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WPP SCOOPS UP JEFFREYGROUP

WPP has acquired Miami-based JeffreyGroup, which has more than 330 staffers and an extensive network in Latin America.



Jeff Sharlach

Founded in 1993 by Jeff Sharlach, JeffreyGroup will maintain its brand in Latin America as a part of Hill+Knowlton Strategies. Brian Burlingame, who has been JeffreyGroup's CEO since 2015, will lead H+K's total Latin American operation.

WPP CEO Mark Read said Latin America remains a major growth opportunity for the ad/PR combine.

The addition of the JeffreyGroup will strengthen its established presence in the region and bring "deep-rooted experience of delivering tailored communications that resonate with audiences," according to Read.

JeffreyGroup has counseled American Airlines, Johnson & Johnson, Marriott International, Salesforce, Bacardi, TikTok, Amazon and Bayer.

It has offices in Mexico City, Brasilia, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and Buenos Aires.

FTI ADDS FBI CYBERSECURITY PRO

FTI Consulting has hired Brian Boetig, a 24-year veteran of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as senior managing director in its cybersecurity unit.



Brian Boetig

During his FBI stint, Boetig was director of the National Cyber Investigative Joint Task Force, which coordinates, integrates and shares information to support threat probes and intelligence for government decision-makers, infrastructure operators and companies. He also was assistant director of the FBI's international operations.

Boetig was the FBI lead on strategic engagements with law enforcement partners in the Five Eyes Alliance of the US, Canada, UK, Australia and New Zealand.

Anthony Ferrante, global head of FTI's cybersecurity unit, said Boetig's "experience with investigations, counterintelligence, cyber risk mitigation and incident response will greatly enhance our ability to support our clients all over the world."

Boetig is based in Seattle.

WEBER HIRES HAVAS HEALTH'S MASSAIA

Weber Shandwick has hired Louis Massaia, executive VP/ chief creative officer at Havas Health & You, as its first CCO for the North America healthcare group.

He will work on key accounts such as Moderna and Novartis and spearhead the creative strategy for the health team.

During his 25-year career, Massaia worked as EVP/creative director at both Saatchi & Saatchi Wellness and GSW/Palio and SVP/CD at The CementBloc.

He has handled clients such as Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson, Narcan, Celgene and Arena Pharma.

Weber Shandwick also has promoted Angela Mears to the New York chief creative officer slot.

The 11-year veteran of the Interpublic unit had been global executive creative director for the western region (Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle).

She led creative for McDonald's, Airbnb, Genentech, Columbia Sportswear and VMware.



Louis Massaia

PR NEEDED FOR PENNSYLVANIA PARKS

The Pennsylvania Recreation and Parks Society, the non-profit membership association that advocates for the Keystone State's local parks as well as its recreation and park professionals, is requesting proposals from marketing agencies.

PRPS is looking for an agency that can lead and grow its Good for You, Good for All campaign, which works to increase citizen engagement in Pennsylvania's local parks and recreation opportunities.

Scope of the work includes: handling content development, social media, and PR services; branding and promotions work; email marketing; creating content for blog posts as well as a monthly newsletter; and promotions of regional PRPS programming.

The contract calls for a year-long commitment, beginning in January 2023.

Proposals are due by 5:00 p.m. (ET) on October 7 and should be sent via email to herd@prps.org, using the subject line "RFP SUBMISSION - [AGENCY NAME]."

Questions should be directed to herd@prps.org with subject line format: "RFP QUESTION - [AGENCY NAME]."

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



ROKER RECEIVES DANIEL J. EDELMAN AWARD

Richard Edelman presented the inaugural Daniel J. Edelman Award to NBC weatherman Al Roker to recognize his social responsibility efforts at [PRSA/New York](#)'s 35th annual Big Apple Awards celebration on Sept. 22.



Al Roker

"I've never met Al until tonight, but I've never seen a guy with more energy and effervescence," said Edelman of the 45-year NBC-TV veteran.

