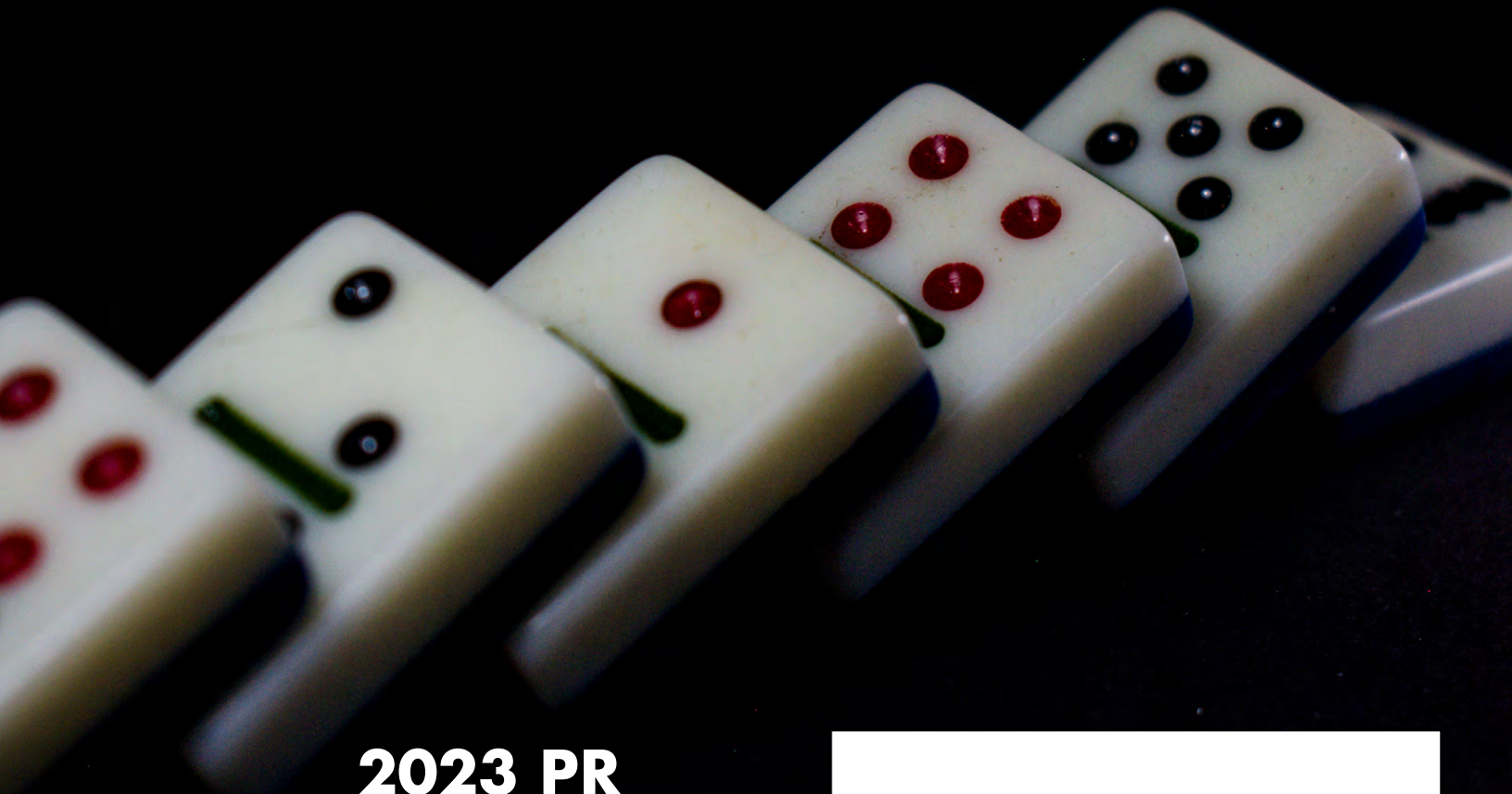


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When crisis threatens an influencer partnership • Crisis management for doctors
Crisis in the documentary era • Adding compassion to the crisis toolkit
What to do when an employee threatens your company's reputation
Why the best companies prepare for crises • Crisis lessons learned from Twitter
Why retail pricing causes product failure • Will ChatGPT rewrite the PR playbook?



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EDITORIAL

DIGITAL EVENTS DOWN, LIVE EVENTS UP IN 2023

As COVID-19 winds down, the move to digital will likely cool off.

LEADERSHIP KEY TO THRIVING IN RECESSION

Thought leadership could help brands survive a looming slowdown.

GOOD RIDDANCE 2022

An overview of the PR highlights—and lowlights—of the past year.

WHEN A CRISIS HITS AN INFLUENCER DEAL

How to plan for a crisis at any stage of a celebrity partnership.

MANAGING REPUTATIONS FOR DOCTORS

Doctors should exercise caution when venturing into social media.

MAKE COMPASSION PART OF YOUR CRISIS TOOLKIT

Stay aware of the stress leaders face in the heat of a crisis.

ON CAMERA: CRISIS IN THE DOCUMENTARY ERA

What to do when your organization is the focus of a documentary.

THE COSTS OF CULTURE FAILURE

Invest in culture to manage risk.

WHAT ARE YOU CHASING IN 2023?

Do your comms plans for the next year focus on the right priorities?

WHEN AN EMPLOYEE IS A REPUTATION THREAT

How to address the impact of an employee's offensive actions.

GIVE CRISIS PREPARATION THOROUGH ATTENTION

Why organizations should be battle-ready for potential crises.

NINE REASONS TO GET A PR AGENCY VALUATION

Does hiring an advisory pro to value your agency pay off?

6

8

9

10

12

14

16

18

20

22

24

26

28

30

32

33

34

35

36

38

40

44

46

56

COLUMNS

54

55

58

TWITTER'S LESSONS FOR CRISIS COMMUNICATORS

How Elon Musk's stumbles can point the way for crisis comms.

NEW YEAR, NEW WORLD, NEW RULES?

Three imperatives to help handle today's crisis ecosystem.

DIVISION ON SOCIAL ROLE BUSINESS SHOULD PLAY

Americans disagree on which issues businesses should address.

WHAT CHATGPT MEANS FOR PR'S FUTURE

How ChatGPT could change PR.

MANAGING A CRISIS LIKE A WORLD CUP GOALIE

The power of being "cool under pressure" and more winning tactics.

IT'S A ROLLUP WORLD

Why more private equity firms are funding and supporting the growth of PR agencies than ever before.

WELCOME BACK TO EVEN MORE UNPREDICTABILITY

A bigger number of problems raises the bar for corporate leaders.

RETAILER PRICING LEADS TO PRODUCT FAILURE

A reluctance to lower prices can mean the end for new products.

PEOPLE IN PR

PROFILES OF CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS FIRMS

WASHINGTON REPORT

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Dominic Rovano

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Fraser Seitel

2023 PR BUYER'S GUIDE



PR BUYER'S GUIDE

2023

58

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EDITORIAL CALENDAR 2023

January: Crisis Comms. / Buyer's Guide

March: Food & Beverage

May: PR Firm Rankings

July: Travel, Tourism & International

August: Financial, I.R. & Prof Services

October: Healthcare & Medical

November: Technology & Social Media

ADVERTISERS

Bospar.....	31
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Crosswind Media & Public Relations.....	21
Dentons Global Advisors.....	3
Edelman.....	42&43
FGSGlobal.....	17
FINN Partners.....	Back Cover
FTI Consulting Strategic Communications.....	29

Gladstone Place Partners.....	Inside Front Cover
G&S Business Communications.....	25
Gould+Partners.....	23
H/AdvisorsAbernathy.....	19
ICR.....	39
Joele Frank.....	45
Karv Communications.....	13
Kekst CNC.....	7

The Levinson Group.....	27
Longacre Square Partners.....	15
Reevemark.....	5
Sitrick And Company.....	49
Sloane & Company.....	41
Stanton.....	37
The Stevens Group.....	8
Tierney.....	9



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Americans split on business' role in social issues

For years now, companies operating in our politically polarized environment have been inculcated by an increasingly conscientious public to the notion that they must take a stance on some of the pressing social, environmental and political challenges facing the world today.

According to a recent report by APCO Worldwide, however, many Americans feel put off when businesses begin preaching politics, and a stark partisan divide arises when it comes to what issues the private sector should try to solve—and how they do it.

APCO's report, which surveyed Americans in an effort to understand their views on Environmental, Social and Governance initiatives and what role they think companies should take in influencing these conversations, put a spotlight on the intense debate surrounding the topic of purpose-driven issues as well as the precarious position in which companies find themselves when navigating today's politically divisive environment.

According to APCO's report, a majority of Americans (82 percent) believe companies should stay out of politics altogether. Instead, most Americans believe the U.S. government is the preferred authority in addressing political issues. For example, 50 percent believe it's the government's responsibility to tackle racial inequality as opposed to businesses (21 percent), 51 percent believe the government is better suited to deal with our ongoing political polarization instead of the private sector (21 percent) and 50 percent believe it's the government's job to fight climate change, not companies (20 percent).

When broken out by political party affiliation, the role Americans think companies should take when it comes to addressing social issues and challenges becomes starkly divided. Among those who identify as Republican or Republican-leaning, 93 percent think companies should focus on providing products and services as opposed to politics, compared to 73 percent of Democrats. More than half (57 percent) of Republicans said they think companies should focus on their core business mission and stay away from current-event issues, while 39 percent of Democrats said they believe companies should speak out, take action or advocate on current events and issues as they relate to their business and in areas where they can make a meaningful difference. Similarly, 40 percent of Republicans think CEOs should stay quiet on current events and issues, compared to only nine percent of Democrats. Democrats, on the other hand, were far more likely (91 percent) to take the view that companies have an important role to play in addressing the major challenges facing society, compared to about two-thirds (66 percent) of Republicans.

Purpose will still continue to drive brand loyalty in 2023

While the private sector's active support of social causes remains a contentious issue, the latest "Relevance Report" released by the USC Annenberg Center for Public Relations discovered that more Americans than ever say they plan to support companies in 2023 that share their values.

USC's annual report found that 60 percent of Americans surveyed want corporations to advocate for causes they care about. Nearly half (44 percent) want corporations to donate to non-profits and 27 percent want them to lobby for regulations and legislation. More than a third (34 percent) want companies to speak out publicly on social issues.

When it comes to the social issues Americans care most about, mental health took the top spot, at 34 percent, followed by abortion (31 percent), education and climate change (both 30 percent), gun legislation (29 percent), healthcare reform (28 percent), racial equality (23 percent) and homelessness (22 percent). Immigration and voting integrity (both 19 percent) gender quality and LGBTQ+ rights (both 12 percent) and police reform (11 percent) bottomed out the list.

Nearly three-quarters (71 percent) of those surveyed also said a company's involvement with social causes at least sometimes influences their purchasing decisions. About the same number (72 percent) said they'd pay more for a product whose brand aligns with their social values, and about a third of those consumers said they'd pay 25 percent or more for that product.

Similarly, while the APCO report discovered that partisanship may influence Americans' opinions on corporate advocacy work, that report still found that most (79 percent) appear to agree that companies *do* have a role to play when it comes to addressing society's most pressing challenges.

The APCO report also found that, regardless of partisan affiliation, Americans widely believe actions speak louder than words. More than three-quarters (78 percent) think making changes via internal policy is the most appropriate response to a current social event or issue, as opposed to external actions such as speaking out on an issue to the media (61 percent). When broken out by party affiliation, Democrats, Republicans and Independents all agreed that taking action internally is preferable to a company simply speaking out on an issue publicly. ●

— Jon Gingerich

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Digital use to slow, in-person events to return in 2023

As the COVID-19 pandemic gradually winds down and travelling and outdoor activities resume, the digital-media consumption frenzy that characterized the last two years will slow somewhat in 2023 while live events and other in-person media activities will rise.

By Jon Gingerich

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in off-the-charts digital media consumption around the world, with people increasing their interaction-time with social media platforms and consuming more content on streaming services, websites and apps than ever before. But growth in that sector appears to be waning, while participation in in-person media activities such as live events is set to increase, according to recent findings from market research firm YouGov.

YouGov's report, which polled respondents around the world regarding their media-consumption habits, found that digital media continued to exhibit the largest upticks in increased consumption during the past 12 months, with more than a third of global respondents claiming they'd spent more time accessing websites, apps, streaming services and interacting with social media in 2022 than they did the year before.

Almost all of those surveyed (95 percent) said they'd visited websites/apps in the last year, and 93 percent said they plan to con-

tinue doing so in 2023. Similarly, 88 percent reported using social media in 2022, and a similar proportion (86 percent) said they're likely to continue this activity next year.

Websites and apps also registered the report's highest "net growth score" in the last year—or the amount a media channel increased in use minus how much it lost during the same period—at 30 percent, followed by streaming video, at 21 percent.

However, the pandemic's historic digital-media surge appears to be winding down. According to YouGov's report, all digital media consumption registered lower projected "net growth" scores for the next 12 months when compared to this year. Web and app use is set to slow from 30 percent growth this year to 18 percent next year. Video streaming appears to have similarly plateaued, and will drop from 21 percent growth in 2022 to 13 percent in 2023. Streaming music is slated to drop from 14 percent growth to 11 percent, social media use will slow from 12 percent growth to seven percent and playing video games are

expected to fall from five percent to one percent.

Meanwhile, in-person media events, which suffered some of the biggest blows during the pandemic, are set to experience something resembling a comeback. While seeing movies at a theater registered a negative "net growth score" of -22 percent this year and attending live events saw a similarly dismal -16 percent, cinemas are expected to see -5 percent "net growth" for the next 12 months, while live events registered -1 percent "net growth" for 2023.

Overall, despite some consumers remaining cautious when it comes to participating in in-person events, 40 percent of global respondents said they plan to attend more live events and make more trips to the cinema in the next year than they did in 2022.

Other forms of traditional media also signaled signs of a rebound, albeit modestly. Reading a newspaper or magazine is expected to swing from -2 percent "net growth" to +1 percent. Listening to the radio is also expected to see a comeback to +1 percent "net growth" from -2 percent.

According to the report: "When comparing the 'net growth' scores for all media activities in the last 12 months, we see a convergence of growth scores between digital and traditional media in terms of likely increased media consumption in the next 12 months, with digital consumption slowing and traditional media, including events and outdoor activities growing."

YouGov's Global Media Outlook report was based on a worldwide survey of more than 19,000 respondents in 18 global markets. Surveys were collected in August. ○



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PR brief

Gladstone supports Weber's go-private bid

Gladstone Place Partners reps Weber Inc.'s special committee of the board that has agreed to be take the outdoor grill maker private via a buyout by BDT Capital Partners.

The transaction implies a \$3.7 billion enterprise value for Weber.

The committee deemed acceptance of BDT Capital's \$8.05 per share offer, which represents a 60 percent premium over Weber's closing stock price prior to the announcement of the deal, to be in the best interest of shareholders.

BDT has been a long-time strategic partner with Weber, which is the leading grill marketer in the US, Germany, Australia, Canada and France.

Weber went public in 2021 with media support from Brunswick Group.

Leadership key to thriving in recession

B2B marketers believe thought leadership will play a vital role in determining which brands survive 2023's looming slowdown.

By Steve Barnes

With an economic slowdown looming as a major possibility for 2023, many B2B marketers say that thought leadership could play a pivotal role in determining which brands weather the storm most successfully.

The “2022 B2B Thought Leadership Impact Report,” a joint effort from Edelman and LinkedIn, says that 62 percent of the C-suite executives who were surveyed are making their plans for next year with the expectation that there will be “a period of economic downturn.”

That expectation could make things tougher for brands that want to do business with them. Almost two-thirds (64 percent) of the C-suite execs said that their companies have made their procurement process more rigorous in anticipation of a challenging economic climate. And nearly half (44 percent) of what the study terms “B2B decision makers” (execs who consume thought leadership and play a major role in the services or products their company acquires) said an economic slump would make them

less receptive to sales calls or marketing outreach.

That tougher environment will hit non-critical goods and services (what the study calls “nice-to-haves rather than must-haves”) hardest, with 55 percent of decision-makers saying any necessary spending cuts would come from those areas.

However, more than nine out of 10 decision-makers (91 percent) say that there are steps “non-critical providers” can take to increase their chances of success in tough economic times.

One of the most effective of those steps? Thought leadership. More than six out of 10 decision-makers (61 percent) said that thought leadership can be more effective at demonstrating the potential value of products/services than “traditional product-oriented marketing.” In addition, half of the C-suite execs (50 percent) said the impact of high-quality thought leadership on purchase decisions actually goes up during economic downturns.

The emphasis there is on “high-quality.”

Respondents said in order to be considered of high quality, thought leadership needs to “offer a strong, data-backed point of view on how to succeed during a downturn.”

That includes such things as identifying new opportunities or industry trends stemming from the downturn (cited by 48 percent), explaining how organizations can do well despite the downturn (44 percent) and demonstrating an understanding of an organization’s major pain points (43 percent).

Some communications basics are also central to putting together a high-quality piece of thought leadership. More than half of decision-makers (51 percent) said thought leadership should be “quick and easy to consume and absorb.” Respondents also said that top-drawer thought leadership should include “robust research and strong supporting data” (49 percent) and “provocative ideas that challenge people’s assumptions” (48 percent).

When it comes to their own thought leadership, 60 percent of respondents said they expect it to keep their brand “top of mind during a downturn.” However, only a third (33 percent) of thought leadership producers rated their own content as “very good or excellent.” ●



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—Abraham Lincoln

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Good riddance 2022

An overview of some of the PR highlights—and a lot of lowlights—covered by *O'Dwyer's* in 2022.

By Kevin McCauley

The invasion of Ukraine, rising interest rates, tumbling stock prices, US/China tensions, an endless flow of refugees at America's southern border and a lingering pandemic combined to make 2022 a year to forget.

The year started off with hopes that COVID-19 would soon be under control and ended with growing fears of a "triple-demic."

As 2022 winds to a close, PR firms are planning for a possible recession in 2023.

Here are some of the PR highlights of 2022.



Andy Polansky

Andy Polansky, CEO of IPG DXTRA and Executive Chairman of Weber Shandwick, announces his plan to retire, wrapping up a nearly 40-year career in marketing communications. "I wanted to leave while there is still a lot of gas in the tank," Polansky, who recently

turned 60, told *O'Dwyer's*.

Jeff Zucker, CNN Worldwide President, resigns due to a "consensual relationship with a colleague." That colleague was Allison Gollust, CMO for CNN.

Declan Kelly, Teneo co-Founder/CEO who resigned in 2021 after he became inebriated at a Global Citizen event and engaged in inappropriate behavior, reemerges. He launched Consello, a Madison Avenue advisory focused on merchant banking, corporate development and mergers and acquisitions.

BGR Government Affairs cut its relationship with Nord Stream 2 AG, the company behind construction of a pipeline between Germany and Russia, after President Biden sanctioned it on Feb. 23 following Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

Everett Eissenstat, who was Senior VP for Global Public Policy at General Motors, joins Edelman Global Advisory as North America Chair and Global Trade lead. He will help clients navigate government policies and geopolitical dynamics to achieve their business objectives. At

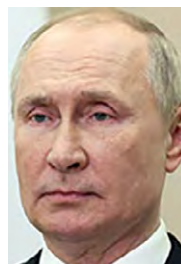


Everett Eissenstat

GM, Eissenstat reported to CEO Mary Barra.

Ronn Torossian steps down as CEO of 5W Public Relations after various reports that he secretly owned a news site and used it to hammer competitive firms. "I have become a distraction and the team deserves the freedom to operate in a context free of noise—noise I personally created," he wrote in an internal memo acquired by *O'Dwyer's*. Torossian will serve as Chairman of the New York-based firm that he founded in 2002.

WPP pulls out of Russia due to Vladimir Putin's decision to invade Ukraine. The ad/PR holding company, which has nearly 1,400 people in Russia, thanked them for their service to clients. It promised to work closely with clients during the winddown of operations.



Vladimir Putin

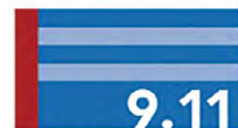
Americans largely believe the tech industry has had a positive impact on their lives, but they also distrust social media companies, according to a poll from insights and analytics company Ipsos. The report found that nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of U.S. adults believe the tech industry positively affects their lives, while only 45 percent said they trust these social media platforms.

U.S. prosecutors have charged Elena Branson, who chaired the New York-based Russian Community Council of the USA, with acting and conspiring to be an agent of the Russian government and willfully failing to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act. She also is charged with conspiring to commit visa fraud and making false statements to the FBI. The 61-year-old Branson is a dual US/Russian citizen.

Trust plays a major role in consumer decisions about vaccine compliance and preventive care, according to a study from Edelman. The study also found that the level of confidence in the healthcare system took a hit in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Edelman's "Trust Barometer Special Report on Health" found that more than half (52 percent) of respondents said that the pandemic had lowered their confidence level in healthcare.

Congressman Don Beyer introduces a bill to support online literacy and educate Americans on how to spot disinformation and misinformation. The Educating Against Misinformation and Disinformation Act is inspired by a program in Finland that teaches students from K-12 to identify propaganda from neighboring Russia.

The World Trade Center Health Program, which



WTC Health Program

was established after the 9/11 terror attacks, issues an RFP for outreach and education services aimed at underrepresented populations of survivors and responders who may not be aware of the benefits they are entitled to. An estimated 400,000 people in NYC were impacted by the dust cloud caused by the collapse of the WTC.

The number of journalists who see CEOs and company PR professionals as credible sources has dropped in the past year, according to a survey from Muck Rack. While 84 percent of respondents said CEOs were credible sources for their reporting in 2021, that number slid to 66 percent in 2022. Company PR pros also saw a decline from 55 percent to 50 percent in the latest survey.

ExxonMobil hires Matt Furman as VP-Public and Government Affairs. He replaces Suzanne McCarron, who is retiring after a 24-year run. Furman joins the energy giant from BestBuy, where he had been Chief Communications and Public Affairs Officer since 2012.

Ruder Finn acquires Peppercomm, a firm that reported \$9.2 million in 2021 fee income for the 58th slot on *O'Dwyer's* rankings of PR firms. Peppercomm's 29 employees in New York, San Francisco and London handle accounts such as Dole Sunshine Co., MINI Cooper, Xero and trivago. The firm, which is led by Steve Cody, is noted for its "Change Agent" humor-led training programs.



Kathy Bloomgarden and Steve Cody

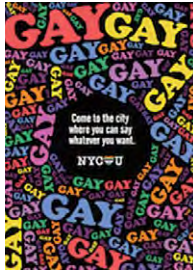
BCW names Mary Corcoran President, North America, effective May 1. She joins BCW from Real Chemistry, where

— Continued on next page

she ran the Twist operating company and served as RC's Chief Client Officer.

Kristina Schake, who was Joe Biden's COVID-19 PR chief, joins Walt Disney Co. as Executive VP-Global Communications after wrapping up a 10-month stint as the Biden administration's COVID-19 Public Education Campaign Director. She took that post after serving as communications specialist for Barack and Michelle Obama's Higher Ground Productions.

WPP's BCW, H+K Strategies, VM-ly&R, Group W and Kinetic donate creative and advertising space for New York mayor Eric Adams' move to run digital billboards in Florida to denounce the "Don't Say Gay" law.



Publicis Groupe's Arthur Sadoun says Q1 revenues jumped 17.1 percent to \$3 billion, driven by a robust demand for its Publicis Sapient and Epsilon digital offerings. Organic growth rose 10.5 percent compared to a 2.8 percent year-ago increase.

Seth Faison, who did a five-year stint as Managing Director of Sitrick And Company's New York office, joins Brunswick Group as partner in its freshly minted China hub. Prior to working at Mike Sitrick's Los Angeles-based crisis shop, Faison headed the New York Times's Shanghai bureau and served as Beijing correspondent for the South China Morning Post.



John Wren

Omnicom CEO John Wren reported a 0.5 percent dip in Q1 2022 revenues to \$3.4 billion and a 24.2 percent decline in operating profit to \$353 million. He cited the negative impact of foreign currency translations and drop in acquisition revenue, net of disposition revenues

for the lackluster performance.

Finn Partners inks \$1.3 million six-month contract with the Ministry of Presidential Affairs for the United Arab Emirates to develop a communications strategy designed to bolster the image of the Gulf State.

Tony Podesta works to assure the Biden administration, Congress and the U.S. media that the Government of Libya is committed to conducting free and fair elections. Libya's first presidential election was scheduled for Dec. 24, 2021, but failed to take place as rival factions could not

agree on the political framework required to conduct the vote.

WPP reports 8.1 percent Q1 growth to \$3.2 billion in like-for-like revenues due to strong demand for its digital media, e-commerce, data and marketing technology offerings. CEO Mark Read boosted overall 2022 guidance from five percent to 5.5 percent to the 6.5 percent level due to the strong start of the year and continued momentum.

Russell Dubner, who exited as Edelman Vice Chairman in December 2021 after a 28-year run at the firm, joins the Boston Consulting Group as Senior Partner/Global Communications.

Ruder Finn acquires Comunicad LLC, an Arlington, VA-based multicultural shop that has served clients such as Ford, Verizon, Telemundo, American Airlines, Freddie Mac, PepsiCo, AARP and Molson Coors.



Karine Jean-Pierre

Karine Jean-Pierre succeeds Jen Psaki as White House Press Secretary on May 13 to become the first Black and openly gay person to hold that position.

New York Republican Congressman Tom Reed steps down from Congress and joins BCW's Prime Policy Group government relations shop as Vice Chairman. Reed announced his decision to quit seven months before the end of his term from the floor of the House.

Huntsworth Communications, which includes Grayling, Citigate Dewe Rogerson, Red and Circle, rebrands as Accordience.

BGR Group agrees to a \$2.1 million contract to represent the Muslim World League, which calls itself the global voice on moderate Islam. Saudi Arabia is a leading contributor to the MWL, which is based in the kingdom.

Embattled Wells Fargo has named Amy Bonitatibus CCO and brand officer She reports to vice chairman Bill Daley and handles duties once held by former Ketchum CEO Barri Rafferty, who was hired in June 2020.

Edelman signs a one-year \$800,000 contract to provide PR services to Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Culture, which plans a crucial role in delivering on Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's "Vision 2030" transformation program.



Moderna awards its global corporate

PR duties to DXTRA Health, a collective of more than 1,500 staffers housed within Interpublic shops. A cross-disciplined group from Weber Shandwick, Golin and Jack Health will work to bolster the corporate reputation of the COVID-19 vaccine maker and spotlight its research savvy. Moderna had used FTI Consulting and Ruder Finn for PR.

Longacre Square Partners handles communications for the reorganization of Revlon, which filed for Chapter 11 in US Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York.

Brian Bartlett, who served in George W. Bush's White House and co-founded the Rational 360 shop, joins Kekst CNC to open its Washington office.

The Justice Dept. opens probe of Digital World Acquisition Corp., the blank check company that plans to take Donald Trump's social media platform public. The Securities and Exchange also is investigating DWAC.



Julie Hamp

Julie Hamp, who resigned her position as Chief Communications Officer of Toyota in 2015 after being arrested in Japan on suspicion of drug charges, returns to the automaker.

Matt McKenna, who was spokesperson for President Bill Clinton, signs on at The Levinson Group as a senior advisor.

Finn Partners adds SPAG, an 85-member healthcare shop that has offices throughout Asia.

Interpublic's Q2 net revenues grew 4.7 percent to \$2.4B as CEO Philippe Krakowsky reports gains across all regions, client sectors and operating units.

Ridgely Walsh, which was founded by the well-connected D.C. Republican PA consultant Juleanna Glover, provides PR and media work for Ukraine on a volunteer basis.

FTI Consulting's PR group registers 6.2 percent Q2 growth as its reputation, crisis, cyber and litigation segments post solid performances.

WPP chief Mark Read says its 8.7 percent 1H growth was driven in part by a resurgence in demand for strategic communications at its H+K Strategies, BCW and Ogilvy units.

BerlinRosen acquires a majority stake in Derris, a brand consultancy that has launched direct-to-consumer brands such as Warby Parker and Everlane. It has 65 staffers in New York and 10 in London.

— Continued on page 33

When crisis threatens an influencer-deal partnership

How to plan for a crisis before, during and after a partnership with a celebrity.

By Eric Yaverbaum

2022 brought no shortage of high-profile crises for brands and celebrities alike.

Under Elon Musk's thumb, Twitter has been marred by continual controversy, including imposter Twitter accounts buying verified status and pretending to be brands—a subscription service that later relaunched with a higher price tag—and at one point, Musk even mentioning bankruptcy. From an internal operations standpoint, Musk can anticipate arbitration cases en masse from his sudden and abrupt staff layoffs.

Worst of all? Musk's takeover brought about an instantaneous rise in hate speech on Twitter that's downright dangerous. Unchecked, hate speech online can lead to real-life violence, and arguably, from the Colorado Club shooting to threats directed at synagogues to highly misrepresented data on hate crimes, it's not hard to see it already has.

Hate speech isn't stopping at random trolls on Twitter either. Kanye West (Ye) has been progressively falling into an antisemitic web, spewing nonstop hate on whatever media platform that will have him. While the rapper has since been suspended from Twitter and Clubhouse, he's still getting unfiltered airtime on shows like Tucker Carlson. Ye has an audience of millions he can spread his ideas to, and his words can lead to real-life violence.

Ye and Musk haven't gotten off scot-free. Brands such as Adidas, Gap, Balenciaga, JP Morgan Chase, CAA and Foot Locker, among others, have all dropped Ye. Not to mention Balenciaga, General Motors, Eli Lilly and Playbill have all left Twitter, and the platform had to offer incentives in order to get advertisers back on board. These aren't the only examples of brands ending an influencer deal due to hate speech, or vice versa. Nike terminated its deal with Kyrie Irving after the NBA player promoted an antisemitic film on Twitter. Kim Kardashian put out a statement regarding her work with Balenciaga after the brand released abhorrent ads related to child abuse and safety.

Brands are facing a widespread conundrum that is really just getting started. If a company partners with the wrong celebrity or influencer, they're leaving themselves wide open to public criticism and potential crisis. Just look at Adidas, the company got slammed in the media and its stock took a hit for not acting soon enough after Ye's antisemitic remarks and it stands to lose millions from pulling its Yeezy line.

So, how do brands work with celebrities and influencers while avoiding a significant media crisis should they find themselves entwined with the wrong person? The first step seems obvious, yet isn't always so simple, and that's doing due diligence on whoever you plan to partner with. Just like when choosing a brand name or company identifier, a company must do research to ensure the person they're choosing to work with isn't going to offend or alienate audiences. Likewise, brands should consult with experts and leaders of various interest groups and marginalized communities. Companies must try to do everything in their power to make sure they aren't about to team up with someone harmful to the safety of others and subsequently to their brand.

Whether or not a brand is international, the Internet is a global place, meaning the reach of advertising, marketing and communications materials will be global in most cases. And with the rise of what folks like to call "cancel culture"—or what I just call the consequences of your actions—it's now more important than ever for brands to be mindful of their audiences and their varying perspectives. Of course, it's impossible to account for everyone's sensitivities, but ensuring that you're avoiding association with hateful words or actions by vetting a partnership to a variety of people prior to release can help avoid disastrous missteps. I can't stress this enough: crisis communications is something you invest in before a crisis ever has a chance to happen, not after. Your strategy needs to be proactive, not just reactive so you can prevent needless and costly disasters.

That said, regardless of how much planning and research you do ahead of time, it's still possible to do your due diligence—and partner with a scandal-free celebrity—only to find yourself entangled in a crisis because of their actions down the line. Working with influencers and celebrities will always pose some level of risk, and mistakes happen. We're all human, after all. Yet, there are ways to prevent or lessen public backlash if a partnership turns out to be a liability.

