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O'Dwyer's

Communications & new media

March 2010 | Vol. 24 No. 3

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February: *Environmental & P.A.*

March: *Food & Beverage*

April: *Broadcast & Social Media*

May: *PR Firm Rankings*

June: *Global & Multicultural*

July: *Travel & Tourism*


August: *Financial/I.R.*

September: *Beauty & Fashion*

October: *Healthcare & Medical*

November: *High-Tech*

December: *Entertainment & Sports*



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Media needs to dissociate from blog sensationalism

Our top news networks are co-opting the lowest, most sensationalistic denominators of celebrity and gossip news in a desperate attempt to lure viewers, resulting in an aesthetic that lies somewhere between a performance art installation and the lost scenes from a Felini film.

Recent media clunkers like “Snowmageddon,” a failed series of attempts to hype the winter weather as something akin to a Michael Bay movie, was a predictably stupid follow-up from seeing our nation’s talking heads chase an empty balloon around the Colorado countryside this fall. Reports of a salacious *New York Times* exposé on NY Governor David Paterson initially became a bigger story than the scandal itself, putting the Governor in crisis mode before he knew what the damage was (disappointing the gossip-hungry masses, the scandal ended up involving a member of his staff, though Paterson’s association led him to step down from reelection). The day after a devastating 8.8-magnitude earthquake hit Chile on Feb. 27, *cnn.com*’s third-top headline was “Dog the Bounty Hunter Evacuated” in relation to Hawaii’s non-existent tsunami. How is this news?

This stray-bullet journalism got bad enough with the creation of a 24-hour news cycle, but it’s only gotten worse now that the media is forced to compete with the unfathomably messy signal-to-noise ratio perpetuated by blogs. Gawker’s Nick Denton has publicly promised to break stories before the facts have been confirmed (a philosophy reiterated by TechCrunch’s Michael Arrington). *Wired* magazine Founder Kevin Kelly famously stated that all books should be melded into a “single book.” These are just a few examples of the rampant idiocy permeating the technocracy’s sorry excuse for “journalism.” The mainstream networks need to stop aping these tactics while they still maintain a narrow lead.

Simple math shows if you create a bottomless news hole, you’re bound to end up with a lot of garbage. We’ve always had a habit of turning to outlets that parrot our own preconceived beliefs. Now there’s a limitless supply of ignorant, irresponsibly conceived channels tuned to our subjective tastes, its collective output forming a homogenized mish-mash with diminishing returns, accountability be damned. Quantity trumps quality. Time is more important than the facts. Got the news wrong? Who cares — all that matters is you got the story first.

One has to wonder: If “print is dead,” why don’t even the biggest blogs break news in 2010? The Huffington Post still relies primarily on editorials and gossip links, leaving the news-breaking business to “dinosaurs” like the *New York Times*. Of course, a typical response to anyone who dares question the technocracy is that you’re a Luddite, that you don’t understand new technology. Obviously. This sort of smugness has become a commonplace reaction from dedicated followers of Web 2.0’s totalitarian crowd-think. The Internet is a wonderful thing, capable of connecting people across the globe, giving individuals access to a diverse spread of information and allowing companies unlimited brand reach. Technology is supposed to work for us, you see; it should aid our development and facilitate our quest for information, not conflict with it. When technology is programmed to leave wisdom to the control of crowds, we all suffer for it.

There is an underlying habit to believe technology will eventually solve these problems, that things will “work themselves out,” a claim akin to free market enthusiasts’ responses when the stock market crashes or a religious person’s admonitions when tragedy strikes. The biggest problem with technological determinism is that it undermines humans’ role in all this. Science is millennia away from understanding human concepts like “quality,” so why do we presume our still-nascent machines could do so? Computers can’t determine the value of friendships, so why think the number of our Facebook friends has any bearing on our real world social skills? How about art, loyalty or trust? Finally, how about privacy? Technology understands none of these concepts, yet has made an indelible impact on each. It is our job to ensure that the Internet continues to harness our human potential without interfering with it. As long as we remain in control, quantity should never trump quality. ●

— Jon Gingerich

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Study links Facebook fans to profits

By Jon Gingerich

A first-of-its kind study may finally confirm Facebook's potential as a marketing powerhouse. Conducted by Rice University's Jones School of Business, the study found that patrons who are members of a business' Facebook fan site spent more money at that business, made more frequent visits and revealed higher brand attachment than patrons who aren't in-touch with the business' social media base. The data could be the last piece of proof marketers need to convince clients that social media is an effective tool for communicating with customers — or at least with its die-hard fan base.

The study picked a local retailer (in this case, it was Houston-based café chain Dessert Gallery) and set up a Facebook fan page for the company. They then surveyed more than 1,700 patrons over a period of three months (the contacts were culled from DG's mailing list).

Among the findings: patrons who are fans of the company's Facebook page made 36% more visits to the store each month than its real-world counterparts, spent 33% total dollars more at the chain (and 45% of their total "eating-out" dollars), reported 14% higher emotional attachment to the brand and 41% more "psychological loyalty."

It goes without saying that individuals who take the time to track down and join a business' Facebook fan site are probably bigger fans of the brand than the casual customer, and as such, are more likely to spend more on a brand's products or services.

Utpal M. Dholakia, a Jones Associate Professor of Marketing who conducted research for the study, said the results are helpful in showing that Facebook fan pages offer an effective, affordable means to reach out to existing loyalists. As such, Dholakia said a Facebook marketing program might work especially well for iconic, larger brands, and erred against jumping to conclusions in believing the medium's power to be a marketing panacea.

"Social media marketing must be employed judiciously with other types of marketing programs," he said.

Currently home to more than 350 million active users, Facebook is the world's largest social media site. In February, web analytics research firm Compete reported that Facebook is now the second most popular Web site in the U.S., beating Yahoo and only slightly behind number-one site Google.

Facebook remains unmatched when it comes to quality metrics. The site comprises about 67% of total global social media

time, with average daily usage of about six hours. With 329.6 billion display ad sales placements in 2009, the site still plays a second (though increasingly narrow) fiddle to News Corp.'s MySpace, which took in 367.6 billion ads, according to a February ComScore report. Most analysts agree these slots could switch later this year.

Marketers focus on mobile

Social media — and Facebook in particular — has been the apple of marketers' collective eye for some time. Now due to recent growth and increased technological capabilities, marketers and researchers have turned an increasing amount of attention to social media's power in the mobile arena, where many feel the next evolutionary step in marketing interaction will take place.

Facebook in February announced that the company now claims 100 million mobile users, a 35% increase since September. This means nearly 25% of total Facebook users now regularly connect to the site via phone.

A February study by Ruder Finn revealed that Americans are now spending 2.7 hours per day on mobile Internet connections, with 91% using their mobile connections to socialize, compared to 79% of users who rely on desktop computer connections.

Perhaps the most telling piece of data in the study: 43% of mobile Internet users are going online for the sole purpose of connecting with others on social networking sites, and 45% are going to these sites solely to post comments.

"Younger people are trying to stay connected while maintaining a very busy lifestyle," said Marty McGough, Director of Ruder Finn's RF Insights division. "They're using this as a primary source of social interaction. This becomes a social conversation and they use the technology as a tool for keeping in touch."

McGough said he was initially shocked to find that "transitory devices" were responsible for so much online socializing, as well as for online activities that "require effort": uploading and downloading photos, going to chat rooms, or leaving comments on message boards.

In terms of demographics alone, the nascent niche is a goldmine. If marketers can better understand mobile users' online destination, aspirations and intent, they have better guidance upon which to harness Facebook's existing power as a marketing tool, be it for giant retailers or cafés in Houston.

"I think there's a great deal of market potential," McGough said. "It seems that these devices provide a unique opportunity for marketers because we know where they're going to socialize. There are unique opportunities to get into that space." ●

Yelp faces suit over ad sale "extortion"

By Jon Gingerich

Two law firms have filed a class-action suit against Yelp, accusing the online user review site of extortive ad sales practices.

The suit, filed in U.S. District Court by Beck & Lee in Miami and The Weston Firm in San Diego, alleges that Yelp sales reps contact local businesses and ask for money in the form of advertising contracts. In exchange, Yelp promises to remove comments disparaging the business on the popular review site.

In this case, the lawsuit alleges that Yelp tried to coerce \$3,600 out of a Long Beach veterinary hospital over the course of 12 months in return for the deletion of negative reviews of the business on the site, a practice attorney Jared Beck referred to as "high-tech extortion."

"The victims tend to be small businesses, such as our client, who often have no choice but to pay Yelp exorbitant sums in order to

prevent further harm to their livelihoods," he said.

This isn't the first time the San Francisco-based Web 2.0 company has been accused of the practice. Last year, Yelp was the focus of an in-depth exposé from Oakland-based East Bay Express that likened the company to an online extortion racket. In the article, "Yelp and the Business of Extortion 2.0," East Bay Express interviewed local business owners who said they received calls from Yelp employees offering to hide negative customer reviews in return for ad sales.

"Several business owners likened Yelp to the Mafia, and one said she feared its retaliation," the article said. "To these mom-and-pop business owners, Yelp's sales tactics are coercive, unethical, and, possibly, illegal."

Yelp was founded in 2004 by former PayPal employees Jeremy Stoppelman and Russel Simmons. The company's page views recently surpassed that of long-time rival Citysearch. Yelp's 2009 revenues were an estimated \$30 million. ●

FAIR wants PR off the air

By Kevin McCauley

Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) is circulating a petition to press cable news channels to identify the corporate ties of pundits who pontificate on affairs of the day.

"Scores of pundits appearing on cable news networks are paid corporate lobbyists and PR flaks — and the networks aren't disclosing their corporate ties," says the organization on its website.

The move follows a report in *The Nation* (March 1) that found at least 75 registered lobbyists, PR pros and corporate officials appeared on CNN, Fox News, Fox Business Network, MSNBC and CNBC to promote the financial or political interests of a client without being identified.

The petition calls for "clear guidelines

regarding conflicts of interest for contributors and guests — and that you enforce those rules to ensure that viewers aren't being exposed to corporate PR masquerading as 'analysis.'"

The Nation's Sebastian Jones takes special umbrage with MSNBC for allowing former Public Strategies Inc. executive Richard Wolffe to serve as fill-in host for Keith Olbermann on "Countdown." That seat was later taken by former Vermont Governor Howard Dean, who does consulting work for drug companies.

FAIR also takes issue with loophole-rid-

dled guidelines such as MSNBC disclosing corporate ties on its website rather than on-the-air.

Founded in 1986, FAIR is a New York City-based progressive media criticism group that describes itself as a "national media watch group" that calls on structural reform to break up the "dominant media conglomerates."

On the FAIR website, the organization defines its mission as working to "invigorate the First Amendment by advocating for greater diversity in the press and by scrutinizing media practices that marginalize public interest, minority and dissenting viewpoints." ●

Media Briefs

NYT squeezes out profit for 2009

The New York Times Company posted fourth quarter 2009 net of \$90.9M, up from \$27.6M in '08, as the print and digital company eked out a \$19.9M profit for the year amid an improved digital ad climate. It lost \$57.8M in 2008.

Ad revenue fell 15 percent in the fourth quarter over '08, including a 20% drop in print ads which was offset by 11% growth in digital. Total revenue for Q4 was \$681M, down 11.5% from '08.

For the full year, the Times' \$19.9M profit compared with a \$57.8M loss in 2008. President and CEO Janet Robinson said advertisers increased their rate of spending across its print and digital properties, while restructuring, new products and increased reach also contributed to gains.

She said "visibility remains limited for advertising" and expects the rate of decline for print ads to improve modestly in 2010 from Q4 of 2009. Digital ads are expected to continue growing.

The Times Co. said it slashed its debt under the \$1B mark by more than \$290M to stand at \$769M.

Its About.com property saw an operating profit gain of 80% in Q4 to \$18M and total Internet revenues for the company were up 10.3% to \$102M.

Robinson noted the company's plans to introduce a paid model for NYTimes.com in 2011, which she sees as an additional revenue stream that will preserve the company's "robust" ad business.

The company cut operating costs by \$475M in 2009, a more than 17% cut.

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PR/service firms say “good riddance” to ‘09

Publicly traded PR firms and service providers happily closed the financial books on a miserable '09 and look forward to slow but steady recovery for the remainder of this year.

By Greg Hazley

Publicis Groupe CEO Maurice Levy, who instituted a pay and hiring freeze, says he's ready to invest in talent as the ad/PR conglomerate embarks on a new phase of profit margin growth. The Frenchman does warn of a few “dips and bumps” ahead.

Publicis said the “first signs of recovery” appeared in the fourth quarter of 2009 as it reported revenue of 1.26B Euro, down 7.6% from 2008.

The company said, in U.S. dollars, its 2009 revenue would be \$6.29 billion, down 8.9% from last year.

Profit slid nearly 10% for the year over '08 to 403M Euro (about \$555M).

Levy called '09 a “paradox” for Publicis as the ad market was slammed with a double-digit downturn from 12-14%, while his company gained some market share on new business and limited its decrease to 6.5%. He's banking the future on digital and emerging markets, both of which will add up to 60% of Publicis' revenue down the road.

Publicis, which owns PR units like MS&L and Publicis Consultants, took a hit from General Motors' bankruptcy last year, but the company said the North American region held up on a high proportion of digital services (34.6% of its revenue) in falling 4.2% overall to 2.09B Euro. Publicis acquired Razorfish last year and owns Digitas.

Like its competitors, Publicis worked to slash cuts last year and personnel costs were down nearly 5% from 2008.

OMC PR slid 8.5% in Q4

“As economies improve, we believe the worst of the recession and its impact is behind us,” said Omnicom's CEO John Wren in a conference on Feb. 10, adding the company anticipates many clients will “at least modestly” increase spending in the second half of 2010.

Omnicom's profit fell 15.3% to \$229.6M in the fourth quarter of 2009 compared with Q4 of '08 as global revenue slipped 3.1% to \$3.3 billion. OMC all-time high of \$53.10 — \$107.21 before a two-for-one split — was in December 1999.

PR revenue among its units like Ketchum and Fleishman-Hillard was down 8.5% for the fourth quarter to \$277.3M and down 14.8% for the full-year 2009 to \$1.1B.

“Results in the quarter improved when compared with the previous three quarters, but still reflect the reductions in annual advertising and marketing spending initiated by clients in the first and second quarters of last year,” Wren said.

For the year, revenue fell 12.3% to \$11.7B. In the U.S., revenue fell 10.3% to \$6.2B while global revenue dropped 14.3% in the tough environment to \$5.5B.

OMC's debt fell to \$2.3 billion in 2009 from more than \$3 billion in '08. It acquired Dubai-based Impact BBDO with 13 offices in the fourth quarter after an association with its BBDO unit since 1979.

Earn-out payments totaled \$158M in 2009.

IPG posts 38% drop

Interpublic posted a 38% decline in fourth-quarter net to \$129.4 million as the recession battered Michael Roth's ad/PR combine. Revenues slipped 5.3% to \$1.8 billion.

IPG's “organic revenues” took an 8.2% hit in Q4, and a 10.8% decrease for the full-year as clients such as General Motors reeled in spending. The firm owns PR firms like Weber Shandwick, MWW Group and GolinHarris.

Roth says a “strong focus on cost discipline” helped IPG steer through the economic mess. Salaries and related expenses dropped 8.8% to \$4B for '09. Office and general expenses dropped 14.5% to \$1.7B.

The New York-based firm spent \$214M during the last five quarters to cover the cut of 6,400 people, 14% of overall workforce.

Looking ahead, Roth sees more stabilized economic conditions as “clients are beginning to re-focus on their brands and the tone of the business is one of cautious optimism,” according to a statement.

The firm had cash/marketable securities of \$2.5B at yearend '09, compared to \$2.3B for the earlier year. Total debt stood at \$1.95B vs. \$2.12B in '08.

Cision revenue down 35% in Q4

Sweden-based Cision said North American revenue fell nearly 17% in Q4 2009 compared with '08 while continued malaise in its European units and the global recession made for an “intense” 2009.

Cision's board also announced a rights issue to raise 250M SEK (about \$34.8M U.S.) in capital from shareholders.

Revenue for the fourth quarter, reported in Swedish Kroner, was down more than 35% in 2009 across its global operations

compared with Q4 of '08 — 315M SEK, or about \$43.8M, vs. 487M SEK.

Loss widened from 17M to 30M SEK. In North America, revenue slipped about 17% to 187M SEK.

CEO Hans Gieskes said Cision remains “cautious” about the near-term and noted Q4 of 2009 was similar to Q3 in that the company was “significantly impacted” by the global recession. He was cheered by organic growth (minus goodwill, restructuring and other one-time costs) of 20% in North America for Q4, down from 23.4% in Q4 of '08.

For the year, revenue fell more than 17% from '08-09 to 1.5 billion SEK.

The company remains bullish on so-called media intelligence in the long-term however, noting the value of brands continues to increase making monitoring and PR software crucial for companies in traditional and new media. Because such tools are expensive to develop, Cision sees the market consolidating over the next few years.

Havas cheered by narrow losses

Havas kicked off the ad/PR conglomerate earnings season in February by posting a 7.8% slide in fourth quarter 2009 revenue from Q4 of '08 — 415M euros compared with 450M — as the company said it's optimistic over a “strong recovery” in organic growth.

OG, which is growth minus acquisitions and currency movements, narrowed to -4.4% in Q4, an improvement over -9.2% over the first three quarters of 2009.

Havas said media and corporate communications — it owns Euro RSCG Worldwide PR — returned to positive growth for the first time in a year in Q4. Full-year revenue was down 8.1% in 2009 to 1.4B euros.