He has appeared in films and TV shows and produced programs rooted in social impact through Al Roker Entertainment, said the CEO of [the No. 1 independent PR firm](#).

Edelman said Roker's strong social conscience is evidenced through his support of nonprofits like Ronald McDonald House and organizations such as Paralyzed Veterans of America and the Wounded Warrior Project.

The co-host of the 3rd Hour of "TODAY," said he was honored to receive the first Daniel J. Edelman Award. "The Edelman name is synonymous with the PR industry," he noted.

Roker talked about how journalists and PR people can shape public opinion and promote positive change. "We have to reach the public with facts and truth," he said.

Edelman considers Roker the ideal recipient of the award "because he embodies the values and principles that Dan Edelman founded our firm on."

The sold-out event was held at ASPIRE at One World Observatory of the World Trade Center.

LUND TAKES WPP HEALTH & WELLNESS POST

WPP has named Wendy Lund EVP, chief client officer for health and wellness.



Wendy Lund

Lund comes to the post from women's health company Organon, where she was chief communications officer. She previously served for over a decade as CEO at WPP's healthcare communications agency, GCI Health. Earlier in her career, she was vice president of marketing at Planned Parenthood.

In her new role, Lund will oversee WPP's efforts to support clients in the health and wellness sector, reporting to WPP chief client officer Lindsay Pattison.

HAVAS REBRANDS /AMO AS H/ADVISORS

France's Havas Group has rebranded its /amo network of global strategic communications firms as H/Advisors.

Stéphane Fouks, Havas EVP, will serve as executive chairman of H/Advisors. He is supported by co-CEOs Tom Johnson, who helms H/Advisors Abernathy, and Neil Bennett, H/Advisors Maitland chief.



The revamped network had over 1,400 staffers located in 35 cities in more than 20 countries.

They offer IR, M&A, restructuring, litigation, bankruptcy, reputation, policy, shareholder activism, private equity, alternative asset management, ESG, blockchain and crisis management services.

NEWS OF FIRMS

Matter launches Gusto, a creative content house specializing in commercials, branded content, podcasting, original shows and branded entertainment. Based in Newburyport, MA, Gusto employs a staff of 25 producers, editors, animators and cinematographers. "For more than a decade, we've understood the value that high-quality branded content adds to integrated PR and marketing campaigns, and the Gusto brand will better position our team



both with clients who already know our work, and companies that demand top-tier production," said Matter Principal and CEO Scott Signore.

MCD Partners, a digital marketing and experience design agency that is part of M&C Saatchi Worldwide, opens an office in Miami, joining its existing locations in New York City, Chicago and Rochester. MCD creative directors Simon Foreman and Ron Wessels will lead the office, pursuing business leads in the financial services sector as well as the startup, hospitality, media and entertainment space. The new Miami office is situated in the heart of Wynwood, Miami's arts district.

Radioactive PR founder Rich Leigh joins forces with Alex Wilson, a former creative strategist and business development lead at Hill+Knowlton Strategies, to present [the High Flyers PR Course](#), a 10-lesson online public relations course that aims to solve the problem of how to receive top professional training in the world of hybrid work. In addition to weekly online video lessons, the course includes a Slack community where students can interact, Q&A sessions with Rich Leigh and an end-of-term assessment with grading and feedback. The first lesson will begin on Monday, November 14.

The Next Practices Group, a network of founder-driven firms that includes [The Bliss Group](#), The Next Practice and NextTech Communications, introduces a "Shared Services" team. The team will be led by chief operating officer Michael Gehb. It consists of leaders in finance, human resources and information technology and will also provide expertise that includes tax, real estate, legal and business operations. "A great shared services team unlocks value for our founders and, ultimately, for our clients," said The Next Practices Group chair Bob Pearson.



TGI Sport, a sports technology, media and marketing company that works with such organizations as FIFA, Mediapro, Major League Soccer and US Soccer, acquires virtual media solutions provider Interregional Sports Group. ISG founders Simon Burgess and Tony Ragan will now lead "ISG powered by TGI Sport" under TGI Sport global CEO Martin Jolly and will also work closely with TGI's board. ISG's offerings include rights sales, content creation and distribution of virtual media through live sporting events.