One of those crucial tactics is keeping your finger on the pulse of the celebrities your brand is working with—so you're tapped into public opinion and aren't taken by surprise—and act quickly should a crisis begin taking root. The second there's wind of a partner beginning to act erratically or say problematic things, start evaluating your options. Should a partner begin

spreading hate speech, it's already well past time to end your work with them. Take Adidas, for instance; the brand's most bewildering mistake was waiting so long to speak up. In actuality, Ye had been displaying and was already infamous for his erratic, troubling behavior going back years, and enormous, glaring red flags had already been raised. So, it's hard to believe Adidas was genuinely surprised by the highly predictable progression of Ye's behavior, and I'm baffled by the brand's prior lack of response and planning. Years of burying its head in the sand aside, in regard to Ye's more recent comments, Adidas made a grave error by choosing not to speak up immediately. Timing is always critical in a PR crisis, but it's even more vital when dealing with dangerous rhetoric and hate speech, behavior that so blatantly crosses what should be an uncrossable line. Not immediately incorporating and addressing negative feedback can lead to a crisis in any situation. However, in the case of hate speech, missing the initial window of denouncing the actions of a celebrity, influencer or brand you're working with can lead to serious, lasting repercussions.



Eric Yaverbaum

While it really shouldn't have ever gotten to this point, even if a company makes the mistake of not immediately speaking up—as Adidas did—it isn't necessarily the end for the brand. There's still an opportunity to speak out as long as it's done in a timely and thoughtful manner, and in a way that owns up and apologizes for the situation—including the delayed response. This includes taking responsibility, expressing genuine remorse, holding accountability and having an action plan detailing how to prevent making the mistake again in the future. Acknowledgment, responsibility, honesty and transparency will go a long way.

After what we saw in 2022, partnering with a celebrity, influencer or even a brand in 2023 can seem like a scary thought. But it doesn't have to be. As long as brands do their research, act quickly and own up to any potential wrongdoing, it can go a long way to solving a crisis. This year will be a new year for brand opportunities, and, hopefully, one that builds on kindness in our world, not on hate.

After what we saw in 2022, partnering with a celebrity, influencer or even a brand in 2023 can seem like a scary thought. But it doesn't have to be. As long as brands do their research, act quickly and own up to any potential wrongdoing, it can go a long way to solving a crisis. This year will be a new year for brand opportunities, and, hopefully, one that builds on kindness in our world, not on hate.

Eric Yaverbaum is CEO of Ericho Communications. He's also author of the industry-standard bestseller, "PR for Dummies," as well as "Leadership Secrets of the World's Most Successful CEOs." ○

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Reputation management for doctors

It's important for medical practices to have an active social media presence, but doctors should approach social media carefully, as they can quickly become vulnerable to a wide range of reputational risks when posting medical advice or information online.

By Alaina Chiappone

As a medical professional, your reputation is critical. In the past, people typically judged physicians by their medical degree or bedside manner. In the age of social media, however, consumers tend to look more at your online persona. That persona is formed by what you post about yourself online and what your patients say about you as a result of the content you share.

Like it or not, your online presence impacts how people evaluate your professional reputation. Reports reveal online reviews are a significant factor in patients choosing a healthcare provider. When reviews give patients a reason to doubt your professional reputation, they take their business elsewhere. In addition, patients draw conclusions about your professional competence based on your private social media.

Whether or not you're trying to grow your brand with healthcare-related content on social media, it's crucial to audit your online persona regularly and curate it in a way that best showcases your expertise as a medical professional. Taking charge of your personal and professional social media branding is a weighty responsibility, but one that every healthcare professional must accept.

Weighing the benefits, pitfalls of social media for physicians

Social media platforms are powerful tools for professionals in the healthcare industry, so don't take them lightly. Through social feeds, you can share valuable information with thousands. You can alert your patients and the community at large to current health concerns, confront societal stigmas in areas such as mental health and addiction and even inspire hope by sharing stories of recovery.

You can also leverage the power of social media to grow your medical practice. When you post medical information online, you open yourself open to a wide range of risks. As a medical professional, be careful not to offer medical advice over social media. Within the walls of your office, you prescribe medical action based on what you know about your patient. On social media, you're talking to thousands of people, and you do not always have the same luxury to provide medical recommendations.

Because comments on social media can so easily be taken out of context, consider

everything you say from a variety of angles before posting. If you're in doubt about how any medical information you offer will be interpreted on social media, it's always better to err on the side of caution.

In addition, posting content to social media opens you to the risk of violating patient privacy. Medical standards and laws prevent you from revealing information about your patients' conditions and procedures which, if violated, will result in one or more HIPAA violations.

For this reason, you must always obtain permission directly from patients before posting a photo of them on social media. That permission has to come via written consent on a legal document. Before you take a picture, explain honestly to the patient why you want the photo and where you plan to share it. If your patient says "no," leave it at that.

Consult your practice's legal department before posting pictures or videos portraying a patient's condition. They should either have consent forms drafted for this purpose or will be able to point you toward an attorney who can help. If your patients provide written consent, remember to mention personal information such as names or birthdates on the content you share.

Tips to guide medical professionals as they approach social media

Your posts on social media both have the potential to build your practice or cause long-lasting damage. To protect your online reputation as a medical professional, I recommend the following three tips:

When in doubt, keep it professional. Treat every post—even those on your personal channels—with the highest professional standards. As a healthcare professional, you don't have the luxury of casually clicking "submit" on a social media platform. Before making a post, ensure that it adheres to your practice's social media guidelines, as well as the professional standards set by regulatory bodies like the FTC. Your personal Facebook page and Instagram feed aren't the places to rant about patients, colleagues, supervisors or the medical profession in general.

Also, try to view your post in the light of your patients. Remember that your patients come from a wide range of backgrounds and all have their own unique perspectives. Pic-

tures on your personal social media of you drinking alcohol, goofing off with friends or venting about current events could be seen by the public, even if you have tighter privacy settings. Once something is posted on the Internet, it should be considered permanent. Even personal posts without any medical content have the power to impact your professional career.

Verify all medical information before sharing it online.

As a medical professional, be sure to always vet information carefully and avoid sharing any facts you cannot confirm. We all witnessed the flood of medical information churned out by social media during the pandemic. These posts garnered millions of views, even though the treatments and recommendations were unsupported by medical research. A media backlash will be more damaging to your online reputation than any immediate boost in engagement or views. Rather than rushing to post medical information, personally verify everything you share.

Whether professional or personal, consistency is key. Always weigh the risks of posting content to social media. If you're posting personal content to private channels, bear in mind that there's always a very real possibility of that content going public. Consider how each personal post aligns with your professional brand. If you're posting professional content to brand yourself and grow your practice, clearly define your strategy and consider every post in light of this strategy. Consistency will help you build a strong online reputation over time.

How to manage an online crisis

No plan is foolproof when it comes to social media. If you see signs of a reputation management crisis brewing, you need to act quickly. Reports show that just one negative online article costs a brand 22 percent of its clients on average.

When things go wrong on social media, they go wrong quickly. Just as patients come to you for medical expertise when they're sick or injured, ask a public relations specialist for assistance when your online reputation suffers. A PR firm can help you accumulate positive reviews and leverage them to find new patients, enable you to overcome negative press and strategize to mitigate the damage.

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Alaina Chiappone



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Adding self-awareness, compassion to the crisis toolkit

Crisis counselors would be well-served to keep in mind the stress and other psychological effects leaders face when under extreme public pressure.

By Anne Green

In May of 2010, BP's then-CEO uttered what must've become one of the most infamous phrases in the annals of crisis communications: "There is no one who wants this over more than I do. I would like my life back."

The leader in question, Tony Hayward, already had a reputation for making cringe-inducing declarations, as a *Fortune* reporter observed that year. In the context of the large-scale—and, at the time, still unresolved—environmental disaster represented by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, these remarks felt unforgivably self-centered and tone-deaf. This is far from what any senior crisis counselor would want to hear coming from the lips of their CEO or client lead.

Yet, even as the communications leader in me indeed cringed, I was struck by a deeper truth worth exploring: that the comment was made by a person in pain.

In this case, two things were true at once. Hayward's comments were the precise opposite of the kind of public-facing leadership required in a crisis. And Hayward was experiencing something personally and intensely challenging and likely quite painful. When his comment hit the press, my first thought was "I can't believe he said that!" My second was, "Wow, what a nakedly honest response."

I share this anecdote not to advocate for that kind of radical and, frankly, misplaced honesty. Far from it. What interests me—and should interest anyone providing counsel to leaders in challenging times—is the humanity of this moment.

Hayward's comment was profoundly revealing of the psychological landscape of individuals under extreme public pressure, especially if that individual is the ultimate locus of organizational accountability. Clichés like "it's lonely at the top" or, if you prefer something more Shakespearean, "uneasy is a head that wears a crown" ring true in these moments. We'd be well-served as crisis experts to remember this.

Too often, our crisis discussions are focused on more "practical" or operational issues. How to develop a thorough yet flexible crisis plan? Who should be tapped as members of a matrixed crisis response team? How can companies avoid the pitfall of their crisis plan gathering dust on the metaphorical shelf through a clear action plan and proactive cadence of crisis team

meetings? Why do so many organizations miss holding debriefs to refine plans once a crisis is mitigated? How do we train our top spokesperson to withstand the pressure of the moment? And so on.

These are all vital and necessary questions. The best—and only—crisis plan worth having is one that's consistently reviewed, refined and acted on. Yet, when we focus the lion's share of our attention on tangible to dos, or reduce this work to a series of "quick tips," we miss the rest of the iceberg. There are layers of complexity beneath the surface, most of which are linked to hard factors to pin down: personal resilience, how we individually process information, the capacity for empathy and mutual compassion and the tangle of emotions that rise when we face adversity.

I say "we" because I'm speaking not just of the leaders we counsel, but also of "us" as the counselors. Here are a few thoughts on how to deepen one's engagement with the human side of our crisis work.

Actively cultivate a deeper awareness of yourself and others. The middle of a major crisis situation is not the time to reflect on how you or your senior leader process information, what triggers your best—or worst—behaviors or whether either of you lean into bad habits like snap decision-making when under pressure. This kind of self-awareness should be actively and consistently cultivated. And not just for yourself, but also relative to your team and organizational or client leaders. Opening the floor for proactive conversations about personal tendencies, strengths, weaknesses and how each person reacts to different types of pressure will build a strong foundation from which to manage dynamic crisis situations.

Don't mistake toughness for resilience. In a 2007 *Harvard Business Review* article titled "Realizing What You're Made Of," author Glenn E. Mangurian observed: "Resilience is one of the key qualities desired in business leaders today, but many people confuse it with toughness." Mangurian noted that while toughness can help leaders cope in the short term with the negative consequences of difficult decisions, it's also an armor that can cut that leader off from their emotions as well as from others. Those potential outcomes are net-negative when confronting a breaking crisis. He defines resilience, by contrast, as an ability to not deflect but absorb challenges and rebound

stronger than before. This is a particularly salient quality in today's world which is ever more volatile, unpredictable and resistant to "plans."

Lean into empathy and mutual compassion. Hayward's quote shone a spotlight on the tendency to revert to "I" in moments of pain or uncertainty. Even the most gracious or committed leader can fall into this trap, as can the most experienced crisis counselor. It takes intention and energy to step back from oneself in times of trouble and actively lean into curiosity and empathy for what others are experiencing. Crisis experts are accustomed to seeking to view a crisis through the eyes of all stakeholders. Yet it's less common to turn that empathic—and, ideally, compassionate—lens toward the leader who stands in the harshest of spotlights. What are they feeling right now? How is this experience hitting them? And would your simple acknowledgment that "This is hard and I'm sorry for that" connect you more deeply with them as a person, so you can work more effectively as a team?

Insist on moments for mindfulness. There's a lot of talk about mindfulness and what outcomes it may provide for individuals, teams or organizations. But it doesn't require an active meditation practice to recognize the importance of taking a breath amid managing an active crisis scenario. As much as speed is core to this work, so is slowing down. Time and space are required to fully assess the latest information and come to the best decision. This includes advocating for moments when everyone on the team stops, takes a full and quiet breath, and steps away from "doing" into "reflecting." A moment of mindfulness can help thwart action bias, lead to better decision making and keep you connected as a team.

We can never stray too far from the vital operational elements that help us effectively manage even the most challenging situations. Yet, by cultivating greater self-awareness and compassion, and leaning into the more "human" side of crisis management, we can foster better outcomes for all stakeholders while forging stronger relationships with leaders and our teams as a whole. We must also gauge the stress on our leaders and make sure that before they go in front of the public or press, they're in the right mind space for the moment.

Anne Green is Principal and Managing Director at G&S Business Communications. ○



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Now streaming: crisis in the documentary era

What to do when your organization becomes the subject of a high-profile documentary.

By Rachel Rosenblatt and Liz Janisse

We're living in the era of the documentary, a time when [insert favorite streaming service here] has the scoop on cults, tigers, murder mysteries and even threats to corporate reputations.

Today, there are more than 50 different streaming services in North America alone, all competing for subscribers and ad spend with sought-after original content.

Considering the time spent binge-watching TV increased dramatically due to the global pandemic, there are captive viewers around the world eagerly anticipating the next talked-about documentary or multipart docuseries. And the engaging, dynamic style of the end product has the potential to make an impact: The leading documentary is poignantly scored, with dynamic visuals and a strategically interwoven narrative that can bring an audience to its knees—and your company's reputation right along with it.

Rather than institutional leadership and traditional media driving the narrative about companies and their legacies, in the case of high-profile documentaries, the masses are brought in to “see for themselves”—serving as both judge and jury for unsolved mysteries, open murder cases and corporate scandals alike, with a curated set of facts and perspectives presented in a fashion that allows the audience to draw its own conclusions about fact versus fiction.

In 2023, companies need to ask themselves: What do we do when our organization is in the crosshairs of a compelling, high-profile documentary?

Understanding the ask

With the demand for content at an all-time high, inquiries can take a variety of forms, with diverse teams made up of freelancers, producers, investigative reporters and independent filmmakers. It's important to dig deep and understand the ask coming from documentarians to get a sense of the form, reach and nature of the end product—attributes that will no doubt shape your opportunity to engage.

At the end of the day, your communications team isn't drafting the storyboard or weighing in on the final cut. How do you make the decision whether to participate in a documentary project when you know the outcome is likely just varying degrees

of reputational damage for your organization? It's a difficult decision to make, and one in which there will never be a clear right or wrong answer.

Research and readiness are vital to the initial response. When assessing an inquiry, it's important to consider factors like:

- **Credentials:** What past work are these filmmakers and/or journalists known for? What examples of their past work can you find and watch—noting tone, overall approach and interview style?

- **Stage in the process:** Where do the creators stand in the process? Are they putting out initial feelers, or have they already conducted many interviews?

- **Distribution channel:** What, if any, streaming platforms or outlets have the documentary makers been engaging with? What is the reach and profile of these forums?

Laying the foundation

The potential impact of a talked-about documentary cannot be overstated. This is the intersection of mainstream media and multichannel entertainment with a strong potential to prompt social media discussion and scrutiny from stakeholders alike.

That's exactly why it's important to get in front of the documentary topics before it hits viewers' screens—lay a foundation, a “pre-buttal,” to prime your stakeholders and develop the proof points needed to share your side of the story.

Spokespeople selection

If you do make the decision to put forward a spokesperson, the ideal choice for a documentary must have expertise in the relevant focus areas and is prepared to balance candor and animation with restraint and the careful delivery of key messages. Preparation and robust media training—along with a level of comfort in public speaking—are all significant factors.

In some instances, offering multiple spokespeople can be helpful in ensuring diverse representation and maximizing your chances of avoiding the cutting room floor. Consider the likelihood your speaker will make the final cut, the risks of expanding your presence in the end product, your ability to address reactive topics head-on and how a corporate presence lends credence to the narrative.

Crisis preparedness and planning

Scenario-planning efforts should be un-

dertaken to understand the risk of blowback from investors, employees, business partners and other key audiences. Your reactive communications strategy must anticipate stakeholder concerns and address them head-on—all while remaining nimble, prepared to deliver your messaging across a range of platforms as needed.

Give particular attention to how you can best influence the media narrative going into and throughout the release. Whatever the issue at stake, make certain your organization has a strong narrative to combat the reputational threats—complete with compelling data points, powerful messaging and the right delivery.

Managing expectations

In these circumstances, it becomes necessary for us to redefine success. Your corporation may not come out on the other side of a documentary exposé completely unscathed, but in many cases, you can affect the outcome—sharing your narrative, acting in transparency and, above all, demonstrating empathy.

Roll the credits

Between a captive, streaming-obsessed audience and a wave of competition in entertainment services, we're living in the era of the documentary. Corporations must be prepared to engage with documentary inquiries to ensure the perspectives of corporate leaders are represented.

While this distinctive medium certainly poses unique challenges, when leveraged properly, a documentary can serve as a significant opportunity to refine your issues management approach and reinforce your organization's narrative.

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Rachel Rosenblatt



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The costs of culture failure

How companies can invest in culture to manage risk and prevent future crises.

By Elizabeth Cholis

Scores of advisors, meetings, hours and approvals have historically gone into developing an organization's crisis plan, with many left bound on a shelf untouched and unproven. These days, organizations are making better, if still erratic, commitments to implementing more sophisticated crisis plans by investing in technology to help better anticipate and manage issues and keeping plans and leaders nimble through simulation drills. However, many companies still fail to embed the collective responsibility of crisis management across the organization, unfairly leaving it up to a chosen few to cover the waterfront of risk.

It's becoming increasingly important to take a culture-driven approach to crisis preparedness, regardless of the industry. Organizations of all sorts should take a page from businesses with robust operational risk by establishing risk mitigation mindsets, tying preparedness and risk mitigation to business objectives and building a company-wide culture around it.

Components of a crisis-ready and risk-oriented culture

Organizations can encourage employees to take ownership of risk mitigation and better manage issues that arise by:

- Defining "crisis" in a meaningful way with clearly delineated crisis severity levels and specific examples relevant to both the company and an individual's role.
- Demonstrating how issues evolve and escalate.
- Showing employees how to identify issues, how they can be mitigated, and when and how they should be escalated.
- Making risk management part of a job description, with roles and responsibilities clearly defined.
- Conducting regular trainings to keep themes and protocols fresh in employees' minds and to address new and evolving industry and company dynamics.
- Ensuring crisis plans and trainings reach across functions and teams.
- Developing incentive schemes to promote a risk-free working culture.

Implications of culture failures

There's a lot at stake. We've all heard of or witnessed the impact of a failed culture, including:

- Low morale and employee turnover.
- Defective products or services and the resulting loss of customer loyalty.
- Fines, stock price impact and bankruptcy.

- Regulatory scrutiny and sanctions.
- Significant, long-lasting reputational damage.

Boeing and Volkswagen experienced many of these implications as they navigated recent crises, and their culture failures came to light. In Boeing's case, a 117-page internal document the company provided to Congress revealed much about its culture, including how senior employees questioned the competence of their own colleagues and the quality of the company's engineering without raising a flag. Similarly, government and shareholder lawsuits called out Volkswagen executives who'd claimed ignorance of emissions oversights and cited the deeper culture issues at play.

With those examples and the costs of culture failure in mind, business leaders along with the legal, risk and communications functions should be viewing their operational priorities through a culture lens—with crisis readiness, risk awareness, culture of compliance—and acting with culture and company values—like ESG and social impact—in mind. Now more than ever, we're seeing generational shifts in how people care about the type of company they work for, the standards to which they hold their company and their comfort level speaking out about concerns or injustices, particularly on social media. There's both inherent risk and opportunity in this generational investment in a company's operations.

Of course, building or changing a culture is no small feat, and it helps to know the keys to success in advance.

A holistic, enterprise-wide approach

Everyone—not just those in leadership positions—has a role to play in identifying and mitigating threats and protecting the company's reputation and its ability to operate. Moreover, cultural expectations, and how a company communicates these expectations, need to be so pervasive and engrained in the company's operations that they become a natural part of how people think and make decisions every day. To achieve this, companies must dedicate resources and ensure the functions and business units most often involved in risk and crisis management—such as legal, communications, compliance, ESG and HR—are aligned. From there, leaders should include and train other personnel to consider how seemingly routine issues may have broader, enterprise-wide implications. Cutting

a corner on a safety check can result in an injured customer, not adhering to auditing best practices can result in shareholder loss, not understanding local regulations can result in the inability to operate in that market, turning a blind eye to harassment can result in morale decline and employee defection and so on. Ensuring personnel feel confident in their ability to identify and escalate these issues can help mitigate crises in the long run.

Behavioral modeling from the top ... and middle

Consistent and intentional behavior modeling from the top is imperative to setting the tone for culture within an organization.

Employees across organizations look up to leaders as examples of how to behave and exemplify the company's values. But it's just as critical that managers at all levels—not just the top—are committed to modeling the behavior on a daily basis.

For example, creating a "safety moment" at the beginning of all meetings has been a simple and effective tool for leaders at any level to instill the concept that safety comes before all else.

Additionally, these leaders must ensure that toxic subcultures aren't allowed to thrive. In another well-known example of culture failure, Wells Fargo admitted that employees trying to meet excessive sales targets opened millions of customer accounts without customer consent and by misusing identities, revealing a subculture within the bank that prized financial performance over compliance and ethical conduct.


Ownership and accountability

In the end, it comes down to individual choices and decisions. Two keys to getting someone to invest in a perspective and behave in a certain way are ownership and accountability. Employees at all levels in an organization need to understand the role they're expected to play, as well as the benefits of meeting those expectations—and the consequences of not. This is when communicating the business imperative of risk identification and mitigation, complying with laws and regulations and effectively managing issues is critical. In court testimony, a former Volkswagen manager blamed company culture for his and others' complicity in the emissions scandal and said he would have acted differently if he



Elizabeth Cholis

— Continued on page 23



When two lightning bolts hit the Hudson River and perfectly framed One World Trade Center during a thunderstorm on July 6, 2020, photographer Gary Hershorn was ready.
Gary Hershorn/Getty Images

Lightning Can Strike Twice. Be Prepared.

Crosswind's Crisis Preparation & Response+ (CPR+) methodology is focused on an active, pre-crisis engagement that paves the way for rapid, organized and smooth crisis response and reputation enhancement before, during and after crisis strikes.

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What are you chasing in 2023?

As corporate communicators plan for the next year, are you focused on the right priorities?

By Gary Grates

It's planning time and with it, the opportunity to assess the business landscape, your organization's strategic intent, and your workforce's capability to perform against unwavering pressure, ambiguity, and uncertainty.

For so many corporate communications functions, the planning cycle becomes a rote exercise updating numbers, objectives, initiatives, and metrics for the coming year.

Yet, the real value in annual planning lies in identifying the one true north star—what are you chasing?

Sizing up 2022

Each year provides a pathway to the future. A portal to propel the organization forward via strong, sophisticated, strategic communications thinking, approach, and efforts. It begins with understanding the competitive relevance of the company or brand amid its segment and customer ecosystem. This is defined ultimately by the business results and financial measures. Further, employees are seeking how their work connects to the company mission and future success and what's in it for them while assessing the performance from the previous year. The process provides a reality check on what is most important for the business to achieve.

Once decided, every aspect of the business aligns itself from a resources, budget, priority, programming, and measurement standpoint to reflect the direction of the enterprise. Simple, right?

Not necessarily. The breakdown usually starts at the beginning. The failure to discern the overall direction or need of the organization. This tends to become a convoluted set of objectives and financial targets that then get translated into a muddled mosaic of messages and talking points which only confuse employees and customers alike.

Let's first start with 2022. An incredibly tumultuous year. For organizations the challenges and choices were varied. Coming out of COVID, some leaders chose to reintroduce their companies and brands after a two-year absence dealing with the pandemic. Many rethought the employee experience instituting new rules of working.

Virtually every organization reassessed its purpose and commitments to stakeholders.

The important take-away from 2022 is what will guide your direction and intent going forward. What's your headline in 2022?

Visualizing 2023

In previewing 2023 from a corporate communications perspective, there are two areas to be focused on: the business situation; and the social reality. Both areas have critical impact on the organization's strategy for success.

Let's begin with the social imperative. CEOs, leaders, and communicators must factor the following topics in their positions:

• Health equity

Premise: Health inequity is pervasive across society and health equity will only exist when all people regardless of geography, race, and economic status can achieve their full potential from a health standpoint.

Leadership considerations: The linkage between health equity with employee well-being, patient expectations, community engagement, and social determinants.

• ESG

Premise: Environmental, Social, and Governance is a financial driven set of measures meant to address an organization's policies and decisions with regard to being a good corporate citizen.

Leadership considerations: Is the company performing as an ESG entity? If so, how are the principles incorporated into its leadership architecture?

• AI

Premise: AI is beginning to pique the interest of business leaders, media, and consumers alike. The story is about competitiveness, customer service, decision-making, and cost effectiveness.

Leadership considerations: From ethics, trust and value, AI is a lightning rod for CEOs and business today. CEOs must have a POV on the topic including how AI is impacting health, customer and patient experience, and the company. If not, it's best to stay away.

• Diversity, equity and inclusion

Premise: The catalysts are the changing demographics of the globe and the heightened expectations of Gen Z and millennials when it comes to DE&I in the workforce. This goes beyond numbers but a complete experiential and cultural existence for all people in the workforce and impacts a company brand.

Leadership considerations: A transparent and open discussion on diversity, equity and inclusion as it relates to culture, health/well-being and the employee brand in gen-

eral, beginning with an honest appraisal of the company.

• Organizational confidence

Premise: CEOs from all industries are beginning to raise the concept of confidence as a competitive differentiator. Organizational Confidence comes from three areas: Relevance; Strategic Intent; and Workforce Engagement.

Leadership considerations: Projecting the organization's ability to scale and maintain a strong culture adhering to its principles and strategy is a terrific story and one that CEOs are relating as part of their talk track externally.

• Social tension

Premise: The myriad issues enveloping society based on racial and social injustice. The call for companies to take a much more public and vocal stance as these issues arise.

Leadership Consideration: Balancing the organization's purpose and efficacy with employee, stakeholder concerns and interests that align with the business' purpose, mission, and efficacy.

• Mental health

Premise: Coming out publicly to discuss personal well-being and how you participate in society on a micro and macro level.

Leadership Consideration: Being open, flexible, and active in addressing mental health for society and your workforce through empathy, programming, and benefits as part of your management model.

• Talent and the future of work

Premise: Post-COVID the workplace has been upended in new and different ways. Not the least of which are work-life balance, office-home hybrid, the sense of belonging, collaboration, and meaningful work. Retaining talent in such an environment is a critical business priority.

Leadership consideration: Conveying how business and the company itself are handling this next phase of work in terms of culture, management behaviors, teamwork, and development.

What is the business chasing in 2023?

This is the key question for any leader or communicator. While every business and situation is different, let's explore the major areas for consideration in calibrating the communications strategy and plan for 2023 starting with the macro environment:



Gary Grates

— Continued on next page

WHAT ARE YOU CHASING IN 2023?

— Continued from page 22

- What does the global competitive marketplace look like
- Where is the game being played?
- How relevant are we?
- Where are we strongest? Weakest?
- How far can our current talent take us?
- Where is the motivation for our business/brands?

From there, we need to dig deeper into our organization and identify the key direction for the enterprise:

- **Market share.** Is the business poised to gain share and increase capacity, interest, and motivation for the stock?
- **Revenue growth.** Can the business increase revenues via new products and services or by raising prices?
- **Profitability.** Will the business focus on more profitable areas investing in sock and innovation?
- **Portfolio and service optimization.** Is M&A a part of the business plan in 2023?
- **Dimensionalization.** Will new customer and product segments, price points, and

THE COSTS OF CULTURE FAILURE

— Continued from page 20

knew the consequences. Some organizations make a “safety bonus” so core to the compensation of all employees, that it’s hard for the workforce to ignore even the smallest of safety infractions. Employees must understand the imperative to achieve success by doing right and the cost of cutting corners or acting unethically—and personally be held accountable when they fall short.

The culture imperative

It probably goes without saying that clear, consistent and two-way communications are an essential aspect of implementing and maintaining cultural change. Even the most employee-focused, communication-heavy organization will need an added level of investment and discipline to do it right. It’s also critical to regularly assess and course correct when needed. And therefore, crisis communications and preparedness advisors—and the clients we advise in the legal, communications, risk and HR functions—must prioritize culture and communicate accordingly.

Getting an organization’s culture right is a significant undertaking, but the reward is managing risk and handling issues more effectively, protecting the business’ reputation—and ultimately setting it up for success.

Elizabeth Cholis is a Partner at Dentons Global Advisors. ○

expanded capabilities be the quest in 2023?

Once the business decides on its direction and core, corporate communications can then determine where to place its bets:

- **Relevance.** In a social/digital world, relevance is the new reputation. If you’re not relevant today, you don’t exist. From a communications standpoint, relevance is about the following: being searched; being talked about; being engaged with; being sought after; being trusted.

- **Relationships.** How would you rate the quality of your relationships with key stakeholders? What needs to be improved if the organization is to succeed? How have influencers infiltrated the opinion formation process?

- **Culture.** Is your corporate culture able to withstand the vagaries of the business?

- **Narrative/story.** Do you have a narrative that reflects the current state and future aspiration of the business? How is it being conveyed? Is your story consistent with your brand?

- **Visibility.** Are your leaders and your POV known in the industry?

- **Efficiencies.** From cost reduction, restructuring, quality and process improvement, what levers need to be pulled for the organization to achieve its goals?

- **M&A assimilation/integration.** How is

the workforce prepared to accept a merger or acquisition? What will such a move do throw the business’ balance off?

- **Confidence.** Are we communicating in such a manner that people inside and outside the organization are smarter and more engaged?

A fresh start

Annual business planning provides a clear set of goals, objectives and strategies aimed at improving an organization’s viability. It is a crucial element of any prudent leadership responsibility and must be met with similar rigor from all areas of the business including corporate communications. Done right, it achieves staff alignment against the business needs.

The process should be a time of reflection, exploration, analysis, education, and experimentation to arrive at the right formula for success.

“Business planning is a mechanism to coalesce thinking of the entire company around one thing: Winning!”

—Anonymous

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When an employee threatens your company's reputation

How the C-suite should respond when a member of your organization threatens harm to your brand by saying or doing offensive things.

By David A. Ball

As business culture changes as a result of both the pandemic and generational shifts, employees can easily act in ways that, while acceptable some years back, are wholly unacceptable today. When that happens, the C-suite must act quickly to prevent reputational damage.

The *Wall Street Journal* recently wrote of the firing of a top Apple executive, one who had accomplished enormous things for the company that contributed directly to the company's bottom line. That executive was approached by a social media influencer as he drove up to a car show, off the clock, at which point the executive paraphrased a line from the movie "Arthur," released more than 40 years ago—before many current customers and employees were born—and added an inappropriate reference to women's bodies.

The remark was clearly spur-of-the moment and silly. Had there been no one filming the comment for social media, maybe there would've been some yucks and maybe it would've been forgotten almost as soon as it was uttered. Instead, the video was posted to TikTok, where it was eventually seen by millions.

Apple demanded the executive's resignation, and when he refused, the executive was fired. "It was 22 years dissolved in about 25 seconds," the executive said.

Was Apple right to remove that loyal executive who spent decades helping the company become more successful, over a brief, lewd throwaway line? Yes.

We live in an age where information travels at the speed of light. In a single post, social media can make or break a person. It's okay to lament this situation, but communicators must absolutely own it.

More to the point: Workplaces are more diverse than they've ever been, though still not diverse enough. It's imperative for CEOs to create a welcoming environment that's free of hostility. Women and people of color have historically faced immense challenges in advancement, in large part because the workplace environment has been filled with demeaning comments and dumb attempts at humor, just like that offered up by the Apple executive, as well as overt racism and sexism.

Brands aren't simply a logo and tagline or a product or service. Brands are also the people working behind them. So, when a brand offends—either with intent or with-

out—the best way to manage the situation can be pulled from the Crisis Management 101 handbook: Admit you're wrong, apologize, fix the problem and move on. Doing so will eliminate protracted battles—and negative news coverage—that can weaken brands over time.