Havas took its biggest lumps in Europe as organic growth there plummeted 14.3% in the U.K. and 9% in the rest of Europe, excluding France, where it more than doubled its U.K. revenue at 97M for only a 2% slip. North America was flat at 118M in Q4.

The company highlighted digital growth and said revenue in that sector grew from 9% of its business in 2006 to more than 16% in 2009. It projects nearly 20% of its work in digital this year on the strength of business with IBM, Heineken USA and EDF.

Healthcare was also singled out for positive growth, in addition to the solid return of media and corporate communications. ●

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Study: consumers want better food regulations

Recent studies tracking the evolution of food policy and communications lend to the theory that we're in the middle of a growing "food temperance" movement. Experts believe this will have a major impact on what choices consumers make at the grocery store, as well as food label reform within the coming years.

By Grant Prentice

Although less extreme and restrictive than the alcohol temperance and prohibition movements of the 1800s and 1900s, we find ourselves at a tipping point in food regulation, characterized by government's steps to exert greater control and restriction of the marketing and distribution of "unhealthy" foods, especially among children and other at-risk populations.

With the obesity epidemic as the unifying call to action, a confluence of factors is driving and defining this temperance movement: widespread food label reform including the first-ever multi-agency alignment among the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Federal Trade Commission (FTC), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA); scrutiny of health claims across the board; increasingly vocal and powerful special interest pressures; and a general mistrust of the food industry when it comes to science and self-policing.

While food industry executives and communications specialists are closely monitoring this environment, a natural question arises: what about grocery shoppers? Are they following and do they care about government efforts to label their food options as "healthy" and "unhealthy?"

According to a new survey conducted by FoodMinds, two-thirds of primary grocery shoppers are not only aware, but many are paying close attention to issues and actions related to food policy. The opinion poll, fielded in January through Greenfield Online's Omnibus using a sample of 1,045 adults balanced by age, gender and region, analyzed the opinions of primary grocery shoppers to measure awareness and reactions to government activities related to classifying foods as healthy and unhealthy.

The study also examined a carefully defined subset of opinion leader shoppers — grocery decision makers who are registered voters likely to exert their opinions through political, social and economic actions. The idea was to better understand whether these groups think Americans

need help from the government in selecting healthy foods, or if they think we should all be left to our own devices.

Consumers want guidance

According to a new survey, the majority of consumers find value in nutritional labeling. Consumers don't just want information, they want front-of-pack nutrition guidance. Consumers think all nutritional labeling on packaging is useful — from nutrient content to health claims to methods of production.

The strongest interest is for direct information contained in nutrition facts panels and front of pack information that calls out levels of key nutrients such as fat, fiber and calories.

However, consistent with the food temperance mindset, a majority of consumers (and in particular, opinion leaders) are even interested in a "warning label" that overtly identifies foods that have "empty calories."

The grocery shopping public, and in particular most opinion leaders, show support for a range of potential policy actions including more overt guidance on healthy and unhealthy foods in government nutrition education programs and a ban on marketing food to children that does not meet strict criteria for nutrient content. The only potential government act not favored by a majority of either opinion leaders or primary

grocery shoppers is the taxation of foods high in sugar and calories but low in nutritional value.

A warning label could convince consumers to ditch their favorite foods, according to the study. A "traffic light" symbol currently in place in the UK has received much attention from FDA in its efforts to develop a uniform approach to front-of-pack nutrient claims. When exposed to a warning label, 64 percent of consumers

Continued on next page

Rate the usefulness of information when judging the nutritional value of your food

Claims on front of package about benefits - "helps you lose weight," or "helps build strong bones"



Information on front of packages about nutrients - "low fat," "high in fiber" or reduced calories."



Nutrient facts panel that lists calories, nutrients



Organic, natural, and sustainable, farming practices



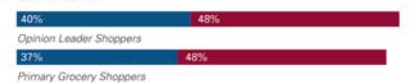
Very useful
Somewhat useful

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Nutrient facts panel that lists calories, nutrients



Organic, natural, and sustainable, farming practices



Very useful
Somewhat useful

How much have you heard or read about:

The increasing numbers of Americans who are unhealthy because they are obese.



Government re-evaluating levels of fat, sugar, salt and other nutrients considered healthy in foods and beverages



Government placing stricter rules on health and nutrition information on food packages and in advertising to children



Heard or read a lot
Heard or read some

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Heard or read a lot
Heard or read some

indicate they would either eat less of their favorite foods, or switch to a healthier option. This should be a real wake-up call for manufacturers – one of the potential outcomes from this food temperance movement is the possibility of the government mandating that manufacturers feature this type of labeling on products they feel warrant an additional level of nutrient content information.

The year of food temperance

Significant food label reform is expected in 2011-2013, including a government-mandated front-of-pack system, an overhaul of the Nutrition Facts Panel, updates to the Daily Values for a number of nutrients, and tighter regulations on health and structure/function claims.

So where does that leave food marketers and manufacturers? Food manufacturers have proven they can and will react quickly to consumer and government demand. While government bodies gather to review available science and discuss solutions throughout 2010, a window of opportunity has opened for strategic action.

Data suggests that consumers are looking for real assistance in helping them make better choices at the grocery store. Americans still believe it is their personal responsibility to make the right choices, and still want to make the decision for themselves. However, they also seem to be indi-

cating that, if the industry isn't able or willing, then grocery shoppers are happy to have the government step in and help.

In this dynamic and evolving food environment, it will be more important than ever for food companies to continually evaluate and refine their innovation efforts to improve the nutritional quality of foods offered, as well as create/improve (and spread the word on) initiatives to better equip consumers with simple, understandable nutrition education.

These efforts should be based on information that helps consumers take advantage of the array of healthy food options available, while retaining a balance — a balance that includes not getting too

Do you favor or oppose these government actions to help people avoid the consumption of unhealthy foods?



Ban advertising for foods that don't meet new, stricter requirements for calories, sugar, fat and salt



Allow employers, through financial rewards and insurance discounts, to reward the healthy while punishing those engaging in unhealthy behaviors



Create new laws that prevent food companies from making health claims



Tax soft drinks and foods high in sugar and calories, but low in beneficial nutrients



Legend: Strongly favor (blue), Favor (red)

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Legend: Strongly favor (blue), Favor (red)

focused on seeing foods through the lens of a bright red or green spotlight.

Grant Prentice is the Director of Strategic Insights at FoodMinds, LLC. ●



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A communications diet for health-conscious consumers

Margaret Booth has been running her own firm for 25 years in New York City, focusing on consumer, lifestyle and corporate brands. A Matrix Award winner for public relations, Booth is recognized as one of the 50 most powerful women in the PR industry. Rich Goldblatt is Senior VP & Director of Consumer Products, and helped create and co-direct the firm's "Better4You" practice, which advises clients on how to communicate the healthy aspects of their products.

By John O'Dwyer

Everyone's trying to eat right these days. How is this affecting your work?

Booth: It's just a big concern across the board with all our food and beverage clients. They realize consumers are increasingly more aware of the ingredients in products and this affects their purchasing decisions.

We have a special practice area known as "Better4You" set up to advise clients in the food, nutrition and consumer health arenas on how to effectively communicate wellness and health benefits to consumers.

It consists of an advisory board of 10 nutritionists, registered dietitians, pediatricians and fitness, weight and diabetes experts. They're available to work with our clients to check messaging and even serve as spokespersons.

The board also looks at the products of prospective clients and helps us gauge whether we can help them.

When I go shopping, it seems every product is touting something like, "No Trans Fats," "Gluten-Free," or "No High Fructose Corn Syrup." What's the deal?

Rich: Consumers want healthier, less-processed options and alternatives to ingredients that are known to be harmful.

Trans fats are formed when liquid vegetable oils are processed with hydrogen to make them more solid. They are proven to promote heart disease and have been linked to diabetes and other health problems.

Forward-thinking companies are replacing trans fats with more natural, less processed vegetable oils, and also finding ways to further improve products by adding healthy omega-3 fats and other beneficial ingredients to foods.

High fructose corn syrup is a refined sweetener made by processing cornstarch into fructose and glucose. It is pervasive in today's food supply — from sodas and fruit-flavored drinks, to cereals and baked goods.

Some brands are now replacing high fructose corn syrup with more natural products such as Stevia, a sweetener derived from a native South American plant. Brown rice syrup and evaporated cane juice are other alternatives.

Gluten is a protein found in wheat, rye, and barley that causes serious health prob-

lems for many people. It's estimated that one out of every 167 children and one out of every 111 adults is allergic to gluten, a condition known as gluten intolerance or celiac disease.

Growing numbers of consumers are opting to avoid gluten, and companies are responding with many new and improved gluten-free foods entering the marketplace.

Another consumer concern is the high sodium found in many snack foods.

We're working with Pirate's Booty, a puffed rice and corn snack that comes in flavors like barbeque, sour cream & onion, and even New York pizza. The product is low in sodium, both trans fat and gluten free, and has 50% less fat per serving than potato chips.

Are brands extolling the health aspects of their products on the web?

Booth: Definitely, take a look at the website for Pirate's Booty (piratesbooty.com). There's more transparency than ever, especially for products that have a health advantage.

Companies are increasingly using their websites to educate consumers about health benefits of certain foods or ingredients and provide consumers with information on how to incorporate healthful foods into their daily lives through menus, recipes, and practical tips.

What kind of outreach have you done recently to extol the health benefits of a client's product?

Booth: We created a consumer event near city hall this past fall where couples from around the world were invited to get hitched or renew their vows to celebrate the launch of Sun Crystals, a natural sweetener with only 5 calories that marries pure cane sugar and Stevia, a naturally sweet plant native to South America that has been around for centuries.

The event was billed as "a Sweet and Solar Powered Wedding," meaning everything from the band's amps and lighting to the ovens on-site used to prepare food for the guests were powered by solar cells.

Two dozen couples celebrated nuptials

as thousands of New Yorkers came by throughout the day to join in the celebration and sample Sun Crystals.

How will Michelle Obama's initiative to fight childhood obesity affect the work you are doing for clients?

Booth: It's too soon for anything concrete yet to happen but I can tell you that we and our clients are thinking about how best to support the First Lady's campaign.

Companies are offering many excellent foods that are naturally nutritious, low in calories, and offer health benefits.

These can certainly complement healthy lifestyles for both children and adults and help consumers more easily manage their weight.

How's business in general?

Booth: We managed to finish 2009 with total net fees up almost 5%.

In the last half of '09 the RFPs we were responding to were much more robust compared to the previous year. We're still waiting for decisions on the multi-million dollar RFPs but clients are definitely spending more money. ●



Margaret Booth



Rich Goldblatt

Media Briefs

Reader's Digest emerges from brief bankruptcy

On Feb. 22, Reader's Digest Association announced it has officially recovered from Chapter 11 protection it filed in August.

The publishers filed for bankruptcy protection six months ago after it was reported the company was \$2.2 billion in debt, partially a result of a 2006 takeover by private equity firm Ripplewood Holdings. Officials said they have since reduced this debt by 75% through a massive restructuring initiative that included bonds refinancing.

In June, the company announced it was reducing its U.S. frequency from 12 to 10 issues a year and scaling back its rate base to respond to consumers' "changed media appetite." Reader's Digest was founded in 1922 and currently has a circulation of more than 8 million in the U.S.

New site links restaurants with publicists, media

A free, ad-driven website now connects restaurants and wineries with publicists, patrons, journalists and vendors, serving up something between a consumer review site and a niche social media home for the restaurant industry.

By Jon Gingerich

The Restaurant Section (www.therestaurantsection.com) launched just several months ago, but already features 350 restaurants and 80 wineries in 10 cities across the country. The site gained 1,000 members in the last month alone, and doesn't show any indication of slowing down.

It's the brainchild of Cliff Bramble, Co-owner of Atlanta-based establishments Rathbun's and Krog Bar. Bramble said he decided to create a social site for restaurants because while the potential was always there, he felt the food and beverage industries have been slow to take advantage of social media.

"What hit me on the head was that it's very difficult to promote your business, but at the same time the tools available just aren't enough. Facebook is great, Twitter is great, but they don't break information down like a niche-driven website that could help the restaurant

industry," he said. "We've definitely gotten busy very quickly."

The Restaurant Section is different from your standard social media site because it's designed specifically around the branding and marketing aspect of a restaurant.

Restaurants and wineries can create profiles highlighting their establishment with photos, menus, press clippings, chef and winemaker bios and an optional customer review section.

Vendors, food publicists and food writers can also create profiles, attaching articles, blogs, client lists and press releases that highlight their core practice.

The aggregated content of all member profiles is streamlined so users can search and view all member restaurants in their area. Like Facebook, the site allows members to link to other profiles as "friends." It also allows members to connect with Twitter RSS feeds and Facebook pages.

"A Restaurant's profile page has all its press information. It's not limited to an

address and a name. Publicists can find new restaurants to market to, and publicists can find out about the food writers in their community," Bramble said. "A lot of journalists tell me the site is great because they get to network with publicists and other journalists and meet with other professionals in the industry."

Bramble came up with the idea of the Restaurant Section just 18 months ago. In the past two months, it has received its largest surge in traffic yet, and is now one of the top 200,000 searched sites currently on the web.

Bramble said when the site launched he initially charged \$50 a month for restaurants to maintain a profile on the site. Subsequent advertising interest however, caused Bramble to change his strategy. Becoming a member on the site — or creating a profile for your restaurant, winery, publicity practice or writer's beat — is now completely free.

"I had so many advertisers who were interested in this I thought 'I'm going to give everyone a break,' so I made the whole thing free for everybody." ●

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Pogue raps social media at Coke h.q. conference

By Richard Braker

Twitter might be an “ego-massaging time-drain,” but *New York Times* contributing technology writer David Pogue said social media serves a higher purpose than a glorified chat room.

Pogue was key speaker at the third Annual Social Media for Communicators at Coca-Cola World Headquarters in Atlanta, GA., February 22-24. He described social media as a “unique new channel, combining real-time, two-way public and private communications” where “no middleman separates the celebrity from the fan ... or the company from its customers.”

A 10-year contributor of the *Times* and author of one of its most popular blogs, Pogue's Posts, Pogue was there to give his opinion and keen insight regarding the Twitter evolution. Does Pogue have a problem with a Twitter user being limited to 140 characters in each submission? Basically, he thinks it's both limiting and wonderful. But a microblog it's not.

“It forces you to be concise and clever. It's a challenge that you have to rise up to

meet,” he said. “It lends itself to certain kinds of conversation such as jokes, thoughts, observations, questions, greetings, headlines, jokes and riddles.”

Pogue said the syntax constraints also make Twitter much easier to consume. “When you have a minute and you're on the receiving end of these things they aren't daunting at all,” he said.

“You can sit down and duck in and read a few and then duck out,” he continued. “It's not like e-mail where each one can be pages long, just like an albatross around your neck.”

Pogue compared Twitter to more discussed recent technological advents such as Google Buzz, Gmail's social networking application that allows users to post Facebook and Twitter status updates via email.

“They're just two different things ... like should you use a spoon or a fork. Twitter remains great for lightweight, fast and witty submissions whereas Google Buzz doesn't force people to be as concise,” he said.

How exactly has social media's ubiquity impacted printed media, and to what extent will it continue? Pogue lamented the “fast decline” of print but stated that “there are pros and cons for either way and ... with

each having its place.”

“You would be hard-pressed to find a college student who has a subscription to a newspaper or magazine. The reason is becoming quite obvious. You can go online and many are just free. They're in your phones and in laptops,” he said.

Pogue hopes that newspapers will continue, both as news-gathering organizations and a lens through which to understand and filter the world.

“They're going to always be there, but in probably different delivery formats,” he said.

Each week, Pogue contributes print and e-mail columns and an online video. He also is an Emmy award-winning tech correspondent for CBS News, a frequent guest on NPR's “Morning Edition” and a regular on CNBC.

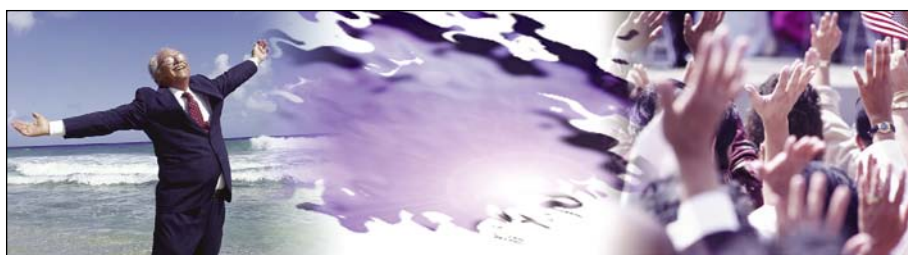


David Pogue

He's also one of the world's best-selling how-to authors. He wrote or helped write seven books in the “For Dummies” series. In 1999, he launched the “Missing Manual,” a line of humorous computer books that includes 60 titles.

Ragan Communications and PRSA were sponsors of the three-day Atlanta conference, where tickets drew a cost of \$1,195 (or \$945 for Ragan “members”).

Top billing was given to Coca-Cola, which hosted the meeting. Coke SVP-PA Clyde Tuggle discussed how Coke uses social media to enhance its reputation, build brands and engage employees. ●



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Media Briefs

Google ad sales to hit \$1 billion

Google's total display ads sales should account for about \$1 billion of the company's revenues in 2010, an increase of more than 40% from the previous year, according to a February estimate by Barclays Capital, as reported in *Business Week*.

Barclays analysts posit the majority of Google's display ad revenue would come from an estimated \$700 in video and banner ads on YouTube. According to a February ComScore report, U.S. Internet users saw a record 4.3 trillion display ads in 2009, with Yahoo! still leading in the display advertising category.