Sēd Communications, a female-run marketing agency founded by DevriesGlobal and Porter Novelli vet Loretta Markevics, launches The Greenhouse, an in-house incubator that invents brands and products to directly support the startup community. The Greenhouse plans to launch one new brand per year, with profits to be invested back into marketing those brands. Sēd's agency team supplies all marketing support for the Greenhouse brands and as the owners of the brands they launch, the agency will use Greenhouse brands as a testing ground to experiment with marketing tactics.

OP-EDS ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

While digitization may have changed almost everything in the PR industry since the popularization of the World Wide Web in the 1990s, there's one exception: the op-ed.

The op-ed column, which first appeared on its own page under that name in the *New York Times* on September 21, 1970, has if anything become more important than ever—largely by staying the same (even if the Times replaced the term op-ed with “guest essay” last year in its online Opinion section).

Digitization has brought such changes as allowing many op-eds to display posted comments in real time. It also enables 600 million blogs to express opinions on the web and in millions of daily LinkedIn posts. Yet the prestige of thought leadership that comes with writing an op-ed for a major news outlet has not been diminished by the digital world.

How many times does an influential electronic media outlet base an interview on a just-published op-ed? I have heard reporters on CNBC's Squawk Box and multiple reporters on Bloomberg Radio and TV promote an upcoming executive interview because a guest penned an op-ed in a major daily that morning. The op-ed is, at times, the news hook.

Former president Trump turned an op-ed into front-page news when, in 2018, someone reportedly in his administration anonymously published a critical column in the *New York Times* that called Mr. Trump “impetuous, adversarial, petty and ineffective.” The President demanded to know who wrote it but could not find out until 2020 when his Homeland Security chief of staff, Miles Taylor, took credit after resigning.

Also in 2018, Yale University researchers conducted a study which determined that op-ed columns result in long-lasting impact on people's views among both the general public and policy experts. That study, published in the *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, found that op-eds swayed the opinions of Republicans and Democrats in roughly equal percentages. According to Alexander Coppock, assistant professor of political science at Yale and the study's lead author, “We found that op-ed pieces have a lasting effect on people's views regardless of their political affiliation or their initial stance on an issue.”

Since 1970, op-eds have been important to clients working to build or sustain their corporate reputation. Nearly every new client I have talked to throughout my 44-year PR career has asked about developing an op-ed for their CEO aimed at the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post* or *Financial Times*. I always tell them the reality is that very few op-eds in those top-tier news outlets are from CEOs, but rather from elected representatives (even the president), government officials, professors, economists, money managers or think tank leaders. It also helps to have a well-reviewed new book just published. And many published op-eds are commissioned by the opinion editors, not pitched by a PR person.

It's hopeful to see that after all these decades, the op-ed is more than holding its own. Keep them in your media plan.

Andy Tannen is president of Tannen Corporate Communications, a corporate reputation consultancy. Previously, he worked in corporate communications at Publicis Groupe's MSL for 28 years, with clients such as IBM, United Technologies, Roche, Honeywell, BP and many other companies.



Andy Tannen

ON THE MOVE

CEDIA, the global association for the home technology industry, names **Christine DeJoy** VP of communications. DeJoy most recently served as VP at Actual Agency. She has also worked on U.S. and international broadcast and syndicated programming for NBC, Bravo, Fremantle and CBS. At CEDIA, DeJoy will be responsible for guiding the association's global communications strategy, which includes industry awareness efforts, media outreach and building relationships with affiliated trade associations.

Brunswick Group brings on **Pascal Saint-Amans** as a partner in the firm's Paris office, effective November 1. Saint-Amans has been director of the Center for Tax Policy and Administration at The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, an international organization with 38 member countries, since 2012. He was previously an official in the French Ministry for Finance. At Brunswick, Saint-Amans will advise clients on policy and regulatory matters, including tax-related issues.

athenahealth, which provides network-enabled software and services for medical groups and health systems, hires **Stacy Simpson** as chief marketing officer. Simpson was most recently CMO and global head of corporate responsibility, diversity, equity and inclusion at professional services firm Genpact. She previously led marketing and communications at Publicis Sapient. In her new post, Simpson will oversee athenahealth's segment marketing, brand and communications, and research and editorial strategy functions.

