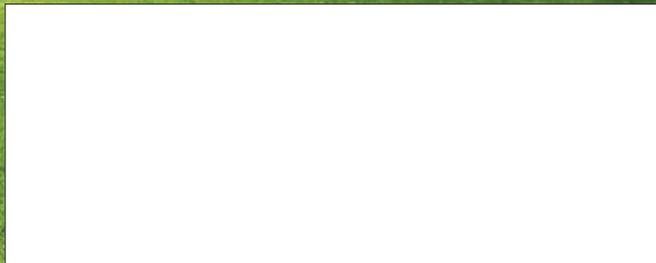




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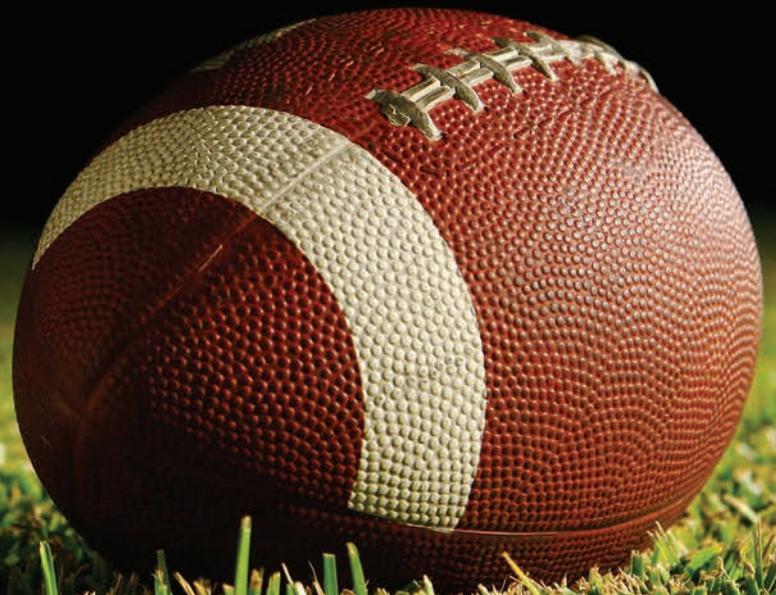
# O'Dwyer's

Communications & New Media

Dec. 2017 | Vol. 31 No. 12

## SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT SPECIAL

**PUBLICITY PROGRAMS FOR SPORTS MARKETING SPONSORSHIPS**    **HOW SPORTS MARKETERS CAN UP THEIR GAME**  
**COUNTDOWN TO THE PYEONGCHANG WINTER OLYMPICS**    **RESTORING THE LUSTER OF A LEGENDARY SPORTS BRAND**  
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# PR played role in rebirth of KKK

Two PR pros played a major role in the 1915 rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan as a profit-making enterprise, according to an article written by Adam Hochschild in the December 7 *New York Review of Books*.

In the aftermath of D.W. Griffith's landmark film, "The Birth of a Nation," Atlanta doctor William Simmons reincarnated the KKK, which had largely disbanded in the South under pressure from the federal government during the 1870s.

Two skilled PR professionals, Elizabeth Tyler and Edward Clarke, began advising Simmons in 1920.

"They convinced him that for the Klan to gain members in other parts of the country, it had to add Jews, Catholics, immigrants, and big society elites to its list of villains," wrote Hochschild. "Tyler and Clarke, in effect, ran the KKK for the next several years, a pair of Bannons to Simmons' Trump."

The PR duo signed a contract with Simmons, giving them 80 percent of dues and other revenues generated from new recruits.

Hochschild believes they collected \$850,000 from the venture — which translates into about \$11 million today — during their first 15 months on the job.

"Tyler and Clarke polished Simmons' speaking style and set up newspaper interviews for him, gave free Klan memberships to Protestant ministers, and assured prominent placement of their blizzard of press releases by buying tens of thousands of dollars' worth of newspaper advertising," wrote Hochschild.

Corruption led to Simmons' demise as he spent Klan money on horse races, prize-fights and booze.

Tyler and Clarke schemed with Simmons' rivals and ousted him from the Imperial Wizard spot.

A Texas dentist, Hiram Evans, took over the Klan in 1922, and with an eye on Tyler and Clarke's 80 percent cut of the revenues, forced them out with a scandal. The pair was having an affair through each was married to someone else.

Linda Gordon, author of "The Second Coming of the KKK: The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s and the American Political Tradition," mainly credits Tyler for the KKK rebirth.

"The organization might well have grown without this this driven, bold, corrupt and precociously entrepreneurial woman, but it would likely have been smaller," she wrote.

The KKK moved its headquarters to Washington and membership soared to an estimated 4M by 1924.

Revenue flowed in from the sale of dues, insurance, knives, trinkets and garb.

Made to exacting patterns, KKK robes and painted hoods were sold at a big markup and could only be purchased from a company controlled by Clarke until he got the boot.

With Gordon's book, Hochschild also reviewed "Ku Klux Kulture: America and the Klan in the 1920s" written by Felix Harcourt.

Hochschild's *New York Review of Books* piece is called "Ku Klux Klambakes." ○



Elizabeth Tyler



William Simmons

— Kevin McCauley

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# Career stage determines what motivates employees

A new research report suggests that where an employee finds him/herself in the course of their career may be a far more accurate indicator in determining what engages them at the job, as opposed to age or even title.

By Jon Gingerich

Two out of every five employees — or 40 percent — characterize themselves as disengaged from their current job. What's worse, that level of workplace detachment appears pervasive across generations — from Gen Z and Millennials to Gen X and Boomers — as well as job title. But depending on what stage employees find themselves in their career, staffers expressed varying traits they believe contribute to their engagement at the workplace, according to key findings in a new research report commissioned by Padilla that sheds some light on how employee engagement affects the workforce in every area from staff retention to earnings.

The study, titled "Beyond Ages: Engaging Employees at all Career Stages," analyzed employees across varying stages in their career in a bid to understand what motivates them and how those preferences differ depending on how long employees have been on the job.

The study's findings suggest that where an employee finds him/herself in the course of their career may be a far more accurate indicator in determining what engages them at the job, as opposed to mere age or even title.

Padilla defined employees across four key career stages: Newbie, Sophomore, Tenured and Sage. For the Newbie demographic, or those who've have been with a company for three years or less, the study found that the top motivator for a majority of this group — 59 percent — is the prospect of learning new skills or gaining new knowledge.

Funding for life priorities and saving for retirement were seen as top challenges for members of this demographic.

In regards to the Sophomore group, or those who've been with a company between four and seven years, good performance was cited by 63 percent as a top motivator. The study found that nearly a third of this demographic — 29 percent — also said they fear getting stuck or not feeling challenged enough.

For the Tenured demographic, or employees who've have been at the company between eight and 10 years, 58 percent said a top motivator involves contributing to the company's overall goals. Saving for retirement was cited as a top challenge.

Finally, there's the Sage stage, or those who've been with a company for 11 years or more. A clear majority of this demographic — 63 percent — said feeling pride in having accomplished a task was a top motivator.

On the other hand, the study also found some universal agreement regarding what values employees ranked as the top drivers of engagement, regardless of their age or where they find themselves in their career.

A workplace that treats all employees fairly and with respect, regardless of employees' position or level, took the highest average importance rating, at 8.6 out of 10. Employers that genuinely care about the health and well-being of their staff and workplaces that promote a positive culture were also rated highly by employees across all career stages.

Employees also said they widely prefer financial incentives in the form of employee rewards as opposed to mere recognition for their efforts.

The study, which was conducted by market research firm SMS Research Advisors, polled 1,500 workforce professionals in August of varying ages and across industry and staff positions. ○

## Healthcare lobbying sector leads for influence in Washington

By Jon Gingerich

Trade associations representing the U.S. healthcare sector on Capitol Hill were widely ranked as the most effective among policy leaders inside the Beltway, according to a research study by D.C.-based PR giant APCO Worldwide that measured advocacy associations in Washington by their perceived influence and efficacy in achieving their policy goals.

The study, which surveyed executive branch officials, congressional staff and private sector executives and asked them to identify what associations they believe are the most effective in delivering policy results for their members, measured performance and perceived effectiveness across 15 separate advocacy characteristics.

Overall, hospital and healthcare network organization the American Hospital Association was named the top-ranked association in the survey, cited as the best trade group in six categories: local impact, member representation, self-regulation and bipartisanship, as well as being an information resource and an industry reputation steward.

Other associations representing the healthcare sector also took high marks. Drug company trade giant the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America followed immediately behind AHA in the study; PhRMA was cited as a leader

in four key areas: lobbying, social media, membership mobilization and multilateral impact. The Biotechnology Innovation Organization, the world's largest trade organization representing the biotechnology industry, was recognized as the top lobbying group for events.

It's the third time in the last four similar studies conducted by APCO that lobbying groups representing the healthcare sector were seen as the top-performing organizations in the most categories. Following healthcare were trade associations representing financial services, retail and the technology industries.

Other trade groups that ranked highly for their perceived effectiveness included the National Association of Manufacturers, which was ranked highest in two categories, grassroots capabilities and coalition building; the Motion Picture Association of America, which took the top slot for media relations; and the American Petroleum Association, which was recognized for having the most unified voice.

APCO's fourth annual TradeMarks Study surveyed more than 300 Washington policy leaders between May and July. Research was conducted by the independent communication agency's in-house research team, APCO Insight. ○

### PR news brief

#### Amazon, PayPal top C&W 'most authentic' list

Amazon and PayPal top Cohn & Wolfe's list of the most authentic brands in the U.S. in its just-released 2017 Authentic Brands study.

Burt's Bees, Crayola, M&Ms, Lego, Hershey's, Newman's Own, AAA and UPS round out the list.

Only one in five said brands "stay true to their purpose," with just 16 percent finding brands to be "open and honest." That number, a seven percent decrease from last year's study, makes the U.S. the only country of the 15 surveyed to show a decrease in the perception of brand authenticity.

U.S. consumers agreed with those in other countries in what they saw as the key driver of brand authenticity. "Respectful" rated as being the most crucial key driver of brand authenticity in 2017, topping last year's "Reliable."

Conducted in May and June, this year's study surveyed over 15,000 consumers, and included more than 1,400 brands.

# PR pros place bets on content for 2018

Communicators are aware of the roles new technologies play in marketing and PR, but their efforts to keep up with today's evolving landscape are routinely beset by budget constraints and teams with limited skillsets, according to a new survey.

By Jon Gingerich

**C**ontent creation initiatives, along with digital marketing and social media undertakings, will take a growing share of companies' marketing budgets within the coming year, according to a global survey of in-house communications and marketing pros released by financial PR shop Cognito.

More than half — 61 percent — of communications pros said they plan to boost investment in content creation offerings in 2018, according to the survey. A similar number — 56 percent — said they see a greater share of their budget going toward digital marketing over the next 12 months, and 54 percent said the same for social media. This was followed by digital advertising, at 48 percent.

Cognito's findings suggest that marketing and communications pros are adapting to new technologies in a bid to keep up with the evolving media landscape. Data analytics was cited as the technological development most communicators believe will significantly impact their work over the next 12 months (79 percent), followed by marketing automation (57 percent) and mobile marketing (54 percent). An overwhelming majority of communicators polled — 83 percent — said technological disruption is the greatest challenge currently facing their marketing team.

However, despite what appears to be widespread acknowledgment of digital technology's importance, the single biggest obstacle facing in-house communicators today, according to 86 percent of the survey's respondents, was the challenge of securing budget and justifying spending.

In-house communicators also seem to recognize that a considerable gap remains between what communications tools their organization needs and the skillsets they believe their teams currently possess to make those objectives happen. Specifically, while most communicators said they believe their organization possesses an understanding of their target audience, as well as a confidence in their organization's communications strategy and their ability to integrate marketing and communications activities effectively, the survey also found communicators are far less sure regarding their capabilities in the digital and social realms.

A third of communicators polled characterized their company's in-house expertise at social media as "limited," and 34 percent said the same in regard to their company's

digital marketing capabilities.