In February, Google launched Google Buzz, a social networking application that allows users to post Facebook and Twitter status updates through the company's Gmail service.

Corn syrup blamed for U.S. obesity woes

Health and nutrition experts say the substitution of cheap corn syrups like high fructose corn syrup for sugar in sodas and other processed foods is a leading cause of obesity in the U.S., creating a PR nightmare for food manufacturers who use the products.

By Jack O'Dwyer

Corn syrup is difficult to break down in the human body. According to many of today's leading nutritionists, corn sugar is stored as fat, and it sits in the bloodstream while the pancreas pumps insulin to break it down. The pancreas can then become inflamed from overwork, can hemorrhage and can even become cancerous.

These conditions also make users susceptible to cardiovascular diseases.

Moreover, if the pancreas stops working efficiently, the person can become diabetic, which is the inability to convert sugar to glucose, the only sugar that cells can utilize. This can lead to the destruction of the vascular system including heart, arteries, eye retinas and the body's ability to heal itself.

All sodas today are sweetened by high fructose corn syrup rather than real sugar. Other foods using corn syrup are marshmallows, Milky Ways, Mars Bars, Coffeemate, Good N'Plenty, Gummie Bears, most children's cereals, most ice cream and anything that says, "caramel."

Adam Bordes, nutritionist author of "Lighten Up! Daily Reminders to Having a Lighter, Happier, Healthier Life," said the corn syrup in sodas does not increase blood sugar like "real" food and results in people staying hungry and eating more.

Americans could rid themselves of diabetes by changing their eating habits, said Bordes. He is especially critical of the powerful Cola companies that use advertising to hook people on their products including children.

PepsiCo, when asked about the dangers of HFCS, provided the website of the American Beverage Association for the answer. The ABA says that high fructose corn syrup is a "common natural liquid sweetener that is very similar in composition to table sugar (sucrose) in sweetness."

Mayo Clinic has looked at criticisms of HFCS, finding arguments on both sides.

Pepsi rebrands with 'real sugar'

PepsiCo recently marketed "Pepsi

Throwback," made with cane and beet sugar as opposed to high fructose corn syrup.

The drink is being touted as "refreshingly retro" on Pepsi's pepsithrowback-hub.com website.

BevReview.com, which critiques sodas and other non-alcoholic beverages, says that "When stacked up against Pepsi made with high fructose corn syrup, frankly, you just want to spit out that stuff and run away."

The extensive review, which goes into the history of soda companies switching decades ago from cane and beet sugar to the cheaper corn syrup, says the soda companies are now in a bind because their marketing of sodas with "real sugar" raises the question of what had they been putting in their products?

BevReview feels that "nine of ten" consumers would prefer Pepsi Throwback to current Pepsi products.

Pepsi marketed the product through Feb. 22 as well as "real" sugar-sweetened drink Mountain Dew. BevReview says the best way to appreciate Pepsi Throwback is to have a group of friends taste-test both Pepsis.

Nutritionists, on the other hand, say there is too much sugar of any kind in the American diet.

Obama Admin. targets 'sweet' purveyors

First Lady Michelle Obama said she feels children — who she has stated "drink way too much soda" — are special targets of soda giants and wants all sweetened beverages removed from schools.

The First Lady has launched a \$10B "Let's Move" campaign against childhood obesity.

New York State and New York City officials are advocating a tax on sodas. The NYS tax would be a penny-per-ounce and would raise the cost of a 12-pack of Coke from \$2.99 to \$4.43.

The possibility of a soda tax was explored by the Feb. 14 *New York Times*. It said Americans drink about 50 gallons of soda yearly plus other sweetened beverages that use HFCS. ●

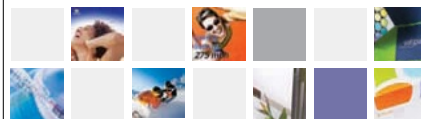


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America's eating problem

By Jon Gingerich

It was the sort of news we didn't want to hear. As fate would have it, most of us didn't. A study published by the *International Journal of Biological Sciences* in December determined that rats fed three of the most popular genetically modified feed and consumer grade corns on the market developed Hepatotoxicity, or chemically driven liver damage.

One of the products tested, NK603, is the Glyphosate-tolerant strand of seed better known as Roundup Ready, manufactured by agricultural giant Monsanto. It's estimated that Monsanto's genetically modified patents have been inserted into 80% of all corn grown in the U.S. and as much as 95% of all soybeans. Because GM foods don't require any labeling in the United States — and because corn is now a staple in every American food from sodas and sauces to breads and cookies — it's not much of a stretch to consider ourselves unwitting lab rats in a biotech gamble where the outcome is anything but certain.

The next month, Monsanto CEO Hugh Grant was gracing the cover of *Forbes*, stoically leaning over the sycophantic banner “company of the year,” a nod to Monsanto's valiant efforts in gaining a virtual monopoly of the seed market. It's an apt paradox given the state of the food industry, an enterprise built on satisfying multiple financial and regulatory objectives which often results in a blurred mission of double standards, like a production system that favors high volumes of poorly made foods, or a nation of citizens who remain fed but for all purposes nutritionally malnourished.

Food is everywhere in America, and it's a good thing. There's a higher demand for it than ever, though we still manage to spend only about 15% of our take-home income on food — a worldwide low. As a result, we've always held the expectation that food would be cheap. But these low prices have come at a greater cost. The number of Americans living with Type 2 diabetes doubled between 1990 and 2005, now accounting for nearly 24 million people — or about 8% of the population. Obesity is the standard; heart disease is the leading cause of death. Soil damage from dangerous pesticides, as well as the loss of biodiversity from patented-seed takeover, has had an indelible impact on our nation's farmland.

We're also paying for it literally. America's current Federal agricultural policy is designed to reward farmers who produce high yields that can only be met with pesticide-heavy crops, making it cheaper for manufacturers to implement cost-cutting preservatives or introduce genetically modified ingredients that seamlessly bypass the regulatory and labeling lines.

The result is a skewed pricing system that favors processed, poor quality foods over healthy ones, and it's for this reason that it's cheaper for a struggling family to eat at McDonald's than it is to buy and prepare a meal at home, or why it's cheaper in many cities to buy soda than milk. Choose organic foods for your family and you can expect to triple your costs. Unhealthy choices are the default; the underlying policy that manages our food industry has had a direct affect on our consumption habits. The ultimate irony is that eating healthy foods in the most agriculturally abundant country in the history of the world is now limited to those who can afford it.

“The price at the supermarket only includes a small portion of the costs we're paying that aren't included on the sticker price,” said Chris Hunt, Research and Policy Analysis Director for nonprofit food organization GRACE. “Part of the question you have to ask when addressing these costs is how we've managed to internalize these negative externalities generated by America's agro-business. There's definitely a chance that we can change, but it takes a grand acknowledgement that there's something wrong with our food system today.”

The cost of choice

Study after study shows that Americans want to eat healthier. For the average American family however, these desires are met with economic obstacles at every turn. Retail food prices typically climb between 2% and 3% each year, but recent fuel prices, handling costs and weather woes sent food prices soaring at a time when the American public couldn't choose to be frugal. Food costs went up nearly 6.5% in 2008, the fastest hike since 1990. Concurrently, a recession, high unemployment rates and record bankruptcies loomed, creating conditions where consumers were expected to spend more money on less. The sharp decline of consumer food spending in 2009 was contrasted by the skyrocketing demand for food banks. Getting by was hard enough.

Making healthy choices was seen as a luxury.

New York-based PR firm Hunter PR reported in an annual food survey that two of the three most popular food stories of 2009 involved food cost (the third was food safety). Many consumers went to generics in 2009, and this put marketers in instant crisis mode, pleading with manufacturers to drop superfluous packaging expenses and initiate bold cost-cutting campaigns, even as their costs went up.

“It's a no-win situation,” said Hunter PR President Grace Leong. “Manufacturers are told to keep their prices down, so they use cheaper ingredients, and then they get beat up on their carbon footprint for shipping. If they start looking to save costs by outsourcing, they're basically killing the industry. Why pay the guy in South Florida when they can do it in South America without all the regulation?”

“There's such pressure to keep prices down because of the culture we live in,” Leong continued, “but the politics of food involves supporting a very costly industry.”


The Consumer Price Index reported a climb of only about 0.5% for food costs in 2009, hinting that many manufacturers pushed to keep prices low even when it hurt. Predicting economic turnaround, some companies have begun raising prices in recent months. Marketers now predict manufacturers will have to rely on advertising and marketing campaigns to bring shoppers back from the world of generics. Similarly, some industry experts believe creating an armory of healthy alternatives could be a viable alternative to regain that dedicated consumer base.

“Consumers know exactly what's going on. Every grocer wants to have locally grown, locally produced food to show they're in-touch, but in the back they'll still carry your foreign produce,” she said. “It's hard to eat healthy, but this is a big opportunity for food companies. They don't want to go down with the ship.”

Children of the corn

Why did it become so easy for manufacturers — and us — to make such bad choices? It's hard to know exactly where to point the finger, but much of America's current food problem began from a well-intentioned revolution in the corn industry waged by President Nixon's Secretary of Agriculture, Earl Butz. In decades prior, we'd actually paid U.S. farmers to limit their corn production in order to keep inflation on the crop down. By the 1970's however, the size and scope of America's

— Continued on next page



palate had changed. Higher food output was desperately needed, and we'd also begun exporting vast amounts of it. In response, Butz designed a bold Federal agricultural expansion that gave massive subsidies to farmers to produce as much corn as possible. The result was a national corn boon that altered our farming landscape forever.

Due to a vastly devaluating surplus the price of corn soon dropped, and farmers found they had to produce constantly higher yields to make a profit. With the advent of high-tech herbicides, it was now possible to output up to 100 bushels an acre, a feat unfathomable 50 years ago. In the course of doing so, many farmers had grown increasingly indebted to the government, as their yields were being supported by federal subsidies as opposed to the market.

It wasn't too long before food manufacturers found ways to use this newly devaluated crop to lower their costs. Simply put, they began putting corn into everything. Japanese scientists developed a way to rend cornstarch into a liquid sweetener with the aid of chemical enzymes, developing High Fructose Corn Syrup, a fructose/glucose disaccharide that became a cheap alternative to sucrose, or table sugar. HFCS became the de facto sweetener of sodas, cookies, breads, salad dressings, sauces and juices. Decades later, we discovered that unlike sucrose, the complex chemical bonds in HFCS are metabolized in the liver, where they possibly contribute to fatty liver disease. There are also harmful carbonyl compounds, and studies show high levels of HFCS can disrupt insulin production levels, leading to diabetes. Arguably, the news came too late: Americans' intake of the ubiquitous sweetener increased more than 1,000% between 1970 and 1990.

Meanwhile, cattle farmers, wary of the market shift, moved their livestock's diet from a grass staple to that of corn, a food the animals aren't biologically designed to eat. Feeding them "distiller's grain," a corn byproduct made from ethanol, cattle began exhibiting massive weight gain, much to the delight of cattle owners. Because cows can't digest corn properly however, they began experiencing ulcers and major stomach ailments, causing farmers to preemptively load them up with antibiotics. Fecal contamination is common, and E. coli outbreaks in the U.S. have boomed since the pathogen's initial discovery in 1982.

Seattle-based law firm Marler Clark LLP PS, which specializes in E. coli litigation,

shared data with *O'Dwyer's* showing nearly 48 million pounds of beef were recalled between 2007 and 2010 alone.

"From 1993 to 2002 almost every case I worked on was E. coli linked to hamburger meat," said attorney William D. Marler. "Now it's routine to see millions of pounds of recalled meat on a yearly basis."

If the numbers aren't harrowing enough, consider the physiological implications. Corn is not just the main pillar in our agricultural economy; it's not just the main ingredient in our diet; it's not just the main ingredient in our livestock's diets. We've been eating it for so long that it now literally makes up who we are. If you were to take DNA extraction analysis of your hair, chances are you would find large amounts of corn in it. We are what we eat, literally.

Who regulates the regulators?

If we know the looming health risks associated with America's eating habits, if we know Americans would eat healthier if they could afford it, if we know the current subsidy system favors the production of bad food and if we know the aisle between wellness and affordability is too wide — why can't we make healthier foods more affordable? Why can't the government offer similar subsidies to farmers who manufacture healthy foods in the same way that it has guaranteed a paycheck for those who produce pesticide heavy corn and soy?

"It's not impossible, but I think it's very challenging due primarily to the power of agro-business," Hunt said. "They have an exceptionally large lobby and the farm bill is so entrenched in our current policy it doesn't look like it will budge any time soon."

Washington's current power structure seems to reiterate this dismal outlook. FDA Senior Advisor Michael Taylor is a former Monsanto lobbyist. In 1996 he fought to allow the use of potentially cancerous pesticides in genetically modified foods. Former Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff, who championed legislation in his state to remove consumer labels on dairy products engineered with Bovine Growth Hormone, is currently Obama's top pick to take the Agriculture for Food Safety's role of Under Secretary.

Moreover, any bottom-up alternatives seem bleak. The organic community has been notoriously stubborn in its refusal to integrate genetically modified crops into the organic fold, though it could lower de-weeding costs by as much as \$450 an acre.

"There will be many who will always

be skeptical of it, and for good reason. There hasn't been sufficient testing on human health and what testing has been done have been on behalf of the industry," Hunt said.

This position isn't made any easier by the bureaucratic FDA-USDA-EPA trifecta that currently regulates our foods, where regulatory grey areas can foster gigantic industry loopholes. For example, because Monsanto's Roundup Ready corn is genetically modified to be immune to the company's herbicidal spray, small residues of the herbicide exist in the corn. The EPA has never established a limit of the amount of residues that can exist in the corn because it enters the food via a genetic process instead of a chemical spray, and thus, falls outside of EPA jurisdiction.

GM food companies are not presently required to consult the FDA, and if they do they don't have to take the agency's suggestions. Therefore, GM food containing unknown amounts of herbicide are free to go into our crops, where they are passed into our foods, our livestock, our sweeteners, and into our bodies — all completely unregulated and completely unlabeled.

It's ironic that the most essential commodity in human survivability has been delegated to a stalemate on the fulcrum where science and policy meet. America's silent food crisis is perhaps only abetted by the fact that we are also a reactionary society: we love a fad, we love a good casuse, we love to go on puritanical crash diets, from "fat free" to Atkins to South Beach, finding boogey foods to lynch along the way like High Fructose Corn Syrup. When regulations don't help us, we've always been quick to help ourselves.

We can take this energy and channel it into proactive consumer choices that demand an alternative to the bad policies and equally bad habits that have shaped our food landscape. Some common sense, and an appeal to moderation and a demand for political oversight could go a long way.

"Food news has become front-page news. The idea has always been there: if big government is not going to do it for me, if I can't trust them to police food safety, I'll do it myself," Leong said.

"Food regulation is a massive, huge job that can't be accomplished by one agency. Someone needs to go in there and bust it up. If you look at the way food was produced back at the turn of the century — if you look at the books that came out exposing the corruption — it broke the cycle and improved our food quality. There's hope for that to happen again." ♦

FOOD & BEVERAGE O'Dwyer's Guide to: PR FIRMS

■ 3.10



Members of the Carmichael Lynch Spong Food and Beverage Practice Group manage celebrity spokesperson relationships with high-profile chefs such as Alton Brown and Michael Symon. Pictured are team members with Michael Symon (second from left) at an event sponsored by Calphalon.

ALLISON & PARTNERS

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Scott Allison, CEO

Clients with a passion for food turn to Allison & Partners for marketing and public relations programs that drive trial, preference and sales. Whether it's launching products, reaching the crème-de-la-crème of influencers, maximizing sponsorship ROI, or making a restaurant the place to see and be seen, our team of consummate foodies bring fresh ideas to influencers in the media and beyond. With experience growing some of the world's leading food, restaurant, beverage, wine and spirits, nutrition and CPG brands and nine full-service offices across the US, our capabilities include: product launches, positioning and branding; publicity and media tours; events and promotions; restaurant openings; sampling and tasting events; social networking; retail marketing; sponsorships and cause marketing programs.

BLAZE PR

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BLAZE is a nationally recognized Silver Anvil award-winning PR firm that attracts compelling and aggressive consumer brands that need to win.

For two decades, BLAZE has produced integrated, pragmatic, bottom-line responsive campaigns for food, beverage, travel and consumer clients, such as The Habit, Ruth's Chris, Original Road House Grill, 7-Eleven, Mimi's Café, House of Blues, Hiram Walker and more. BLAZE also provides fully integrated, in-house social media capabilities and utilizes this medium with traditional strategies to help our clients meet their goals, whether it is filling a restaurant mid-week, increasing distribution channels or increasing catering business.

We succeed for our clients because we realize that public relations is the effective and strategic use of media and other communications channels to realize our clients'

goals. Our integrated approach allows our clients to find their "voice," determine the correct "channel" and realize their business objectives through a mix of communications tools and creative strategies.

BLAZE is headquartered in Santa Monica, CA with offices in Santa Barbara and New York.

CARMICHAEL LYNCH SPONG

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Douglas K. Spong, APR, Pres.
Grete Krohn Lavrenz, Principal, Chair, Food and Beverage

If you can no longer stomach the same stale, tasteless ideas, perhaps it's time for some fresh thinking. Carmichael Lynch Spong leads the food, beverage, nutrition and wellness arena — representing some of the biggest brands.

Our list of envied food and beverage clients includes: retail (Noodles & Company); packaged goods (Jack Link's Beef Jerky); ingredient brands (Martek); food processing (Cargill) and cookware (Calphalon).