SPI Group brings on **Stacey Hajdak** as SVP. Hajdak most recently served as VP of marketing & communications for Affiliated Distributors, a marketing and buying group in the industrial and construction space. She has also been director of marketing and communications for Aqua America, chief of corporate communications for Defense Logistics Agency; and director of communications for the Bucks County, PA government. At SPI, Hajdak serves as a senior account leader and counselor.

Strategic Elements hires **Kathy Didawick** as a strategic partner. Didawick also joins the company's political consulting agency, Kdence. Didawick was previously vice president of political and external affairs for the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. She also serves as the President of The Dovetail Group. Earlier in her career, she served on the staffs of U.S. Senators Conrad Burns (R-MT), Don Nickles (R-OK) and Paula Hawkins (R-FL). “She has a proven track record for developing winning strategies on complex policy initiatives,” said Strategic Elements president and CEO Christine Stineman.

Open Systems, a cybersecurity services provider, appoints **May Mitchell** CMO. Mitchell joins the company from cloud security platform iboss, where she served as senior vp of marketing. She was previously vp of marketing and global channel for Cylance, an AI-driven endpoint prevention solution.



Pascal Saint-Amans



Stacey Hajdak

ALASKA HOUSING FINANCE CORP. SEEKS PR

The Alaska Housing Finance Corp. is looking for a partner to develop a strategic communications program to advance its mission of providing Alaskans access to safe, quality and affordable housing.



The selected firm “will deploy relevant tactical and visual communications for audiences using a combination of paid, earned, social and earned media,” according to its RFP. It is expected to have an “awareness and appreciation for Alaska’s diverse peoples,” a strong crisis communications background, content creation savvy and the skills to comprehend complex and bureaucratic systems.

The communications partner will work closely with AHFC’s department of governmental relations and public affairs, and its web/digital contractor.

AHFC will issue a two-year contract with the option to extend for two additional three-year periods.

Proposals are due Oct. 5 at submittals@ahfc.us
[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

NIKE’S BLACKBURN TO UNITED MINDS CEI POST

Nike’s Nadine Redd Blackburn has joined United Minds, which is part of The Weber Shandwick Collective, as executive VP for culture, equity & inclusion behavior & systemic change. She had been head of diversity, equity and inclusion at Nike North America, One Nike Marketplace, Jordan and Converse units.



**Nadine Redd
Blackburn**

At United Minds, she will support the efforts of clients to improve representation, equity, inclusion and belonging.

Blackburn will join Emil Hill, executive VP, to co-lead TWSC’s culture, equity and inclusion specialty.

This expanded capability advances the data-backed, culture-centered DE&I counsel that Weber Shandwick and

United Minds have offered for nearly a decade.

Through CEI, the agencies will help clients manage DE&I and culture as business imperatives and support the change management that is critical to achieving company goals.

CITADEL’S MCEVILY MOVES TO VENTAS

Molly McEvily, who was COO-global affairs at alternative investment giant Citadel, has joined Ventas as VP-corporate communications.



Molly McEvily

At Citadel, McEvily handled PR, internal communications, reputation management, executive thought leadership, branding and philanthropic engagement.

McEvily joined Citadel, which has more than \$50B in assets under management, in 2011 as executive assistant to the office of the CEO.

Chicago-based Ventas is a real estate trust that invests in senior housing, medical offices/outpatient facilities, life science centers and hospitals. It owns 1,200 properties in the US, Canada and UK.

Ventas CEO Debra Cafaro called McEvily an accomplished PA professional, thinker and strategist.