Only half said their company has an effective social media strategy, and only slightly more than a third — 36 percent — say their CEO has any functioning social media presence at all.

Nearly 40 percent characterized their own communications team's marketing technology expertise as limited, and the survey found communicators have the highest levels of confidence in their teams' abilities when it comes to traditional communications endeavors such as media relations, events and corporate communications.

Overall, 80 percent of respondents said technological adaptation was a top challenge for their communications and marketing teams in the course of the next year.

Finally, the survey discovered that

## Asset management firms embrace content marketing

By Jon Gingerich

**A**sset management firms appear to recognize the role thought leadership plays in their PR programs, with nearly nine out of every 10 — or 88 percent — of the world's largest money managers now utilizing content marketing as part of their communications toolkit, according to a report by fintech PR specialists BackBay Communications that sought to analyze the content creation and sharing habits of the world's 200 largest asset management firms.

The study also found that more than half (51 percent) of the world's largest money managers now publish new content on at least a weekly basis, with an even higher percentage of asset managers based in the U.S. doing so (62 percent).

Social media is clearly the preferred channel for distributing this content, as 95 percent of global money managers are now active on at least one social platform. Nearly three-quarters (74 percent) now utilize four or more social media channels, and three out of every five (59 percent) typically manage a minimum of five social media channels.

LinkedIn remains the preferred social hub for asset managers, with 95 percent of the top 200 firms actively using the jobs networking platform. Twitter isn't far behind, at 82 percent, while YouTube represents the third-most popular social platform, at 78 percent. Facebook and Google+ see adoption activity of 71 percent and 65 percent,

LinkedIn's effectiveness at paid campaigns and targeting has caused that medium to surge in popularity among communicators, with 85 percent characterizing the job networking hub as more important to their business than it was a year ago. Google, Twitter and YouTube were also cited as important channels. On the other hand, traditional broadcast outlets, Facebook and newspapers were seen as less of a priority than previous years by 35 percent, 23 percent and 24 percent respectively.

Cognito's second annual Communications & Marketing Survey polled 165 communications pros in September across the banking, asset management, wealth management, FinTech, insurance, technology and professional services sectors in the US, EMEA and APAC regions. ○

respectively.

Perhaps the biggest takeaway: the study found that a substantial majority of the world's largest asset managers now utilize multiple channels in their integrated PR strategy, with 67 percent regularly publishing at least three different types of content across multiple mediums, including everything from corporate magazines, to infographics, to published roundtables or branded radio broadcasts.

The study found that video remains the most common medium used, at 93 percent, followed by insights or market commentaries, at 90 percent. Webinars or podcasts are also employed by a slight majority (55 percent).

Finally, the study also found that the largest firms typically produce nearly double the amount of content — and distribute it with far greater frequency across more channels — than the smallest firms on the list.

BackBay's whitepaper analyzed publicly available data on the largest asset managers firms' websites and social media channels to quantify how many produce content regularly, the types of content created across various channels and the frequency at which firms are publishing new content. Firms were chosen based on Pensions & Investments' Global Money Managers ranking, which lists the largest firms by total assets under management. ○

# Olympic PR: what's new and what's not

The countdown to 2018 Winter Olympics is on, and already the world is buzzing about who'll be the Olympic darlings to watch in PyeongChang, along with which brands will emerge victorious amid a flurry of Olympics-related marketing activities.

By Caroline Andrew

Having been fortunate enough to work on seven Olympic Games — through brands, athletes and organizations — it's exciting to see how communication strategies and methods have evolved over the past 15-plus years, and, conversely, what's remained status quo for athletes and brands.

Let's start with the best part: What's new and notable. As social media's prominence continues to snowball, there's been a drastic shift in athletes' ability to create their own brands and tell their own stories. Gone are the days of relying solely on a sport's organization or sponsors to do the work for them. After all, they're building their own brands and connecting with fans (and hopefully future fans) year-round.

We're eager to see whose personal marketing efforts will pay off in Korea, and already have our eyes on what some of the expected stand-out surfers and skaters are lining up leading into Tokyo.

The flipside of every personality having a platform is that the fight for attention is fiercer than ever. This rings true with how many athletes the sporting organizations and brands are focusing on as well. The trend we're seeing is that more marketing dollars are going to support fewer athletes, in the hopes that a deeper investment will pay off with more eyeballs seeing their stars (hopefully on top of the podium).

Naturally, competition is also fierce when it comes to pitching; there are only so many stories that can be told and media are being pitched by brands, agents and publicists. Figure out your hook and how it relates to the reader. And get it in there early.

For PR pros crafting their strategies, it's important to keep in mind that training regimes and athlete schedules have become more intense throughout the past decade, which makes it harder to find time to line up interviews. Tip: plan out each week of the next two months and block their calendars for interviews.

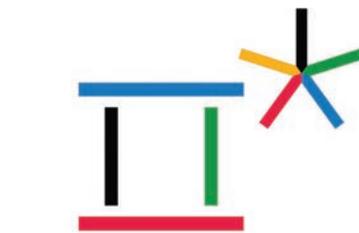
Be sure to take advantage of technology! Skype or FaceTime is a great way to set up interviews and allow media to really feel what the athlete is going through. They can give some behind-the-scenes intel and make the reporter feel extra special by taking the interview in the gym or at the top of the hill. Tech is great way to maximize time when athletes aren't in the US, they can still

take over Instagram accounts, do Facebook Lives and more.

Capitalize on celebrities and influencers to drive social buzz during the hype of the Games without a hefty price tag. Celebs/influencers are so excited to have the chance to meet/swim/ski/ride/skate with an Olympian and share that key moment in time holding the medal.

## What's remained constant?

Looking back to Park City in the early 2000s, most athletes didn't have publicists, Instagram didn't exist and print was still alive and well (hard to remember those days!). Athletes, agents and brands have had to adapt quickly, but when you're dealing with major corporate sponsors, global campaigns and lots of red tape, change hasn't moved as quickly as some industries.



PyeongChang 2018



Rule 40 must be kept top of mind ("no competitor, coach, trainer or official who participates in the Olympic Games may allow his person, name, picture or sports performances to be used for advertising purposes during the Olympic Games"). Throughout the past decade this has often been an obstacle for athletes and companies that invest in them, but not the hefty price tag that comes with the 'Olympic sponsor' designation.

Many athletes have one — maybe two — games to maximize endorsement opportunities and not all athletes can (or want to) be sponsored by the short list of official sponsors, making the traditional enforcement of Rule 40 quite prohibitive. Tip: The Rule 40 period for the PyeongChang Games is February 1-28, 2018.

The positive side of this for our industry is that PR has remained a critical driver for

storytelling when it comes to the Olympics. Freedom of press allows for stories to hit pre, during and post Games without having to worry about Rule 40 and a pesky Black Out Period.

Another key to successful campaigns that has remained consistent is storytelling, i.e., finding the emotional connections that tie an athlete to a sport, brand or organization. The Olympics brings an opportunity to target outlets that don't typically cover sports to highlight the lifestyle around these incredible athletes. This can include their workout routines, what they eat, how they train, what music they listen to, what they pack, their favorite destinations and more. You can get creative and have a lot of fun with their stories, how they relate to a brand you represent and drive awareness among a much larger audience that any non-Olympic year would present.

## Prepping for the post-games haze

A critical time to plan for is the post-Olympic window, which really begins the moment the first medal is awarded and national anthem plays. As soon as new media stars emerge, the clock is ticking on Olympic fatigue, so you need to carve out space for your stories to be told.

Winning athletes are bound to head out on Victory Tours that will span major national media and regional opportunities. The "stardom" phase for most Olympians is short lived so you want to maximize time. A strategy needs to be set up before an athlete even wins or you will be too late. Think about the little things — what is the earliest possible time she can land back in the US? Who is in charge of keeping track of the medal that Jimmy Fallon is going to want to hold?

And, finally, the most important thing that has gone unchanged is the excitement around the Games! The pride that is evoked with these young, passionate athletes seeing their dreams fulfilled is unmatched. And, we consider ourselves lucky to be able to tell their stories!

Caroline Andrew is Senior Vice President of Mfa, Ltd. Marketing and PR. ◉



Caroline Andrew

# Why outsource media monitoring and measurement?

A dozen-plus reasons why you should hire a professional media monitoring and measurement service as opposed to your in-house PR staff.

By William Comcowich

Hiring a media monitoring and measurement service with experienced content analysts and data analytics professionals offers significant advantages over trying to do PR analysis with in-house staff.

In determining whether to use an outside service instead of in-house staff to perform PR measurement, it's worthwhile to consider the major attributes that distinguish professional media monitoring and measurement services. Here are 13 of them:

**More comprehensive and accurate media monitoring.** Free media monitoring tools don't nearly match the results produced by integrated media monitoring and analytics services. Professional services use highly specialized tools that monitor far more news sources, blogs and social media networks. In addition, they monitor with far greater depth than free tools do. As a result, the services deliver more media mentions from both prominent and obscure media sources. Media monitoring services also ensure more accurate results by using advanced search queries, known as Boolean searches. The carefully designed queries omit irrelevant hits. This capability is especially important for companies with common names like "Orange," the telecom company, and Lincoln.

**Data analytics expertise.** Like outside attorneys, accountants or payroll services your organization may hire, professionals at reputable social media listening and media measurement services have specialized skills and training. Because they work full time in measurement, their clients can be assured of first-rate and up-to-date analytics skills.

**More time efficient.** Overseeing news and social media monitoring and reviewing a large number of media mentions requires considerable time. With their special training, dedicated media analysis professionals can do the analysis faster than in-house PR staff. In addition, because in-house personnel feel the pressure of other urgent obligations, they often tend to put media analysis on the back burner in order to fulfill their other responsibilities. Media analysis often slips when it's an in-house responsibility.

**More objective analysis.** In-house personnel may have a biased perspective that taints their analysis of media clips, especially on controversial issues or on clips resulting from a PR crisis. Media measurement

professionals are positioned to deliver more objective analysis of media mentions about the organization, its brands and services, its competition, and issues it faces.

**Better staff productivity.** The time that in-house staff devotes to analysis of media mentions takes away time from other strategic tasks that are best done in-house. Using outside measurement specialists frees in-house employees and the agency account team to focus on essential tasks that only they can perform because of their in-house experience and perspective.

**First-rate technology.** All media monitoring and measurement services have dedicated years creating advanced technology tools that offer comprehensive monitoring, integrated analytics and customizable dashboards with easy-to-use interfaces. The services compete with each other to introduce new features and analytics that clients want — and that better demonstrate the value of PR and other communications programs to clients and upper management.

**Advanced metrics.** As specialists in analytics, media intelligence services stay current on trends in metrics and measurement, which have changed enormously in recent years. By serving multiple organizations, the services get an inside look at the leading edge of PR and marketing measurement practices at major companies. They can then introduce those techniques to all clients. In-house staff are often unable to keep up with fast-changing measurement practices.

**Integrated analytics.** Media measurement services integrate results from all media — print, online, broadcast, social networks — into a single dashboard for easy viewing and analysis. Some even incorporate results from the organization's owned media, including its corporate and brand websites. This integration offers better insights on media coverage than separate analysis of each media type.

**Superior analytics.** The online dashboards used by media measurement professionals provide more wide-ranging and in-depth analytics than in-house teams can generate with spreadsheets or other desktop tools. In addition, some services such as Glean.info enable customized metrics and analytics based on each customer's specific business objectives. As a result, professional media measurement services typically offer more credible and practical insights on consumer sentiment, media coverage and com-

munications campaigns.

**Enterprise applications.** With an online dashboard from a professional service, clients can easily share analytics with other departments across the organization. Clients can also easily segment results in order to share relevant data with product managers, country managers and others. That's especially valuable since different managers in the organization want reports that focus on their specific responsibilities or territories.

**Always available.** The software as a service dashboards are always on and available through the so-called cloud. Staff from throughout the organization can access the service anywhere at any time and obtain comprehensive analytics reports with only a browser and an internet connection.