We work with food industry leaders, consumer groups, chefs, nutritionists, commodity groups, regulatory organizations and experts in general, on a regular basis. Our relationships go beyond media. We know the right people to target with the right program, product, campaign or cause. And they know us.

COHN & WOLFE

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Stephanie Marchesi, Pres., NY
Michael O'Brien, President, Global Consumer Marketing
Donna Fleishman, Pres., Atlanta, Food & Beverage Specialist
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Cohn & Wolfe, a subsidiary of

WPP, is a leading communications firm with an impressive food and beverage offering led by talented professionals who have represented clients in every aisle of the supermarket as well as some of America's favorite foodservice establishments. We've launched hundreds of new products, developed nutrition education programs for consumers of all ages and know how to engage media, influencers and consumers on and offline whether promoting pantry staples or the latest premium organic products. Cohn & Wolfe's food/beverage clients include: J.M. Smucker Company, Jif, Crisco, Pillsbury, Hungry Jack, Green & Black's Organic Chocolate, Olive Garden, Red Lobster and Taco Bell.

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Peggy O'Shea Kochenbach, MBA, RD, LDN, Vice President
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For almost three decades, Cone has earned a reputation for building strong brands in the food and beverage industry. We provide best-in-class communication strategy, talent and creativity to drive business growth for leading brands, such as Nestlé Waters North America, Lindt and General Mills. We understand that extraordinary results must begin with experts who possess a keen understanding of your business, your brand and its connection to society. With two registered dietitians on staff, we can communicate the distinct attributes of your brand, including the health and nutritional benefits of foods and beverages. The depth of our experience in working with associations and marketing boards and our carefully tailored approach to your communications allow us to deliver campaigns that are authentic, credible and relevant.

We are ready to share our creativity, passion and commitment along with a full range of services. We specialize in food and beverage new product launches, influencer programs, media events, new media executions, promotions and celebrity campaigns.

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Meghan Flynn, MS, RD, Director of Food and Nutrition
Stacy Becker, Assistant Vice President

Coyne PR is one of the nation's leading independent public relations agencies with extensive experience in the food and beverage category. Coyne PR combines sound strategic counsel with cutting edge creative elements to achieve superior communications goals for its clients. The agency represents some of the world's largest food and beverage companies and brands, including General Mills, the Hershey Company, the Campbell Soup Company, AMP Energy Drink (Pepsi Beverages), and Old Bay. In addition to the consumer packaged goods work, the agency has grown its Nutrition and Wellness practice, most notably with the arrival of Meghan Flynn, MS, RD. The Coyne PR team is comprised of experts in product launches, brand building campaigns, tradeshow support, events, sponsorships, contests, promotions, cause marketing, influencer outreach, crisis management and social media. The agency has also worked with General Mills to create an extensive blogger network, MyBlogSpark, which helps connect brands with bloggers. In 2009 Coyne PR was named 2009 Midsize Agency of the Year by *PRWeek* and *PR News*, as well as 2009 Consumer Agency of the Year and 2009 Best Agency to Work For in America by *The Holmes Report*.

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Patrice Tanaka, Co-Chair, Chief Creative Officer
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CRT/tanaka is an award-winning public relations and marketing firm known for its whatcanbeSM workplace culture and approach to business. Headquartered in Richmond, Va., and New York, with offices in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C. and Norfolk, Va., CRT/tanaka specializes in four practice areas — Consumer, Health, Corporate and Interactive/Social Media. The agency has been recognized with more than 300 national and regional awards for its strategic counsel, creativity, workplace culture and community service. Clients include Wines from Rioja (Spain), the Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers, Performance Food Group, Air New Zealand, Cambria Suites (Choice Hotels), BISSELL Homecare, Charles Schwab & Co., Girl Scouts of the USA, Council for Responsible Nutrition and Sprint Nextel.

Other food and beverage brands that CRT/tanaka has represented include Atkins Nutritionals, Godiva Chocolatier, Walnut Acres, Newman's Own, Cocktails by Jenn, De'Longhi, Lipton Recipe Secrets, Maille Mustard, Lea & Perrins, Consorzio Pecorino Romano, Hostess Snack Cakes, Coors Brewing Co., Stolichnaya Russian Vodka, Korbel Champagne, Noilly Prat Vermouth, Krispy Kreme Doughnuts, Eskimo Pie and The Switch Beverage Company.

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Jim Dublin, CEO
Mary Uhlig, President

Dublin & Associates is a full-service strategic communications firm with extensive experience serving food industry clients. We

have worked with food and consumer companies including Pioneer Flour Mills, Pace Foods (Campbell Soup Co.), the Coca-Cola Bottling Company of the Southwest, NatureSweet Tomatoes, Luby's Cafeterias, Taco Cabana, the Culinary Institute of America, the New Braunfels Smokehouse, and food / entertainment promotional firms such as Hispano USA. We provide national and regional media coverage, special event planning and Hispanic market outreach. We work closely with clients to develop strategic initiatives and publicity campaigns that focus on client marketing goals and bottom line results.

EDELMAN

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Janet Cabot, President, Central Region & U.S. Food & Nutrition Practice Lead

Food is about much more than nourishment. It is about the con-

vergence of good health, great taste, values and beliefs, and politics. With more than a decade of proprietary research, Edelman offers its clients deep expertise and multifaceted strategies that engage today's continuum of stakeholders along the food chain. On staff Edelman counselors include noted experts Susan T. Borra, RD, former President of the International Food Information Council Foundation and Mary K. Young, MS, RD, former Vice President of Nutrition at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, 12 Registered Dietitians, and health and digital communication practitioners who address food communication needs with all constituents from food policy opinion elites to health professionals and ultimately, consumers.

Edelman's deep food, nutrition and wellness expertise has created longstanding client relationships with Starbucks, Dairy Management, Inc. (DMI), Kraft, Butterball, American Egg Board, Quaker, the American Heart Association and the Mushroom Council among others.

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Michael Fineman, *President*
Lorna Bush, *Vice President*
Heidi White, *Vice President*

Fineman PR, founded in 1988, specializes in Brand PR and crisis communications for food and beverage clients. Our strength is building strong and appealing brand identity for our clients. Our award-winning public relations programs are creative, strategic and consistently exceed client objectives.

Our experience includes work with Foster Farms Poultry, Foster Farms Dairy, Nunes Company / Foxy Foods, Diamond of California, Fantastic Foods, Fresh Express Farms, Clif Bar, Odwalla, Nancy's Specialty Foods and The Republic of Tea. The agency also works with wineries and wine-related companies, including a marquee wine client list during the last several years that include Derenoncourt California, Montesquieu, Stag's Leap Wine Cellars, Hanzell Vineyards, Chateau Montelena, Kendall-Jackson Wine Estates, Constellation Wines U.S., Landmark Vineyards, Wine Institute and Seguin Moreau.

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Melissa Novak, *Kansas City*

Communicating within the food and agribusiness industries has never been more challenging. Globalization and demographic shifts are ushering in an exciting new world of foods and flavors. The explosion of chronic health issues caused by aging and obesity demand a better understanding of food's roles in health and wellness. Our desire for a safe, secure food supply is bringing greater scrutiny about how our food is produced,

packaged and shipped.

Fleishman-Hillard's Food & Agribusiness practice has a unique "farm to fork" perspective and is dedicated to help identify, understand, and manage the increasingly complex trends and issues affecting business. The practice offers a full range of integrated communications services — including public relations, public affairs, digital communications, advertising and event marketing — on a global scale. The practice is integrated with the firm's Sustainability practice to build communications around this increasingly important operational focus.

Clients include: Bumble Bee Seafoods, California Table Grape Commission, California Raisin Marketing Board, ConAgra Foundation, Desert Glory, Dow, AgroSciences, Fisheries Council of Canada, Flour Fortification Initiative, Gatorade, GLG Life Tech, Hamdi Ulukaya, IHOP/Applebee's, Kansas Beef Council, Kubota Tractor Corporation, Mars, Maple Leaf Foods, Midwest Dairy Association, Mirassou Winery, National Mango Board, Nutrients for Life Foundation, PepsiCo, Perdue Farms, SunSweet Growers, Texas Sweet Citrus, Tri-Lamb Group, Tropicana, U.S. Potato Board.

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Laura Cubillos, *RD; Bill Layden; Sue Pitman*, *MA, RD; Partners*

A food and nutrition company that harnesses science, public affairs and communications, FoodMinds' vision is to be a trusted partner in producing novel food and nutrition positions and programs that shape the future for its clients. We apply knowledge, critical thinking and industry connections to help our clients tell a better story that makes a difference. We pride ourselves on the right mix of talented, seasoned and motivated professionals — registered dietitians, consumer marketers, media strategists, PhDs, science writers and policy experts — to challenge the status quo and achieve great things for our clients.

2010 clients include: Applegate

Farms, Bush Brothers and Company, Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, Dairy Management Inc., Hass Avocado Board, Kashi Company, Kellogg Company, National Confectioners Association, and Welch Foods Inc.

FRENCH / WEST / VAUGHAN

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French/West/Vaughan (FWV) is the Southeast's largest independent public relations, public affairs and brand communications agency, and is the nation's 17th largest independently-owned PR firm. Founded in 1997, the agency is headquartered in Raleigh, N.C. and also has offices in both New York City and Tampa.

FWV is home to one of the nation's largest Food and Beverage practice areas. As a national leader in launching head-turning, results-driven marketing campaigns, FWV's work inspires consumers and influences them favorably toward the world's leading companies and brands, including the Coca-Cola Company (NESTEA, Gold Peak, Minute Maid, several DASANI products and Simply Orange).

Client experience includes work for Celebrity Chef Lorena Garcia, the North Carolina Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association, Brinker International (Maggiano's Little Italy restaurant chain), ConAgra (Slim Jim, Pemmican Beef Jerky), Nabisco Foods, Brown-Forman (Jack Daniel's), Diageo North America (Bulleit Bourbon brand) and many others.

Product launches have included NESTEA COOL, Diet NESTEA, Gold Peak, DASANI Plus, Arbor Mist wines, Dolphins & Friends snack crackers, various Orville Redenbacher's popcorns and Pemmican Beef Jerky. FWV launched these products in key markets across the U.S. with hospitality coordination, strategic planning and comprehensive media outreach campaigns. The agency also executes multi-faceted programs to stimulate product trials and awareness.

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Hanna Lee, *President*

Hanna Lee Communications, Inc. is an award-winning, boutique PR agency specialized in the spirits, food, wine, travel and lifestyle industries and event management. The agency only represents products and companies about which it is passionate. This philosophy drives the agency's well-acknowledged excellence.

The agency's services include: strategic PR planning; national and local media outreach; long-term brand building; press trips; press conferences; media training; trade and consumer show support; sponsorship management; and, co-marketing promotions.

Current clients are Leblon Cachaça, The Manhattan Cocktail Classic, Terra Andina Chilean Winery, Goats do Roam South African Winery, G7 Portuguese Wine Consortium, Bar Celona Tapas and Cocktail Lounge, Gourmet Latino Festival, Lowell European-Style Yogurts and Kyochon Restaurant Group (Korea's #1 chicken brand).

The agency's work on behalf of its clients has earned national and international recognition. Its breakthrough "Truth in Vodka" PR campaign for Sobieski Vodka won first runner-up in *PRWeek's* "Best Consumer Launch of the Year" and was a finalist for a SABRE Award, given by *The Holmes Report* based in London.

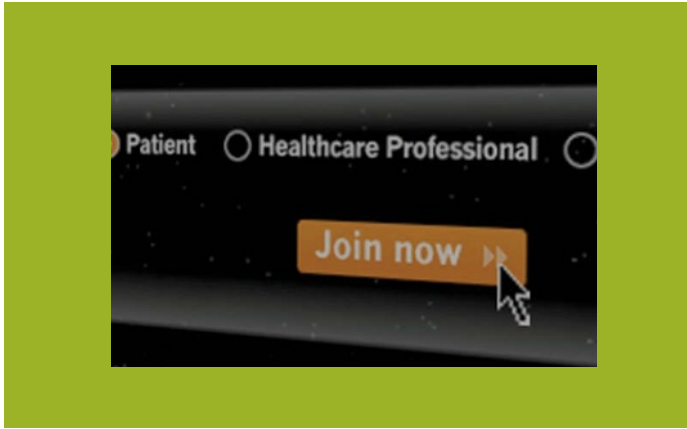
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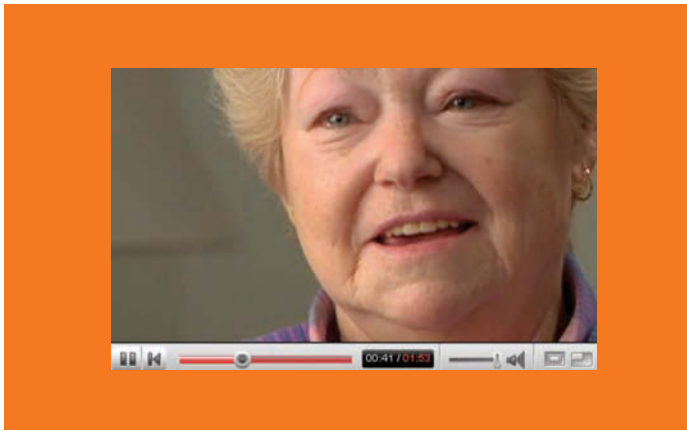
David C. Van Voorhis, *Dir., Business Dev. & Client Relations*

From launching new food and beverage products to the grand

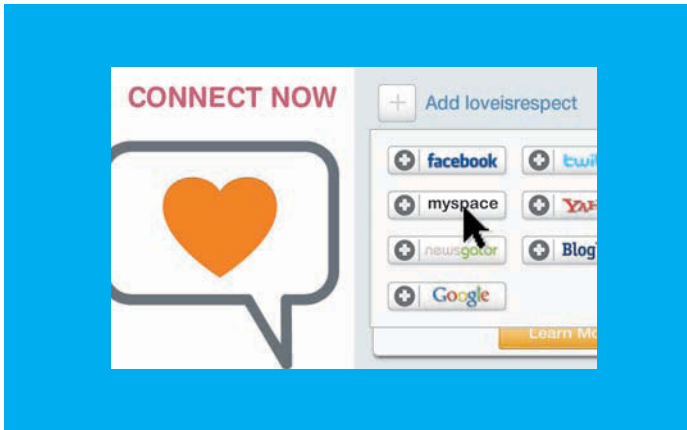
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Corton Chef Robert Truitt uses the iSi Creative Whip, a JB Cumberland client, at the Sugar and Whips event in summer 2009.
Photo Credits: Jeff Elkins

HOPE-BECKHAM, INC.

Continued from page 22

openings of quick serve, casual or fine dining establishments, Hope-Beckham has done it all.

Hope-Beckham Inc. excels in public relations, experiential marketing and business consulting. The agency provides a variety of

services to its clients on a local, regional and national level. In 2007, 2008 and 2009, Hope-Beckham was awarded *O'Dwyer's* Top Independent PR Firms in Food & Beverage.

How does public relations relate to the food and beverage world?

Communication, as with any food or beverage, is only as good as the ingredients that make them



Hunter PR celebrated the 20th anniversary of Jell-O Jigglers by engaging the Jelly Mongers – two architects-turned-caterers – to create works of art in Jell-O gelatin. On a nationwide media tour, the Mongers created the world's largest map of the United States made from Jell-O and unveiled it live on the CBS Early Show. The Mongers built a replica of the castle and were featured on Access Hollywood. The program generated over 83 million media impressions which helped drive Jell-O sales during the back to school season.

up ... Hope-Beckham has the perfect blend of experience in a variety of communications strategies to create the perfect recipe for success.

Why choose Hope-Beckham? Imagination Speaks... Let Hope-Beckham be your Creative Voice!

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Hunter Public Relations is a top-ranked marketing communication firm specializing in food, beverage and spirits. The 65-person, independently owned and operated firm offers strategic marketing PR services including creative brainstorming and facilitation, traditional and social media relations, special event production, product introductions, anniversaries, nutrition and recipe initiatives (led by dietitians), contests, local market events, spokesperson tours and crisis counseling.

Revitalizing mature brands, creating buzz around new products and building awareness among key influencer groups (including the epicurean, medical and dietetic community) are among the firm's specific areas of expertise.

Clients include some of the strongest and most respected brand names in food and beverages including Kraft Foods, E&J Gallo Winery, Diageo, Kellogg's, Campbell's, Wrigley, Arby's, Malt-O-Meal, Apple & Eve, McIlhenny Company and Signature Brands.

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Cluttered categories and overstocked retail shelves — in a market flooded with competing products and messages, companies face the challenge of standing out, selling-in and selling-through: this is what we are hired to do!

For more than 25 years, JB Cumberland Public Relations (JBC PR) has been helping clients distinguish themselves from competitors and imitators, while helping them achieve their ultimate goal: selling products!

We achieve this goal through strategic media campaigns, constantly leveraging our outstanding contacts with key editors in the industry; through social media and online projects; through special events, seminars and TV appearances — always adapting our strategy and tactics according to the client's needs.

We understand our clients' markets, their businesses and their products — whether beverage, specialty food or housewares — so much so that one client's wholesale business has tripled since our partnership began, and another client's wholesale business has quadrupled.

This is what we have done and continue to do for brands as diverse as Australian Lamb, ZeroWater, Bodum Coffee, iSi Espuma Cuisine and Whippers, Starfruit, Curious Chef, CMA, the German Food Marketing Association, Twinings Tea, St. Dalfour Fruit Spreads, Dr. Andrew Weil Healthy Kitchen Products and San Pellegrino.