FGS REPS CERES’ CLIMATE DISCLOSURE PUSH

[FGS Global](#) is supporting Ceres Inc., the Boston-based sustainability advocacy nonprofit, in issues related to the Securities and Exchange Commission’s climate disclosure ruling process.

SEC chair Gary Gensler told the Senate Banking Committee on Sept. 15 that the agency has the legal authority to enact rules protecting investors from the financial risks associated with climate change.

Ceres CEO Mindy Lubber wants the SEC to reach common ground on the mandatory climate disclosure and finalize the rule as quickly as possible.

As the SEC mulls the climate disclosure rule, Ceres reports that extreme weather events caused an estimated \$65B in losses worldwide during the first half of 2022.

That number is expected to jump with growing greenhouse gas emissions and rising average temperatures.

FGS has a seven-member team on the Ceres push.

That includes partners Susan Brophy, who was president Clinton’s chief of staff and legislative affairs strategist, and Brian Gaston, aide to Republican Conference chairmen Dick Arney and John Boehner.

KETCHUM TO HANDLE AADA

Ketchum is named agency of record for the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, a nonprofit membership organization for mental health professionals and providers of public resources.

Ketchum will work to further establish ADAA’s mental health leadership and enlist more members, spokespeople and sponsors for the organization. The agency’s Washington, D.C., team will lead the account, which will cover enterprise communications, executive visibility, earned and paid social media and digital campaigns, corporate partnerships and event planning.

“Their professional experience — and passion — for our work is why we selected them as our partners,” said ADAA executive director Susan Gurley.

FH’S CHOI-WILES DRIVES TO AUDI

Whaewon Choi-Wiles, who was most recently general manager, SVP and at [FleishmanHillard](#), comes on board at Audi of America as director of corporate communications.

Choi-Wiles had been at FH since 2010, serving in positions that also included brand practice leader and interim chief diversity, equity and inclusion officer.

At Audi of America, Choi-Wiles will lead communications efforts focused on shaping its brand reputation. She will lead brand storytelling, executive visibility, internal and corporate communications, reporting to Audi of America’s SVP and CCO, Emilie Cotter.

“Whaewon’s wealth of experience across industries, strategic thinking and creative approach to corporate storytelling brings expertise that will help Audi of America shape our path forward for key stakeholders,” said Cotter.



Ceres



**Anxiety & Depression
Association of America**
Triumphing Through Science, Treatment, and Education



Whaewon Choi-Wiles

STAGWELL STARTS RISK & REPUTATION UNIT

Stagwell has launched a bipartisan risk and reputation unit to counsel clients on emerging, policy, political and social issues.



Mark Penn

Mark Penn, Stagwell CEO, said businesses often depend on expertise from one side of the political aisle without considering the overall financial implications of a public position.

“Our team goes beyond the purpose-marketing units in today’s landscape to bring true, bipartisan political insights and tested business acumen closer to the war room,” said Penn.

The operation will include executives from Stagwell’s Democratic strategic PR firm SKDK, Republican digital-first political communications shop Targeted Victory and IR/financial PR agency [Sloane & Co.](#)

They will audit issues that are most important to stakeholders, develop proactive/reactive strategies and monitor the impact on positions on corporate reputation and overall performance.

HABERMAN HELPS MINNESOTA ON E-CIGS PUSH

The Minnesota Dept. of Health has selected Haberman for a campaign to educate young people about the health risks surrounding e-cigarette use.



The Minneapolis firm will create a youth-led engagement effort, creating “ambassadors” to represent the prevention initiative.

Brian Wachtler, Haberman president, said the goal is to empower young people to become leaders and advocates in the communities.

The effort, which will launch early next year, will feature brand/identity creation, experiential & event planning, social & community activation, PR and paid media.

MDH released an RFP for the campaign earlier this year. Haberman has worked with the MDH in the past on anti-smoking efforts.

PAN AM’S KRIENDLER DIES AT 76

Jeff Kriendler, the public voice of Pan American World Airlines during its last turbulent decade of existence, died Sept. 3 after suffering from several serious illnesses over the years. He was 76.