**Many options.** The number of media monitoring and measurement services has increased in recent years with many new ones primarily focused on social media analytics. That offers businesses, government agencies and nonprofits a wide range of options and prices. With the extensive number of choices, it's important to vet media measurement services thoroughly and ask wide-ranging questions about their media measurement philosophies and capabilities before reaching a decision. Some vendors combine media monitoring and analytics with other services such as news release distribution and media lists in a PR version of the triple play.

**Competitive costs.** Many corporate decision-makers may think that it's less expensive to have in-house employees handle media monitoring and measurement than to hire an outside service. In reality, paying outside experts usually offers a more cost-effective option because of lower development costs spread over many clients and because of day-to-day operating efficiencies.

Media monitoring and measurement professionals offer important advantages over conducting news monitoring, social media listening and media measurement in-house. Professional services offer objective analysis and specialized expertise that produce better insights and actionable recommendations based on business objectives. With their training and specialized skills, the experts deliver the full benefits of advanced media monitoring and measurement.

*William J. Comcowich is interim CEO of Glean.info. ○*



William Comcowich

# Restoring the luster of a legendary personal brand

How an agency raised the public profile of a legendary sports agent and his practice through national media exposure and the use of an innovative educational event series.

By Charles Upchurch

The FWV Sports & Entertainment practice is proud to have the opportunity to work with high-profile professional athletes, sports properties, special events and brand sponsors. Our teams have led dozens of campaigns on behalf of iconic brands, but one of the most iconic we've had the pleasure to work with is legendary sports agent Leigh Steinberg.

Steinberg was once the most powerful sports agent in the world. But at the height of his success, the "real Jerry Maguire" was derailed by a series of personal setbacks. Four years ago, he retained FWV to help relaunch his career. Now 68, Steinberg is making a storybook comeback. The past 24 months have been pivotal. With two quarterbacks selected in the first round of the NFL Draft the last two years, Steinberg is ascendant. His memoir, *The Agent*, has become a bestseller, and he has successfully launched the Leigh Steinberg Agent Academy. With momentum building, FWV has helped push Steinberg's personal narrative and public profile to new heights.

To restore the luster on a once-elite personal brand, FWV's objective was simple: sustain a year-round national media presence to raise public awareness and influence the positive perception of the Steinberg mystique. In each of the last four years, during Super Bowl week in New York, Phoenix, San Francisco and Houston, FWV leveraged opportunities to maximize media exposure and elevate Steinberg's status within the NFL community and beyond. For four consecutive days each year, during the most media-intensive week of the NFL season, FWV insured that Steinberg was featured on nearly every major network and sports talk radio station in the U.S., bolstering his reputation as a legendary agent and immeasurably enhancing his ability to attract and excite new clients.

Together with non-stop interviews on Media Row, the Leigh Steinberg Super Bowl Party, a tradition three decades in the making, also provided the backdrop and opportunity for national sports and entertainment media coverage.

Beyond the Super Bowl, FWV drove media attention for Steinberg's Agent Academy seminar series. Created in 2014, the innovative educational workshop features Steinberg and Steinberg Sports COO Chris

Cabott, together with special guests from college and NFL programs, leading an intensive, two-day boot camp for aspiring agents during the off-season. In 2017, the academy was held in Dallas and Newport Beach, Calif. To promote the events and drive brand awareness in critically important NFL markets, FWV booked Steinberg on the leading sports radio and TV stations in Dallas-Ft. Worth, Los Angeles and San Diego, and delivered a feature on the academy in the *Dallas Morning News*.



FWV Senior Counselor Charles Upchurch (second row, third from left) with the Steinberg Sports team at Super Bowl 50 in San Francisco.

From the beginning, FWV focused on research to have a clear view of the media landscape for Steinberg. Journalists with a history of negative coverage from years past were avoided. We tracked the press coverage of other agents for comparative analysis. As a well-known personality who crosses into the category of celebrity, Steinberg is sometimes sought for his viewpoint on sports-related issues in the headlines. We closely monitored relevant news cycles and pitched him for strategically beneficial opportunities, positioning him as a pre-eminent thought leader in the industry of professional sports. This led to bookings on CNN, CNBC, Fox Business and other networks to offer analysis of trending national stories, including the Ryan Lochte scandal during the 2016 Rio Olympics, the NFL's expansion into Los Angeles and the Colin Kaepernick national anthem protest controversy in 2017.

Steinberg's signing of high-profile quarterbacks Paxton Lynch (University of Memphis) in 2016 and Patrick Mahomes (Texas Tech) in 2017, each of whom were selected in the first round of the NFL Draft

in consecutive years, reinforced the agent's renewed status as a power player. In all strategic outreach, FWV targeted specific media outlets to influence key audiences, including college football players and their network of influence, as well as the professional sports industry, especially the players, coaches, scouts, team executives, GMs and franchise owners in the NFL.

In total, FWV media relations efforts have secured more than 450 print, broadcast and online interviews, features and news items representing more than 750 million targeted impressions among the audiences of major market media and national outlets.



Charles Upchurch

Our ability to respond quickly to interview requests, along with the client's ability to deliver intelligent, insightful commentary based on more than 40 years of experience, increased demand and raised confidence among media that requests will be fulfilled and the results would exceed expectations. Today, Steinberg is the most frequently seen and heard sports agent in the country. His ubiquitous media presence allows him to tell his personal story his way, including his commitment to make a positive difference in the world.

The aggregate effect of Steinberg's positive media exposure is the opening of doors. The families of prospective draft picks who have seen the agent on CNN or Fox are welcoming Steinberg into their homes. Coaches at major college programs who have seen him on ESPN or the NFL Network, or read the coverage of his success in the recent NFL Drafts, make time to meet with the Steinberg Sports team. NFL owners and GMs have an added level of confidence that Steinberg is fully reestablished as an active and competitive agent, and treat him with due respect.

Steinberg Sports & Entertainment now represents 17 active NFL players. Steinberg has defied the skeptics, making a dramatic re-entry into the industry he once presided over. With every interview, old perceptions fall away and we see a uniquely motivated individual with a professional pedigree that may never be equaled. The media profile we continue to build for Steinberg will be foundational in the agent's ongoing return to prominence on sports' biggest stage.

Charles Upchurch is Senior Counselor at French/West/Vaughan. ○

# Macro trends affecting the future of work and IT

In a world of mobile phones, digital assistants, cloud computing and IoT devices, it's difficult to analyze how technology is changing the workplace today without recognizing how technology spanning the rest of our lives has also evolved.

By RJ Bardsley

This overlay of work and play wasn't always the case. The first generation of workplace technology streamlined the back office with mainframe computing and the front office with productivity-boosting tools like word processors. Those who weren't in the workforce witnessed this revolution in pop culture as the computer took center stage in movies and television shows. Granted, schools soon got onboard with desktop computers like the Apple IIe and the TRS-80. Some families even bought desktops for home use.

As the following waves and generations of technology flooded the workforce, we saw the Internet, web services, big data, mobility and virtual servers turn things upside down in every corner of the office. But somewhere in the early to mid 2000s, the lines began to blur regarding what parts of our lives these technologies were improving.

I've had the opportunity to watch a number of different technology trends take shape around the globe. Today, when our team looks at the technologies shaping the future of work, we tend to look at three categories: devices, AI and 5G. There are undoubtedly more technologies impacting the way we work (security is a major one), but I wanted to touch on these three elements because they not only improve productivity but also enable greater creativity and flexibility, two components I believe are now as important as productivity in how we work. The workplace of today and of the future is about connecting people in new and different ways and enabling them to think creatively to produce new ideas and better solutions to traditional problems.

## Devices

The universe of devices in our lives — smartphones, tablets, desktops, laptops, wearables — is expanding every day. While I'll always love device design, the increase in computing power and functionality of these devices — smartphones in particular — is the real "wow" factor in this segment. Here are three things we're watching in devices:

- Improved voice recognition is changing the way we work with our devices. In the '80s, word processors made typewriters a thing of the past. Today, "voice" is poised to do the same thing to keypads. OK Google and Siri are great digital assistants, but being able to dictate an email rather than typing it is adding minutes back to our days. Apps like WeChat and WhatsApp are let-

ting voice become a mixed medium, which makes relaying information a new and richer experience.

- The mobile/desktop merger is happening. Chromebooks have given us the Android experience on a laptop, but new capabilities inside smartphones like the Huawei Mate10 and the Samsung 8 (with the help of the DEX docking station) turn the phone into a desktop environment when it's hooked up to a monitor. This functionality bridges the shortcomings phones have traditionally had as productivity tools, giving us a mouse, keyboard and a larger screen. This seems basic, but the implications are big: everything you do during your work day is now a part of the device that you carry around with you. This means you can work from wherever; it means your presentation is always with you; it means when inspiration hits you in the middle of the night, you have the right technology with you to record it that instant, then later turn it into a Word document or PowerPoint deck. You thought that working from the coffee shop was connected; imagine having that desktop with you wherever you go.

- One word: Battery. Improvements in power mean we can consume and produce information for longer stretches of time on a single charge. When we do need to recharge we have options — from wireless charging to fast charging — that make it easier to get back up and running. The not-so-obvious by-product of this is less "charge anxiety." It might be a small thing, but any reduction in work-related stress is a good thing.

## Artificial Intelligence

It seems like we're seeing AI take center stage in everything from the cars we drive to washers and dryers. Indeed, it's hard to predict what new gadget will be powered by AI, but the compelling thing about AI in the workplace is how it affects everyone else's job. Simply put, it's going to help up-level everything.

When we look beyond the hype, what AI does really well is learn basic tasks quickly, analyze and mine lots of information, and help organize and structure things. This has tremendous potential to streamline basic tasks and free people to do more complex thinking. For example, in our industry of integrated marketing, we're starting to use AI to help uncover new connections between influencers. This enables us to better organize how we approach, and work with those

influencers. It can show us where there are holes in media coverage or ad campaigns, tasks that would traditionally require hours of people time. This gives our teams the time back to think creatively about how we're going to improve campaign strategy or our work with influencers.

It's hard to say what the future of AI is for sure, but it's interesting to think about how AI and the IoT are converging. In looking at edge computing or end-point computing increasingly powered by AI, it's easy to imagine a future where we have a fog of intelligence all around us, thanks to processors and sensors residing across a range of different smaller devices. I anticipate we're going to see AI become more ubiquitous, going beyond something on a computer, a phone or a watch, to live on thermostats, in wall paint and on wearable patches.

## 5G

We're already seeing 5G trials in the US, and we will likely see full scale rollout over the next couple of years, providing all of us with a whole new level of connectivity. At the very basic core of it, you're going to be able to do more things faster. Think about being able to download entire movies in 60 to 90 seconds. Think about what that speed of download means for work. It's huge. You'll never have to wait for a PowerPoint to download. We'll see other innovations on 5G that take advantage of improvements in latency. You're never experiencing lag on a conference call. And you know, more importantly, you're linked in almost simultaneously real time with the rest of your office, so it's just going to do a lot for collaboration and I think those are the things that are shaping how we work and what we work on.

There are a number of other technologies shaping our work-life blend these days. I haven't touched on security, big data, chip design, cloud computing, OTA, virtual and augmented reality, flash memory or software — all areas where innovation continues to happen at a blistering pace.

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RJ Bardsley

# Brand advocacy in influencer marketing: a win for sports

The current model of influencer marketing must evolve in ways that adopt a level of customization if communicators want to drive relevant conversations that better engage target audiences, building lasting relationships with trusted and genuine brand advocates.

By Samantha Baier

We hear a lot of nonsense about “influencer marketing” these days, as it’s become a buzzworthy phrase that people use in all kinds of convoluted and circular ways. Navigating a space that, depending on your definition, includes everyone from Hollywood celebrities and athletes to bloggers and fan Twitter accounts, can be daunting and overwhelming. So, let’s make it simple. As a marketer, define “influencer” as the most influential source of information or content to your desired audience during a specified time, not just the celebrities or athletes with the highest follower counts.

With this definition as a guiding light, the quality of the entities to work with becomes much more important than the quantity. It’s time to shift our focus from a costly reach model to a more efficient way to impact consumers.