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Founded by Jeff Smith and Jill Sandin in 2001, JS2 Communications is an award-winning bi-coastal PR agency dedicated to strategic solutions, candid counsel and tangible results. The largest of its four practice areas, the F&B division boasts the west coast division of the Patina Restaurant Group, which includes more than 30 award-winning locations such as Patina, Nick+Stef's and Café Pinot, Chicago-inspired bar and restaurant Rush Street and farm to fork and fast casual regional restaurant chain, Tender Greens. New clients stretch from Las Vegas to Hollywood and include the re-signing as AOR for the Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf, the oldest and largest U.S. based, privately held, global specialty coffee and tea retailer, d.vino and Dragon Noodle Company

restaurants at the Monte Carlo Resort and Casino in Las Vegas, Morels and the three So Cal locations of the The Grill on the Alley.

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Jonni Hegenderfer, CEO, CVO & Founder
Jim Kokoris, Pres. & GM
Laura Dihel, SVP, Consumer Lifestyle

Celebrating its 20th anniversary last year, JSH&A has built its reputation on innovative consumer lifestyle marketing PR campaigns for industry leaders such as McDonald's, The Hershey Co., Beam Global Spirits and Wine, ConAgra, Edible Arrangements, and Purina. The agency's trademarked LIF™ Style PR and Social LIF™ strategies drive the award-winning 360degree campaigns used to launch new brands and support marketing promotions with exciting online and offline programs that create buzz and generate purchase.

Whether working with celebrities, sports stars, mommy bloggers or science experts, JSH&A understands how to break through the noise and make an impact with consumers. We've conducted Great Whisk(ey) Debates, fashion shows, Smithsonian lock-ins and cookie exchanges held in 1000 homes during the same week. Our clients have appeared on "Rachel Ray," "Martha Stewart," the "Today Show," "Fox & Friends," "Squawk Box," HGTV, E! and a long list of popular TV programs. They've been featured in the dailies, the weeklies, the women's magazines, the business pages and, of course, they've engaged in unending conversations in the Blogosphere.

As a member of the IPREX network, JSH&A has partner agencies throughout the U.S., in Canada, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia Pacific allowing us to provide best-in-class PR capabilities for our clients around the globe.

KAPLOW

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Liz Kaplow, President and CEO

An award-winning, full-service PR agency founded in 1991 with vast experience in the consumer

sector, Kaplow changes conversations building brand momentum and producing measurable results that impact the bottom line.

Kaplow's Retail, Food and Wine practice has developed and executed strategic programs for major, best-in-class brands, including: Constellation Wines — Robert Mondavi Private Selection and Woodbridge brands, to Newman's Own, to our long-standing work for Target's diverse collection of proprietary consumable brands from Archer Farms to Choxie Chocolate.

In a changing media landscape, Kaplow and our K:Drive specialty division take clients' brands beyond the edges of traditional media into social media, blogs, and other emerging platforms.

Kaplow intimately connects clients to the people, industries, and opinion influencers who count. We're not just sparking conversations; we're changing them.

LANE PR

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Wendy Lane Stevens, President

LANE PR is a nationally recognized PR agency focused on our clients' business success. We understand what's compelling about a company and know how to spread the word.

We are a team of passionate, curious foodies. And while our enthusiasm is contagious, we realize it takes more than enthusiasm to build brands. We are a group of 25 skilled communicators and strategic planners who understand how to raise awareness and build consumer allegiance.

The secret to our success? In our 20-year history, LANE PR has developed unparalleled knowledge of the industry and established meaningful relationships with the media and key industry influencers that help drive sales results for our clients.

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Howard Pearlstein, Principal

Lee & Assocs. offers strategic



Los Angeles Trade Tech Culinary School Director, Steve Kasmar (far right) and Ron Parque, President of Mrs. Cubbison's Foods (far left), congratulate the student chef winners in the school's 12th Annual Mrs. Cubbison's Thanksgiving Stuffing Cook-Off, created and produced each year as a major media event by Lee Associates, Inc. Mrs. Cubbison's has been a client for 60 years.

planning, program evaluation, media relations, product launches, consumer education, recipe development, special events, crisis management and corporate PR services to its food & beverage client roster.

Founded in 1950, the agency is proud of its Western Research Kitchens division, which features home economists, nutritionists, dietitians, chefs and medical doctors. The firm has represented PepsiCo, Del Monte, American Home Foods and Suntory Int'l, as well as brand names like John Morrell, Florida's Natural Fruit Snacks, Morehouse Mustard and Mrs. Cubbison's Foods (stuffing and croutons — a client for 60 years). Additional clients include trade associations and marketing boards, from California apples, eggs, figs, prunes, seafood and tomatoes to Hawaiian papaya, Oregon potatoes and the New Zealand Trade Commission.

MARINA MAHER COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

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Nancy Lowman LaBadie, EVP DeLisa Harmon, Managing Director, Consumer Brands Kanchan Kinkade, VP, Food and Beverage Practice

Marina Maher Comms., Inc.

(MMC) Food and Beverage Practice creates delicious pop culture and lifestyle relevance for food and wine brands which results in high profile media coverage rarely seen in the category. Headed by a certified sommelier, the team regularly works with industry insiders, such as celebrity chefs, mixologists, and nutritionists to craft five-star communications programs.

MMC builds strategic partnerships with tasteful brands. Currently, MMC works with Bimbo Bakeries USA, the largest bakery company in the U.S., on brands such as Thomas', Boboli, Arnold and Orowheat Bread. Also in the food category, MMC partners with Post Cereals supporting both adult and children's brands such as Post Shredded Wheat, Post Raisin Bran, Post Grape Nuts, Post Pebbles and Post Honey Bunches of Oats. For Terlato Wines International, MMC represents Santa Margherita, the #1-selling Pinot Grigio in America, Markham Vineyards and Two Hands Wines. MMC's experience also includes work for Weight Watchers licensed food products, Ronzoni, Godiva and the Chaine des Rôtisseurs food and wine society.

MMC offers 26 years of expertise in marketing-to-women and a Media Connections team featuring experts in the fields of traditional and social media, and special events. MMC also deploys a proprietary tool, the Trendscaster, which identifies and leverages trends to benefit our partner brands in the food and beverage industry.



Shirley and Ryan Weir exchanged wedding vows in New York City's Foley Square at the Sun Crystals "Sweet & Solar Wedding" event. The couple, who met three years ago on the subway, joined more than a dozen others at the eco-friendly wedding. The event, powered by solar panels and featuring recyclable wedding decorations, marked the introduction of M Booth client Sun Crystals, a new all-natural sweetener.

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Michael A. Layne, Partner

Marx Layne has been providing cost-effective marketing and public relations services on a local, regional and national basis to the food and beverage sector since 1987.

Services offered to clients include media relations, product publicity, crisis and issues management, internal communications, special events planning, direct mail, e-blasts, graphic design, Web development, brochure and newsletter production, social networking and marketing, and digital media.

Clients include fine dining restaurants, quick service restaurants, supermarket chains, and food manufacturers and suppliers.

M BOOTH & ASSOCIATES

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Margaret Booth, President
Rich Goldblatt, SVP, Director
Joyce Yaeger, SVP, Director
Josh Rosenberg, SVP, Director,
Wine & Spirits

M Booth's Better4You practice, launched last year, served up some

robust campaigns in 2009. The practice helps food/nutrition and home brands communicate innovations, functional benefits and product revitalizations to the marketplace. As part of the offering, the practice launched a blog, www.better4you.com, which posts and comments on trends and news in the health, wellness and nutrition arenas that brand and marketing managers will find useful.

Complementing M Booth's seasoned staff of communications professionals is a nine-member Better4You advisory board of medical and health experts that span nutrition, fitness, weight, cardio and pediatrics. M Booth's breadth and depth in the area of "better for you" brands includes work for margarines, salad dressings, pasta, frozen food and low carb products, as well as nutraceuticals and eye care.

To launch the Sun Crystals All-Natural Sweetener from McNeil Nutritionals, M Booth held the sweetest event of the century. To mark the marriage of Sun Crystal's two natural ingredients — Stevia and cane sugar — Sun Crystals hosted a "Sweet & Solar" wedding. Bells were ringing for couples from as far away as the U.S. Virgin Islands who were married eco-friendly style in the heart of New York's Foley Square. The event created international buzz, garnering broadcast and print coverage, and contributed to a sweet launch at retail stores nationwide.

M Booth added a plateful of new clients to its roster. The agency will assist Schwan's Home Service, one of the largest distributors of frozen foods, and Pirate Brands, makers of Pirate's Booty with public relations support in 2010.



Nearly 2,500 people registered for the Dreamfields Pasta webcast, launching the "DFF" program (Diabetes Friends Forever), a first-of-its-kind contest that pays tribute to the special people who help make living with diabetes a manageable experience. The panel was client-moderated and included the Dreamfields Advisory Board of registered dietitians and certified diabetes educators. M&P Food Communications has managed the Dreamfields campaign for three years.

Things are also stirring for M Booth in the beverage category. The agency's dedicated wine and spirits team added to its top-shelf portfolio with Nolet Spirits USA, introducing HARLEM® Kruiden Liqueur. As agency of record for six years representing The Macallan® Single Malt Scotch Whisky, the team continued to reach key influencers through luxury brand partnerships and special events amplified through traditional and social media channels. M Booth also began working for The Macallan globally with the launch of The Macallan 1824 Collection — a global travel retail exclusive line of single malts.

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Brenda McDowell, Principal
Jessie Vicha, Sr. Account Manager
Liz Rytel-Mudroncik, Sr. Advisor

Whether telling a nutrition story, driving Web site traffic, developing recipes, or connecting with influencers, M&P creates successful, strategic, on-budget programs.

Our ideas move audiences to action, drive trial and build loyalty for current and past clients including Wilton Enterprises, Dreamfields Pasta, Seneca Foods, Quaker Oats, Good Humor-Breyers, Jolly Time Pop Corn, National Cattleman's Beef Association, and the Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers.

Our M&P Everyday Foodologists consumer panel pro-

vides in-depth insight on products, trends, recipes and more.

M&P has provided public relations/communications services to consumer food and beverage clients for 20+ years. We are food-focused, consumer-connected, and client-centered.

MWW GROUP

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Michael W. Kempner, Pres. & CEO
Alissa Blate, EVP, Global Consumer Marketing Practice Leader

MWW Group represents some of today's most prolific food, beverage, nutrition and restaurant brands. Our team has decades of experience with media relations, product launches and marketing, branding and re-branding, celebrity endorsement, digital and experiential marketing. We are able to expand media coverage beyond the food pages and into influential lifestyle outlets, creating lifestyle relevance and developing emotional connections to culinary brands that drive trial, brand loyalty, and patronage. Our team of professionals is comprised of some of the best minds in the business who understand the crucial nuances of the food and beverage industry in a way that captures the media's attention and imagination. Our experience includes: The Hershey Company, Sara Lee, Jimmy Dean, Ball Park Franks, Nutrisystem, Gallo Salame, The Palm Restaurants, McDonald's, Freshdirect, Gardenburger, XanGo, Hard Rock Café, CiCi's Pizza, and The Restaurants at Newport.



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M. Young Communications helped Georges Duboeuf celebrate Peace, Love and Beaujolais Nouveau in New York to commemorate the wine's official November release with a Beaujolais Love Bus touring the city containing a group of tie-dyed dressed hippies. Activities included a sit-in to count down the wine's arrival, a sip-in tasting and media lunch, and a food drive benefiting Food Bank for New York City.

Jennifer Mitchell Photography.



Padilla Speer Beardsley helped DecoPac, the world's largest cake decorating supplier, promote its cakes.com Web site, with the world's largest cupcake for SpongeBob's 10th anniversary. The event drew thousands and garnered massive television placements and Web traffic.

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Melanie Young, President
David Ransom, Director, Events

M. Young Communications represents an international clientele of wine, spirits and food accounts. The firm provides marketing promotion, media outreach and special event production, from educational wine tastings and media dinners to wine conferences, trade and consumer events, restaurant and retail promotions, media tours and brand and image building publicity campaigns. With our extensive connections among the food and beverage industry trade and media, we connect our clients to influencers throughout the U.S. Recent activities have included media management for VINO 2010-Italian Wine Week, launch of the Italian Wine Masters program for the Consorzi Brunello di Montalcino, Chianti Classico, Nobile di Montepulciano and Prosecco Conegliano-Valdobbiadene Superior (New York/Chicago), a "Peace, Love and Beaujolais Nouveau" promotion for Georges Duboeuf (New York/Miami), media/trade programs for the Spanish wine regions of Navarra, Manchuela and Madrid and the launch of a recipe contest for chefs on behalf of Australia's Cleanseas Tuna Ltd.

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Bill Reihl, Executive Vice President, Global Consumer Marketing

Ogilvy PR has deep and unparalleled expertise in food and beverage. During a time of

rapid lifestyle and health shifts in the category, we specialize in creating dynamic and game-changing programs that impact consumer perceptions and drive bottom-line results. Our combination of research-based strategy, breakthrough creativity, and flawless execution deliver meaningful media results, talkability and buzz, and product sales. In addition, we have a staff of seasoned communications professionals — including in-house food and nutrition experts and a national network of RD consultants — that is in-tune with current and future trends in food and beverage. Our roster of food clients includes Fage, Unilever (Lipton, Slim-Fast, Knorr, Bertolli), Tropicana, Naked Juice, Maggie Moo's Ice Cream and Treatery, Marble Slab Creamery, PretzelMaker, PretzelTime, Great American Cookie Company, Johnsonville Sausage and Produce for Better Health Foundation.

PADILLA SPEER BEARDSLEY

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Tom Jollie, Senior VP, Consumer Products
Mike Greece, Senior VP, Managing Director, NY
Tina Valek, Director, Food

Padilla Speer Beardsley is a multi-specialty marketing communications and public relations firm with offices in Minneapolis and New York City. We launch new products, create and reenergize brands, craft social-media campaigns and handle crises and product recalls. We engage proven planning methodologies that provide insight, guide strategy and generate measurable outcomes. Our award-winning programs have driven business results for clients nationally for nearly 50 years.

Our experience includes work for Betty Crocker, Caribou Coffee, Cheerios, Cub Foods, Fiber One, Frito-Lay, GE, Gold Medal Flour, Golden Valley Microwave Foods, Jim Beam, Land O'Lakes, Lloyd's Barbeque Company, The Malt-O-Meal Company, Nature Valley, PepsiCo, Pillsbury, Progresso, SUPERVALU, Total and Trix.



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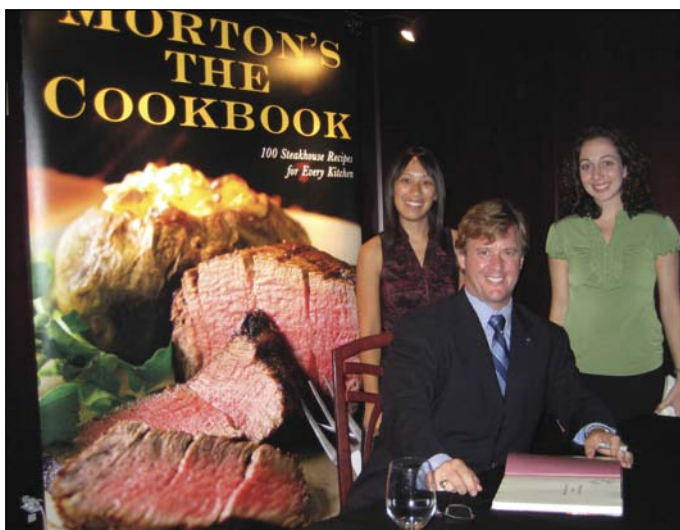


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Pierson Grant Public Relations handled the media tour for Morton's The Steakhouse locations in South Florida and Central Florida as Taylor Field III, Vice President of Wine & Spirits and Co-Author of Morton's "The Cookbook: 100 Steakhouse Recipes For Every Kitchen," traveled through the region on a book tour benefiting Feeding America.

PEPPERCOM

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Steven Cody, *Managing Partner*
Edward Moed, *Managing Partner*

Peppercom is a mid-sized communications agency that specializes in developing strategic and creative PR programs for food and beverage companies.

In addition to PR campaigns, services include a positioning program to differentiate a client from its competitive set, a crisis management program called CrisisRx, Pain-Based Selling to identify the gap between what client sales forces think customers are thinking and what they actually are, and ways to leverage existing partnerships or develop new ones. PepperDigital and GreenPepper concentrate on digital and green initiatives, respectively, while Peppercommotions focuses on events and leverages sponsorships.

Peppercom is ranked among the top 20 largest independent PR firms in the U.S. by *O'Dwyer's*. Current and past clients include FreshDirect, Wilbur-Ellis Company, Malibu-Kahlua International, Dr. Praeger's Sensible Foods, Procter & Gamble's Millstone Coffee, Diageo, and Quiznos.

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Maria Pierson, *CEO*
Jane Grant, *President*

Pierson Grant PR is a full-service agency with offices in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. and Raleigh, N.C., serving a wide range of clients with strategic and tactical planning, media and community relations, superior Web-based and social media, crisis communications and special events.

Restaurant clients include Dairy Queen, Olive Garden and Morton's The Steakhouse.

The firm's fresh thinking helps clients build brand identity, generates publicity for openings and food and beverage introductions, brings creativity to special events and community relations, and leverages the power of Internet marketing through its High Impact Digital division.

**POLLOCK
COMMUNICATIONS**

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Louise Pollock, *President*

Pollock Communications, is an independent PR and marketing communications agency that offers cutting edge expertise for food and beverage clients. Founded in 1991, Pollock pioneered the functional food movement, creating some of the major food trends of the past 10 years including making tea the healthy drink of the new millennium and making chocolate a healthy indulgence. We know how to capitalize on emerging health and wellness trends in a credible way, with media, consumers and health professionals.