Apple might have weathered the story reasonably well, with minimal or no impact on sales. Not acting, though, would've sent a terrible message to the company's associates: This person's value to his business unit is greater than the harm we cause our employees by saying and doing nothing.

Historically, brands have done a great deal of research before discontinuing an offensive name, logo or tagline. After these extensive review periods, sometimes they've done the right thing, and other times they clearly haven't. It doesn't take a multimillion-dollar marketing study to determine if a name or logo should be changed. If it harms a community, change is in order.

The Washington Commanders adopted their new name some 20 years after Native Americans first opposed the team's previous name, with was offensive to that population. The team's ownership resisted change for years, as have the owners of other professional sports teams, like the Atlanta Braves. Every time a news story runs about the controversy over the Braves' name—14,400 Google News results under "Atlanta Braves name controversy"—it weakens the brand.

For too many years, companies have defended insensitive and downright offensive behavior by rationalizing their actions. "They don't really mind," goes the oft-heard explanation. Or, "it's all in good fun." Or, so-and-so is "a good sport."

Except that they do mind. It's not fun for them. And it's not so much that the subjects of such comments are good sports, but that they feel powerless to create change. Customers, associates, business partners, shareholders and other key stakeholders roll their eyes, but they also change their behavior. They stop visiting the business. They decide to take a job elsewhere.

Why let controversy eat away at a brand slowly, or worse, create a crisis? If a company leader doesn't reflect core values, they must be removed from their role. Length of service and contributions to the bottom line can't be considerations. Companies must live their values.

For those who think such considerations are simply political correctness run amok, or part of some cancel culture conspiracy, the line is a bright one: Will a significant number of stakeholders find it offensive? Cancel culture implies rash decision-making resulting from a perceived injustice. In a situation like the one described above, a company must act fast, but not impulsively. I see that as a critical distinction. Also, is a single person harmed or a community? That's a second critical test.

The Apple executive was on his own time and riffing on a line from a very old movie. Yet, coming from an executive, a company leader, the message was unacceptable because it was demeaning.

Was the comment by the Apple executive as harmful as harassing or assaulting an employee? Of course not. Still, that's no reason not to do something. Taking action will serve to protect that company's reputation, while also setting a tone that such behavior isn't tolerated.

I'm guessing it will be a while before the next Apple executive makes a crass comment in public.

David A. Ball is President and Founder of Ball Consulting Group, LLC, a strategic communications firm that specializes in health care, nonprofits, education and crisis communications. ○



David A. Ball

PR brief

Ruder Finn expands D.C. footprint

Ruder Finn expands its presence in the Washington, D.C. metro area with a new office that houses more than 20 communications specialists. The expansion follows the agency's acquisition of Virginia-based multicultural firm Comunicad in May.

Ruder Finn's DC office will service anchor clients such as Southwest Airlines, which recently named the agency as AOR to advance overall communications and thought leadership. Ruder Finn has also brought on Ellen Back as head of federal communications and sustainability communications expert Sarah Stanley.

"Public affairs and government relations is a major focus for Ruder Finn," said Ruder Finn CEO Kathy Bloomgarden. "The breadth and depth of our expertise in the Washington, DC office is a testament to how adaptive our communications work can be in order to best serve our clients' needs in an integrated and holistic manner."



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The best companies anticipate crises and drill to prepare

Why organizations should always keep their boots laced up and their hard hats within reach.

By Robert Durand and Jonathan Taylor

The case for having a crisis public relations plan—especially in the world of misinformation, disinformation, propaganda and trial by press release—now applies to all organizations.

A reputational crisis can come to almost all public-facing enterprises, not just refineries, factories and airlines, where accidents must be anticipated and trained for.

Reputation attacks can happen instantly, launched overnight or even within hours against any organization, from litigation and boycotts to demands for remedial legislation and criminal sanctions.

The opposition will attack suddenly, bursting onto the public stage—fast, furious and surprisingly forceful—but not necessarily factual. The truth may be on your side, but until you respond, public opinion is being shaped by your opponent. You need a swift and strong response, which requires a plan and practice.

Practice telling the truth

Develop, test and regularly drill a crisis response plan so you're ready to react confidently and quickly in telling the truth. Engage swiftly, even if it's a bridge: "Here's what we know now, we hope to know more soon, our next brief will be at 2 p.m." Have an experienced executive team ready to say, "Activate the plan!" The first hours are vital, even critical. An ad hoc or on-the-fly response to a reputation challenge will be chaotic, defensive and overly emotional. Planning and practicing prevent panic.

Institutional reputation takes years to build. Undefended, reputation can be destroyed in days. Make crisis response part

of an ongoing reputation management program and not just a binder on the shelf for when an alarm sounds. Response plans must be maintained—regularly reviewed, constantly monitored, carefully evaluated—and vigorously drilled.

Your team is as important as the plan. Your responders must be a team, players who know each other well and have worked together through active exercises at least once a year. The primary and alternate responders must be comfortable in their roles to reliably act quickly and decisively. And your team needs a strong reserve; today's 24/7 media landscape requires a team that can sustain 24/7 operations until the storm has passed.

Traditional crisis communication—fires, floods, product recalls, accidents and incidents—tends to focus solely on the emergency. Those "common emergencies" are seldom confined to the event itself and are compounded by reputation challenges.

Anticipate "reflash"

The media and influentials will ask: How could this have been prevented? What warnings were ignored? What's being done to prevent future accidents? How are those impacted being taken care of? These issues can and will appear without warning after the fire appears to be out. Just as firefighters set a "reflash watch," your crisis response needs to anticipate issues and get ahead of them to repair, maintain or even improve your reputation.

A crisis is an unplanned test of every aspect of your organization. Are you competent? Prepared? Truthful? Responsive?

Compassionate? We believe that a crisis that's properly handled can improve your reputation. Today's leaders gain trust when they demonstrate leadership through moments of public stress.

Again: an effective response takes a plan and practice.

We call our Crosswind program CPR+, which is crisis communication focused on an active, pre-crisis engagement that paves the way for a rapid, organized and smooth crisis response and reputation enhancement. We can help. So can the several experienced specialty firms we work with who share our view that reputation management is an ongoing challenge—and a contact sport.

Whoever first said "A lie can travel around the world and back again while the truth is lacing up its boots" (the quote is often attributed to Mark Twain, Winston Churchill and Thomas Jefferson, but the actual author isn't known), the wisdom of the phrase is absolute. Misinformation thrives today. It can be spread cheaply and easily, gaining momentum and the veneer of authenticity because it's becoming "common knowledge." Failure to respond—or poorly executed responses that come too late—creates an environment where misinformation and slander can rule the day.

Boots laced, hard hats ready

When more nimble organizations take active charge of their reputations, the price of misinformation goes up. When you have a plan and a process in place to monitor and respond, your boots are always laced up and your hard hat is always within reach. And lies can't get very far when you are ready to answer with authority and truth.

Rear Admiral Robert Durand, formerly Vice Chief of Information for the U.S. Navy, is VP of Corporate Communications at Crosswind Media and Public Relations, where he provides strategic media and spokesperson services. Jonathan W. Taylor, who served his country as a frontline combat medic with tours in Afghanistan, supports Crosswind clients on corporate issues. He was formerly a staff sergeant, combat medic and combat advisor in the United States Army Reserves. ○



Robert Durand



Jonathan Taylor

One third of major deals leaked

More than one-third of major deals made during the past half-dozen years were publicly reported in the media prior to the official corporate announcement, according to a study by H/Advisors Abernathy.

Seventy percent of mega-mergers (e.g., deals valued at \$15 billion and higher) were leaked during the first-half of 2022. Those leaks resulted in media coverage that ran 28 days before the eventual announcement.

Though rumors of impending deals without naming the specific seller or buyer frequently circulate in the media, Abernathy found that in top-tier media, 75 percent of

the stories included the names of both companies involved in the transaction.

Abernathy suggests that both buyer and seller should assume that leaks are going to happen and that the online spotlight will glow more brightly. Abernathy recommends that communicators be brought into the process. A small group of PR people can "add real value by serving as an early warning on leaks, managing leaks if they arise and setting a framework to maximize any announcement."

Abernathy analyzed 399 transactions valued at \$5 billion or greater where at least one buyer or seller was based in the U.S. ○

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Nine reasons to get a PR agency valuation

Is hiring a qualified outside advisory professional to value your PR agency worth the investment?

By Rick Gould

Contrary to the belief of many prospective sellers, firms are not valued at a “multiple of net revenues.”

I’ve been valuing PR firms for more than twenty-five years, initially as the CPA firm for many seller firms, and then since I started my own M&A advisory firm, Gould+Partners, in 2001. Valuing PR agencies is a complex process. It takes financial expertise, knowledge of the M&A marketplace, and an understanding of how buyers create offers/term sheets.

There’s no exact science in valuing a PR firm. Every valuation is different. PR is a business in which both actual financial performance, recast for many adjustments, and several intangibles, will determine value. Items such as relationships with clients, depth of second tier of management, specialties and fee levels may also impact value.

A couple years back, I was called by a prospective seller who asked me for advice on the value of her firm. She was told by a competitor of my firm that she should simply double the annual fees, assuming her bottom line was at least 20 percent. What he did not ask her were a series of questions needing answers and detail in order to fairly and accurately value her firm. There are at least nine different items needed to value a firm. He asked for none of these, only shared his illusionary model for valuation.

There’s generally an element of subjectivity in valuing a firm, but there certainly are objective rules and guidelines that a professional who values PR firms should use. In addition, there is extensive review work performed prior to doing the actual valuation report. Every PR firm has its unique components. There’s no cut-and-dried formula for valuing a firm.

While having a thorough understanding of your firm’s value is a good idea, there are several specific circumstances when it is particularly beneficial to get an accurate PR firm valuation.

1. Potential sale. When contemplating putting your PR firm on the market, knowing how much your firm is worth can help you tremendously in understanding the offer made by a buyer for your firm. It also will assist in your negotiation strategy.

2. Potential merger of two or more firms. A firm valuation is a valuable resource to have on hand when considering the merger of multiple firms. Again, knowing the value of the firm will help to ensure that a fair and reasonable transaction takes place should the firm merge with another firm. It will save time and cost if the valuation is already in place.

3. Partner split-up. When firm partners split up and potentially divide firm assets, understanding the value of the firm is imperative, especially if a contentious split-up, which is often the case.

4. Partner buy-in. When adding new partners to the firm, knowing your company’s worth is necessary in order to ensure that your new partners understand the value they are receiving.

5. Partner buy-out. Knowing a firm’s value is key, especially if the partner is retiring or moving on to her/his next chapter of their career. Their equity value represents the monetization of their years of sweat equity.

6. Borrowing power. Any substantial loan request may require an independent valuation.

7. Estate planning. When organizing your estate and creating a succession plan

for your business it’s important to have an accurate business valuation on hand. This will help you with tax planning and assist you in determining who should ultimately inherit your financial interest in the firm. Valuation for an estate plan is very different than valuation for a sale of the firm.

8. Divorce. Whether a divorce is amicable or not, knowing the worth of your organization is a safe bet when you go into negotiations. Understanding how much the business you worked hard to build is worth can help ensure that a fair divorce settlement is reached, especially if the two owners splitting up are married.

9. Growth plan. Having a comprehensive firm valuation can greatly help in making beneficial business decisions on a day-to-day basis. It can also provide valuable information and insight when large and small opportunities for growth come along.

There is no general rule of thumb. There are many moving parts, many factors and some factors carry more weight than others. There are items, when evaluated, may add or subtract value from the calculated value. These intangibles are critical in the ultimate determination of value. For example, death of the main rainmaker, loss of a major client, the hiring of a well-established PR pro to build a new and growing division.

My recommendations are as follows:

- Reach out to the professional who has been referred to do the valuation.
- Discuss their credentials, their expertise and experience in doing valuations for PR firms.
- Ask about their education including certification in doing valuations or teaching valuations at the collegiate level.
- What is the cost?
- What is the timeline for completion?
- Who will be doing the actual work?

Do your homework on what it takes to do an accurate valuation. Be assured that the individual doing the work is qualified, respected and trusted in the PR industry and will provide the highest quality of service and a reliable and professionally prepared report.

I believe establishing a “Build to Sell” strategy for your firm now will have a huge payback in the future. Today’s valuation is your starting point. You, ultimately, will assess whether your investment in a valuation was worth it.

Rick Gould, CPA, M.S., J.D., is Managing Partner of Gould+Partners. ○



Rick Gould

TikTok beats Instagram for top influencer platform

According to report from Collabstr, TikTok has now surpassed Instagram to become the number-one platform for the influencer marketing sector. The site, which is enormously popular with the GenZ demographic, was the top social media platform for influencer marketing in 2022, where it was home to 45 percent of paid collaborations. Instagram, meanwhile, the original hub for modern-day influencer marketing, now comes in second, accounting for 39 percent of paid collaborations.

Collabstr found that influencers on TikTok also make more money. TikTok influ-

encers charge an average of \$460 for advertising deals, compared to Instagram, where the average advertising deal costs \$363. The study additionally reported that TikTok influencers make an average of \$203 per collaboration, compared to Instagram, where influencers make \$183 per collaboration.

While more influencer activity has migrated to TikTok recently, Instagram remains the top platform when it comes to being home to the total number of influencers, as 82 percent of all influencers counted in the Collabstr study offer services on that platform, while 61 percent of all influencers offer services via TikTok. ○

An aerial photograph showing a two-lane asphalt road that curves through a dense green forest. To the right of the road is a calm body of water with a light blue-green hue. The sky is a pale, clear blue.

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Twitter's lessons for crisis communications

Seven teachable moments from Elon Musk's recent imbroglio of controversies that can be applied to crisis communications situations.

By Alex Stanton

There's never a dull news day for those who track Elon Musk's business activities and management of Twitter. Whatever your opinion on Musk, the media are reporting on his every move for better or worse. There's no denying he moves boldly and publicly, and any one of his recent controversies is packed with important learnings and reminders for communicators.

Here are seven lessons that can be applied to crisis communications situations—beyond “don't make your own problems”—and which can inform overall planning and management in challenging media environments:

Follow the clicks

In today's challenged economic environment for media platforms, there's a tug-of-war that guides newsroom judgment—the push-pull between reader traffic and journalistic mission. While journalists everywhere are interested in telling the best stories and reporting on hard news, often reader clicks have a major influence on what gets covered, how thoroughly and for how long. What we've learned from the Twitter communications imbroglio is that when your actions or inactions create a persistent story, you shouldn't be surprised when it becomes your living reality. Those stories not only don't go away but are also often amplified as reporters and editors continue searching for ways to advance the story to compete with others on the same trail and fill their outlet's appetite for more clicks.

Pacing matters

After your initial response to a controversy, it's smart to set and regularly revisit guideposts around pacing of response. Are you helped by responding immediately to each new development or line of media inquiry, or are you letting time be your friend? Stories roll out and evolve, often being told over several iterations across news cycles. By pacing your responses, you can adjust your messaging according to what's known as opposed to what's speculated. This approach can allow an organization to present more thoughtful responses when it makes sense to do so—or to wait it out and let the story evolve away from their doorstep or fade away entirely.

Set the right tone when ownership changes

It's reasonable to expect company ownership changes and the intentions of the new owners to be met with a certain amount of scrutiny and cynicism, even in smaller companies with less visible CEOs. How you address this reality at the time of announcement and in the first few weeks that follow will set the tone and provide a good compass reading for what to expect moving forward. Companies are well-served by explaining why changes are happening, what changes can be expected and when, and providing a rationale. Transparent communication—within reason—is helpful to establishing trust with employees. And filling the communications pipeline—even when there is nothing earth-shaking to share—helps tamp down the rumor mill and get team members re-focused on their daily work.

Be ready to respond to biggest reputation risks

Most leaders of companies and organizations can rattle off a list of their most significant reputational risks, and yet adequate preparation is often not done to respond to those risks when events cause them to spill into public view. It is essential to identify and have at hand draft responses to your five biggest reputational risks so that you avoid improvising while you're under the gun. Response time and credibility are enhanced during a crisis when you are working from pre-approved approaches that can be quickly updated and altered to fit the evolving situation.

Work the CEO's support network

Communicators are well-advised to connect with the CEO whisperers who can help define and moderate their company leader's natural instincts. These are the people—often outside the company—that the CEO will consult, or who will reach out to him or her, when times get tough. They can be very helpful in supporting sensible communications strategies, and in discouraging rogue behaviors.

A personal touch matters

Adopting a personal and multi-constituent approach to communications outside of the town square can be very helpful in managing crisis situations. The tendency can be to turn inwards especially while firefighting on media inquiries and social channel chatter. But you can't lose sight of the positive impact that direct communica-

tion from company leaders—and wherever possible personal communication—can have on customers, business partners, employees and other key stakeholders. This is effective even when the decision-makers and influencers are reading persistent negative coverage in the media and social feeds.

Don't make assumptions about your allies

Crisis preparation must include pre-recruiting third party allies who can help support your point of view and past actions around key issues. It's important to reach out to these independent influencers and make them feel informed and knowledgeable about the issues at hand as the situation evolves. Some may even be cultivated as advocates and supportive voices in the media. It's likewise a mistake to assume that employees will be your loyal friends when a controversy erupts—this has certainly not proven to be the case at Twitter. If they haven't been communicated with effectively and/or feel they aren't being listened to, current and former employees can be a potent source of bad news for the media and other stakeholders.

Examining or revisiting these seven lessons, with a fresh eye of course, should prove helpful as communicators manage through the crisis or media controversies they will inevitably face in 2023.

Alex Stanton is CEO of Stanton, a communications firm with offices in New York and the San Francisco Bay Area. He can be reached at astanton@stantonpr.com. ○



Alex Stanton

PR brief

MMGY Global acquires Origin

MMGY Global acquires outdoor-focused, digitally driven creative, content and branding agency Origin, which will become known as MMGY Origin. Danielle Kristmanson and Marie-Josée Legault, who founded the Whistler, Canada-based firm more than 20 years ago, will remain with the brand, Legault serving as Partner and Managing Director, and Kristmanson serving as Partner and Executive Creative Director. With the addition of Origin's Whistler, Montreal and Vermont locations, MMGY Global will now have over 500 employees and operate in 16 markets globally.

“Origin represents a unique addition to our global company that differentiates our product portfolio and positions us in a niche segment that connects travel with active lifestyle,” said MMGY Global President and incoming CEO Katie Briscoe.

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New year, new world, new rules?

Three crisis-readiness imperatives for communicators operating in today's crisis ecosystem.

By Jessica Berk Ross

After several years of FOMO, companies, countries and organizations around the world are eager to convene, host, keynote and just generally seek meaningful engagement and powerful exchanges.

And with this renewed momentum, we're seeing the redoubling of efforts to be "caught in the act of leading." And of late, that doesn't always turn out to be what they had in mind. The spotlight can illuminate, but can also expose imperfections or, in some cases, even near-fatal flaws.

Countries are vying for soft power and fortified reputation as they've dealt with the global exigencies of a war in Europe, the pandemic and the looming R-word, to name just a few factors. Companies are eager to demonstrate that they've been quietly—or boldly—leading through the pandemic, rethinking their supply chains, building and fortifying resilience, engaging employees remotely and otherwise navigating the zeitgeist that has sparked the great resignation.

And our academic and non-profit clients have spent these past few years reinvigorating and re-inventing how to deliver real world-impact in a shifting landscape.

But the immutable element of risk is ever-pervasive. The more we build, grow and drive, the greater number of challenges and threats arise. Many nations around the world clamor to be both partners and destinations of choice, to be traded with and invested in and to rise up in global rankings.

Brands can be made or undone by the "too visible" CEO or by betting on the wrong influencer—that list is long and painful. Culture wars seek to undo or recast meaningful programs, good works and needed interventions.

And at the same time that there's evolution, there's meaningful adaptation. The world is asking for more. No, actually—it's demanding more. Many consumers want to see a real dedication to sustainability, to diversity, to meaningful engagement. Citizens across the globe are demanding freedoms, human rights, access to healthcare, education, information ... and the truth.

But our national conversations can deride and divide. And for every demand for better, there are malignant voices who seem to want the worst, or just less.

But despite detractors and pitfalls, in every state, region and geography our clients are delivering more. With breathtaking innovations, focused futurecasting and the weaving of sustainable and more equitable threads through every part of the work, this is a time of purpose. All around us there's a powerful dedication to making a world that we would actually like to live in. But the stakes are high and the market is a fickle master.

So, how do we navigate the complexities of the new and the now—what's that evolved crisis playbook as we venture out of the pandemic era and into a world that has made many, many adaptations? Given the tumultuous landscape, what are the business and communications imperatives to ensure a state of readiness?

Sure, some of the rules of old still apply, but with a few updates. Crisis communications is its own ecosystem with its own set of skills necessary for survival. There are three key imperatives to having a future-ready stance.

Agility

To paraphrase an old trope, a crisis situation has run its way all around the world before the holding statement has finished lacing up its sneakers. Information—and disinformation—move inconceivably fast.

This upscaled urgency is well met with rigorous, thoughtful preparation. Crisis assessment and planning need to be more frequent, more forward looking and more readily deployed. Knowing the who, what, when and how to respond is increasingly critical to managing any potential, evolving or already incendiary issue. That requires regular maintenance and workshopping replete with critical thinking and key players. A smart facilitator can help move towards an agile framework for future-proofing.

Those who lag and deliberate too long lose the window and the narrative is cast for them. The ecosystem is unforgiving.

Intentionality

Crisis communications demands that leaders speak with forethought and integrity. What's the authentic voice that's essential to navigating the most challenging of times. Communicating with purpose and communicating in a way that's fit for purpose in troubled moments is an art and a science.

This is where seasoned counselors can help senior leaders find and share their true north, especially during difficult moments.

For many, the antics and stunts that drive hits and grab likes are part of their playbook. But this is all disappointing performance art.

History will not look kindly upon these players, and those with measured and authentic voices of reason will be the real leaders—the durable truth tellers that outlast the viral spikes and vicissitudes.

Adaptability

The crisis ecosystem is a demanding environment and requires that we iterate, learn and grow. If these challenging times have underscored anything, it's that we all must be in a constant state of learning. It's essential. Research, intelligence and real time analytics helps us to understand the scope and scale of reputational impact of an issue or crisis. Using the latest data and insights are key to clearer understanding and to crafting effective strategies moving forward.

We'll often see that when a program or campaign hits a roadblock or even a speed bump, there is a tendency to put the brakes on. To bunker. But it's important that as communicators, we learn from challenges. The most difficult of situations can help to inform the road ahead if we're savvy. Building in post-mortem murder boards or after-action evaluations is an important framework for growth and for building that needed agility.

And thank goodness, data can help to fortify that process.

These three crisis-readiness imperatives underscore that the real take away here isn't the "what" of crisis communication, but rather the "how." Purposeful, ethical, evolved engagement with audiences is at the heart of navigating both the new and not-so-new challenges of an evolving world.

Jessica Berk Ross is Managing Partner and Global Publics Affairs Practice Leader at FINN Partners. ○



Jessica Berk Ross

Democracy under threat, but few Americans care

Americans believe that our current form of government is under threat of disappearing, yet most don't think this threat is the biggest problem facing the country, according to a recent poll.

By Jon Gingerich

An alarming number of Americans now believe that our democracy is under attack, but oddly, most don't see that as the biggest problem currently facing the country, according to a *New York Times*/Siena College poll of voters.

According to the poll, nearly three-quarters of voters (71 percent) believe that our democracy is at risk. Astonishingly, however, only seven percent view this threat as the most important problem currently facing the country.

Puzzling as it sounds that voters could be so cavalier about the possibility of our form of government disappearing, it makes slightly more sense when their greater concerns are taken into account, concerns they perceive to be the cause of the currently tenuous state of our democracy: the opposing party. Most respondents in the *Times* poll who identified as Republican said the greatest threats facing our democracy are

President Biden, the mainstream media, the federal government and the practice of voting by mail. Most respondents identifying as Democrat, on the other hand, cited Donald Trump, the Supreme Court and the Electoral College as democracy's greatest threat.

It also appears that another contributing factor to these views is a growing cynicism and lack of trust in the U.S. government, which includes ongoing doubts surrounding the veracity of our elections. More than a third (39 percent) of those polled said they'd be comfortable voting for a candidate who said they believe the 2020 election was stolen. Among Republicans, that number stood at more nearly three-quarters (71 percent), but more than a third (37 percent) of independent voters agreed, as did 12 percent of Democrats. Even 19 percent of those who believe Biden won the election fairly admitted they were comfortable voting for

a candidate who claimed the election was rigged (this included 43 percent of Republicans, 22 percent of independents and 10 percent of Democrats).

An additional 28 percent of all voters—including 41 percent of Republicans—said they had little to no faith in the accuracy of the forthcoming midterm election results. More than a quarter (26 percent) of independents and 13 percent of Democrats agreed.

About a third of respondents (34 percent) said they don't think someone's political views revealed much regarding whether someone is a good person, compared to 14 percent who said it does. Nearly 20 percent admitted that political disagreements had been the cause of hurt relationships with friends or family.

The *Times*/Siena College poll surveyed approx. 800 registered voters via telephone in October. ○

GOOD RIDDANCE 2022

— Continued from page 11

The International Rescue Committee kicks off a search for a PR firm to publicize the plight of Ukrainian refugees.

McDonald's names Jon Banner EVP and Global Chief Impact Officer. He joins from PepsiCo, where he was EVP-communications, and President of the soft drink company's foundation.

WPP's GroupM Worldwide handles Ukraine's Ministry of Culture and Information Policy's "Advantage Ukraine" campaign to promote confidence among businesses, investors and policymakers that the battered country will recover from Russia's invasion.



Brenna Terry

Finn Partners acquires Rachel Kay Public Relations, a 19-person shop based in San Diego that focuses on the food and beverage category.

Hill+Knowlton Strategies names Brenna Terry Global Chair of Healthcare. She was most recently Senior



Director of Enterprise Engagement and Communication at Janssen North America, which is part of Johnson & Johnson.

WPP scoops up Miami-based Jeffery Group, which has more than 330 staffers and an extensive network in Latin America.

The Securities and Exchange Commission files charges against Kim Kardashian for promoting a crypto asset security on her Instagram without disclosing that she was paid \$250,000 to do so.

MMGY Global makes a move on Wagstaff Media and Marketing, a firm that specializes in the travel, culinary and hospitality lifestyle sectors.

The American Academy of Pediatrics begins a hunt for a PR firm to counter disinformation and misinformation about the COVID-19 vaccine.

Sean McCormick, who was VP-Communications at Boeing, joins Chevron with the same title. Most recently, McCormick was at Trailrunner International.

Ruder Finn scores Touchdown, a 65-member technology PR shop headquartered in Austin with offices in the UK, Netherlands, Germany, France and Australia.

Justin Goodman, Communications Director for Senate Majority Leader

Chuck Schumer, joins SKDK as an EVP in its Washington public affairs practice.

LGBTQ+ representation in communications is getting better, but many brands are still lagging when it comes to making a year-round commitment, according to a report from WPP Unite.

FGS Global handles the initial public offering of Luberef, the oil refining unit of the Saudi Arabian Oil Company.

BPCM signs three-year deal to represent Volkswagen Group of America as the German automaker makes an aggressive push to market its line-up of electric vehicles. Edelman had the account.

The State Dept. appoints James Rubin Coordinator of the Global Engagement Center, which is to lead Washington's effort to recognize, understand, expose and counter foreign state and non-state propaganda and disinformation that threatens U.S. security. ○



Justin Goodman



Volkswagen

What ChatGPT means for the future of PR

ChatGPT's ability to create written content has the potential to rewrite the rules for the PR industry. But the human element remains a central part of creating that content ... at least for now.

By Benji Englander

At the end of November, new technology was introduced to the public that is poised to revolutionize the field of public relations.

And it had absolutely nothing to do with Elon Musk's Twitter.

While much digital ink was spilled trying to figure out what the chaos at Twitter means for clients, far less attention has been paid to ChatGPT, the new digital chatbot from OpenAI.

In simple terms, it's a large language model which uses artificial intelligence to analyze and learn from massive amounts of text scraped from books, articles, and websites. The result is a tool that provokes equal parts fun and fear.

Users can ask questions or make requests and get clear, human-like answers. As the New York Times noted: "It can write jokes (some of which are actually funny), working computer code and college-level essays. It can also guess at medical diagnoses, create text-based Harry Potter games and explain scientific concepts at multiple levels of difficulty." Microsoft Clip-
py this is not.

Researchers are still exploring all of ChatGPT's potential, but there are some immediate applications for our industry. ChatGPT's ability to quickly generate written content can be a valuable asset for public relations professionals. By providing suggestions and ideas for stories and campaigns, ChatGPT can help PR professionals to generate fresh and engaging content. Additionally, ChatGPT can assist with fact-checking and editing, ensuring that all written materials are accurate and free of errors. This can save time and allow PR professionals to focus on other important tasks, such as media outreach and building relationships with journalists.

Let's test it out.

Recently, advocates have pushed policymakers at the federal, state and local level to adopt universal free school meals. A go-to PR tactic for this kind of advocacy campaign is a letter to the editor of the local paper. So I asked ChatGPT to do just that.

Me: Write a letter to the editor arguing that school meals should be free for all students.

ChatGPT: Dear editor,

I am writing to argue that school meals should be free for all students. Providing

free, healthy meals at school is not only a moral imperative, but it's also essential for the academic success and overall well-being of our youth. Studies have shown that when students have access to healthy meals at school, they are more likely to perform better academically and have better overall health. Additionally, providing free school meals can help alleviate the financial burden on families and reduce food insecurity among children.

Furthermore, offering free school meals can help combat the persistent issue of childhood obesity, which is a growing concern in our country. By providing healthy meals at school, we can help educate students on the importance of good nutrition and encourage them to make healthier food choices.

In conclusion, providing free school meals for all students is an important step towards ensuring that all children have access to the healthy, nutritious food they need to succeed in school and in life.

Sincerely, [Your Name]

Not bad. If an intern on my team produced this as a rough draft, I'd be pretty pleased. We'd want to make it specific, authentic and infused with pathos—but this is more than a good start.

Here's another example. Let's say a beverage company is rolling out a new kind of soda; they'll need some tweets to promote the product. I asked ChatGPT to do the thankless task of drafting social content.

Me: Write a tweet from a beverage company promoting the launch of a new soda.

ChatGPT: We're excited to announce the launch of our new, refreshing soda! Made with natural ingredients and no artificial sweeteners, our soda is the perfect choice for any occasion. Try it today and experience the delicious taste for yourself! #NewSoda #RefreshingSoda #NaturalIngredients

Again, it's a place to start!

But while both examples hit the major points, they don't do it in any inspired way that would truly excite a reader or move them to action. As with most of ChatGPT's prose, both are rather bland and what WIRED's Amit Katlaw calls "superficially impressive but largely lacking in substance."

Then again, so is much of human writing. Nonetheless, the ability to produce a serviceable first draft is incredibly valuable. In

a profession as hectic as PR, anything that can save a little time is greatly appreciated.

Where things get tricky is in the potential scale of this technology. Software that can write near limitless letters to a member of Congress will supercharge already dubious "AstroTurf" campaigns. As Tyler Cowen warns in Bloomberg, "Over time, interest groups will employ ChatGPT, and they will flood the political system with artificial but intelligent content." Like any new tool, it's up to practitioners to use ChatGPT wisely.

Does all this mean that us PR pros should worry about our jobs?

Not yet, and maybe not ever. While ChatGPT can do the grunt work of a first draft, it takes a real human to elevate the writing to a level of sophistication that will inspire engagement. AI cannot capture all the complexities of the world. It pays no attention to the nuance and sensitivity required when messaging to diverse stakeholders. And it certainly plays no role in the day-to-day client management and relationship development that is essential to PR success. It's a blunt tool in a discipline that most often requires a scalpel.