For instance, in order to amplify Tide’s “#BradshawStain” moment during the Super Bowl XLI broadcast (in which Terry Bradshaw appeared with an embarrassing stain on his shirt), our Taylor Digital Sports team meticulously researched and vetted who and what would help Tide’s message reach the most engaged audience during the most-watched event of the year. In order to engage with avid NFL fans, we worked closely with the @NFL and @BleacherReport Twitter channels. To reach more casual Super Bowl viewers, we tapped a cross-section of popular comedians, lifestyle influencers and athletes who are all known for commenting on culturally relevant moments in real time.

The homework paid off, as the influencers drove significant conversation volume and engagement in the brief period of time before Tide’s orchestration of Terry Bradshaw’s humiliating on-air stain was revealed in their award-winning television spot.

But determining the right influencers to work with is just the first piece of the “influencer marketing” puzzle. You’re choosing those influencers for a reason, so it becomes imperative that the content they post is the kind of content that is proven to resonate with their audience. Influencer content has to be relevant to your brand’s audience at the right time. Around a sports

platform, timing is even more critical, as fan sentiment can change on a dime, or as quickly as it takes your favorite team’s quarterback to throw a pick six. That’s why we place such an emphasis on remaining nimble. The entire allure of social media is real-time interaction. If you can’t be as flexible as the conversation, the audience will look right past what you spend your time and money creating. But if you do it right, you can garner more meaningful engagements for less investment.

For a brand to achieve this, the biggest win is to add value to the fan experience — rather than to simply add to the noise — and that starts with audience insights. For instance, when marketing in the NFL, we often emphasize that “NFL fans” are few and far between. Fans are fans first of their teams. In that respect, there are 32 separate, individual fan bases, and in order to speak to their passion, you have to know how to speak each fan base’s unique language.

This means your approach has to be targeted and nuanced, and that requires a deep understanding and feel for individual fan bases. But the homework is worth it in the end. A Cowboys fan isn’t going to react the same way that a Panthers fan would. (I live in Charlotte and we do exist! #Keep-Pounding)

Gatorade understood that concept when it launched the “Let It Shine” spot with Cam Newton around kickoff last season. The video started with all the negative press Newton received coming out of Super Bowl 50 and followed his preparation for the 2016-17 season. This ad spoke specifically to Panthers fans like me who wanted redemption after a less-than-stellar Super Bowl performance.

However, the ad’s focus on bouncing back was relatable for all NFL fans looking for a fresh start to the season — except for the Super Bowl 50 Champion Denver Broncos, of course. This success may also have led the brand to its newest “Make Defeat Your Fuel” campaign featuring a range of athletes, including Falcons quarterback Matt Ryan, fighting through loss to experience success.

This content also showcases another important component of “influencer market-

ing.” As consumers become more discerning about the content served to them on digital platforms, maintaining authenticity becomes paramount. This means treating your influencers as partners and taking a customized approach to each interaction.

Fostering these relationships takes time and often means finding ways to add value beyond product and monetary compensation. For example, instead of paying per post, a sponsor can offer influencers insider access to their favorite team through VIP experiences. This access-vs.-investment approach results in a motivated influencer who creates the kind of content his or her audience craves.

As marketers, the right influencer for you could be a media outlet, a league, a team, an athlete or a fan. Regardless, working together to provide that level of customization is an extra, yet critical, step in building the kind of long-term relationship that creates a trusted brand advocate. The expensive transactional relationships of the past are replaced by achieving truly genuine advocacy. This is the ultimate win, as that passion will only seep deeper into the content, creating a greater, lasting impact on brand reputation with your target audience.

*Samantha Baier is Director of Taylor’s Digital Sports group. Baier started her career at CBS Evening News in New York before moving south to work as a television news reporter and social content producer in North and South Carolina. She’s been pivotal in leading ground-breaking client partner activations and influencer work, with P&G (for Tide around the Super Bowl and NFL Draft), Mercedes-Benz and IBM around the Masters and US Open tennis.*

*Taylor’s deep knowledge and insights around fan behavior across a multitude of sports is at the core of its Digital Sports group, which is uniquely positioned to lead digital strategy and activation for many of the sports industry’s marketing and technology innovators. ○*



Samantha Baier

# O'DWYER'S RANKINGS

## TOP SPORTS PR FIRMS

Firm	Net Fees (2016)	Firm	Net Fees (2016)
1. <b>Taylor</b> , New York, NY	<b>\$9,847,000</b>	13. <b>Trevelino/Keller</b> , Atlanta, GA	<b>200,000</b>
2. <b>French   West   Vaughan</b> , Raleigh, NC	<b>6,118,247</b>	14. <b>Marketing Maven Public Relations</b> , Camarillo, CA	<b>\$177,345</b>
3. <b>Coyne</b> , Parsippany, NJ	<b>5,000,000</b>	15. <b>Public Communications Inc.</b> , Chicago, IL	<b>156,719</b>
4. <b>Racepoint Global</b> , Boston, MA	<b>1,862,951</b>	16. <b>McNeely Pigott &amp; Fox Public Relations</b> , Nashville, TN	<b>103,577</b>
5. <b>Edelman</b> , New York, NY	<b>1,794,000</b>	17. <b>BoardroomPR</b> , Ft. Lauderdale, FL	<b>100,000</b>
6. <b>LaunchSquad</b> , San Francisco, CA	<b>1,750,000</b>	18. <b>Finn Partners</b> , New York, NY	<b>76,000</b>
7. <b>Havas Formula</b> , New York, NY	<b>1,425,900</b>	19. <b>rbb Communications</b> , Miami, FL	<b>50,040</b>
8. <b>APCO Worldwide</b> , Washington, DC	<b>1,215,000</b>	20. <b>Power Group, The</b> , Dallas, TX	<b>47,710</b>
9. <b>Jackson Spalding</b> , Atlanta, GA	<b>1,029,505</b>	21. <b>TransMedia Group</b> , Boca Raton, FL	<b>35,000</b>
10. <b>Konnect Agency</b> , Los Angeles, CA	<b>893,350</b>	22. <b>Padilla</b> , Minneapolis, MN	<b>15,430</b>
11. <b>Fish Consulting</b> , Hollywood, FL	<b>463,600</b>	23. <b>Perry Communications Group</b> , Sacramento, CA	<b>9,000</b>
12. <b>O'Malley Hansen Communications</b> , Chicago, IL	<b>346,000</b>	24. <b>The Buzz Agency</b> , Delray Beach, FL	<b>9,000</b>

# O'DWYER'S RANKINGS

## TOP ENTERTAINMENT PR FIRMS

Firm	Net Fees (2016)	Firm	Net Fees (2016)
1. <b>Edelman</b> , New York, NY	<b>\$24,885,000</b>	18. <b>IW Group, Inc.</b> , West Hollywood, CA	<b>\$163,000</b>
2. <b>Finn Partners</b> , New York, NY	<b>7,792,000</b>	19. <b>Schneider Associates</b> , Boston, MA	<b>158,500</b>
3. <b>Taylor</b> , New York, NY	<b>4,809,000</b>	20. <b>TransMedia Group</b> , Boca Raton, FL	<b>140,000</b>
4. <b>Peppercomm</b> , New York, NY	<b>1,690,636</b>	21. <b>O'Malley Hansen Communications</b> , Chicago, IL	<b>137,000</b>
5. <b>360PR+</b> , Boston, MA	<b>1,043,391</b>	22. <b>North 6th Agency (N6A)</b> , New York, NY	<b>130,126</b>
6. <b>French   West   Vaughan</b> , Raleigh, NC	<b>954,550</b>	23. <b>Red Sky PR</b> , Boise, ID	<b>112,244</b>
7. <b>Jackson Spalding</b> , Atlanta, GA	<b>807,541</b>	24. <b>Rasky Partners, Inc.</b> , Boston, MA	<b>107,610</b>
8. <b>Padilla</b> , Minneapolis, MN	<b>647,700</b>	25. <b>WordWrite Communications LLC</b> , Pittsburgh, PA	<b>52,000</b>
9. <b>Greenough</b> , Boston, MA	<b>585,151</b>	26. <b>Maccabee</b> , Minneapolis, MN	<b>51,300</b>
10. <b>Public Communications Inc.</b> , Chicago, IL	<b>542,079</b>	27. <b>Hunter PR</b> , New York, NY	<b>50,000</b>
11. <b>LaunchSquad</b> , San Francisco, CA	<b>380,000</b>	28. <b>AMP3 Public Relations</b> , New York, NY	<b>38,986</b>
12. <b>Singer Associates, Inc.</b> , San Francisco, CA	<b>306,089</b>	29. <b>Power Group, The</b> , Dallas, TX	<b>35,350</b>
13. <b>McNeely Pigott &amp; Fox Public Relations</b> , Nashville, TN	<b>295,988</b>	30. <b>Rosica Communications</b> , Paramus, NJ	<b>26,750</b>
14. <b>rbb Communications</b> , Miami, FL	<b>263,679</b>	31. <b>Stuntman PR</b> , New York, NY	<b>23,000</b>
15. <b>SPM Communications</b> , Dallas, TX	<b>216,349</b>	32. <b>Bob Gold &amp; Associates</b> , Redondo Beach, CA	<b>20,267</b>
16. <b>BoardroomPR</b> , Ft. Lauderdale, FL	<b>200,000</b>	33. <b>CooperKatz &amp; Co.</b> , New York, NY	<b>15,000</b>
17. <b>Intrepid Agency</b> , Salt Lake City, UT	<b>169,559</b>	34. <b>Standing Partnership</b> , St. Louis, MO	<b>5,418</b>

# Three ways sports marketers can up their game

Technology has disrupted the sports marketing environment in virtually every way, and marketers today must embrace this new reality if they want to remain relevant and succeed.

By Marya Ketchell

Public relations and marketing disciplines in virtually every industry are being disrupted today, and nowhere is this more evident than in sports. Athletes are disintermediating traditional sports marketing channels by creating their own personal brands, finding their voices and using their influence like never before. This means sports marketers, brands, leagues and teams are navigating a whole new world.

As a professional in the sports marketing arena with 17 years of experience — including six years as the in-house communications director for a top American professional cycling team — this is one of the biggest changes I've seen in our industry.

Athletes from high school (several high school basketball players have more than 30,000 followers on social!) all the way up to the professional level now communicate directly with fans through social media, effectively cutting out sports organizations, leagues, sponsors, brands and traditional media.

Technology has changed the way we root for teams, consume news and express opinions. It gives everyone, especially athletes, the opportunity to interact with fans, brands and teams in new and different ways. Moreover, it allows fans to be increasingly connected to their favorite athletes. So, what does this mean for sports marketers?

It's time to break out of the traditional mindset. For example, sports marketers may need to invest less money transforming athletes into influencers and more resources in engaging with athletes who are already influencers. Instead of trying to start a conversation to raise the profile of an athlete, team or sponsor brand, look to join the conversations that are already happening.

Here are three ways sports marketers can become more relevant amid all the disruption.

## Strive for authenticity

Slapping a logo on a uniform or inside a stadium, or hosting a staged event with an athlete showing off a sponsor's product, are no longer the best options. Ultimately, athletes want to be authentic to match fans' rising expectations to know them as people, not just the stars they watch on game day. Sports marketers will be effective if

they embrace this reality and help athletes promote themselves as real human beings (who are also incredibly talented).

Giving fans a closer look at athletes' lives — their successes and their disappointments, their best moments and their biggest failures — prompts real and, ultimately, more valuable conversations. That means sports marketers need to push boundaries and create content that drives this type of storytelling.

It's also time for sports marketers to get more creative. Take Pepsi MAX's series of commercials that star NBA player Kyrie Irving in disguise as Uncle Drew, a senior citizen who suddenly becomes a playground basketball phenomenon. Fans connect with and remember the character. The spots displaying Irving's immense talent and sense of humor have been viewed almost 100 million times on YouTube. Earlier this year, a production company bought the film rights to Uncle Drew and will release a movie starring several professional basketball players in summer 2018.