This knowledge of the latest research and science in the health & nutrition arena enables us to deliver actionable consumer and market insights and practical health & lifestyle wellness benefits for brands and commodities. PCI has an unsurpassed understanding of media that cover food and nutrition news and trends. Our staff includes credentialed registered dietitians with on-air and editorial experience who can address the health & nutrition issues that are top-of-mind for today's editors and reporters — including those who serve as trusted "watchdogs" for family gatekeepers. We have developed and executed innovative social media programs to reach the key health & nutrition influencers online, including blogging initiatives for a global cheese brand and a new juice beverage for children.

The company represents Committee for Promotion of Honey & Health, Cranberry Institute, First Juice, Gourmet Garden Herbs & Spices, Presidents Brand Cheese, Sorrento Brand Cheese, Tea Council of the USA, Unilever Promise, Country Crock & I Can't Believe It's Not Butter brands, the USA Rice Federation, Wish-Bone and Friendship Dairies.

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Amy Binder, *CEO*
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Managing Director*

With the advent of the Food Network and celebrity chefs on the one hand and increasing scrutiny of health and nutrition from regulators on the other, the food industry is facing new challenges as well as

new opportunities as a result of consumers' growing interest in knowing more about the foods they eat and the products they buy. Competition for the consumer is as strong as ever, and consumer expectations and the grocery shopping experience are rapidly changing. Concern for nutrition and dieting are a permanent dimension of food and beverage marketing. Social media is well established as a powerful source for both consumer information (about recipes, nutrition, and safety) as well as marketing.

RF|Binder has worked in every aspect of food and beverage marketing and public relations from Dunkin' Donuts to Cargill, from the 100th anniversary of the Fig Newton to Wines of Germany. RF|Binder brings market and industry insight, research-based and creative programming, and access to the key influencers who shape public opinion. We provide the wide array of services from consumer promotions, influencer outreach, issues management and trade relations to investor relations. Our staff has extensive experience in promoting prepared foods, imported foods, ingredients, supplements, grocers, restaurants, quick service restaurants, wine, beer, liquors, and coffee among other categories.

As well as being experienced communications professionals, the RF|Binder staff includes professionals who have been trained and worked in the culinary arts and wine industry, who have studied health and nutrition, who worked as industry/security analysts in the food sector and who are also food and nutrition bloggers. We promote products, but we also routinely deal with the most challenging issues — recalls, labeling, FDA actions, organics, ingredients, health and nutrition, safety, and regulation.

Current and recent clients include ARAMARK / 1st & Fresh Catering, Atkins Nutritionals, Breyers Yogurt Company, Bob Evans, Cargill's Truvia™ natural sweetener, Chilean Specialty Foods, The Culinary Trust, Dunkin' Brands, the European Union (European Rieslings), Hershey's Scharffen Berger Chocolate, Kayem Foods, The Malaysian Trade Association (Malaysia Kitchen for the World), Miller Brewing (Pilsner Urquell), The Pantry, Readers' Digest Association/Food & Entertaining Affinity, Tillen Farms, Wegmans, Wines of Chile, Wines of Germany, Wines of Israel, and YoCrunch.

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Alicia Young, Dan Pooley

The food and beverage industry is undergoing tremendous change, in terms of the proliferation of choices, emerging issues and factors driving consumer preferences.

Taste still reigns supreme, but health and wellness, functional benefits, packaging, portability, organics, the obesity epidemic and variety are impacting the foods we eat every day both at home and away.

Brand trial, purchase and loyalty are being influenced by factors like corporate social responsibility and reputational issues, distance to market, wellness, functional benefits, supernutrients, packaging, sustainability, additives and portion size.

Ruder Finn food and beverage expertise is a key part of our cross-office Life+Style specialty. Our food and beverage experts work with clients to understand today's complex food and beverage landscape and the drivers of decision-making to help clients navigate this landscape and find the right voice for brand communications and reputational opportunities for the corporations behind them. Food and beverage communications is much more — it's about connecting, finding and exploring relevance and igniting advocates who can help add credibility and reach new audiences.

Among the food and beverage clients we have championed are Kellogg's, Perdue, Bolthouse Farms, Everpure Beringer, Castello di Gabbiano wines, Wolf Blass (Foster's WineEstates Americas); Good Earth Organic Coffee; Atkins Center; Price Chopper, Sweet 'N Low (product and corporate); Snapple; ModMix Organic Cocktail mix, Seagram's and Gerber (product and corporate).

The April issue of *O'Dwyer's* will profile firms that specialize in social media, as well as video. If you would like your firm listed, contact Editor Jon Gingerich at 646/843-2080 or jon@odwyerpr.com

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Schneider Associates is a full service public relations and marketing communications firm. We specialize in Launch Public RelationsSM — a proprietary method of launching products, services, companies and communities. Types of PR handled include: consumer products, launch public relations, food & beverage, social media, retail, public affairs, corporate communications, real estate, and financial and professional services. Additional agency services include social media, messaging, media training, special events, crisis communications and spokesperson training.

Clients Include: Baskin-Robbins®, Foods of Québec, and New England Confectionery Company®.

TAYLOR

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Tony Signore, CEO & Managing Partner

Taylor partners exclusively with category leading consumer brands that utilize lifestyle, sports, and entertainment platforms to engage consumers and drive business growth.

The Holmes Report's "Consumer Agency of the Decade," Taylor has more than 100 employees with headquarters in New York and offices in Los Angeles, Chicago, Charlotte and London. The agency provides a full array of marketing communications services including: proprietary research and competitive intelligence, program planning and



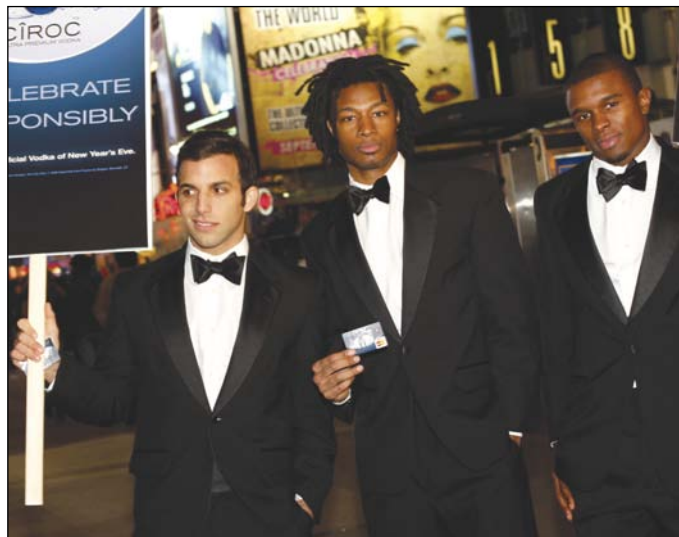
Schneider Associates' Joan Schneider, President and Creative Director (left), and Julie Hall, EVP/Partner (right), engage with friends and colleagues at an industry event.

development, strategic media relations, digital and emerging media, measurement and evaluation, event production, Hispanic / multicultural marketing communications, and spokesperson procurement and training.

Taylor develops strategic marketing communications programs for category leading food and beverage brands, designed specifically to engage their target consumer and

create business impact. Partnering with Diageo — the world's leading premium drinks business — the agency has successfully launched new products, reinvigorated iconic brands and sustained momentum in the marketplace for adult beverage favorites such as Crown Royal, Jose Cuervo, Guinness, Smirnoff and CÎROC ultra premium vodka,

Continued on page 32



Taylor partners with category leading, iconic brands such as CÎROC ultra premium vodka to drive and support brand marketing objectives. One of the many initiatives Taylor spearheaded in 2009 was a social responsibility campaign where street teams distributed prepaid debit cards in Times Square for taxi and subway usage as a way to remind New Year's Eve revelers to get home safely on the big night.



Missy Barrickman (Miami Dolphins Cheerleader), Ashton Landgraf (Miami Dolphins Cheerleader), Doug Schmick (Co-Founder of McCormick & Schmick's), Chipp Lewis (GM McCormick & Schmick's West Palm Beach), Fabiola Romero (Miami Dolphins Cheerleader), and Lilly Robbins (Miami Dolphins Cheerleader) at the grand opening of McCormick & Schmick's Fresh Seafood Restaurant in West Palm Beach at CityPlace. The seafood restaurant is a client of TransMedia Group.

TAYLOR

Continued from page 31

among others. In addition to program development and brand awareness for Diageo, the agency is charged with integrating a social responsibility message throughout all activities, highlighting the importance of making responsible decisions when drinking. Many Taylor programs executed on behalf of Diageo in the U.S. have been implemented around the world.

Taylor's portfolio of client partners includes MasterCard, Diageo, P&G, Gillette, Allstate Insurance Company, Coca-Cola, GlaxoSmithKline, BRP, Mars, Staples, Guinness, Jose Cuervo, Kimberly-Clark, T. Rowe Price, and IAC/ask.com.

TRANSMEDIA GROUP

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Tom Madden, CEO and Founder
Kim Morgan, Senior VP
Lynn Lewis, Director of Public Relations

As a leader in public relations for the past 29 years, TransMedia Group is the oldest and largest independent firm in South Florida with extensive experience in the culinary industry representing chefs, restaurants and food product launches

that have garnered international, national, regional and local media exposure for a wide variety of clients.

Senior Vice President Kim Morgan and PR Director Lynn Lewis have spearheaded the grand openings of such notable restaurants including the Florida locations of McCormick & Schmick's in Boca Raton, Naples and West Palm Beach, Copper Canyon Grill in Boca Raton, New York Prime and Durango Steak House, also in Boca, LaCigale Mediterranean Restaurant in Delray Beach, New York Strip Steakhouse & Cabaret in Fort Lauderdale, and others.

According to Chipp Lewis, General Manager of McCormick & Schmick's West Palm Beach, "We had one of the strongest grand openings in the company's history and tremendous media attention from the front page of the *Palm Beach Post* to great coverage on all the local networks. It was a real treat to have the Miami Dolphins Cheerleaders at our signature fish toss too!"

TREVELINO/KELLER

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Trevelino/Keller has become one of the most sought after food and beverage agencies in the country for emerging and established corporate and franchise multi-mar-

ket concepts. Specializing in public relations, social media and brand communications, the firm works closely with its clients on brand positioning, store experience, industry relations, national and local media relations, executive visibility, mobile and web applications, social networks, communities and crisis communications.

Experienced in fine dining, casual, fast casual and quick service, the firm also works directly with food and beverage packaged goods and retailers.

In 2009, the firm released its first wine from Crushpad, a Grist Vineyard Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel. All new clients receive their own private stash.

WEBER SHANDWICK

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Gail Heimann, Vice Chair
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Janet Helm, MS, RD, Chief Food and Nutrition Strategist, North America

Weber Shandwick is immersed in the food business from farm to fork, with clients representing every part of the food pyramid. Weber Shandwick has proven expertise in nutrition communications, consumer education, food policy, health influencer outreach, alliance building, issues management and crisis counseling.

The agency's experience ranges from crafting nutrition messages and leveraging scientific research to food safety and sustainability. Weber Shandwick has a unique expertise in creating nutrition-related education campaigns, from obesity and heart disease prevention to youth fitness, childhood obesity and health promotion.

Whether launching a new product or repositioning a brand, Weber Shandwick uses an insight-driven approach to build advocates in this new era of engagement.

Weber Shandwick's food and nutrition practice is staffed by some of the industry's most strategic senior counselors, including registered dietitians, food scientists, former and current journalists and trained chefs. Weber Shandwick has a proprietary network of nutrition professionals across the country that is deployed

on behalf of numerous clients.

Weber Shandwick works with many of the world's leading food and beverage companies, brands and associations, including Campbell Soup Company, Kraft Foods, McCormick, Ocean Spray, Yum!, Unilever and the Cherry Marketing Institute. The agency leads strategic integrated communications for category marketing programs such as the Milk Mustache "got milk?" campaign and "Pork. The Other White Meat," as well as for branded products and programs, including the launches of the Oreo Double Stuf Racing League and creating the first-ever "face from space" for KFC.

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Barby K. Siegel, CEO

At The Table. Zeno Group is the marketing communications agency committed to helping clients make the most of the new realities of audience engagement and the evolving role of PR.

Our teams have worked with some of the world's leading food, beverage and nutrition brands, helping to navigate the changing health and wellness landscape and the new ways consumers consume information to make their brand choices.

One, senior led team — The most experienced minds at the table. Our most senior team members work on business (not spreadsheets) because that's what we love to do and that's what's right for our clients.

Across our four offices, we operate as one, easily enabling the right talent for the job regardless of geography.

Insights to ideation — Our dedicated planning capability ensures our recommendations are anchored by relevant insights and a research-driven strategy. From there, we work to find the 'right' big ideas that will drive clients business forward in new and interesting ways.

The Real Moms of Zeno — To help our clients engage with this highly influential target audience, we listen to our proprietary group of 50 moms to understand what REAL-ly matters to them and how brands can best fit into their lives. ●

O'DWYER'S RANKINGS

TOP FOOD & BEVERAGE PR FIRMS

Firm		2008 Net Fees	Firm		2008 Net Fees
1. Edelman	New York	\$54,712,795	30. Seigenthaler PR	Nashville	503,172
2. Hunter PR	New York	5,773,991	31. Gregory FCA	Ardmore, PA	500,000
3. APCO Worldwide	Wash., D.C.	5,620,000	32. Trevelino/Keller	Atlanta	450,000
4. Taylor	New York	3,855,000	33. Dudell & Assocs.	Oakland, CA	443,000
5. RF Binder Partners	New York	3,777,022	34. Morgan & Myers	Waukesha, WI	427,837
6. 5W Public Relations	New York	3,650,000	35. Levick Strategic Comms.	Wash., D.C.	410,602
7. CRT/tanaka	Richmond, VA	3,188,000	36. McGrath-Power	Santa Clara	382,080
8. M Booth & Assocs.	New York	3,111,139	37. Kaplow	New York	353,000
9. Coyne PR	Parsippany, NJ	2,447,000	38. Richmond PR	Seattle	352,956
10. French West Vaughan	Raleigh	2,166,125	39. The Castle Group	Boston	341,750
11. Charleston Orwig	Hartland, WI	2,018,950	40. Blaze	Santa Monica	281,000
12. RL PR & Marketing	Los Angeles	1,904,891	41. rbb Public Relations	Miami	272,824
13. Linhart PR	Denver	1,404,043	42. Widmeyer PR	Wash., D.C.	259,000
14. Padilla Speer Beardsley	Minneapolis	1,388,510	43. Luckie Strategic PR	Birmingham, AL	239,134
15. Qorvis Comms.	Wash., D.C.	1,312,963	44. Bader Rutter	Branford, WI	200,000
16. O'Malley Hansen	Chicago	1,296,450	45. M/C/C	Dallas	200,000
17. Zeno Group	New York	1,272,082	46. Vollmer PR	Houston	196,130
18. Shift Comms.	Brighton, CT	1,223,369	47. Travers, Collins & Co.	Buffalo	179,256
19. The Kotchen Group	Hartford, CT	1,177,683	48. Hope-Beckham	Atlanta	172,529
20. Kohnstamm Comms.	St. Paul, MN	1,004,417	49. Maccabee Group	Minneapolis	169,198
21. PainePR	Los Angeles	930,656	50. TransMedia	Boca Raton	150,000
22. Lane PR	Portland, OR	922,680	51. Rogers Group	Los Angeles	146,896
23. Allison & Partners	San Francisco	850,000	52. JohnstonWells PR	Denver	136,000
24. JS2 Comms., Inc.	Los Angeles	827,900	53. JB Cumberland PR	New York	125,800
25. Pierson Grant PR	Ft. Lauderdale	750,000	54. Rosica Strategic PR	Parsippany	118,100
26. zcomm	Bethesda, MD	700,746	55. Peppercom	New York	115,000
27. Lee & Assocs.	Los Angeles	663,000	56. McNeely Pigott & Fox	Nashville	106,701
28. VPE PR	S. Pasadena, CA	561,504	57. Landis Comms.	San Francisco	76,000
29. Morris + King Co.	New York	516,997	58. The Phelps Group	Santa Monica	64,780

The myth of media training

By Fraser Seitel

A friend of mine has been conducting “media training” for PR people and business and government officials for 40 years. (He’s old.)

Over that period, as local news and public affairs programming expanded, three television networks morphed into dozens of cable networks and stations, and public relations increased in stature, the media trainer, himself, began to appear regularly in the media, particularly on television.

And in the process, he found that much of what he had been “training” people to do in regard to media interviews was flat out wrong!

Indeed, it turns out that there are a host of media training “myths” that you can’t know about unless you, yourself, occasionally leap into the often-icy TV waters.

For example, here are six typical recommendations that simply shouldn’t be followed by interviewees eager to make an impression.

Myth #1. Arrive early.

Media trainers suggest getting to the studio early, an hour or so ahead of the scheduled “hit time,” to get acclimated to the culture shock that is TV. The more comfortable you become with the new show biz surroundings, the logic goes, the more at ease you will be during the interview.

Don’t buy it.

Early arrivals are dumped in the Green Room, plastered with makeup, and then left to experience one of two uncomfortable circumstances:

They sit, awkwardly, in the midst of several other poor saps, waiting for their own star turn. No one talks to anyone. The silence is deafening and most unnerving. Or ...

They encounter a chatty Cathy — or Carlos — who talks non-stop, usually at an other-worldly decibel level, about what shows they’ve been on, whom they’ve met, and how much they know about everything.

This is even more unnerving.

So get there a half hour before your scheduled appearance, no mas.