Jeff Kriendler

He joined Pan Am as a management trainee in 1968 and rose to the VP-corporate communications post in 1982.

Kriendler handled the sale of Pan Am’s huge Pacific network in 1985; the Lockerbie, Scotland bombing of Flight 103 in 1988; and the ensuing bankruptcy and cessation of operations in 1991.

Kriendler was born in New York City to Florence and Bob Kriendler, one of the owners of the legendary “21 Club.”

After he suffered a mild stroke following Pan Am’s Chapter 11 filing, Kriendler moved to Miami, where he kept active as a member of the airline’s historical foundation.

Ed Trippe, son of Pan Am founder, Juan Trippe, said of Kriendler: “Jeff was Pan Am.”

MEDIA MANEUVERS

LinkedIn signs up Courtney Coupe, who was most recently SVP of content strategy and operations at CNN Digital, as its first head of original programming. The social media platform, which recently launched a podcast network, has been investing in original content and Coupe is charged with leading a newly formed original programming team that will bring its efforts together, overseeing the strategy, development and production of all original video and audio content. LinkedIn’s editorial team numbers more than 180 employees across 16 countries.



Courtney Coupe

Apple Music has signed on as the sponsor for the Super Bowl halftime show, taking over from Pepsi, which backed the event for the past 10 years. According to *Sports Business Journal*, the five-year deal is worth approximately \$50 million per year. Last year’s Emmy-winning edition, which featured Dr. Dre, Snoop Dogg, Eminem, Mary J. Blige and Kendrick Lamar, averaged 103.4 million viewers, up seven percent from the previous year.

Parade magazine, the Sunday newspaper supplement that was launched in 1941, will cease print publication after its November 6 issue. The magazine will now only appear in the digital editions of the newspapers that run it. According to a report on MediaPost, Parade currently appears in about 700 newspapers. The Arena Group, which also owns such brands as TheStreet and *Sports Illustrated*, acquired Parade’s parent, AMG/Parade, earlier this year for \$16.3 million.

O’DWYER’S STAFFER PENS NOVEL ABOUT PR

Jon Gingerich, senior editor of *O’Dwyer’s*, has published a satirical novel about the crisis management industry titled *The Appetite Factory*.

The novel was published by Keylight Books, an imprint of Turner Publishing Company. Turner acquired the novel last year.

The Appetite Factory is about a PR pro named Leonard Lundell, who leads the crisis management team at a medium-sized Madison Avenue PR firm—and has his own crisis. Specifically, he enjoys eating things with no nutritional value: pencils, carpet, laundry detergent, among other inanimate objects.

Lundell is able to hide his habit until a low-ranking employee of a prized new client discovers his secret and blackmails him. Eventually, the pair develop a cynical new crisis management model where they convince companies to hire them to manufacture fake crises so the media will give them coverage.

In a [promotional video](#), Gingerich said the novel is a comment on today’s “scandal-obsessed news cycle.”

Gingerich, who is also a fiction instructor at the Gotham Writers Workshop, has edited *O’Dwyer’s* print magazine since 2006. In 2019, his short story, “[Thornhope, Indiana](#),” was named winner of *The Saturday Evening Post’s* “2020 Great American Fiction Contest.”

The Appetite Factory can be purchased through [the publisher’s website](#), as well as from [Amazon](#) and [Barnes & Noble](#).



Jon Gingerich

COMMENTARY



Douglas Ramsey

Beyond Meat has suffered just about the worst PR disaster that could hit a company that makes plant-based meat products.

Douglas Ramsey, COO of BM, allegedly bit the nose of another man on Sept. 17 after they bumped cars while leaving the parking lot after an Arkansas Razorbacks football game in Fayetteville.

The NBC-TV affiliate reported that Ramsey chomped on his victim's snout so hard that he tore flesh.

Was he that hungry?

Reeling from the PR crisis, BM suspended Ramsey on Sept. 20. His PR misplay only compounds the company's woes.

The company has reported flat sales of \$256M for the first half of the year. Its net loss widened from \$43M to \$187M.