## Be prepared to react to anything

We're living in a new era of political and social volatility. Although sports marketers may be tempted to steer away from controversial topics like doping, staying silent may be the wrong choice.

Not all brands have a definite and articulated purpose. Those that don't should identify one, because it becomes a common rallying cry when responding to any crisis. When a brand chooses to react to a situation, the response process should be quick and aligned with its purpose. It's time for brands to rewrite the crisis playbook with a sophisticated protocol that takes into account everyone involved — athletes, fans, consumers, the league, other teams and other athletes potentially from different sports.

This protocol should enable a calculated but swift reaction. One example is Danon's decision to drop NFL player Cam Newton after he made sexist comments to a female sports reporter. In this case, the brand's clear purpose and understanding of its audience made the decision easy to comprehend. Severing ties with Newton within a day of the comments made the right impression and maintained target consumers' trust in the brand.

## Create true partnerships

As more athletes build their own brands, sports marketers have an opportunity to act as their partners. Athletes speak out because they feel it's the right thing to do with their elevated platform. When sports marketers can align the values of their brand with an influential athlete and a target audience, the synergies among all parties can drive success.

There isn't a better example of athletes supporting a brand's values and vice versa than the NFL controversy around the national anthem. Brands sponsoring the NFL and its athletes have been expected to take a stand on the protests occurring on fields across the country. Nike was applauded for addressing the issues head on, with a consistent voice and point of view, while Under Armour's response fell flat with fans and consumers alike for seeming to waffle between one side and the other.

The stakes are high in today's environment. Fans demand brands take a stand on important political and social issues. Athletes are bypassing sports marketers and going directly to fans. The way people consume sports is changing. Platforms and content strategies are ever-evolving. Everyone from athletes and teams to brands are going live with content to bring fans closer to the game and the stars. But one thing remains constant: the inspirational and aspirational nature of athletics and the athletes themselves.

Leaning into the reasons we all love sports and care about athletes — to feel inspired and connected — will bring positive results and create new experiences for partnerships. The upcoming 2018 Winter Olympics is a great opportunity for brands and athletes alike to take advantage of this collective psyche.

The sports business is not about just winning championships anymore; its new purpose is to be a bigger part of the community, to be more human, to make athletes and teams more accessible. Marketers must embrace this reality to succeed.

Marya Ketchell is Senior Director at Peppercomm. ○



Marya Ketchell

# Publicity programs for sports marketing sponsorships

Communications pros can extend sports marketing sponsorships through the use of a publicity program.

By Arthur Solomon

The cost of sports sponsorships keeps increasing. Athlete spokespersons are no longer afraid to speak their minds about societal issues, even if sponsors would prefer they wouldn't. Too frequently, reports of athlete spokespersons' actions end up in police reports. These occurrences aren't new. What is new is that sports' reporting has largely changed: The bigger the star, the more prominently and longer unsportsman-like conduct will be reported, often putting sponsors on the spot as they are increasingly at risk of becoming part of the story.

When I managed sports marketing programs, first at Advance Public Relations and later, for almost 25 years at Burson-Marsteller, and was also responsible for the creative publicity input and media outreach, clients would always ask five questions:

- "How do I know I'm getting my money's worth?"
- "What sports will get me the most bang for my bucks?"
- "Can you develop a program that will have a long shelf life?"
- "I already am advertising on TV sports events, so why should I spend additional money on a public relations/publicity program?"
- "If I give you money for a PR/publicity budget, can you guarantee that it'll result in media coverage?"

My answers were:

- How do you know you're getting your money's worth from TV advertising? This question is more relevant than ever, because of the ways a person can now avoid commercials and other methods of watching a sporting event.
- PR programs are less expensive than TV advertising and stories in newspapers and on TV are more believable than ads.
- I'm not asking you to curtail advertising. Just give me ten percent of the budget.
- You can create your own program without needing approval from the major sports organizations. This is especially important for small and medium size companies.
- Reporters look for interesting stories. If you can offer that, reporters don't care if your program is sanctioned by official sporting organizations.
- A savvy publicity program will help expand TV brand awareness and position the brand to consumers as a leader in its category, even if it's not.

• Because of my journalistic background, I think like an editor or reporter, which includes sports reporting, so I know how to craft programs that will generate news coverage.

• As for which sports will provide the greatest bang for bucks, my opinion hasn't changed. I recommend a baseball, football or basketball nexus for obvious reasons: They're covered by the media year-round so a savvy media-friendly publicity program has the greatest opportunity of succeeding.

## Athlete sponsorships

It's no secret that the easiest method for obtaining coverage in sports media is by having an athlete spokesperson. However, athlete spokespersons are as plentiful as leaves falling off a tree. Athletes are also used in multiple TV brand commercials, making some unsuitable to represent a single brand, in my opinion. And, importantly, there's always the possibility of negative media coverage of recent and current athletes. Peyton Manning, Tom Brady, Alex Rodriguez, Lance Armstrong, Tiger Woods, Ryan Lochte, Jose Reyes and Jeurys Familia, just to name a few.

Regardless, it's possible to stand out in the athlete spokesperson clutter: Here's how:

- Create your own program.
- Use a well-respected, retired athlete who participated in a sport associated with your client. They're less expensive and more welcomed by the media than current athletes in the papers every day.
- Make certain the athlete you choose is squeaky clean. You don't want reporters bringing up negative happenings from the past.
- Use an athlete who's media friendly.
- Don't use an athlete famous for one occurrence, like Ralph Branca or Bill Buckner. You don't want an interviewer to concentrate on one aspect.

Some examples: For Gillette's sponsorship of MLB's All-Star balloting program, I used athletes including Bob Feller, Ralph Kiner, Lefty Gomez and coaches like Ernie Banks. When G.E. sponsored the baseball demonstration sport at the 1984 Olympic Games, I used Robin Roberts. For Olympic programs, I used Bob Mathias and other retired Olympians. For a classroom math teaching product using baseball as a tool, I used Monte Irvin. The nostalgia talks resulted in major media coverage with brand mentions and message points that clients wanted.

## Campaign rules

Some rules to remember when creating a sports marketing publicity program:

- A sports marketing publicity program can and should be crafted in a manner that will work with or without an athlete as the spokesperson. Example: A sports psychologist is an easy fit; also, because of the interest in preventing injuries to high school athletes or younger, a head trainer from a major sport team works.
- For business media coverage, I've often divided spokespersons' responsibilities: Using the athlete for sports media and a high-ranking corporate executive for business media.
- Programs should be crafted so they can be implemented locally and nationally.

• It's not necessary to work with the most prominent athletes to achieve major publicity.

• Programs should be workable for many years with minimal changes.

• Do your own due diligence regarding the athlete's behavior. It's easily done using search sites.

• Know the media. Publicity success is largely due to knowing which media to pitch.

• Think like a reporter. Each story they cover can be approached several different ways. PR people should have several different angles to pitch.

• Use someone who has been out of the media spotlight for a while.

• A media savvy ambush marketing sports program can gain more publicity than an "approved" program. (Just check the legal restrictions.)

One major advantage of creating your own sports marketing publicity program is the notion that you and your client can establish guidelines that best serve the client and the media without interference from the major sports entities. And that's something more conducive to publicity success than the ubiquitous "Official Sponsor of" designations that reporters ignore and scoff at.

*Arthur Solomon, a former journalist, was a Senior VP and Senior Counselor at Burson-Marsteller. He now is a frequent contributor to public relations publications, consults on public relations projects and was on the Seoul Peace Prize nominating committee. He can be reached at arthursolomon4pr@juno.com. ○*



Arthur Solomon

# O'Dwyer's guide to ENTERTAINMENT & SPORTS PR

## 5W PUBLIC RELATIONS

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www.5wpr.com

5W Public Relations is a top 15 independent PR firm whose client list spans across lifestyle, sports and entertainment. 5WPR has been a trusted PR partner to celebrities, business leaders, and professional sports leagues. Client experience includes Bowlmor AMF, Wendy Williams, Pat Smith, D'Angeli-co Guitars™, Davenport Theatrical Enterprises, and the Wiggles. 5WPR's services include celebrity branding, event management, fashion shows, Red Carpet events, record label promotion, launch events, movie premiers, and influencer management. 5WPR has secured product placement, brand ambassador partnerships or event appearances for our clients with the following celebrities and influencers: Jessica Alba, Anna Kendrick, Kim Kardashian, Fergie, Chrissy Teigen, Thomas Keller, Daymond John, Jeremy Piven, Kevin Durant, reality show stars, movies and a slew of others.

## BLAZE

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**Matt Kovacs**, President

BLAZE is the trusted partner of choice for lifestyle contender brands hungry for a real piece of the marketshare. BLAZE has been retained by a growing number of savvy clients who want integrated PR, influencer and social media strategies — and flawless execution. BLAZE senior level professionals play a hands-on, day-to-day role with clients. With more than two decades of relationships and a solid team founded in strategic approaches, BLAZE is adroit in advancing client objectives and nimble to the quick-changing pace

of media technologies.

Clients include: ESPN, The Fit Expo, Gold's Gym, Great Mall, Griffin Club, Performance Bike, Ontario Mills, Outlets at Orange, Spectrum Sports and youththeory Racing.

## BZA PR

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www.bzapr.com

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212/708-1703

**Steve Brener**, President  
steveb@bzapr.com

BZA is a PR and marketing firm with more than 60 years of combined experience in the sports journalism and PR fields. BZA has the experience and contacts to maximize client exposure via PR, promotions, event planning, event production and marketing plans.

The firm's network of media contacts at the local, national and international levels facilitates media placements. Its service-oriented philosophy includes strategic plan development, interaction with client contacts, cultivation of media promotions to enhance advertising buys, adherence to timelines, timely progress reports, on-site execution and event results and evaluation.

Sports clients include: NFL (National Football League), NHL (National Hockey League), SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING, OMEGA, MGM Resorts, CareerBuilder Challenge, Santa Anita Race Track, JDP Communications, Bellator MMA, TGR Live, On Location Experience, Breeders Cup, Auto Club Speedway and AUA (American Urological Association).

## FRENCH/WEST/ VAUGHAN

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**Rick French**, Chairman & CEO  
**David Gwyn**, President / Principal  
**Natalie Best**, Executive Vice President / Director of Client Services / Principal

French/West/Vaughan (FWV) is the Southeast's largest independently-held public relations, advertising and social media marketing agency. Founded in April 1997 by agency Chairman & CEO Rick French, FWV now employs more than 100 public relations, public affairs, social media, advertising and digital marketing experts among its Raleigh, N.C. headquarters and New York City, Los Angeles and Tampa offices. Ranked as the #2 firm for sports PR and #6 for entertainment PR by *O'Dwyer's*, FWV specializes in creating maximum brand exposure for its clients through strategic partnerships, paid endorsements, sponsor relations, event management, social media, experiential marketing and traditional earned media outreach programs.

FWV is the first and only N.C.-based public relations firm to earn National Agency of the Year honors, something the firm has now captured 12 times in its illustrious 20-year history, including seven in the past 18 months. The agency also earned a Top 10 ranking this year in the *Holmes Report* Global Creative Index, and made its debut among the country's top 15 PR firms, ranking No. 14 nationally and No. 1 in the Southeast by *O'Dwyer's*. FWV is listed as the nation's third largest Consumer-focused PR firm in the 2017 *PR Week* global rankings.

Sports and entertainment clients include former NFL quarterback Michael Vick, Dallas Cowboys cornerback Nolan Carroll, legendary sports agent Leigh Steinberg, race car driver Bobby Mesmer, NFL running back and Dancing with the Stars winner Rashad Jennings, National Pro Fastpitch, Daytona Tortugas Professional Baseball, the Veteran Golfers Association, Paralyzed Veterans of America, O2 Fitness, Fleet Feet, Sure Sports Lending, NATHAN, Full Frame Documentary Film Festival, the Louisiana Film & Entertainment Association, and best-selling author Nick Schuyler. In addition, agency Chairman & CEO Rick French is a film producer with three projects in development, including *Not Without Hope*, the feature film based on Schuyler's memoir, as well as the comedy, *The Real Don Quixote*, starring Tim Blake Nelson.