Myth # 2. Chat up the interviewer

The theory here is that meeting and engaging the interviewer in a conversation, before you hit the studio, will break the ice and enable a more pleasant TV tête-à-tête.

Fuggedaboutit.

A pre-air conversation is the last thing an experienced interviewer desires. Pre-interviews suck all the air out of the spontaneity of the on-camera interview. Broadcasters call the exercise, “leaving it in the Green Room.”

So don’t even think about more than a cursory greeting from your interviewer, before doing battle in the studio.

Myth #3. Lean forward.

Media trainers correctly encourage interviewees to “appear eager” during the interview, to express their desire to share their knowledge. To do this, many say, “lean forward” in your chair.

No.

Leaning forward makes you slouch and look crooked. And perfect posture is an important factor on television. (Just look at all those straight-backed anchors.)

So the much better advice is to balance yourself squarely on your — pardon the expression — haunches.

And keep your derrière balanced thusly throughout the interview, gesturing from the waist up.

Myth #4. Be polite and wait your turn.

Media trainers warn interviewees not to come across as a “bully.” They argue that viewers will object to some fat cat corporate type, for example, throwing his weight around. And they are right. But ...

Today’s TV interviews are more often than not free-for-alls, frequently featuring “camera hogs,” who refuse to relinquish the stage without a fight. These cretins, relishing their 15 minutes in the spotlight, keep talking and talking — often without taking a breath.

So ... if you want to get a word in edgewise, you must jump in, interrupt, and keep talking.

The camera will automatically follow whoever has the floor at a given moment. So as soon as you win back the microphone, you’ll be back in charge.

Myth #5. Strike back if attacked.

On the other hand, media trainers tell you that if you are being attacked, strike back, as Samuel L. Jackson once famously said, “with great force and furious anger.”

Not a good idea.

An experienced TV guest or host will make mince meat of a novice who dares to come at him directly in rebuttal. Don’t forget, it’s their sandbox, not yours.

So what do you do if attacked?

Keep your cool. Take a deep breath, and don’t refer to the fusillade that’s just been unleashed against you. Rather, speak objectively about why what has just been said is so off base.

Stated another way, go after your accuser with logic and fact, without ever mentioning him or the heresy he’s just uttered.

Myth #6. Adopt a compromise.

Media trainers, in the words of the late Rodney King, wonder “why can’t we all just get along?” Accordingly, they instruct potential interviewees to “go with the studio flow” and acknowledge that one’s ideas can always be modified.

Nah.

While it’s certainly true that “compromise” should be the spirit of positive public relations, in TV interviews, it’s a bad idea.

Media interviews are neither “conversations” nor exercises in intellectual thought. They’re all about putting across the particular messages you have come to deliver.

So in TV, it’s my way or the highway. You’ve got to convey a confidence in your point-of-view. That means no compromise.

Sorry Rodney. ●



Fraser P. Seitel has been a communications consultant, author and teacher for 30 years. He is the author of the Prentice-Hall text, *The Practice of Public Relations*.

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Expense reduction for PR firms

By Richard Goldstein

Is the recession over? Our current political leaders are telling us that we are turning the corner to prosperity. While this may be true, your best indicator of the recession is your clients. Are they still cutting back on your services? Are you still finding it difficult to cover operating expenses? Are you using the bank credit line?



Richard Goldstein is a partner at Buchbinder Tunick & Company LLP, New York, Certified Public Accountants.

Planning is crucial

It is now March 2010. If you have not done so, you need a budget for 2010. It is not too late to do this. A budget can help identify potential problems in achieving specified organizational goals

and objectives. By quantifying potential difficulties and making them visible, budgets can help stimulate management to think about ways to overcome those difficulties before they are realized. Participating in the budget process helps produce a spirit of cooperation, motivate employees, and instill a feeling of team work.

Profitability

A PR firm's target pre-tax adjusted profit goal should be 25 percent with a stretch goal of 33-38 percent. In looking at this goal, subtract excess compensation and perks that may be taken by principals of closely held independently owned PR firms. Management should stress to staffers how critical hourly billings are to the bottom line. Though the amount of hours that a staffer may bill varies depending on the client, a target goal should be 80 percent to 85 percent of 1,800 hours during a 40-hour work week in a year minus vacations, holidays, personal days and continuing education, etc.

Expense reduction

If the result of the budget process is that overhead is too high, cuts may need to be made. So, how do you go about cutting costs? Believe it or not, there is a right and wrong way to go about it.

Along with strategies to raise revenues, management must devise strate-

gies to reduce expenses. Similar to the ongoing process used to monitor and achieve revenue goals, a cost-cutting mentality must be instilled throughout the agency. Once a firm's owners and management truly become serious about cost-cutting, the attitude of employees will soon follow if the program is properly presented to them. The cost emphasis will breathe new life into the organization and help balance the firm's revenue efforts.

Cost-cutting ideas and strategies come from various sources. Sometime they are driven by the CEO, whereas in other cases they come from the controller, operations manager, department head, and employees. Even consultants and outside CPAs can assist agencies in finding and implementing cost saving strategies. In the better programs, appropriate blends of all these individuals work as a team to develop cost-cutting strategies.

Although each of these individuals has a different focus or approach to cost cutting, there are generally some common traits motivating factors. They all seem to have a knack for spotting overspending and then finding ways to save dollars. It often goes against their very nature not to speak up when potential ways to increase agency profits are discovered.

Requirements for cost-cutting

Two essential requirements of any cost-cutting effort or program include obtaining the support of the owner/CEO and participation of rank-and-file employees. Although both fill different roles, they both should be present for the program to reach its full potential. If you haven't figured it out, a successful cost-cutting program is not a one-person show. The process has to involve principals, account management, financial management, rank-and-file, and possibly your CPA firm.

The owners must be fully supportive of the cost cutting efforts. If they are merely lukewarm to the efforts, the program will generally die within a year or so. The owners' support should be enthusiastic and visible to the entire company. The owners' enthusiasm will cause the cost-cutting "seed" to spread and grow at all levels of the agency. If managers see that cost cutting is a top priority with the owner(s), they will naturally make it their top priority.

Similarly, if managers become enthusiastic, employees will adopt the same enthusiasm.

There are two reasons why rank-and-file employees can be significant contributors to any cost-cutting effort. First, they are in the trenches day after day performing the activities and duties that generate many of the expenses. Thus, they are in an ideal position to recommend ways of doing things more efficiently — if only someone who is interested will ask. Second, the sheer number of rank-and-file employees also explains their importance to a cost-cutting effort. Even one or two suggestions each from the rank-and-file can quickly add up to big savings for the agency.

To properly tap into the wealth of ideas and insight contained with these employees, an appropriate environment must be created and nurtured by management. As mentioned previously, the employees must see visible enthusiasm from the owners and other management members. Closely tied to this enthusiasm is recognition. Employees will respond generously to cost-cutting requests if they are recognized for their efforts.

There are several ways to recognize and reward employee contributions. Agencies should consider the following when deciding how to reward employees for cost-cutting participation:

1. **Acknowledgment.** Each employee's suggestion should be acknowledged and responded to, even if the suggestion is rejected. Otherwise, that employee will be unlikely to continue making suggestions.
2. **Recognition.** Recognize employees whose ideas are adopted by the agency. The recognition may be verbal or written, such as posting their names and ideas on a bulletin board or agency newsletter.
3. **Reward.** Consider rewarding employees. Rewards are not absolutely necessary, but they are often helpful. Rewards can be monetary, extra days off, expense paid trips, and token gifts (such as coffee mugs or watches with the company logo).

So how do you begin the program and tackle which expenses to tackle? To find out you need to come back next month. ●

Since when have Republicans been for small government?

By Jon Gingerich

As expected, the 37th Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Washington, D.C. was a huge success this year. What was once a modest gathering of core party thinkers has since mushroomed into a who's who of the conservative movement, showcasing stalwart party speakers such as Glenn Beck, Mitt Romney, Newt Gingrich and Ann Coulter.



Jon Gingerich is Editor of O'Dwyer's.

The turnout also revealed a surprising diversity among CPAC habitués, drawing factions that typically lie on the conservative periphery, assorted wingnuts like the prodigious Tea Party Movement, the Oath Keepers, the Free State Project and 25-year-old Ron Paul supporters who live in their parents' basements.

For the most part, CPAC's riled-up reclamations against "socialized" government retained its predictable dog-and-pony show format, but the unified anathema of anything "big government" should be noted for its ability to bridge conservative camps this year, from east coast politicians to the garden variety Tea Partier.

As much as Tea Partiers romantically envision themselves as Rooseveltian vanguards of small government, they've become uncharacteristically obsequious to their beltway counterparts, and it's for this reason they can be seen as new pawns in an old game for conservatives. There is a reason why Republican Party leaders have begun courting the Tea Party in recent months after treating them like ugly cousins for the better part of a year prior.

The fact is, "small government" has never been a particular concern for Republican Party leaders. Though the phrase has been used repeatedly for its populist tenor, the Republican leaders' M.O. of the past 35 years has been to expand the presence of government at virtually every impasse, and a brief historic of party policy shows the rallying cry to be a meaningless clause with mythological roots.

We can start with Nixon, whose penchant for "socialized" services dwarfed Obama's by a hilarious degree. Nixon established "big" agencies like the EPA, the CPSC and OSHA, and drastically expanded the pow-

ers of existing agencies like the Office of Management and Budget.

He introduced the Section 8 housing voucher program and implemented affirmative action predecessor The Philadelphia Plan. He increased direct Medicare and Social Security payments to individuals by 2.6% and pumped up pay for federal employees. He introduced a health insurance plan where employers had to buy insurance for their workers. He even implemented wage and price controls.

He signed the Equal Employment Opportunity Act and to further corporate chagrin authorized the Clean Air Act. Nixon revolutionized America's agricultural policies by giving massive federal subsidies to farmers. Food aid and public assistance rose during Nixon's reign by \$2.5 billion. Defense spending decreased by 3.3%. In today's Tea Party terms, Nixon was as "socialist" as they come.

Next we have Reagan, who history has a funny way of remembering because he initially cut taxes during his first year in Office but continued to raise them each year for the remainder of his two terms. Reagan's tax hikes hit \$1 billion within three years (when adjusted for inflation, they even beat Clinton's tax hikes of 1993). He imposed a heavy tax on gas, removed tax loopholes for businesses and introduced giant payroll taxes. During his second term, he signed the largest corporate tax increase in history — \$120 billion over the course of five years.

Reagan wrote the blueprint for contemporary Republicans' "small government" creed, an illusory practice of "shrinking" government by decentralizing internal (re: "closet socialist") agencies, while effectively doubling the ones that further their political agenda. Federal spending ballooned under Reagan, from \$590 billion in 1980 to \$1.14 trillion in 1988. The number of federal employees grew by 8%, or by 61,000 (by comparison, these number fell by 373,000 under Clinton).

Meanwhile, Reagan expanded the Earned Income Tax Credit and gave Social Security a \$165 billion bailout. Small government indeed.

George H.W. Bush picked up where Nixon left off, raising unemployment benefits and pumping up welfare funds to historic highs. He signed what is typically viewed as one of the biggest civil rights bills in history, the Americans with Disabilities Act. He reauthorized Nixon's Clean Air Act and increased funding for our highways. Faced with the unsavory task of cleaning up Reagan's irresponsible deficit, he drew fire

from his own ranks when he famously backpedaled on his "no new taxes" pledge.

It's hard to know where to begin with George W. Bush. From the early days of his administration, Bush was poised to revive Reagan's 1981 tax cuts but in the course of doing so managed to add \$345 billion to the federal budget, a record only paralleled when he added another \$290 to it during his second term. By the end of his presidency, the national debt had increased 100% from when he took office.

He increased funding for the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health, and he signed a \$7 trillion Medicare drug benefit program. He buffeted state funding on education services with No Child Left Behind.

Bush also continued the Republican practice of increasing the presence of "big government" vis-à-vis swaps with the private sector, a trend that began when Reagan appointed former Merrill Lynch CEO Don Regan to Treasury Secretary. Bush's Treasury Department staff roster looked like a yearbook for big bank executives, and the benefits became instantly obvious: under Bush historic bailouts were engineered for banks, financial institutions and automakers.

Bush mandated increased regulation of private enterprise, he oversaw a Federal takeover of stockholder-owned Fannie Mae. He gave the NSA the authority to spy on Americans without a warrant. He disabled marketplace competition by giving no-bid handouts to corporate ties during his conquests in the Middle East.

By outsourcing Tea Partiers' "white burden" as a cause célèbre, the Republican Party has hitched a ride on the mentality of lynch mobs and driven it to critical mass. Where were the Tea Partiers when our Republican leaders were spending tax dollars to bail out the banks? Where was the predictable patter comparing the President to Adolph Hitler when Reagan installed the largest tax increases since World War 2?

The fact is, Republicans endorse a model of small government when it suits their needs. Republicans are all-too-quick to use government to interfere in the lives of others when it comes to pro-life legislation, abolishing same-sex marriage, dissolving the lines between church and state, enacting legislation that prohibits the sale of generic drugs or jerry-rigging federal subsidies programs to give payouts to corporate interests.

Republicans love the idea of expanding the presence of government, they just don't like the idea of paying for it. ●

Preventing crises should be PR's primary goal

By Arthur Solomon

It's easy to be a Monday morning quarterback as was evidenced by the bevy of PR people who jumped through hoops to be quoted about giving advice to Tiger Woods.



Arthur Solomon is a former Senior VP for Burson-Marsteller.

What was also observable was that the great majority of advice-givers were mouthing the same words, although some louder than others. (It must be nice to be so self-assured that you believe that only what you say is correct.)

Where was the original thinking that people in our business are hired to provide? It makes me wonder if PR has too many people who graduated from Cookie Cutter University.

It's too late in the Tiger situation, but there will be many other crises situations. The best way to handle one is to try and prevent it.

During and after a nearly 25-year career at Burson-Marsteller, I always believed that protecting a client from media controversy was more important than the "big hit." It's called "precautionary public relations" — meaning crisis prevention — when planning or implementing an agenda.

Like a toothache, a PR crisis doesn't give much advance notice (although in Woods' case he showed naïveté to think his off-course hobbies would always remain in the deep background category).

So to paraphrase Rogers and Hammerstein, let's start at the very beginning. It's very easy to do.

Some crises arise unexpectedly. But some are self-generated by clients during interviews. Normally, these are easy to prevent. But once a client agrees to meet the press, it's necessary to have a client willing to tell the truth.

Here are several general rules (general because I believe that each situation deserves original thinking):

- Know your media before arranging interviews.
- Correct a reporter's or your client's error immediately.
- Tell your client not to freelance. If he/she doesn't know the answer to a question say so.

- It's okay to tell a reporter the information wanted is proprietary.

- Don't fall for the, "I'm on deadline routine and need an immediate answer." It's okay to say, "I'll get back to you."

- Don't let an interviewer interrupt an answer. Insist on completing it.

- Nothing is ever off-the-record.

- Even when the notebook is put away and the tape recorder or video camera is turned off, what is said is on-the-record.

- Prepare a list of tough questions that may be asked; have members of your team play reporters interviewing the client. After the mock interview, write three stories to demonstrate how the same story can be written differently. Also, videotape an interview and do the same. Use the mock interviews to refine the client's answers.

- Critique each actual interview so your client can be better during the next one.

- Read the major dailies each morning and on weekends, also the business magazines and trade pubs. Notify a client immediately if there is a story that may result in questions from media.

- Prepare a client for an interview by boning up on the subject and deciding message points. Re: message points. Instead of writing them on your hands, use index cards. (Got that Sarah?)

- Monitor the Internet and web sites of major dailies at least several times a day to see if there is any breaking news that may relate to your client.

- If you're aware of a flash-point that may attract media attention, prepare several statements in advance that can be used when needed.

- Prepare, for foreign clients coming to the U.S., a briefing book containing possible tough questions and suggested answers; also, for U.S. clients, if the interview subject is controversial.

- When an unsolicited media call is received, ask the nature of the call and say, "I'll try to find the proper person and get back to you."

- After speaking to a reporter, e-mail the answer provided, thus having a written record of what you said.

- You don't have to give in to the media pressure of "coming clean immediately." But never lie to or mislead a reporter.

- Press conferences can be embarrassing and deadly. Round-table discussions with several hand-picked journalists and individual interviews are usually a safer route.

- If a crisis develops, a senior individual with significant media experience should be the lead person in speaking to the media.

- Always have a prepared crisis communication plan, covering different situations, so you don't have to start from scratch if you need one.

- And remember: Even your best media friend can't protect you if a big name client messes up during an interview. Too many eyes are watching.

Yes, I believe that in most cases if there's negative news it's best to get out in front of the story so it doesn't dribble out day-after-day. But it depends on the type of crisis.

And in this 24-hours news cycle, which thrives on scandalous revelations, that is sometimes impossible. The Tiger Woods situation was, is and will be covered as if the end of time has arrived. Even if Tiger made a mea culpa standing on his head the sensationalism of the coverage would have continued.

In my opinion, every crisis situation deserves original thinking, even if it means delaying a statement for a day or two or sometimes three. Analyzing the media fallout only can help a PR practitioner give better advice.

But eventually the media spotlight will fade from Tiger. Sure to happen, another sex scandal will emerge featuring a well-known sports, show business or political figure.

That will put the "new" back into news and the media will have another individual to torment and PR "crises specialists" will render the same tired boilerplate advice as if it was the 11th commandment. ●

Media Briefs

Lawyers help journalists

The SCG Legal PR Network, New York, has been set up by a network of nearly 1,000 lawyers to help reporters with legal aspects of their stories.

Journalists can post queries on the SCG network and receive comments without charge from lawyers or legal professionals.