Benji Englander is a Director at Seven Letter, a leading full-service strategic communications firm with offices in Washington, D.C. and Boston. ○



Benji Englander

PR brief

Edelman works Amgen Horizon deal

Edelman represents Amgen as it moves to acquire Horizon Therapeutics for \$27.8 billion, making it the biggest healthcare deal for the year.

Horizon produces medicines for rare autoimmune and severe inflammatory diseases. Tepezza, its top drug, treats thyroid eye disease, and helped boost Horizon's revenues up 47 percent to \$3.2 billion during the past year.

Robert Bradway, Amgen's CEO, said the deal fits his company's "strategy of delivering long-term growth by providing innovative medicines that address the needs of patients who suffer from serious diseases."

He also noted that drugs in Horizon's pipeline complement Amgen's R&D portfolio.

Horizon disclosed last month that it was considering takeover offers from Johnson & Johnson and Sanofi.

Dublin-based Amgen trades on the NASDAQ.

Managing crises like World Cup goalkeepers

Why the last line of defense always exemplifies “cool under pressure” and other winning attributes.

By TJ White

Every two years, the world collectively stops what it's doing to watch some of the best athletes represent their country in the Women's and Men's World Cup soccer tournaments. As a former—and impressively average—college soccer player, I love witnessing this sport's ability to bring people together for a much-needed 90-minute breath of fresh air. Wearing my professional hat, though, I'm most taken with the goalkeepers—the crisis managers of the sport—and the lessons they can teach us as we professionally manage crises.

Before I dig too deep, let's examine the best goalkeeper of this year's World Cup: AB InBev. For decades, the Budweiser parent company has been a valued partner of the International Federation of Association Football, the governing body that runs the World Cup, and one of the organization's largest corporate sponsors. So, when host-nation Qatar announced at the proverbial 11th hour—long after tens of millions of dollars worth of beer had already been delivered—that its stadiums would not be serving Budweiser, the company found itself in a good old-fashioned crisis.

In past years, we would expect something like this, a contractual nightmare for both AB InBev and FIFA, to be settled in court—and it may still be—with passive statements

about how disappointed they're in the decision or how they're confident that their case has merit. However, Budweiser and AB InBev had to have known that this was a possibility, particularly given the host country's religious practices and already-restrictive rules regarding alcohol consumption, and surely had a plan in place to mitigate the downside risk. Ultimately, whether planned or reactive, Budweiser received a phenomenal opportunity to demonstrate the ethos of the World Cup and capitalized on it, announcing that it would ship the unsold beer to the country that wins the tournament and host “the ultimate championship celebration.” Consider it one of the best saves of the tournament.

The plight of the goalkeeper is a difficult one: you're called upon when everything else in the game has gone wrong, and, in that moment, you can either be a hero or a villain—there's no in-between. It's a position that requires attributes every company, like AB InBev, needs when facing their own crisis, like:

- A calm approach to the task at hand, ignoring emotional responses until the dust has settled;
- An analytical strategy, directing your teammates to avoid self-inflicted wounds; and,

- Extensive in-game experience, upon which you can better anticipate and navigate potential outcomes.

Each one of these attributes is shared by the best goalkeepers in the world and should be shared by the external advisors a company partners with to navigate critical inflection points. We've all seen these inflection points handled well, and not so well. But if a company retains advisors who are calm under pressure, analytical and strategic, with extensive experience in analogous situations, they're doing almost everything in their power to protect against the worst possible outcomes.



TJ White

But almost isn't always good enough; it seldom is in managing a crisis, and rarely is for a goalkeeper. So, what's the difference between doing almost everything in one's power and doing absolutely everything? More often than not, it's meaningful preparation and practice.

What we see in a World Cup match is 90 minutes of hard work, but what we don't see are the hours spent studying your opponent and perfecting your strategy, the months training with your team to ensure conditioning, cohesion and alignment and the decades of learning and enhancing your craft. All of this comes together at game time to ensure fast and thoughtful responses to the scenarios you've planned for (and, ideally, you've planned for all of them). The same should be done in response to a professional crisis. Whether it's an activist shareholder, a product recall or a hostile M&A foray, the best crisis responses over time all share this common thread—they've been prepared for and comprehensively address the issues at hand. I suspect this played a key role in Budweiser's great form.

Planning for a crisis is, and always will be, the most critical element of effective management and response. At Sloane & Company, we encourage our clients to look around the corner, anticipate potential pain points and prepare for and practice responding to crises and critical inflection points, because it leads to the best outcomes. We believe every company, large or small, should do the same. If you're looking for a goalkeeper and partner, Sloane & Company is ready to be your last line of defense.

TJ White is Managing Director, Head of Special Situations, at Sloane & Company. ○

Consumers know when marketers are lying to them

“Marketers are lying and customers can tell.” So says a new study from PAN Communications about the gap between the strategies marketers use to tell brand stories and the ways in which customers understand and relate to those stories.

The study, which surveyed 100 senior marketers and 1,000 consumers, found almost a third (32 percent) of the marketers surveyed said that they sometimes tell inauthentic stories “because they feel they have to meet customer expectations or match industry needs.”

In addition, 70 percent say they face pressure to tell inauthentic stories, with 50 percent saying they face “some pressure,” 15 percent facing “frequent pressure” and five percent facing “constant pressure” to do so.

One of the essential components of authenticity, consumers say, is a sense of shared values with a brand. Almost three

quarters (71 percent) of consumers said the values of individual executives have a direct impact on a brand's reputation. More than half (55 percent) said they're more likely to recommend a brand to others if it reflects their values.

Almost a third (31 percent) of those surveyed said they rely on people they know, rather than brand messaging, to get information about new brands.

Even when marketers have an authentic, interesting story to tell, the study results indicated that they have a tough time figuring out how to go about that. More than a quarter of respondents (28 percent) said their storytelling is kept from succeeding by “inefficient methods of distribution.”

The study concludes that marketers need to learn more about their audience, and one way to do that is to “start thinking about who tells their brand story and how it's communicated.” ○

It's a rollup world

Why more private equity firms are funding and supporting the growth of PR agencies than ever before.

By Art Stevens

Rollup" is a phrase that has gained prominence and recognition in the PR agency world. One of the early rollups was created by Peter Gummer, now known as Lord Chadlington. Gummer, a UK businessman and entrepreneur, "invaded" the U.S. and offered to buy up any PR agency that came his way. He succeeded wildly.

Many prominent PR agencies succumbed to his will and financing and became wholly owned by a company he named "Shandwick." For a long time, Shandwick consisted of many agencies and was considered to be part of a rollup, defined as the acquisition of a number of agencies generally standing as separate, autonomous units under the umbrella of a holding company.

But then Gummer did something unusual. At a certain point, he notified all the agencies that he acquired that they would no longer be known by their original names but would become Shandwick. All of the agencies that had operated under their own names would now become field offices of Shandwick. Shandwick was then acquired

by Interpublic, which also acquired Larry Weber's former firm Weber. The two were merged to become Weber Shandwick, which is now the second-largest PR agency in the world.

This rollup, which it originally was, gave rise to many more rollups as the years passed and added to the enormous growth of such present-day agencies as Finn Partners, Real Chemistry and Stagwell Group. Given the success of these organizations, many smaller agencies began to find a way to grow exponentially by finding funding partners and acquiring agencies. Real Chemistry, founded by Jim Weiss and formerly known as w2o, now does around \$500 million in revenues by virtue of both organic growth and acquisitions.

So, who's doing the funding and taking some equity in PR agency rollups? Private equity firms and PR agencies themselves. At one point, private equity firms wanted very little to do with professional service firms, including public relations. The premise was that the assets of a service

firm go down the elevator each night and the company is bereft of assets. They preferred manufacturing and industrial companies, which made things and had machinery.

But Weber Shandwick made a lot of private equity heads turn. They began to see the continuing growth of PR agencies, and one—Edelman—that topped a billion dollars in revenues. No small potatoes. PR agencies could demonstrate EBITDA of more than 30 percent, in some cases, and the use of agencies by the corporate, government and non-profit worlds were spending more of their budgets on public relations.

There are more private equity firms supporting the growth of PR agencies than ever before. And, consequently, there are more acquisitions of PR agencies taking place than ever before. No longer is the sole exit strategy for the founder of a PR agency to close up shop and go fishing. No longer is the option of selling to employees at discount prices a second option. If a PR agency has a record of revenue and profitability growth over a period of time, there's a very good chance that such an agency is an acquisition target. PR has become more of a business than a cottage industry. The founders and principals of modern agencies must not only serve clients but must run their businesses with an eye on profit and loss. Agency owners rely heavily on their financial advisors in the form of highly trained chief financial officers and outside CPA firms.

Plus, PR agency owners currently make an enormous amount of money. I've seen agencies that do around \$3 million in revenues generate more than \$1 million in profits. And most of that goes to the owner. Not a bad business to be in, and the financial community has awoken to that fact.

So, where is the PR agency business right now? It's growing rapidly. More agencies are being acquired by sources outside the PR agency world. More agencies will exceed \$100 million in revenues. And agencies that are doing around \$20 million in revenues today are good candidates to be the platform agencies acquired by private equity firms and could rollup smaller agencies within their universe.

And what does this trend do for someone like me, who has been facilitating mergers and acquisitions for more than fifteen years? Frankly, it means greater opportunities and a lot more fun.

Art Stevens is Managing Partner of The Stevens Group. ○



Art Stevens

Voters reject curbing ESG

Americans across the political spectrum believe it's companies' responsibility to make a positive impact on communities in which they serve, according to a new study.

By Steve Barnes

With many Republican legislators threatening to rein in "corporate wokeism" in 2023, a new study from ROKK Solutions and Penn State University's Center for the Business of Sustainability finds that neither Democratic nor Republican voters are behind efforts to curb ESG initiatives.

"Navigating ESG in the New Congress," which surveyed 1,261 registered voters across the U.S., found that more than three-quarters (76 percent) of respondents across the political spectrum agreed that "companies should be held accountable to make a positive impact on communities in which they operate." Perhaps not unexpectedly, that number was considerably higher for Democrats (82 percent) than for Republicans (69 percent).

However, more than half (52 percent) of all respondents said they felt that "corporate wokeness" has gone too far. The general feeling was that they wanted companies "to be more focused on their products and

services than on espousing support for ESG-related initiatives."

Only about a third (33 percent) said they supported an employer speaking out about social issues that are not related to that company's business focus. That number rises to 47 percent for Democrats and falls sharply (to 20 percent) for Republicans. In addition, only 32 percent of Republican respondents said they wanted their employer to openly criticize legislation that goes against its stated values. Slightly more than half (52 percent) of Democrats were OK with an employer criticizing such legislation.

But a majority of respondents were against letting the government step in to curb a company's "corporate wokeism." More than six in 10 (63 percent) said that the government should not set limits on corporate ESG investments. Republicans (70 percent) were even more adamant than Democrats (57 percent) in this regard. ○

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Curate thoughtful plans that help navigate challenges and seize opportunities to secure lasting leadership positions.

Welcome back to an even-more unpredictable world

Our “return to normal” often feels like we’ve traded one massive global crisis for many smaller—yet substantial—problems, creating an expectation for our corporate leaders to assume a larger role in providing insights, guidance and solutions for these challenges.

By Andrew Frank

Like many of you, our agency has—mostly—returned to the office in the second half of 2022. Although life has transitioned out of quarantine and brought many of us back together in person, we’ve all gained unique tools and ways of doing things that have stuck with us beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. While it has been nice to spend more time with our clients and colleagues, our “return to normal” largely feels like we’ve traded one massive global crisis for many smaller, yet substantial ones.

The crises we face are on numerous fronts. The war in Ukraine has obviously impacted most of the world in myriad ways, while we face inflation, supply chain disruptions, social and political upheaval, energy supply challenges, labor movements, a shifting regulatory environment, bank policy changes and the very real prospect of a looming recession.

Given all these challenges—while also acknowledging the public’s lack of trust in political institutions—there’s a public expectation that corporate leaders take on a larger role in providing insights, guidance and solutions for today’s issues. And although it’s important for corporate leaders to engage the public on these issues, it can often be fraught with risk. Communicating to a public that’s 50 percent split and of dia-

metrically opposed ideologies is a daunting task, as any public comment risks alienating those on either side of the political spectrum.

There’s no avoiding every one of these global issues affecting a business and its operations, yet how companies and institutions prepare, examine, strategize and react will determine how well each is positioned to succeed with its critical stakeholders once the dust settles.

We believe the best offense is a good defense, and beginning to prepare your enterprise for potential challenges to its mission and reputation before they arrive at your doorstep offers the best chance to avoid major damage in your relationships with customers, employees, investors, the media, and other important constituents. Preparing for a crisis by developing a formal crisis plan will help your enterprise to:

1. Outline potential scenarios that could be harmful.
2. Develop a framework for determining whether your organization is facing a true crisis or simply a challenging issue that must be actively managed.
3. Identify a team of senior executives across all key functions that are prepared to assess and form a consensus about a response.
4. Develop strategies and messages to

communicate with each of your critical stakeholders.

5. Quickly take steps to defend your reputation and restore your standing.

Every organization should be prepared to respond to potential events that will have a negative impact on operations, strategy and/or reputation. By not preparing, you’re ultimately going to find yourself on the backfoot once one of these swirling and boiling global crises touches your organization. There’s no avoiding all challenges, but it’s up to you to determine how well you will be able to respond to protect your bottom line and reputation.

We certainly hope that you’ve come out of the COVID-19 crisis stronger, and we at KARV would be happy to help ensure that you continue strengthening your organization by preparing for the complicated and multifaceted global events which impact us all. More information about KARV’s offerings is available at www.KARVcommunications.com or by contacting info@KARVcommunications.com.

Andrew Frank is Founder and President of KARV Communications. ○



Andrew Frank

LGBTQ+ marketing makes progress

A recent WPP Unite report found that while LGBTQ+ representation in communications is getting better, many brands are still behind.

By Steve Barnes

LGBTQ+ representation in communications is getting better, but many brands are still lagging when it comes to making a year-round commitment. That’s the conclusion of “Beyond the Rainbow,” a new report from WPP Unite, which brings together LGBTQ+ employees across the company’s businesses.

The study’s authors polled 3,500 LGBTQ+ people in the US, UK and Canada (and 4,000 non-LGBTQ+ people) to see what they thought of the current state of LGBTQ+ marketing. While they found a lot to be positive about, they also uncovered several areas in which there’s room for things to get better.

Almost three quarters (74 percent) of the queer people surveyed said that there’s been improvement in LGBTQ+ representation in ads in recent years. However, they also say that much of that representation is limited to such strategies as changing a company’s logo to the rainbow flag colors during Pride month.

Though 52 percent of queer respondents say they like seeing those rainbow logos, three in four also say that they’d like to see brands’ efforts go a little further—including such strategies as more advertising showing LGBTQ+ people, raising awareness of issues impacting LGBTQ+ people and supporting initiatives that aid LGBTQ+ charities.

The survey also shows that many people expect the acceptance of varying sexuality identities to increase. About three-quarters (74 percent) of the LGBTQ+ people surveyed and 61 percent of the non-LGBTQ+ people surveyed say they think “sexuality will be become more fluid in the future.”

The key role that queer media play in communications to both LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ audiences is also discussed. While nine out of 10 LGBTQ+ respondents say they seek out “specific queer media,” a surprising 61 of non-LGBTQ+ respondents also look for it. For non-LGBTQ+ people between 18 and 24, that number rises to 85 percent.

But queer media also have some work to do. The study finds that just 38 percent of those who seek out queer content are satisfied with the way LGBTQ+ people are represented. ○



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Retailer pricing often cause of product failure

Retailers' reluctance to lower prices on items is often the reason why new products fail, according to a recent study.

By Jon Gingerich

The post-COVID economy, characterized by stubborn inflation and continued supply-chain logjams, has caused prices on many consumer goods to skyrocket in the last year, putting retailers in a bind. Faced with demand uncertainty, retailers are often forced to make a decision when a new item initially sells poorly: adjust the price or take that product off their shelves.

According to a new study published in marketing journal *Marketing Science*, several specific variables often make retailers reluctant to adjust prices on a new inventory that's underperforming. Moreover, retailers' reluctance to lower that item's price is often the reason why those products fail.

The study, which sought to understand what influences a retailer's decision to adjust product prices, focused on "price frictions," or obstacles that make it more difficult or less cost-effective for retailers to lower prices.

While it's generally understood that price frictions limit the frequency of price changes, the study found that price frictions also contribute to new products' outright failure. Specifically, the study discovered that when price frictions are high, retailers generally respond not by adjusting prices but instead by simply discontinuing that product altogether.

Retailers often make adjustments to an item's initial price in order to generate sales. Traditionally, higher-than-usual inventory, sluggish customer demand—often caused by inflation, which can even hurt holiday shopping seasons—and recessionary economic conditions are among the reasons why retailers discount an item's price.

But sometimes, certain roadblocks—or "price frictions"—make retailers hesitant to reduce those prices to generate sales, even when initial sales are sluggish.

To evaluate when and how retailers decide whether to lower prices or discontinue

the sale of underperforming new products, the study's authors identified new, poorly-performing retail products spanning 30 categories being sold at stores in 47 U.S. metropolitan areas. Researchers also aimed their focus on new stores, based on the assumption that operating in an uncertain environment, new retailers will be more likely to make price adjustments after observing low initial sales of a new product.

The study identified three common reasons why retailers may be reluctant to adjust the price of a new product. The first involves the timing of price changes on related products. The second involves state price-labeling laws, which require that retailers label every item in a store with a price sticker, thus incurring additional labor costs anytime prices need to be lowered. The third is when a product's price ends with .99¢, a price which retailers are often hesitant to change, given that number psychologically conditions consumers to see a bargain.

The study suggests that while all three of these "price friction" variations are distinctly different, the greater the price frictions that are stacked against an item, the higher the likelihood that the item will simply be discontinued, as opposed to receiving a price adjustment.

The study's authors conclude that understanding the role these variables play in the discontinuation of items may help manufacturers and retailers better decide when and how they introduce new products.

"If manufacturers and retailers recognized the relationship between the timing of new product introductions and the scheduling of price changes, and they believed this relationship was causal, it seems likely that at least some of them would try to adjust the timing of their new product introductions. Although manufacturers often introduce new products at the same time at different retailers, they may instead want to adjust the timing of new product introductions at some retailers. This could provide more price flexibility if initial sales are low."

The study's findings appear in the current edition of *Marketing Science*, a peer-reviewed marketing journal published by the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS). The study, "Price Frictions and the Success of New Products," was authored by Diego Aparicio of IESE Business School in Barcelona, Spain, and Duncan Simester of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. ○

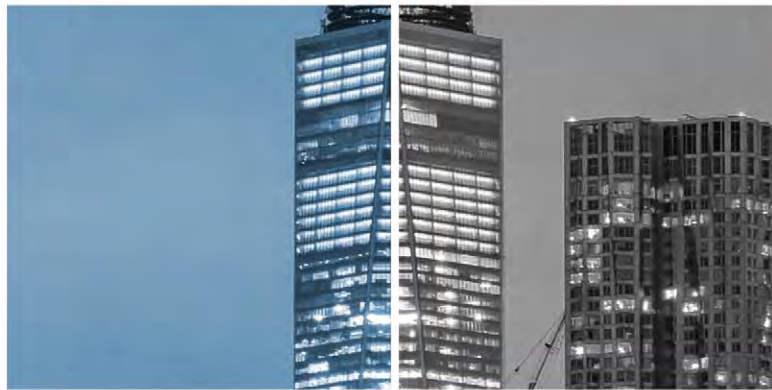


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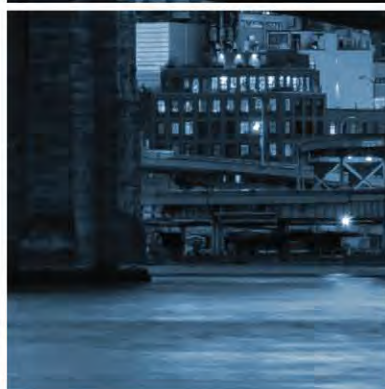
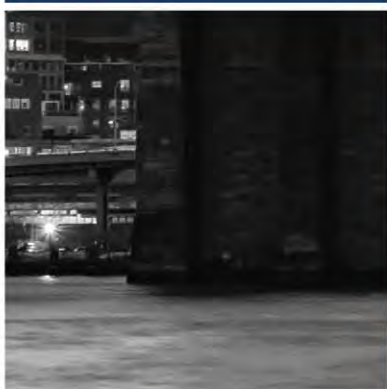
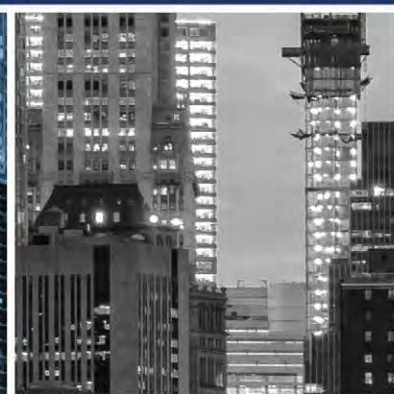
Strategic Communications at the Intersection of Valuation and Reputation



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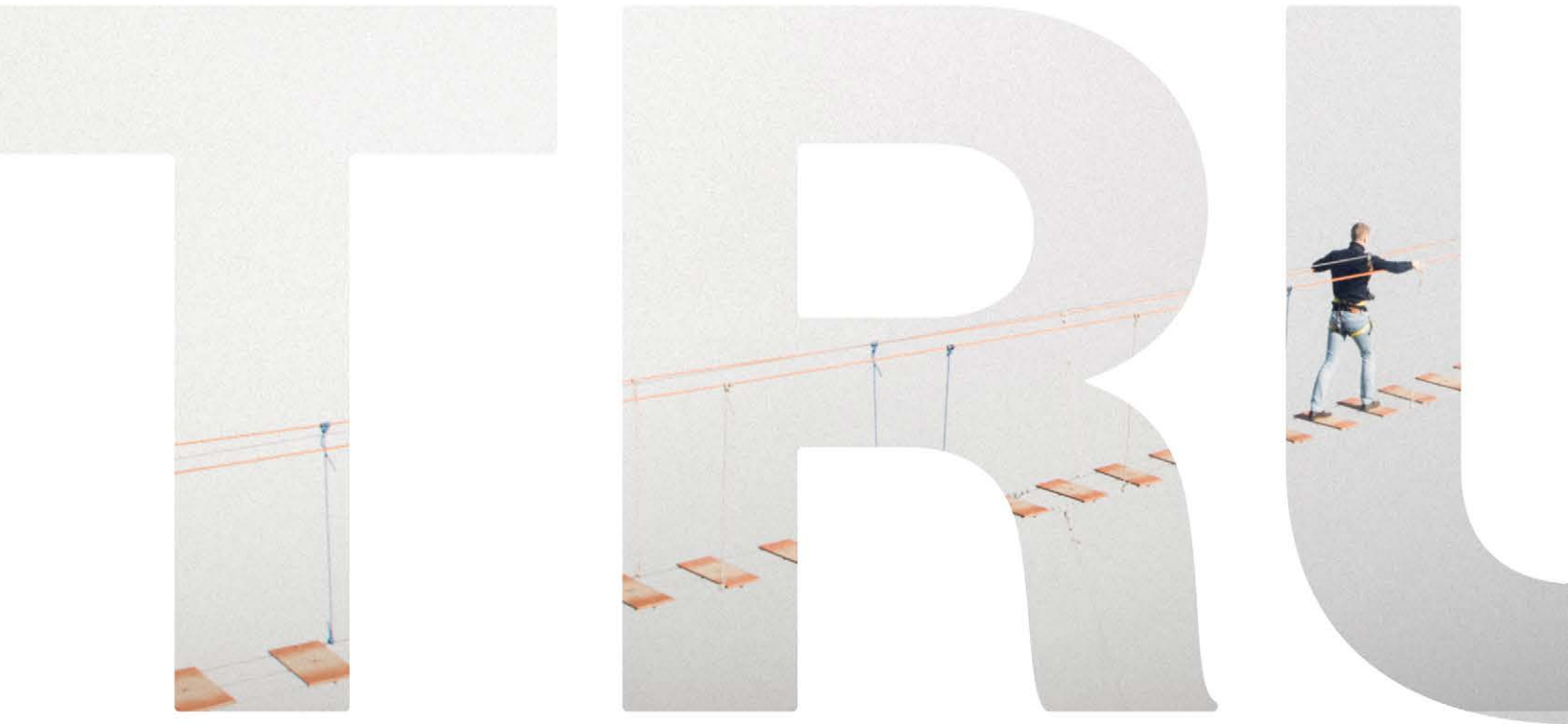


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competitive disruption and
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Brunswick recruits Google's Fitzpatrick

Michael Fitzpatrick, Google's Director for Global Strategy and Innovation, global affairs, will join Brunswick Group in Washington on Dec. 6.

He will advise clients on regulatory and public policy matters related to emerging digital technologies and crisis management.



Michael Fitzpatrick

Prior to his three-year run at Google, Fitzpatrick headed regulatory advocacy, global law and policy at General Electric.

Fitzpatrick developed strategy for emerging digital industrial policy issues affecting additive manufacturing, artificial intelligence, automated and unmanned aerial transportation, spectrum and the Future of Work.

He also served as a member of GE's Global Government Affairs and Policy Leadership team during his eight-year stint.

Fitzpatrick worked in the Obama White House as Associate Administrator, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, was a Partner at Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, and Senior Advisor during the Clinton administration for regulatory reform efforts. ○

Navarro-McKay to exit BerlinRosen

Alex Navarro-McKay, the leader of BerlinRosen's Campaigns and Elections practice, is departing the shop after a 14-year run.

The Democratic shop handled more than 170 races in 28 states during 2022, winning 100-plus of them.

It helped elect five new Democrats to Congress: Dan Goldman and Pat Ryan (NY), Greg Casar (TX), Summer Lee (PA) and Maxwell Frost (FL). The firm also helped Ruwa Romman become the first Muslim woman to serve in the Georgia State house and the first Pakistani elected office in the Peachtree State.

BR claims to have helped "stop the red wave in its tracks," while protecting abortion access and promoting gun safety reform.



Alex Navarro-McKay

Navarro-McKay, who joined BR from the John Edwards for President campaign, plans to consult and teach at Columbia's University School of International and Public Affairs.

Isaac Goldberg, a six-year veteran of BR, will take over for Navarro-McKay. ○

Brunswick's Lagana switches to Invariant

Brunswick Group's Susan Lagana has joined Invariant's strategic communications and public affairs team.

As a Partner at Brunswick, Lagana advised clients on policymaking and handled media relations in political capitals around the globe.

Prior to Brunswick, Lagana was Managing Director and EVP at BCW Global.

She worked in the Obama administration as PA Director for the Department of Transportation, where she worked on the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act; and at the Department of Defense as Communications Director for the Navy.

Invariant CEO Heather Podesta said Lagana has counseled clients on a wide array of policy, litigation and reputation issues.

She expects Lagana's background in emerging technologies, antitrust and infrastructure policy will provide immediate value to Invariant's clients. ○



Susan Lagana

Bloomberg's Deveau to Longacre Square

Scott Deveau, a deals reporter at Bloomberg News, has joined Longacre Square Partners as a Managing Director.

During his eight-year run, Deveau covered shareholder activism, mergers and acquisitions, IPOs and other special situations.

His primary focus was on high-profile shareholder activists, such as Carl Icahn, Bill Ackman and Dan Loeb.

Prior to Bloomberg, Deveau was business reporter for Toronto's National Post for seven years, a war correspondent in Afghan-



Scott Deveau

istan for Canwest News Service and a reporter for The Globe and Mail.

The native Canadian will help Longacre Square build a Canada financial communications offering. ○

Energy Pro Venuto joins Cornerstone

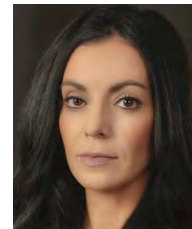
Sarah Venuto, Director of External Affairs at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, will join Cornerstone Government Affairs on Feb. 1.

At the FERC, Venuto dealt with issues related to climate change, environmental injustice, transmission policy and pipeline permitting.

She also was the FERC's liaison to the White House, EPA and Interior/Energy Depts.

Prior to her FERC post, Venuto was VP-Public Policy at Duke Energy, where she advanced its net zero carbon and methane emissions goals; Chief Counsel to Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV); Head of Federal Government Affairs at America's Natural Gas Alliance and Government Relations Director at CenterPoint Energy.

Geoff Gonella, Cornerstone President, said Venuto's service on Capitol Hill, in the executive branch and with entities throughout the energy industry "will add immediate value to our clients and the firm." ○



Sarah Venuto

McAfee hires Condé Nast's Findlay

McAfee appoints Deirdre Findlay as SVP and CMO. Findlay joins the company from Condé Nast, where she was Global CMO and Head of Consumer Revenue, leading consumer marketing efforts for brands including Vogue, Vanity Fair and The New Yorker.

Findlay previously served as Global CMO at Stitch Fix and Senior Director of Global Hardware Marketing at Google. In her new position, Findlay will oversee all worldwide marketing and communication efforts and report to Greg Johnson, President and CEO of McAfee. ○



Deirdre Findlay

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David A. Ball, President & Founder
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Crises seldom appear conveniently at 9 a.m. on a Monday. Even before a reporter calls out of the blue or a TV news van sets up out front, organizations need a trusted partner ready to step in to help minimize damage, maintain their reputation, and position them for future success.

Ball Consulting Group, LLC is an award-winning, full-service strategic communications firm that specializes in crisis communications, planning and management.

Founded in 2004 and based in the Boston area but with clients worldwide, we have helped lead organizations through many types of crises, including bankruptcies and closures, criminal misdeeds, cyberattacks, food and drug recalls, government settlements, lawsuits, labor strikes, layoffs, natural disasters, regulatory actions, and sexual harassment.

We have built a reputation for not only providing highly strategic guidance during challenging and complex crises, but also for helping organizations identify weak points and prevent a crisis from ever occurring. We help clients prepare for any situation by creating a comprehensive crisis communications plan that identifies the crisis management team, establishes communication protocols and provides step-by-step guidance.

We take immense pride in our ability to bring a guiding hand, abundant experience and confidential counsel to help organizations overcome crisis and emerge stronger.

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- *PRWeek's* Best in Corporate Branding, Boutique Agency of the Year, Best Place to Work
- *The Observer's* PR Power List

Our crisis practice is designed with proactive and reactive approaches in mind, because sometimes you need help right now. Our approach **prepares** you with plans, tabletop exercises, and train-

ing. We **respond** with monitoring, counsel, and internal and external stakeholder relations, and we help you **recover** with a full review and any necessary media, social and SEO activities to restore your reputation.

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- One Crosswind responder had oversight of the entire U.S. Navy public and community communications channels during multiple national and international crises and operations.

- Another, a much-decorated combat medic, returned to the Lone Star state to help handle our own regional catastrophes and critical calamities.

- A third Crosswind team member led response teams from the world's largest defense company and the energy industry's most maverick corporation through multiple calamities, financial setbacks and achievements.

Our broad experience and deployments include messaging for critical litigation and restructuring, navigation to safety of one of the largest university systems in the nation, frontline defense of the industry leader among national healthcare providers, course corrections for marketing the state's most expensive highway build, and removal of impediments to progress of disruptive technologies across the energy, biotech, engineering and financial industries.

We are the leading regional public communications and marketing-communications firm based in Texas, with deep national and international *Fortune* 500 experience and seasoned talent, connecting, informing and creating inspiring work. We re-tune brands and reputations to broaden public awareness. We reframe national and international narratives to deeply engage with core customers and influencers.

Texas is our home but our clients have global audiences and worldwide impact. We have deep roots in the state and understand how to bring Texas and Texas enterprise to the world and how to bring the world to Texas.