Additionally, FWV has a pro-bono partnership with Teen Cancer America (TCA), the national non-profit founded by rock 'n' roll icons Roger Daltrey and Pete Townshend of The Who, and works closely with its sports and entertainment ambassadors, including PGA TOUR star Daniel Berger, Duke basketball legend Nolan Smith, Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder, actress Victoria Summer and others.

The agency has also done work on behalf of the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA), United States Polo Association, Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association, United States Speedskating, international swimwear brands Arena and Speedo, Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson, retired All-Pro NFL running back Arian Foster, Detroit Lions safety Glover Quin, Cincinnati Bengals defensive tackle Geno Atkins, former Chicago Bears safety Ryan Mundy, former NFL safety Terrence Holt, Pro Football Hall of Fame nominee Torry Holt, NFL legend-turned filmmaker Simeon Rice, former Indianapolis Colts GM Ryan Grigson, singer-songwriter Jacob Whitesides, singer-songwriter Lucie Silvas, platinum-selling musician T.I., actor Brandon Mychal Smith, AstroTurf, MoGo Mouthguards, MyBookie online sportsbook, TVG (America's Horseracing Network), the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC) and The Backstreet Boys, among other notable clients.

## HUNTER ENTERTAINMENT + SPORTS

A division of Hunter Public Relations

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www.hunterpr.com  
smormar@hunterpr.com (Samara Farber Mormar)

Partners: **Grace Leong**, **Jonathan Lyon**, **Mark Newman**, **Donetta Allen**, **Gigi Russo**, **Erin Hanson**  
Practice Leader: **Samantha Turtle**

Hunter Public Relations is an award-winning consumer products and services public relations



**Hunter helped PowerBar amplify the announcement of their new Clean Whey product line by partnering with Ryan Lochte, an infamous Olympian in need of his own clean start.**

firm with offices in New York and London and a strategic footprint in markets across North America. Beginning with research-driven insights, Hunter executes creative public relations programs that build equity, increase engagement and drive measurable business results for branded consumer products. A powerful blend of content marketing, media relations, social and digital media, influencer engagement, and events and experiences engages the hearts, minds and spirits of target consumers.

Hunter's four-agencies-in-one model enables us to deliver seamless, integrated service to our brand partners through in-house capabilities that serve their evolving needs. This includes Hunter Entertainment + Sports, a specialized division consisting of dedicated entertainment marketers who manage strategic alignments that solidify a brand's role in popular culture through the practice's core competencies: brand-right talent identification and engagement; sponsorship negotiation, activations, and on-site execution; and entertainment media relations and strategy.

Recent highlights include a five-year-long relationship between allergy-sufferer, Debra Messing and ZYRTEC®; helping PowerBar get a #CleanStart with Ryan Lochte; dancing alongside BAND-AID® ambassador, Kelly Rowland to encourage consumers to STICK WITH IT™; taking a stand at the US-Mexico border with Wilmer Valderrama and Johnnie Walker;

fighting #DairyEnvy with Judy Greer; and activating around some of the largest cultural events of the year including Coachella, Sundance, the Latin Music Billboards, NYFW and Art Basel.

## KEITH SHERMAN & ASSOCIATES

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**Keith Sherman**, President  
**Brett Oberman**, VP  
**Scott Klein**, VP

Keith Sherman & Associates provides strategic public relations counseling and marketing communications services to a diverse entertainment, arts, lifestyles and international brands clientele.

We are proud of several long-term client relationships including 10 years working for the *New York Times*, 18 years for the Tony Awards, 28 years representing Olympic Gold medalist Brian Boi-

tano and a decade working for insurance giant Marsh & McLennan. KSA's six person staff is based in Times Square.

We have represented hundreds of network, cable and digital broadcasts, studio and independent films, Broadway and Off-Broadway shows, national tours, media companies, high profile events globally, festivals, not-for-profit organizations, awards, travel, sponsorships, diversity, healthcare, technology and more. Our site, [ksa-pr.com](http://ksa-pr.com), provides additional information.

As a result of our corporate to cool client base, we have a unique perspective that we've brought to campaign after campaign with tremendous results over time.

KSA's work is distinguished by proactive effort, integrity, strategic thinking, creativity, positivity and passionate drive for the clients we represent.

Clients include: Architectural Digest, Art Students League of New York, Brian Boitano, Bolshoi Ballet, BRAVO, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Broadway League, Columbia University, Drama Desk Awards, Feinstein's/54 Below, Focus Features, Forum Gallery, Hertz, Chris Gethard, Adrian Grenier, Kimpton Hotels, Lang Lang, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Montreal Jazz Festival, New York Marriott Marquis, the *New York Times*, The Onion, Oscilloscope, Point Foundation, Colin Quinn, Samuel French, Sony, Tony Awards, Universal Pictures and Visiting Nurse Service of New York.



**Marketing Maven participated in the Sustainable Development Goals Media Zone at the United Nations representing global goal number six: clean water and sanitation on behalf of client WaterAid America. Game of Thrones actor Nikolaj Coster-Waldau addressed media after serving as a UNDP Goodwill Ambassador for the Global Goals World Cup the day prior.**

## MARKETING MAVEN

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**Lindsey Carnett**, CEO & President  
**Natalie Rucker**, Director of  
Business Development

Award-winning agency, Marketing Maven, led by former NCAA women's soccer captain, Lindsey Carnett, combines traditional media relations and cutting-edge digital strategies for sports and entertainment clients. This fusion of online and offline marketing helps our team develop campaigns that are results-driven and measurable. By aligning with our clients' goals, identifying and engaging with key influencers, brands and adapting to emerging trends, we consistently deliver ROI for clients.

With offices in LA and NY, this bicoastal team is tapped into media at the two largest entertainment capitals of the U.S. From movie premieres, gifting suites, red carpet events, product launches to national media tours, Marketing Maven executes worldwide PR stunts and viral social media competitions to generate buzz for our clients. In addition to content marketing, our digital team also executes social media advertising campaigns with analytics and insights geared toward driving consumer awareness, engagement and conversions.

## MFA MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS (MISSY FARREN & ASSOCIATES, LTD.)

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**Missy Farren**, Founder & CEO  
**Caroline Andrew**, Senior Vice  
President

Mfa Marketing & Public Relations is a full service communications agency, with 23 years of dynamic PR, digital and marketing communications success. Story-

telling is our forte, and our enthusiastic team specializes in delivering compelling placements, unique influencer programming, fruitful partnerships and campaigns that span paid, owned and earned media across multiple channels.

Sports and wellness brand expertise has created success that matters for brands like Stance, Cannondale, TheraGun, US Ski and Snowboard, Polaris, Quiksilver, ROXY, Endeavor, Trek, G-Form, LifeProof, Roam Fitness, Sugoi, Onewheel, Burton Snowboards, lululemon, Target C9 by Champion, Anna Victoria, Juja Active, GT Bicycles, Dew Tour, Schwinn, 2XU, Skins and Global Surf Industries.

Mfa's holistic approach is rounded out with complimentary practice areas including consumer products, culinary and travel. A dedicated cause marketing practice known as MFAAction works with non- and for-profit entities with a social good mission. We are more than marketers; we live our clients' lifestyles every day.

## PEPPERCOMM, INC.

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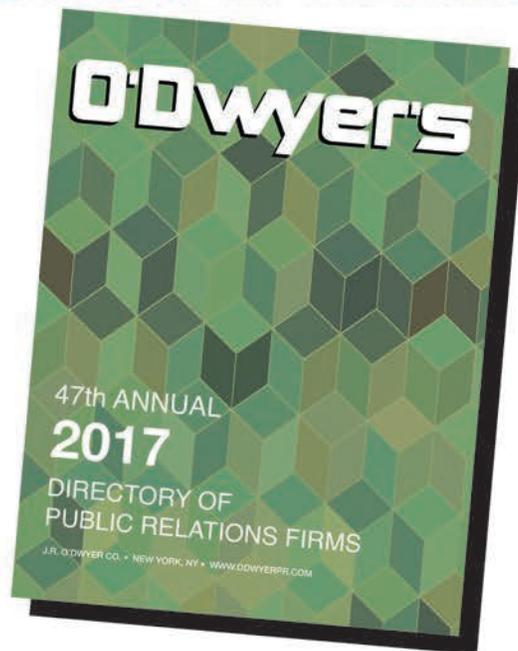
**Steve Cody**, Co-CEO &  
Co-Founder  
**Ed Moed**, Co-CEO & Co-Founder  
**Ted Birkhahn**, Partner &  
President  
**Ann Barlow**, Partner & President,  
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**Deborah Brown**, Partner &  
Managing Director  
**Jacqueline Kolek**, Partner &  
Managing Director  
**Maggie O'Neill**, Partner &  
Managing Director  
**Mike Friedin**, Chief Digital Officer

Peppercomm is an award-winning strategic, integrated communications and marketing agency headquartered in New York City with offices in San Francisco and London. The firm connects brands, messages and people through data-driven insights, cross-channel communications and brilliant customer experience. Employing an omni-channel approach, the company uses customer insights to determine the right mix of tools and platforms to help clients reach, engage and influence customers along their path to purchase.

Founded in 1995, Peppercomm

— Continued on page 24

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**O'Dwyer's is the #1 source for researching public relations firms and outside PR counsel. We've been connecting clients and PR firms for 47 years through our directory of PR firms.**

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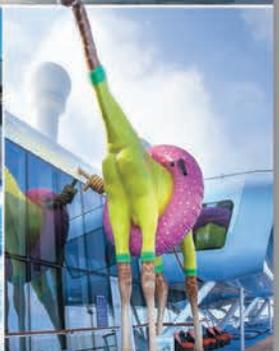
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## PEPPERCOMM, INC.

Continued from page 22

has received numerous accolades, including the *Holmes Report's* North American Corporate/B2B Agency of the Year and *Bulldog Reporter's* Mid-sized Agency of the Year. The agency has been listed as one of *Fortune's* 10 Best Workplaces in Advertising and Marketing, 100 Best Workplaces for Women, 50 Best Small and Medium Workplaces and 50 Best Workplaces for New College Grads.

Services include Branding, Content Strategy & Development, Creative Services, Crisis Management, Digital Solutions, Experiential, Insights & Strategy, Licensing, Public Relations & Social Media and Research & Measurement.

For more information, visit [www.peppercomm.com](http://www.peppercomm.com).

## ROGERS & COWAN

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**Mark Owens**, CEO  
**Holly Beverly**, Vice President

Our team leverages the power of owned, earned and paid media to ensure its clients are relevant and part of the cultural conversation. We harness the power of technology, influencers, talent, content, brands and media to proactively develop the narratives that shape pop culture. We're not just on top of what's trending, authentic and hot right now — we're creating it.

Media, entertainment and sports are at the forefront of what drives popular culture. At Rogers & Cowan, we represent some of Hollywood, the music and sports industry's biggest stars, gaming's best-selling titles, and some of the most viewed content, from web series to OTT & TV shows, and award-winning films.

Clients: Verizon, YouTube, Hasbro, Amazon, Denzel Washington, Brie Larson, Chris Pratt, Riz Ahmed, Jamie Foxx, Elton John, The Rolling Stones and Chloe Kim.

## TAYLOR

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For more than 30 years, Taylor has been a global leader in providing strategic counsel and sponsorship activation support for the world's leading sports marketers, such as Mercedes Benz (pictured, with brand ambassador Rickie Fowler), P&G, Allstate, IBM, and Capital One, among others.

