpire in tennis cited her for multiple penalties. The U.S. Open and other Grand Slam tennis tournaments are indeed guilty of sexism, but of the sort that Williams has never protested. Male and female players are both paid the same winnings, but male players have to play best of five sets, while women only have to play best of three. Equal pay for less work (and considerably less risk of injury).

When confronting the referee, Williams declared he would never again referee one of her games. Flaunting power and promising to vanquish his enemies is one of Trump’s signature traits. Another Trump trait is refusing to apologize, which Williams declined to do even after her coach admitted he was signaling to her from the sidelines, a violation of tournament rules.

Williams vowed to “continue to fight for women” while proudly sporting the Nike logo she likely receives a tidy sum to wear. Williams conveniently ignored, or is unaware, of the damning *New York Times* story in April about Nike’s mistreatment of female employees or the class action lawsuit charging that women at the company are devalued and demeaned.

Nike’s marketing folks have truly done Trump proud. The company is being hailed for its “courage” to promote Kaepernick, its logo was prominently displayed by a much-admired athlete claiming to fight for women’s rights, and its slick advertising campaign has received gushing media coverage. The public neither knows nor cares that Nike’s business practices and culture are at odds with the causes that Kaepernick and Williams profess to be fighting for.

Eric Starkman, a former financial journalist with major newspapers in the U.S. and Canada, managed an eponymous PR and crisis communications firm for more than 20 years.