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Dentons Global Advisors is an expert-led advisory firm that provides integrated solutions for clients in an increasingly complex, regulated and interconnected business environment. Comprising Albright Stonebridge Group and a deep bench of communications, public affairs, government relations and strategy consultants, we help clients engage with governments and regulatory bodies, navigate public disclosures and transactions within the private and capital markets, and manage their reputations through critical moments of change, challenge or opportunity. Our relationship with Dentons, the world's largest law firm, means clients can draw upon integrated legal expertise and strategic advisory services when and where they need them.

Our team of experts has significant experience advising boards and management teams on the most complex and high-stakes reputational issues and crises of the last decade. In these situations, we help protect our client's brand, valuation, reputation and permission to operate by ensuring accurate representation of facts, maintaining credibility, strengthening relationships, reducing negative legal and/or political consequences, ensuring business continuity, driving employee engagement and protecting corporate value. Specific examples include: cybersecurity and privacy matters, product recalls, litigation, government investigations, executive transitions, labor relations disputes, workforce reductions, human resources issues, operational incidents, financial disclosures, as well as environmental, financial or social activism.

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Dragon Horse Agency was one of the first global ad agencies to identify the value and the necessity of an integrated business and marketing strategy delivering customized solutions. Dragon Horse Agency's business strategists and creative architects integrate the synergies of business and marketing analytics and strategy into one powerful solution called DragonONE. Dragon Horse Agency is led by a highly experienced team of partners with over 60 years of combined professional experience in business and advertising.

Dragon Horse Agency specializes in all forms of Public Relations and Marketing, providing customized end-to-end solutions.

Dragon Horse Agency also offers an industry-leading digital and social media artificial intelligence platform called DragonIQ bundled with a data analytics reporting product called DragonVISION.

DragonIQ's and DragonVISION's A.I. bundle is a precision optimization platform enabling companies and brands to drive tactical engagement, 24/7, worldwide, with multiple campaigns running in unison across all platforms.

Dragon Horse Agency is your architect for a successful business marketing foundation, leverage the highly skilled professional team of Dragon Horse writers, creators, designers, technicians, Internet/social media experts, camera and film professionals, tv/radio/print producers, media buyers, brand managers, analysts, business strategists and more all under one company.

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FGS Global (formerly Sard Verbinen & Co and Finsbury Glover Hering) is the strategic advisor for the stakeholder economy. FGS Global's team includes leaders in all aspects of strategic communications, including corporate reputation, crisis management, government affairs, and transformation and change, and is the leading force in financial communications worldwide. FGS Global offers clients seamless and integrated support across the globe, with offices in 26 countries and more than 1,200 professionals across multidisciplinary practice areas, including design and creative, digital strategy, and research and insights.

FGS Global delivers the expertise and insights to help you stay a step ahead of complex and fast-breaking issues making sure you are prepared in advance and ready to communicate with calmness, clarity and consistency when situations arise. We map threats, develop strategies and build infrastructure to help you navigate the moment and stay focused on what's important. When you're facing intense scrutiny, our team of business, media, communications, legal and government affairs experts will help you respond rapidly, strategically and powerfully with an integrated campaign.

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From business transformation, cybersecurity issues, executive leadership transition, financial restatement, government investigations, litigation, product recalls to shareholder relations, our experts in Consumer Products, Health, Economic Development, Education, Manufacturing, Public Affairs, Energy and Sustainability, Technology and Travel, blend crisis experience with sector expertise. At a time of global uncertainty, when issues rise to the level of business disruption, our team of skilled crisis experts helps clients navigate the complex communications landscape, maintain the confidence of key stakeholders, and protect reputation and brand.

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Founded in 1997, French/West/Vaughan (FWV) is the Southeast's leading public relations, public affairs, advertising and digital media agency, a distinction it has held since 2001.

FWV has become one of the nation's go-to agencies for issues management and crisis counseling work, having defended the reputation of dozens of high-profile individuals, institutions, companies and associations. For a quarter century, we have helped prepare, guide and support our clients through challenging, unpredicted and even unprecedented times, including workplace accidents and shootings, construction-related accidents, environmental disaster response/plans (major oil spills, fires), natural disasters and driver negligence, among many others. Our experience ranges from healthcare to consumer goods clients, to sports organizations and food and beverage companies — each of which has been faced with its own unique challenges and issues.

Recent crisis communications work includes:

- Managed the aftermath of one of the largest commercial fires in the history of a large Southern metropolitan area. Worked with the construction company and contractor who was building the structure, managed news media, provided media training and led social media support.
- Provided crisis communications and media training for executives of a large senior living facility conglomerate accused of negligent behavior by its employees.
- Worked with a national poultry company accused of environmental contamination. This included media training, media relations and creating a strategic public relations and advertising plan.

In addition to its extensive crisis and issues management experience, FWV's passionate team of expert storytellers works with many of the world's leading companies and brands, including Wrangler, Proximo, Melitta, Volvo Trucks North America, Teen Cancer America and the N.C. Department of Transportation, just to name a few.

Among its partners and affiliates are: FWV Fetching, a pet and animal health PR and marketing agency; AMP3 PR, a fashion, beauty, luxury and lifestyle PR firm (New York City); CGPR, an active lifestyle, outdoor, ski, fashion, technology and travel PR and consumer brand marketing agency (Greater Boston); The Millerschin Group, a leading mobility and B2B-focused PR firm (Detroit); and Prix Productions, the company's longform content feature and documentary film division, with offices in Raleigh and L.A. FWV employs more than 130 public relations, public affairs, social media,

advertising and digital marketing experts between its Raleigh, N.C., headquarters and offices around the country.

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Mark McCall, Global Segment Leader

C-suites, boards of directors, and business leaders from around the world come to FTI Strategic Communications with their most complex, business-critical issues that require diverse skill sets and integrated disciplines. As part of a global business advisory firm, we help these organizations manage change, mitigate risk and enhance their market position by combining decades of deep subject matter expertise with functional and disciplinary experience.

Our financial communications professionals serve as trusted advisors to management teams on a range of capital markets events as well as other stakeholder issues throughout the corporate life-cycle. We help clients navigate their most pressing challenges and opportunities around M&A, IPOs, restructuring, capital raising, corporate governance, ESG strategy, proxy fights, and shareholder activism. Our integrated capabilities in financial communications, corporate reputation and public affairs help clients protect and drive business value.

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Steve Halsey, Chief Growth Officer

G&S Business Communications helps innovative companies change the world. Our mission is to inspire people to take action, resulting in business growth for our clients. Our vision is to fuel transformation in the five key industries we serve, Advanced Manufacturing & Energy, Agribusiness, Financial & Professional Services, Healthcare and Home & Building.

Our researchers, media strate-

gists, storytellers, and engagement experts meet each client at the intersection of business and communications. Our strategies help B2B clients meet their business goals, and our work produces meaningful results that move markets. Our commitment to measurement ensures that we are constantly learning and improving to make your program better.

We have a global staff of 140+ people, who operate primarily from four offices, New York, Raleigh, Chicago and Basel, but we offer our clients a global network of support through PROI World-wide partners.

GLADSTONE PLACE PARTNERS

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 www.gladstoneplace.com

Steven Lipin, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Lauren Odell, Partner and Chief Operating Officer
Christina Stenson, Partner
Felipe Ucrós, Partner
Vanessa Esparza, Partner

Gladstone Place Partners is a strategic financial communications firm headquartered in New York with an office in San Francisco. We specialize in advising companies and investors at critical moments when communications can make a significant difference in achieving core objectives. We are a highly focused and experienced team with a broad range of backgrounds, including business leaders, communications professionals, finance professionals, and former senior journalists.

With global capabilities, our diverse team is designed to meet the evolving strategic communications needs of leading companies' CEOs, boards of directors, and heads of communications. Clients seek Gladstone Place Partners' counsel on a range of matters, including mergers & acquisitions, crisis situations, corporate reputation and strategic positioning, IPOs and spinoffs, global trade and supply-chain matters, cybersecurity, shareholder activism, quarterly earnings announcements, and corporate governance communications.

Our boutique approach, with a focus on independent advice and confidentiality, enhances our ability to help our clients navigate layered and critical matters. We

— Continued on page 50

WHEN EVERYTHING IS ON THE LINE WHO DO YOU WANT REPRESENTING YOU?

“The City’s Most Prominent Crisis-Management Firm.” – *New York Times*

“The crew from the television magazine is banging on your door. You can have the security guard throw them out and know they’ll trash you. Or you can sit down with them and figure that out of the hour you give them, they’ll use only 40 seconds on air. And those 40 seconds will make you look very guilty. Better solution, call Mike Sitrick.” – *Forbes Magazine*

“The Winston Wolf of public relations had arrived. Wolf, you will recall, was the fixer in *Pulp Fiction*. Played by Harvey Keitel, he washed away assassins’ splatter and gore. Sitrick cleans up the messes of companies, celebrities and others, and he’s a strategist who isn’t averse to treating PR as combat.”—*Fortune Magazine*

“Now (they) have hired Michael Sitrick, whose Los Angeles (based) public relations firm is known for going atomic on opponents, using “truth squads,” “wheel-of-pain” tactics and high profile journalists (to write profiles...That’s unbelievable (said the head of the PR firm for the opposing entity). This is the heavy artillery.” – *BusinessWeek*

TechCrunch: “When it comes to handling crisis situations in particular, Sitrick is as well regarded as they come.” “We’ve been in a tricky position a number of times and the thinking (in Silicon Valley) has historically been to ignore reporters, says one Bay Area tech founder. “Sitrick takes the opposite approach. You’re made to get into the trenches and engage.”

“You cannot put your firm’s interests ahead of the client’s interests,” **Michael Sitrick as quoted in the *New York Times*.**

SITRICK AND COMPANY

CORPORATE, FINANCIAL, TRANSACTIONAL, REPUTATIONAL AND CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS
WWW.SITRICK.COM

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800-288-8809 (24-HOURS/DAY, 7-DAYS/WEEK)

GLADSTONE PLACE

— Continued from page 48

understand the complexity and super-charged nature of today's environment, which is why we have social and digital capabilities embedded in our DNA. This includes hands-on experience with social media, including channels frequented by retail investors such as Reddit and StockTwits.

Gladstone Place Partners strives to build long-term, trusted relationships by delivering the highest quality work product, paired with uncompromising ethics, integrity, and judgment. Our work is underpinned by a culture of professional excellence, meritocracy, and diversity.

Our founder and chief executive officer, Steve Lipin, has spent more than 30 years at the intersection of the corporate world, Wall Street, and the media as a leading financial journalist and top communications strategist to C-suites, boards of directors, and chief communications officers.

H/ADVISORS ABERNATHY

abernathy.h-advisors.global
New York, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington D.C.

Tom Johnson, CEO
Carina Davidson, President
Kendell Fitter, Managing Director and Head of Crisis

A trusted strategic communications advisor, H/Advisors Abernathy specializes in advising CEOs, board directors and senior executives on effective stakeholder communications and engagement. For nearly 40 years, we have been entrusted by clients across sectors to help build, protect and enhance their reputations, boost value and seize new opportunities.

We are one of the nation's leading crisis management firms, having advised on some of the most high-profile and consequential challenges of the past four decades. Combining our strategic acumen with our extensive experience across industries and disciplines, we ensure business continuity, optimize outcomes for stakeholders and minimize reputational damage. We provide 24/7 real-time, bespoke communications counsel, including stakeholder engagement, media relations, scenario planning and litigation support, all informed

by the latest industry and digital trends, to help our clients navigate their crisis and achieve their business goals. Our distinct approach to crisis and risk management has been recognized by Chambers and Partners—the leading research and rankings firm for the legal and related industries.

Abernathy's crisis management experience spans a broad range of issues and events, from workplace misconduct to product recalls, cybersecurity to employee activism and physical disasters to mass violence. We also manage significant corporate matters such as C-suite changes, regulatory issues and white-collar crime. We are also experts in crisis preparedness, guiding clients through quick diagnostics or simulations for boards of directors and executive teams. We help our clients identify their greatest risks, effectively leverage their resources and implement tailored best practices to navigate effectively through any crisis.

ICR

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Thomas Ryan, CEO
Don Duffy, President

Established in 1998, ICR partners with its clients to execute strategic communications and advisory programs that achieve business goals, build awareness and credibility, and enhance long-term enterprise value. The firm's highly-differentiated service model, which pairs capital markets veterans with senior communications professionals, brings deep sector knowledge and relationships to approximately 1,000 clients across more than 20 industry groups. ICR's healthcare practice operates under the Westwicke brand (westwicke.com). Today, ICR is one of the largest and most experienced independent comms. and advisory firms in North America, maintaining offices in New York, Norwalk, Boston, Baltimore, San Francisco and Beijing. Learn more at icrinc.com. Follow us on Twitter at @ICRPR and LinkedIn.

ICR's Crisis & Special Situations Group advises clients through dedicated experts across all categories of response and planning including, shareholder activism, short-seller attacks, M&A, bankruptcy/restructuring, litigation support, executive transition, cybersecurity and general crisis.

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Additional offices: San Francisco, Chicago, Washington, DC and London.

Jamie Diaferia, Founder & CEO
Zach Olsen, President

Infinite Global is an award-winning strategic communications agency advising a wide range of domestic and international clients facing difficult scenarios in which reputational, legal and commercial risk is high.

We advise organizations and individuals, providing counsel and tactical support to mitigate risk and protect reputations when it matters most. We have broad sector experience managing our clients' reputational risk, often involving active litigation, regulatory and political pressure, media attention and heightened public scrutiny. Infinite has an established data breach response practice that helps clients across a range of industries—including financial and legal services, education and healthcare—mitigate, prepare for and respond to the risks endemic to housing sensitive data.

Our work spans each phase of the crisis lifecycle: from pre-crisis preparation and planning, to rapid crisis response and post-crisis reputational repair.

JOELE FRANK, WILKINSON BRIMMER KATCHER

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Joelle Frank, Managing Partner
Matthew Sherman, President

The events of the past several years underscore the importance of effective corporate communications regardless of the crisis. Communications to internal and external audiences must instill confidence, articulate the issues and describe how challenges are

being addressed.

Whatever the crisis, Joelle Frank helps companies navigate new realities and unexpected circumstances. We help shape and implement effective communications strategies that are transparent and nimble enough to adapt to rapidly evolving situations. Indeed, in a crisis, a company is judged not only on the crisis itself, but also how it prepared, managed and communicated through the event.

KARV COMMUNICATIONS

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Andrew Frank, Founder and President
Eric Andrus, Executive Vice President

KARV Communications is a globally recognized strategic communications firm based in New York City, specializing in sophisticated corporate and financial communications, crisis and personal reputation management, litigation support and public affairs. The KARV philosophy is simple—we accomplish the goals set by our corporate, government and non-profit clients all over the world, through an extensive network and an unbiased approach to solving problems.

KARV is led by a team of talented professionals with wide-ranging global experience in a variety of industries: finance, media, energy, consumer goods and services, technology, healthcare, gaming, entertainment, government and non-profit sectors and more.

We offer clients the broad spectrum of relationships that we have cultivated over many years: legal, lobbying, financial advising, management consultancy, technology, risk management/business intelligence, and other in-house or outside advisors. Through these relationships, KARV brings a balanced and comprehensive approach to issues management and strategic counsel to our clients in high-stakes situations.

Many firms offer talent and experience; however, few offer talent, experience, and worldwide relationships. This is what sets KARV Communications apart as we deliver custom-tailored communications strategies to reach all critical stakeholders.

KEKST CNC

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Jeremy Fielding and Bernhard Meising, Co-Chief Executive Officers

Many companies and institutions around the world will confront unforeseen events that may well alter their future, pose unprecedented challenges, and potentially define their reputation for years to come.

What is required in these circumstances is an expert, experienced strategic communications partner to work with senior management and a Board of Directors to develop and execute the necessary integrated communications strategies to gain the trust and confidence of key stakeholders in this era of accelerated change.

Kekst CNC is ideally equipped to help global business and institutional leaders address these challenges ... as well as their opportunities. For more than 50 years, our team of more than 250 experienced professionals, located in 15 offices around the world, has partnered with leading organizations of all sizes to: articulate new business strategies and a vision for success; explain an enterprise transforming event and its significance; help navigate complex business challenges or crises; build support among key stakeholders; and, work to strengthen and protect our clients' credibility, reputation, and brand.

As trusted advisors, Kekst CNC's professionals bring to client engagements high energy, sound judgment and expertise on such high stakes matters as: M&A, shareholder activism and governance, crisis communications, restructurings, regulatory investigations / resolutions, litigation support, complex investor relations, IPO communications, issues and reputation management, leadership transitions, employee engagement, as well as digital and social communications—providing exceptional counsel and execution supported by objective insights, based on access to proprietary research, data and analytics capabilities.

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Jeff Gaunt, Managing Director,

Crisis & Reputation
Katie Barnes, Director, Crisis & Reputation

Lambert's award-winning crisis & reputation team provides on-call crisis support, crisis communication planning and audits, crisis tabletop scenarios, media and crisis training and more to clients around the world. The Lambert team prides itself on serving as an extension of our clients' leadership teams and in-house communications counsel. We have successfully helped our clients manage communications around a wide variety of crises and incidents, including national media investigations, class action lawsuits, regulatory enforcement actions, executive terminations, environmental disasters, bankruptcies, criminal cases and more.

We have extensive experience working with multinational and publicly traded companies, private equity firms, and sector leaders in industries including automotive, manufacturing, health care, consumer goods, education, non-profit, agriculture, energy, finance and more. We also have specialized experience in more complex legal and regulatory matters, including state and federal criminal cases, SEC investigations, and Superfund site remediation.

THE LEVINSON GROUP (TLG)

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The Levinson Group (TLG) is a full-service strategic communications and public relations firm with a global reach and impact, specializing in advising C-Suites, Boards of Directors, influential individuals, law firms, and other leaders in corporations, non-profits, and other organizations in their most mission-critical moments.

Since its founding in 2013, TLG has become well known for serving as a strategic partner and advisor in high stakes matters relating to corporate reputation and governance; government response and sensitive investigations; public affairs and issues management; crisis and risk management; litigation com-

munications; and global financial communications including corporate restructuring, executive transitions, mergers, acquisitions, and other transitions. Headquartered in Washington, DC and New York, NY, the firm also has deep expertise advising multiple Am Law 50 law firms.

Many of TLG's team of expert communications advisors come from backgrounds in journalism, politics, government, and the private sector. The team specializes in creating and implementing targeted, always-on communications campaigns crafted to cultivate meaningful engagement with valued stakeholders. TLG's expert team have emerged as industry leaders, securing recognition twice as the "Crisis Manager of the Year" from *PR News*, "Women to Watch" by *PR Week*, and "Top 100 Legal Strategists" by *Lawdragon*.

Chambers & Partners and *National Law Journal* ranked TLG among the top public relations and communications firms in the U.S., noting the firm's proven track record in Crisis Management and Litigation Communications. TLG has also been recognized for its commitment to leading social impact programs and for its robust pro bono practice.

THE MONTGOMERY STRATEGIES GROUP

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Michael W. Robinson, Chairman & CEO, mrobinson@tmsgsr.com

The Montgomery Strategies Group is a full-service agency with broad expertise in crisis and litigation communications, reputation management, public affairs and regulatory/legislative advocacy, financial communications and transactions, as well as marketing and brand awareness.

We draw on decades of collective experience as trusted counselors and strategists to public and private company C-suite executives, boards of directors, private equity investors, hedge fund managers, and trade association officials—with a team that includes former senior communications leaders from the SEC, The White House, Department of Justice, FINRA, NASDAQ, Capitol Hill, the In-

vestment Company Institute (ICI), a host of *Fortune* 500 companies—T-Mobile, Lenovo, Honeywell, GE, Freddie Mac, and ExxonMobil among them—as well as a wide cross-section of global communications and marketing consultancies.

The breadth of our award-winning team includes expertise across all types of criminal and civil litigation, regulatory enforcement and policy actions, congressional and state AG investigations, and securing the legislative/regulatory approvals necessary to complete key corporate transactions. We provide proven depth in a number of industries and issues, with a particular focus on financial services, banking, and tax; healthcare and medical devices; consumer-facing industries and product recalls; data privacy, cyber breach, and technology policy; global trade and supply chain; and corporate governance.

MONTIETH & COMPANY

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Montieth M. Illingworth, CEO & Global Managing Partner
Perry Goldman, Sen. Dir., Prof. Services, Crisis Management & Litigation PR

Katarina Matic, Sen. Dir., Marketing Communications, Issues Management & Public Affairs

Becky Nye, Director, Fin. Services
Cameron Penny, Director, EMEA
Joyce Lee, APAC Lead/Hong Kong

Montieth & Company is a global specialist communications consultancy that provides a fully integrated set of communications services and solutions that deliver high-value, measurable outcomes for organizations across sectors and global money and media markets.

We are recognized globally for our issues and crisis management, and litigation PR expertise which is provided throughout the world. This work includes crisis planning, strategic counsel, media relations, and stakeholder communications support on the full range of civil and criminal matters from business disputes to regulatory and law enforcement actions. We have advised on many of the most high-profile, headline issues, crises, and court actions in the world.

Our mission is to help our clients achieve influence, realize their ambitions, and solve their most critical problems. Central to our value-add

— Continued on page 52

MONTIETH & COMPANY

— Continued from page 51

is achieving outcomes in our issues, crisis and litigation counsel that protects the corporate reputation and, where relevant, supports key corporate initiatives. These range from expanding profitable market share to M&A, corporate competitions, management transitions, restructurings, commercial conflicts, government and community relations.

Montieth & Company's flexible, integrated, and budget-efficient cross-border business model enables us to reach multiple media markets via our global hubs in New York, London, and Hong Kong, and our affiliates around the globe.

THE NEXT SOLUTIONS GROUP

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Ray Kerins, CEO (Former SVP of Corporate Affairs at Bayer and Public Affairs/Comms. VP at Pfizer)
Justin Blum, Managing Director of Content/Issues Management (Former Sr. Editor at Bloomberg News and *Washington Post* Reporter)
Dan Childs, Managing Director of Global Media Relations (Former Dir. of External Communications at Bayer and ABC News Sr. Producer)
Mike Harley, Managing Director of Business Intelligence (Former NSA and Military Intelligence)

Our senior team of professionals has a broad range of experience in business, government, and journalism. We have supported C-suite executives, top government officials, military, and non-profit leaders.

We protect and advance our clients' reputation while ensuring alignment with organizational objectives. We support and coach executives and leaders in preparation for engagement with key audiences, including investors, employees, regulators, and journalists. At a time when companies and their leaders are coming under relentless assault online, we monitor the clear, deep, and dark web to protect their safety and reputation.

We have represented multinational companies in sectors including healthcare, technology, consumer goods and financial services. Our senior leaders are engaged. We do the day-to-day work. Clients won't get passed off to junior staff. We have engaged with companies that

have been under investigations by various governmental agencies, including the Justice Department and the Federal Trade Commission. We have worked on class action lawsuits, executive issues/transitions, corporate layoffs, anti-corporate activism, and cyber/ransomware attacks. Our work has also included M&A, regulatory and product issues such as recalls.

PADILLA

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Chris Werle, Senior Vice President
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Crises can come from any direction, and each one represents a moment of truth for your brand and your reputation. Fortunately, the Crisis Communications + Critical Issues Management Team at Padilla can guide you from pre-crisis event preparation to crisis and critical issues event support. We help our clients perform at their absolute best on their very worst day by showing them how to maintain control in the midst of chaos.

That work begins before the crisis strikes. First we help our clients measure their level of preparedness with our Crisis IQ methodology. Based on that analysis, we develop plans and programming to address and mitigate the primary threats facing the business and simulations designed to stress test an organization's crisis preparedness.

Padilla is a full-service agency that transforms brands and organizations through strategically creative communications. Our work across a range of industry sectors is consistently recognized by industry partners such as *PRWeek* Awards, *PRovoke* IN2 SABRE Awards and *PRSA* Anvil Awards, among others. Padilla operates in seven cities in the U.S. through its family of brands, which includes, *SHIFT*, *FoodMinds*, and *Joe Smith*. As an *AVENIR GLOBAL* company and a founding member of the *Worldcom* Public Relations Group, the agency provides services to clients through 155 offices worldwide. Transform with purpose at PadillaCo.com.

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Steve Cody, CEO and Founder
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Jacqueline Kolek, EVP & Chief Innovation Officer
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Tara Lilien, Chief Talent Officer

Peppercomm is an award-winning strategic, integrated communications and marketing agency headquartered in New York City with office in San Francisco, London and Singapore. Acquired by Ruder Finn following 27 years of expertise serving blue chip and breakout clients, the agency has guided countless clients through a wide variety of issues and crises, managing corporate reputation on an ongoing basis. Experience includes "traditional" crises (consumer product recalls, social media crises, class action lawsuits, professional sports drug scandals, food contamination, pandemic-related issues) and more importantly, today, helping brands and leaders respond to societal controversies that matter. Increasingly, all stakeholders—from consumers and businesses to employees and community members—want to work with, for, and alongside brands that align with their values. But far too often, brands either ignore issues that their stakeholders care about, or make empty statements backed by no action or investment. Brands need a new playbook for determining if, when, and how to respond to societal issues. Peppercomm recently launched its new issues and crisis communications solution, *RepCompass*, that guides organizations through the development of an issues response framework aligned to their unique values and stakeholders, and successfully prepares for those critical moments when they have an opportunity to speak out (or not).

REEVEMARK

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Brandy Bergman, CEO & Founding Partner
Hugh Burns, **Paul Caminiti**, **Delia Cannan**, **Renée Soto**, Founding Partners

We are strategic communications specialists trusted by clients to advise leadership on navigating complex situations. Founded by five established practitioners of public and investor relations, Reevemark delivers big-firm expertise in a boutique package. We provide di-

rect and insightful counsel, develop top-quality written and digital content, and engage with key stakeholders, including the media and investors. We created Reevemark to focus on what really matters—delivering favorable outcomes for our clients.

Our practice areas include litigation support, crisis communications, bankruptcies and restructurings, shareholder activism and corporate governance, transactions, investor relations and corporate positioning programs, and reputation-al matters.

Reevemark has been recognized by *Chambers and Partners* for litigation support and crisis communications, *The Deal* as top global bankruptcy communications advisor, *Bloomberg* as a top ten global shareholder activism defense advisor and *Business Insider* for crisis and financial communications.

Clients Include: AIG, Bausch + Lomb, BigBear.ai, Carronade Capital, H.I.G. Capital, INNOVATE Corp., Sanderson Farms and The Children's Place.

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Michael S. Sitrick, Chairman & CEO

Less important than what you say about yourself is what others say about you.

• *The New York Times*: "The City's Most Prominent Crisis-Management Firm."

• *Forbes*: "The crew from the television magazine is banging on your door. You can have the security guard throw them out and know they'll trash you. Or you can sit down with them and figure that out of the hour you give them, they'll use only 40 seconds on air. And those 40 seconds will make you look very guilty. Better solution, call Mike Sitrick."

• *BusinessWeek*: "That's unbelievable. This is the heavy artillery." Quote is from the CEO of one of the largest PR firms in the world, after learning we were brought in on the other side of a contentious matter in which his firm was involved.

Since our founding 31 years ago, we have been consistently ranked among the top crisis and strategic communications firm in the nation.

The majority of the firm's senior executives are former editors and reporters from news organizations that include the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, Bloomberg, *Los Angeles Times*, *Forbes*, CBS News and NBC News. We also have former practicing attorneys and business executives.

Matters with which we have been involved include litigation support of all kinds; intellectual property matters, allegations of stock manipulation, wrongful termination, contract disputes, allegations of fraud and fraudulent inducement, wrongful death claims, allegations of illegal drug use, SEC matters, and a variety of other white-collar crimes. We have also handled criminal and civil cases against companies and their executives for such things as price fixing, insurance fraud, options backdating, antitrust violations, race and sex discrimination, sexual harassment, racism and #MeToo matters. We have a significant data breach, mergers and acquisitions and corporate governance practice and have done extensive work combatting short sellers. Other issues include sensitive environmental matters, racketeering cases, family disputes, and high-profile divorces, reputation management and reputational positioning. We have also been involved in helping to launch such firms as Oaktree Capital.

SLOANE & COMPANY

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Darren Brandt, Whit Clay,
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John Hartz, President
TJ White, Managing Director and
Head of Special Situations

Sloane & Company is an industry-leading strategic communications firm that provides a range of crisis-focused services around situations including: shareholder activism; litigation; unforeseen management changes; Board issues; employee issues; cybersecurity; natural disasters; product integrity; regulatory and legislative issues; bankruptcies / restructurings; environmental issues; and corporate governance. More broadly, we provide strategic counsel and support around corporate and financial public relations; transactions; strategic insights; messaging, analytics and

measurement; public affairs; and investor relations—to public and private companies as well as investors, associations and individuals.

We are experts at assisting clients when unforeseen events threaten to impact their business or damage their reputation. We are known for our intelligence, intensity, creativity and focus on getting results. Whether the situation calls for developing and delivering the right messages to the audiences that matter or advising on high-stakes deals or crises, our goal is the same—to drive winning outcomes for our clients.

We have become a go-to firm when these crises and special situations occur by listening to our clients, understanding the situation, determining the risks to their business and delivering candid advice to management teams, boards, executives and organizations when they need it most. Clients have the benefit of working with senior executives with decades of experience who offer professional counsel in all phases of crisis planning and response, leading to immediate results.

Beyond specific crisis situations, we develop effective and actionable contingency plans in close coordination with a client's legal, financial, marketing, communications and government relations/lobbying advisors. Our approach provides best-practices and enhances client procedures and appropriate training of personnel before and during a crisis. When the unexpected happens, we actively manage and support implementing the appropriate communications tactics. After the crisis subsides, we help clients restore their credibility and reputation in the marketplace.

STANTON

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Alex Stanton, CEO
Tom Faust, Charlyn Lusk,
Managing Directors
Liam Collopy, Matthew Conroy,
Michael Goodwin, Scott Lessne,
Katrin Lieberwirth, Sr. VPs

Stanton provides a full range of senior-level counsel to protect corporate reputations before, during and after a crisis hits, when critical issues arise, and through major transitions. Our expertise helps clients prevent crises through thoughtful planning and oversight. In the event a crisis does occur, we help

contain the situation by managing media coverage and executing proactive communications to offset reputational damage and repair relationships with key constituents.

Stanton works with senior leadership teams, corporate task forces, outside counsel and other advisors to develop comprehensive communications strategies that ensure our clients are fully prepared. We apply our decades of experience to create the right strategy and put the right support behind it to control the narrative from the start and stay focused on your priorities. Our experience spans a variety of situations including corporate litigation, cybersecurity, bankruptcy and restructuring, executive changes, consumer and special interest boycotts, workplace violence, manufacturing plan issues, employee misconduct, financial improprieties, environmental issues, product tampering and many others. Stanton's efforts help clients minimize negative attention and prevent escalation of vulnerabilities during crisis situations. That's why you've never heard of some of our best crisis work.

Clients include: Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty, Bain Capital, Bob's Furniture, Carl Marks Advisors, CityMD, CVC, HGGC, Immediation, Makena Capital, Sun Capital Partners and Winston & Strawn.

TAYLOR

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Bryan Harris, COO & Mng. Partner
John Liporace, Mike Costabile,
Managing Partners
Maeve Hagen, President

Taylor has a **history as a values-led organization** and is sharpening its focus as a **purpose-led marketing communications agency**.

As "Shapers of Possibility" we help the world's leading brands lean into the edge of their purpose to unlock opportunities for growth.

We create **platforms, experiences and moments** that open the door to **meaningful engagements**.

Our **heritage in public relations** and deep sports & entertainment expertise fuels **breakthrough creativity** across the entire media ecosystem.

Impactful **insights**, intentional **strategy**, imaginative **creative** and

influential **engagement** shape possibilities for our client partners.

We live our values every day, we walk the walk. From **publicly available diversity data** to **pro-bono partnerships**, we ensure access and opportunity for under-represented communities.