**Tony Signore**, CEO & Managing Partner  
**Bryan Harris**, COO & Managing Partner

The perennial leader in the annual *O'Dwyer's* Sports Rankings, Taylor has forged a reputation of excellence in public relations and brand marketing for more than 30 years by partnering with the world's leading corporate marketers utilizing their sports, lifestyle, and entertainment assets to engage consumers and foster brand relationships that drive business growth. The agency's roots are firmly planted in the world of sports and its legacy of developing and activating hundreds of award-winning campaigns for leading brands in support of sports sponsorships is unparalleled. From global properties like the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup, to the crown jewels of U.S. sports — the World Series, Super Bowl, NBA Finals, and Daytona 500, among others — Taylor has long been a trusted counselor for many of the world's most influential sports marketers. As the sports landscape has rapidly evolved and shifted in response to the impact of social media and game-changing technology platforms, Taylor has helped to redefine the rules for fan engagement. The agency's deep

knowledge and insights around fan behavior across a multitude of sports is at the core of its Taylor Digital Sports group, which is uniquely positioned to lead digital strategy and activation for many of the sports industry's marketing and technology innovators. Taylor's client partners include Activision, Allstate, AMB Group, Capital One, Comcast, Diageo, IBM, Mercedes-Benz, Panini America, PVH, P&G, and Tempur-Sealy.

## WEBER SHANDWICK

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**Marc Abel**, Executive Vice President, Client Experience, Consumer

Weber Shandwick's Sports practice combines the agency's industry-leading consumer marketing practice with an expansive global network of sports communications experts to create culturally relevant, award-winning campaigns for many of the world's best known brands across both domestic and international sports franchises, leagues and athletes.

With experience amplifying pro-

grams around every major sports property, including the National Football League, Major League Baseball, the National Basketball Association, the PGA TOUR, NASCAR, the NCAA, FIFA World Cup and the growing e-sports landscape, we are well-versed in leveraging sports sponsorships to develop communication campaigns that tell engaging brand stories, enhancing consumer loyalty and increasing sales.

We build visibility and awareness for our clients, their products and services by developing multi-platform communication-driven programs that include: consumer outreach, digital activation, media relations, event marketing, fan engagement, sponsorship activation, CSR amplification, influencer marketing and social media. In addition, we work closely with our Interpublic Group sports marketing partner Octagon to offer our clients a full range of counsel and support surrounding sponsorships, athlete representation, on-site consumer activation and hospitality, negotiation and benchmarking.

Our breadth of experience with and success in helping clients use their sports partnerships as a platform to tell their brand story makes Weber Shandwick a leader in the sports communications industry. ○

## APCO taps Teller for executive director post

**A**PCO Worldwide announced that it has hired corporate communications veteran Harlan Teller, who's been named an Executive Director at the global communication agency.

Teller, a former Corporate Practice Chair at Hill+Knowlton Strategies and Burson-Marsteller, previously held the top strategic communications slot at FTI Consulting. He launched the Washington-based corporate services company's Midwest PR operations in 2005 and held a Senior Managing Director role in the firm's Chicago office.



Harlan Teller

He later left that post to lead marketing and communications for Northern Illinois University.

Teller has been charged with counseling APCO's corporate and institutional clients on reputation management issues as well as assisting with new business development. He'll be based in APCO's Chicago office. ○

## Emily's List votes for Reynolds

**C**hristina Reynolds, most recently Senior VP at Global Strategy Group, has joined Emily's List, which funds political campaigns for pro-choice Democratic women, as VP-Communications.

Prior to GSG, Reynolds was Deputy Communications Director at Hillary for America, managing director at Glover Park Group, media affairs director in the White House and rapid response director at Obama for America.



Christina Reynolds

She also served as Research/Policy Director at the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, and communications advisor at the John Edwards for President campaign.

Stephanie Schriock, President of Emily's List, called Reynolds a "long-time fighter for progressive values."

Since its launch in 1985, Emily's List has raised more than \$500 million for political candidates. ○

## Ketchum catches Wolf

**K**etchum has snagged Samantha Wolf from Havas PR for the Senior VP-Corporate Media Strategy slot.

Prior to holding the Senior VP slot responsible for corporate and global units at Havas, Wolf did a nearly six-year stint at KCSA Strategic Communications.



Samantha Wolf

At Ketchum, she reports to John Bradbury, Director of the New York corporate practice in the Omnicom unit's global issues & crisis management network. ○

## Verizon calls MTV's Agathoklis

**V**erizon has tapped Mariana Agathoklis for the VP-Corporate Communications post that was formerly held by Torod Neptune, who left in March after a nearly two-year stint for Lenovo.

The ex-VP Communications at MTV takes charge of external communications and issues, reporting to Jim Gerace, Chief Communications Officer from her perch in Basking Ridge, NJ.

At MTV, Agathoklis worked on its series, specials, awards & news programming across the digital, mobile and social platforms. She also was responsible for corporate/brand initiatives, as well as promoting the Viacom unit's leadership team.



Mariana Agathoklis

Agathoklis joined MTV in 2005 from Porter Novelli.

Known for its wireless network, Verizon's Oath unit includes social/digital/video brands AOL, TechCrunch, Yahoo, HuffPost, engadget, MAKERS and tumblr. ○

## Spotify targets Jenkins

**S**potify music streaming service has hired Target pro Dustee Jenkins to head its PR team.

Target's former Senior VP/COO assumes command of Spotify's consolidated PR unit.

Angela Watts, who has handled communication for Spotify out of its London office for seven years, and Graham James, who

has led PR efforts out of the company's New York office, will both now report to her.

Jenkins will report to Chief Marketing Officer Seth Farbman.

Jenkins's hiring reflects a drive by the music streaming service to consolidate all of its public relations activities. She arrives at Spotify as it prepares for a public offering, under which shares will be sold directly to the public rather than through banks, in early 2018.

Before coming to Target in 2010, Jenkins spent four years as Director, Media Relations and Crisis Communications, at Hill + Knowlton Strategies. She was Director of Communications for HUD during the Bush administration and served as Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison's Press Secretary from 2001 to 2004.



Dustee Jenkins

Spotify is the world's largest streaming service, with 140 million worldwide users and 60 million paying subscribers. Its closest competition comes from Apple Music, which announced in September that it had passed the 30-million subscriber mark. ○

## Princeton calls Colburn

**P**rincenton University has named Brent Colburn VP-Communications and PA, effective Feb. 1.

Colburn comes to the Ivy League university from the top communications post at the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, the philanthropic organization founded by Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg and his wife, pediatrician and educator Dr. Priscilla Chen. He has also served as National Communications Director for the 2012 Obama for America campaign and has held Senior Communications and Public Affairs positions at several cabinet-level federal agencies.



Brent Colburn

Colburn will oversee the presentation of Princeton's objectives and activities, serve as a spokesman for the university and have responsibility for the offices of communications, public affairs, government affairs and community and regional affairs.

"Brent's talent, energy and values are impressive, and I believe that he will be a spectacular colleague for all of us at Princeton," said Princeton President Christopher L. Eisgruber. ○

# The pinking of the Gray Lady

By Fraser Seitel

The page-one headline screamed scandal: “Russians Sent ‘Backdoor’ Bid to Meet Trump.”

Here, on the November 18 front page of *The New York Times*, was the smoking gun we’d been waiting for. Bylined by three different reporters and assisted by three researchers in Washington and New York, this was finally the blockbuster story that would blow the lid off the Trump-Russian election tampering.



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

Or was it? According to the front-page *Times* story, a senior Russian official tried to arrange a meeting between Vladimir Putin

and candidate Donald Trump, but Jared Kushner rejected it. Even worse ... well, there was no “even worse.” In fact, there was nothing more to the story. Yet it merited the first page of the most important newspaper in the world.

And therein lies the sad reality of journalism circa 2017: the *New York Times*, the Great Gray Lady of America’s Fifth Estate, has allowed its news judgment and its news columns to become, like its editorial page, not only anti-Trump but in the process, hopelessly biased.

To be sure, the *New York Times* is still, far-and-away, the world’s greatest newspaper, and each day it’s responsible for helping set the global news agenda. And while it’s still true that placing a news story in the *Times* can turbo-charge a public relations professional’s career, the clout and credibility of the newspaper of record has diminished as its liberal news bias has become more obvious.

Obviously, journalism — or what passes for it in 2017 — has undergone a gut-wrenching transformation since the *Times* was founded two centuries ago. For much of that period, newspapers of record,

like the *Times*, valued their objectivity, attempting to portray issues and events in a neutral and unbiased manner, regardless of the opinion or personal beliefs of the reporter or the editor or the publisher.

For public relations people and their employers, the *Times* and its reporters were often unkind, frequently unapproachable and occasionally unfathomable, but their — and their paper’s — integrity was rarely called into question. While pure objectivity is clearly impossible — all of us carry biases — *Times* reporters, by and large, practiced fair-minded journalism, asking probing questions and calling things the way they saw them. Not any more.

Objective journalism has become a shadow of its former self. In a day when “fake” is an accurate descriptor of social media “news,” one-sided networks like MSNBC and Fox News make no pretense of their prejudice. As moronic tweets from moronic celebrities become “breaking stories,” journalistic standards have become an endangered species. The fact is, most news organizations today have given up even pretending to be “objective.”

Sadly, to students of journalism, even the vaunted *New York Times* has joined this race to the biased bottom. The daily proof is ineluctable.

- Last year, *Times* media critic Jim Rutenberg wrote a column urging his fellow reporters to “throw out the textbook American journalism has been using for the better part of the past half century” and become oppositional to Trump.

- Heeding its columnist’s words, the *Times* assigned the Trump White House beat to its two most virulently anti-Trump reporters, Maggie Haberman and Glenn Thrush, both tabloid veterans, who turned out daily page-one screeds on Trumpian insolence, incompetence and inadequacy. Predictably, the *Times*’ diabolical duo was soon signed by Random House to write a West Wing tell-all book. No doubt the collaborators would have cheerfully continued their Trump thumping had the *Times* not suspended Mr. Thrush for allegedly going all Harvey Weinstein on several unsuspecting female colleagues.

- On November 18, the same day the *Times* chose to blast its Trump-Putin non-meeting story on page one, it also chose to “bury” a smaller story inside the paper regarding Trump’s decision to reverse his Administration’s controversial policy allowing hunters to import trophies of elephants killed in Africa. Although this policy had infuriated liberals and dominated cable news and talk radio, the *Times* seemed circumspect to



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# Understanding your investments

By Richard Goldstein

Investors tend to select investments based on their investment philosophy and tolerance for risk, among other criteria. Some investors seek out cash flow while others are willing to forego current cash flow in exchange for significant appreciation. Because taxes are levied on investment income, it's unwise to consider an investment without understanding the cost involved by making the investment.



**Richard Goldstein** is a partner at Buchbind-er Tunick & Company LLP, New York, Certified Public Accountants.

Not being an investment advisor, I'm not in a position to make investment recommendations. I am, however,

in a position to explain various types of investments and the tax cost associated with each. Accordingly, this month's column will focus on the tax cost of investments.

## Portfolio income

Those who desire current cash flow from their investments may choose investments that generate interest or regular dividends. Investments that provide interest income include certificates of deposit, savings accounts, corporate bonds and government bonds.

Investments that generate dividend income include direct equity investments in corporate stocks or investment in mutual funds that invest in corporate stock. Each one of these investments generate current cash flows but can differ significantly in terms of their economic and tax consequences. Additionally, it's important to understand bond discount and bond premium associated with bond investments and the related tax consequences of each.

Corporations, the U.S. Treasury and states raise money from debt markets by issuing bonds. These bonds are issued at maturity value, at a discount or at a premium. Treasury bonds and Treasury notes pay a stated rate of interest semiannually.

However, corporate bonds may pay interest at a stated coupon rate or they may not provide any periodic interest payments. Bonds that don't pay periodic interest are called zero coupon bonds. Just in case you don't know the difference between a Treasury bond and a Treasury note, they differ

in terms of their maturities. Treasury notes are issued with two-, five- and 10-year maturities. Treasury bonds are issued with maturities with greater than 10 years.

The consequences of owning these types of investments are very similar. The primary differences are that interest from Treasury bonds is exempt from state taxation while interest from corporate bonds is not. Treasury bonds always pay interest periodically while corporate bonds may or may not. The tax rules for determining the timing and amount of interest income from corporate and U.S. Treasury are as follows:

- Interest received is included in gross income.