It blamed an uncertain near-term economic outlook due to a laundry list of macroeconomic issues, including "inflation and rising interest rates, increasing concerns about the likelihood of a recession and COVID-19 and its potential impact on consumer behavior and demand levels, challenges related to labor availability and supply chain disruptions, partially attributable to recent geopolitical tensions."

BM left its biggest challenge off the list. The novelty factor of eating a meatless hamburger has worn off.

Consumers hunger for authenticity in their lives, which is bad news for BM.

The company's stock, which traded as high as \$115.48 during the past 52 weeks, now trades at its \$14.61 52-week low range.

News of Ramsey's road rage may have been the last straw for BM's investors.

Saudi culture czar... Richard Edelman has registered with the Justice Dept. as a foreign agent for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Culture.

The CEO of the No. 1 independent PR firm is to provide culture-centric advice, strategic counsel and stakeholder engagement recommendations through communications support and media outreach, according to the FARA filing.

Edelman's shop in June inked a one-year, \$800K contract with the Ministry of Culture to help it reach its goal of "building a vibrant, thriving and ambitious nation."

The Ministry plans a crucial role in delivering on Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's "Vision 2030" transformation program.

ESG threatens democracy? Vivek Ramaswamy, founder of Strive Asset Management and the No. 1 scourge of environmental, social and governance investing, makes a novel case against stakeholder capitalism in [an essay that he wrote for The Economist](#).

He thinks it's flat-out wrong to grant executives from trillion-dollar financial institutions the power to implement social values.

"Part of what it means to live in a democracy is for those

questions to be determined by the citizenry—publicly through debate and privately at the ballot box—where each person's view is unadjusted according to the number of dollars that he controls in the marketplace," wrote Ramaswamy.

He believes everyday citizens are frustrated and feel powerless when corporate elites use the market climate to settle what the author considers political questions (e.g., global warming).

In Ramaswamy's view: ESG poisons democracy.

And speaking of corporate elites: Howard Lutnick, CEO of Cantor Fitzgerald, delivers the goods for Donald Trump.

A Cantor Fitzgerald SPAC paved the way for video-sharing platform Rumble to begin trading on the NASDAQ on Sept. 19.

Rumble is the conservative video network that is backed by right-wing billionaire Peter Thiel.

The Trump Media & Technology Group, which runs the Truth Social Twitter knock-off, in August joined Rumble's ad platform and is a potential customer for its future cloud offering.

The company had an intoxicating first day of trading as the stock went off at \$12.04, hit a high of \$18.52 and closed at \$16.81.

Investors sobered up on Day 2 as the stock closed at \$12.79. It is trading at \$12.29.

Where was the PR pushback?... Boeing has agreed to pay \$200M to settle charges that it and former CEO Dennis Muilenburg made materially misleading public statements about its 737 Max following crashes in 2018 and 2019.

A press release is at the heart of the matter.

[According to the SEC, Boeing's PR team huddled](#) with engineers and lawyers on Nov. 15, 2018 to draft a press release following the crash in Indonesia.

The initial draft called the 737 Max either "a safe airplane" or that it "continued to be safe to fly." Certain versions of the release noted that Boeing engineers were working with the FAA to expedite and certify new flight control software for the plane.

On Nov. 20, Muilenburg complained in an email that "we are spending too much time playing defense. We need to start playing some offense." The next day he reviewed the press release and recommended removing the reference to the flight control system.

The final press release stated that Boeing's customers and passengers "have assurances that the 737 Max is as safe as any airline that ever flown the skies."

The CEO approved the release on Nov. 27 and emailed: "looks great. . . .factual and sticks to the report while making our key reports. Good to go."

The SEC order says Boeing and Muilenburg knew there was an ongoing safety issue with the flight control system but assured the public that the plane was safe.

Muilenburg agreed to pay \$1M for his role in the cover-up, but what about the PR staffers, engineers and lawyers who decided to drop the reference to the flight control system?

Shouldn't they be held accountable? —Kevin McCauley