Our **diversity of thought is a tremendous asset** and our people provide a **unique edge in shaping the world** we want to live in and the mark we want to leave behind.

Clients include: AIG, Capital One, Captain Morgan, Crown Royal, Diageo, Gillette, Guinness, Panini America, P&G, Red Bull, Samsung, Secret, Smirnoff, Tide, UNCF and World Athletics.

TIERNEY

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hellotierney.com/about

Mary Stengel Austen, CEO
Tim Spreitzer, Executive VP

Tierney is an award winning, Philadelphia-based full-service marketing and communications agency, providing strategy, content, PR, media, creative and digital services. We are owned by The Interpublic Group (IPG), giving us access to a global network, unmatched media clout and industry-leading research and analytic tools.

Our public relations team includes 30+ practitioners; we're fully stocked with strategic thinkers who represent a variety of backgrounds and experience in consumer, B2B and crisis/issues management, across all industries—together, we can tackle just about any communications challenge.

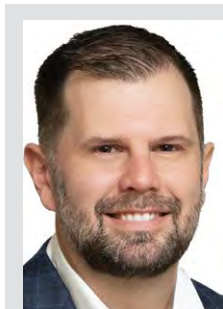
When it comes to reputation management and crisis communications, we understand the importance of helping organizations navigate some of their most challenging moments. For decades, our reputation management team has provided strategic counsel on the most sensitive issues. Our goal is to help our clients proactively assess their vulnerabilities, design plans to effectively prepare and manage a crisis and create solutions to avoid future crises. From crisis prevention and detection to 24-hour on-call support and robust material development, we cover the whole scope of the crisis world, with an approach that evolves as constantly as consumer and media landscapes.

But, don't take our word for it; talk to our references. Visit hellotierney.com to learn more. **O**

Tax planning considerations for 2023

By Dominic Rovano

With the new year upon us, it's important to consider various business needs such as staffing requirements, budget amounts, technology upgrades and client service initiatives along with tax updates.



Dominic Rovano, CPA, is a Co-Partner in Charge of Janover LLC's New York City office and leads the Professional Services group.

As tax season is quickly approaching, we've created a list of preliminary tax deadlines and other updates to help guide you through the 2023 tax planning process.

Required forms to keep on file

Employee benefits. Employees are to complete election forms for employee benefits

before January 1, 2023, such as the following:

- **401(k) deferrals** (see "changes and updates to rates and limits" section for changes to maximum deferrals for 2023).

- **Flex plan contributions.**

Employment eligibility verification—Form 1-9. This form is used to verify employee eligibility for employment for employees hired after 1986. It can be obtained on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website. There are penalties for failure to obtain a proper I-9 Form.

Statutory insurance. Make sure to have your certificates of coverage. Obtain certificates of coverage for independent contractors, as it's requested as part of routine audits of workers' compensation. Lack of these certificates will result in penalties.

Withholding requirements

Foreign Form 1042. This form is required for a withholding agent to report amounts subject to withholding as well as the tax withheld on income from foreign persons or entities. This form must be filed and provided to recipients by March 15, 2023.

Foreign Forms 8804, 8805 and 8813. These forms are used to report income and tax withheld from foreign partners:

- **Form 8804 and Form 8805** must be filed annually with the IRS by the 15th day of the third month following the partnership's year-end. Form 8805 needs to be filed for each foreign partner separately. Form 8804 serves as a transmittal form to accompany Form 8805. An extension for Form 8804 is granted with the filing of Form 7004, however, this isn't an extension to pay taxes due.

- **Form 8813** must be filed with each payment made for partnership withholding. These must be filed on or before the 15th of the fourth, sixth, ninth and twelfth months of the partnership's tax year.

- **Penalties and interest** will be imposed for late filing or failure to furnish. Consult your tax advisor for further information.

Changes and updates to rates and limits Social Security and Medicare. The 2023 Social Security and Medicare taxable wage-base tables are as follows:

- **2023 Social Security.** Wage base: \$160,200. Tax rate: 6.20 percent. Maximum tax: \$9,932.40.

- **2023 Medicare.** Wage base: All wages. Tax rate: 1.45 percent. Maximum tax: No limit.

0.9 percent of additional Medicare tax on wages and compensation is required to be withheld on wages paid in excess of \$200,000 for single, \$250,000 for married filing jointly and \$125,000 for married filing separately taxpayers for 2023.

- **401(k) deferral.** The maximum 401(K) deferral and catch-up contribution has increased for 2023. The 2023 maximum 401(K) deferral for non-self-employed individuals age 49 and under is \$22,500. The catch-up contribution for individuals age 50 and older is \$7,500. The maximum deferral for individuals age 50 and older is \$30,000.

For self-employed individuals, the maximum company contribution for individuals age 49 and under for 2023 is \$66,000. Catch-up contribution for individuals age 50 and older is \$7,500. Maximum deferral for individuals age 50 and older is \$73,500.

To take advantage of the catch-up contribution deferrals, you'll need to make sure your plan documents are amended and updated to reflect catch-up contributions to be permitted.

- **IRA contribution.** Modified AGI phase-outs related to traditional IRA contribution deductions for 2023: For single/head-of-household, the minimum is \$73,000 and the maximum is \$83,000. For married filing jointly/qualified widower, the minimum is \$116,000 and the maximum is \$136,000. For married filing separately, the minimum is \$0 and the maximum is \$10,000.

The above is for active participants in other pension plans. Individuals who aren't active participants can deduct up to \$6,500 (\$7,500 if age 50 or older) regardless of AGI.

- **Simple IRA and Simple 401(k).** Age 49 and younger: Maximum contribution increased from \$14,000 in 2022 to \$15,500 in 2023. Age 50 and older: Maximum contribution increased from \$17,000 in 2022 to \$19,000 in 2023.

- **401(k) student loan benefit programs.** An employer may make a non-elective contribution of five percent of an employee's eligible compensation if that employee contributes at least two percent of their eligible compensation per pay period to go towards repayment of their student loan.

- **Health savings accounts (HSA).** Individuals: Maximum contribution increased from \$3,650 in 2022 to \$3,850 in 2023. Families: Maximum contribution increased from \$7,300 in 2022 to \$7,750 in 2023. Catch-up contributions: If an individual is 55 or older, they're eligible for an annual catch-up contribution up to an additional \$1,000 per year.

Year-end payroll adjustments

Year-end bonuses. Taxes must be withheld on bonuses for federal, state and city withholding. Employers can be subject to penalties and/or interest if the proper amount is not withheld.

Taxable fringe benefits. Inform your payroll service of expenses such as personal auto usage, travel for family members, meals and entertainment, and professional fees. Keep records of these expenses. Expenses reimbursed under a non-accountable plan must be included in the employee's income.

Non-qualified deferred compensation plans. Amounts should be included in gross income. The deferrals are to be reported in Box 1 and Box 12 (code Z) on the employee's W-2. This income is subject to an additional 20 percent tax to be reported on Form 1040. The amount may also be reported as income on a 1099-Misc in Box 7.

Documentation for deductible business travel and meals. Any business that reimburses employees for any deductible business travel and meals must maintain support for the deduction which includes date, amount and location of the expense, as well as an explanation of the expense and those attending.

Deferral of FICA taxes. Under the CARES Act, employers can elect to defer the payment of the employer share of FICA taxes through the period ending December 31, 2020. 50 percent of the deferred taxes must be deposited by December 30, 2021, and the remaining amount deposited by December 31, 2022.

Employee Retention Credit. Under the Consolidated Appropriations Act passed in December 2020, eligible employers can claim a refundable tax credit against certain employment taxes as follows:

- **2020 eligible wages.** Wages: \$10,000. Tax credit: 50 percent. Maximum tax credit: Up to \$5,000 per employee.

- **2021 eligible wages.** Wages: \$10,000. Tax credit: 70 percent. Maximum tax

— Continued on next page

Musk can ban whomever he wants

By Fraser Seitel

The line between genius and madman is razor-thin.

On one hand, you can possess the Henry Ford-like brilliance to create a successful, attractive, superior new automobile and follow it up with a spaceship that flies to Mars. On the other hand, you can be so maniacal that you tear down, willfully, all you've created.



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*.

Behold the perplexing paradox that is Elon Musk.

Yes, he invented Tesla, the sleekest, fastest and most gorgeous car of all time.

Yes, he's single-handedly wrecking the value of his once-thriving company and its shareholders, one of whom—in dismaying full disclosure—is me!

No, he never really intended to buy Twitter.

No, he had/has no clue what to do with the losing social network now that he's stuck with it.

And no, there's little chance that Twitter, the company, will avoid bankruptcy and that Musk, the individual, will avoid being forced to sell out at bargain-basement prices the only liquid currency he owns, Tesla stock, to repay his bulging Twitter debt.

And there's also little doubt that the billionaire's purchase of Twitter will go down in the annals of business decisions as "Elon Musk's Folly," one of the dumbest takeovers of all time.

But—and here's the point—despite what outraged journalists and self-appointed free speech advocates have argued, the fact that Musk owns the private messaging site gives him every right to throw off that site any reporter he doesn't like.

Sorry, *New York Times* and *Washington Post* and CNN and Keith Olbermann and Stephen King and AOC, but if he owns the company, then as long as he isn't acting in a racist, sexist or antisemitic manner, he can toss your caboose off the site.

Musk's initial decision to suspend from Twitter any journalist—who, through tweet or link, exposed the location of the Musk family—was met with great vitriol by re-

porters and politicians around the world.

The *Times* demanded a "satisfying explanation for this action." The executive editor of the *Post* huffed that the suspensions "undermine Elon Musk's claim that he intends to run Twitter as a platform dedicated to free speech."

But here's why Musk is right and his critics are wrong.

First, while Twitter users are protected by Constitutional First Amendment Free Speech and Free Press clauses, Twitter users aren't "journalists" in the classical sense, protected by media shield laws.

Rather, Twitter is now a private company, owned by one man, who can do with it what he wants, as long as it's legal.

If media companies, free speech champions or human rights advocates don't like what Musk is doing with Twitter, they can either take him to court or petition Congress to pass laws that treat blogs and social media as "journalists."

Moreover, to most people, Twitter is meaningless. The vast majority of Americans—77 percent, according to the latest Pew Research data—don't use Twitter. And of the less than one-quarter who do use the site regularly, the top 25 percent of those users produce 97 percent of all tweets.

And who are the top Twitter daily users? Journalists, 69 percent of whom report they use Twitter more than any other site. That compares with only 13 percent of U.S. adults who say they regularly get news from Twitter.

So, the point is that even though *The New York Times* and *Washington Post* and other major media regularly cite tweets as a major source of news and prevailing opinion, Twitter, in fact, is the very definition of an "elite" medium with little relevance to most people.

So, if Elon Musk wants to kick some reporter off his site, he's totally within his rights to do so.

Second, journalists aren't even "journalists" anymore. So why should they be accorded special privileges?

It used to be that objectivity and professional integrity were the attributes that separated journalists from the rest of us. Typical were the six elements of the Code of Ethics of the Radio Television Digital News Association: 1) public trust, 2) truthfulness, 3) fairness, 4) integrity, 5) independence and 6) accountability.

In other words, once upon a time, if you read it in *The New York Times*, you could be relatively certain the story had been produced by professional journalists, vetted by experienced editors and therefore produced

with even-handedness and a minimum of political bias.

Today, where according to the paper's own demographic data, 91 percent of *Times*' readers identify as Democrats, the old rules of fairness and truthfulness no longer apply.

Typical is the *Times*' daily drumbeat of embarrassing "news" stories that fan the flames of an imaginary "national trend" that more and more firms are unionizing. To "prove" its case, the *Times* regularly reports on the unionization efforts at only two companies, Starbucks and Amazon. The reality in both cases, where most efforts to unionize have been thwarted by enlightened management adopting more pro-labor benefits, is rarely mentioned in *Times*' stories. No wonder, according to most polls, fewer than half of Americans believe the *Times* is a "trustworthy news source."

The reality in today's world of journalism is that objectivity is out and political bias is in. So, the argument that journalists merit special privileges is increasingly more difficult to justify, primarily because ...

Third, the media, sadly, are no longer considered "credible" sources of news by many Americans.

Credibility in the media—just like trust in most American institutions—continues to decline. According to the latest Pew Research:

Trust in national news outlets among all U.S. adults has descended to 61 percent, with 77 percent of Democrats and only 42 percent of Republicans expressing such trust.

Younger Americans under 30 now trust social media news sources as much as national media news sources.

Perhaps, most tellingly, while 76 percent of all American adults believe the news media have a responsibility to strive for "equal coverage" of all sides in reporting news, only 44 percent of U.S. journalists feel similarly. So much for journalistic credibility.

In all fairness, when it comes to credibility, at this stage Elon Musk also commands little or none. But does the mad billionaire have the right to expel anyone he wants from his sinking social media site? Yes, he does. ○

TAX PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

— Continued from page 54

credit: Up to \$7,000 per employee. The maximum tax credit per employee is \$5,000 for 2020 and \$21,000 for 2021. The Employee Retention Credit is available only for wages paid through September 30, 2021 (Q1, Q2 and Q3). For all quarters in 2020, the deadline to apply for the ERC is April 15, 2024, and for all quarters in 2021, the deadline is April 15, 2025. ○

Trust in military tanks

Less than half (48 percent) of Americans have a great deal of confidence in the U.S. military, according to a poll released Dec. 1 by the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation.

That's down from 70 percent in 2018 but up a bit from the 45 percent recording in last year's Reagan National Defense Survey.

A perceived politicization of the military, cited by 62 percent of respondents, is the top reason for the loss of confidence in the military.

Poor civilian leadership (55 percent), ability to win a potential future war (52 percent), "woke practices" undermining military effectiveness (50 percent) and existence of far right or extremist individuals serving in the military (46 percent) are among other reasons.

The Foundation found that 57 percent of Americans want to continue supplying military assistance to Ukraine.

Russia is viewed as an enemy by 82 percent of respondents, which is up from 65 percent a year ago.

China poses the greatest threat to the U.S., according to a 43 percent plurality.

Three-quarters of respondents said they see China as an enemy. That's up from 65 percent and 55 percent in the 2021 and 2018 polls.

More than half (54 percent) say the U.S. lacks a clear strategy for managing its relationship with China.

Seventy percent believe China is going to invade Taiwan during the next five years.

If so, 43 percent would support committing U.S. ground troops to the defense of Taiwan and 36 percent would oppose. ○

BGR delivers for Grubhub

BGR Government Affairs is providing strategic counsel and advocacy services to Grubhub, the online food delivery service. It is handling issues surrounding privacy, food insecurity and treatment of Grubhub's workforce.

BGR President Erskine Wells, who also heads the firm's commerce practice, leads the Grubhub team.

He is joined by Robin Colwell (SVP-Commerce), Fred Turner (SVP-International and Trade), Joel Bailey (VP-Health and Life Sciences) and Joseph Lai (Principal-Commerce).

Amsterdam-based Just Eat Takeaway.com acquired Grubhub in 2020. ○

Rubin returns to State Dept. to counter disinformation

The State Dept. has appointed James Rubin as special envoy and coordinator of the Global Engagement Center, which is to lead Washington's effort to recognize, understand and expose and counter foreign state and non-state propaganda and disinformation that threatens U.S. security.

He had joined Ballard Partners in 2018 as Chair of its International Policy and Strategy Center and exited last year for the diplomatic counselor slot to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Secretary General.

Rubin served in the Clinton administration as Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs and joined Bloomberg News to oversee its editorial issues



James Rubin



outside the U.S.

He's the former husband of CNN International correspondent Christiane Amanpour.

Rubin has contributed articles to the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Economist*, *Financial Times*, *Sunday Times*, *The New Republic*, *Foreign Affairs* and *Newsweek*.

His focus at the GEC will be on leading disinformation actors including Russia, China, Iran, ISIS and al-Qaeda. ○

Banner Public Affairs hires Sen. Boozman aide

Banner Public Affairs hires Ryan Losak as VP of Government Relations.

Losak joins the firm after spending over a decade on Capitol Hill, where he most recently worked for Sen. John Boozman (R-AR), focusing on such issues as appropriations, health care, rural development, education and labor.

In his new position, he's part of the firm's bipartisan team of infrastructure experts, a division created in response to the federal government's Infrastructure and Jobs Act. Losak supports clients from Banner's Washington, D.C. headquarters. ○



Ryan Losak

Ex-Sen. Breau reps ExxonMobil's clean energy unit

Former Senator John Breau has signed on to represent ExxonMobil Low Carbon Solutions on matters related to clean energy, carbon capture and storage.

Critics have accused ExxonMobil about misleading the public about climate change.

The Louisiana Democrat is part of a five-member team at Crossroads Strategies, where he is a principal and director.

ExxonMobil formed its clean energy unit in 2021 to commercialize emission-reduction technology.

Its initial focus is on CC&S, which ExxonMobil believes is one of the critical technologies required to achieve the climate goals outlined in the Paris Agreement. ExxonMobil plans to develop 20 new CC&S projects throughout the world and invest \$3 billion in lower emissions technologies through 2025. ○



John Breau

Prime Policy Group targets North Korean disinformation

Prime Policy Group has picked up a \$600,000 contract to educate the Biden Administration and Congress on the “substantial activities of the North Korean Government to subvert the South Korean Government through civic institutions” and about its spread of disinformation, according to its one-year contract with Jayu Press of Seoul.

Jayu Press believes those North Korean activities are designed to spread division in South Korea and change attitudes about the regime led by Kim Jong-un.

Prime Policy Group is expected to develop “bipartisan champions in the U.S. House and U.S. Senate who will take the lead in engaging Congress in exposing these North Korean activities.”

It’s to recruit influencers, such as Christian Protestant denominations, to encourage Congress to become more engaged with Korean affairs, and to brief think tanks. Ju Ken Juong, the charismatic pastor of the Presbyterian Sarang Jeil Church, co-signed the contract with Jayu CEO Enoch Jun.

His Seoul-based mega-church has more than 60,000 members. WPP owns Prime Policy Group. ○

FGS Global handles big Saudi IPO

FGS Global is handling the initial public offering of Luberef, the oil refining unit of the Saudi Arabian Oil Company, that is expected to raise about \$1.3 billion.

The 50 million share offer includes the entire 30 percent stake in Luberef that is owned by Jadwa Investments. Jadwa acquired those shares in 2007 from ExxonMobil.

The IPO is expected to be priced at the higher end of the offering

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.

Mercury Public Affairs, LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered Nov. 6, 2022 for Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.**, Yeongtong-gu, Suwon-si, Republic of Korea, regarding providing business, government relations and advocacy services.

Myriad International Marketing, LLC, Overland Park, Kan., **registered Dec. 13, 2022 for Italian National Tourist Board**, New York, N.Y., regarding providing public relations and promotion services, including translation services and video editing, to promote Italy to U.S. visitors.

Red Banyan Group, LLC, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., **registered Nov. 30, 2022 for Embassy of Niger**, Washington, D.C., regarding providing public relations and government relations services to the Embassy of Niger for the 2022 U.S. – Africa Leaders Conference.

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.

Arnold & Porter Kaye Schuler LLP, Washington, D.C., **registered Dec. 16, 2022 for Milwaukee Repertory Theater**, Milwaukee, Wis., concerning federal appropriations funding to support the Milwaukee Repertory Theater.

Capitol Counsel LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered Dec. 9, 2022 for The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc.**, Washington, D.C., regarding bank regulatory and general financial services issues.

O’Neill and Associates, Boston, Mass., **registered Dec. 15, 2022 for Cubavision LLC**, Malibu, Calif., concerning advocacy for Cuban American business relations.

Squire Patton Boggs, Washington, D.C., **registered Dec. 13, 2022 for American Solar Rail LLC**, Macon, Ga., regarding passenger rail project advancement.

range due to a strong demand for Gulf listings.

Saudi Aramco, which owns a 70 percent stake in Luberef, is not selling any of its shares in the IPO. Individual investors will get the opportunity to buy Luberef stock, which will list on the Saudi Exchange, beginning December 14.

FGS Global Managing Director Sophie McNulty and Director Ahmed Jebur in the Dubai office handle Luberef. ○

Ogilvy gauges U.S. opinion about Japan’s whaling

The Embassy of Japan has hired Ogilvy to conduct an audit of U.S. public opinion about the country’s commercial whaling activity.

Japan withdrew from the International Whaling Commission in 2019 and resumed the commercial hunting of whales in its territorial waters and exclusive economic zone. The IWC had allowed Japan to slaughter a limited number of whales in the Antarctic region under the guise of scientific research.

Ogilvy is to conduct a social listening and traditional media audit to gauge America’s sentiment about whaling.

The work kicked off November 1 and runs through February 12. Ogilvy is to receive a fixed fee of \$27,385 for the effort. ○

Navigators guides Qatar’s D.C. push

Navigators Global, which has close ties to the Republican party, has signed on to represent Qatar on its relationship with the U.S.

The \$25,000 a month contract, which went into effect on Dec. 1, may include outreach to the incoming GOP-controlled House.

Navigators is serving as a subcontract to law firm Venable. ○

2023 PR Buyer's Guide

Annual Reports/Design/Branding	59	Mergers & Acquisitions	69
Associations	59	Newsletters.....	69
Awards	60	Newswires/Press Services	69
Celebrities	62	Press Release Distribution	70
Clipping Services	62	Public Relations Networks	70
Copywriters	62	Public Service Announcements	70
Corporate Image Consultants.....	62	Radio	71
CPA/Consulting Services	63	Research	73
Crisis Management	63	Satellite Media Tours	73
Digital Media Tours	65	Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	75
Directories	65	Social Media	75
Education	66	Speakers Service (Talent)	76
Electronic Newsfeeds/Satellite Svcs	67	Special Events	76
Executive Coaching	67	Speechwriting	76
Executive Search	67	Television (TV) Production	76
Graphic Design Services.....	67	Video	76
Influencer Marketing.....	67	Virtual Meeting Solutions	77
Integrated Marketing & PR	67	Webcasting.....	77
Management Consultants	68	Website Development	78
Measurement and Evaluation.....	68		
Media Tours/Roadshows	68	Index to Listed Companies	80
Media Training	68		

Annual Reports/ Design/Branding

Tier One Partners, 129 South St., Boston, MA 02111. 617/918-7060. kwilson@tieronepr.com; www.tieronepr.com. Kathy Wilson.

Associations

Advertising Club of New York, 21 West 38th St., 12th fl., New York, NY 10018. 212/533-8080. www.theadvertisingclub.org. Gina Grillo, Pres. & CEO.

Advertising Specialty Institute, 4800 Street Rd., Trevese, PA 19053. 800/546-1350. www.asicentral.com/contact-asi. Timothy M. Andrews, Pres. & CEO.

Alliance for Women in Media, 2365 Harrodsburg Rd., #A325, Lexington, KY 40504. 202/750-3664. allwomeninmedia.org. Becky Brooks, Pres.

American Association of Advertising Agencies (4As), 25 W. 45th St., 16th fl., New York, NY 10036. 212/682-2500. www.aaaa.org. Marla Kaplowitz, Pres. & CEO.

American Association of Political Consultants, 1750 Tysons Blvd., #1500, McLean, VA 22102. 703/245-8020. theaapc.org. Alana Joyce, Exec. Dir.

American Marketing Association, The, 130 E. Randolph St., 22nd fl., Chicago, IL 60601. 800/AMA-1150. www.ama.org. Bennie F. Johnson, CEO.

American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), 1575 I St., N.W., Washington, DC 20005. 202/371-0940. www.asaecenter.org. Chris Vest, VP, Corp. Comms. & PR.

Association for Conflict Resolution, P.O. Box 5, Eagle, NE 68347. 614/262-2724. acrnet.org. Fernaundra Ferguson, Pres.

Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, 234 Outlet Pointe Blvd., Ste. A, Columbia, SC 29210-5667. 803/798-0271. www.aejmc.org. Amanda Caldwell, Exec. Dir.

Association for Women in Communications, The, 4730 S. National Ave., Ste. A1, Springfield, MO 65810. 417/409-2492. womcom.org. Jean Harmison, AWC National Office.

Association of Marketing and Communications Professionals, 127 Pittsburg St., Dallas, TX 75207. 214/377-3524. www.amcpros.com.

Association of National Advertisers (ANA), 155 E. 44th St., New York, NY 10017. 212/697-5950. www.ana.net. John Wolfe, Dir., Comms.

Automotive PR Council, Original Equipment Suppliers Assn., 25925 Telegraph Rd., #350, Southfield, MI 48033. 248/952-6401. www.oesa.org.

Chief Marketing Officer Council, 1494 Hamilton Way, San Jose, CA 95125. 408/677-5333. www.cmocouncil.org. Donovan Neale-May, Exec. Dir.

CPR, The International Institute For Conflict Prevention and Resolution, 30 East 33rd St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10016. 212/949-6490. www.cpradr.org. Allen Waxman, Pres. & CEO.

Florida PR Association, 40 Sarasota Ctr. Blvd., #107, Sarasota, FL 34240. 941/365-2135. www.fpra.org.

Hispanic Public Relations Association, hprausa.org.

Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association Int'l., 7918 Jones Branch Dr., #300, McLean, VA 22102. 703/506-3280. americas.hsmi.org. Robert A. Gilbert, Pres. & CEO.

Institute for PR, University of Florida, P.O. Box 118400, Gainesville, FL 32611-8400. 352/392-0280. instituteforpr.org. Tina McCorkindale, Pres. & CEO.

International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), 330 N. Wabash Ave., #2000, Chicago, IL 60611. 312/321-6868. www.iabc.com.

International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), Wash., D.C. Chapter, iabcdc.org.

International Association of Speakers Bureaus, 1922 E. Fairmont Dr., Tempe, AZ 85282. 480/839-1423. www.iasbweb.org. Marie Fredette, Exec. VP.

International Women's Media Foundation, 1625 K St., N.W., #1275, Washington, DC 20006. 202/496-1992. www.iwmf.org.

Museum of Public Relations, The, 85 Broad St., 17th fl., New York, NY 10004. 212/943-9439. info@prmuseum.org; www.prmuseum.org. Shelley Spector, Barry Spector, Founders.

National Association of Broadcasters, 1 M St., S.E., Washington, DC 20003. 202/429-5300. www.nab.org. Curtis LeGeyt, Pres. & CEO.

National Association of Government Communicators, 400 S. 4th St., #754E, Minneapolis, MN 55415. 888/285-8556. nagg.com. Dara Rudick, Interim Exec. Dir. and Board Secretary.

National Black Public Relations Society, 14636 Runnymede St., Van Nuys, CA 91405. 888/976-0005. nbprs.org.

National Council for Marketing & Public Relations (NCMPR), 5901 Wyoming Blvd., N.E., #J-254, Albuquerque, NM 87109. 505/349-0500. www.ncmpr.org.

National Foundation for Women Legislators, Alexandria, VA 22314. 703/518-7931. www.womenlegislators.org. Jody Thomas, Exec. Dir.

National Hispanic Media Coalition, 12825 Philadelphia St., Whittier, CA 90601. 626/792-6462. communications@nhmc.org; www.nhmc.org. Brenda Victoria Castillo, Pres. & CEO.

National Institute for Lobbying & Ethics, The, 10340 Democracy Lane, #300, Fairfax, VA 22030. 703/383-1330. www.lobbyinginstitute.com.

National Investor Relations Institute, 908 King St., #310, Alexandria, VA 22314. 703/562-7700. www.niri.org. Al Rickard, Dir., Comms.

National Press Club, The, 529 14th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20045. 202/662-7500. www.press.org.

National School PR Association, 15948 Derwood Rd., Rockville, MD 20855. 301/519-0496. www.nspra.org. Barbara M. Hunter, Exec. Dir.

New York Financial Writers' Association, P.O. Box 338, Ridgewood, NJ 07451. 646/470-7433. contact@nyfwa.org; www.nyfwa.org.

New York Women in Communications (NYWICI), 7918 Jones Branch Dr., Ste. 300, McLean, VA 22102. 212/251-7255. info@nywici.org; nywici.org.

Online News Association, 1111 N. Capitol St., N.E., 2nd fl., Washington, DC 20002. journalists.org. Irving Washington, CEO.

Page (Arthur W. Page Society), 230 Park Ave., #455, New York, NY 10169. 212/400-7959. page.org. Roger Bolton, Pres.

Pennsylvania Association for Government Relations, P.O. Box 116, Harrisburg, PA 17108. 717/939-1900. info@pagr.org; pagr.org. Christine Corrigan, Exec. Dir.

Philadelphia PR Association, 1500 Chestnut St., Ste. 2 #2629, Philadelphia, PA 19102. 215/557-9865. ppra.net.

PR Club, (Formerly Publicity Club of New England), c/o March Comms., 560 Harrison Ave., #408, Boston, MA 02118. www.prclub.org.



PR Council, 1460 Broadway, 8th fl., New York, NY 10036. 917/439-9201. www.prcouncil.net. Kim Sample, President.

The PR Council is the only association dedicated to agencies with public relations offerings. PR Council Member agencies – 135 of the country's premier global, mid-size, regional and specialty firms – operate in the most sophisticated public relations market in the world, set the standard for excellence, and share a common desire to build the world's most successful agencies.

Promotional Products Association Int'l., 3125 Skyway Circle North, Irving, TX 75038. 888/426-7724. www.ppai.org. Dale Denham, Pres. & CEO.

PRSA/Georgia Chapter 770/449-6369. www.prsageorgia.org.

PRSA/Los Angeles Chapter, 2700 E. Foothill Blvd., #209, Pasadena, CA 91107. 626/313-4343. prsala.org.

PRSA/National Capital Chapter, 200 Little Falls St., #205, Falls Church, VA 22046. 703/691-9212. prsance.org.

PRSA/New York Chapter, One World Trade Center, flr. 69, New York, NY 10007. 212/228-7228. info@prsany.org; www.prsany.org.

Public Affairs Council, 2121 K St., N.W., #900, Washington, DC 20037. 202/787-5950. pac.org. Douglas Pinkham, Pres.

Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), 120 Wall St., 21st fl., New York, NY 10005-4024. 212/460-1400. www.prsa.org. Karen Mateo, Chief Comms. Officer.

Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), 120 Wall St., 21st fl., New York, NY 10005-4024. 212/460-1474. www.prsa.org/prssa. Jeneen Garcia, Sr. VP, Programs.

Publicity Club of Chicago, P.O. Box 101236, Chicago, IL 60610. office@publicity.org; www.publicity.org.

Publicity Club of New York, 8554 260th St, Floral Park, NY 11001. info@publicityclub.nyc; publicityclub.org. Peter Himler, Pres.

Radio Television Digital News Association, National Press Bldg., 529 14th St., N.W., #1240, Washington, DC 20045. 202/221-4282. www.rtdna.org. Dan Shelley, Pres. & CEO.

She Runs It (Formerly Advertising Women of NY), New York, NY. 212/221-7969. sherunsit.org.

SIIA, Software & Information Industry Assn., 1620 I St., N.W., #501, Washington, DC 20005. 202/289-7442. www.siia.net.

Society for Advancing Business Editing and Writing (SABEW), Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Arizona State Univ., 555 N. Central Ave., #302, Phoenix, AZ 85004-1248. 602/496-7862. sabew.org. Kathleen Graham, Exec. Dir.

Society for Technical Communication, 3251 Old Lee Highway, #406, Fairfax, VA 22030. 703/522-4114. www.stc.org. Liz Pohland, CEO.

Society of American Travel Writers (SATW), 17W110 22nd St., One Parkview Plaza, #800, Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181. 877/480-4585. satw.org. Marla Schrager, Exec. Dir.

Society of Professional Journalists, P.O. Box 441748, Indianapolis, IN 46244. 317/927-8000. www.spj.org. Jennifer Royer, Interim Exec. Dir.

U.S. Travel Association, 1100 New York Ave., N.W., #450, Washington, DC 20005. 202/408-8422. www.ustravel.org.

Washington Women in PR, P.O. Box 65297, Washington, DC 20035. wwpr.org.