- If a bond is issued at a discount, special Original Issue Discount rules apply. Taxpayers are required to amortize the discount and include the amount of the current year amortization in gross income in addition to any interest payments received. In the case of corporate zero-coupon bonds, taxpayers are required to pay taxes on income related to the bonds even though they did not receive any payments from the bonds. Bond issuers or brokers are responsible for calculating the yearly amortization of the OID and provide this information to investors using Form 1099-OID.

- If a bond was issued at a premium, taxpayers may elect to amortize the premium. Again, this information will be provided to you. The amount of the current year amortization offsets a portion of the actual interest payments taxpayers are required to include in gross income. The original tax basis of the bond includes the premium and is reduced by amortization of bond premium over the life of the bond.

- If a bond is purchased on a secondary bond market at a premium, the premium is treated exactly like original issue bond premium. Accordingly, an election can be made to amortize the market premium to reduce the annual interest income from the bond. If not, the premium remains as part of the tax cost (basis) of the bond and affects the capital gain or loss taxpayers recognize when the bond sells or is redeemed.

## U.S. savings bonds

The bonds are issued at either face value or at a discount. These bonds do not pay interest, rather it accumulates over the term of the bonds and is paid when redeemed at maturity or earlier. An election may be made to include the increase in bond redemption value in income each year.

While this is generally not advisable, in certain situations the holder may actually not have to pay any tax when redeemed. Interest from Series EE and Series I bonds

may be excluded from gross income to the extent the bond proceeds are used to pay for qualifying education expenses. This, however, is subject to a phase-out based on adjusted gross income.

## Dividends

Historically, dividends received by investors have been taxed at the same rate as interest. However, in 2003 Congress changed the law for dividends to mitigate the "double tax" on dividend income. Qualified dividends are taxed at a preferential rate: 0, 15, or 20 percent. (Note this may change if and when new tax legislation is passed to exclude 50 percent of the income from tax. Time will tell.)

Caution: even though corporations may report to taxpayers the amount of a dividend subject to the reduced rate, taxpayers are responsible to determine if they are in fact entitled to the reduced rate. Qualified dividends are those paid by domestic or certain foreign corporations provided the investor holds the dividend paying stock for more than 60 days during the 121-day period that begins 60 days before the ex-dividend date (the first day on which the purchaser of the stock would not be entitled to receive a dividend declared on the stock).

In the next column, I'll discuss capital gains and losses, the tax rates pertaining to capital gains, wash sales, passive activity income and losses with emphasis on rental real estate. I'll also discuss the net investment income tax on net passive income. Keep in mind that President Trump has proposed this tax be eliminated along with the estate and gift tax and the alternative minimum tax.

Here are some good moves to consider for your agency before year end: max out on Section 179; consider bonus depreciation; spruce up your company-owned business premises (there may be some solid tax benefits in doing so); speed up bonus payments if you are an accrual basis agency. ○

## The Gray Lady

— Continued from page 26

publicize that Trump, for once, might in fact have done the right thing.

Obviously, these are but a few examples of news bias in the *New York Times*. But there are many others, and their frequency has increased as the Trump Administration has trudged on.

To be sure, the *Times* is still the best newspaper we have, and public relations people who wish to keep informed should still read it every day. Only now with a far more jaundiced eye. ○

## Twitter taps lobbyists as Congress mulls digital ad bill

Twitter has retained D.C.-based government relations shop Integrated Solutions Group in response to a recently introduced bill that could fundamentally change how paid political advertising is regulated on social media sites.

In October, Senators Mark Warner (D-VA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and John McCain (R-AZ) unveiled S. 1989, or the “Honest Ads Act.” That bipartisan piece of legislation aims to enhance transparency and accountability for online political ads by establishing a framework similar to endorsement rules governing TV, radio and print ad campaigns, thereby making it more difficult for foreign actors to use social media sites to influence U.S. politics.

Among other provisions, the “Honest Ads Act” would require Internet platforms such as Google, Facebook and Twitter to disclose in a public database the names of persons or groups that purchase political ads exceeding \$500.

The proposed legislation comes as U.S. officials continue unraveling the prolific extent to which Russia used political ads placed across social media platforms in an effort to spread disinformation and foment dissent in the months leading up to the 2016 presidential election.

Officials from Twitter, along with Facebook and Google, testified at Congressional hearings in October and November convened for the purpose of examining Russia’s role in last year’s election. Facebook admitted that as many as 126 million people in the U.S. may have been exposed to Russian propaganda in the form of posts over its platform, including \$100,000 spent by Saint Petersburg-based troll farm the Internet Research Agency. Google said it had uncovered about \$4,700 worth of Russia-linked ads across its YouTube, Gmail and search platforms, and Twitter said it discovered more than 2,700 accounts tied to Kremlin-backed organizations, far more than the company had initially estimated.

In light of the bombshell news that Russia had paid for political ads in the U.S. in a bid to sway the 2016 election, social media leaders have publicly pledged to improve how political advertising is handled on their platforms and agreed to foster increasingly transparent environments. Their response to lawmakers’ recent attempts to legislate online political ads, however, can thus far be best characterized as tepid.

Web lobbying organization the Internet Association on Oct. 31 published its own eight-point set of internal guidelines in response to the “Honest Ads Act,” detailing steps they believe member companies can take in lieu of federal legislation to prevent foreign agent interference “while also protecting privacy, legitimate free speech and political debate online.”

The D.C.-based trade group, whose members include Amazon, Airbnb, eBay, Expedia, Facebook, Google, LinkedIn, PayPal, Twitter and many others, suggested that “legislation or regulation should improve transparency and disclosure of online election advertising without creating requirements that would discourage legitimate stakeholders from actively engaging in the political process or limit political speech.”

## Watchdog wages anti-union lobbying salvo

Anti-union policy group the Center for Union Facts has retained Capitol Hill lobbying and public affairs shop CGCN Group to advocate on behalf of a labor bill currently making its way through Congress that aims to protect workers from union overreach through a series of pro-employee reforms.



Sen. Orrin Hatch’s (R-UT) “Employee Rights Act,” or S.1774, promises some of the most comprehensive reforms to U.S. labor laws since the 1940s. Among the bill’s key provisions, the ERA would implement secret paper ballot elections where employees are periodically allowed to vote on whether to retain union representation.

The bill also forbids unions from using dues for political purposes without receiving written permission from members, and mandates that the union’s representation should also be voted on in cases where a workplace is upended by a merger, expansion or high turnover, in order to determine if that labor union still receives majority employee support.

Earlier versions of the ERA failed to leave the 112th, 113th and 114th Congresses. Hatch re-introduced S.1774 into Congress in September. It currently has 22 co-sponsors, including Sens. Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Ted Cruz (R-TX).

An identical bill, H.R. 2723, was re-introduced in the House this May by Rep. Phil Roe (R-TN).

Washington-based Center for Union Facts, which was founded in 2006, bills itself as a union watchdog devoted to exposing “the truth about labor unions and the pain they impose upon free enterprise.” The nonprofit has been a longtime proponent of right-to-work legislation, which prohibits union representation as a condition for employment.

CUF is one of many front groups founded by lobbyist Richard Berman, a former U.S. Chamber of Commerce labor lawyer who runs Washington, D.C.-based public affairs shop Berman & Co. Berman’s other noted advocacy outfits include nonprofit food coalition the Center for Consumer Freedom and restaurant trade association the American Beverage Institute.

## Jeavons joins B-M’s Impact unit

Kathy Jeavons has joined Burson-Marsteller’s Direct Impact grassroots communications unit as Executive VP.

The veteran communicator worked in George Bush’s White House as Associate Director for Public Liaison and at the Dept. of Energy as PA specialist in its congressional affairs office.

Most recently, Jeavons was Senior VP at Story Partners, handling healthcare, energy, food and nutrition clients. She also did stints at Ketchum, Public Strategies Inc. and Dix & Eaton.

DI President Michael Fleischer called Jeavons a “demonstrated leader in developing and leading multifaceted national and international PA, issue advocacy and reputation campaigns.”



Kathy Jeavons

## Russia's propaganda unit files as foreign agent

Russia's RT global television network, which was fingered by intelligence agencies for seeking to influence U.S. politics, registered Nov. 10 with the Justice Dept. as a foreign agent.

T&R Productions, RT's content supplier, made the registration. It disputed the need to register, saying owner Mikhail Solodovnikov retains sole editorial control over its news, talk shows and entertainment video packages.

The content "merely informs, not influences," according to the filing. T&R said its programs "cover a broad range of topics, reflect balance regarding commentary, and are not aimed to benefit any foreign government or political party."

The Justice Dept.'s national security division is reviewing T&R's filing for both accuracy and sufficiency. ○

## D'Amato reps Somalia

Former New York Republican Senator Al D'Amato is repping terror-torn Somalia in its outreach to Congress and the U.S. Government.

The Islamic State is a growing presence in that Horn of Africa nation, fortified by fighters who fled Syria with the collapse of its forces there.

The U.S. conducted its drone strikes in Somalia in November, with commanders reporting the deaths of "some terrorists." The el-Shabab group, an affiliate of al-Qaida, also is active in Somalia. It was responsible for a truck bombing in Somalia's capital, Mogadishu, in October that killed 350 people.

D'Amato's Park Strategies firm will provide strategic counsel to the Somalis and assesses "relevant policy, economic, and security developments that have implications for the relationship between

the Somali Republic and the U.S.," according to its contract.

The firm will arrange meetings, develop PR and press strategies and report on the "political landscape" to gauge developments that could impact Somalia's ties with the U.S. ○

## Rogue Libyan general retains D.C. lobbyists

The family of Khalifa Haftar, the controversial general commander of the Libyan National Army, has retained Washington lobbying shop Grassroots Political Consulting for U.S. Congressional outreach as well as to provide political and strategic consulting services.

Haftar, who'd lived in exile in the U.S. for decades after leading a failed coup against strongman Col. Muammar Gaddafi, returned to Libya in 2011, where he became a key figure in that country's 2011 NATO-backed rebellion.

As general commander of Libya's national armed forces, Haftar embarked on a comprehensive military campaign to push militants out of the country, which has been torn apart by rival militia groups and terrorists since Gaddafi's ouster.

Libya's new internationally recognized body, the Libyan House of Representatives, appointed Haftar armed forces commander in 2015. The HoR came to power after it defeated Libya's former government, The General National Congress, in a landslide 2014 election.

According to Foreign Agents Registration Acts documents filed in November, GPC will lobby in the U.S. House and Senate to provide a narrative of the political, military and governmental history of Libya as well as to advocate on behalf of Haftar's role in strengthening the future political and multilateral interests of the North African nation. ○

### 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. For a complete list of filings, visit [www.fara.gov](http://www.fara.gov).

**Reston Translator, LLC**, Reston, VA, **registered Nov. 15, 2017 for Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency**, Moscow, Russia, regarding the sale of radio broadcast time for programming.

**Hogan Lovells US LLP**, Washington, D.C., **registered Nov. 3, 2017 for Georgian Oil and Gas Corporation**, Tbilisi, Georgia, to meet with US government officials regarding agreements to exploit and/or develop oil, gas and mineral reserves as well as a contract dispute between the principal and a private entity.

**Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, LLP**, Columbia, SC, **registered Oct. 30, 2017 for The Government of the Republic of Malawi**, Lilongwe, Malawi, to meet with US government officials and members of the US media to promote the news of Government of Malawi's efforts to strengthen its economy, develop a strong educational system and help secure borders.

### Lobbying News



## 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 [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov).

**Blank Rome Government Relations**, Washington, D.C., **registered Nov. 21, 2017 for Computer & Communications Industry Association**, Mountain View, CA, regarding an IRS Free File program.

**Mercury**, Washington, D.C., **registered Nov. 20, 2017 for Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)**, Los Angeles, CA, regarding meetings with key congressional leaders to gather information about the status of the Dream Act.

**Tere International**, Cambridge, MA, **registered Nov. 20, 2017 for The Palestine Institute for Public Diplomacy**, Ramallah, Palestine, regarding raising awareness among the US public about issues in daily life in Palestine.

**Ernst & Young LLP**, Washington, D.C., **registered Nov. 21, 2017 for Aramark Corporation**, Philadelphia, PA, regarding corporate tax reform.

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