Legal experts are available on subjects such as copyright, trademarks, estate planning, tax law, divorce, workplace injuries and issues, franchising whether domestic or international, contract and securities law, real estate and many other areas.

Journalists post queries on the SCG website where communications personnel will contact them. If a journalist does not have time to submit a query or wait for replies, he or she can look up promising experts on the SCG database and contact them directly.

GOP fills top PR slot

The Republican National Committee has filled its top communications slot ahead of the 2010 mid-term elections with the appointment of Hill vet Doug Heye as Communications Director.

He fills the post vacated by Burson-Marsteller veteran Trevor Francis in a November shake-up. Ad man Alex Castellanos had been filling the role as an unpaid advisor to RNC chair Michael Steele.

Heye, who appears regularly on cable news and in print, was Communications Director for Steele's failed 2006 Senate bid in Maryland. He backed a winner in 2004 as Communications Director for Sen. Richard Burr's (R-N.C.) election campaign and on his Senate staff.

The RNC has also promoted Katie Right to Deputy Communications Director as press secretary Gail Gitcho exits for the staff of newly elected Sen. Scott Brown (R-Mass.).

Firms win Florida census PR

Five agencies and a non-profit group of broadcasters won portions of a \$2.1M account to inform Floridians about the 2010 census, following a highly competitive RFP in the Sunshine State.

An RFP issued by Gov. Charlie Crist's office in November divided the campaign into 12 demographics, essentially creating a dozen accounts up for grabs.

A partnership between Tallahassee's Moore Consulting Group and Ketchum won the most categories — five — including two regions of African-American outreach, college/university students, rural areas, and part-time Florida residents. Ketchum confirmed that its D.C. office collaborated with MCG on the pitch.

Ron Sachs Communications of Tallahassee edged competition in three sectors in the RFP, including outreach to American Indians, Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders, and migrant farm workers.

The work includes grassroots outreach, integrated PR and media services. Any advertising used will be from the federal census effort.

Shell takes Akin for climate change

Shell Oil, the sole oil major remaining in the U.S. Climate Action Partnership, is using Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld for global warming issues and other matters.

The Partnership, a venture of corporate and environmental groups, was rocked with news Feb. 15 that ConocoPhillips, BP (British Petroleum) and Caterpillar (heavy equipment maker) decided not to renew membership.

Jim Mulva, ConocoPhillips CEO, took a swipe at USCAP, saying that its plan for climate and energy legislation that passed the House, "left domestic refineries unfairly penalized versus international competition."

Akin Gump's duties include climate change, CO2 management, carbon capture and sequestration, economic stimulus and other oil and gas company concerns.

USCAP members are General Electric, Natural Resources Defense Council, Deere, Environmental Defense Fund, DuPont, Pew Center for Climate Change, Honeywell and General Motors.



Toyota tags Glover Park Group

Battered by the recall of more than eight million of its cars for faulty accelerator pedals, Toyota has hired Democratic powerhouse firm Glover Park Group to deal with its image mess.

GPG is the firm of Joe Lockhart, President Clinton's former speechwriter, and Carter Eskew, chief strategist to Al Gore's Presidential run.

The GPG hiring comes as Members of Congress promise lengthy probes into the Japanese automaker's safety record.

Toyota has already reached out to Robinson Lerer & Montgomery, a WPP unit, for crisis work and hired Quinn Gillespie & Associates in D.C.

Washington Briefs

Microsoft adds Pearson

Fleishman-Hillard Senior VP Christina Pearson has moved to Microsoft in D.C. as Senior Director of PR.

Pearson joined F-H last April to handle healthcare public affairs after working both terms of the Bush administration, finishing up as Assistant Secretary of Public Affairs at the Dept. of Health & Human Services.

She previously handled media relations at the American Hospital Association and started out as a Deputy Communications Director for the Senate Finance Committee during the mid-1990s.

Pearson also spent a year at Policy Impact Communications, the firm set up by top GOP operatives Ed Gillespie and Haley Barbour.



Christina Pearson

Washington Briefs

Decter moves to Beckerman

Naomi Decter, a Partner in Brunswick Group's Washington, D.C., office, has moved to Beckerman to heads its new capital outpost.

Decter takes the title of Senior VP for Crisis, Litigation and Legal Services for the growing firm based in Hackensack, N.J. She was previously a VP for Powell Tate and earlier was an editorial writer for the *Washington Times*. She is the daughter of prominent conservative writers Norman Podhoretz and Midge Decter.

Obama 'rebrands' Iraq mission

President Barack Obama is rebranding "Operation Iraqi Freedom" to "Operation New Dawn" to reflect his mission of withdrawing the bulk of American forces that are occupying Iraq, according to a memo from Defense Secretary Robert Gates.

Effective Sept. 1, the new moniker is to coincide with the "change of mission for U.S. forces in Iraq," says the memo that was obtained by ABC, and then posted on its website.

OND is to be a "strong signal" that OIF as launched by President George Bush in 2003 is over, as the number of U.S.

forces is scheduled to drop to 50,000 before being given a new mission.

Gates believes OND provides PA/propaganda benefits by presenting "opportunities to synchronize strategic communication initiatives."

The new banner, writes Gates, "reinforces our commitment to the Security Agreement, and recognizes our evolving relationship with the Government of Iraq."

The seven-line memo was sent to General David Petraeus, commander of the U.S. Central Command. ●

Ketchum hauls in \$3.5M from work with Russia

Ketchum/U.S. received \$3.5M in fees/expenses in work for Russia and its Gazprom energy operation during the six-month period ended Nov. 30, according to fresh federal records.

Much of the Russia activity focused on the first anniversary of its war with Georgia, President Dimitri Medvedev's trip to the G20 summit in Pittsburgh, and outreach to the business community.

Ketchum also handled the visit of Russian ambassador Sergey Kislyak and consul general Vladimir Vinokurov to Fort Ross, Calif., Russia's easternmost settlement in the 1800s which is in dire need of preservation funding.

Ketchum got a \$1.8M payment for Russia from its British unit. The remaining \$1.7M payment was received from Diversified Energy Communications, another U.K. affiliate. ●

Weber Shandwick to guide Israel's Shanghai debut

Weber Shandwick is to oversee media outreach and plan special events for Israel, which is debuting on the World Expo scene in Shanghai. The show will run from May 1 to Oct. 31. It is expected to attract 70M people.

The country has allotted \$6M for the exposition, which will carry the "Innovation for Better Life," theme. Israel's pavilion will consist of a "Whispering Garden," an orchard that will be equipped with trees that whisper in English and Chinese when a person walks close to them; "Hall of Light," a room covered with PVC/glass to symbolize transparency and technology, and "Hall of Innovation," where an audio-visual show will link visitors to hundreds of Israeli doctors, scientists, and inventors describing their work and efforts for a bright future.

The Interpublic unit also will handle General Motors' Shanghai pavilion. ●

FARA News

NEW FOREIGN AGENTS REGISTRATION ACT FILINGS

Below is a list of select companies that have registered with the U.S. Department of Justice, FARA Registration Unit, Washington, D.C., in order to comply with the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, regarding their consulting and communications work on behalf of foreign principals, including governments, political parties, organizations, and individuals.

Capitol Law & Policy Group, PLLC, Washington, D.C., registered Jan. 7 for **President of the National Assembly, Republic of Gabon**, Libreville, Gabon, regarding advising and assisting in scheduling meetings with members of Congress, including the preparation of background information and documents.

Cassidy & Associates, Inc., Washington, D.C., registered Jan. 15 for **Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency**, Washington, D.C., regarding providing advice and consultation to the principal and various Korean companies concerning the U.S. government procurement and contracting process.

Gephardt Group Government Affairs, LLC, Washington, D.C., registered Jan. 22 for **Government of Georgia**, Tbilisi, Georgia, regarding providing lobbying and government relations services.

NEW LOBBYING DISCLOSURE ACT FILINGS

Below is a list of select companies that have registered with the Secretary of the Senate, Office of Public Records, and the Clerk of the House of Representatives, Legislative Resource Center, Washington, D.C., in order to comply with the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995. For a complete list of filings, visit <http://sopr.senate.gov>.

Akerman Senterfitt, Washington, D.C., registered Feb. 15, 2010 for **Village of Bald Head Island**, Bald Head Island, N.C., regarding maintenance of beach and shipping channel sand affected by erosion and status of endangered species.

Capital Hill Strategies, LLC, Washington, D.C., registered Feb. 4, 2010 for **National Football League**, Washington, D.C., regarding labor issues, including player safety issues, and antitrust issues related to a pending Supreme Court case on licensing NFL trademarks.

Fidelis Government Relations, Fairfax, Va., registered Feb. 12, 2010 for **American Bail Coalition**, Fairfax, Va., regarding bail issues and pre-trial release regulations.

Quinn Gillespie & Assocs., Washington, D.C., registered Feb. 16, 2010 for **Hilton Worldwide**, McLean, Va., regarding healthcare reform, immigration reform and corporate sustainability.

Calif. growers tap firm for consumer outreach

AdFarm, a PR and advertising agency focused on the agricultural sector, has defeated nine other firms with California operations in a competitive pitch process to help "reconnect" Golden State consumers with growers.



A coalition of agriculture groups led by the Western Growers Association issued an RFP in December for the three-year, \$357,500 account and received 10 proposals. Managing director Bob Wilhelm, based in St. Louis, and Kathryn Pinke in AdFarm's North Dakota outpost, lead the account, according to a WGA official.

Also vying for the work were Nuffer, Smith, Tucker (San Diego), Precision PR (Sacramento), Fleishman-Hillard (Sacramento); Saint Somewhere Marketing (Jamul), DVBE Communications; Huntington Marketing (San Marino); Brown Miller Communications (Martinez); Stacey Doss Doherty PR (Irvine), and The Communications Department (Watsonville).

The group, which calls itself the California Agricultural Communications Coalition, was looking for a firm with experience in handling diverse coalitions and guiding, crisis, consumer, and traditional and new media campaigns.

DNA13 expands offering, reach

DNA13 has released an upgraded version of its flagship media monitoring and PR management software and expanded its availability through a partnership with Thomson Reuters.

The revamped software monitors both traditional and social media, including microblogging services like Twitter, and adds the capability to register RSS feeds and similar content.

The dna13 software also allows for multiple users to collaborate on projects and share assets like media lists and other information from a single source.

News coverage is provided in graphical and tabular format and can be sorted by issue, campaign, region or business line, the company said. (www.dna13.com) ●

Chilean wines toast Thomas

The Thomas Collective, a New York-based consumer PR firm, has picked up Wines of Chile USA's PR account after an RFP process.

RF|Binder Partners handled the account since 2005.

Six-year-old TTC, which has extensive experience with liquor brands like Glenlivet and Jameson, is charged with managing PR for the group's 81 member wineries and supporting its wine tourism efforts for the U.S.

That includes press trips, virtual blogger tastings, and culinary education among other PR counsel and media relations activities.

Chilean wines have grown from U.S. obscurity in the early 1990s to become widely consumed in this country. Exports to the U.S., Chile's No. 2 wine market behind the U.K., surpassed \$188M in 2009.

CA seeks firm for 'Rethink Your Drink'

California's Orange County is looking for a firm to run its "Rethink Your Drink" social marketing campaign aimed to encourage people to choose "healthy" beverages.

The county's Health Care Agency has issued an RFP for an agency to propose a plan to reach its three million residents, which includes different ages and "diverse communities" in English, Spanish and Vietnamese media.

The tagline was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to highlight low-calorie alternatives to common unhealthy beverages – i.e. skip the 20-ounce soda and go with a bottle of water or diet soda; seltzer with a splash of fruit juice rather than a glass of ginger ale.

Similar campaigns are run throughout

the country, including in California's Northcoast region (Napa, Sonoma, Humboldt...) and Los Angeles County.

The RFP says key messages will include how to choose a healthier beverage, as well as messages that influence individuals to do so.

The county anticipates a two-year contract for the campaign. Proposals are due by April 1. Download the RFP (PDF).

The county also has an RFP out to evaluate its overall efforts aimed at obesity prevention, from a media campaign to physical education in the region.

Citrus entity seeks pitches

Florida has begun a review process for its \$2.5M international PR account to support its Department of Citrus that includes work in the U.S., Europe and Scandinavia.

The state issued an open RFP on Feb. 18 calling for pitches by March 24.

GolinHarris has worked with the department for more than a decade domestically and abroad. It last won a review in 2007 to handle PR in the U.S., Canada and Europe.

Karen Mathis, PR director for the Dept. of Citrus, told O'Dwyer's that the RFP has been issued as required by the Foreign Agricultural Service of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, which mandates that international contracts go out for bid every three years.

She said GH's contract expires at the end of June and the DOC anticipates that the firm will participate in the RFP process.

To pitch, firms must have offices or existing affiliates in the U.S., Canada, France, U.K., Belgium, the Netherlands, and Sweden. A strong consumer packaged goods background is sought, as well as crisis management experience with overseas countries. The work ranges from media and community relations to events, research and measurement.

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Screen capture from dna13 software shows social media hits.

Publicists slowly learn the art of social media

By George S. McQuade II

Social media requires targeted, intelligent audience engagement. This was the overriding message at a sold-out February workshop of social media experts hosted by the Entertainment Publicists Professional Society (EPPS) in Hollywood.

Some panelists noted that 60% of marketing campaigns are now spent on social media strategy, versus 40% on PR and Marketing. "It is one more layer of client management, but for a restaurant the goal is to get people in the door," said Caroline Rustigian Bruderer, CEO of K-LINE 7 Co. in Orange County.

"It is possible to measure ROI," but according to Panelist Sally Falkow of Expansion Plus, campaigns take four to six weeks of research and strategy and can cost from several thousand dollars to millions.

"We don't go by retainer, but more by the project, because it really depends upon how much time is involved and how long your project runs," she said.

"Movie fans and visitors love behind the scenes marketing of movies," said Vice President Wayne Bennett of Movieset, based in Vancouver, B.C. The free membership site helps market movies via images, on-the-set interviews and constant blogging. Bennett, a 20-year TV and movie production veteran, uses his social media skills to assist television production and publicist departments.

"You have to type what's going on behind the camera for fans all over the world," Bennett explained. "It might be the director of photography on how he lit the shot, or in the case of Peter Jackson in King Kong, before Facebook, YouTube and Twitter; he was literally posting photos of prop guys, costume fittings with actors, on the scene location scouts activities and video blogs. Jackson built this buzz that topped a million fans, who were already engaged in the process and the movie by the time he finished it for distribution."

"Every movie or TV project has a core audience, and the Internet is the most strategic way to get to those people," explained Bennett. "This allows you to do the EPK and other advertising much later. The Concept is the production, and the

sooner you engage your audience the sooner they are going to grab onto it, and follow the different phases to the point where you get to your last news release or airing. There will be much more information that surfaces to the top of Google than there would be in putting out a release over six weeks."

The panel also talked about the advantages of Widgets, and recommended the practice of funneling all your social media sites such as Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn, Twitter on one portal such as www.tweetdeck.com, where you can organize feeds and tweets.

Entertainment companies and filmmakers are leveraging the power of social media by marketing their films to international audiences and building loyal audiences and communities around their work. Another tactic mentioned are RSS feeds,

social media, the responses were quite different.

"I am using social media, because it brings in new clientele we did not have access to previously, and it's inexpensive," said Ann Simley of Communications Interchange, Inc., Beverly Hills, CA.

"Social media is very important, because you're getting the word out, making people more aware of your product and new services," said Tiffany Young, Director of Sales and Marketing, Radisson Hotel in Whittier (CA). "It brings additional revenues and awareness for the entire brand of hotels."

"Even if you don't get as many followers as you want on something like Twitter, the fact that you can follow people who you want to follow to make it work for you says it all," said Dave Malacrida, Buzz Master Public Relations, Westlake Village, CA.

"With the changing of new media in Los Angeles you can't afford to ignore the latest and greatest in social media trends," said Camera Operator Jonathan S. Abrahm, SOC, LA. "Stay on top of it and you will be ahead of the game. I use Facebook to network and sometimes LinkedIn, and I can't afford to go without the Internet job sites."

"I use Facebook, but get friended constantly, because there so many other people with same name, so I rely on my website," said actress Sean Young, who played Rachael in the hit 1982 movie Blade Runner.

"I'm always checking blogs, emails, eZines, social sites, Facebook and Twitter," said Independent Film Publicist Glen Anderson. "I'm always getting requests to be my 'friend' or be my 'follower.' It's a fun way to do movie marketing."

"It's incredibly important, and it's almost 90% of what I do now, and I'm recommending it to everybody," said Entertainment Publicist Carol Eisner. "It's truly part of getting the word out; it's 90% of it," she said.

"Publicists cannot keep up with it," said Leslie Stoddard, Regional Sales Director, VMS, a national video monitoring service, Los Angeles. "That's why PR firms hire us to track their online reputation with social media, and it could be Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter or whatever, we have to find and monitor those conversations. It's critical today for clients." ●



Social media experts speak at the February EPPS panel in Hollywood.

Photo by George S. McQuade III

which in layman's terms stands for real simple syndication or officially "rich site summary" for delivering regularly changing web content. All agreed that to increase web traffic PR pros need an RSS feed on their client's website or blog to whoever subscribes or wants the content.

Publicists using social media more

Publicists who battled endless, speculative chatter of 24-hour cable — something that publicists of old never had to contend with before — are now similarly overwhelmed with social media, according to a January EPPS mixer in Culver City, CA.

When asked a year ago at an EPPS mixer in Hollywood, more than 90% of publicists admitted they were not using social media as they had hoped to, because it was either something they were afraid of or didn't yet understand.

When asked this year if they used

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