Women in Government Relations, 908 King St., #320, Alexandria, VA 22314. 202/868-6797. www.wgr.org. Jen Brydges, Exec. Dir.

Women in PR North America womeninpr.com.

Awards

Adrian Awards, Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association Int'l., 7918 Jones Branch Drive, #300, McLean, VA 22102. 703/506-3280. americas.hsmi.org. Ellen Wilson, Washington, DC Mng. Dir., Adrian Awards Competition Dir.

AME - Advertising & Marketing Effectiveness Awards, New York Festivals, 641 Lexington Ave., 13th fl., New York, NY 10022. 212/271-5278. www.ameawards.com.

APEX Awards, Communications Concepts, Inc., 6604 Richmond Rd., #19, Williamsburg, VA 23188. 703/643-2200. info@ApexAwards.com; apexawards.com. Ken Turtoro, Exec. Editor.

ARC Awards, Sponsored by MerComm, Inc., 500 Executive Blvd., Ossining-on-Hudson, NY 10562. 914/923-9400. www.mercommawards.com. Reni L. Witt, Pres.

Association TRENDS Annual Trendy Awards, Columbia Books & Information Services, 1530 Wilson Blvd., #400, Arlington, VA 22209. 888/265-0600. www.associationtrends.com. Mia Williams, Dir., Events and Training.

Association TRENDS Salute to Association Excellence Awards, Columbia Books & Information Services, 1530 Wilson Blvd., #400, Arlington, VA 22209. 888/265-0600. www.associationtrends.com. Mia Williams, Dir., Events and Training.

Astrid Awards, Sponsored by MerComm, Inc., 500 Executive Blvd., Ossining-on-Hudson, NY 10562. 914/923-9400. www.mercommawards.com. Reni L. Witt, Pres.

AVA Digital Awards, Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals, 127 Pittsburg St., Dallas, TX 75207. 214/730-0533. awards@avaawards.com; www.avaawards.com.

Bell Ringer Awards, PR Club, (Formerly Publicity Club of New England), % March Comms., 560 Harrison Ave., #408, Boston, MA 02118. www.prclub.org.

Big Apple Awards, PRSA/New York Chapter, One World Trade Center, flr. 69, New York, NY 10007. 212/228-7228. info@prsany.org; www.prsany.org.

Bronze Anvil Awards of PR Society of America, 120 Wall St., 21st flr., New York, NY 10005-4024. 212/460-1400. www.prsa.org. Karen Mateo, Chief Comms. Officer.

Bulldog PR Awards, PR Awards, Stars of PR Awards. bulldogawards.com.

Cannes Lions Awards, Festival of Creativity. +44 (0) 20 3033 4000. www.canneslions.com.

Clarion Awards, Association for Women in Communications, 4730 S. National Ave., Ste. A1, Springfield, MO 65810. 417/409-2492. womcom.org. Jean Harmison.

CLIO Awards, 104 W. 27th St., 10th flr., New York, NY 10001. 212/683-4300. clios.com. Nicole Purcell, CEO.

CODiE Awards, EXCEL Awards, IMPACT Awards, Neal Awards, Software & Information Industry Association, 1620 I St., N.W., #501, Washington, DC 20005. 202/289-7442. siia.net/codie/.

Communicator Awards, Academy of Interactive & Visual Arts, 22 West 21st St., 7th flr. North, New York, NY 10010. 212/675-3555. www.communicatorawards.com.

Communitas Awards, Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals, 127 Pittsburg St., Dallas, TX 75207. 214/377-3526. info@communitasawards.com; www.communitasawards.com.

dotCOMM Awards, Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals, 127 Pittsburg St., Dallas, TX 75207. 214/377-3526. awards@dotcommawards.com; www.dotcommawards.com.

Galaxy Awards, Sponsored by MerComm, Inc., 500 Executive Blvd., Ossining-on-Hudson, NY 10562. 914/923-9400. www.mercommawards.com. Reni L. Witt, Pres.

Gold Anvil Award of PR Society of America, 120 Wall St., 21st flr., New York, NY 10005-4024. 212/460-1400. www.prsa.org. Karen Mateo, Chief Comms. Officer.

Gold Quill Awards, Int'l. Association of Business Communicators (IABC), 330 N. Wabash Ave., #2000, Chicago, IL 60611. 312/321-6868. www.iabc.com.

Golden Trumpet Awards, Publicity Club of Chicago, P.O. Box 101236, Chicago, IL 60610. office@publicity.org; www.publicity.org.

Hermes Creative Awards, Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals, 127 Pittsburg St., Dallas, TX 75207. 214/377-3525. awards@hermesawards.com; www.hermesawards.com.

iBravo! Awards, Hispanic Public Relations Association. hprausa.org.

iNova Awards, Sponsored by MerComm, Inc., 500 Executive Blvd., Ossining-on-Hudson, NY 10562. 914/923-9400. www.mercommawards.com. Reni L. Witt, Pres.

Jack Felton Medal for Lifetime Achievement, Institute for PR, University of Florida, P.O. Box 118400, Gainesville, FL 32611-8400. 352/392-0280. instituteforpr.org. Tina McCorkindale, Pres. & CEO.

MarCom Awards, Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals, 127 Pittsburg St., Dallas, TX 75207. 214/377-3524. awards@marcomawards.com; www.marcomawards.com.

Matrix Awards, NY WICI, 7918 Jones Branch Dr., #300, McLean, VA 22102. 212/251-7255. nywici.org.

Mercury Awards, Sponsored by MerComm, Inc., 500 Executive Blvd., Ossining-on-Hudson, NY 10562. 914/923-9400. www.mercommawards.com. Reni L. Witt, Pres.

NAGC Communicator of the Year Award, National Association of Government Communicators, 400 South 4th St., #754e, Minneapolis, MN 55415. 888/285-8556. nagc.com. Dara Rudick, Interim Exec. Dir.

New York Festivals, TV & Film Awards, 641 Lexington Ave., 13th flr., New York, NY 10022. 212/271-5278. www.newyorkfestivals.com.

Outstanding Educator Award of PR Society of America, 120 Wall St., 21st flr., New York, NY 10005-4024. 212/460-1400. www.prsa.org. Karen Mateo, Chief Comms. Officer.

Paragon Awards, Plus Additional Awards, National Council for Marketing & Public Relations (NCMPR), 5901 Wyoming Blvd., N.E., #J-254, Albuquerque, NM 87109. 505/349-0500. www.ncmpr.org.

Paul M. Lund Public Service Award of PR Society of America, 120 Wall St., 21st flr., New York, NY 10005-4024. 212/460-1400. www.prsa.org. Karen Mateo, Chief Comms. Officer.

Power of A Awards, American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), 1575 I St., N.W., Washington, DC 20005. 202/371-0940; fax: 202/371-8315. www.asaecenter.org. Chris Vest, VP, Corp. Comms. & PR.

PR News Awards, Access Intelligence, LLC. www.prnewsonline.com/pr-news-awards.

PR Professional of the Year Award of PR Society of America, 120 Wall St., 21st flr., New York, NY 10005-4024. 212/460-1400. www.prsa.org. Karen Mateo, Chief Comms. Officer.

PRSA/NCC National Capital Excellence in Comm. Awards, 200 Little Falls St., #205, Falls Church, VA 22046. 703/691-9212. prsancc.org.

Public Relations and Marketing Excellence Awards, Business Intelligence Group. 909/529-2737. www.bintelligence.com.

Questar Awards, Sponsored by MerComm, Inc., 500 Executive Blvd., Ossining-on-Hudson, NY 10562. 914/923-9400. www.mercommawards.com. Reni L. Witt, Pres.

Ragan's PR Daily Awards, 10 S. LaSalle St., Chicago, IL 60603. 800/878-5331. www.prdaily.com.

REBRAND 100 Global Awards, 24 Corliss St., #6791, Providence, RI 02940. rebrand.com. Anaezi Modu, Founder & CEO.

SABRE Awards, PRovoke Media, 271 West 47th St., New York, NY 10036. 212/333-2300. www.provokemedia.com.

Sigma Delta Chi Awards, c/o Society of Professional Journalists, P.O. Box 441748, Indianapolis, IN 46244. 317/927-8000. www.spj.org. Jennifer Royer, Interim Exec. Dir.

Silver Anvil Awards of PR Society of America, 120 Wall St., 21st flr., New York, NY 10005-4024. 212/460-1400. www.prsa.org. Karen Mateo, Chief Comms. Officer.

Silver Apple Awards, Marketing Club of New York, 228 Park Ave. South, #88658, New York, NY 10003-1502. 646/741-4771. marketingclubny.org.

Society for Technical Communication, STC Awards, 3251 Old Lee Highway, #406, Fairfax, VA 22030. 703/522-4114. www.stc.org. Liz Pohland, CEO.

Society of American Travel Writers (SATW), SATW Foundation Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Competition, 17W110 22nd St., One Parkview Plaza, #800, Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181. 877/480-4585. satw.org. Marla Schragar, Exec. Dir.



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Telly Awards, The, Ashland, KY. 212/675-3555. www.tellyawards.com.

Viddy Awards, 127 Pittsburg St., Dallas, TX 75207. 214/730-0539. info@viddyawards.com; www.viddyawards.com.

Washington Women in Public Relations (WWPR) Woman of the Year Award, P.O. Box 65297, Washington, DC 20035. wwpr.org.

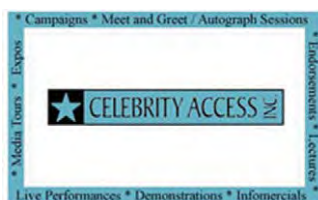
Woman of the Year Award, She Runs It (Formerly Advertising Women of NY), New York, NY. 212/221-7969. sherunsit.org.

Celebrities



Cavanaugh & Associates Inc., 14350 Addison St., #222, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423. 818/907-5210. tim@cavanaughassociates.com; www.cavanaughassociates.com. Tim Cavanaugh.

Cavanaugh & Associates, Inc. provides celebrities in any category for everything from product launches, promotional events, SMTs and full-scale endorsements, to personal appearances, celebrity gifting/influencers, speeches and performances. We provide personalized service in ensuring a perfect celebrity fit for all target demographic needs. With over 20 years experience in the entertainment industry, our celebrity relationships make the difference.



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glenn@celebrityaccessinc.com; www.celebrityaccessinc.com. Glenn Rosenblum.

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World Class Speakers & Entertainers, 5158 Clareton Drive, Ste. 1034, Agoura Hills (County of Los Angeles), CA 91376. 818/991-5400. jksessler@wcSpeakers.com; wcse@wcSpeakers.com; www.wcspeakers.com. Joseph I. Kessler, Pres.

See full listing under Speakers Service (Talent).

Clipping Services



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CoverageBook coveragebook.com.

Self-service software tool used by in-house and agency teams to showcase and measure their hard-earned media.

Copywriters

Tier One Partners, 129 South St., Boston, MA 02111. 617/918-7060. kwilson@tieronepr.com; www.tieronepr.com. Kathy Wilson.

Corporate Image Consultants



MIEN CONSULTANCY

MIEN Consultancy, Downtown Newark, NJ 07102. 201/283-8353. info@miien.co; www.miien.co. Mikara Reid.

CPA/Consulting Services



Gould+Partners LLC, One Penn Plaza, Suite 3200, New York, NY 10119. 212/896-1909; cell: 917/783-4500. rick@gould-partners.com; www.gould-partners.com. Rick Gould, CPA, J.D., Mng. Partner; Mike Muraszko, Partner; Jack Bergen, Strategic Partner; Jennifer Casani, Partner; Don Bates, Sr. Counselor; James Arnold, Sr. Counselor; Robert Udowitz, Sr. Counselor; Yadi Gomez, Acct. Coord.; Sally Tilleray, Sr. Advisor, London/UK.

Crisis Management

5W Public Relations, 3 Park Ave., flr. 19, New York, NY 10016. 212/999-5585. www.5wpr.com. Dara Busch, Matthew Caiola, Co-CEOs.

Abernathy MacGregor, Tom Johnson, CEO; Carina Davidson, Pres.
See listing (under "H-Advisors Abernathy") in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

AJB Communications, 5 Conifer Lane, Avon, CT 06001. 917/783-1680. ajbcomms@gmail.com; www.ajbcomms.com. Andrew Blum.

Axia Public Relations +1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (+1-888-773-4768); Mobile Number: 904/583-1977. inbound@axiapr.com; axiapr.com/crisis. Jason Mudd.

Ball Consulting Group, LLC, One Gateway Center, Ste. 406, Newton, MA 02458. 617/243-9950. david@ballcg.com; ballcg.com. David A. Ball, Pres. & Founder.
See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Bishoff Communications LLC, 200 Highland Ave., Ste. 306, Needham, MA 02494. 617/573-0076. bishoffcommunications.com. Janey Bishoff, CEO.

Blaine Group, Inc., The, 8665 Wilshire Blvd., #301, Beverly Hills, CA 90211. 310/360-1499. www.blainegroupinc.com. Devon Blaine, Pres./CEO.

Bliss Group, The, 500 5th Ave., #1640, New York, NY 10110. 212/840-1661. theblissgrp.com.
See listing (under "Next Solutions Group") in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Boardroom Communications Inc., 1776 N. Pine Island Rd., #320, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33322. 954/370-8999. boardroompr.com. Don Silver, COO; Todd Templin, Exec. VP.

Bospar, Serving locations including San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles, Washington, DC, Chicago and Austin. results@bospar.com; bospar.com. Chris Boehlke, Curtis Sparrer, Tom Carpenter, Principals.
See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Butler Associates, LLC, 353 Lexington Ave., 17th flr. 212/685-4600. www.butlerpr.com. Thomas P. Butler, Pres.

Crosswind Media and Public Relations, 501 Congress Ave., Ste. 150, Austin, TX 78701. 512/537-1414. info@crosswindpr.com; crosswindpr.com. Thomas Graham, Pres. & CEO.
See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Dentons Global Advisors, 1900 K Street NW, Washington, DC, 20006, 202/759-5100. www.dentonsglobaladvisors.com. Edward Reilly, CEO.
See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Dragon Horse Ad Agency, 848 1st Ave. North, #200, Naples, FL 34102. 239/325-5088. info@dragonhorseagency.com; www.dragonhorseagency.com. Julie Koester, Founder/Mng. Partner/Pres., Patrick Blake Renda, Founder/Mng. Partner/Chief Strategy Officer.
See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Edelman, 250 Hudson St., 16th flr., New York, NY 10013. 212/768-0550. www.edelman.com.
See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Feintuch Communications, 11 East 44th St., Ste. 1201, New York, NY 10017. 212/808-4900. info@feintuchpr.com; www.feintuchcommunications.com. Henry Feintuch, Pres.

FGS Global, 909 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022. 212/687-8080. fgsglobal.com. George Sard, Roland Rudd, Carter Eskew, Co-Chairmen.
See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Fineman PR, A division of Off Madison Ave, San Francisco, CA. 415/392-1000. info@finemanpr.com; finemanpr.com.

Finn Partners, 301 East 57th St., New York, NY 10022. 212/715-1600. www.finnpartners.com. Jessica Berk Ross, Mng. Partner, Global Public Affairs Practice Leader.
See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

FleishmanHillard, 200 N. Broadway, St. Louis, MO 63102. 314/982-1700. fleishmanhillard.com. Ken Fields, Americas Crisis Lead.

French/West/Vaughan, 112 East Hargett St., Raleigh, NC 27601. 919/832-6300. www.fvw-us.com. Rick French, Chairman & CEO; David Gwyn, President/Principal; Natalie Best, Chief Operating Officer/Principal.
See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

FTI Consulting Strategic Communications, 1166 Avenue of the Americas, 15th flr., New York, NY 10036. 212/247-1010. fticomunications.com. Mark McCall, Global Segment Leader.
See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

G&S Business Communications, 111 West 33rd St., 22nd flr., New York, NY 10001. 212/697-2600. SHalsey@gscommunications.com; www.gscommunications.com. Steve Halsey, Chief Growth Officer.
See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Gladstone Place Partners, 485 Madison Ave., 4th flr., New York, NY 10022. 212/230-5930. www.gladstoneplace.com. Steven Lipin, Chmn. and CEO, Lauren Odell, Partner and COO, Christina Stenson, Partner.
See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Havas Formula, 200 Hudson St., New York, NY 10013. 212/886-4100. nyinfo@havasformula.com; havasformula.com. Michael Olguin, CEO, Donovan Roche, VP, Trust.

ICR, 685 Third Ave., 2nd fl., New York, NY 10017. 646/277-1200. tom.ryan@icrinc.com; icrinc.com. Thomas Ryan, CEO, Don Duffy, Pres.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Infinite Global, New York Office: 21 W. 38th St., 16th fl., New York, NY 10018. 917/602-0545. infiniteglobal.com. Jamie Diaferia, Founder & CEO, Zach Olsen, Pres.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Issues Management Group, 30 Winter St., 6th fl., Boston, MA 02108. 617/855-8308. issuesgroup.com. Dan Cence, CEO.

Joele Frank, 622 Third Ave., 36th fl., New York, NY 10017. 212/355-4449. info@joelefrank.com; www.joelefrank.com. Joele Frank, Mng. Partner, Matthew Sherman, Pres.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

KARV Communications, 370 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10017. 212/333-0275. www.karvcommunications.com. Andrew Frank, Founder and Pres., Eric Andrus, Exec. VP.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Kekst CNC, U.S. Headquarters: 437 Madison Ave., 37th fl., New York, NY 10022. 212/521-4800. www.kekstcnc.com. Jeremy Fielding, Co-CEO, Bernhard Meising, Co-CEO.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Kivvit, 222 W. Merchandise Mart Plaza, #2400, Chicago, IL 60654. 312/664-0153. info@kivvit.com; www.kivvit.com. Eric Sedler, Founder & CEO.

Lambert, 47 Commerce Ave., Grand Rapids, MI 49503. 616/233-0500. crisis@lambert.com; lambert.com/Jeff Gaunt, Managing Director, Crisis & Reputation; Katie Barnes, Director, Crisis & Reputation.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

L.C. Williams & Associates, 150 N. Michigan Ave., 38th fl., Chicago, IL 60601. 312/565-3900. lcwa.com. Kim Blazek Dahlborn, Pres. and CEO.

Levinson Group (TLG), The, 200 Park Ave. South, Ste. 1218, New York, NY 10003. 202/244-1785. tlgcommunications.com.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Marathon Strategies LLC, 38 E. 29th St., 4th fl., New York, NY 10016. 212/960-8120. marathonstrategies.com. Phil Singer, Founder & CEO.

Montgomery Strategies Group, The, 2445 M Street NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20037. 202/255-0737. mrobinson@tmsgr.com; www.tmsgr.com.

Michael W. Robinson, Chairman & CEO.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

MWWPR, 1250 Broadway, 3rd fl., New York, NY 10001. 212/704-9727. www.mww.com. Michael Kempner, Founder & CEO, Bret Werner, Pres., Carreen Winters, Exec. VP, Corp. Reputation & Chief Strategy Officer.

Padilla, 1101 West River Pkwy., #400, Minneapolis, MN 55415. 612/455-1700. padillaco.com. Chris Werle, Sr. VP.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Peppercomm, Inc., 470 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016. 212/931-6100. www.peppercomm.com. Steve Cody, CEO & Founder.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Polpeo, Thomas House, 84 Ecclestone Square, London, SW1V 1PX, U.K.. +44 20 3457 6405. polpeo.com. Kate Hartley, Co-Founder.

Public Communications Inc., One East Wacker Dr., 24th fl., Chicago, IL 60601. 312/558-1770. lets_talk@pcipr.com; pcipr.com. Jill Allread, CEO, Craig Pugh, Pres, Pamela Oettel, COO/CFO.

Qorvis Communications, 1201 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Ste. 1000, Washington, DC 20036. 202/496-1000. www.qorvis.com. Michael Petruzzello, Mng. Dir., Matt Lauer, Exec. VP.

Rachel Harrison Communications, 285 West Broadway, Ste. 200, New York, NY 10013. rhc@wearerhc.com; wearerhc.com. Amanda Watenberg, Mng. Dir., Lucy Ballantyne, Mng. Dir., Nick Papa, Mng. Dir.

Reevemark, 521 Fifth Ave., 27th fl., New York, NY 10175. 212/433-4600. www.reevemark.com. Brandy Bergman, CEO and Founding Partner.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Reputation Doctor® LLC, 244 Fifth Ave., Suite 2620, New York, NY 10001. 212/595-8500. www.reputationdoctor.com. Mike Paul, President & CEO.

Revive, 209 10th Avenue South, Suite 214, Nashville, TN 37203. 615/742-7242. partner@reviveagency.com; www.reviveagency.com.

Rosica Communications, 2-14 Fair Lawn Ave., Fair Lawn, NJ 07410. 201/977-2789. www.rosica.com. Chris Rosica, Pres. & CEO.

Sitrick And Company, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Boston. 800/288-8809. www.sitrick.com. Michael S. Sitrick, Chmn. and CEO.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Sloane & Company, One World Trade Center, 285 Fulton St., 69th fl., New York, NY 10007. 212/486-9500. info@sloanepr.com; www.sloanepr.com. Darren Brandt, Whit Clay, Co-CEOs.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Stanton, 909 Third Ave., 14th fl., New York, NY 10022. 212/366-5300. info@stantonpr.com; www.stantonpr.com. Alex Stanton, CEO.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Strategic Objectives, 184 Front St. East, Ste. 400, Toronto, Ontario M5A 4N3, Canada. 866/366-7733. info@strategicobjectives.com; www.strategicobjectives.com.

Taylor, 1540 Broadway, 40th fl.; New York, NY 10036. 212/714-1280; fax: 212/695-5685. Tony Signore, CEO & Managing Partner; Bryan Harris, COO & Managing Partner.

See listing in Crisis Communications profile section, p. 46.

Tier One Partners, 129 South St., Boston, MA 02111. 617/918-7060. kwilson@tieronepr.com; www.tieronepr.com. Kathy Wilson.



Tierney, A subsidiary of the Interpublic Group of Companies (IPG), 1700 Market St., 29th fl., Philadelphia, PA 19103. 215/790-4100.
tspreitzer@tierneyagency.com;
hellotierney.com. Tim Spreitzer, Exec. VP.

TJM Communications, Inc., 1170 Tree Swallow Dr., #346, Winter Springs, FL 32708. 407/977-5004.
info@tjmcommunications.com;
tjmcommunications.com. Treva J. Marshall, Pres.

Torrenzano Group, The, New York, NY. 212/681-1700. www.torrenzano.com.
Richard Torrenzano, Chief Executive.

Weber Shandwick, 909 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022. 212/445-8000.
www.webershandwick.com.

Digital Media Tours



Connex International, 46 Federal Road, Suite F, Danbury, CT 06810. 800/793-6404. danielle@connexintl.com; meeting.connexintl.com/connex-difference.
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www.kefmedia.com. Kevin Foley, Yvonne Hanak, Linda Buckley.

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Prime Time Media, Studios in Los Angeles, New York City, Chicago, San Francisco, Toronto, Vancouver, London. 310/559-0445; 310/709-1109. info@primetimemedia.us;
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Prime Time Media is one of the most trusted organizations in the industry. With our 28 years in the business, we excel at media relations, media distribution, and all forms of broadcast and digital communications. We create strategies and solutions to help brands, agencies, all sectors of entertainment, publishing, sports, health, beauty, lifestyle that garners mass media impressions.

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- Satellite Media Tours
- Digital Media Tours
- Radio Tours
- Satellite Feeds
- In-Studio Media Placement

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Directories

Complete Broadcasting Industry Guide, The: Television, Radio, Cable & Streaming, Grey House Publishing, 4919 Route 22, P.O. Box 56, Amenia, NY 12501. 800/562-2139; 518/789-8700.
www.greyhouse.com. Leslie Mackenzie, Publisher.

Directory of Business Information Resources, Grey House Publishing, 4919 Route 22, P.O. Box 56, Amenia, NY 12501. 800/562-2139; 518/789-8700.
www.greyhouse.com. Leslie Mackenzie, Publisher.

Headquarters USA Directory, Omnigraphics, 132 West 31st St., 16th flr., New York, NY 10001. 800/234-1340. contact@omnigraphics.com; omnigraphics.com.

Hudson's Washington News Media Contacts Guide, Grey House Publishing, 4919 Route 22, P.O. Box 56, Amenia, NY 12501. 800/562-2139; 518/789-8700. www.greyhouse.com. Leslie Mackenzie, Publisher.

Leadership Connect, (Formerly Leadership Directories), Providing Information on Leaders in Government, Business and Media, 1900 K St., N.W., #1130, Washington, DC 20006. 202/347-7757. www.leadershipconnect.io.

O'Dwyer's Directory of Public Relations Firms, 271 Madison Ave., #1500, New York, NY 10016. 212/679-2471. www.odwyerpr.com. John O'Dwyer, Publisher.

Original U.S. Congress Handbook, The, Columbia Books & Information Services, 1530 Wilson Blvd., #400, Arlington, VA 22209. 888/265-0600. www.columbiabooks.com.

World Radio TV Handbook, WRTH Publications Ltd., 8 King Edward St., Oxford, U.K. OX1 4HL. 44 (0) 1865 339355. sales@wrth.com; www.wrth.com.

Yearbook of Experts, Broadcast Interview Source, Inc., 2500 Wisconsin Ave., N.W., Ste. 949, Washington, DC 20007-4132. 202/333-5000. www.expertclick.com. Mitchell P. Davis, Editor & Publisher.

Education

American University, School of Communication, 4400 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20016. 202/885-1000; 202/885-2058. www.american.edu.

Baruch College (CUNY), M.A. in Corporate Communication, Weissman School of Arts and Sciences, 55 Lexington Ave. at 24th St., New York, NY 10010. 646/312-1000. www.baruch.cuny.edu.

Bowling Green State University, School of Media and Communication, 306 Kuhlman Center, Bowling Green, OH 43403. 419/372-8349. www.bgsu.edu.

Columbia University, M.S., Strategic Communication, School of Professional Studies, 203 Lewisohn Hall, 2970 Broadway, MC 4119, New York, NY 10027. 212/854-9666. sps.columbia.edu/academics.

Drexel University, M.S. and Ph.D., Communication, Culture, and Media, College of Arts and Sciences, 3201 Arch St., 149, Philadelphia, PA 19104. 215/895-1354. drexel.edu.

George Washington University, Master's in Strategic Public Relations, The Graduate School of Political Management, 805 21st St., N.W., Washington, DC 20052. 202/994-6000. gspm.gwu.edu/masters-programs. Larry Parnell, Dir.

Georgetown University, School of Continuing Studies, Master's in Public Relations & Corporate Comms., 640 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20001. 202/687-8700. scs.georgetown.edu.

Gonzaga University, Online M.A., Communication and Leadership Studies, 502 East Boone Ave., Spokane, WA 99258. 800/986-9585. www.gonzaga.edu.

Northeastern University College of Professional Studies, Online M.S., Corporate and Organizational Communication, 50 Nightingale Hall, 360 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115-9959. 877/668-7727. cps.northeastern.edu. Carl Zangerl, Faculty Dir.

NYU School of Professional Studies, Executive M.S. in Marketing and Strategic Comms., 7 East 12th St., #921, New York, NY 10003. 212/998-7100. www.sps.nyu.edu.

Purdue University, Online M.S. in Communication, 100 North University St., West Lafayette, IN 47907. 765/494-4600. cla.purdue.edu/graduatestudies/index.html.

Quinnipiac University, M.S. in Public Relations, 275 Mount Carmel Ave., Hamden, CT 06518. 203/582-8200. www.qu.edu.

Rutgers University School of Communication and Information, Master of Communication and Media Program, 4 Huntington St., New Brunswick, NJ 08901. 848/932-7500. www.rutgers.edu. Richard Dool, Dir.

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University of Florida, College of Journalism & Communications, P.O. Box 118400, 2096 Weimer Hall, Gainesville, FL 32611. 352/392-0466. www.jou.ufl.edu. Hub Brown, Dean.

University of Maryland, College Park, The Dept. of Communication, 2130 Skinner Bldg., College Park, MD 20742-7635. 301/405-6519. communication.umd.edu.

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USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, M.A., Public Relations and Advertising, 3502 Watt Way, Los Angeles, CA 90089. 213/740-6180. annenberg.usc.edu. Willow Bay, Dean.

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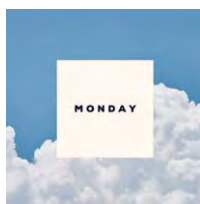
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Media Training

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Feintuch Communications takes a holistic approach to media training engagements. Whether conducted on a project basis or as part of a PR campaign, we work with our clients to understand their key business objectives and media targets in order to help prepare their spokespersons to maximize each press encounter.

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The Newman Group is the premier provider of virtual executive media training, business presentation coaching, and crisis communication facilitation in the United States. Over the last 40 years, C-level executives, officials in public office, best-selling authors, sports and entertainment celebrities, and business people from almost every industry have benefited from The Newman Group's personalized, dynamic, and challenging media interview and business presentation training.

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For over 25 years, Ken has provided media training, presentation training, crisis communications training and consulting, and writing and editing to business leaders, celebrities, and politicians. Ken



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has prepared clients for interviews with publications from *The New York Times* to local newspapers, speeches before groups as large as 2,000 and as small as one, and appearances on *60 Minutes*, *The Daily Show*, CNBC, MSNBC, CNN, NPR, *20/20*, podcasts, and satellite radio. "Making sure the message they take away is what you meant to say."

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Words Normalize Behavior LLC

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Mergers & Acquisitions



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Tier One Partners, 129 South St., Boston, MA 02111. 617/918-7060. kwilson@tieronepr.com; www.tieronepr.com. Kathy Wilson.

Newsletters

Capitol Communicator, Washington, DC. capitolcommunicator.com.

O'Dwyer's Public Relations Newsletter, 271 Madison Ave., #1500, New York, NY 10016. 212/679-2471. www.odwyerpr.com. Kevin McCauley, Editor-in-Chief.

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Newswires/Press Services

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We cut our teeth in the broadcast world, where our belief in classic broadcast tactics like satellite and radio media tours quickly turned our small agency into an internationally recognized full-service communications firm. 4media group believes in broadcast because of our unique makeup. We are journalists, producers and directors, PR professionals and marketers, and all of us, at one point or another, have watched broadcast work wonders.

The Nielsen data is clear: 93% of adults are listening to the radio each week, and 94% of radio listeners tune into a network-affiliated station each week. Your brand's newsworthy story angle is best told through your spokesperson. Let 4media group help you find your angle, prepare talking points, optimize recording conditions and book a schedule of interviews that gets your message the media attention that it earns. Whether via a radio media tour or an audio news release (or both!), 4media group can help your spokespeople engage with your community in just the right place at just the right time.

4media group also offers: satellite media tours, surveys/market research, full media relations services, public service announcements, media buying, creative video production, podcast production, social media management and influencer marketing.

DEFINITION 6

DEFINITION 6, 218 West 40th St., 2nd fl., New York, NY 10018. 716/560-3371. Jeff.Licciardi@definition6.com; definition6.com/services/. Jeff Licciardi, Sr. VP, Strategic Partnerships.

Through our broadcast and digital PR services, we deliver turnkey video and media distribution solutions at scale. Industry-leading studio, remote and virtual media tours deliver high-quality interviews and guarantee a minimum of 30 million impressions.

We're also known for our award-winning PSA production and proprietary distribution, tracking and reporting.

DEFINITION 6 also offers: Web Design/Dev., Analytics & Data, App Development, and has an award-winning Entertainment team. Please visit our website or reach out directly for more information.



North American Network, 5335 Wisconsin Avenue NW, #440, Washington, DC 20015. 202/243-0592. info@nanradio.com; www.nanradio.com. Tom Sweeney, President; Tammy Lemley, Vice President.

Radio is America's most-trusted medium: It's intimate, convenient, flexible, and an excellent way to connect with audiences. We can help you reach **specific demographics and markets—including in Spanish**. And, we're able to quickly and easily customize your outreach—utilizing such techniques as **one-on-one interviews, pre-recorded news soundbites, and produced features/PSAs**. We've helped countless companies, organizations, government agencies, and PR firms make their campaigns radio-friendly—ensuring that their messages are heard.



Pitching Monkeys Media, Waldwick, NJ 07643. 201/214-9611. mark@pitchingmonkeys.com; www.pitchingmonkeysmedia.com. Mark Ganguzza, President.

See full listing under Satellite Media Tours.



Strauss Media Strategies, Inc., 529 14th St., N.W., #1163, Nat'l Press Bldg., Washington, DC 20045. 202/638-0200. info@straussmedia.com; www.straussmedia.com.

New York, NY
newyork@straussmedia.com
Los Angeles, CA
losangeles@straussmedia.com

Richard Strauss, President

Proudly celebrating our 27th anniversary in 2023, Strauss Media Strategies, Inc., **is the nation's premier public relations, communications, and strategy firm specializing in television and radio, on-air and online**. Not just another "crank it out booking service," Strauss Media Strategies works closely with its clients to develop campaign-specific strategies and tactics that get quality results. We make the booking process easy for you with a focus on quality and results.

Collectively, our staff brings more than 270 years of broadcast experience and judgment to our clients, delivering tens of thousands of interviews throughout our company history with a strong commitment to quality.

Strauss Media specializes in booking **television satellite media tours** with local stations, national broadcast and cable networks, network feeder services, syndicated programs and high-visibility digital platforms. We expertly manage every aspect of your SMT including the booking of all interviews, studio rental and equipment, satellite uplink, make-up and catering services, and all other technical and production needs to make your

SMT the most successful it can be.

During COVID, our teams were able to pivot and delivered SMTs remotely with the spokespersons conducting the interviews from the safety and security of their homes. We have continued to provide similar flexibility as needed, to compliment the return to in-studio and on-location tours.

We specialize in booking **radio tours** with national news networks, nationally syndicated shows, statewide, regional, and local radio outlets in each of the nation's nearly 300 radio markets. **Strauss Media also conducts radio and television ground tours, either coordinating in-person interviews on-location or in-studio.**

We also specialize in booking **digital media and podcast tours**.

Moreover, we script, produce, and distribute targeted audio news releases to the nation's largest radio networks with the best "guaranteed-placement" in the industry. In addition, Strauss Media provides:

- Audio Actuality Pitching and Placement Systems
- Radio Promotions
- Public Service Announcements
- Audio and Video Podcasts
- Print, Digital, and Radio Paid Advertising Production and Placement
- Live Remote Broadcasts
- Customized Broadcast E-mailing to Radio & TV Stations and Shows.
- Satellite Uplinks and Downlinks
- Broadcast Media Training

We routinely work with political groups such as the DNC, advocacy groups like the Sierra Club; award-winning PR firms like BCW, Edelman, Porter Novelli, MSL-Group, Hager Sharp, and Weber Shandwick; non-profit clients; government agencies like HRSA and the US Census Bureau; associations; large-scale events such as the major auto shows; major companies like Uber, Facebook, and General Motors; and we have worked on hundreds of local, state and federal political campaigns. **The company is also proud to be on the official GSA Schedule.**

When your campaign calls for television and radio, **Strauss Media Strategies delivers the absolute best results in the industry**. You'll enjoy working with our friendly staff of experienced public relations media professionals. **Contact us today to discuss a customized solution for your next broadcast outreach campaign!**

Research



Atomik Research, a part of 4media group
888-890-8066. hello@4media-group.com;
www.atomikresearch.com.

Atomik Research is a full-service creative market research company delivering insightful results through quantitative, qualitative and secondary research approaches. With our roots in PR surveys, we partner with brands to create media-genic content that gets people talking. However, we don't stop there. We also offer single-focus research executions as well as bespoke multi-disciplinary research approaches. Atomik powers strategies with data-driven insights.

Atomik services include the following:

- PR surveys
- Brand Health Tracking
- Social Media and/or News Media Landscape Analyses
- Competitor Share of Voice Analysis
- Social Listening and Crisis Monitoring
- Focus groups, In-Depth Interviews, and other qualitative approaches
- Business Intelligence services
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- Audience Segmentation studies
- Brand-Impact-Focused Performance Measurement
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Researchscape International, 5077
Fruitville Rd., #120, Sarasota, FL 34232-
2272. 888/983-1675.
tcheevers@researchscape.com;
researchscape.com. Tony Cheevers.

Researchscape International (www.researchscape.com) is an agile market research consultancy delivering high-quality custom and omnibus surveys, automated reporting tools as well as other research-related services, to marketers and agencies. Our surveys are frequently used to power news releases, help generate journalist interviews, drive thought leadership, support content creation and help grow organizations' public

profiles. Other services include concept testing, feature prioritization, crisis communications, customer satisfaction and more. Contact us for hands-on support in developing your next newsmaker survey.



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The Analyst Agency, 50 Fountain Plaza,
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0620. info@theanalystagency.com;
theanalystagency.com. Steven Czymry.

The Analyst Agency is an operations & strategic consulting firm that provides comprehensive qualitative and quantitative market research, media and industry analysis, and advanced media monitoring services for startups, large companies, and public relations firms. We have been cited as experts in market research and consulting in many prominent publications including *The Free Press Journal*, *Personal Real Estate Investor Magazine*, *Market Watch*, and *Influencer Daily*, among others.



4media group 888-890-8066.
hello@4media-group.com;
www.4media-group.com.

As global integrated media experts, 4media group offers forward-thinking Intelligence, Content, Communications, and Digital services that deliver measurable results for our clients. By exceeding expectations and going above and beyond for our clients every day, we strive to be the most trusted communications agency partner.

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A-1 Broadcast, 2030 Powers Ferry Rd.,
Suite 400, Atlanta, GA 30339. 770/790-
3690. beverly@a-1broadcast.com;
www.A-1Broadcast.com. Beverly Brunston,
President.

A-1 Broadcast was formed by a former Television News Director. A-1 Broadcast's staff has over 100 years of major market TV and Public Relations broadcast experience, which translates into successful projects and results for our clients. A-1 Broadcast works with PR Agencies and *Fortune* 500 companies for their Broadcast PR needs such as Satellite Media Tours, Radio Media Tours, Virtual Media Tours and Brand Integration.



Artisan Production House, 110 East 25th
St., Floor 2, New York, NY 10010. 347/351-
4804. erin@artisanproductionhouse.com;
kara@artisanproductionhouse.com;
www.artisanproductionhouse.com. Erin
Lahey Schwitter, Producer/Partner; Kara
Leibowitz, Producer/Partner.

Artisan Production House is a full-service production house specializing in book publicity as well as food & lifestyle publicity. We create content that resonates with your audience and keeps

Continues on next page

ARTISAN PRODUCTION *continued*

them engaged. Our innate understanding of story relevance, along with our personal relationships with TV producers and media influencers throughout the country, gets your story heard. We'll help you deliver your messages seamlessly and with style utilizing our high-end production capabilities (including film-style shooters and professional graphic designers and animators). Artisan's in-studio & on-location satellite junkets include quality bookings that are actually seen, spot-on custom craft services and a fresh, modern design aesthetic. Additional services include radio media tours, stunning branded content food videos, original book promotional videos and select matchmaking between celebrity talent and brands.

Our clients include Food Network/Discovery+, Penguin Random House, The Wonderful Company, Le Creuset of America and commodity boards ranging from the National Onion Association to Grapes from California.



D S Simon Media, 229 West 36th St., 9th flr., New York, NY 10018.
E: news@dssimonmedia.com
T: 212-736-2727
dssimon.com

D S Simon Media helps clients get their stories on television, through satellite media tours and by producing and distributing video content to the media. Our clients include top brands in healthcare, travel, consumer goods, entertainment, technology, retail as well as leading non-profits and organizations delivering public affairs, CSR and DE&I messages. While it's harder than ever to get your story on cable or network news, there's a greater opportunity to get your experts and spokespeople on local news via satellite media tours. The power of local TV news is sometimes overlooked, however, according to Pew Research Center, local TV has a larger audience than either cable or network TV. A satellite media tour allows you to establish your experts as leaders in the subject and create awareness for your brand or product through personalized messaging.

Our media tours include 25-30+ bookings and a 40 million audience guarantee.

DEFINITION 6

DEFINITION 6, 218 West 40th St., 2nd flr., New York, NY 10018. 716/560-3371. Jeff. Licciardi@definition6.com; definition6.com/services/. Jeff Licciardi, Sr. VP, Strategic Partnerships.

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DEFINITION 6 also offers: Web Design/Dev., Analytics & Data, App Development, and has an award-winning Entertainment team. Please visit our website or reach out directly for more information.



KEF Media, 1161 Concord Rd. SE, Smyrna, GA 30080. 404/605-0009.
yhanak@kefmedia.com; lbuckley@kefmedia.com; www.kefmedia.com. Kevin Foley, Yvonne Hanak, Linda Buckley.

KEF Media is the go-to broadcast media partner for many of the world's most notable brands. With customized plans, honest counsel, unrivaled client service and strong results, KEF Media continues to adapt its offerings to serve clients' ever-evolving needs.

Specialties:

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- Matte Releases

Moldow Communications LLC 201/519-3075. jmoldow@MoldowCommunications.com; www.moldowcommunications.com. Jim Moldow, President.

Murray Hill Studios, 248 East 35th St., New York, NY 10016. 212/889-4200. Ourteam@murrayhillstudios.com; www.murrayhillstudios.com. Contact: Jahaneen Johnsen.

See full listing under Television (TV) Production.

Newman Group Inc., The, 220 E. 63rd St., New York, NY 10065. 212/838-8371. hello@newmangroup.com; www.newmangroup.com. Richard Newman, Pres.

See full listing under Media Training.



Pitching Monkeys Media, Waldwick, NJ 07643. 201/214-9611.
mark@pitchingmonkeys.com; www.pitchingmonkeysmedia.com. Mark Ganguzza, President.

- Media Consultants - Planning / Strategizing
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- Radio Media Tours (RMT)
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Prime Time Media, Studios in Los Angeles, New York City, Chicago, San Francisco, Toronto, Vancouver, London. 310/559-0445; 310/709-1109.
info@primetimedmedia.us; www.prime-timedmedia.com. Neisha Cohen, Founder/Owner.

Prime Time Media is one of the most trusted organizations in the industry. With our 28 years in the business, we excel at media relations, media distribution, and all forms of broadcast and digital communications. We create strategies and solutions to help brands, agencies, all sectors of entertainment, publishing,

sports, health, beauty, lifestyle that garners mass media impressions.

As producers at the highest rated network morning and late-night programs, **we know how producers think and what they want.**

- Virtual Internet Tours
- Satellite Media Tours
- Digital Media Tours
- Radio Tours
- Satellite Feeds
- In-Studio Media Placement

Along with longstanding relationships with decision-makers in all media we position you for success. We coordinate every project with detail, professionalism, diligence, and creativity. We get you the best media placement for your message and within your budget. **Plus, we target and get the largest audience and amass the most media impressions for you. That's our job.**

PRIME TIME MEDIA: WHEN YOU WANT THE WORLD TO KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING



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New York, NY
newyork@straussmedia.com
Los Angeles, CA
losangeles@straussmedia.com

Richard Strauss, President

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- Satellite Uplinks and Downlinks
- Broadcast Media Training

We routinely work with political groups such as the DNC, advocacy groups like the Sierra Club; award-winning PR firms like BCW, Edelman, Porter Novelli, MSL-Group, Hager Sharp, and Weber Shandwick; non-profit clients; government agencies like HRSA and the US Census Bureau; associations; large-scale events such as the major auto shows; major

companies like Uber, Facebook, and General Motors; and we have worked on hundreds of local, state and federal political campaigns. **The company is also proud to be on the official GSA Schedule.**

When your campaign calls for television and radio, **Strauss Media Strategies delivers the absolute best results in the industry.** You'll enjoy working with our friendly staff of experienced public relations media professionals. **Contact us today to discuss a customized solution for your next broadcast outreach campaign!**

Search Engine Optimization



Lightbox Search, 135 Madison Ave., floor 8, New York, NY 10016. 212/235-0248. info@lightboxsearch.com; lightboxsearch.com. Jim Gold, Project Dir.

Social Media



Feintuch Communications, 11 East 44th St., Suite 1201, New York, NY 10017. 212/808-4900. info@feintuchpr.com; www.feintuchcommunications.com. Henry Feintuch, President.

Chatter about your company is happening across the web, so why not join the conversation?

Feintuch Communications offers a comprehensive solution for b-to-b companies looking to incorporate or enhance their social media presence in their marketing arsenal. Each program is designed to support the company's business objectives and PR/marketing goals. Programs include an analysis of the current industry landscape and competitors; a calendar of planned updates; content creation; community building and management; and measurement.

Let us help you have purposeful conversations with clients, prospects, partners, employees, investors, journalists and others that touch your organization.



Marketing Maven, 2390 C Las Posas Rd., #479, Camarillo, CA 93010. 310/994-7380. lindsey@marketingmaven.com; www.marketingmaven.com. Lindsey Carnett, Pres.

Marketing Maven is not your typical PR firm. With origins in direct response public relations, Marketing Maven utilizes advanced metrics to measure their clients' marketing reach and provide valuable competitive analysis. Their client campaigns have won national awards for driving revenue upon launching. Social media services include content, promotions and advertising to drive engagement and sales. Blogger and influencer relations are also available services.

Tier One Partners, 129 South St., Boston, MA 02111. 617/918-7060. kwilson@tieronepr.com; www.tieronepr.com. Kathy Wilson.

Speakers Service (Talent)

Capitol City Speakers Bureau, 6500 Carlisle Bend, Springfield, IL 62711. 800/397-3183. info@capcityspeakers.com; www.capcityspeakers.com; www.speakersfornurses.com. Mike Klemm, Pres.



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See full listing under Speakers Service (Talent).

Speechwriting

Newman Group Inc., The, 220 E. 63rd St., New York, NY 10065. 212/838-8371. hello@newmangroup.com; www.newmangroup.com. Richard Newman, Pres.

See full listing under Media Training.

Words Normalize Behavior LLC, wordsnormalizebehavior@gmail.com; wordsnormalizebehavior.com. Michael Franklin.

Television (TV) Production



MURRAY HILL STUDIOS
NYC

Murray Hill Studios, 248 East 35th St., New York, NY 10016. 212/889-4200. Ourteam@murrayhillstudios.com; www.murrayhillstudios.com. Contact: Jahaneen Johnsen.

Murray Hill Studios is a full-service production facility in NYC providing high-end live streaming and traditional broadcast production.

Services include: virtual media tours, satellite media tours, interactive streaming events, video podcasts, broadcast-quality ZOOM, Skype, and WebEx interviews, Facebook Live segments, live shots with domestic and international

transmission, early education professional development videos, studio services with green screens, kitchen sets with a prep-kitchen, curved cyc, custom sets, consulting, and so much more. Call us at 212-889-4200, visit www.murrayhillstudios.com or follow us on social:

- [instagram.com/murrayhillstudios/](https://www.instagram.com/murrayhillstudios/)
- twitter.com/murhillstudios
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Strauss Media
STRATEGIES

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Washington, DC • New York • Los Angeles

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New York, NY
newyork@straussmedia.com
Los Angeles, CA
losangeles@straussmedia.com

Richard Strauss, President

See full listing under SMTs and Radio.

Video

Artisan Production House, 110 East 25th St., Floor 2, New York, NY 10010. 347/351-4804. erin@artisanproductionhouse.com; kara@artisanproductionhouse.com; www.artisanproductionhouse.com. Erin Lahey Schwitter, Producer/Partner; Kara Leibowitz, Producer/Partner.

See full listing under Satellite Media Tours.

Murray Hill Studios, 248 East 35th St., New York, NY 10016. 212/889-4200. Ourteam@murrayhillstudios.com; www.murrayhillstudios.com. Contact: Jahaneen Johnsen.

See full listing under Television (TV) Production.

Virtual Meeting Solutions



Connex International, 46 Federal Road, Suite F, Danbury, CT 06810. 800/793-6404. danielle@connexintl.com; meeting.connexintl.com/connex-difference. Deb Volansky, CEO.

You've got important things to say and our goal is to make sure you are heard.

At Connex Intl, we offer exactly what you are looking for: effective, scalable, and reliable virtual meeting solutions built to suit you. It's our business to provide tools to advance your ideas and strategies and grow your business. We want you to make a good impression on

your audience – wherever they are.

If there's one thing we set out to do, it's making our clients' lives easier. We designed our web, video, and audio conferencing services to simplify your life and streamline your daily communications.

For over 40 years, Connex Intl, a certified woman owned business, has focused on executive virtual meetings and events. As a Connex client, you'll have:

- Stability, flexibility, and availability – we don't turn our clients away.

- A U.S. and facilities-based provider with a dedicated team assigned to you and committed to your success.

- High-quality, reliable, scalable, and secure web, video, and audio virtual meetings that are simple to use.

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- Webcast & Streaming Solutions
- Web & Video Conferencing
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- Med/Pharma Solutions



D S Simon Media, 229 West 36th St., 9th flr., New York, NY 10018.

E: news@dssimonmedia.com

T: 212-736-2727

dssimon.com

The future of virtual events is here and it's the Metaverse. We are one of the few companies to produce a successful live broadcast event in a Metaverse environment in 2022. The Metaverse Business Conference combined the access to the top thinkers in that industry with the opportunity for the personal interaction of an in-person trade show without anyone having to travel. The audience was able to connect with them and other attendees personally and privately within this Metaverse trade show environment. They were able to use their computer or phone to access the environment without needing a headset or other equipment. The B2B uses for Metaverse Events are growing exponentially with video playing a vital role. Our team can help yours produce virtual broadcast events and virtual panel discussions in the Metaverse.

Murray Hill Studios, 248 East 35th St., New York, NY 10016. 212/889-4200.

Ourteam@murrayhillstudios.com;

www.murrayhillstudios.com. Jahaneen Johnsen.

See full listing under Television (TV) Production.

Webcasting



Connex International, 46 Federal Road, Suite F, Danbury, CT 06810. 800/793-6404. danielle@connexintl.com; meeting.connexintl.com/connex-difference. Deb Volansky, CEO.

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CONNEX INTERNATIONAL *continued*

engage with an audience, capture leads, and generally be seen, a ConnexCast-PRO webcast fits the bill. Our easy-to-use cloud-based technology allows you to deliver a high-quality virtual event directly to your audience's desktop.

If there's one thing we set out to do, it's making our clients' lives easier. We designed our web, video, and audio conferencing services to simplify your life and streamline your daily communications.

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Newman Group Inc., The, 220 E. 63rd St., New York, NY 10065. 212/838-8371. hello@newmangroup.com; www.newmangroup.com. Richard Newman, Pres.

See full listing under Media Training.

Website Development



At Point Inc., P.O. Box 361, Roseland, NJ 07068. 973/324-0866; fax: 973/324-0778. info@atpoint.com; www.atpoint.com. Mick Gyure.

At Point provides website development and maintenance services, and can manage your project from end to

end. Clients receive personalized and high-quality customer service, solutions that fit their budgets, and the assurance of At Point's reliability.

DEFINITION6

DEFINITION 6, 218 West 40th St., 2nd fl., New York, NY 10018. 716/560-3371. Jeff. Licciardi@definition6.com; definition6.com/services/. Jeff Licciardi, Sr. VP, Strategic Partnerships.

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I-9

24-7 Press Release Newswire: Press Release Distribution
 4media group: Influencer Marketing, Public Service Announcements, Radio, Satellite Media Tours
 5W Public Relations: Crisis Management

A

A-1 Broadcast: Satellite Media Tours
 Abernathy MacGregor: Crisis Management
 Adrian Awards: Awards
 Advertising Club of New York: Associations
 Advertising Specialty Institute: Associations
 AJB Communications: Crisis Management
 Alliance for Women in Media: Associations
 AME - Advertising & Marketing Effectiveness Awards, New York Festivals: Awards
 American Association of Advertising Agencies (4As): Associations
 American Association of Political Consultants: Associations
 American Marketing Association, The: Associations
 American Society of Association Executives (ASAE): Associations
 American University, School of Communication: Education
 APEX Awards: Awards
 ARC Awards: Awards
 Artisan Production House: Satellite Media Tours, Video
 Association for Conflict Resolution: Associations
 Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication: Associations
 Association for Women in Communications, The: Associations
 Association of Marketing and Communications Professionals: Associations
 Association of National Advertisers (ANA): Associations
 Association TRENDS Annual Trendy Awards: Awards
 Association TRENDS Salute to Association Excellence Awards: Awards
 Astrid Awards: Awards
 At Point Inc.: Website Development
 Atomik Research, a part of 4media group: Research
 Automotive PR Council, Original Equipment Suppliers Assn.: Associations

AVA Digital Awards: Awards
 Axia Public Relations: Crisis Management

B

Ball Consulting Group, LLC: Crisis Management
 Baruch College (CUNY), M.A. in Corporate Communication: Education
 Bell Ringer Awards: Awards
 Big Apple Awards: Awards
 Bischoff Communications LLC: Crisis Management
 Blaine Group, Inc., The: Crisis Management, Integrated Marketing & PR, Media Training
 Bliss Group, The: Crisis Management
 Boardroom Communications Inc.: Crisis Management
 Bospar: Crisis Management
 Bowling Green State University, School of Media and Communication: Education
 Brian Simon Associates: Executive Search
 Bronze Anvil Awards of PR Society of America: Awards
 Bulldog PR Awards: Awards
 Butler Associates, LLC: Crisis Management

C

Cameron Communications Inc.: Media Training
 Cannes Lions Awards: Awards
 Capitol City Speakers Bureau: Speakers Service (Talent)
 Capitol Communicator: Newsletters
 Cavanaugh & Associates Inc.: Celebrities
 Celebrity Access, Inc.: Celebrities
 Cerrell Associates, Inc.: Crisis Management
 Chief Marketing Officer Council: Associations
 Clarion Awards: Awards
 CLIO Awards: Awards
 CODiE Awards, EXCEL Awards, IMPACT Awards, Neal Awards: Awards
 Columbia University, M.S., Strategic Communication: Education
 CommCore, Inc.: Crisis Management
 Communicator Awards: Awards
 Communitas Awards: Awards
 Complete Broadcasting Industry Guide, The: Television, Radio, Cable & Streaming: Directories
 Comsint: Crisis Management
 Connect360 MultiMedia: Public Service Announcements
 Connex International: Digital Media Tours, Virtual Meeting Solutions, Webcasting

CoverageBook: Clipping Services, Measurement & Evaluation
 CPR, The International Institute For Conflict Prevention and Resolution: Associations
 Crosswind Media and Public Relations: Crisis Management

D

D S Simon Media: Satellite Media Tours, Virtual Meeting Solutions
 DEFINITION 6: Media Tours/Roadshows, Public Service Announcements, Radio, Satellite Media Tours, Website Development
 Directory of Business Information Resources: Directories
 dotCOMM Awards: Awards
 Dragon Horse Ad Agency: Crisis Management
 Drexel University: Education

E

Edelman: Crisis Management
 ExpertClick: Newswires/Press Services, Press Release Distribution

F

Feintuch Communications: Crisis Management, Media Training, Social Media
 FGS Global: Crisis Management
 Fineman PR: Crisis Management
 Finn Partners: Crisis Management
 FleishmanHillard: Crisis Management
 Florida PR Association: Associations
 FTI Consulting Strategic Communications: Crisis Management

G

G&S Business Communications: Crisis Management
 Galaxy Awards: Awards
 George Washington University, Master's in Strategic Public Relations: Education
 Georgetown University, School of Continuing Studies, Master's in Public Relations & Corporate Comms.: Education
 Gladstone Place Partners: Crisis Management
 Gold Anvil Award of PR Society of America: Awards
 Gold Quill Awards: Awards

Golden Trumpet Awards: Awards
Gonzaga University, Online M.A.,
Communication and Leadership
Studies: Education
Gould+Partners LLC: CPA/Consulting
Services, Management Consultants,
Mergers & Acquisitions

H

Havas Formula: Crisis Management
Headquarters USA Directory: Directories
Hechkooff Executive Search Inc.: Executive
Search
Hermes Creative Awards: Awards
Hispanic Public Relations Association:
Associations
Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association
Int'l.: Associations
Hudson's Washington News Media
Contacts Guide: Directories

I

iBravo! Awards: Awards
ICR: Crisis Management
Infinite Global: Crisis Management
iNova Awards: Awards
Institute for PR: Associations
International Association of Business
Communicators (IABC): Associations
International Association of Business
Communicators (IABC), Wash., D.C.
Chapter: Associations
International Association of Speakers
Bureaus: Associations
International Women's Media Foundation:
Associations
Issues Management Group: Crisis
Management

J

Jack Felton Medal for Lifetime
Achievement: Awards
Jacobs Consulting & Executive Coaching:
Executive Coaching
Joele Frank: Crisis Management

K

KARV Communications: Crisis
Management
KEF Media: Digital Media Tours, Satellite
Media Tours
Kekst CNC: Crisis Management
Kivvit: Crisis Management

L

L.C. Williams & Associates: Crisis
Management
Leadership Connect: Directories
Levinson Group (TLG), The: Crisis
Management
Lightbox Search: Search Engine
Optimization

M

Marathon Strategies LLC: Crisis
Management
MarCom Awards: Awards
Marketing Maven: Integrated Marketing &
PR, Social Media
Matrix Awards: Awards
Mercury Awards: Awards
MIEN Consultancy: Corporate Image
Consultants
Moldow Communications LLC: Satellite
Media Tours
Monday Talent: Executive Search
Montgomery Strategies Group, The: Crisis
Management, Media Training
Murray Hill Studios: Satellite Media Tours,
Television (TV) Production, Video,
Virtual Meeting Solutions, Webcasting
Museum of Public Relations, The:
Associations
MWWPR: Crisis Management

N

NAGC Communicator of the Year Award:
Awards
National Association of Broadcasters:
Associations
National Association of Government
Communicators: Associations
National Black Public Relations Society:
Associations
National Council for Marketing & Public
Relations (NCMPR): Associations
National Foundation for Women
Legislators: Associations
National Hispanic Media Coalition:
Associations
National Institute for Lobbying & Ethics,
The: Associations
National Investor Relations Institute:
Associations
National Press Club, The: Associations
National School PR Association:
Associations
New York Festivals, TV & Film Awards:
Awards
New York Financial Writers' Association:
Associations

New York Women in Communications
(NYWICI): Associations
Newman Group Inc., The: Digital Media
Tours, Media Tours/Roadshows,
Media Training, Satellite Media Tours,
Speechwriting, Webcasting
North American Network: Public Service
Announcements, Radio
Northeastern University College of
Professional Studies, Online M.S.,
Corporate and Organizational
Communication: Education
NYU School of Professional Studies,
Executive M.S. in Marketing and
Strategic Comms.: Education

O

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Firms: Directories
O'Dwyer's Public Relations Newsletter:
Newsletters
Online News Association: Associations
Original U.S. Congress Handbook, The:
Directories
Outstanding Educator Award of PR
Society of America: Awards

P

Padilla: Crisis Management
Page (Arthur W. Page Society):
Associations
Paragon Awards: Awards
Paul M. Lund Public Service Award of PR
Society of America: Awards
Pennsylvania Association for Government
Relations: Associations
Peppercomm, Inc.: Crisis Management
Philadelphia PR Association: Associations
Pitching Monkeys Media: Media Tours/
Roadshows, Radio, Satellite Media
Tours
Polpeo: Crisis Management
Power of A Awards: Awards
PR Club: Associations
PR Council: Associations
PR News Awards: Awards
PR Professional of the Year Award of PR
Society of America: Awards
PR World Alliance: Public Relations
Networks
Prime Time Media: Digital Media Tours,
Satellite Media Tours
Promotional Products Association Int'l.:
Associations
Propel PRM: Press Release Distribution
PRSA/Georgia Chapter: Associations
PRSA/Los Angeles Chapter: Associations
PRSA/National Capital Chapter:
Associations

PRSA/NCC National Capital Excellence in Comm. Awards: Awards
 PRSA/New York Chapter: Associations
 Public Affairs Council: Associations
 Public Communications Inc.: Crisis Management
 Public Relations and Marketing Excellence Awards: Awards
 Public Relations Boutiques Int'l: Public Relations Networks
 Public Relations Society of America (PRSA): Associations
 Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA): Associations
 Publicity Club of Chicago: Associations
 Publicity Club of New York: Associations
 Purdue University, Online M.S. in Communication: Education

Q

Qorvis Communications: Crisis Management
 Questar Awards: Awards
 Quinnipiac University, M.S. in Public Relations: Education

R

Rachel Harrison Communications: Crisis Management
 Radio Television Digital News Association: Associations
 Ragan's PR Daily Awards: Awards
 REBRAND 100 Global Awards: Awards
 Reevermark: Crisis Management
 Rephonic: Influencer Marketing
 Reputation Doctor® LLC: Crisis Management
 Researchscape International: Research
 Revive: Crisis Management
 Rosica Communications: Crisis Management
 Rutgers University School of Communication and Information, Master of Communication and Media Program: Education

S

SABRE Awards: Awards
 Scudder Training & Consulting, Ken: Media Training
 Send2Press® Newswire, a service of Neotrope®: Press Release Distribution

Seton Hall University, M.A., Communications: Education
 She Runs It (Formerly Advertising Women of NY): Associations
 SHOOT Publicity Wire: Newswires/Press Services
 Sigma Delta Chi Awards: Awards
 SIIA, Software & Information Industry Assn.: Associations
 Silver Anvil Awards of PR Society of America: Awards
 Silver Apple Awards: Awards
 Simmons College, B.A., Communications: Education
 Sitrick And Company: Crisis Management
 Sloane & Company: Crisis Management
 Society for Advancing Business Editing and Writing (SABEW): Associations
 Society for Technical Communication: Associations
 Society for Technical Communication, STC Awards: Awards
 Society of American Travel Writers (SATW): Associations, Awards
 Society of Professional Journalists: Associations
 Stanton: Crisis Management
 Stevens Group, The: Mergers & Acquisitions
 Stevie Awards: Awards
 Strategic Objectives: Crisis Management
 Strauss Media Strategies, Inc.: Electronic Newsfeeds/Satellite Services, Media Tours/Roadshows, Public Service Announcements, Radio, Satellite Media Tours, Television (TV) Production
 Syracuse University, S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications: Education

T

Telly Awards, The: Awards
 The Analyst Agency: Research
 Tier One Partners: Annual Reports/Design/Branding, Copywriters, Crisis Management, Graphic Design Services, Integrated Marketing & PR, Measurement & Evaluation, Media Tours/Roadshows, Media Training, Mergers & Acquisitions, Newsletters, Social Media, Special Events, Website Development
 Tierney: Crisis Management
 TJM Communications, Inc.: Crisis Management
 Torrenzano Group, The: Crisis Management

Tufts University, Gerald J. & Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Food and Nutrition Policy and Programs: Education

U

U.S. Travel Association: Associations
 University of Florida, College of Journalism & Communications: Education
 University of Maryland, College Park, The Dept. of Communication: Education
 University of Memphis, The, College of Communication and Fine Arts, Dept. of Journalism and Strategic Media: Education
 USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, M.A., Public Relations and Advertising: Education

V

Viddy Awards: Awards

W

Washington Women in PR: Associations
 Washington Women in Public Relations (WWPR) Woman of the Year Award: Awards
 Weber Shandwick: Crisis Management
 West Virginia University, Online M.S., Integrated Marketing Communications: Education
 Woman of the Year Award: Awards
 Women in Government Relations: Associations
 Women in PR North America: Associations
 Words Normalize Behavior LLC: Media Training, Speechwriting
 World Class Speakers & Entertainers: Celebrities, Speakers Service (Talent), Special Events
 World Radio TV Handbook: Directories
 Worldcom Public Relations Group: Public Relations Networks

Y

Yearbook of Experts: Directories

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